

FY 2019 Student Success/Enrollment Management Plan

Name of College Mountain Empire Community College

Name of Contact Person Completing this Form Dr. Victoria Ratliff, VP of Academic Affairs and Workforce Solutions

President's Signature _____ Date 8/30/2018

College's \$2 Tuition Increase Amount (from budget spreadsheet) \$83,402

Narrative

Mountain Empire Community College's FY 2019 Student Success and Enrollment Management Plan is focused on the improvement of student success and retention through a comprehensive first-year experience. The first-year experience is comprised of three key elements: a thorough orientation to the College, a comprehensive advising process, and the development of clearly defined educational plans. Under this plan, the comprehensive first year experience will enable students to:

1. Gain and apply knowledge of MECC's terminology and practices upon entry;
2. Utilize MECC's structured advising processes;
3. Create a comprehensive educational plan that fits with their interests, skills, abilities, and values during their first academic semester; and
4. Achieve continued, measurable progress toward timely completion of academic and career goals.

Background: Tripling the number of credentials that students earn is the single goal of the Virginia Community College System's Complete 2021 strategic plan. In support of the singular system-wide goal, Mountain Empire Community College (MECC) recognizes the need to increase its student performance outcomes related to student connection, entry, progression and completion. To accomplish this, MECC will not only need to recruit more students from diverse subgroups, but will also need to better

retain those currently enrolled, ensuring that they complete the goals they set out to accomplish, and that those goals include completion of credentials leading to transfer or employment.

As a comprehensive community college, MECC's mission is to provide the far southwestern region of Virginia with accessible, quality higher education, workforce training, and community programs to ensure an educated population and a globally competitive workforce. To achieve this mission, the college offers a wide variety of associate degree, certificate, and career studies programs, as well as an extensive range of workforce training options. MECC utilizes advisory committees to ensure that academic programs stay current to the needs of existing employers, and it works with economic development organizations to meet the demands of emerging industries.

To effectively accomplish its mission, the college engages in ongoing, integrated, and institution-wide research-based planning and evaluation processes. The college prides itself on being a shared governance institution with a culture of broad-based involvement. This is evident through faculty, staff, and student involvement in committee work and institutional planning. Input gathered through these avenues, as well as through focus groups and surveys, is consistently used in decision-making and was the basis on which this Student Success/Enrollment Management Plan was developed.

Although several topics emerged in consideration for the plan, it was evident both from institutional data and stakeholder input that students' first-year experiences could be enhanced. Although the college has made progress through its two-day SDV College Success Skills class delivered prior to the beginning of the semester, there remains a gap between the time students first apply to the college and the time they attend SDV 100. Students often arrive for the two-day class without having completed their financial aid applications and are unsure of what their next steps should be. Qualitative findings revealed that students often feel lost within our processes, are confused by terminology used by college personnel, and frequently

believe they do not have a “go to” person to answer questions or provide assistance. Because students are only required to meet with an advisor upon their initial registration, self-advising in subsequent semesters commonly results in a disconnect between students’ goals and their actual academic progress.

Strategies: Currently, MECC relies on a distributed model for key elements of its students’ first year experiences. Under this plan, the college will develop a centralized structure, known as Fox Central, that houses all aspects of entry to the College (Enrollment Services, Financial Aid, Student Outreach & Success, Testing Center, Career & Transfer Counseling, Student Services and the College Bookstore). Offices within Fox Central will be responsible for a new student orientation program (Freshman Orientation eXperience or FOX) and a comprehensive advising process which will lead students to clearly defined educational pathways through intentional and intrusive advising services. Efforts developed by this plan will lead to continuity of programming and services for all new students.

FOX Orientation: College personnel and students have reported that one ongoing issue with regard to the success of students in their first semester is their lack of preparation for the college environment. The MECC service region has a number of prospective college students that are first generation and often do not understand the terminology related to college, nor do they understand the processes of enrollment or the support services available to them. To address this problem, the college will develop its new student Freshman Orientation eXperience (FOX) program to provide an introduction to MECC that will acclimate students to the college environment, introduce common terms and practices and ease their transition into higher education.

Comprehensive Advising Process: A review of literature on centralized advising models has demonstrated that this method of student engagement and onboarding is successful. Not only does centralized advising, which is commonly defined as the staffing of trained academic advisors in one central location, increase student engagement, but it also increases retention and persistence. Chiteng (2014) found

that “students who used centralized advising instead of no advising experienced an increase in their first-term GPA, second-term GPA, and first-year cumulative GPA” (p. 527). Additionally, these students were more likely to be retained from fall to spring semesters. Under this model, MECC will implement a centralized advising program where all new students will be advised within the college’s Student Outreach & Success Center. An advisor within the SOS Center will act as a mentor and aid students in choosing a career path that suits his/her goals. Although students will be assigned a faculty program advisor once program-placed, this original advisor will serve as a mentor and point of contact throughout the student’s educational career.

Clearly Defined Educational Pathways: An integral part of the advising process is the development of a clearly defined educational pathway. Under this proposal, developing a pathway will coincide with the comprehensive advising process. Student Outreach & Success (SOS) advisors will walk students through the Navigate system, exploring career options by aligning student interests with their individual goals through the Virginia Educational Wizard.

Once enrolled, students will have an enhanced student support system resulting from their initial connections with college personnel. SOS staff, student services counselors, and members of the college’s Fox Central team will be assigned as student advocates or mentors for all newly enrolled students. This team of advocates will utilize a variety of tools to remain in contact with the students. Among those are SAILS (until December 2018), NUDGE email and text alerts, and regular contacts through college email, text and phone. Until Navigate’s Early Alert system and Advisor Dashboards are available in early Spring, MECC will utilize its internally developed Tableau system to track and report issues and/or contacts made with students following the end of SAILS availability. Because only the Financial Aid offices can monitor notes entered by the Blackboard Financial Aid Services Dashboards, any notes signifying follow-up is needed will be referred to the SOS center by members of the college’s Financial Aid team. Likewise, college staff will be reminded frequently

to refer students in need of academic or other support assistance to Fox Central's SOS or Student Services departments.

Outcomes: Mountain Empire Community College’s Student Success and Enrollment Management Plan has four principle outcomes. The success of these outcomes will be measured by the key performance indicators listed below:

<p>Outcome 1: First-year students will gain and apply knowledge of MECC’s terminology and processes upon entry.</p>
<p><i>Key Performance Indicators:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of terminology and processes required of a first-year student will be measured in a pretest in Fox Orientation and a posttest in SDV. The value-added significance of this assessment will reflect a 5% or more improvement in pre vs. post scores. • Student satisfaction surveys will reflect 80% or more of all new students are “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with their onboarding experiences.
<p>Outcome 2: Students will utilize MECC’s structured advising processes.</p>
<p><i>Key Performance Indicators:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A minimum of 3 encounters/interactions will be documented in the College’s Tableau system between students/advisors/staff each semester during FTIC students’ first year of enrollment. • 75% or more student advisees will indicate on the Survey of Entering Student Engagement (SENSE) that they are “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with MECC’s academic advising services.
<p>Outcome 3: Students will create a comprehensive educational plan that fits with their interests, skills, and values during their first academic year.</p>
<p><i>Key Performance Indicator:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 75% of FTIC students will have a defined educational plan within SIS and/or Navigate during the first 30 credit hours of college studies.
<p>Outcome 4: Students will achieve continued, measurable progress toward timely completion of academic and career goals through their self-identified educational plan.</p>
<p><i>Key Performance Indicators:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 70% of first-time, full-time students entering Spring 2019, and subsequently, will achieve at least a 2.0 average during each term of their freshman year. • 4% increase in first time, full time students completing 2/3 of attempted credits in their first semester with a GPA that is greater than or equal to 2.0. • 5% increase in persistence rates of first-time, full-time students by Spring 2020.

Table 1: Outcomes & Key Performance Indicators

Part 2: Detailed Plan. In the following table, list the components required to implement the strategy, the funds that will be allocated to support the implementation of each component, and the performance indicators for each component. Colleges may supplement funding from the tuition increase with other college resources.

Problem Identified	Implementation Steps	Who is responsible?	Timeline: When will activity occur?	Budget: How much funding will be allocated to support the component parts of the strategy? Please indicate if expenditure of funds is ongoing.
<i>New students applying for admission to MECC often find themselves wandering from building to building across campus to complete the processes of admission, financial aid, placement testing, obtaining a student ID, locating an advisor, and other requirements for new students.</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish “one stop” FOX Central by moving necessary entities into a central location. 2. Develop a formalized onboarding process in the One-Stop as a single point of entry for all students. 3. The college will implement new student orientation (FOX) sessions. 	<i>Dean of Enrollment Services & Financial Aid; Dean of Student Services; Facilities and college administration</i>	<i>Fall 2018</i>	<i>\$300,000 - renovation of Holton Hall; FOX orientation support</i>
<i>Inadequate Signage</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Acquire digital signage for all entry areas 2. Design and install non-digital signage that is consistent in design and messaging 	<i>Deans for Enrollment Services, Financial Aid & Student Services; Print Shop and college administration</i>	<i>Fall 2018</i>	<i>\$65,000 - signage</i>
<i>Inconsistent communication and messaging related to college processes</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Standardize terminology and processes of enrollment for all students 2. Provide training to faculty and staff in the use of consistent terminology 3. Incorporate identified college-specific terminology and processes into advising sessions, SDV 100 and summer FOX orientation sessions 4. Instructors will include an overview of the syllabus, exam schedule, college-specific terminology and LMS on day one of each course. 	<i>Vice President of Academic Affairs & Workforce Solutions and VP Staff; Faculty & Staff</i>	<i>Fall 2018 and ongoing</i>	<i>Daily operational costs</i>

<p><i>The quality and intensity of advising services provided to students is inconsistent</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create a student advising checklist, which will be mailed to the student upon acceptance. 2. Develop a comprehensive advising handbook for both faculty and students, including an advising checklist for advisors. 3. Require all new students to participate in an initial advising session in FOX Central's SOS Center. 4. Provide college-wide professional development on advising. 5. Implement software (Tableau or Navigate) that will allow advisors to document interactions with advisees to ensure consistency in advising. 6. Develop an outcomes-based evaluation and assessment for advising services. 	<p>Dean of Student Services, VP of Academics</p>	<p>Fall 2018 and ongoing</p>	<p>\$20,000 - Professional Development; Development of Handbook</p>
<p><i>Students often change programs of study without considering the implications to financial aid and their time to completion.</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Require student utilization of the career planner tools (Wizard, Navigate, etc.) during initial advising session and/or FOX Orientation to match student interests to careers. 2. Using career interest inventory results, students will create a written comprehensive educational plan, with the assistance of their advisors. 3. The college will refine its guided pathways in order to decrease time-to-completion and aid student progression through a program. 4. The college will market opportunities for students to each credit for prior learning and experience, i.e. Credits2Careers, CAEL PLA standards. 5. Create an "Advising Matters" page on the college website, which includes career and transfer information. 	<p>Dean of Student Services, VP of Academics</p>	<p>Beginning Fall 2018 and ongoing</p>	<p>\$8,000 - Update of College website and advising and marketing materials</p>

<p>The persistence rate of students from Fall to Spring and Fall to Fall is less than targeted goals.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The college will utilize SAILS, Tableau and Navigate to monitor student progress and attendance, flagging students for follow-up as needed. 2. The college will require students to meet with their Advisors mid-semester during their first two semesters to discuss their progress in terms of their self-identified educational plans. 3. The college will utilize Ad Astra Platinum Analytics to determine optimum course schedules to meet student needs. 4. The college will extend the operating hours of its Student Support Services Center (tutoring, supplemental instruction, etc.) to serve students in the evening. 	<p>Dean of Student Services and Director of Student Support Services</p>	<p>Fall 2018 and ongoing</p>	<p>\$12,000 - Extended operational hours for tutoring and supplemental instruction (ongoing)</p>
<p>Pilot projects are improving student success, but resource limitations prevent taking "to scale"</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Revamp Quick-Start program to accommodate all students attempting to enroll after the first-day of class 2. Update FAST Assessment and revise remediation for those who fall below a score of 70. 3. Add component to 2-day SDV 100 to include periodic follow-up contacts by SDV faculty to students in their SDV sections throughout the semester. 	<p>Dean of Student Services, VP of Academics, Faculty</p>	<p>Fall 2018 and ongoing</p>	<p>\$3,500 - Release time for faculty to revamp Quick-Start curricula and FAST Assessment</p>
<p>Intensive professional development is not being provided to prepare personnel for changing job roles and reduced staff levels.</p>	<p>Provide professional development and cross-training for all key personnel</p>	<p>VP Staff</p>	<p>Fall 2018 to Spring 2019</p>	<p>\$12,000 - skills related professional development expenses (ongoing)</p>
<p>There is an anticipated gap in the use of early alert tools between SAILS and Navigate.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide professional development for advisors, coaches, and faculty on the use of the college's Tableau system 2. Encourage the use of other forms of contact during the gap 3. Prepare advisors, coaches and faculty to utilize Navigate when it becomes available 	<p>Dean of Student Services & Staff</p>	<p>Fall 2018 to Spring 2019</p>	<p>\$1,200 - Tableau system and training</p>
<p>Need to gather data to evaluate success of implementation of student success and enrollment management plan; modify and improve processes as needed</p>	<p>Gather feedback, evaluate success outcomes, make adjustments to plan as needed</p>	<p>VP of Academic Affairs & Institutional Research analyst</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Daily operational costs</p>

FY 2019 Student Success Plans should be submitted to the Chancellor's Office by August 31, 2018.