

Mitchell Technical Institute

Institutional Effectiveness/Program Level Assessment

Overview –The Higher Learning Commission's expects its accredited institutions to have a commitment to assessment and a strong, defined culture of continuous improvement. HLC's Criteria for Accreditation mandate that institutions assess student learning at the program and institutional level, and use the information gained from assessment to improve student learning. Mitchell Technical Institute meets these expectations through its Institutional Effectiveness Plan, its Annual Program Assessment Review, a faculty-led Assessment Committee, and a fulltime Accreditation and Institutional Effectiveness Director.

MTI's Institutional Effectiveness Plan is based on the assessment of six core abilities or institutional learning outcomes that prepare students, regardless of their program of study, to become productive members of the work force and lifelong learners ready to grow within their chosen professions. We believe all MTI graduates should be able to:

- Communicate effectively through both oral and written means
- Demonstrate a professional attitude and work ethic
- Apply reasoning and critical thinking to solve problems and seek information
- Work cooperatively in a team environment
- Use computer technology within a field of study
- Apply technical skills required of an entry-level technician in a chosen field

These outcomes are regularly assessed both directly and indirectly. A set of rubrics tied to our learning outcomes are used by instructors throughout the year to assess student achievement and to provide feedback to the institution, as well as to the students themselves. The assessment committee analyzed the data from almost 1,800 rubric scores turned in last year and set an institutional effectiveness goal for the institution. This year we are focusing on USING TECHNOLOGY in an effort to raise achievement in this important outcome.

We also measure institutional effectiveness through surveys of our stakeholders, such as students, alumni, advisory boards, and employers. The survey results are used for institutional and program planning and improvement efforts.

MTI faculty are also using student achievement data at the **program level** to guide their efforts to continuously improve student learning in their programs. Each program has identified specific program level outcomes – skills and abilities that learners develop through completion of the program. Our annual program assessment review includes multiple direct and indirect measures of program effectiveness and student learning, which involves program faculty analyzing assessment results for each measure and planning for improvements when benchmarks are not met.

We are expanding this effort to include the assessment of each program's learning outcomes. Department meetings will be held to assist faculty in refining their program outcomes; setting benchmarks for each outcome; and gathering and analyzing student achievement data. Faculty will use program outcome assessment data, along with enrollment, retention, placement, and survey data, to make plans for how they can continue to improve student learning in their programs.

Mitchell Technical Institute

Persistence & Completion Academy

As part of the process to maintain our accreditation with The Higher Learning Commission, MTI is currently participating in HLC's Persistence and Completion Academy. The Persistence and Completion Academy is a four-year program which provides participating colleges and universities with a mentor-facilitated, structured process for understanding and improving their persistence and completion rates.

A team of three instructors, two student success coaches, and two administrators makes up MTI's Academy Team. Through the team's activities within the Academy, MTI is learning how to define, track, and analyze our student data. We have then been able to use that analysis to drive a number of student success goals and strategies, including the following:

- A Student Success Committee comprised of faculty and staff has been formed to evaluate and monitor current retention and completion strategies and to identify areas needing improvement. This group, which meets twice a semester, has proven to be vital in our efforts to improve the completion and success of students.
- The Center for Student Success was created as a centralized resource for students to find solutions to their academic, personal, and career-related questions. Services included tutoring, study aids, advising and academic success plans, career coaching, disability services, diversity services, and counseling, to name just a few.
- We have implemented an online exit survey tool for students withdrawing from MTI to help us identify those factors influencing students' decision to leave before graduating. A similar tool was designed for graduating MTI students to help identify factors that contribute to persistence and completion. This is data we were not previously collecting which we hope will give us further insight into why our students leave and why they stay.
- A new model for delivering needed remediation for students with lower entrance exam scores in math was rolled out this fall. These students, who graduate at much lower rates than non-remedial students, are enrolled in the required math course as well as a corequisite remedial course where they receive extra support and instruction. Additional support is provided by staff in the Center for Student Success to assure these students will be successful in their required math course.
- Examination of student outcome data and input from subsequent student focus groups was used by faculty to determine targeted initiatives to address specific concerns in lower-performing programs. These initiatives included adjustments to curriculum, student schedules, and delivery of instruction.

MTI's work in the Persistence & Completion Academy will wrap up in the spring of 2018 when we submit our Impact Report and share our results with our fellow Academy participants. Of course, we know that the work will not end there; the processes and skills we have learned through the Academy will continue to help MTI collect and understand our data to guide future student success efforts.

Mitchell Technical Institute

The Center for Student Success

Campus Center, First Floor - 605.995.7195

The Center for Student Success supports students in learning the technical and career skills needed to successfully complete their postsecondary degrees.

Services provided include:

- Help with academic coursework, such as tutoring, study aids, research databases, print resources (i.e. textbooks, magazines, newspapers, etc.) and electronic media
- Assistance with course scheduling, program changes, graduation requirements, and withdrawing from a program or class
- Coaching for students to help them work through academic, personal, and career-related challenges
- Advising and Academic Success Plans
- Disability and learning services
- Diversity services
- Counseling
- Guidance on career decisions, internship selection, job searches, resumes, and interviews
- Information about MTI's Student Representative Board and other MTI clubs and activities
- Student ID cards, printing, copying and scanning services
- Computer access, including Internet, email, MyMTI and application software
- Guidance on where to access important campus services, such as Financial Aid, Business Office, Scholarships, etc.
- Information about off-campus resources, such as housing, healthcare, transportation, financial sources, student discounts, available memberships, childcare and other support services.
- Internship and job search assistance
- Resume and cover letter development and review
- Interview skills and preparation
- Job fairs and workshops
- Work study positions
- Changes in course registration (add/drop)
- Request to graduate
- Personal information changes

For more information: www.mitchelltech.edu/StudentSuccess

Advanced Technical Education at Mitchell Technical Institute

MTI is moving forward with a plan to establish a new division called Advanced Technical Education. We are finding through our conversations with advisory committee members, alumni, corporate education partners and industry supporters that there is a gap developing as entry level technicians gain experience in the workplace. There is becoming a greater need for additional education and training for these individuals to move up the career ladder.

Because they are focused on technical skill areas, these workers may not be in need of a baccalaureate degree, but require more education and training, either in specific skill areas or in management or leadership.

MTI has several initiatives in development to help bridge that gap:

- Registered Apprenticeships
- The South Dakota Leadership Academy
- Credit-bearing courses, workshops and specific skill training
- Flexible scheduling including weekends, short-term modules, summer workshops and seminars
- Technical Education at a Distance (TED) hybrid model using online and on-site experiential learning
- Access to MTI's world-class training facilities in many occupational areas

Depending upon the needs of the individual client or the sponsoring organization, each situation will be uniquely tailored. If the client seeks academic credit, MTI assures the related coursework adheres to commonly accepted practices in higher education and will transcribe credits earned that can be used toward obtaining an Associate of Applied Science degree or that may be transferred to another college or university.

Those who would benefit from Advanced Technical Education include technical graduates who have previously earned a certificate, diploma or Associate degree; those with enough life experience to have mastery of a particular occupation; those seeking a license or certificate as a journey worker or equivalent; or those individuals planning to move into a management position.

Advanced Technical Education . . . A new way to take your technical career to the next level!

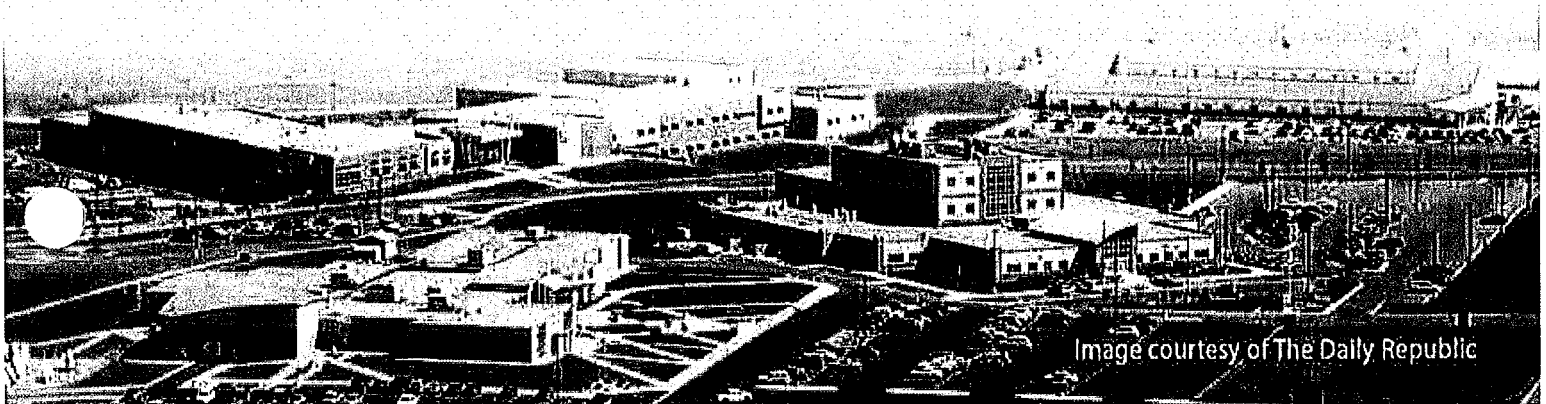


Image courtesy of The Daily Republic

MTI instructors adding to campus

By Jake Shama on Aug 11, 2016 at 6:57 p.m.



Some students at Mitchell Technical Institute will return from summer vacation to find a new classroom and workspace, courtesy of the school's instructors.

For about three weeks, professors from the architectural design and building construction and agriculture technology programs have been renovating the newest piece of the MTI campus: a building dedicated to the ButlerEdge Ag Technician program.

"We were kind of cramped in the space we were in before, and now we're expanding," said ButlerEdge Instructor Greg Kock, who has been on-site nearly full-time throughout the project.

The ButlerEdge program is made up of nine semesters, during which students alternate between on-campus classes and internships with a Butler Machinery dealer. On campus, students learn agriculture mechanics using AGCO equipment, which requires a lot of space.

"I think it's a great opportunity for us. Looking forward to seeing how the students react to this bigger facility, bigger area," Kock said. "I know they were kind of cramped before."

For two years, the program was housed inside the Nordby Trade Center. That building also houses the Farm Power Technology program, which teaches students how to work with automated machinery equipment.

"One thing about this type of work is once you start tearing something apart and putting something together, at the end of the day, it's not something you can just pack up and put away so another class can use the space," said Julie Brookbank, director of communications for MTI.

The new classroom and workspace is located next to the Pepsi-Cola Bottling Co., just west of South Ohlmann Street, which is almost 3 miles northwest of the MTI campus. Brookbank said the location wasn't ideal, but the structure provided the necessary space.

"In a perfect world, it would have been right adjacent to our campus. It truly came down to something we could find that was of appropriate size that had the kinds of bays and garage doors to accommodate the equipment," Brookbank said. "The facility is something that will be very useful for the program."

On July 19, MTI purchased the building, which has two bay doors on each side of a warehouse with an office-turned-classroom attached to the northeast corner.

Aside from the classroom space, which was completely remodeled, much of the required work is cosmetic, including wall cleaning and ceiling tile installation.

Jobs like plumbing and electrical work were contracted out, but the majority of the project was completed internally by instructors from MTI, like Ag Technology Instructor Rick Kriese and architectural design and building construction instructors Nick Baus and Jim Mahoney.

"It's coming along really good," Mahoney said. "Kind of a short timeline, but it should be ready to go, I would think (before school starts)."

Mahoney said he wouldn't have been able to complete the project during the school year, but he was happy to help out during the summer and leave a physical mark on MTI.

"That's kind of probably one of the main reasons I got into building in the first place. You love to see stuff when it's finished and say that you were a part of that," Mahoney said.

Mitchell Career and Technical Education Academy instructors Eric Schramm and Jed Schoenfelder and MTI maintenance employees Jeff Bruntz and Jimmie Nicolaus also assisted on the project.

Brookbank said hiring instructors didn't necessarily save the school money, but the instructors are expected to complete the project fairly quickly, and she likes the idea of helping them use their skills outside the classroom.

"Our building instructors have a lot of experience, but they don't often get to put that into practice," Brookbank said. "Then to also be able to partner with the MCTEA instructors, it was just kind of a fun project to put them all together and get their creativity going ... I think it's been a good project all the way around."