

**MOHEGAN**  
Community College  
Norwich, Connecticut

Mohegan Community College

# SELF-STUDY

1992

Prepared for:  
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# FORWARD

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In the 1982 Self-Study Report, Mohegan Community College portrayed itself as a "College in Transition." After almost five years of relative administrative stability, we find ourselves even more accurately fitting that description. In July 1991, after serving as president for five years, President John Hurd resigned to accept another position. The Dean of Instruction, Dianne Williams, was appointed to serve as Acting President while the national search for a new president was conducted. Mary Ann Bianchi, a division chair from Manchester Community College, was appointed as Acting Dean of Instruction for this same period. In June 1992, the Board of Trustees cancelled the presidential search and appointed Dr. Booker T. DeVaughn of Northwestern Community College as President of the new institution to be formed by the merger of Mohegan Community College and Thames Valley State Technical College. Dianne Williams was appointed President of Quinebaug Valley Community College but was asked to remain at Mohegan to assist Dr. DeVaughn and manage the Instructional Division until a search could be completed for a new Dean of Instruction. Due to the State's fiscal crisis, the College laid off staff, left vacancies unfilled, and experienced the retirement of four senior faculty.

An even greater transition than that caused by personnel changes will result from the legislative mandate to merge Mohegan Community College with Thames Valley State Technical College beginning July 1, 1992. The administrative merger is to be completed by January 1, 1993. This action will create a comprehensive college to serve southeastern Connecticut.

The College does not view these challenges as threats or negatives, but rather as opportunities. The College has fully supported the plan to merge the two named institutions because we believe the new comprehensive institution will benefit students, our community, and both the State as an entity and its individual taxpayers.

Mohegan Community College, as it exists during this self-evaluation process, has shown substantial enrollment growth; initiated new programs and services; established new sites and community relationships; developed an academic division structure, new governance system, and planning process; became involved in the planning done by the community to meet the drastic changes in the local economy; and continued to meet its institutional mission. The selection of a permanent president and the creation of a new merged institution will position us to even better meet both our mission as an educational institution and the needs of the citizens of Southeastern Connecticut.

Although the process of self-study involves all members of a college community, special recognition must be given to the Self-Study Task Force very ably chaired by Patricia Sauter. She was

) faced first with new standards and then continuing on task with the Self-Study while merger implementation began. The Task Force was comprised of Shirley Perry, Carol Kaszubski, Carol Arsenault, Sarah Flynn, Meredith Trinqué, John Whitman, Matthew Hightower, Ann Branchini, Terry Enos, Barbara Driscoll, Mary Kao, and Linda Crootof. Madge Manfred served as editor of the document working to weave the writings of the members of the Task Force into one document that speaks as if written by one. Sue Moore then took the final draft and skillfully produced this final printed document.

Dianne Williams  
Acting President

# INTRODUCTION

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## SELF-STUDY METHODOLOGY

The Self-Study Report was prepared specifically for the accreditation visit by the NEASC. However, much of the information used to address the standards was provided by our institutional plan which is the product of our planning and governance process.

The reaccreditation Self-Study Task Force was first called by President John Hurd September 25, 1990. The original Task Force was made up of 10 volunteers. From those volunteers a chair was elected. It then became the role of the chair to solicit additional membership. By October the Task Force was complete. It had fourteen members: The chair, the editor and one member for each standard who would assume the role of a subcommittee chair. The ground rules for selection of the subcommittee chair were established - largely that no subcommittee chair could have a vested interest in the standard undertaken and that the chairs would solicit assistance from experts in their area - deans, directors, faculty, student alumni, and Foundation Board members. The self-study was to be an objective and inclusive process. It was to provide the institution a healthy and helpful opportunity for self-examination, be candid in its descriptions and appraisals and realistic in its projections. It was further agreed that we would develop a process that would allow us the opportunity to merge, to some degree, our self-study with our institutional assessment plan

and incorporate the self-study process clearly into our long range institutional planning.

By January 1991, the President's Cabinet and the Planning and Policy Advisory Committee had been notified of the Task Force membership, subcommittee chairs were soliciting membership on committees, and work had begun. Outlines for each standard were submitted and discussed May 1, 1991. It should be noted that various methods for data collection were used throughout the process: Collection of documents, newspaper surveys, telephone surveys, interviews, and in-house surveys to students, faculty and staff. The primary purpose of the surveys was to assess community and institutional sentiment about our effectiveness.

The Fall 1991 semester brought changes. The new standards were introduced and the Task Force voted to recommend to the President that we utilize these new standards in the preparation of our report. The President accepted the Task Force recommendations and the chair of the Special Activities subcommittee was excused. All information that had been collected in this area was merged into the body of information on Student Services and Programs and Instruction. Rough drafts were completed December 12, 1991.

During the first two months of the Spring 1992 semester, the President, Self-Study Chair and Subcommittee Chairs met with Deans and Directors. At these individual meetings, the rough drafts were reviewed for accuracy. Each rough draft was then amended and forwarded to the Chair of the Reaccreditation Self-Study Task Force

for the initial writing of the document. The first draft of the report was completed by May 1.

At the May Division meetings, the content of the Self-Study, particularly the strengths and weaknesses of the institution, was discussed. During this process each staff member was given the opportunity to raise questions, provide further input, request modifications, and make editing suggestions. As always, we provided each member of the Mohegan Community College staff with the opportunity to be part of the process. The visits to the Division meetings were viewed not only by the staff but also by the Self-Study Task Force as beneficial.

## **SELF-STUDY ISSUES**

Mohegan Community College, like many other publicly funded institutions, has suffered from unpredictable budget fluctuations for years. Orderly planning has been almost impossible, staff morale has rocketed up and down, dislocations have periodically wrenched the College, our credibility with the community has been weakened, and, most importantly, students have had the open door closed in their faces. Just one example of the topsy-turvy existence we have led can be seen in our Travel-Tourism Program. After developing the program, gaining approval from the Byzantine maze of boards and commissions, and hiring a program leader, the program was cut and the director laid-off during one of the State's most severe financial crises. The good news is that we have been able to revive the program and hire another director. The point,



however, is that much of our energy is squandered during these manic-depressive cycles, and Mohegan has never been able to fulfill its true potential for serving the community. References to the problems caused by unpredictable funding surface repeatedly in this report.

A second issue derives from the emphasis on assessment in the new standards. While Mohegan Community College has had an Institutional Assessment Plan in place since 1990, we soon realized that in order to meet this new priority work would begin immediately on issues of academic assessment. A senior faculty member, having received a distinguished service award and funding, volunteered to develop and coordinate activities within the Instructional Division to facilitate the formulation of assessment models, as well as goals and objectives for our General Studies and Liberal Arts and Sciences Program. Career Programs had already established goals and objectives as a requirement for the periodic reviews of each program by the State. This work culminated in an off-campus professional day and a report outlining newly adopted and integrated goals and objectives. While we have worked very diligently on the model and there is philosophical consensus among the faculty about assessment, we are only beginning to construct models for measurement. The professional day put the Division on track, work has begun in earnest, but there is still much to do.

The self-study process has afforded Mohegan Community College the opportunity for institution-wide introspection. We have looked back at our history and with great pride acknowledged the scope of

our many accomplishments. We have grown and maintained, during that growth and maturation process, a serious and unquestionable commitment to our mission as a community college in Southeastern Connecticut.

No doubt the years ahead will present challenges and frustrations. We will need to continuously monitor resources, institutional effectiveness, and the rapidly changing community needs. The economic climate, the political arena, and the uncertainty of stabilization in either area, has forced us to plan cautiously and to learn how to reallocate resources to maximize efficiency and institutional effectiveness. While these factors will undoubtedly bring changes in the types of services we provide, they cannot and will not affect the institutional commitment to accessible, quality education in a comprehensive community college setting.