Highline College Institutional Effectiveness Department Report

2020-2021

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| **Department information** | |
| Department name | Mathematics, Engineering, Science, Achievement (MESA) |
| Date this report was completed | 28 July 2020 |
| Staff who contributed to this report | Timur Kuzu |
| Department Mission statement  (if applicable) |  |

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| **Taking stock of 2019-2020** |
| **Describe 2-5 major accomplishments for 2019-2020. For each accomplishment, identify the related objective or indicator from the Mission Fulfillment Report (MFR), and describe the evidence you used assess this accomplishment** |
| **#1-Increased communication and outreach efforts on & off campus.**  **Core Theme #3-Objectives 1 & 2:**  During the 2019-2020 academic year, the MESA program focused on establishing new connections and strengthening existing connections with campus and community partners. We created a new website which included more resources, easier navigation, and added a personal touch by including the faces and backgrounds of all MESA staff. The MESA Director also revised and updated marketing materials like new Tri-fold brochures, a new e-application process to track data more efficiently, and increased collaboration with multiple campus and community programs for STEM events and trips. Since the new e-application process was implemented, potential students can now apply without having to physically be on campus or adjust their schedules. A 40% increase in applications, a significant increase with running start students, and an increase from more high schools throughout the district has shown this to be a benefit to the program. The program has also started participating in local STEM related events by having student ambassadors volunteer and connect by sharing their experiences in the program and at Highline. The MESA student ambassadors relay feedback and suggestions based off these interactions to improve our efforts in connecting with the community. Core Theme #2, measure 2.2B has been a great indicator to identify trends with students applying for MESA as well as tracking which STEM Majors are preferred.  **#2- Increased student and faculty engagement by modifying learning environment options.**  **Core Theme #1-Objective 1, Core Theme #2-Objective 1:**  During the first year of the new incoming directors’ assignment, he generated surveys for both students and faculty to gain insight and feedback. This information was used to identify positive and negative trends, best practices, and lessons learned from previous years. The MESA director then conducted one-on-one meetings with faculty to discuss MESA improvements and gain their trust by including them in the process. Based off this feedback, we implemented a program to allow STEM Faculty more access to students and the ability to utilize the MESA Student Center for office hours in which they can advise and connect with the students. This was well received by the students who expressed a comfort by faculty coming to them and establishing rapport outside of the classroom environment. Since implementation faculty interest and volunteering with MESA students has increased and a new rotating schedule is now an option. By offering a space that allows students and faculty to engage and develop meaningful relationships, this will have a positive effect on the faculty/student relationship and improve student academic performance. Students will now be able seek out advice from peers and faculty, which will directly impact their performance in the classroom environment and give them a sense of community. A climate within the MESA Program is essential by providing incoming students with a family atmosphere, which is critical during their first year on campus.  MESA is a state program that serves underrepresented, first generation, low income students and mimics Highline Colleges Mission Statement. By engaging our community, developing meaningful relationships, and highlighting diversity; we are able to prepare our students for the upcoming challenges of a STEM Career. The MESA Staff will be able to utilize these meaningful relationships and ensure the students are aware of deadlines and requirements relating to their academic pathway. We currently utilize SMS to track student data for student enrollments in the program, it is up to each college to track the remaining data separately. With the upcoming CTC Link migration, MESA will be able to synchronize data collection efforts with other MESA Programs and identify trends within specific demographics more efficiently. |
| **Department strengths** |
| The MESA Program is continually trying to improve the experience of each student at Highline by improving the climate so each student feels they are part of a family. By utilizing both student ambassadors and STEM Faculty volunteers, we are providing an environment that supports and challenges each student to excel in the classroom and in life. MESA also provides opportunities for students to expand their networks, make informed decisions about campus selections, and improve interpersonal communication skills. The program provides students with STEM specific advising that aligns with STEM industry opportunities and acceptance into competitive higher education programs. |
| **Department challenges** |
| One major challenge for the MESA Program at Highline College is the lack of a staff to support students. The program is designed to assist students with personalized advising and prepare them to be competitive applicants to 4-year university STEM programs. Due to limited funding from the state, the MESA Program has limited flexibility with putting a support staff in place. This will require the program director to fulfill duty requirements that are time consuming which could negatively affect other areas of the program.  Another challenge is maintaining communication with students during the current Covid-19 Health Pandemic. This is extremely challenging as most first-generation STEM students require additional instruction with complex curriculum. The removal of the in-person peer-to-peer community that MESA provides will challenge students to find belonging and negatively impact their grades. The program usually provides a space where students can interact and motivate each other to overcome challenges. This will be difficult to navigate and would benefit greatly with the addition of a new student support specialist who can dedicate more time to students on a daily basis. |
| **Areas you would like to improve** |
| #1 Academic advising for MESA students!  #2 Community outreach programs  #3 Improved data collection and tracking  #4 Virtual resources (Canvas, Workshops, Webinars, etc)  #5 Increased support for the ASEM Program |

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| **2020 - 2021 work plan development** |
| **Goals:** Identify 3-6 goals for your department for 2020-2021. Each goal should be associated with the core theme objective or indicator that best relates to the desired outcome of your work. In parentheses after each of your goals, describe the evidence you plan to use to assess the achievement of that goal.  Not every objective or indicator will have an associated goal from your department, and you are welcome to delete the Core Themes/Objectives/Indicators that are NOT directly related to your goals for 2020-2021. |
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| **Suggestions to improve this report or process** |
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