Institutional Effectiveness Process: Key Definitions

MCC Office of Enterprise Project Management and Institutional Effectiveness (EPMO-IE)
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**Baseline** - An existing (or current) value of a measure. For example, the baseline value for completion time in a certain academic program might be quoted as 5 semesters (2.5 years).

**Closed Loop** - A method of process control that operates by comparing actual performance to desired outcomes (targets) and draws conclusive analysis of the performance relative to the target and enterprise environmental factors and organizational process assets.

**Data** - Information that is used to inform decision making. Data are most often quantitative (numerical), such as obtained from Key Performance Indicators, but may also be qualitative (anecdotal). Decision making of any type should be supported by a rubric that specifies how the data will be employed.

**Goal** - The intended results, expressed in general terms, which must be accomplished to fulfill the mission of the College. Goals are supported by objectives, which are more precise descriptions of specific items that must be achieved to support each goal.

**Institutional Effectiveness** - An ongoing, systematic, integrated, institution wide, research based planning process aimed at helping the College achieve its mission and goals and assisting in continuous improvement of the College’s operations.

**Institutional Priority** - A high-level group of initiatives that will be a major focus during a planning cycle. The institutional priorities in MCC’s Year 1 strategic plan are Alignment, Major Implementations, Strategic Planning/Effectiveness, Business Processes, and Marketing/Foundation. Each Institutional Priority is supported by a set of individual initiatives. MCC Institutional Priorities appear under “Institutional Priorities” in WEAVE.

**Key Performance Indicator (KPI)** - A standardized measurement that is used in decision making. Common KPIs include fall-to-spring persistence, fall-to-fall persistence, and three-year completion rate. MCC KPIs appear in WEAVE projects as a unique collection under “Strategic Initiatives.”

**Objective** - A results-oriented outcome statement that directly supports an institutional goal. An objective is stated in precise terms and is directly measurable. Objectives should be SMART – Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time bound.

**Operational Planning** - The operational planning process allows for the development of objectives and action plans to achieve the College's mission and goals through the development of Institutional Effectiveness Plans (IE Plans) by MCC planning units (usually departments).

**Measure** - A method of determining the completion status of an activity. For example, a measure of an activity meant to increase enrollment might be the number of students enrolled in classes.

**Planning Unit** - A functional unit (an autonomous, organizationally defined department, office, or program) with specific responsibilities that uniquely contribute to the mission of the College.

**Planning Unit Manager (PUM)** - The person who is assigned the duty of developing and providing leadership in implementing IE Plans for the planning unit.

**Strategic Planning** - The process which establishes the essential major directions for the College and creates the framework within which other planning can occur.

**Target** - The desired outcome or condition as a result of an operational process (or tactic). As example, a campus may have a target of increasing enrollment by 5%.