



CENTERS FOR EXCELLENCE UPDATE

Michigan Colleges Online

July 2017

Year in Review – Summer 2017

The Michigan Colleges Online (MCO) provides course sharing for students in need of specific courses as they progress through their academic paths. The new registration system continues to be refined and updated based on stakeholder/college staff input. The MCO provides additional services to member institutions, and the related activities of 2016-17 are highlighted below.

MCO Collaborative Programs Initiative – In July 2016, the MCCA became the fiscal agent for the MiRIS Consortium. MCO provides administrative and technical support. During the past year, the following activities were accomplished:

- This past summer, the MiRIS Consortium members (which included Grand Rapids, Grand Valley State University, Kellogg, Lansing, Lake Michigan, and Mid-Michigan) approved a new agreement that includes the MCO and MCCA. The agreement outlines:
 - The shared governance structure with representation of all charter members and the MCCA/MCO.
 - All colleges own the curriculum and hire faculty and admit their students.
 - MCCA facilitates the intercollegiate partnerships.
 - MCCA serves as the fiscal agent for the consortium – colleges share all costs of the consortium
 - MCO provides the learning management system and the course design standards.
 - All course registrations run through the MCO.
 - MCCA hired Dr. Amy Lee as the Director of the Collaborative Programs Initiative and that position is funded by the consortium members.
 - The Consortium Governance Council, includes an administrative representative (e.g.; dean, vice president) from each college and the MCCA/MCO, and provides strategic and financial decisions to support the collective best interest of the Consortium.
 - A Program Leadership Committee was established for the MRI program and includes the Program Director and/or Educational Coordinator for the program content from each member college. This committee is responsible for establishing and executing the policies, processes and procedures to effectively support the program and ensure successful student outcomes. The Program Leadership Committee reports to the Consortium Governance Council.
- In November 2016, the Joint Review Committee on Education in Radiologic Technology (JRCERT) site team visited Michigan to do their first review of the MRI Technologist Program. The MiRIS Consortium was later informed it had received accreditation from the JRCERT for the MRI program. MiRIS is the first ever accredited consortium, 13th accredited MRI program in the country, and the only accredited MRI program in the State of Michigan.
- The MiRIS Consortium completed the first full year with the MCCA as its fiscal agent. The transition has proved to support program and student success, by streamlining program procedures and processes.
- The MRI program began the 7th Cohort on May15, 2017 with 30 students. Cohort 6 is scheduled to graduate August 7, 2017 and board eligible on August 8th. The program's job placement rate is 99%, 87% retention rate, and 83% first attempt board pass rate for the past five years.
- The MiRIS Consortium has been working with five additional community colleges to offer MRI in their region within the next two years.

- In addition to new partnerships the MIRIS Consortium has been working on new program development in the areas of Computed Tomography (CT) and Electroencephalograms (EEG). Computed Tomography (CT) is expected to begin Fall 2017 and will provide a certificate and secondary credential eligibility to Registered Radiographers, Radiation Therapists, and Nuclear Med. Techs. The EEG program is scheduled to begin Spring 2018 and will provide graduates with an Associate degree in Applied Science and eligibility to sit for the EEG registry.

MCO Open Education Resources (OER) Initiative – The MCO OER Initiative seeks to increase student success, decrease student costs and foster inter-institutional sharing through a variety of activities to increase the usage of open educational resources. The following activities were completed this year with the help of the MCO OER Steering Committee which includes college staff from all 28 community colleges.

- The [MCO OER Repository](#), which officially launched in September 2016, includes open textbooks from multiple sources, as well as lectures, assessments, simulations etc., in the areas of Applied Science, Arts & Humanities, Business & Communication, Career & Technical Education, Education, English/Language Arts, History, Law, Life Science, Mathematics, Physical Science, Social Science and Psychology. There is also a Professional Development section devoted to OER including tutorials for faculty and staff. Everything in the repository has an open license and is freely available to faculty and students.
- Multiple training sessions were offered to faculty, instructional designers, librarians, and other staff that might be interested in using the repository. The training included group management, for librarians and other staff involved in curation, and a session on how to use Open Author - the publishing platform for open educational resources that will be shared in the MCO OER Repository.
- Throughout the year colleges have been curating and sharing resources for faculty and students to use. Many colleges offered MCO OER Repository launch events during college professional development days.
- The MCO OER Steering Committee confirmed the metrics that are used to quantify and report cost savings students are realizing with the faculty adoption of open textbooks and other open instructional materials.
- The MCO issued a Call for Proposals for high-impact and collaborative projects that support the use of open educational resources (OER) to increase student retention and student success and reduce instructional costs for students. The focus of this MCO OER initiative is to increase the number of OERs used across the state - in particular open textbooks. Proposals focused on the adoption of an open textbook, adaption of an existing open textbook, or development of a new open educational resource.
- MCO awarded grants to faculty who submitted winning proposals in one of 3 categories of projects. The projects were:

OER Adoption Category: Jonathan Oaks (Macomb Community College), Analytic Geometry & Calculus I; Sean Ruane (Northwestern Michigan College), Psychology; Sharon Hughes (Lansing Community College), Social Psychology; Brian Harding (Mott Community College) History.

OER Adaption category: Arthur Wohlwill (Lansing Community College), Cell Biology and Human Genetics; Arron Gulyas (Mott Community College), World History; Mindy Morton (Northwestern Community College), American History Pre-Columbian; Maria Gross (Mid-Michigan Community College) Psychology/Communications.

OER Development Category: Kari Richards (Lansing Community College), Spanish; Christine Conner (Lansing Community College), Fashion; Jennifer Fillion (Mott Community College) Forensic Science.

- Colleges began reporting to MCO their OER (Open Educational Resources) usage this past year.

- During the Fall 2016 semester there were 120 courses that utilized open textbooks at 14 community colleges providing an estimated savings of \$1,523,200 to 15,232 students. See the full report [here](#)
- During the Winter/Spring 2017 semester there were 118 courses (some with multiple sections) that utilized open textbooks at 14 community colleges providing an estimated savings of \$1,197,800 to community college students. For the full report click [here](#).
- The MCO OER Steering committee began work on the first 2017 MI OER Summit, which is scheduled for September 22, 2017. The Summit, sponsored by the MCO and hosted by Kellogg Community College, will be a statewide event focused on collaboration, networking, sharing and learning about Open Educational Resources (OER). Faculty, librarians, instructional designers and technologists, and administrators are encouraged to attend to learn more about models for adoption and use of OER, adapting or creating new open content, curating OER content, policies and funding of OER usage on campus, or implementation of OER use in a classroom.

MCO Help Desk Initiative – This past year, MCO conducted a pilot project with a third-party vendor to supply the colleges in the pilot with 24/7 augmented helpdesk services that extends the capacity of their existing helpdesk services model. In the early spring 2017, the colleges were asked about their experiences and if they wished to continue the pilot – four out of the five colleges were very interested. A call was extended to other institutions and three additional colleges have signed on to the discounted services contract through MCO.

State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement - At the end of 2016, the national State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (SARA) had signed on a total of 47 states and the District of Columbia. New Jersey, New York, and Connecticut are the newest members of SARA. The only states NOT members of SARA at this time are California, Florida and Massachusetts. The map of all participating SARA states and institutions may be viewed on the NC-SARA website. [MAP OF SARA STATES](#)

Additionally, the US Department of Education (ED) published final regulations in the December 19, 2016 [Federal Register](#) that amend the state authorization sections of the Institutional Eligibility regulations, as well as the required institutional disclosures for distance education and correspondence courses. The new rules, effective July 1, 2018, are almost unchanged from the proposed regulations issued in July 2016. On January 19, 2017, the Under Secretary of Education wrote a [letter](#) confirming that the US Department of Education supports the national SARA initiative and confirms the reciprocity definition that keeps a state from undermining the agreement. The final regulations that were released on December 19, 2016, left in doubt whether a state could enforce their own authorization regulations above and beyond the SARA. In his letter, Ted Mitchell made it clear that “..a distance education reciprocity agreement may require a State to meet the requirements and terms of that agreement in order for the State to participate in that agreement.” The clarification letter suggests that States may need to resolve their own body of law in order to maintain in good standing with a reciprocity agreement.

Other Activities – The MCO continues to also provide other services to member institutions. The following is a brief listing of some of the activities and services provided over the past year.

- **MCO Professional Development series** – The following webinars were offered to faculty and staff throughout the academic year. They were recorded and archived [here](#).
 - Open Educational Resources - Reducing Costs, Expanding Access, and Improving Engagement
 - The Internet of Things and Implications for Community Colleges
 - The Beauty of Some Rights Reserved - An Introduction to Creative Commons

- BlackBeltHelp IT help desk demonstration
 - New York Times Site Demonstration
 - MCO OER Repository – Hub Managers Training
 - MCO OER Repository – Open Author Training
- **MCO Virtual World** – The MCO virtual world (Second Life Island) was developed by and for college faculty to use in teaching, such as simulations, demonstrations, office hours, etc.
 - **Collaborative purchasing discounts** – The MCO negotiates collaborative purchases and membership discounts on the following products and services:
 - ReadSpeaker – A text- to-speech technology that gives a voice to websites, online courses, digital books, etc. Aligning with ADA accessibility guidelines, ReadSpeaker enhances the learning experience for all students and assists those who are dyslexic, ESL, learning disabled, ADHD, non-traditionals and poor readers. MCO’s collaborative statewide purchase reduces cost by leveraging a combined FTE. Colleges will get a savings of 25% off standard pricing.
 - NetTutor – US based online tutoring service for all students. MCO has negotiated a collaborative discount for colleges wishing to join – with about 15% off standard price
 - TechSmith – Michigan based company offering digital curriculum development tools. Collaborative discounts are providing all faculty and students with licenses at reduced costs close to 50% off standard pricing.
 - ZOOM – US-based web conferencing service. MCO has negotiated a savings of nearly 90% off standard pricing.
 - BlackBeltHelp – US-based help desk call center for augmenting after-hours, weekend and holiday college help desks. Licenses include a reduced cost close to 45% off standard rates.