



**Marine Corps University**

**Institutional Research, Assessment and Planning**

**(IRAP)**

**Annual Institutional Effectiveness Plan**

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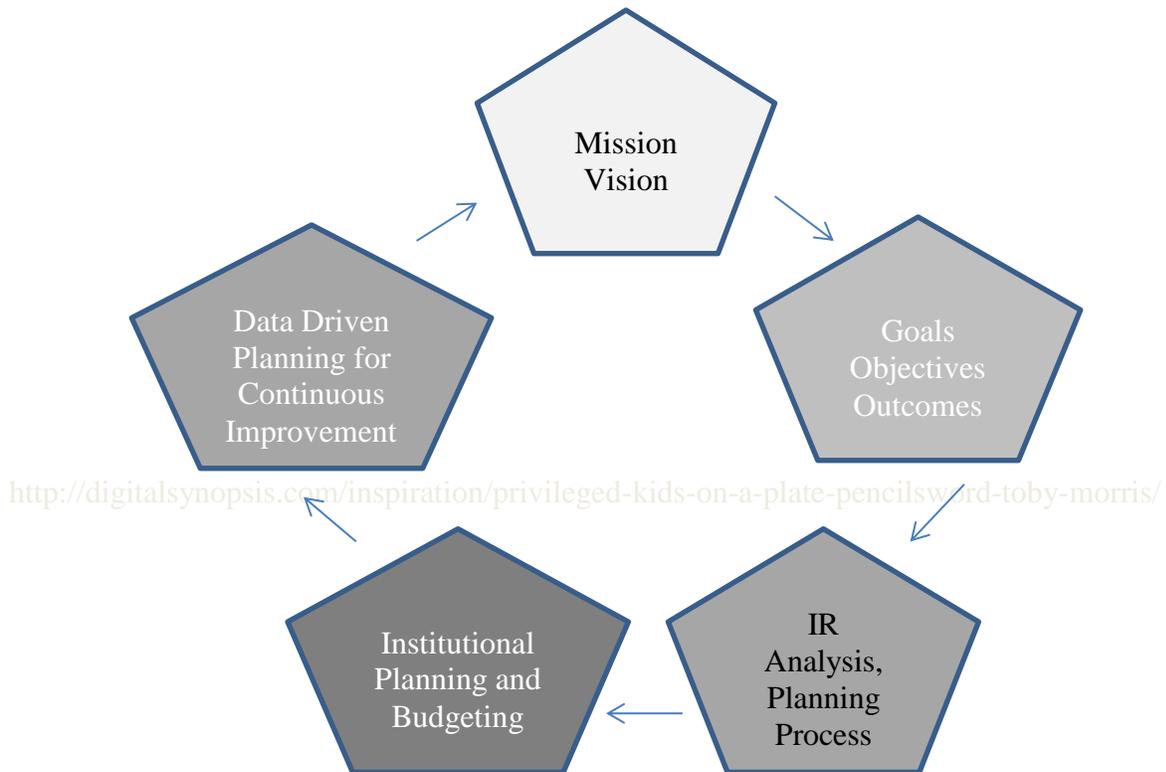
## Table of Contents

<b>Section I: Introduction and Overview</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Section II: Executing the Mission</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Section III: Developing Organizational Goals Supporting the Mission</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Section IV: Institutional Planning and Assessment Processes and Measures</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Section V: Summary</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Appendix A: The MCU Planning, Assessment and Budgeting Cycle</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Appendix B: The Assessment Process</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Appendix C: The Individual Unit's IE Plan/Report (4CM) Example</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Appendix D: The Process for Goal-Setting</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Appendix E: The List of Annual Direct and Indirect Assessments</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>Glossary</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>Endnotes</b>	<b>38</b>

## SECTION I: Introduction and Overview

The Marine Corps University (MCU) Institutional Effectiveness (IE) process integrates the methods and approaches for assessment, planning and budgeting — the critical components to achievement of educational goals as depicted in Appendix A. As structured, it recognizes the requirements of a robust IE process while acknowledging the structure of a professional military education (PME) system. The systematic collection of data supporting the IE process, as presented in Appendix B, is achieved through an ongoing cycle of resource allocation, assessment, data analysis and academic intervention all aimed at continuous improvement. This model is guided by the mission, vision, goals and objectives set forth in the Strategic Plan. The effectiveness of the institution in achieving those goals and objectives is evidenced through the annual assessment reports provided through the IE plans — the Four Column Matrix and Director’s reports submitted by the five academic schoolhouses, the distance learning programs and the eighteen administrative and educational support organizations of MCU (See Tables 1 and 2). This systematic process is detailed below in the MCU Institutional Effectiveness Model, Figure 1.1.

**Figure 1.1: MCU Institutional Effectiveness Model**



The President’s Planning Council (PPC) is responsible for the monitoring and review of these elements and any requisite adjustments ensuring the integrity of oversight. Once institutional goals have been established, MCU engages in comprehensive measurement and evaluation to determine the level at which the goals have been met. This requires rigorous assessment of student learning outcomes, administrative and educational support services, research and community and public service relevant to the mission.

**Table 1: MCU Academic Organizations**

<b>Marine Corps University Academic Organizations</b>		
<b>School</b>	<b>Mission</b>	<b>Degrees Awarded</b>
<b>Marine Corps War College (MCWAR)</b>	Educates select military and civilian professionals to develop critical thinkers, military strategists, joint warfighters and strategic leaders who are prepared to meet the challenges of a complex and dynamic security environment	Master’s of Strategic Studies
<b>School of Advanced Warfighting (SAW)</b>	Develops lead planners and future commanders with the will and intellect to solve complex problems, employ operational art, and design/execute campaigns in order to enhance the Marine Corps’ ability to prepare for and fight wars.	Master’s of Operational Studies
<b>Command and Staff College (CSC)</b>	Provides graduate-level education and training in order to develop critical thinkers, innovative problem solvers, and ethical leaders who will serve as commanders and staff officers in service, joint, interagency, and multinational organizations confronting complex and uncertain security environments.	Master’s of Military Studies
<b>Expeditionary Warfare School (EWS)</b>	Educates and trains company grade Marine Air-Ground Task Force (MAGTF) officers to serve in an expeditionary environment.	
<b>Enlisted Professional Military Education (EPME)</b>	Provides progressive educational opportunities to improve leadership, sharpen critical-thinking skills, and deepen student understanding of warfighting concepts in distributed and joint environments. The goal is to create ethical and highly professional leaders capable of making sound decisions in complex operational situations.	
<b>College of Distance Education and Training</b>	Designs, develops, delivers, evaluates, manages and resources distance learning products and	

<b>(CDET)</b>	programs across the Marine Corps training and education continuum in order to increase operational readiness.	
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MCU’s commitment to the integrity and compliance of this planning and assessment process is demonstrated in the ongoing operations and through the documents detailing operational and long-term strategic goals including the Marine Corps University Strategic Plans 2011-2016, Strategic Plan 2012-2017, and the most recent Marine Corps University Strategic Plan 2016-2021. Additionally, input from external groups is critical to the process of assessment and planning as detailed in the model found in Appendix D. Some of the groups which influence MCU’s outcomes include the Southern Association for Colleges and Schools–Commission on Colleges (SACS-COC), the Office of the Commandant – USMC, federal agencies and organizations and accrediting bodies including the Process Accreditation for Joint Education (PAJE), the accrediting authority for education in the joint professional military education system. The system orchestrated through Institutional Research, Assessment and Planning (IRAP) is an internal process which coordinates the various organizations and data streams of MCU into a continuous process of improvement. The process generates findings which document institutional effectiveness and improvement.

**Table 2: MCU Administrative and Educational Support Organizations**

<b>Marine Corps University Administrative and Educational Support Unit Organizations</b>	
<b>Organization</b>	<b>Mission</b>
<b>Vice President – Academic Affairs (VPAA)</b>	Academic Support represents the administrative support team to include Student Services and Office of the Registrar, Faculty Development, Marine Corps Fellows, the Academic Chairs and Scholars, the Board of Visitors, the Leadership Communications Skills Center, Middle East Studies and the MAGTF Instructors Group.
<b>Vice President – Business Affairs (VPBA)</b>	The Business Affairs group represents the support team dedicated to administrative, physical and technical infrastructure development and maintenance which includes the Fiscal, Logistics, Information Technology and Administrative Services.
<b>Vice President – Educational Integration and Operational Planning (VPEIOP)</b>	The Educational Integration and Operational Planning group represents team responsible for institutional effectiveness, and operational and strategic planning. It is comprised of Institutional Research, Assessment and Planning and Policy and Operations.
<b>Vice President – Distance Learning (VPDL)</b>	The Distance Learning division is responsible for all education and training achieved through the distributed network of digital and blended learning resources for Marine Corps PME. It is also lead in educational

	technology for the entire University.
<b>Gray Research Center/Library of the Marine Corps – History Division (GRC-HD)</b>	The GRC and Library of the Marine Corps provide research and reference support to faculty and students. History Division, which includes the Archives of the Marine Corps, preserves, protects and publishes the history of the Marine Corps.
<b>Lejeune Leadership Institute (LLI)</b>	LLI develops leadership and ethics training and education for Marines and civilian Marines to facilitate the development of leaders firmly rooted in Marine Corps heritage of selfless service, core values and warfighting excellence.
<b>Center for Advanced Operational Culture Learning (CAOCL)</b>	CAOCL provides education and training solutions and serves as the proponent for capabilities related to operational culture and language familiarization for the Marine Corps.
<b>National Museum of the Marine Corps (NMMC)</b>	NMMC preserves the history of the Marine Corps by collecting and preserving artifacts that reflect the history of the Marine Corps, interpreting these artifacts in exhibitions for the public, offering educational programs, conducting research and supporting recruitment and education within the Marine Corps.

IRAP at MCU is responsible for five key aspects of the VPEIOP mission.

- a) The timely collection of relevant data to support analysis and decision-making.
- b) Organizing, monitoring and supporting coordinated effort to meet requirements for SACS reaffirmation initiatives and the on-going support for and implementation of the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) for the 5-year reaffirmation, “Strengthening Leadership Through Enhanced Creative Problem Solving.”
- c) Ensuring that MCU is in compliance with SACSCOC Core Requirement 2.5.
- d) Ensuring MCU is in compliance with SACSCOC Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1.1 - .5.
- e) Chapter 4 of MCU Academic Regulations Handbook pertaining to institutional effectiveness and the execution of the PPC is updated annually and submitted to VPAA for publication.

As provided for by SACS Core Requirement 2.5, Institutional Effectiveness,

“The institution engages in ongoing, integrated and institution-wide research-based planning and evaluation processes that incorporate a systematic review of institutional mission, goals, and outcomes; result in continuing improvement in institutional quality; and demonstrate the institution is effectively accomplishing its mission.”

### **MCU Mission**

Develop, deliver, and evaluate Professional Military Education and training through resident and distance learning programs in order to prepare leaders to meet the cultural,

ethical, and operational challenges of a complex security environment. Preserve, promote, and present the history and heritage of the Marine Corps.

### **Vision Statement**

Advance the Marine Corps' legacy of Warfighting excellence through an forward-thinking military academic institution that delivers world-class education to develop professional leaders.

### **Strategic Goals**

According to the 2016-2021 Strategic Plan, the goals of MCU are as follows:

1. **Goal 1 (Professional Learning)**: Conduct education and training to develop professionally competent individuals who think critically and solve complex problems creatively in a dynamic environment. *[VPAA Lead]*
2. **Goal 2 (Organizational Strength)**: Develop and maintain an effective, transparent, collaborative, and responsive organizational structure in order to foster a culture of continuous learning and improvement. *[VPEIOP Lead]*
3. **Goal 3 (Infrastructure and Technology)**: Provide state-of-the-art facilities and cutting edge technologies in order to facilitate Marine Corps University's innovative and global learning environment. *[VPBA Lead]*
4. **Goal 4 (Faculty and Staff Development)**: Strengthen faculty and staff development opportunities in order to promote teaching excellence, scholarship, and the sharing of knowledge. *[VPAA Lead]*
5. **Goal 5 (University Outreach)**: Leverage MCU's scholarship, research, publishing, stewardship, learning opportunities, and conferencing capabilities in order to strengthen the MCU brand and to support the Marine Corps, the broader national security audience, and the public. *[VPDL Lead]*

Table 3 below represents the Goals as outlined in the Strategic Plan and the organization(s) designated with responsibility for accomplishing the goals and their associated objectives.

Objectives associated with each of the strategic goals identified in the Strategic Plan 2012-2017 are relevant to the organizations' distinct mission and purpose within MCU. The Strategic Plan identifies targets for systematic evaluation and is foundational to the Institutional Effectiveness Plan. The data generated through this continuous review cycle ensures the necessary oversight and accountability which drives the accomplishment of the stated goals and objectives.

**Table 3: Strategic Plan Goals and Responsible Organizations\***

<b>Organization</b>	<b>GOAL 1</b>	<b>GOAL 2</b>	<b>GOAL 3</b>	<b>GOAL 4</b>	<b>GOAL 5</b>
<b>Vice President Academic Affairs</b>	√			√	
<b>Vice President Business Affairs</b>			√		
<b>Vice President Educational Integration and Operational Planning</b>		√			
<b>Vice President Distance Learning</b>					√

\*Associated Critical Tasks and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) currently under review for approval of PPC in April 2017.

### **Overview**

The SACS Principles of Accreditation Core Requirement 2.5 requires all member institutions to provide for ongoing, integrated and institution-wide research-based planning and evaluation processes. This plan, created in consultation with representation from across the Marine Corps University (MCU) community, articulates the process used by MCU to develop goals, objectives, critical tasks and key performance indicators (KPIs) and the roles of all MCU organizations in the assessment and evaluation process which is key to Institutional Effectiveness (IE). While each organization at MCU plays a role in the process, the responsibility for oversight in achieving IE goals is the unique responsibility of Institutional Research, Assessment and Planning (IRAP). This plan provides a step-by-step guide through the IE process as it is established here at MCU – the planning cycle, the university community’s methods of engagement, the outcomes of the process and the arc of decision-making and documentation as implemented at MCU.

The goal driving the development of this plan is straightforward: to describe the IE process transparently in order to promote the achievement of continuous improvement throughout MCU. In this regard, the entire spectrum of factors and events which contribute to IE will be explored. The development of goals, objectives, critical tasks, and KPIs supporting execution of the mission will be examined as will the process and methods used in institutional planning and assessment. Regulations, processing models and a comprehensive list of data collection and assessment methods will be included in this report.

Questions or suggestions regarding this plan should be submitted to Dr. Susan Johnston, Director, Institutional Research, Assessment and Planning, Marine Corps University, Breckinridge Hall, Quantico, VA 22134, [susan.johnston@usmcu.edu](mailto:susan.johnston@usmcu.edu).

## **SECTION II: Executing the Mission**

Marine Corps University (MCU) executes its strategic plan through a comprehensive process which engages all organizations in the mission, and vision set forth therein. The goals, which are then assigned to various responsible lead organizations, are further refined to objectives, critical tasks and KPIs. These objectives and related measures of effectiveness are reflected in the mission statements and goals of each of the responsible organizations. The outcomes identified and approved for each organization to accomplish, the measures used for assessment, the results of assessment and recommendations for further improvement are presented in the Four Column Matrix which is submitted annually as part of the Annual Assessment Report.

The organizations of MCU are expected to maintain and modify their mission statements and goals to accurately reflect the role their organization plays in accomplishing the MCU mission. Members of the President's Planning Council (PPC) monitor and evaluate the stated mission and goals of each organization to ensure compliance with the MCU strategic plan and goals.

Governance of MCU is achieved through oversight at all levels of the university from the Office of the President through to the organizations responsible for achieving the objectives supporting the accomplishment of the MCU mission. To ensure the goals and objectives throughout the organization are met, the office of Institutional Research, Assessment and Planning (IRAP) facilitates data collection at the institutional and organizational levels and submits it to the President, MCU and the PPC for evaluation. MCU's Board of Visitors (BOV) exercises oversight in an advisory capacity through semi-annual review of performance metrics.

IRAP is responsible for the systematic collection, analysis and dissemination of information supporting institutional effectiveness. Operating under the authority of the Vice President of Educational Integration and Operational Planning (VPEIOP) as the primary organization within MCU responsible for Institutional Effectiveness, IRAP's mandate is stated in the following Mission Statement.

### **Mission Statement of Institutional Research, Assessment and Planning**

*Institutional Research, Assessment and Planning serves as a resource to MCU engaging in the ongoing collection of information supporting systematic assessment and evaluation of both resident and nonresident programs. Included in this mission is the provision of research services which promote the use of relevant, timely and accessible data from which leaders can gain a deeper understanding of issues and conclusions that support decision-making, resource allocation and institutional effectiveness.*

### **SECTION III: Developing Organizational Goals Supporting the Mission**

Each organization within Marine Corps University (MCU) translates the goals and objectives associated with supporting the accomplishment of MCU's mission into critical tasks/KPIs leading to measurable outcomes that are accounted for through the Four Column Matrix. The Four Column Matrix is a reporting and planning tool that tracks performance based on specific assessment measures. As part of the strategic planning process, all organizations within MCU provide assessment information through the Four Column Matrix, which constitutes the annual Institutional Effectiveness (IE) Plan/Report. Appendix C offers a representative model of the detailed assessment information.

The outcomes and measures developed from objectives/critical tasks/KPIs are determined by the organizations and approved by review of governing boards. The academic organizations' governing board, the Curriculum Review Board (CRB), is convened biennially to review student learning outcomes for currency and relevancy to the mission. The administrative organizations are governed by the Administrative and Educational Support Unit Review Board (AESURB) which also meets every two years. These boards approve the outcomes and assessment measures as proposed by the organizations within the context of the Strategic Plan and MCU's long-term goals as reviewed and affirmed at the annual President's Planning Council (PPC) Strategic Planning Offsite meeting.

The Four Column Matrix is completed as part of the annual assessment process as described in detail in Chapter 4 of the MCU Academic Regulations Handbook (see <https://www.usmcu.edu/sites/default/files/SchoolFiles/MCU%20Academic%20Regulations%20%28Updated%2009%20Aug%202016%29.pdf>). The annual assessment process delineates the learning or administrative outcomes related to the mission and objectives of each unit, the measures used to conduct assessment, the resulting data obtained through the measures and the plan for the coming year to respond to issues requiring intervention. The process of annual assessment ensures accountability throughout the organization for accomplishing the objectives and the goals of MCU. It supports planning and budgeting to refine performance as the strategic vision is shaped by events and the drive for continuous improvement.

The role of Institutional Research, Assessment and Planning (IRAP) is to engage all members of the MCU community – students, faculty, staff, administrators, Board of Visitors (BOV), operating forces -- in the IE model supporting the commitment to continuous improvement. This collaborative engagement conveys the ongoing dedication of the entire community to the shared values of academic rigor and commitment to learning. Further, the engagement of the entire MCU community builds confidence in decision-making that fosters cohesion within the university and beyond to the entire Marine Corps. In short, it creates a stronger university with clarity of vision, devoted to the singular purpose – enriching the intellectual life of the Marine Corps.

The Annual Assessment Report offers a representation of the thorough range of assessment by MCU. Basic to the Annual Assessment Report are the IE Plan/Report – Four Column Matrices, a detailed guide to the outcomes, assessment measures, metrics resulting from assessment measures and interventions supporting the effort for continuous improvement. This exhaustive report is consistent with the professional standards associated with requirements in higher

education. It is also a product of the meticulous nature of the military culture in which MCU is founded – one that prizes precision and integrity as required in the crucible of armed conflict.

## SECTION IV: Institutional Planning and Assessment Processes and Measures

The policies and practices supporting institutional planning and assessment are critical to continuous improvement within higher education. However, the tangible characteristics associated with the framework of an institution – governance, fiscal solvency, faculty credentials and curricular coherency -- are only factors supporting the primary focus: **student learning**. The role of institutional planning and assessment is founded in the ability to evaluate how well the university accomplishes the central mission, that of educating students. The core questions guiding this role are straightforward: What are students learning? Is it the right kind of learning? What difference is the institution making in their lives? What evidence does an institution have that ensures it is providing real value in exchange for the student's engagement? <sup>1</sup>

Documenting student learning and activities, goals and expectations are the means to accomplish outcomes assessment. <sup>2</sup> A comprehensive plan for assessment provides the necessary information for decisions fostering improvement of all facets of the university: education, research, and student support.

Assessment provides the critical information needed by leaders at Marine Corps University (MCU) to evaluate performance and identify areas requiring improvement and resources. It offers information that allows leaders to make decisions based on actual metrics and hard evidence. It presents guidelines documenting student performance that allow faculty and students to recognize if learning outcomes are achieved and, if not, how to consider possible means of intervention for improvement. <sup>3</sup> This approach supports the commitment to standards of professional accreditation of academic programs and regional accreditation organizations which recognize the significance of documenting achievement of student outcomes as measures of Institutional Effectiveness (IE). This is in direct coordination with Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) Comprehensive Standard 3.4.10, which identifies the importance of faculty in creating a culture of assessment.

The Institutional Research, Assessment and Planning (IRAP) office under the auspices of Vice President of Educational Integration and Operational Planning (VPEIOP) is responsible for the development of the plan guiding the institutional assessment process and forms the basis for a shared understanding of how well MCU is accomplishing its goals. The schools are the focal point in assessment. Chapter 4 of the MCU Academic Regulations (available at <https://www.usmcu.edu/sites/default/files/SchoolFiles/MCU%20Academic%20Regulations%20%28Updated%2009%20Aug%202016%29.pdf>) details the key role the schools play in providing input and the critical role of faculty-driven assessment, as required in SACS Comprehensive Standard 3.4.10 .

Assessment itself is based in the foundational components of accountability, program improvement, and satisfaction of the stakeholders (students, faculty, graduates, supervisors, staff, etc.). Comprehensive assessment conducted through an ongoing program devoted to continuous improvement is focused on areas relevant to institutional effectiveness: accreditation, curriculum review and direct evaluation of administrative and educational support. Activities used to provide assessment data include results of assessment of achievement of student learning outcomes, surveys and focus groups of students, faculty, staff, graduates, supervising seniors in the field and members of the larger Professional Military Education (PME) community. The goal

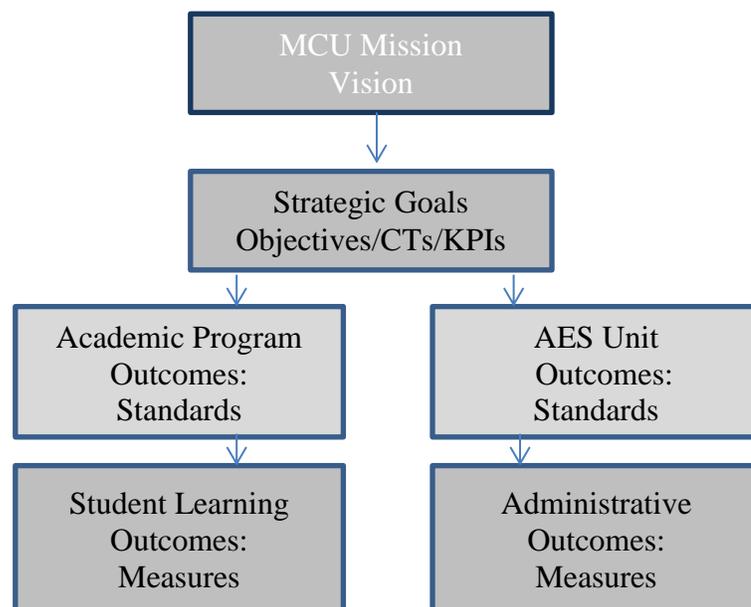
is to achieve  $\geq 80\%$  of responses on surveys in either the “strongly agree” or “agree” categories indicating favorable levels of satisfaction.

At the academic program level, student learning outcomes are measured and represent students’ learning at particular points in their learning experience. These measures provide evidence of student learning as assessed by faculty. The standard of achievement of learning outcomes is at a minimum level of 80%. Grading is calculated as “A” (A+, A, A-) indicating an achievement assessed at  $\geq 90\%$ , a grade of “B” (B+, B, B-) indicating an assessment of  $\geq 80\%$ . Any grade below 80% is equivalent to a grade of “C” which is unacceptable for course completion.

Units of the university assessed range from the academic programs and educational service organizations to faculty and staff and MCU as a whole.

At the academic program level, student learning outcomes are measured and represent students’ learning at particular points in their educational experience. These measures provide evidence of student learning as assessed by faculty. Each academic program is required to provide evidence of assessment of student learning outcomes developed from the program learning outcomes which flow from the MCU mission, vision and goals. These MCU goals and objectives are reflected in the standards against which student achievement is measured. Measures are chosen based on the curriculum and learning outcomes and the results contribute evidence of students’ overall capability. The measures provide documentation, both quantitative and qualitative and offer both direct and indirect evidence of student learning. The documentation captures in a coherent manner the degree to which each program has accomplished the stated goals and objectives. Figure 2, MCU Institutional Assessment Model, below details the model for development of goals, identification of standards and measures, and assessment of program outcomes. This model represents the translation of the MCU mission, and vision to Strategic Goals/Objectives, Critical Tasks/KPIs and their eventual emergence as student learning outcomes and administrative outcomes.

**Figure 2: MCU Institutional Assessment Model**



Direct measures of usage and satisfaction with services as provided by the Administrative and Educational Support (AES) Units contribute to a deeper understanding of the achievement of overall program outcomes by assessing the satisfaction with the administrative and support services. These measures are indicative of a perceived ability to function effectively as students supported by systems that encourage their achievement.

### *The Role of Assessment*

The role of assessment is to provide accurate, unbiased feedback to the colleges and schools as to the performance of their students in achieving learning outcomes. This feedback contributes to information that fosters continuous improvement in programming for student achievement. The information developed through assessment provides evidence to evaluators – both internal and external – of institutional effectiveness. It also provides reinforcement that the learning is in line with the MCU mission and goals, and identifies the level of learning taking place – thereby allowing MCU to improve the institutional learning outcomes and focus on the ongoing effort to further the MCU mission. Faculty and staff use the data to identify objectives for continuous improvement. Further, external evaluators will use the data to determine whether stated objectives are being achieved.

Accrediting organizations require evidence that the framework of assessment is in place and operating effectively.<sup>4</sup> SACS requires a systematic and continuing assessment process<sup>5</sup> which meets the SACS accreditation standards. In compliance with SACS core requirements and comprehensive standards and federal requirements, MCU has established a systematic and ongoing evaluation process for all academic and administrative and educational support units which demonstrates institutional effectiveness.

SACS delineates the requirements associated with the standards articulated in the Core Requirements and the Comprehensive Standards:

The institution has a clearly defined, comprehensive and published mission statement that is specific to the institution and appropriate for higher education. The mission addresses teaching and learning and, where applicable, research and public service.

*Principles of Accreditation, Core Requirement 2.4 (Institutional Mission)*

As stipulated by SACS requirements, the mission and goals of the institution are monitored – both by the academic programs and by IRAP – for appropriate revision consistent with the commitment to continuous improvement reflecting commitment to institutional quality and the accomplishment of the mission.

The institution engages in ongoing, integrated, and institution-wide research-based planning and evaluation processes that (1) incorporate a systematic review of institutional mission, goals, and outcomes; (2) result in continuing improvement in institutional quality; and (3) demonstrate the institution is effectively accomplishing its mission.

*Principles of Accreditation, Core Requirement 2.5 (Institutional Effectiveness)*

MCU's understanding of outcomes assessment in accordance with SACS Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1 includes evaluation of student learning outcomes, administrative and educational support services, research and community and public service relevant to the mission.

The institution identifies expected outcomes, assesses the extent to which it achieves these outcomes, and provides evidence of improvement based on analysis of the results in each of the following areas:

- educational programs, to include student learning outcomes
  - administrative support services
  - academic and student support services
  - research within its mission, if appropriate
  - community/public service within its mission, if appropriate
- Principles of Accreditation*, Comprehensive Standard 3.3.1 (Institutional Effectiveness)

SACS further has required institutions to establish a plan for continuous improvement addressing the quality of education.

The institution has developed an acceptable Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) that includes an institutional process for identifying key issues emerging from institutional assessment and focuses on learning outcomes and/or the environment supporting student learning and accomplishing the mission of the institution.

*Principles of Accreditation*, Core Requirement 2.12 (Quality Enhancement Plan)

The institution has developed a QEP that (1) demonstrates institutional capability for the initiation, implementation, and completion of the QEP; (2) includes broad-based involvement of institutional constituencies in the development and proposed implementation of the QEP; and (3) identifies goals and a plan to assess their achievement.

*Principles of Accreditation* Comprehensive Standard 3.3.2 (QEP)

While primary responsibility for ensuring compliance with the standards identified in the SACS Core Requirements and Comprehensive Standards is under the direction of MCU VPEIOP and IRAP, the centrality of faculty to the assessment process is primary. Faculty identify curriculum and determine effectiveness. In that capacity, faculty are also at the center of implementation of the institutional effectiveness plan.

The focus of institutional effectiveness is most significantly devoted to gathering the data and engaging in unbiased analysis with the goal of discovering the efficacy of each program in achieving the established goals and then basing improvements in the program on that data analysis. Assessment measures student learning inside and outside the classroom and MCU's assessment demonstrates the caliber of teaching and learning taking place here. Ideally, assessment fosters the continued growth and development of the MCU mission and vision through the improvement of the factors that contribute to student achievement of learning outcomes.

### *Development of the Annual Assessment Report*

The typical requirements associated with accountability in higher education apply to the institutional effectiveness standards at MCU with the added significance that the graduates of the colleges here are engaged in endeavors at levels of challenge and difficulty most individuals may never encounter. The pressure to transition capabilities in critical thinking, decision-making, and leadership acquired in an educational environment to the high-stakes, high-stress environment of military conflict requires a singular commitment to ensuring the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process.

Beyond that obvious commitment, the importance of striving to expand capacities to identify means to measure accurately and authentically the impact of education requires an iterative process which seeks varied methods of data collection and engages the institution at every level. The goal of ensuring continuous improvement through a rigorous institutional effectiveness model must be on-going and exist within a systematic framework of policies, processes and protocols. Student learning outcomes and strategies for measuring those outcomes are foundational to this framework. These then become the basis for determining how to improve and enhance MCU's capabilities to meet its goals.

Each of the organizations within MCU determines the processes and methods used to measure effectiveness as guided by Chapter 4 of the Academic Regulations Handbook. An Institutional Effectiveness/Institutional Research Coordinator is designated by each organization who is responsible for the development, implementation and monitoring of an IE Plan/Report, The Four Column Matrix. The IE/Institutional Research (IR) Coordinator for the organization works closely with the Director and/or any other representative designated by the director to develop the IE plan. The IE Plan/Report (Four Column Matrix) takes the objectives which are linked to the MCU strategic goals, critical tasks and KPIs, identifies the measureable outcomes which will achieve the objectives and determines the most appropriate way of measuring the organization's progress in accomplishing the outcomes. The Four Column Matrix may be considered the basic framework for the IE Plan but organizations may deem it valuable to enhance it with additional support and documentation which tracks their unit's institutional effectiveness as specifically tailored to their role and functions.

Planning and assessment at MCU incorporates the policies, procedures and protocols that are used across the university to encompass a process which is systematic and broad-based. The planning and assessment is framed through the model detailed here.

1. MCU has a clearly defined Mission and Vision which guide institutional effectiveness, planning and assessment.
2. Both academic and non-academic programs have documented planning and assessment processes with six components:
  - a. The identification of educational and/or administrative objectives which are drawn from the goals stated in the Strategic Plan and that are consistent with MCU's mission;
  - b. The development of strategies to achieve objectives;

- c. Stated measurable educational/administrative outcomes developed from the objectives, critical tasks and KPIs which are designated to the organization;
  - d. Procedures for assessment that are documented and that detail the level achieved in meeting the outcomes during the designated time period;
  - e. Use of assessment results to guide planning and decision-making for recommendations driving continuous improvement.
  - f. Follow-up on the results of recommendations (whether implemented, modified, rejected, deferred and the resulting impact).
3. Directors designate specific individuals responsible for monitoring and reporting assessment measures and processes.
  4. Directors establish a systematic process for updating and adjustment of planning procedures.
  5. Directors implement specific procedures for monitoring progress in achieving objectives and refining and adjusting plans.

### *Expected Outcomes*

The planning and assessment model used at MCU provides for an orderly process (Appendix A). It also engages each unit at MCU, whether academic or administrative and education support, to provide for the following:

- a) A comprehensive and continuous planning and assessment process;
- b) Integration of the individual organization's planning and assessment into the larger systematic process of MCU;
- c) Engagement of various stakeholders in a participatory process;
- d) The collection and analysis of both quantitative and qualitative input to document institutional effectiveness;
- e) An expanded use of institutional effectiveness information in institutional planning, budgeting, and program review.

Planning and assessment as conducted in each organization at MCU is comprised of:

- a) Mission: A mission statement drawn from the goals articulated in the strategic plan;
- b) Goals/Objectives/Critical Tasks/Key Performance Indicators/Outcomes: The student learning outcomes or administrative process outcomes are drawn from the critical tasks and KPIs which emerge from the Strategic Plan and are acknowledged in each unit's IE Plan/Report (Four Column Matrix).
- c) Measures: The methods and metric tools for evaluating success in achieving outcomes.
- d) Summary of Results: The findings of the measures in sufficient detail to substantiate the level of achievement of the objectives/outcomes.
- e) Use of Results: The action plan to remediate any gap that was identified between the stated objectives/outcomes and the performance as evaluated by the measures.
- f) Director's Report: The analysis and narrative which summarizes the results of the program and recommended changes, the effectiveness in achieving the objectives and student learning outcomes and plans for the upcoming year.

### *Planning Schedule*

In order to ensure oversight supporting continuous improvement, MCU operates from several planning schedules: five-year, biennial, annual and semi-annual and on-going.

- Five-Year: The Five-Year schedule outlines the MCU Strategic Plan, which is reviewed for currency and possible revision every two years.
- Biennial: Any revisions to MCU's mission, vision, or goals are reviewed and adopted on a biennial basis. The MCU Curriculum Review Board (CRB) for academic units and Administrative and Educational Support Unit Review Board (AESURB) for administrative and educational support units convene to identify the two year outcomes/objectives which flow from the Strategic Plan Goals.
- Annual: The ongoing review of outcomes and objectives begins with the production of the MCU Factbook, setting forth the enrollment and faculty information for each school and college. As the academic year proceeds, various adjustments to curriculum, policy or procedures may be implemented based on changing circumstances. The cycle culminates at the end of the year in the Annual Assessment Report. This represents the most active cycle of planning since it ensures a critical assessment of the achievement of program objectives and the methods chosen to achieve the objectives. In addition, faculty and staff are evaluated on an annual basis.
- Semi-annual and ongoing: Mid-year reviews of curriculum by the academic organizations ensure for ongoing assessment and adjustment as needed. In addition to the ongoing collection of survey data to inform course directors at the schools as to student satisfaction, focus groups are convened on an as-needed basis with selected schools and colleges in order to provide more robust feedback. Also, faculty and staff are provided a mid-year assessment of performance.

### *Outcomes Assessment*

The outcomes assessment strategies of MCU are based on measuring improvement in student learning with the intent of providing evidence that methods used are effective.<sup>6</sup> The assessments are designed to gather information on whether intended outcomes are being achieved and to identify approaches for improving programs. The process as a whole is intended to provide the leadership at all levels of MCU with information to guide critical decision-making processes. The model used to guide the process employed at MCU is detailed below and is adapted from the one presented by the University of Wisconsin-Madison<sup>7</sup>.

*STEP 1: Define the educational/administrative support program outcomes and student learning outcomes for the major or program.*

The instructional learning outcomes of each school/college represent the foundation on which assessment is built. Assessment provides information on student performance as it relates to the educational goals and objectives established by the organization.

*STEP 2: Identify and describe instruments or methods for assessing student achievement at important stages in the program.*

Assessment methods for gathering student performance data are determined based on the student learning outcomes and are developed to assess the achievement of each learning outcome discretely.

*STEP 3: Decide how the results will be disseminated and used for improvement.*

MCU strives for a timely turn-around of data to each organization to support the goal of continuous improvement. Given the essential nature of feedback in assessment, the ability to provide recent findings quickly allows faculty to adjust curriculum to respond to the students' needs for capabilities preparing them for performance outside the classroom as professional military leaders. All data is disseminated to the approved point-of-contact (POC) for each school and organization responsible for managing the reporting functions for that organization. The approved POCs for each organization are cited in Table 4 below.

**Table 4: Approved Point-of-Contact for Dissemination of Indirect Assessment Information**

<b>School/College</b>	<b>IE/IR Coordinator</b>
<b>Marine Corps War College (MCWAR)</b>	<b>LtCol Jason Palma, Associate Dean</b>
<b>Command and Staff College (CSC)</b>	<b>Mr. Michael Ronza, Deputy Director of Academic Operations</b>
<b>School of Advanced Warfighting (SAW)</b>	<b>LtCol Gilberto Juarez, Deputy Director</b>
<b>Expeditionary Warfare School (EWS)</b>	<b>Mr. Matt Erickson, Operations Manager</b>
<b>Enlisted Professional Military Education (EPME)</b>	<b>Mr. Ron Pettigrew, IE Coordinator</b>
<b>CDET</b>	<b>Mr. Mark Mitchell</b>

*STEP 4: Develop a timetable for carrying out the previous three steps. Each academic organization will establish a schedule for selecting, implementing and using the results of assessment strategies.*

The academic organizations at MCU have well-established protocols for the collection of information supporting ongoing planning and continuing assessment, analysis, revision and implementation of changes.

*STEP 5: Submit assessment objectives, methods and timetable to MCU Curriculum Review Boards.*

The colleges and schools' curriculum and assessment plans are reviewed on a biennial basis and approved for implementation. Within that time frame, student learning outcomes are the focus of annual review based on student performance and feedback and graduate and supervisor feedback. Faculty members use direct measures (tests, written and oral assignments, etc.) in assessing student learning outcomes through performance and document all activities which are embedded in their courses. Indirect measures (surveys, focus groups, etc.) as determined by the colleges and schools in conjunction with IRAP are facilitated and supported by IRAP through data collection, analysis and documentation as needed. A comprehensive list of indirect

measures is available in Appendix E. The results of all assessment initiatives are documented, reported and archived to indicate the ways that results were used to improve the institution.

*STEP 6: Carry out assessment plans and revise as needed.*

As assessment plans are approved through the biennial CRB, faculty are responsible for executing the strategy and using assessment feedback as it becomes available to improve or revise methods or recommend revision to curriculum if necessary.

To summarize, each academic unit at MCU has a mission statement, program objectives, and student learning outcomes that emerge from institutional goals based on the MCU mission statement. Each academic unit determines the appropriate assessment methods to measure student achievement of learning outcomes and areas for improvement and revision. Faculty meet on an ongoing basis throughout the year to support the culture of institutional effectiveness by discussing student progress and performance, assessment results and strategies to achieve improved outcomes. At the end of the academic year, the colleges, schools and administrative and educational support units provide an annual assessment report which links the mission statements, the assessment process, the results of assessment measures, the options exercised to improve outcomes and the results of those interventions chosen to improve outcomes. IRAP receives the assessment reports along with a written summary from each unit, the Director's Report, and compiles these reports for submission to the Commanding General/President, MCU.

*Types of Assessments*

To ensure an accurate assessment of student learning outcomes, a variety of direct and indirect assessment measures are used.

*1. Examinations*

Examinations, both oral and written including comprehensive examinations, are one tool in an array of measures in an assessment plan. Typically, they are used to measure cognitive goals associated with knowledge in areas of academic study. The academic programs at MCU use exams as one method to assess program effectiveness in achieving student learning outcomes. The exams are typically associated with end-of-course assessment and vary depending on the discipline and faculty.

*2. Papers and Written Assignments*

All schools and colleges require students demonstrate their development as critical thinkers by performing written assignments of varying length throughout the year.

*3. Journal Writing*

The use of journal writing contributing to critical reflection is used in some programs.

*4. Seminar Contribution*

Students are required to lead and participate in class discussion.

*5. Thesis Evaluation*

A graduate thesis is used in those programs granting master's degrees as an assignment which engages students in the scholarship, planning and higher order cognitive skills necessary to demonstrate mastery of content and process.

#### 6. *Oral Defense of Thesis*

The assessment of mastery is based not only in thesis evaluation but in the student's ability to orally articulate deep understanding of the subject as well as respond to questions and critique of the thesis. Students prepare their defense for presentation to a board of evaluators and, in some cases, the students in their cohort.

#### 7. *War Gaming/Simulations and Planning Exercises*

Students engage in a unique form demonstrating achievement in the assignments associated with war games and planning exercises. Planning exercises are conducted through the process of team assignments throughout the year and culminate in a significant event at the end of the academic year. These events draw heavily on the capabilities derived from the development of higher order thinking to guide decision-making and leadership as well as capabilities drawn from experience. These exercises reflect the diverse capabilities necessary to lead in the most challenging of settings.

#### 8. *Student Surveying and Exit Interview*

Feedback from students is essential to a better understanding of the experiences students have while studying at MCU. Student responses concerning perceived learning outcomes as well as reactions to instructional methods, pedagogical approaches and support services are important inputs to the effort for continuous improvement. As part of other methods for assessing effectiveness, student surveys offer a sound basis for examining curricular and co-curricular performance.

#### 9. *Alumni Surveying*

Surveying former students offers valuable input about the relevance, currency and preparation for professional demands. It also provides feedback on the satisfaction of former students with MCU from a perspective removed from the immediate experience and engages them in a conscious examination of program value.

#### 10. *Senior/Supervisor Surveying*

The information collected from seniors and supervisors offers an opportunity to learn more about the value of learning acquired through MCU in the settings for which the learning is intended. It provides insight from another perspective of those directly engaged in working closely with individuals who have been most deeply influenced by their learning experience at MCU. This informs program improvement and also emphasizes to students the value of learning achieved at MCU.

#### 11. *Faculty/Staff Surveying*

Feedback from faculty and staff invites input from a particularly valuable group within the MCU community, the professionals who are responsible for the learning and the delivery of services that support achievement of learning. This annual survey expands the voice of this group by offering an avenue for their perspective that assures confidentiality and anonymity.<sup>8</sup>

## *12. Creative Problem Solving Assessment*

The goals of the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) include the enhancement of creative problem solving skills among students. The assessment of creative problem solving necessitates a varied process with multiple methods of determining the actual demonstration of creative problem solving capability and any increase in that capability. Assessment of creative problem solving artifacts using ranking and rating scales (calibrated against a creative thinking rubric) as well as indirect measures through surveys and focus groups will allow triangulation of data supporting comprehensive assessment of achievement of QEP goals. Interviews with graduates and their seniors will complete the development of data supporting assessment at every level, including the demonstration of creative problem solving in the field.

Institutional Effectiveness demands a systematic process of assessment of education and support services, analysis of findings and decision-making drawn from a range of sources to improve programming at MCU. MCU's assessment process addresses effectiveness from a range of perspectives: academic, administrative and educational support units and business and interagency processes. In accordance with Process for the Accreditation of Joint Education (PAJE) and SACS requirements, MCU documents the use of assessments and the data collected to inform a comprehensive picture of institutional performance. All areas are included for assessment: graduate curriculum and instruction, faculty, administration, service staff, library and research services, student affairs and academic support services as well as former students and the Board of Visitors.

### *Curriculum and Instruction*

Students at MCU are engaged in PME at either the enlisted or officer level. Students in enlisted professional military education (EPME) at MCU are not required to possess a post-secondary academic credential. Their programs support pursuit of education as professional military leaders.

Students involved in officer professional military education (OPME), however, are required to have completed a bachelor's degree prior to enrollment in the SACS accredited graduate programs at Marine Corps War College (MCWAR), School of Advanced Warfighting (SAW) and Command and Staff College (CSC), whether pursuing a master's degree or not, and the nonaccredited PME component offered at Expeditionary Warfare School (EWS). In some instances, their academic capability is assessed by a pre-evaluation diagnostic to assist in providing resources appropriate to student need and facilitating student success. Post-evaluations associated with academic program requirements complement a range of curricular and instructional measures as implemented at the colleges and schools. Measures including student GPA, pre- and post-evaluations, mastery of subject matter and demonstration of academic skills and processes are used to assess the achievement of both student learning outcomes and program outcomes. The achievement of program outcomes are discerned through analysis of enrollment and completion rates, surveys of students, graduates, seniors and faculty and staff. All these methods contribute to fostering an environment of continuous improvement.

### *Faculty*

Faculty are formally evaluated at both mid-year and annual performance evaluation conferences with their immediate supervisor (MCU Faculty Handbook: <https://www.usmcu.edu/sites/default/files/SchoolFiles/MCU%20Faculty%20Handbook%20%28Updated%2009%20Aug%202016%29.pdf>). In addition, data on faculty performance are gathered from a range of sources including student survey responses and student performance metrics.

### *Administration*

MCU policy requires evaluation of performance for administrative professionals at both the mid-year and annual time frame in accordance with the MCU Faculty Handbook and government human resource policy.

### *Data Collection*

The annual cycle of planning and assessment allows MCU to capture data that may indicate a need for further assessment to provide more complete information for decision-making at the strategic level. This allows a variety of instruments to augment data collection as appropriate. Regular post course evaluations as well as ad hoc surveys to assess particular aspects of curriculum or needs of faculty are administered on an as needed basis. In addition, IRAP supports the mandated surveys as required by the Marine Corps which assess the command climate of MCU (Education Command). The findings of data collection are critical to understanding the level at which MCU is achieving its goals but also to engage the MCU community in the process of continuous improvement. The data representing enrollment and faculty assignments and credentials is available in the MCU Factbook and made available online at the MCU website ([https://www.usmcu.edu/sites/default/files/SchoolFiles/MCU%20Factbook%202017\\_Web.pdf](https://www.usmcu.edu/sites/default/files/SchoolFiles/MCU%20Factbook%202017_Web.pdf).)

Data compiled from direct and indirect methods are archived and made available through the Four Column Matrix submitted through the annual assessment process. In addition, focus groups which seek qualitative input from students and faculty and staff are used to deepen understanding of issues influencing effectiveness. IRAP supports and facilitates the use of a range of methods and approaches for measurement of outcomes.

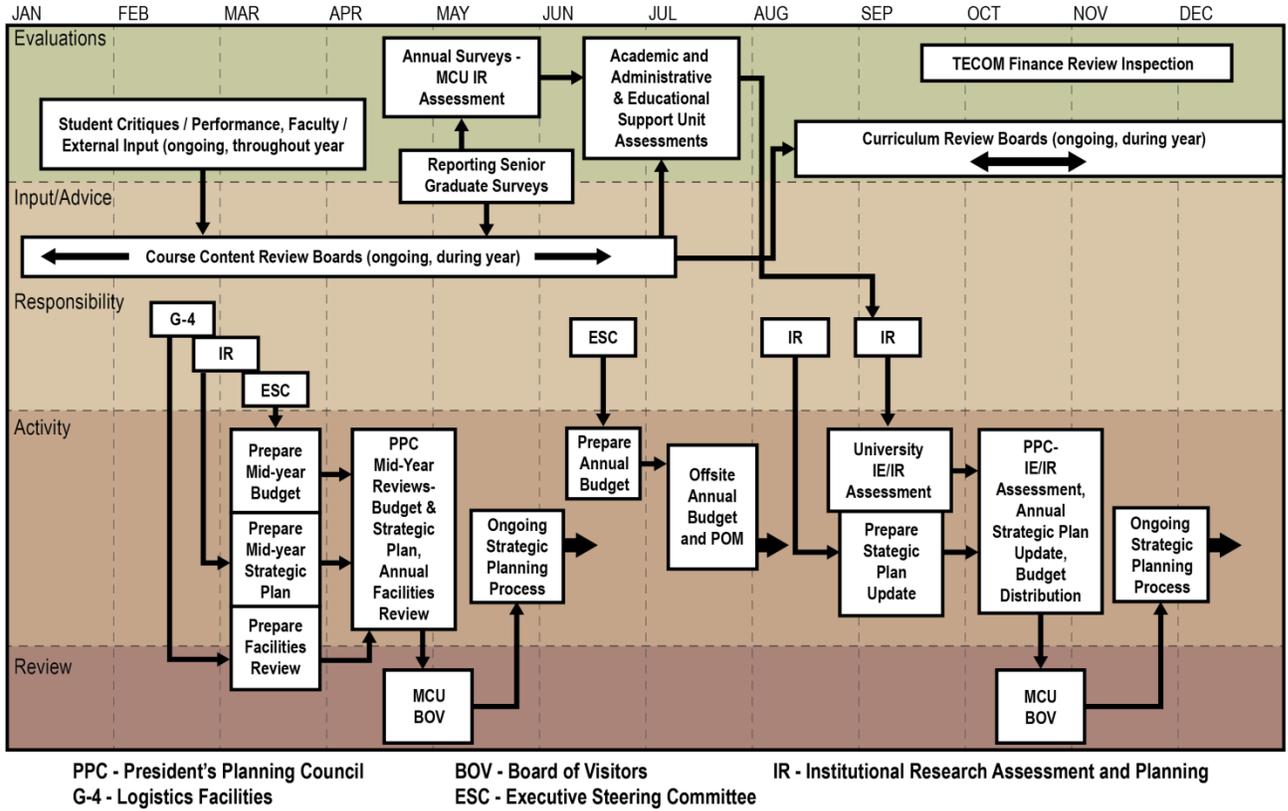
## **SECTION V: Summary**

Marine Corps University (MCU) has established an approach to institutional effectiveness and continuous improvement that strives to incorporate the mission statement, in both spirit and intent, into the ongoing functions of this professional military education institution of higher education. Stakeholders, both internal and external, are included as resources to share in governance and to translate the mission into goals and objectives for the organization. One or more organizations within MCU are assigned responsibility for achieving each of the goals and objectives. From the individual mission statements, each organization then develops its own goals and objectives flowing directly from the goals and objectives of MCU. Each organization assesses their performance in meeting their goals and objectives and provides a plan to ensure that gaps in meeting objectives are met. Institutional Research, Assessment and Planning (IRAP) reviews these plans for institutional effectiveness and provides guidance and feedback to ensure continuous improvement processes are in place, and tracked and documented. This ensures the entire MCU community – leaders, scholars, administrators and students – are consistently involved in the IE process and focused on achieving and exceeding the goals of the institution.

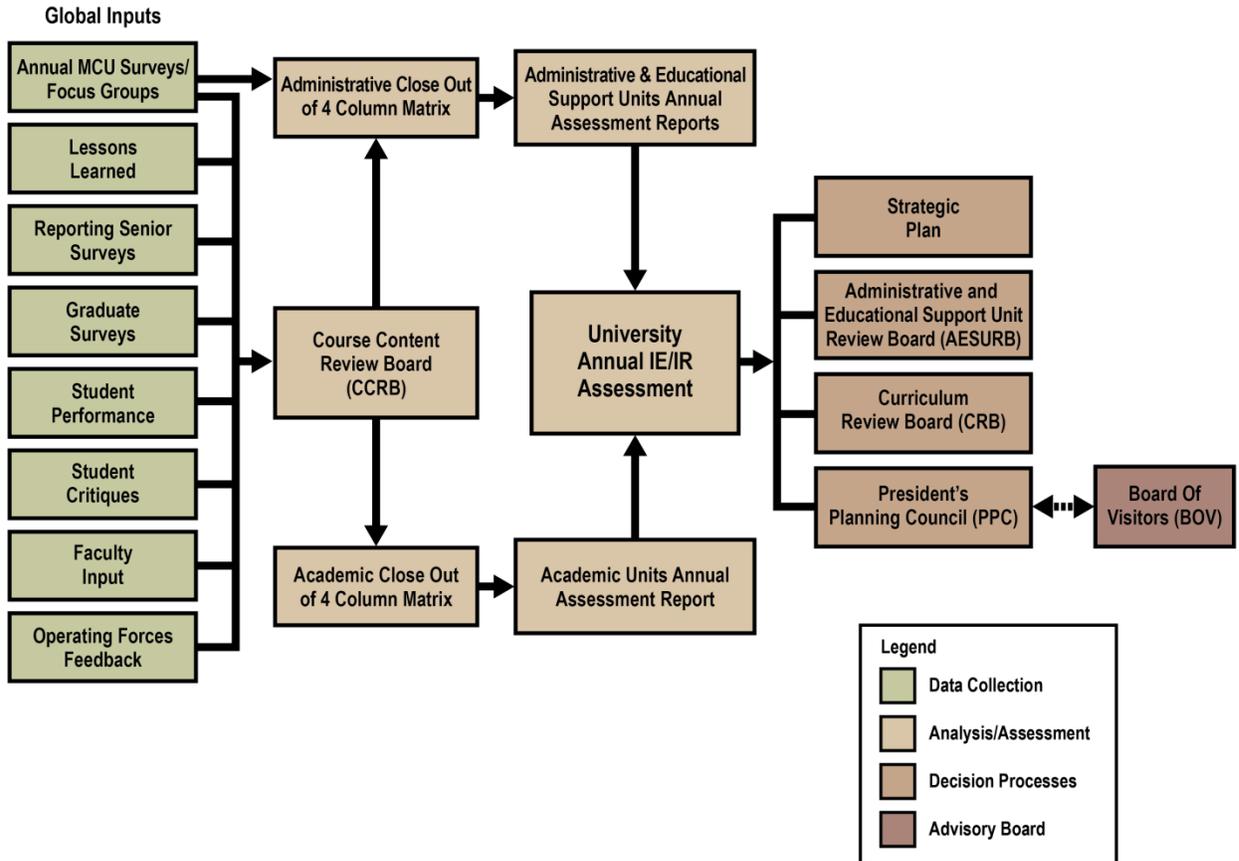
# **APPENDICES**

# APPENDIX A:

## The MCU Planning, Assessment and Budgeting Cycle

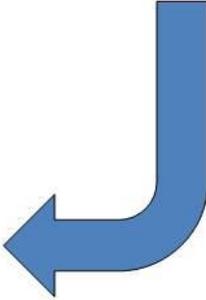


## APPENDIX B: Assessment Process



**APPENDIX C:  
Four Column Matrix (Example)**

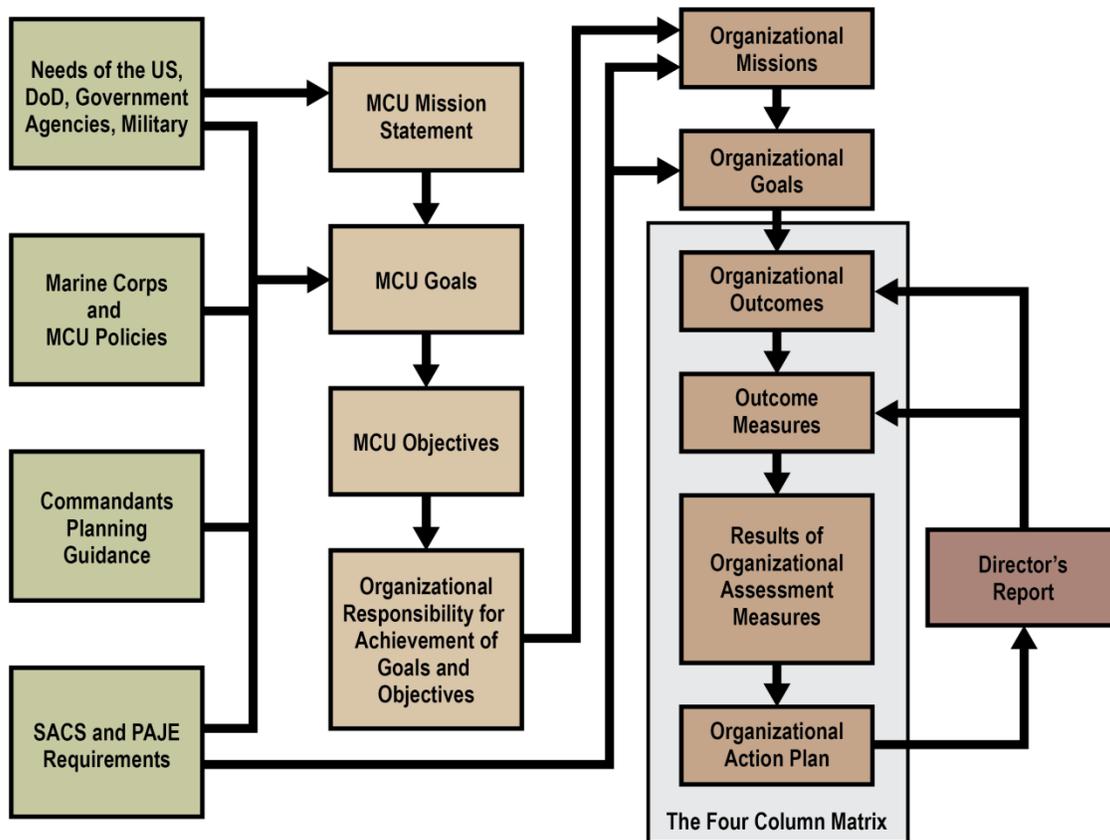
MCU 4 Column Matrix – Unit Institutional Effectiveness Plan  
Columns 1-2

Outcomes	Assessment Measures	Summary of Results	Use of Results
<p align="center"><b>“What is Expected?”</b></p> <p>Broad, Overarching Outcomes <i>Aligned w/Strategic Plan</i></p> <p><b>Academic Units</b> - Approved by the CRB Process</p> <p><b>Administrative &amp; Education Support (AES) Units</b> - Approved by the AES Review Board</p>	<p align="center"><b>“How do we Measure the Expected?”</b></p> <p><i>Collecting Evidence</i></p> <p>Student Results – exams, essays rubrics.</p> <p>Survey Results (Students, Fleet, Faculty, and Staff, etc.)</p> <p>Completion Rate</p> <p>Satisfaction Rate – services</p>	<p align="center"><b>Columns 1 &amp; 2 (Outcomes and Measurements set at beginning of Academic Year)</b></p> 	

## MCU 4 Column Matrix – Unit Institutional Effectiveness Plan Columns 3-4

Outcomes	Assessment Measures	Summary of Results	Use of Results
<p><b>Columns 3 &amp; 4 (Results and Use of Results) Completed and Submitted at the end of the Academic Year – with narrative from VP/Director – Prior to Executive Offsite</b></p>		<p><b>“How well did we do what was Expected?”</b></p> <p><b><i>Convergence of Evidence Triangulation</i></b></p> <p>Academic &amp; AES Units Submit Annually June 15<sup>th</sup>, along With the Units Annual Assessment Report</p> <p>This data feeds into the MCU Annual IR/IE Report which provides the information necessary for the decision making processes</p>	<p>This is vital, <b>“what do we plan to do with our findings?”</b></p> <p>Academic &amp; AES Units Submit Annually June 15<sup>th</sup>, along With the Units Annual Assessment Report</p> <p>This data as part of the MCU Annual IR/IE Report is submitted to the President for approval. If there is a change to Column #1 a mini CRB/AESURB must be held.</p> <p>Change Management Process Begins for the next AY with results of changes included in the Director’s Report.</p>

**APPENDIX D:  
Overall Process for Goal Setting**



Key to Four Column Matrix

- Organizational Goals = Program Outcomes
- Organizational Outcomes = Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) or Support Outcomes
- Outcome Measures = Measures
- Results of Organizational Measures = Summary of Results
- Organizational Action Plan = Use of Results

**APPENDIX E:  
List of Direct and Indirect Assessments**

<b>Institutional Research, Assessment and Planning Surveys</b>	
<b>July</b>	MCU - Faculty Development Conference Survey
	EPME - First Sergeants Course Graduate Survey
	EPME - Reserve Senior Staff Course Survey
	EPME - Reserve SNCOA Graduate Survey
	EPME - SNCOA Graduate Survey
	SAW - Module 1 Survey
	SAW - Module 2 Survey
	SAW - Module 3 Survey
	SAW - Module 4 Survey
	SAW - Module 5 Survey
	SAW - Module 6 Survey
<b>August</b>	EPME - Senior Enlisted PME Survey
	EPME - SNCOA Graduate Survey
	EWS - Foundations Course Survey
	MCU - IMS Preparatory Class Survey, Summer
	MCU - Professional Development Opportunities
	MCWAR - Critique #1
	SAW - Module 7 Survey
	SAW - Module 8 Survey
	SAW - Module 9 Survey
	SAW - Module 10 Survey
	SAW - Module 11 Survey
	SAW - Module 12 Survey
	SAW - Module 13 Survey
	SAW - Module 14 Survey
<b>September</b>	CSC - Think, Decide, Communicate Survey
	CSC - Warfighting #1
	EWS - Doctrine Course Survey
	LLI - GO/SES SLDP Survey
	LLI - SLDP Course Completion Survey
	MCWAR - Critique #2
	SAW - Module 15 Survey
	SAW - Module 16 Survey
	SAW - Module 17 Survey
	SAW - Module 18 Survey

<b>October</b>	CSC - Warfighting Survey #2
	EPME - Senior Enlisted PME Survey
	EPME - SNCOA Graduate Survey
	EWS - Planning Course Student Survey
	LLI - Cols Cornerstone Course Survey Week #1
	LLI - Cols Cornerstone Course Survey Week #2
	LLI - LtCols Cornerstone Course Survey Week #1
	LLI - LtCols Cornerstone Course Survey Week #2
	MCWAR - Critique #3
	MCWAR - Critique #4
	SAW - Module 16 Survey
	SAW - Module 19 Survey
	SAW - Module 20 Survey
	SAW - Module 21 Survey
	SAW - Module 22 Survey
	SAW - Module 23 Survey
	SAW - Module 24 Survey
	SAW - Module 25 Survey
	SAW - Module 26 Survey
<b>November</b>	CSC - Warfighting Survey #3
	CSC - Warfighting Survey #4
	EPME - SNCOA Graduate Survey
	LCSC - Studio Class Survey
	MCWAR - Critique #5
	MCWAR - Critique #6
	SAW - Module 27 Survey
	SAW - Module 28 Survey
	SAW - Module 29 Survey
	SAW - Module 30 Survey
	SAW - Module 31 Survey
	SAW - Module 32 Survey
	SAW - Module 33 Survey
<b>December</b>	CSC - Leadership Survey #1
	CSC - Security Studies Survey #1
	CSC - War Studies Survey #1
	EPME - SNCOA Graduate Survey
	MCWAR - Critique #7
	MCWAR - Critique #8
	SAW - Module 34 Survey

	SAW - Module 35 Survey
	SAW - Module 36 Survey
	SAW - Module 37 Survey
<b>January</b>	CSC - Graduate Survey
	CSC - Reporting Senior Survey
	EPME - Senior Enlisted PME Survey
	EPME - SNCOA Graduate Survey
	EWS - Graduate Survey
	EWS - Supervisor Survey
	MCU - MCLE Survey
	MCWAR - Critique #9
	MCWAR - Critique #10
	MCWAR - Graduate Survey
	MCWAR - Supervisor Survey
	SAW - Graduate Survey
	SAW - Module 38 Survey
	SAW - Supervisor Survey
<b>February</b>	CSC - Electives Survey
	CSC - Leadership Survey #2
	EPME - SNCOA Graduate Survey
	EPME - SNCOA Graduate Survey
	LCSC - Studio Class Survey
	MCU - MCLE Survey
	MCWAR - Critique #11
	SAW - Module 39 Survey
	SAW - Module 40 Survey
	SAW - Module 41 Survey
	SAW - Module 42 Survey
	SAW - Module 43 Survey
	SAW - Module 44 Survey
	SAW - Module 45 Survey
<b>March</b>	CSC - Leadership Survey #4
	CSC - Leadership Survey #5
	CSC - Leadership Survey #6
	CSC - Warfighting Survey #5
	EPME - First Sergeants Course Survey
	EPME - Senior Enlisted PME Survey
	EPME - Senior Planners Course Survey

	EPME - SNCOA Graduate Survey
	EWS - Amphibious Operations Survey
	EWS - Spring OFEC Course Student Survey
	MCWAR - Advanced Studies Program Survey
	MCWAR - Critique #12
	MCWAR - Critique #13
	MCWAR - Critique #14
	SAW - Module 46 Survey
	SAW - Module 47 Survey
	SAW - Module 48 Survey
<b>April</b>	CSC - Warfighting #6 Survey
	CSC - Warfighting #7 Survey
	EPME - SNCOA Reserve Graduate Survey
	EPME - SNCOA Graduate Survey
	EWS - Small Wars Student Survey
	LCSC - Annual Follow-Up Survey
	MCU - Annual Student Survey
	MCU - IMS Faculty Survey
	MCWAR - Critique #15
	SAW - Module 49 Survey
	SAW - Module 50 Survey
	SAW - Module 51 Survey
	SAW - Module 52 Survey
	SAW - Module 53 Survey
	SAW - Module 54 Survey
	SAW - Module 55 Survey
	SAW - Module 56 Survey
<b>May</b>	CSC - Security Studies #2 Survey
	CSC - War Studies #2 Survey
	EPME - SNCOA Graduate Survey
	EPME - Staff Survey
	EWS - Faculty Development Survey
	EWS - Leadership Development Course Student Survey
	LLI - Cornerstone Course Survey Week #1
	LLI - Cornerstone Course Survey Week #2
	LLI - Cornerstone Course Survey SgtMaj
	MCU - Annual Faculty/Staff Survey
	SAW - Module 57 Survey
	SAW - Module 58 Survey

	SAW - Module 59 Survey
	SAW - Module 60 Survey
<b>June</b>	EPME - Corporals Course Survey
	EPME - Senior Enlisted PME Course Survey
	EPME - Faculty Advisors Course Graduate Survey
	EPME - SNCOA Graduate Survey
	LCSC - Annual Follow-Up Survey
	NMMC - Staff Survey

## Glossary

**Assessment** - evaluation: a judgment about something based on an understanding of the situation

**Benchmark** - standard: a standard against which something can be measured or assessed

**Closing the Loop** - using data to improve academic programs

**Commission on Colleges** - the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges is the recognized regional accrediting body in the eleven U.S. Southern states (Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia) and in Latin America for those institutions of higher education that award associate, baccalaureate, master's or doctoral degrees.

**Continuous Improvement** - is an ongoing effort to improve products, services or processes

**Core Requirements** - an advisory statement designed to assist institutions in fulfilling accreditation requirements

**Criteria** - a standard of judgment or criticism; a rule or principle for evaluating or testing something

**Critical Tasks** – Specific requirements associated with Strategic Goals and Objectives

**Evaluation** - a systematic determination of a subject's merit, worth and significance, using criteria governed by a set of standards

**Goal** - a desired result a person or a system envisions, plans and commits to achieve a personal or organizational desired end-point in some sort of assumed development

**Institutional Effectiveness** - a cyclic process of continuous improvement

**Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)** – Performance measures demonstrating accomplishment of the Critical Tasks

**Learning Outcome** - the specification of what a student should learn as the result of a period of specified and supported study

**Measures** - an evaluation or a basis of comparison

**Mission Statement** - a statement of the purpose of a company, organization or person, its reason for existing

**Objective** - something that one's efforts or actions are intended to attain or accomplish; purpose; goal; target

**Outcomes** - result: the way that something turns out in the end

**Program Level Assessment** - it's a systematic process for looking at student work or other evidence of student achievement across courses

**Qualitative Assessment** - is based on system knowledge, experience, and judgment

**Quantitative Assessment** - a process that measures the probability and consequences of risks and estimates their implications for project objectives

**Rubric** - a standard of performance for a defined population

**Standards** - level of quality or excellence

## Endnotes

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<sup>1</sup> Council of Regional Accrediting Commissions, *Regional Accreditation and Student Learning: Principles for Good Practices* (Washington, DC: Council of Regional Accrediting Commissions, 2003).

<sup>2</sup> T.W. Banta, J.P. Lund, K.E. Black and F. W. Oblander, *Assessment in Practice*. (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1996), 43-49.

<sup>3</sup> Banta, T.W. "Contemporary Approaches to Assessing Student Achievement of General Education Outcomes," *Journal of General Education*, 1991, 208.

<sup>4</sup> Western Association of Schools and Colleges, *2013 Handbook and WASC Accreditation*, (Temecula, CA: WASC, 2013), <http://www.wascsenior.org/resources/handbook-accreditation-2013/part-i-2013-handbook-and-wasc-accreditation/changing-context-accreditation> (accessed March 12, 2013).

<sup>5</sup> Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, *2012 Principles of Accreditation: Foundations for Quality Enhancement*, (Atlanta, GA: SACS, 2012), 3, <http://www.sacscoc.org/pdf/2012PrinciplesOfAccreditation.pdf> (accessed March 9, 2013).

<sup>6</sup> T.W. Banta, J.P. Lund, K.E. Black and F. W. Oblander, *Assessment in Practice*, (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1996), 57.

<sup>7</sup> University of Wisconsin-Madison, *Academic Assessment Plan 2003 (updated 2008)*, (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2008), 1-8, [http://www.provost.wisc.edu/assessment/Assessmentplan2003\\_R2008.pdf](http://www.provost.wisc.edu/assessment/Assessmentplan2003_R2008.pdf) (accessed March 20, 2013).

<sup>8</sup> T.W. Banta, J.P. Lund, K.E. Black and F. W. Oblander, 328-330.