

Mountain Empire Community College

Program Advisory Committee Handbook



MECC, a two-year, fully accredited, comprehensive community college, is devoted to serving the educational needs of its community. The College works in a cooperative effort with local industries, businesses, and governmental agencies to prepare citizens in our region for employment. More students from the service region (Lee County, City of Norton, Scott County, Wise County, and a portion of Dickenson County) attend MECC than any other college in Virginia.

Located on a 95-acre campus, MECC boasts approximately 3,600 students annually pursuing programs that lead to certificates and degrees, as well as professional and personal development. Educational opportunities are provided for learners of all ages. The College offers a comprehensive program that recognizes the individual differences of each student.

Students select MECC to gain skills to prepare for employment, to upgrade skills in their current jobs, and to retrain to enter other employment fields. Students planning to transfer to a four-year college or university also select MECC. The cost of tuition is very competitive in comparison with other colleges. Day and evening classes are offered at MECC, both on and off campus. A variety of distance learning opportunities are available. MECC provides a comprehensive developmental studies program for students. Tutorial assistance is also available through Student Support Services. Financial aid is available to all qualified students. The College operates under the philosophy that no student should be denied the opportunity for a post-secondary education due solely to a lack of financial resources.

The quality of MECC's educational programs is evidenced by the success of MECC graduates, both in the workplace for those who complete occupational/technical programs and success in four-year colleges and universities for those who complete transfer programs.

MECC's future has never been brighter. Dedicated to excellence is not just a slogan at MECC--it is a way of life.

AN EXPLANATION OF THE ADMISSION POLICY

Individuals are eligible for admission to Mountain Empire Community College if they are high school graduates or the equivalent, or if they are eighteen years of age or older and able to benefit academically from study at the community college, as demonstrated by assessment in reading, writing, and mathematics. Minimum scores are noted in the chart below. Colleges may allow students who are in their final semester of high school or home school to enroll in summer courses. These students must provide documentation of graduation in order to enroll in subsequent semesters. Exceptions to this policy may be made by the college president only for documented reasons.

	VPT
Reading	EDE 10
Writing	EDE 10
Math	MDE 10

While the above applies to most programs, it should be noted that some programs incorporate a selective admission process.

MECC reserves the right to evaluate and document special cases and to refuse or revoke admission if the college determines that the applicant or student poses a threat, is a potential danger, is significantly disruptive to the college community, or if such refusal or revocation is considered to be in the best interest of the college. MECC also reserves the right to refuse admission for applicants that have been expelled or suspended from, or determined to be a threat, potential danger, or significantly disruptive, by another college. Students whose admission is revoked after enrollment must be given due process.

Mission Statement

Mountain Empire Community College's mission is to provide our region with accessible, quality higher education, workforce training, and community programs to ensure an educated population and globally competitive workforce.

Mountain Empire Community College's mission is fulfilled through the following avenues:

General Education: Civic Engagement, Critical Thinking, Professional Readiness, Quantitative Literacy, Scientific Literacy, and Written Communication.

Career -Technical Education: The career and technical education programs meet the increasing demand for technicians, professionals, and a skilled workforce.

Transfer Education: The transfer education program, which includes freshman and sophomore courses in arts and sciences and pre-professional education, allows students to transfer into baccalaureate degree programs at four-year colleges and universities.

Developmental Studies: Developmental courses are offered to correct deficiencies in basic areas, such as English, reading, and mathematics, and to prepare students who have not had the required course prerequisites for admission to specific programs.

Dual Enrollment: Dual enrollment courses allow high-achieving students to meet the requirements for high school graduation while simultaneously earning college credit.

Distance Education: Distance education courses and programs offer accessibility through a number of delivery modes, to include the internet, video, and off-campus locations.

Student Services: The College provides programs, services, and resources that facilitate college access, enhance student success, develop career readiness, promote student leadership, and provide opportunities for student engagement.

Workforce Development: Workforce development encompasses credit and non-credit training to meet workforce needs and promote economic development through programs, customized training, and on-going workshops.

Community Services: College facilities and personnel support the cultural and educational needs of the region through cultural events, workshops, meetings, lectures, conferences, seminars, community projects, and service learning.

Vision Statement

Mountain Empire Community College's vision is to be recognized by our community as the leader in preparing our region's educated workforce.

Mountain Empire Community College will pursue its vision by acquiring the following traits:

Teaching will be characterized by the use of the best practices for knowledge and skills to be developed, including the involvement of businesses, the use of hands-on interactive mediums, and opportunities for real-life applications of knowledge and skills.

Instructional delivery will employ non-traditional methods with emphasis on the use of technology. Faculty members will be facilitators of learning, mentors, and role models, exhibiting to students the importance of knowledge, competence, and a thirst for learning.

The College will be the major provider of workforce training and a leader in community development, partnering with businesses, educational institutions, non-profits, and government to strengthen the competitiveness of the region for attracting and retaining jobs.

The College will be an exemplary model of service and involvement to our students and the community, promoting economic development, appreciation of culture, and the quality of living in rural, southwest Virginia.

College Values

Mountain Empire Community College is committed to these values:

- Community and Cultural Preservation
- Creativity and Innovation
- Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity
- Honesty, integrity, and Trust
- Leadership and Service
- Learning
- Student Success
- Teamwork and Communication

WHY USE ADVISORY COMMITTEES?

An advisory committee is organized to advise educators about the world of work. The committee is composed of a group of persons with specific occupational knowledge and expertise.

Advisory committees are important to the establishment and maintenance of up-to-date educational programs. Changes in technology and in business and industry operations have increased the need for effective communication between education and the world of work.

An advisory committee of interested, competent, and concerned citizens is the most productive and effective method for involving the community in education. It is a vital link between the community and Mountain Empire Community College.

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE?

The vice president of academic affairs and workforce solutions will serve as liaison between the advisory committee and the college administration. The committee's function is to advise and assist in program planning, not to establish or direct policy. Within the area of its educational, occupational/technical specialty, the committee may:

Assist MECC in the establishment of occupational/technical programs and curricula by:

- Helping to identify present and future occupational needs within the College's region and the skills and knowledge required by prospective employees;
- Advising the College concerning employment practices; specific certification and licensure requirements; job-entry educational levels required by business, industry, government, and the professions; standards and regulations relating to student employment; and occupational placement of graduates; and
- Reviewing and submitting recommendations regarding specific program and curriculum proposals and specialized equipment and facility requirements of new or innovative programs.

Assist with recruitment of students by:

- Publicizing the College's programs and employment opportunities;
- Encouraging student scholarships and other financial assistance;

- Promoting understanding and support of MECC and its programs by aiding in the establishment and maintenance of liaison between the College and regional business, industry, professional organizations and agencies; and
- Aiding MECC in the conduct of regional studies and surveys.

Participate in the evaluation of MECC’s programs as they relate to the educational and occupational needs of the region.

MEMBERSHIP

The minimum size of any one committee will be six persons and the maximum will vary with the nature of the program(s) served. The membership will be representative of area businesses, industries, governmental agencies, and the professions who would benefit from the services of graduates of the respective programs. A representative from each new major industry moving into the area should be appointed to an appropriate advisory committee at the earliest opportunity. Full or part-time faculty or staff may serve as ex-officio, non-voting members of an advisory committee.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Each member is expected to:

- Attend meetings regularly, participate in the committee discussions, and serve on sub-committees when requested;
- Study carefully any problems that come before the advisory committee; and
- Keep the college administration and faculty informed of new developments in business and industry.

APPOINTMENT

The dean will review the qualifications and recommend new committee members to the vice president of academic affairs and workforce solutions. The vice president will, in turn, recommend to the President who will recommend to the College Board for approval.

ORIENTATION OF NEW MEMBERS

The dean and the committee chair are responsible for the orientation of new members. Orientation should occur prior to the new member's first meeting. The committee's purpose, the College's Mission, and the role of members should be included. A tour of College facilities and introductions of appropriate college personnel should also be included.

LOSS OF MEMBERSHIP

Membership should be reviewed annually by the appropriate division dean. Any member who does not attend regularly should be contacted to ascertain continued interest and be replaced if interest has ceased. Notification in writing will be sent by the appropriate dean regarding loss of membership.

CHAIR

The advisory committee elects a lay member to serve as chair. The chair presides at meetings, works closely with college officials, calls meetings, plans agendas, appoints subcommittees, and ensures that the annual program evaluation is complete. The chair’s term of office shall be no more than two years.

VICE-CHAIR

A vice-chair is elected to serve in the absence of the chair. The vice-chair’s term of office shall be no more than two years.

SECRETARY

A committee may elect a recording secretary from its membership or ask a non-voting college representative to serve as secretary. The secretary will perform the usual functions of announcing meetings, communicating information, and recording and mailing copies of the minutes to all committee members and the dean. Minutes of each formal meeting will be kept on file by the dean.

MEETINGS

It is important to establish the date, time, and place of meetings early so that members can mark their schedules accordingly. Although the number of meetings to be held each year is dependent on the specific situation and need, at least two meetings are recommended.

AGENDA

Meetings should be conducted with a planned agenda. The responsibility for the development of the agenda lies with the committee chair and the appropriate dean. The agenda should be sent to each member with the meeting notification and any material necessary for the meeting. This gives the members the opportunity to come to the meeting prepared to take an active part in the discussion.

The contributions of the Advisory Committee and the individuals who volunteer to serve as members are invaluable to Mountain Empire Community College. The entire college community – administration, faculty, staff, and students – greatly appreciate the time, commitment, and experience contributed by each Advisory Committee member.