



# Preserving the Vision of our Ancestors: An Educational Legacy

**COLLEGE OF THE MUSCOGEE NATION**

**PREPARED FOR THE HIGHER LEARNING  
COMMISSION OF NORTH CENTRAL  
ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES AND  
SCHOOLS**

**EMETAT EVKETECVKET  
SELF-STUDY REPORT**

**SITE VISIT MARCH 10-12, 2014**



# Table of Contents

<b>Executive Summary</b>	i
<b>College Overview</b>	
2014 CMN Self-Study.....	1
College of the Muscogee Nation Background.....	5
Relationship with Muscogee (Creek) Nation .....	7
Governance .....	8
Constitutional College of the Muscogee Nation.....	9
Partnership with Oklahoma State University .....	10
Muscogee (Creek) Nation .....	11
Achieving Independent Status.....	12
Campus .....	13
Academic Programs .....	16
Employee Demographics .....	17
Student Profile.....	18
Enrollment Trends and Credit Hour Production.....	20
Student Recruitment and Admissions .....	20
Resident Housing .....	22
Campus/Facility Maintenance.....	23
Quarterly Reports.....	24
Significant Events 2004-2014.....	25
<b>Criterion One. Mission</b>	
<b>Core Component 1.A.</b> .....	27
<b>Core Component 1.B.</b> .....	31
<b>Core Component 1.C.</b> .....	34
<b>Core Component 1.D.</b> .....	38
<b>Criterion Two. Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct</b>	
<b>Core Component 2.A.</b> .....	45
<b>Core Component 2.B.</b> .....	57
<b>Core Component 2.C.</b> .....	64
<b>Core Component 2.D.</b> .....	68
<b>Core Component 2.E.</b> .....	70
<b>Criterion Three. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support</b>	
<b>Core Component 3.A.</b> .....	74
<b>Core Component 3.B.</b> .....	79
<b>Core Component 3.C.</b> .....	87
<b>Core Component 3.D.</b> .....	98
<b>Core Component 3.E.</b> .....	117

## **Criterion Four. Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement**

<b>Core Component 4.A.</b> .....	122
<b>Core Component 4.B.</b> .....	130
<b>Core Component 4.C.</b> .....	137

## **Criterion Five. Resources, Planning and Institutional Effectiveness**

<b>Core Component 5.A.</b> .....	146
<b>Core Component 5.B.</b> .....	153
<b>Core Component 5.C.</b> .....	157
<b>Core Component 5.D.</b> .....	166

## **Supporting Documents**

<b>Strengths, Areas for Improvement and Recommendations</b> .....	171
<b>Response to Candidacy Site Review Team Determination and IAC Recommendations</b> .....	176
<b>Formal Request for Initial Accreditation</b> .....	181

## **Self-Study Appendices**

SS Appendix 1: College Charter

SS Appendix 2: Vita for President

SS Appendix 3: Administrative Staff Vitae  
Dean of Academic Affairs  
Director of Business Affairs

SS Appendix 4: Transcript (Revised)

SS Appendix 5: Sample Diploma

SS Appendix 6: Institutional Snapshot

SS Appendix 7: Glossary of Acronyms

## **List of Tables**

<b>1.</b>	CMN Faculty and Staff Demographics.....	18
<b>2.</b>	Five Year Budget Overview .....	30
<b>3.</b>	Consistency of Mission and Goals.....	37
<b>4.</b>	Graduates by Degree .....	75
<b>5.</b>	Educational Expenses by Category and Aid by Term: Fall 2009-Fall 2013.....	100
<b>6.</b>	Remedial/Developmental Math Courses Attended by CMN Students.....	104
<b>7.</b>	Library Collection Holdings.....	110
<b>8.</b>	Library Service Statistics.....	111
<b>9.</b>	Library Expenditures .....	114
<b>10.</b>	Student Satisfaction with CMN Experiences.....	127
<b>11.</b>	Retention and Graduation Rate.....	138
<b>12.</b>	CMN Budget for FY 2014.....	148
<b>13.</b>	Instructor/Course Survey Results for Summer 2013.....	167

## **List of Charts**

<b>1.</b>	CMN Student Profile Fall 2013. ....	19
<b>2.</b>	CMN Enrollment by Academic Year.....	20
<b>3.</b>	Financial Assistance to CMN Students.....	96

## **List of Figures**

1. Steering Committee Meeting. ....	2
2. College of the Muscogee Nation Campus Location. ....	5
3. Stompdance Demonstration on CMN Cultural Plaza. ....	15
4. CMN Students and Advisors Attending ONASHE Conference 2013. ....	35
5. Construction Sign for Student Center.....	50
6. Organizational Chart, Approved 7/8/13 .....	56
7. Master Site Plan .....	158

# Executive Summary

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## Executive Summary

The College of the Muscogee Nation (CMN) is the tribal institution of higher education for the Muscogee (Creek) Nation, a federally recognized Indian tribe. The college, which is located in Okmulgee, OK, the capital of the Muscogee Nation, has the same primary service area as the Creek Nation boundaries established through treaties with the U.S. Government. CMN, one of 37 tribal colleges throughout the United States offers Associate degrees in Gaming, Native American Studies, Police Science, and Tribal Services with Certificates offered in Gaming and Mvskoke Language Studies.

The Self-Study Report and the associated documents provided in the Electronic Resource Room serve as evidence in support of our Site Visit and request for Initial Accreditation from the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. Development of the report provided a college-wide opportunity for faculty and staff to participate in a formal, comprehensive, process of self-examination to document evidence of continual improvement and aspiration.

The College of the Muscogee Nation believes that it has provided sufficient evidence to ensure that it meets all the Criteria and Core Components for Initial Accreditation. As a unique institution with a tribally focused mission, CMN has prepared a report and provided documentation that articulates the distinctiveness of our college through Native cultural and historical perspectives. Within the Self-Study Report, the College Overview, HLC Criteria and Core Components Discussion are presented. Also included in the Self-Study but not addressed in the Executive Summary is the Response to Site Review Team Determination and Institution Actions Council Recommendations.

## Executive Summary

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**College Overview:** Opens the study by providing a background of the College, Muscogee (Creek) Nation, students and college staff characteristics. CMN is the Constitutional Tribal College of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation. The Tribal College has an enrollment of 184 students and employs 30 full-time employees, of which 7 are full-time faculty.

The Self-Study addresses HLC Criteria and Core Components, as follows:

**Criterion One: *Mission.*** The mission is articulated in terms of consistency with programs, budget alignment, emphasis in programs, and college context. Evidence in the budget overview reflects priorities consistent with the mission. Engagements with external constituencies are documented to demonstrate a relationship to the mission.

**Criterion Two: *Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct.*** The practice of integrity within the institution is emphasized and presents methods used for maintaining the highest level of conduct. The college presents itself clearly and completely in its documents and website to its students, external constituents and public. The governing board for the institution the Board of Regents acts independently and is sufficiently autonomous from external influences and abstains from involvement in day-to-day operations. The college has an Institutional Review Board (IRB) that has the responsibility of approving research to ensure that proper protocols are followed. Faculty members guide students in the ethics of research through instruction.

**Criterion Three: *Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources, and Support.*** The College is an associate degree granting institution with appropriate learning outcomes that are being implemented according to the assessment plan. All faculty are appropriately credentialed and have at least a degree one level higher than the level at which they teach. Student support services are being expanded with the addition of a Student Center that will provide food service, fitness center and a student commons. The library has continued to grow and develop, adding to

## Executive Summary

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its collections and increasing its circulation as well. Co-curricular activities are culturally focused and relevant.

**Criterion Four:** *Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement.* The initial needs assessment served as the basis of CMN academic programs with their feasibility continuing to be reviewed. Graduates have been surveyed about the quality of their CMN experience. A second survey has been validated and will be administered to assess the success of CMN alumni. An assessment plan has been implemented and phases of it are currently being applied. Data on student retention, persistence and completion are collected and have served as the basis for the Student Success Center.

**Criterion Five:** *Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness.* The resources and infrastructure are sufficient to effectively support the operations and programs. Budgeting for the college is a well-developed process; expenses are controlled, monitored and aligned with the mission and priorities. The college has an updated Strategic Plan which provides an effective strategy for its continued development and growth.

In the last part of the Self-Study, sections related to Strengths, Areas for Improvement and Recommendations, Response to Candidacy Site Review Team Determination and IAC Recommendations and Request for Initial Accreditation are presented. The Self-Study Appendices are provided as an attachment in a separate document.



## COLLEGE OVERVIEW



# College Overview

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## College Overview

The College of the Muscogee Nation Self-Study Report provides specific evidence that CMN seeks a culture of aspiration and continual improvement, consistent with the Higher Learning Commission's Criteria for Accreditation and the CMN Institutional Mission and Goals. The Self-Study document serves as partial fulfillment for the HLC requirements for Initial Accreditation. This report is the culmination of work conducted by all CMN faculty and staff, and demonstrates the commitment of the Muscogee Nation and its leaders to higher education for Native Americans. By highlighting successes and future plans for growth, this self-study will validate how the College is preserving the vision of our ancestors by continuing an educational legacy for future generations of Muscogee students.

### **2014 CMN Self-Study**

The process for developing the Self-Study report presented an excellent opportunity for faculty and staff to come together and discuss their specific responsibilities within the major functions of the institution, and to reflect on the character of CMN. After Candidacy was granted, the Self-Study for pursuing Initial Accreditation was initiated by the Steering Committee, composed of nine members and one student representative. Selected members were designated as Team Chair according to the Criterion for Accreditation, Federal Compliance and Assumed Practices. All employees of CMN participated in the self-study process, and were delegated tasks that would contribute to the completion of the Self-Study report.

The purpose of the self-study is to conduct a formal, comprehensive, tribal college-wide process of self-examination to ensure institutional effectiveness. The Self-Study addresses the five Criteria for Accreditation: Criterion One: Mission, Criterion Two: Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct, Criterion Three: Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and

# College Overview

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Support, Criterion Four: Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement and Criterion Five: Resources, Planning and Institutional Effectiveness.

Opening the Self-Study Report, this College Overview provides a background of the College, Muscogee (Creek) Nation, student and college characteristics and the CMN Self-Study process. The self-study process includes a discussion of Federal Compliance relating to higher education and rules and regulations that affect the administration of the college, as well as CMN students. An updated Eligibility Filing that reflects no changes since establishing Eligibility is provided. Assumed Practices in Document III are foundational to the Criteria for Accreditation, and are presented as facts.

The Updated Eligibility Filing, Assumed Practices and Federal Compliance materials are addressed in their respective documents, included in required materials for the Comprehensive Evaluation for Initial Accreditation – Materials Set I.

Figure 1: *Steering Committee Meeting*



# College Overview

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Writing the Self-Study was a collaborative process that involved a majority of Steering Committee members being named Chairs of selected Criterion Teams. It was the responsibility of each Criterion Chair to monitor and assist Criterion Team Members with individual assignments. The following are the Committees and Team Members of each:

## **Steering Committee for Initial Accreditation (SCIA)**

Dr. James King (Chair)	Robert Bible, President
Lacey Azbell (Co-Chair)	Monte Randall, Dean of Student Affairs
Angela Bunner, Dean of Academic Affairs	Karen Haught, Librarian
Jan Hart, Business Manager	Kathy McCormack, Admissions Officer
Mekko Tyner, Registrar,	Amber Burgess, Student

## **Criterion One: Mission**

James King (Chair)	Monte Randall
Karen Haught	Hannah Foreman
Lacey Azbell	

## **Criterion Two: Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct**

Jan Hart (Chair)	Tashina Gilley
Robert Bible	James Middleton
Kasey McKenzie	Linette Factor
Bryan Selsor	

## **Criterion Three: Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support**

Monte Randall (Chair)	Rita Courtwright
Norma Marshall	Diana Blackwell

## **Criterion Four: Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement**

Angela Bunner (Chair)	Trent Pembroke
Kathy McCormack	Cynthia Sanders
John MacClain	

## **Criterion Five: Resources, Planning and Institutional Effectiveness**

Mekko Tyner (Chair)	Daniel Barrett
Allan Colbert	Levi Payne
Ronnie Sands	Derek Parker

*\*\*List current to December 2, 2013*

The Steering Committee set as its first task, the development and adoption of the following Mission and Goals for the Self-Study. The Mission and Goals provide a framework

## College Overview

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for which CMN faculty and staff prepares for the report and onsite evaluation for achieving Initial Accreditation:

**Mission:** To examine CMN practices to ensure the continual improvement of the institution, and to prepare for the onsite evaluation for achieving Initial Accreditation. The CMN Self-Study Report will assess and articulate the College of the Muscogee Nation higher education program and unique cultural context within: 1.) Eligibility Requirements, 2.) All Assumed Practices within the Criteria, 3.) All the Criteria for Accreditation and Core Components and 4.) Federal Compliance.

**Goal:** Engage in collaborative dialogue to strengthen our institutional identity, heritage and effectiveness.

***Talk to others** (your colleagues, students, tribal leaders, community members and other college staff) about such things as the foundation of the tribal college. Find out about Muscogee people, find out about the history of the college. Use this and blend it into your discussion of related higher education function.*

**Goal:** Examine the internal and external environments and resources to support planned growth and development within the parameters of the CMN mission.

***Look at your surroundings** inside and outside the college. Become aware of those things that affect your responsibilities to the institution.*

**Goal:** Analyze data and relevant information that accurately reflects the college's congruency with each of the five Higher Learning Commission criteria.

***Study** the things that relate to your assignment and your role in the tribal college.*

**Goal:** Advance a learning-focused organization by interweaving core values into the self-study process.

***Think** about how the core values are incorporated into your functions at the College.*

**Goal:** Integrate individual perceptions and concepts of specified institutional functions and responsibilities into the CMN Self-Study Report.

***Follow** the established goals of the self-study process in completing your contribution.*

The basis for these goals is to provide an introductory context, and to engage faculty and staff in the comprehensive self-study process. The goals encourage CMN employees to start



## College Overview

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main building holds a library, eight classrooms, computer lab and staff and faculty offices. It is located a short walk from the Student Residence Units, which house up to 64 students.

Since being granted Candidacy with HLC, the College continues to experience significant growth, and has aspirations for creating an exemplary tribal college. An example of campus development involves the construction of a new Student Center (*Cokv Hecvlke Nakvftetv Cuko*), projected to be open for services in the summer of 2014. This facility will increase the capacity for becoming a full service institution, meeting the needs of a growing on-campus student body with a fitness center, expanded library, a science lab, food service area and a bookstore. As the new facility is completed, the library will move into the new center, and a Student Success Center (*Cokv Hecvlke Emvnicetv Etohkvlketv*) will take its vacated place in the main building.

Supported with seed money from two Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) grants totaling \$1.6 million; the Muscogee Nation allocated \$4 million for matching these funds to complete the Student Center. The Department of Energy additionally granted \$214,000 for Geo-Thermal wells. This campus expansion will allow for more auxiliary services to students and allow CMN to continually improve all student functions.

The foundation for ongoing development of the college originated with a Work Study Committee composed of tribal leaders. The committee, along with external constituencies, reviewed the first College Feasibility Needs Survey of Muscogee (Creek) citizens. Their responses were used to determine needs and establish priorities that have been used for much of the development taking place at the College. After being established, the College Regents approved a formal agreement with the OSUIT system. This allows CMN to have access to OSUIT facilities, administrative systems, technical support and faculty. As the partnership comes to a close, a transition/separation agreement is being negotiated for financial aid

## College Overview

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processing, transcripts and college credit provided by the Oklahoma State University system as CMN systems and policies are finalized.

Underscoring the College's mission to provide higher education opportunities for tribal citizens, CMN's enrollment count continually reflects a majority of Muscogee (Creek) citizens as students. The culturally focused setting geared toward Native Americans is emphasized by the number of students enrolled representing the Cherokee Nation, Seminole Nation, Choctaw Nation, Chickasaw Nation and other Indian tribes. The benefits from college planning and support of our external constituencies are evident in the community and the diverse, tribal student body.

### **Relationship with Muscogee (Creek) Nation**

The affiliation between the Muscogee (Creek) Nation and the College is described as the relationship between the government and its higher educational institution and in [NCA 11-040](#), "College of the Muscogee Nation Board of Regents." Further clarification of the relationship is cited in the Constitution of the Muscogee Nation-[Article XIII](#) that enhances CMN's stability, as the Constitution is the Supreme Law of the Muscogee Nation. The primary responsibility of the tribal government to the College in fulfilling the [Treaty of 1866](#) with the United States government by establishing an educational institution, providing funding and services for the benefit of Native American students. In addition to resources from the Nation, a number of tribal departments provide assistance to the College and its staff in the form of training, career development assistance, risk management services, law enforcement on Indian trust lands, payroll administration, personnel services and fringe benefit participation for College employees. CMN students benefit from the Employment and Training Program to support their education goals, while the college budget, funded by the Nation, supports student

# College Overview

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scholarships, student employment and tuition waivers.

Regular communication between the College and the tribal government is initiated through reports to the appropriate legislative committees to request funding, and report on CMN projects when requested. As outlined in NCA 11-040, interaction is enhanced with the Legislative Branch by having a non-voting ex-officio member attend Board of Regents meetings, acting as a liaison between the Board and the National Council. The ex-officio member may participate in discussions at the board meeting but shall not make motions or vote. The significance of this relationship is that even if the Principal Chief and/or the National Council were not personally in support of the College, the legal status within the Muscogee Nation cannot be revoked by either. Only the citizens, through an appropriate referendum, can amend that authority in the Muscogee (Creek) Constitution.

## **Governance**

The Board of Regents is the governing board of the College of the Muscogee Nation, guaranteed by the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Constitution and in the College Charter. Muscogee (Creek) Legislation NCA 11-040 and the [Regent's Bylaws](#) further clarify the power, duties and responsibility of the Board. Authority flows from the Board to the President to the major functional heads and individual staff based on college policy. A major responsibility of the Board is to employ the President and maintain oversight of the President at all times.

Enabling legislation contains Articles which are designed specifically to strengthen CMN Board of Regents governance in the following ways:

1. Reinforce the autonomy of the Board of Regents
2. Delegation of authority to the President to expend funds
3. Micromanagement (abstain from involvement in day-to-day operations)
4. Qualifications of the Board of Regents
5. Both the Principal Chief and National Council are required to seat Board of Regents members
6. Delegation of authority to the President to hire staff

## College Overview

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With these legislative amendments in place, the autonomy of the College and the Board of Regents is clear.

CMN institutional and educational integrity is protected at numerous levels within the context of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation. In addition to the governmental standards to which each branch of government adheres, there are tribal traditions on which current tribal law is based. With regard to the Board having the ability to govern, there are checks and balances in place within the tribal government to avoid external interference by elected tribal officials of constitutional entities such as the Tribal College. Since establishment, Principal Chiefs have all recognized the importance of their role in maintaining stability of the College by nominating Board members for confirmation as required by the legislation.

### **Constitutional College of the Muscogee Nation**

On November 7, 2009 Muscogee (Creek) citizens voted in support of the College of the Muscogee Nation becoming a constitutional college. Passage of this referendum resulted in the College Board of Regents becoming Article XIII in the Constitution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation. Muscogee (Creek) people strengthened the College by vesting CMN with the same Constitutional source of authority as the Executive, Legislative and Judicial Branches. CMN's foundation is backed by the Constitutional Act, Supreme Law of the Muscogee (Creek) people. As for all Boards in the Muscogee (Creek) Nation, even as the Principal Chief appoints members with the advice and consent of the National Council, the CMN Board of Regents remain independent- guaranteed by the Constitution, Legislation and the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Code.

# College Overview

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## ARTICLE XIII

### § 1. [Board of Regents of the College of the Muscogee Nation]

*The governing body of the Mvskoke Etlwv Nakcokv Mvhakv Svhlwecvt, otherwise known in the English language as the College of the Muscogee Nation, is hereby vested in the Board of Regents consisting of five members to be appointed by the Principal Chief of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation with the advice and consent of the National Council. The term of said Regents shall be in accordance with the rules set forth in the Charter and the By-laws of the Mvskoke Etlwv Nakcokv Mvhakv Svhlwecvt, the College of the Muscogee Nation. The exception is that the appointed members of the Board of Regents in office at the time of the adoption of this Amendment as provided by law at the time of this Amendment's ratification shall continue in office during the term for which they were appointed, and thereafter as provided herein. Members of the Board of Regents of the Mvskoke Etlwv Nakcokv Mvhakv Svhlwecvt, the College of the Muscogee Nation, shall be subject to removal from office only as provided by law for the removal of elective officers not liable to impeachment.*

Constitution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation  
2009 Enactment

### **Partnership with Oklahoma State University**

A formal [agreement](#) between the College of the Muscogee Nation and Oklahoma State University defines the relationship between the institutions and the expected roles and responsibilities of each, in a manner that both will understand and be accountable for their contributions. Standards are defined and adopted for consistent implementation, and to be cognizant of accreditation requirements for each institution. CMN's current partnership with Oklahoma State University system is recognized and supported by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education (OSRHE).

The significance of this partnership is that it allows the College of the Muscogee Nation to extend the benefits of these accredited institutions its students. Credits earned through the Tribal College are transcribed through both CMN and OSU, and are recognized for transfer at other higher education institutions. CMN students are also allowed to take advantage of the

## College Overview

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amenities on OSUIT's campus that are not currently available on the CMN campus, such as food services, wellness center and the book store. Also of note in this arrangement, is that CMN has contributed to an increased retention and graduation rate among Native American students on the OSUIT campus, as well as providing diversity in the curriculum and student body. Since the adoption of this agreement, it has proven to be a prime example of a mutually beneficial relationship for both institutions and their students.

A committee has established a transition plan for CMN to become an independent, freestanding institution. Included on this committee are the CMN Financial Aid Coordinator, Bursar and Registrar; OSUIT is represented by the Financial Aid Director, Bursar and Accountant Specialist. It is their charge to develop a plan that introduces a graduated number of students into the CMN financial aid process, with the intent of CMN controlling 100% of the financial aid process and related college functions upon achieving HLC Initial Accreditation. At that point, the institutions will agree to an articulation agreement to promote the ease of transfer between the two schools. As CMN has continued to expand its facilities and student services it is now more capable of being a full-service institution, offering amenities enjoyed by students through the partnership. Through its pursuit of Accreditation, the College recognizes the importance of offering quality services to its students independently.

### **Muscogee (Creek) Nation**

The Muscogee (Creek) Nation is a sovereign nation that has a treaty relationship with the United States government dating back to 1790. Beginning with the 1866 Creek Treaty, the United States has recognized the right of “the Muscogee (Creek) Nation to erect buildings within the Creek country for educational purposes...” Significant aspects of the Muscogee Nation that demonstrate the environment in which the College was developed:

## College Overview

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- The Muscogee (Creek) Nation is a sound tripartite tribal government. Muscogee people have always maintained a democracy since the 1860's, originally with the bicameral form of government composed of The House of Kings and The House of Warrior and the Executive Branch headed by the Principal Chief. District courts were located throughout the Nation with law enforcement under the responsibility of the Creek Lighthorsemen.
- MCN has distinct separation of powers among the three branches of government: Executive, Legislative and Judicial to ensure for the College full compliance with the constitution and laws of the Muscogee Nation.
- The financial ability of the tribal government underscores the stability and inherent capacity within the MCN government to provide funding for the college on a continuing basis. The Muscogee comprehensive tribal budget has steadily grown with the recent 2013 budget being \$235 million, and in comparison the Tribal College budget has grown equally as well, to the current amount of \$4.16 million. Although this appropriation has been growing annually, an analysis of the MCN Comprehensive Annual Budget (CAB) reveals that the 2013 Tribal College budget was just a small fraction (1.7%) of the 2013 annual budget. In addition, the financial capacity of the Creek Nation is much greater when factoring in investments, capital assets and other revenue sources.
- Muscogee (Creek) Nation tribal support is substantially vested in, and dedicated to the success of the College. The tribe has provided more than \$14 million for a 15 acre campus, the first building, student housing and student center; therefore, this capital commitment is proof of the tribe's continued support of the college mission.
- The Muscogee (Creek) Nation has provided scholarship funds for Creek students and other Federally Recognized tribal members, which further indicates the dedication of the tribe to CMN's success.

Each of the conditions discussed show the strength of the governmental relationship the College of the Muscogee and the Muscogee (Creek) Nation maintain, and continue to foster and grow for the future success of the tribal college.

### **Achieving Independent Status**

The College entered into an agreement with Oklahoma State University Institute of Technology in 2007, to extend the benefits of the accredited institution to CMN students. As the

## College Overview

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College continues to grow and develop into a wholly self-sufficient institution of higher education, a plan for separation from the OSU system has been implemented. Ongoing discussion of the transition is facilitated through committee meetings on a regular basis. Each specific area of the agreement was considered and a plan of action has been developed.

Financial aid, housing, food services, book store usage, availability of the fitness center are issues addressed until Title IV Financial Aid is administered and CMN's Student Center is completed.

As mentioned previously, CMN and OSUIT have begun implementing a transition plan for the College to become an independent, freestanding institution. A committee consisting of staff from both institutions has oversight responsibility of the transition for CMN to expand control of its college functions including financial aid, bookstore, fitness center, food service. As CMN begins offering more services, amenities in-house to its students and becomes accredited, it will have a greater opportunity to successfully recruit students and grow the institution.

### **Campus**

The College of the Muscogee Nation is located at 2170 Raven Circle on a beautiful 25 acre campus in Okmulgee, Oklahoma. The developing campus is a milestone as CMN grows and implements services to become a fully operational college. The CMN campus features many elements of Muscogee (Creek) culture, and these are interwoven into the daily experiences of students on campus.

It is generally our students' first experience with a tribal college and culturally focused curriculum when they matriculate. The campus and personnel strive to incorporate these cultural elements in all aspects of curriculum and services provided by CMN. Students are taught by Native (in most cases Muscogee) faculty, and learn in classrooms filled with other Muscogee students. Native administrators provide services for students. All across campus there are

## College Overview

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aspects of Native culture and history, which reinforce and validate academic culture with a Native influence.

The campus is designed to educate about Muscogee life. Educational and cultural features range from the development of the Muscogee Garden, the marquee sign accented with native stone proudly displaying the College name in Creek language and the very building in which classes are held that use Muscogee language and designs. The campus design has buildings configured in a circular pattern with the center of the campus reserved for cultural activities. An intentional fluidity is represented in the architecture of the inaugural building and with the mound simulation surrounding the cultural plaza. This wind-inspired physical setting shapes the campus character.

Muscogee oral history tells us that the tribal clans and the mound were at the core of the origination of the Muscogee (Creek)—these represent our Indigenous roots. On the Western face of the Administration Building is a pergola inspired by traditional arbors, with tables and benches below. This is an outdoor gathering place for studying, cedar flute making or other activities for students, faculty and staff. The presence of the Muscogee language throughout the campus demonstrates the importance of the language to the College and Muscogee people.

These details merge in providing a cultural atmosphere for classes, administrative offices and residence units. Throughout the spacious hallways and commons area, students can be heard visiting with each other, perhaps sharing a snack or watching the news on the television in the lobby. Sunlight streams in through the glass wall and western entrance which overlooks the grassy clearing, expanse of sky, a small retention pond and the trees in the distance. In the southwest section of the campus a Muscogee garden is designated for the Native American Studies classes to promote an awareness of plants native to the Muscogee Nation and its people.

## College Overview

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The eastern part of the campus has been landscaped with seven indigenous plant beds, numerous trees and shrubs to accent the natural aspects of the college setting.

These physical aspects of the campus echo the social, cultural and intellectual relationships that form our learning community - one which validates the importance of Mvskoke traditional knowledge and life ways.

Figure 3: *StompDance Demonstration on CMN Cultural Plaza during Native American History Month*



Using available funding from Muscogee (Creek) Nation, and applying for and receiving grant monies from Housing and Urban Development and Department of Energy, the development of CMN's campus has emerged through three phases of construction. Phase I of development was CMN's inaugural building, a 22,000 square foot facility that includes a library, seven classrooms equipped with SmartBoards, computer lab, offices, conference room and a commons area. Phase II followed in 2011, and was 16 Student Residence Units which accommodates 64 students. Each unit consists of two-bedrooms, two bathrooms and a living

## College Overview

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room. All units are equipped with a telephone, cable television and internet. A laundry facility is also located on site. The third phase of development began in summer 2013, with the construction of the Student Center.

### **Academic Programs**

To support its mission, CMN's academic programs are dedicated to maintaining exemplary academic programs through curriculum development, assessment, experiential learning and social engagement. CMN offers four associate degrees and two certificate programs. Each academic program focuses on preparing students for future employment in tribal settings. Although learning can be applied to non-tribal contexts, the specialized education that is required in specific degree programs prepares graduates that are particularly suited for career opportunities in tribal sectors.

Students receive the following credit hours in order to fulfill the requirements for program completion:

- 27-39 required general education credit hours in the associate programs;
- 27-33 required core/specialized credit hours in the associate programs; and
- 21-25 required core credit hours in the certificate programs.

Career opportunities relevant to Native communities are a feature of all of our degree programs.

When recruiters attend community events and public school college days, they encourage potential students to attend college, more specifically CMN, by emphasizing the benefits of these degree programs. Specifics of the Associate Degree and Certificate Programs are as follows:

- *Gaming*: For students looking to join one of the nation's fastest growing entertainment industries, tribal gaming (61 credit hours).
- *Police Science*: For students pursuing a career in law enforcement (65 credit hours).
- *Native American Studies*: For students seeking employment in tribal language programs, cultural retention and for continuing their studies in Native history, culture and language (66 credit hours).
- *Tribal Services*: For students seeking a rewarding career in Native American programs and tribal enterprises (66 credit hours).

# College Overview

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## Certificate Programs:

- *Gaming*: Designed for students who prefer specialized courses only and not the full spectrum of courses for the Associate degree (24 credit hours).
- *Mvskoke Language Studies*: Designed for students who prefer an in-depth study of the tribal language only (21 credit hours).

With more than 95 courses offered in the academic and certificate programs, CMN helps students define their academic path. Since CMN offers smaller class sizes with an average enrollment of 12-15 students, there are many opportunities for individualized instruction and attention, subsequently maximizing personal engagement from our faculty.

## Employee Demographics

As of November 12, 2013, the College employed 30 individuals as faculty and staff. Of those, seven are faculty and 23 are staff. There are ten administrative staff members and 13 support staff. The faculty profile is as follows: two males, five females, six are Native Americans and five of those are Muscogee (Creek). The average age for all CMN staff is 41.3 years, while the average age for faculty is 46.5 years.

Of the 23 remaining personnel, ten are administrative and 13 are support staff. The staff profile is as follows: 13 males and ten females, 20 are Native Americans with 13 being Muscogee (Creek), two Caucasian and one African-American.

Educational achievement of faculty and staff is as follows: three Doctorates, eight Masters, nine Bachelors, four Associates and six High School Diplomas. With regard to residence, 24 employees reside within the boundaries of the service area of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation and six live outside the boundaries

# College Overview

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Table 1: *CMN Faculty and Staff Demographics*

Classification	Number	Gender		Ethnicity			Average Age	Average Length of Employment
		Male	Female	NA	C	AA		
<b>Administrative Staff</b>	10	6	4	9	1	0	42.2	3.8
<b>Faculty</b>	7	2	5	6	1	0	46.6	3.3
<b>Support Staff</b>	13	7	6	11	1	1	37.9	1.8
<b>Total</b>	30	15	15	26	3	1	42.2	3.0

*Source: Business Affairs 11/12/13*

## Student Profile

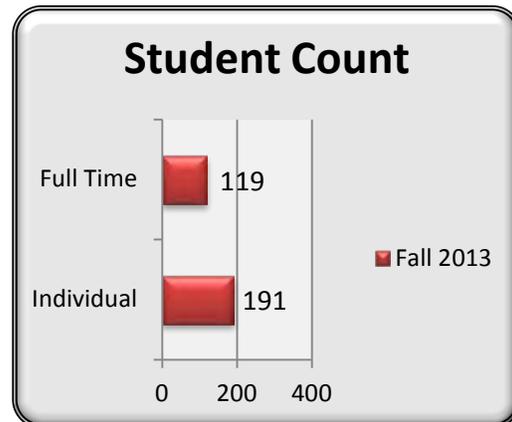
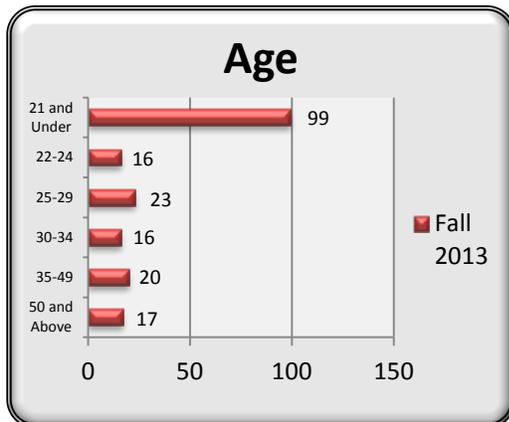
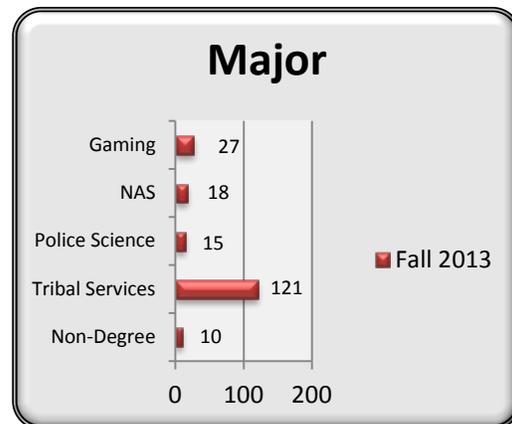
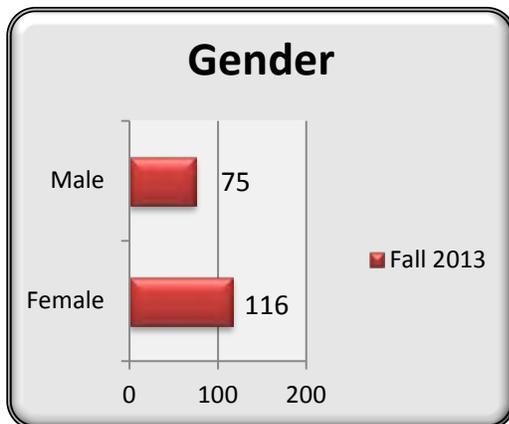
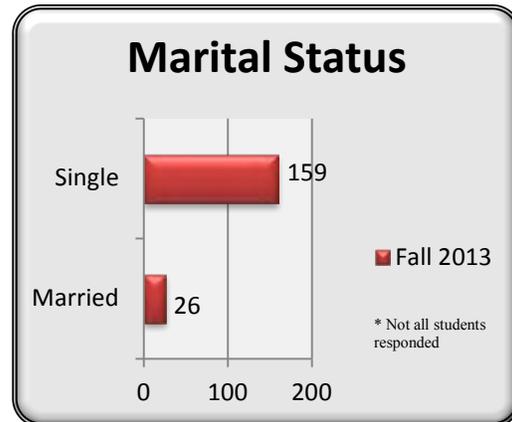
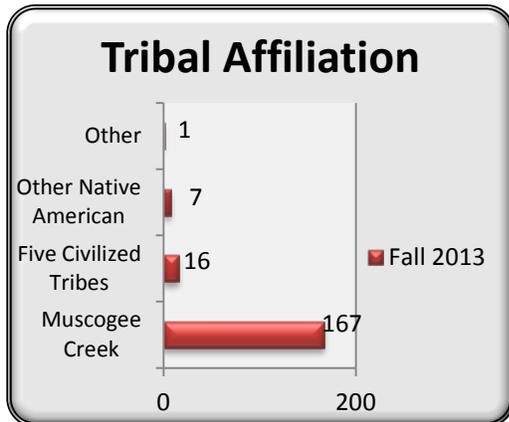
One hundred ninety-one (191) students enrolled in the fall of 2013. Tribal Services remains the degree program with the highest enrollment with 121 students (63%) of the total, followed by Gaming with 27 students (22%). Native American Studies enrolled 18 (15%) of the total, Police Science at 15 (12%) and Non-degree majors had ten (8%).

Additional demographic characteristics are: 116 (61%) of the student body during the Fall 13 term were female; 119 (62%) were full time and 190 (99%) are Native American, of which 167 (87%) were Muscogee (Creek). The age breakdown of the student population indicates that 99 (52%) students are in the age range 21 and under, with the five remaining ranges generally revealing an equal distribution of students. Marital status for students shows 159 (83%) identifying as single.

General characteristics of the student body are as follows: the majority is enrolled fulltime, female, age 21 and under, single, enrolled Muscogee (Creek) citizens and majoring in Tribal Services. The student profile is representative of all students enrolled in the fall 2013 term, and are illustrated in the graphs following.

# College Overview

Chart 1: *CMN Student Profile Fall 2013*



Source: Registrar 9/5/13

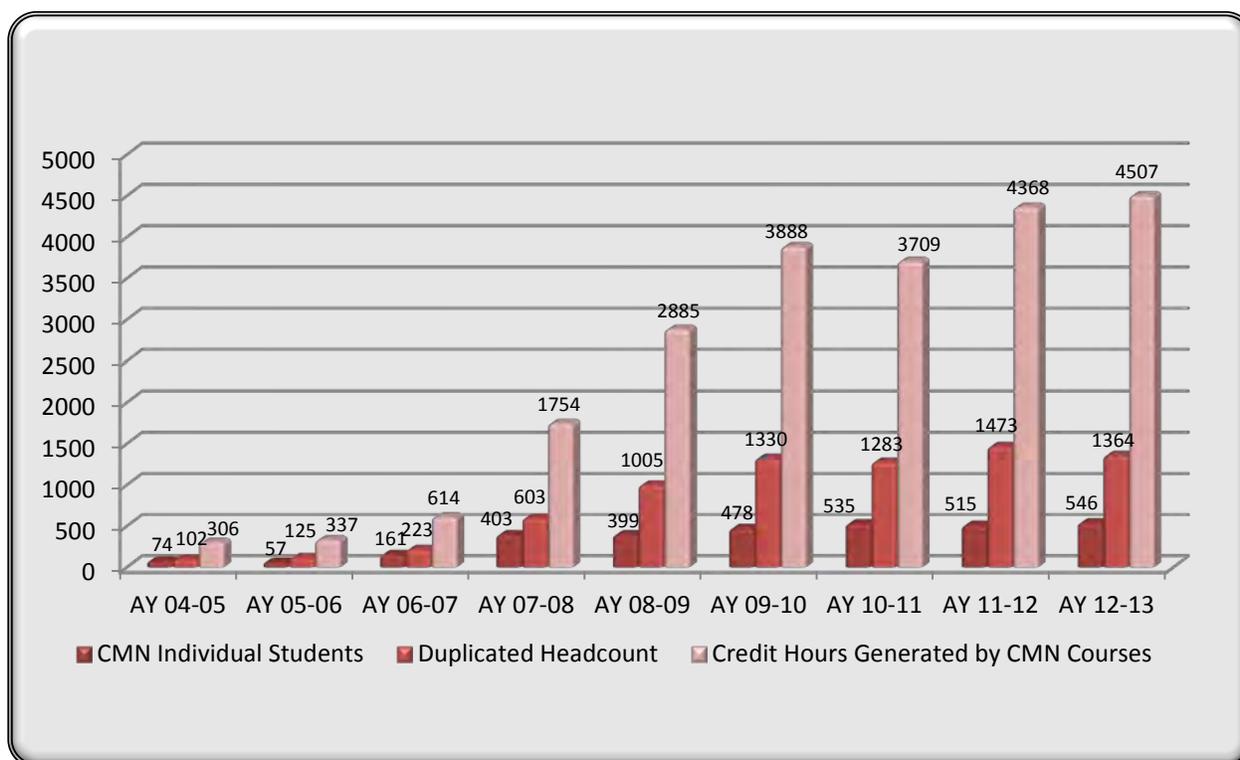
# College Overview

## Enrollment Trends and Credit Hour Production

In Academic Year 2011-12, CMN had 515 students, duplicated headcount of 1,473 and generated 4,368 credit hours. CMN saw a decrease in students by 20, increase in duplicated headcount by 190 and an increase in hours generated by 659 from the previous Academic year 2010-11.

In Academic Year 2012-13, CMN had 546 students, duplicated headcount of 1,364 and generated 4,507 hours. CMN experienced an increase in students by 31, decrease in duplicated headcount by 109 and increase in hours generated by 139 from the previous Academic year.

Chart 2: *CMN Enrollment by Academic Year*



Source: Registrar 11/12/13

## Student Recruitment and Admissions

Within the last two years, the College has seen an increase among traditional students enrolling at CMN. The transition has been to a more non-traditional student from an older age

## College Overview

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group that may be working full-time and also seeking the educational opportunities that CMN offers. Surveying graduates and the student body has shown this trend, and it is indicated through the [Survey Report](#), that the shift will continue through future graduates.

More emphasis has been placed on attending recruiting events held for this younger demographic, as well as networking with high school counselors and Indian Education professionals within the public school systems in this area. The College experienced its largest enrollment in fall 2012, with a slight drop in enrollment for the 2013-14 school term.

Recruitment, one of the main functions of the Student Affairs office is outlined in the CMN [Strategic Plan](#). College faculty and staff engage in student recruitment by participating in high school visits, attending college fairs, conferences and open houses. Recruitment initiatives to increase enrollment include updating brochures, the production of an updated recruitment video and greater visibility within the local community. Increasing visibility includes distributing printed materials to potential students and their parents, presenting information and videos highlighting the college's programs, activities aimed at addressing community needs, documenting civic responsibility and emphasizing CMN Core Values. Representatives attending recruitment activities provide information about the four degree programs offered at CMN, student life, financial aid and admission.

Specific functions attended by CMN staff and faculty are as follows: American Indian Higher Education Forum, Northeastern State University, Annual Pink Party hosted by MCN Division of Health, Sapulpa College Fair, Broken Arrow Native College Night, College Goal Sunday sponsored by the College and the Muscogee Creek Nation, Choctaw Career Fair, College of the Muscogee Nation Career Fair, Youth Leadership Summit, Indian Youth Career Day,

## College Overview

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National Congress of the American Indian (NCAI) Annual Convention and Indian Education Summit.

Admission to the College of the Muscogee Nation is managed through the CMN Admissions and Records Office. Applications are available at the admissions office or on CMN's website, [www.mvsktc.org](http://www.mvsktc.org). Until CMN achieves Initial Accreditation, students apply for admission to both CMN and OSUIT through a partnership with Oklahoma State University Institute of Technology (OSUIT). Students initiate the admission process with any degree coordinator, or with the CMN Admissions and Records Office. The Advisement and Enrollment Handbook (currently in revision) outlines the process and provides a culturally-based perspective. Applicants must submit all additional necessary documents as listed in the [Catalog](#), [Student Handbook](#) and the CMN website. First-time students are expected to meet minimum levels of competency in reading, writing, math and science. Placement in appropriate classes will be based on scores obtained on the ACT or assessment tests.

### **Resident Housing**

The Student Housing Complex is a 16 unit co-ed setup, furnished with two bedrooms, living areas and private baths. Each unit houses four students and is equipped with local telephone service, cable and internet connection. In order to move-in to a housing unit, the prospective student must check-in with the CMN Student Housing Office and complete a HUD Housing Contract with documentation showing enrollment in 12 credit hours. A HUD Contract is required to be in compliance with HUD funding requirements, which was used for construction. An NCIC Background check is done on each student applying for housing.

Student Housing has a full-time Housing Manager who lives on site and is on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week while CMN is in session. The Housing Manager's main

## College Overview

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responsibilities include advising Student-Residents, communicating with Student-Residents and visitors, enforcing rules and regulations, assisting Student-Residents with lost keys, maintenance, repairs, mail/packages and reporting emergencies. Other responsibilities include supervising and training Student-Resident workers.

All Student-Residents have a voice in the Student Housing Organization, cultural programming and environmental improvements. The Student Housing Organization (SHO) serves as the unifying body for the Student-Residents by promoting leadership and community involvement. Listed are some of the SHO activities: Welcome Back Luncheon, Indian Taco Dinner Night, Seasonal outside evening activities, Free Movie Night, Student Cook Out, evening activities, holiday celebrations, Behavioral Health Student Game Night, Behavioral Health Sex/HIV Awareness (provided for all new students), Behavioral Health QPR Suicide Prevention training and Behavioral Health Cultural Arts.

### **Campus/Facility Maintenance**

This college is proud of its unique and culturally significant campus. Dedication to preserving the quality of all aspects of the campus is reflected in the objectives of the maintenance department. Maintenance personnel are responsible for the day to day upkeep of the grounds, facilities and operation of the buildings. Facilities and maintenance personnel have a weekly and monthly checklist of duties that must be performed in all facilities, which not only involve thorough cleaning of all offices and common areas, but also checking structures. Another duty encompasses maintenance on vehicles.

Maintenance and janitorial staff have a regular routine to keep facilities neat, orderly and functioning properly. Weekly disinfection of all classrooms, trashcans, door handles and classroom desks ensures a healthy environment for our students and guests. Along with other

## College Overview

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weekly tasks, the windows are washed inside and out, the lobby area is mopped and buffed and mowing is done on areas not covered by the contracted landscaping service. Carpets and rugs are shampooed monthly, as well as vehicle maintenance and a thorough check of air conditioning units, electrical and lighting fixtures. Floors are stripped and waxed annually. Landscaping and grass maintenance is handled weekly through a landscaping service, in order to keep the grounds looking fresh and well-manicured.

Having students living in on-campus housing means their needs are of utmost importance, and contribute to a positive learning environment. Students expect healthy, comfortable, state of the art facilities to aid in their successful completion of a higher education. The maintenance department and personnel focus their efforts to assure the safety and comfort of all students and employees. Both departments strive to effectively and efficiently make improvements and maintain the beauty of the campus. Our employees, facilities and departments rival other colleges in our class, and we rise above and go beyond to maintain facilities of which all can be proud.

### **Quarterly Reports**

Departments within the College produce quarterly reports, which are turned in to the President's office. These reports provide a snapshot of improvements and setbacks experienced in the respective department during the quarter. Compiled as a quarterly report of the College of the Muscogee Nation, the document is sent to the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Executive Branch - Office of the Principal Chief to be included in his quarterly presentation to the Legislative body, Muscogee (Creek) Nation Council.

# College Overview

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An Annual Report for the College was created through committee meetings and planning sessions in 2013. It is anticipated that this report will be finalized and published in 2014, and will be sent to relevant external and internal constituencies.

## **Significant Events**

While CMN has only been in existence for ten years, there are many important events that have happened since it has been established. CMN's steady progress toward becoming an accredited institution as well as a central figure in the community has contributed to our college's vision of a tribal and global society. The following list outlines the events from 2004 to November 2013:

### 2004-2006

- First classes Fall 2004
- Academic year 2004-2005, 74 students enrolled in nine classes
- Tribal Legislation NCA 11-040 established the Tribal College
- Board of Regents held its first meeting in February 2005
- First building purchased located at 600 N. Mission - 2006
- Chartered July 2006
- First graduate May 2006 with an A.A.S. in Police Science

### 2007-2009

- Signed Partnership Agreement with OSU system - 2007
- Received HUD grant for first college building on its campus - 2007
- Native American Student Association (NASA) organized Spring - 2008
- Purchased 15 acres for the tribal college campus – 2008
- First graduation, May 2008: 12 degrees and 1 certificate awarded
- Tribal Constitution amended to include CMN – 2009

### 2010-2012

- Submitted Preliminary Information Form to HLC - October 1, 2010
- Held a dedication completing Phase I of Campus Construction with the Education/Administration Building - December 17, 2010
- Began construction on Phase II of Campus Construction for student housing - March 2011
- First graduation at the tribal college's own campus - April 2011
- HLC approves Preliminary Information Form and On-Site Visit - June 7, 2011
- HLC's official On-Site visit for Self-Study - May 21-23, 2012

## College Overview

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- Member, American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC) October 2012
- HLC Board of Trustees grant Candidacy - November 2012

### 2013-Present

- Presented college update to Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education - March 2013
- Bureau of Indian Education conducted a site visit to establish TCU status for CMN - May 2013
- Received Title III funding from US Department of Education for Student Success Center - May, 2013
- Began phase III of campus construction, a 20,000 square foot Student Center/Library building - June 2013
- Began process to participate in Title IV Federal Financial student aid application - 2013
- Approved to participate in American Indian College Fund - September 2013
- Received funding from USDA for Tribal Land Grant Institutions – September 2013
- Purchased ten acres to expand the CMN campus, to a total of 25 acres - December 2013



## MISSION

## Criterion One: Mission

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### Criterion One: Mission

***Core Component I.A.:*** *The institution's mission is broadly understood within the institution and guides its operations.*

***I.A.1. The mission statement is developed through a process suited to the nature and culture of the institution and is adopted by the governing board.***

In 2005, CMN staff began working on mission documents beginning with the Mission Statement, the cornerstone for the College, and other mission documents which were later developed. A draft of the Mission Statement was discussed and thoroughly reviewed by the Board of Regents for cultural features relevant to Muscogee (Creek) values. Only after the Board was satisfied that it would have a positive impact on Muscogee people did they adopt the Mission Statement.

The Philosophy, Vision Statement and Goals of the College of the Muscogee Nation were also developed through transcribed discussions of CMN employees and Regents, using the Mission Statement as framework for these documents. Through a survey of students and discussion with faculty, staff and Regents in 2008, the Core Values were established to reflect CMN's emphasis on Muscogee values, language and higher education throughout the institution. Commitment to students is clearly presented throughout the mission documents - Cultural Context, Mission Statement, Philosophy, Vision Statement, Core Values and College Goals, all of which are provided to the public.

CMN's Mission Statement is intended to be reviewed and amended as defined in the Strategic Plan. The Board recognizes the need to change and adapt to best fit students' needs and has set forth guidelines through their bylaws for updating the mission as needed. As the College continues to develop and identify changes in the educational needs of the student population, mission documents will be reviewed and adapted if necessary during future

## Criterion One: Mission

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discussions of the Regents. The Mission Statement has remained unchanged since being adopted on April 13, 2005 and reads as follows:

*The College of the Muscogee Nation is the institution of higher education for the Muscogee Creek Nation emphasizing native cultures, values, language, and self-determination.*

*The College will provide a positive learning environment for tribal and non-tribal students as citizens of a tribal and global society supported by teaching excellence and will offer exemplary academic programs that meet student, tribal, and societal needs.*

*Through instructional quality and visionary leadership, the College of the Muscogee Nation will encourage life-long learners, for personal growth, professional development, and intellectual advancement.*

Since being adopted, the Mission has guided college development. This guiding statement gave rise to Goals of the College of the Muscogee Nation, Philosophy, Vision Statement, Cultural Context and Core Values.

### ***1.A.2. The institution's academic programs, student support services and enrollment profile are consistent with its stated mission.***

The institutional Mission clearly highlights the College of the Muscogee Nation as a tribal college. Features of the mission reminds us of the uniqueness involving the Native community, culture, history and language reflected in both the mission and goals that reinforce CMN's primary focus. Evidence within the academic programs (Native faculty and tribal sensitive degrees/certificates and courses), student support services (Scholarships for Native students, Native cultural co-curricular activities and awareness) and enrollment profile (majority of students are Native) indicate the uniqueness of the college and show representativeness of the mission. Further analysis of the College goals reveal specific functions parallel to this mission, including: Academics, Accessible Educational Opportunities, Co-curricular Activities, Quality Educational Programs, Career Opportunities

## Criterion One: Mission

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and Safe and Secure Campus which are all consistent with the institutional mission. All of these goals through the mission touch everyone at the college including students, faculty, staff and the Board of Regents.

### ***1.A.3. The institution's planning and budgeting priorities align with and support the mission.***

Consistent with governmental budget processes, budgets for the College are developed by following policy of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation. According to tribal law, an Executive Order from the Principal Chief's office directs the Controller to initiate the budgeting process. Every fiscal year the college prepares its budget consistent with requirements detailed in the Budget Call, which is developed and disseminated from the Controller. Basic cost considerations include fringe benefit rate, indirect cost rate, travel for in state and out of state, per diem and other overhead costs. The budget for the College is based on historical costs and functional activities planned for the future fiscal year.

Budgeting for programs at CMN is guided by the Mission, and the goals associated with fulfilling that mission. Offering exemplary academic programs through quality instruction is emphasized in the mission, and to fulfill that aspect of the mission, the instruction and academic affairs functions have steadily increased. Since 2009, the allocation for instruction and Academic Affairs has increased by \$491,015 from \$483,792 to \$974,807 in 2013, a 101.5% increase.

Supporting a positive learning environment is a high priority for CMN and is emphasized in the Mission, as well as budgeting. To support the positive learning environment, Student Affairs has shown a large budget increase as more student programs are offered. Since 2009, allocation for Student Affairs has increased by \$585,704 from \$152,446 to \$738,150 in 2013, a 384.2% increase.

## Criterion One: Mission

Visionary leadership is a critical aspect of the Mission Statement and is reflected in the budget function of Business Affairs and Operations. This particular function represents the provision of current technology, implementation of the Strategic Plan and the capacity of the institution to effectively operate on a daily basis. Since 2009, the allocation for Business Affairs and Operations has increased by \$427,113 from \$1,013,441 to \$1,440,554 in 2013, a 42.1% increase.

Scholarships are provided in the budget to fulfill the mission of encouraging life-long learners. Students receiving scholarships are provided financial aid that encourages them to pursue further education and career opportunities. Since 2009, the allocation for Scholarships has increased by \$281,518 from \$732,913 to \$1,014,431 in 2013, a 38.4% increase.

Table 2: *Five Year Budget Overview*

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
MCN Appropriation	2,382,592	2,432,592	3,328,846	3,435,378	4,167,942
Grants		25,000	32,000		55,000
Total Budget	2,382,592	2,457,592	3,360,846	3,435,378	4,222,942
<b>Appropriation % of Budget</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>99.0%</b>	<b>99.0%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>98.7%</b>
<b>By Function, in dollar amount:</b>					
Instruction	326,343	397,787	482,492	491,079	519,020
Academic Affairs	157,449	281,692	433,551	324,936	455,787
Student Affairs	152,446	176,374	414,680	668,073	738,150
Business Affairs	772,500	668,980	786,317	809,596	870,869
Operation	240,941	174,846	298,875	228,763	569,685
Scholarships	732,913	732,913	912,931	912,931	1,014,431
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,382,592</b>	<b>2,432,592</b>	<b>3,328,846</b>	<b>3,435,378</b>	<b>4,167,942</b>
<b>By Function, % of budget:</b>					
Instruction	13.7%	16.4%	14.5%	14.3%	12.5%
Academic Affairs	6.6%	11.6%	13.0%	9.5%	10.9%
Student Affairs	6.4%	7.2%	12.5%	19.4%	17.7%
Business Affairs	32.4%	27.5%	23.6%	23.5%	20.9%
Operation	10.1%	7.2%	9.0%	6.7%	13.7%
Scholarships	30.8%	30.1%	27.4%	26.6%	24.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Source: Business Affairs 9/18/13*

## Criterion One: Mission

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These examples indicate that the College aligns budgeting priorities with the Mission Statement, and CMN is ensuring that all aspects of the college are properly equipped and generously support the continued achievement of the mission.

***Core Component 1.B: The mission is articulated publicly.***

***1.B.1. The institution clearly articulates its mission through one or more public documents, such as statements of purpose, vision, values, goals, plans or institutional priorities.***

Recognizing the importance of articulating our mission to students, and the translation into the daily functions of the college, the Mission Statement is displayed publicly on the outdoor marquee, on large posters in hallways and in all classrooms. After formally adopting the Mission Statement, it was used as the foundation by which goals for the college were established. These goals have shaped all aspects of the college curriculum, degree programs and how the College responds to the needs of the student body.

Because CMN has clearly articulated its Mission, students understand that they are expected to comply with ideals set forth in the mission, and demonstrate CMN's core value statements in their actions. Students accept responsibility for abiding by the College's policies, and are expected to respect the rights and property of CMN and their fellow students. The core values are traditional for Muscogee people, and in turn shape the cultural context of the College. The implications of this are extended into the greater society, as CMN students embody these values and impress them throughout their future experiences.

The Mission Statement, as well as other mission components, is included in the College Catalog, Student Handbook, [Faculty Handbook](#) and other documents available for public access. Promotional items are given away periodically to employees, students and visitors to reinforce the presentation of the mission and its context throughout the College.

The foundation for the mission of the College of the Muscogee Nation is grounded in

## Criterion One: Mission

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the belief of and support evidenced by the Board of Regents, Tribal Government's Legislative and Executive Branches and most importantly, Creek Citizens. Belief in the mission of the College encourages financial, political and personal commitments.

An important aspect of mission support is to make the College accessible to all students and community members, regardless of health conditions or physical ability. All facilities were designed and constructed to be barrier-free for all; thus, CMN is in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

The college mission is the primary document for communicating the purpose and direction that CMN has chosen. Specifically, Cultural Context, Philosophy, Vision Statement, Core Values, Goals, Philosophy of Assessment of Student Learning, Philosophy of General Education are based in the mission, and are presented to students, community, Muscogee (Creek) Nation, and higher education associates through the CMN website. Additionally, documents presented to students and faculty within the college contain these mission related contextual items. Specific examples of presentation of mission are as follows:

- To increase awareness of our Mission and Core Values, the college proudly displays these statements, printed and framed throughout the building. These are also framed and are hanging in the front of each classroom.
- The student respondent for graduation is nominated by faculty and staff and then selected by committee with regard to how he or she exemplifies the core values.
- The Core Values have been woven into a traditional Mvskoke Hymn to reinforce understanding of their meaning, and has been taught in Tribal Services classes.
- Promotional items have been printed with our Emetat Evketeckvet (Self-Study) Site visit poster logo and Core Values and have been distributed to faculty and staff. Students, visitors, representatives from other tribal colleges and citizens of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation are presented with the items as well.

## Criterion One: Mission

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***1.B.2. The mission document or documents are current and explain the extent of the institution's emphasis on the various aspects of its mission, such as instruction, scholarship, research, application of research, creative works, clinical service, public service, economic development and religious or cultural purpose.***

A perfect example of the value that the tribal college places on its mission is in the Strategic Plan. Presented first in the plan is the mission as Goal One, which underscores the focus of the college and its priorities for the future. Our commitment to the institutional mission is further referenced in the current Strategic Plan that CMN will maintain a mission that is clear and articulated publicly; the mission will guide the institution's operations and will be revised as the college evolves.

As a most important aspect of the planning document, faculty and staff emphasize that our students' educational and cultural experience is consistent with its mission, involving research, community engagement, service learning and economic development. Under college policies and the plan as well, the tribal institution will continue to provide effective oversight to ensure the integrity of research and support services that complement scholarly practice conducted by its faculty, staff and students. In addition, CMN always addresses and will continue to stress its role as a tribal college in a multicultural society through a culturally sensitive curriculum unique to Native Americans.

While the Strategic Plan is not the sole source for emphasizing the mission to our constituents, it is enhanced through other forms of documentation and policy. All of the main functions of the college are managed consistently within the mission whether it is Business Affairs, Academic Affairs, Admissions and Records or Student Affairs. As primary documents and information sources of the departments are updated the plan goals and objectives, which have a strong emphasis on mission, will be interwoven into department and college character.

## Criterion One: Mission

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***1.B.3. The mission document or documents identify the nature, scope and intended constituents of the higher education programs and services the institution provides.***

The mission clearly identifies the nature, scope and constituents of the institution. The nature of the college is to be the institution of higher education for the Muscogee (Creek) Nation, a federally recognized Indian tribe. It is the college's scope to offer exemplary academic programs, specifically associate degrees and certificate programs that are sensitive to native culture, language and self-determination. Constituents are tribal and non-tribal students as citizens of tribal and global society encouraged to be lifelong learners, for personal growth, professional development and intellectual advancement.

***Core Component 1.C: The institution understands the relationship between its mission and the diversity of society.***

***1.C.1. The institution addresses its role in a multicultural society.***

One aspect of the mission is to serve the global society, placing emphasis on the culture presented by the College and also recognizing the role that a Native perspective has in a multicultural society. In accordance with the mission to prepare students for living in a global society, CMN observed Constitution Day on September 17<sup>th</sup> with a presentation titled "Contributions of Native Americans to the US Constitution," presented by the CMN Registrar. Supported by teaching excellence, CMN offers a variety of multicultural events and programs that reinforce the College's commitment to diversity. As a tribal college, we are committed to the maintenance and utilization of Mvskoke culture, including language, in the face of cultural loss. Pum Opunvkv Vcayecvkes (Preserving Our Language) is vital to the College's mission of emphasizing native culture and language. CMN language classes employ a Service Learning component where some students teach community classes, incorporating Mvskoke language lessons learned in the Language Studies academic program.

## Criterion One: Mission

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CMN hosts an annual celebration for Native American Heritage Month in November which recognizes several Indian cultures. This year's event began with Mvskoke hymn singing, an overview of the "Parts of a Traditional Church Program" presentation and a cedar blessing ceremony. The following week a Student Forum was hosted to promote student dialogue with faculty and staff, relating to the identity of Native people, Creek people and CMN students. The third week was recognition of Native Veterans and a presentation by Joe Taylor, a Muscogee (Creek) Veteran and poet. A Native storyteller entertained students with legends and tales passed down from older generations. Also, during the month a stompdance demonstration was held to share the cultural dancing of the este-Mvskoke (Muscogee People). Wrapping up the month, a historical presentation was given on the "Importance of Tribal Colleges and the History of CMN" followed by a traditional Muscogee food tasting.

Figure 4: *CMN Students and Advisors attending ONASHE Conference 2013*



The College is an active participant in the Oklahoma Native American Students in Higher Education (ONASHE) association. ONASHE hosts student meetings and a spring conference, providing cultural and social activities like hand games and storytelling for students to learn from

## Criterion One: Mission

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each other's tribal culture. Other cultural events include presentations such as "The Freedmen Saga in the Dawes Commission" in observance of African American History Month. A lacrosse presentation was also held at CMN during the summer 2013, which provided insight into the Iroquois people of the northeastern region of the United States.

According to AIHEC, tribal colleges are seen as "... institutions created and chartered by its own tribal government for a specific purpose: to provide higher education opportunities to American Indians through programs that are locally and culturally based, holistic and supportive." Our membership with AIHEC is also another way in which we put our mission statement into action by joining a network of colleges with similar tribal interests. This membership and the many events like those listed above continue to strengthen our institution academically and culturally, making the College more viable for the future.

The tribal college is an active participant in the larger higher education community within the state of Oklahoma. Locally, CMN is one of three institutions of higher education within one mile of each other, each holding a specific mission. With our OSUIT partnership, CMN regularly interacts on diversity issues and shares our culture with the OSUIT students and community. Our neighbor to the south, Green Country Technology Center, cooperates with CMN to network for providing educational support to students of each institution. By keeping an open dialogue and good working relationship with all institutions in this area, CMN enhances its multi-cultural interaction and fulfillment of its mission.

### ***1.C.2 The institution's processes and activities reflect attention to human diversity as appropriate within its mission and for the constituencies it serves.***

A wide variety of Native cultures are represented within CMN's faculty, staff and students. Multiple Native American tribes are part of the CMN community as well as non-native peoples; the focus on native culture creates a unifying sense of community among a multicultural

## Criterion One: Mission

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group. The College also supports, but is not limited to, diversity in gender, race, sexual orientation and religious belief. As a college, CMN is bringing diversity into academia by serving the needs of native and non-native students through a tribal college; an emphasis on native culture and language provides many new opportunities for students.

Emphasis on human and cultural diversity encourages a positive learning environment for tribal and non-tribal students; it also underscores the values on which CMN is built. As an example, The Beginning Mvskoke class, required of all students, encourages them to acknowledge and understand the importance of diversity. Students share their background at the beginning of class, and these different cultures are referenced throughout the course. Muscogee hymns are sung as a part of the class and other cultural traditions shared, like music, food and stories. Processes and activities presented are driven by institutional goals, which are derived from the mission and provide consistency within the institutional structure, as noted below.

Table 3: *Consistency of Mission and Goals*

Phrases from Mission	Goals
Offer exemplary academic programs that meet student, tribal, and societal needs	Goal 1: Offer academic degree programs that are unique and reflect Mvskoke culture, history and language
Institution of Higher Education for the Muscogee (Creek) Nation	Goal 2: Create educational opportunities that are accessible to the Native community and tribal members
Emphasizing Native culture, values, language and self-determination	Goal 3: Provide co-curricular activities that respect tribal traditions and culture
Lifelong learners for personal growth, professional development, and intellectual advancement	Goal 4: Develop quality educational programs that give students a scholastic foundation to pursue higher academic degrees or to achieve their career objectives
Positive learning environment	Goal 5: Maintain a focused learning environment in a safe and secure campus

Students educated at the College receive a unique set of skills and values that prepare them for the professional world, as well as turn them into representatives of Native American education. The success of CMN students is, in part, due to the culturally sensitive community

## Criterion One: Mission

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that encourages people of all backgrounds to pursue higher education while still emphasizing the idea of community.

Human diversity and highlighting native culture create an environment that is conducive to the Core Values of CMN. Students who are educated in this environment appreciate diversity and recognize the differences in individuals they will experience in a global society.

***Core Component 1.D: The institution's mission demonstrates commitment to the public good.***

***1.D.1. Actions and decision reflect an understanding that in its educational role, the institution serves the public, not solely the institution, and thus entails a public obligation.***

The tribal college continually works to ensure that it serves not only its students, but surrounding communities as well. The mission states, in part, that it will provide a positive learning environment for tribal and non-tribal students as citizens of a tribal and global society supported by teaching excellence and will offer exemplary academic programs which meet student, tribal and societal needs. CMN fulfills this portion of the mission statement in several key ways.

Before the college was founded in 2004, a survey was completed to gauge the needs of the community. The responses were used to determine and establish priorities that have been used for much of the development taking place at the college. By surveying Muscogee (Creek) citizens, the college was able to develop four tailored degree programs: Gaming, Native American Studies, Police Science and Tribal Services, which meet a public need as demonstrated through the needs assessment. As the institution of higher education for the Muscogee (Creek) Nation, the College has been active in the pursuit of serving the public good since its inception. CMN fulfills a public need by providing culturally enriched educational opportunities to a traditionally underserved population.

## Criterion One: Mission

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The College recognizes the diversity of its learners and relevant constituencies by participating in a wide range of local, surrounding community and tribal activities that encompass the interests of the student body as a whole. Local community functions in which the college participates include: Relay for Life, Red Ribbon Week, Walk a Mile in Her Shoes, Domestic Violence Prevention, Canned Food Drive and the Pink Party. Representatives of CMN have traveled to Creek communities such as Eufaula, Okmulgee and Tulsa to provide information about the CMN. Faculty and students network with not only Okmulgee High School, but with the public schools at Wilson, Preston, Henryetta, Beggs and Morris to educate the students about Native American and Mvskoke cultural ways.

In addition to a moccasin and tobacco bag making class that was open to the public, the college has invited speakers to discuss a variety of topics. Sterlin Harjo, a Muscogee (Creek) film director, presented his movie *Barking Waters* to students, faculty, staff, community and tribal members. Also, for the last two years, the library has participated in World Book Night, which provides reluctant readers with a copy of a free book. The College also actively engages the community by opening its building to be used as a community meeting space. By participating in community events, a cultural perspective is provided to outside groups by demonstrating core values, such as: responsibility (*mecvlke*), integrity (*fvtcetv*) and respect (*vrakkeuckv*).

Similarly, the Native American Student Association (NASA) holds cultural demonstrations, such as stickball and stompdances for area schools. NASA also holds an annual toy and school supply drive, with the items being donated to children in need. They also recently participated in the local “walk a student to school” day. NASA students also participate with OSUIT in their annual Carnifall (community Halloween event) and Christmas Party for area

## Criterion One: Mission

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children. CMN students who attend ONASHE are becoming better citizens by interacting with other Native American students from other colleges to plan statewide activities and conferences. They have also attended the Creek Nation Youth Wellness summer camp and gain a rewarding sense of accomplishment by interacting with the campers and informing them of the College.

Students are often heard saying their main career goal is to give back to their tribe. That desire is fostered when students are exposed to the college fulfilling its mission with community engagement. When students witness firsthand the impact CMN has on Muscogee (Creek) Nation and surrounding areas, they are inspired to continue CMN's tradition of giving back through community involvement.

The Service Learning component for the Native American Studies and Tribal Services degree programs provide students with regular opportunities for community service. Service Learning projects have ranged from teaching computer skills to elders, working with the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Community Development department to develop a tribal directory. Other activities included assisting the Main Street Okmulgee program, providing Mvskoke language and basket weaving classes at area community centers, assisting with Challenge Bowl (an annual competition held by MCN JOM, involving schools from throughout the Creek Nation) and initiating a community garden. The service learning component of our degree programs help teach our students the importance of being involved in the College's mission as well as tribal and area communities. By assessing the needs of its community and participating in civic activities, the tribal college has been able to positively impact its surroundings.

## Criterion One: Mission

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***1.D.2. The institution's educational responsibilities take primacy over other purposes, such as generating financial returns for investors, contributing to a related or parent organization, or support external interests.***

The College of the Muscogee Nation is a public tribal college that is the institution of higher education for the Muscogee (Creek) Nation, a tribal government of a federally recognized Indian tribe. The college generates no financial returns for investors, makes no contributions to a related or parent organization and does not support external interests.

Funding is received from tribal appropriations and federal grants to provide specific programs of the college and for the student body without requiring any individual financial benefit or return for individuals and/or organizations. The college's primary responsibility is to provide a positive learning environment and offer exemplary academic programs to tribal and non-tribal students. Also stated in the college vision, educational responsibility is further clarified... "fosters the spirit of enthusiasm for learning, identity embedded in culture and appreciation for tradition that will serve our students well into the future..."

***1.D.3. The institution engages with its identified external constituencies and communities of interest and responds to their needs as its mission and capacity allow.***

In the Mission Statement, CMN encourages life-long learners, for personal growth, professional development and intellectual advancement. Demonstrating commitment to the community and other external groups as allowed in the Mission, the College networks with the general public including Native communities. Likewise, faculty, staff and students are committed to the public good by giving back to the community and participating in various activities throughout the year. Examples of tribal, regional, state and national activities are listed in detail below.

## Criterion One: Mission

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### **Muscogee (Creek) Nation**

Behavioral Health – CMN’s relationship with the Behavioral Health Department allows their presence on campus where students and employees are much more likely to utilize their services. The College strives to accommodate this program in order to increase students’ knowledge of their programs. CMN also responds to requests for in-service training and professional development held on campus.

Division of Health – CMN classrooms are provided for monthly training sessions to the Health Division of Muscogee (Creek) Nation for in-service professional training. The technology included in each classroom enhances their capacity to provide training in the ever changing health field. Special arrangements are made for classes in Medical Terminology and Community Health, and are provided online and in class.

Muscogee (Creek) Nation Departments – Our goal is to welcome departments and make them feel a part of the college community by encouraging them to utilize our campus for events and training. CMN was pleased to host the Employment and Training department every week during the 2013 summer. Students were presented information by CMN Recruiters on higher education opportunities, and encourage them to consider college as an option after high school. An estimate of 1,000 students were hosted over the course of the summer. The College also facilitated the development of a Creek Curriculum, which will be used to teach employees of the tribe about the history of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation.

### **Okmulgee Region**

Muscogee (Creek) Nation Communities and Tribal Members – Library services and resources are available to the Muscogee (Creek) community, the students, faculty and staff of the college, and to interested researchers from outside the community. While the library is open to the general public, only CMN students, faculty, and staff and citizens of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation may check out library materials. Tutoring services are also available in the library to CMN students and all Muscogee (Creek) students in K-12 at no cost. This service is funded through a grant from the Joint Opportunities for Building Success (JOBS) program.

Public Schools - Representatives of the College travel to Creek communities such as Eufaula, Okmulgee, Morris and Tulsa, providing information about college offerings. Additionally, CMN groups have visited schools including Okmulgee, Henryetta, Ryal and Preston, demonstrating stickball and stompdances to educate younger students about Native American and Mvskoke cultural ways. College students use these opportunities to embody the Mission Statement by sharing their experiences on campus and encouraging younger students to become life-long learners.

## Criterion One: Mission

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Local Communities - Activities in which the college extends its commitment of the Mission to the local community by participation in: Leadership Okmulgee, Relay for Life, Red Ribbon Week, Walk a Mile in Her Shoes, Domestic Violence Prevention, Canned Food Drive and the Pink Party. Other events the college has participated in through the Native American Student Association (NASA) are Clean up the Loop and the Halloween Celebration held annually at Okmulgee Lake. These opportunities provide a positive learning experience outside the classroom, and encourage personal growth and giving back to the community.

### **State of Oklahoma**

OSUIT/OSU-OKC – Through our partnership with the Oklahoma State University system, CMN has brought about an awareness relating to Native issues and more diverse perspective. This resulted in an increased retention rate among Native American students for the partner institutions. Students and employees of the OSU system are able to take classes in Mvskoke language, flute making, hymn singing and other classes specifically aimed to increase cultural knowledge and awareness.

State Agencies – While CMN has tribal sovereignty, it recognizes the importance of establishing relationships with the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education to build an awareness of our unique status and historical perspective. Because of this acknowledgement of OSHRE, they have become more aware of Tribal Colleges and Indian education as a whole. In addition, the Chancellor appointed the CMN Regent’s Director of Institutional Effectiveness to the Oklahoma Advisory Board for Indian Education, with the CMN President currently holding the board position. This participation allows CMN to be involved in policy making for the state, which effects Indian education and Native students at all levels. Tribal College personnel are involved in a variety of other state committees, including: EPSCoR, Oklahoma Diversity Officers/Practitioners, Oklahoma Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admission Officers, Jim Thorpe Native American Games and Indigenous Scholar Development Center. In addition faculty participated in the following: Indian Education Parent Committees, OLA Tribal Libraries Committee, ONASHE, Workforce Oklahoma ASPIRE Officer (Assisting Single Parents Reaching Education) and Native Language Revitalization Committee. The Tribal College perspective is represented when CMN staff serves on these committees and boards.

### **National**

Higher Learning Commission – In 2013, CMN was invited by the Higher Learning Commission to present at its annual conference in Chicago. CMN presented from a Tribal College point of view “Reflections on Moving through the Eligibility Process for Accreditation” to institutions of higher education that were preparing for Candidacy for Accreditation. Also, CMN was asked to host a table explaining our Self-Study process to conferees. These invitations were

## Criterion One: Mission

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another way for CMN to fulfill the Mission by sharing the visionary leadership to other institutions of higher education. Further recognizing our achievements, HLC has recommended other tribal colleges seek our assistance in modeling their processes as they seek Candidacy and Initial Accreditation.

AIHEC – The College of the Muscogee Nation is an active member in the American Indian Higher Education Consortium, participating in all activities that are offered. The College President attends all meetings and serves as a member of the Membership and Accreditation Committee. Through CMN’s participation, the voice of AIHEC is expanded to Oklahoma and its tribal colleges. This increases the political impact that AIHEC can have on federal policy.

As demonstrated, the College recognizes the diversity of its learners and relevant constituencies. By participating in local, regional, national and tribal activities, CMN responds to the needs of our constituencies as our Mission and capacity allow.



INTEGRITY: ETHICAL AND RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT

## Criterion Two. Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

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### Criterion Two. Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

*Core Component 2A: The institution operates with integrity in its financial, academic, personnel and auxiliary functions; it establishes and follows fair and ethical policies and processes for its governing board, administration, faculty and staff.*

As an institution, CMN holds true to the established Core Values in all operations, specifically integrity and responsibility. The importance of being accountable and transparent to maintain the confidence of the Muscogee community is recognized throughout.

#### **Financial**

The Business Affairs department is charged with performing the following financial functions, among others: accounting, budgeting, financial reporting, purchasing and inventory control. Guidelines are in place to ensure purchasing, property management and accounting are consistent with the policies of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation and adheres to Generally Accepted Principles of Accounting.

Safeguards are in place to uphold the integrity of the institution for all fiscal affairs. Appropriate checks and balances have been implemented in accordance with accounting principles. Additionally, documentation is maintained and secured in departmental offices as well as electronic archives of documents stored off-site.

As set forth in the NCA 11-040 “The books and records of the Board shall be audited each year by an independent Certified Public Accountant in accordance with generally accepted auditing procedures.” The [independent auditor’s reports](#) state that audits are conducted in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America and the standards applicable to financial audits contained in *Government Auditing Standards*, issued by the Comptroller General of the United States. Paper copies of the annual audits are distributed to the Board of Regents, Muscogee (Creek) Nation Controller, the Principal Chief and the National

## Criterion Two. Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

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Council. Electronic copies of the audit are provided to US Government Agencies, CMN faculty and staff. The audit report is also made available upon request to the general public, and provided by electronic link on the CMN website.

### **Academic**

College of the Muscogee Nation's commitment to *Fvtcety (integrity)* is rooted in the core values inherited from our tribal elders. Our organization's conduct in the matters related to fulfilling its mission is fair, honest and accountable. Academic integrity is present in the actions set forth by established policies and procedures relating to the Academic Affairs/Curriculum Committee, Faculty Council and faculty responsibilities. These academic factors, along with the Academic Dean and faculty members, are critical in maintaining the integrity of the academic functions at CMN.

The College involves faculty and staff in academic review to achieve a consensus relating to academic integrity from a broad range of responsibilities within the organization. Consequently, the purpose of the Academic Affairs/Curriculum Committee is to review and approve course and degree revisions and new courses and degree programs before being submitted to the Board of Regents and external entities. This committee ensures CMN maintains current academic policies and a periodic review of academic programs and services. Members that comprise this committee include the following: Dean of Academic Affairs (Chair), Regents Director of Institutional Effectiveness, a Faculty Representative and the Librarian.

As the academic leader for the college, the Dean of Academic Affairs plans, develops and implements the academic functions at CMN by meeting regularly with faculty to fulfill those responsibilities and impress the importance on the organization as a whole. The Dean provides oversight of policies that support instructional quality, procedures and assembling resources that

## Criterion Two. Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

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support effective teaching. Accuracy in reporting of academic programs, integrity in program development and the engagement of faculty in the oversight of program curriculum and assessment of student learning are also integral parts of the academic function.

As noted in the Faculty Handbook, faculty have critical responsibilities for practicing intellectual honesty, adhering to their proper role as intellectual leader and promoting, protecting and defending their right to academic freedom; all contributing to academic integrity. To give a voice to the faculty, a Faculty Council was established in 2010 with the intent to provide a general forum for faculty involvement in policy formations and implementation and encourage communication between faculty, staff and administration. Matters for consideration and recommendation include areas such as curriculum, academic standards and academic support activities.

Assessment of student learning is a key item that contributes to the validity of the academic programs. In the spring of 2012, the faculty and Academic Dean began the progression of establishing and implementing an assessment plan for CMN. Both entities have been heavily involved in the process of reviewing and revising of institutional and program learning outcomes to identifying the tools that will be used to assess and analyze assessment data in the upcoming year. As this process continues, an annual practice of assessment will be implemented in order to monitor best practices and less effective methods in the academic programs.

Another form of checks and balances for the academic functions is addressed by the flow of responsibility. The faculty report to the Dean of Academic Affairs, who meets regularly with the President, who in turn is accountable to the Board of Regents. This process helps to ensure

## Criterion Two. Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

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reliability and oversight of the academic operations, and will evolve as CMN grows and develops to ensure highest academic integrity.

### **Personnel**

In 2004, the Board of Regents adopted the Muscogee (Creek) Nation's Personnel Policies and Procedures, along with the condensed version of the [Employee Handbook](#) for the new employees of the college. The purpose of these policies and procedures is to provide an administrative framework for operating management to act with integrity during all phases of the hiring process. The College works in conjunction with MCN to initiate the hiring process, interview phase and then finally hiring the selected individual. CMN follows these policies to ensure fair and ethical processes that have been established are followed throughout the personnel function.

Employees are notified of regulations, rights and responsibilities, policies regarding a drug free workplace, sexual harassment, grievance procedures and nepotism through the Policy and Procedures Manual. A comprehensive guide to federal laws that the Muscogee (Creek) Nation must comply with, as an employer, is posted in a high traffic area for employees to read. The College recognizes the importance of complying by these regulations, and informing employees and the public of these policies.

Upon hiring an individual, College's goal is to provide an orientation process that is informative, communicating the value placed with each employee in addition to the generous benefit package. It is recognized that retention of quality employees through competitive salaries and generous benefits helps to ensure a successful future for the Tribal College. Fair and ethical policies for faculty and staff have been developed, and are addressed in the Policies and Procedures section that follows.

## Criterion Two. Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

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### **Auxiliary Services**

The institution will operate its own auxiliary services for the first time in the Fall 2014, including the bookstore, café and fitness center. Housing is a HUD funded project, thus residents must sign a HUD required contract and comply with income requirements, as well as pass a background check performed by MCN Lighthouse Police. It is CMN's responsibility to provide safe and suitable housing, as defined in the Student Residents Handbook which outlines policies and clarifies student rights and responsibilities.

The bookstore, Raven's Nest, will not only contain books and other materials for courses, but offer school apparel and small personal necessity items. Policies for the bookstore are being developed, and it is the intent of CMN to provide adequate supplies and a sufficient number of books available for classes prior to the first class meeting. This is an income generating function of the college, but CMN is cognizant of the impact of high book prices on students. By pricing books at a fair and reasonable price, the bookstore will be self-sufficient and will not have a significant impact on the students' financial aid resources. Book listings for classes are posted online, for students to browse if they are interested in purchasing from other vendors. Additional supplies needed for certain programs may also be purchased on the students' account from the bookstore with proper documentation of student need.

In the new building, a fitness center will be provided for students to promote healthy lifestyles. This area will be monitored at all times by CMN security to provide a safe and secure environment for students. Equipment within the fitness center will be subject to maintenance according to manufacturer's suggestions in order to keep the machines operating safely.

Additionally, the new facility will provide food service for all students, specifically for students living on campus. Healthy food menus will be provided to meet USDA requirements and food service staff will be required to have a current food handler's permit. Hours of

## Criterion Two. Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

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operation for the café will be such that students will be provided meals three times a day, seven days per week throughout the term.

With the construction of our new Student Center, CMN will have the facilities necessary to offer auxiliary services that have been previously handled through our partnership agreement.

Figure 5: *Construction Sign for Student Center*



### **Policies and Processes**

The College of the Muscogee Nation is committed to the core values inherited from our tribal elders; these values are clear in our policies and procedures. Both the CMN Personnel Policies and Faculty Handbook provide essential information for personnel as they fulfill their responsibilities at CMN. All faculty have a copy of the Faculty Handbook while an electronic copy is available on the College's shared drive, which is accessible by all employees. Paper copies of the Personnel Policies are available upon request from the Business Affairs Office, library and the shared drive.

A pocket-sized Employee Handbook is given to every employee at the time of employment to give each new hire a clear understanding of the ethical responsibilities of all employees. In addition, every employee is provided an orientation by the Business Office to give each a better understanding of their positions. In the Personnel Policy and Procedure

## Criterion Two. Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

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Manual or the Procurement Policies Manual, there are clear, concise and fair policies concerning travel, purchasing, employment process, training and development, standards and attendance, grievance process, sexual harassment, safety in the work environment, as well as other policies and processes.

Also included in the Personnel Policy and Procedures Manual is a section titled “Code of Ethics” which promotes integrity, honesty, service, respect, professional competence, fairness, impartiality, efficiency and effectiveness.

To help ensure the integrity and responsibility of CMN and to provide the best possible examples for our students, it is our policy to perform a background check on every employee before they are hired. Due to Title IV regulations, CMN has recently begun ensuring all employees are in compliance with their own student financial aid loans.

### **Governing Board**

The fair and ethical policies start with selection of the Board of Regents. All members of the Board are appointed by the Principal Chief with the approval of the Muscogee National Council, and serve five-year terms. No Regent may be seated until the National Council confirms the Principal Chief’s appointment. All terms are staggered which ensures stability within the Board and College. The Board of Regents, all citizens of the Muscogee Nation, is the only Board within Muscogee (Creek) Nation where all members are required to have at least a Bachelors’ Degree. The Board determines management policy, employs personnel and has responsibility for general governance, which includes the authority to make decisions affecting institutional integrity.

Being a part of the Constitution requires that the College operate with fair and ethical practices. Citizens had enough faith in the college to include CMN in the Constitution as Article

## Criterion Two. Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

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XIII; the voting citizens of the Creek nation are the sole source for passage of a referendum to amend the article should there be a need. In addition, Tribal Legislation NCA 11-040 enables the Board to act independently and in concert with all of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation branches of government. In addition, the enabling legislation and [bylaws](#) protect the Board from external influences, which authorizes them to act solely in the best interest of the College. The Board is granted in Section 4-111.A. the responsibility for fiscal affairs of the College and all ventures under its management, and to oversee and control the financial business affairs.

Should conflicts arise for the Board or College, there are remedies within the laws, policies and precedents in the tribal courts to ensure that the Board and the College administration are able to act ethically and responsibly in the best interest of the College. The integrity of the institution is enhanced with NCA 11-040 Legislation and Policies which address Conflict of Interest in sections 113.E.2. (Prevention of nepotism) and 113.F. (procurement policies and procedures). In addition these are also addressed in the Personnel Policies and Procedures, Section 403 Chapter C Title 2, and apply to all Administrators.

### **Administration**

Administration follows hiring procedures as defined in the Personnel Policies and Procedures in order to advertise openly, interview objectively and to ultimately select the best and most qualified person that can carry out the Mission of the College with utmost integrity. As a group, the department heads, key administrative personnel and President, strive to present a cohesive message to other staff, students and external constituents. The administration adopts policies and procedures that comply with federal, state and tribal laws to ensure that the institution is in compliance and meets all appropriate regulations for the benefit of the students and college.

## Criterion Two. Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

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The administration has clear and open communication with staff on a regular basis, holding meetings and training that enhance the understanding of everyone, relating to the college mission, goals and objectives. Meeting on a monthly basis, the Board of Regents stays informed of the college initiatives and progress by hearing college administrative reports. The President and key administrators prepares the Board regular monthly meeting agenda with input from the Board. In addition, the President and other administrative staff provide reports to the Board at their monthly meetings. Items on the agenda generally relate to policy, budget, employment, curricula, organization operations, executive functions and grants

The Board of Regents acquires its authority to hire, evaluate and dismiss the chief executive officer from Section 4-111. D. of the Tribal College legislation which states, “...Employ a president, who shall have the authority to hire dean(s), administrative staff and other employees who shall be primarily responsible for carrying out the day-to-day operations of the College, subject at all times to oversight by the Board.”

The President and key administrative staff consistently emphasize the importance of operating with integrity and following fair and ethical policies and processes to all staff and external constituents, such as tribal leaders, educational partners and outside agencies with which the College has a relationship. Of most importance to the College is the fact that the administration provides documentation that validates the financial integrity, personnel services, grant compliance and strategic planning.

### **Faculty**

The Faculty Handbook is distributed to all instructional staff at the beginning of their employment. The handbook provides information relating to: faculty service, employment, academic classifications, academic freedom, faculty evaluation, leave and absences, fringe

## Criterion Two. Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

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benefits, travel policies, college services, student related responsibilities, academic and administrative support, purchasing procedures, fire regulations, security and emergencies and maintenance.

The faculty handbook is revised and updated every other year, prior to March 1. This ensures that current information is distributed in order to support the academic integrity of the tribal college by having a well-informed faculty. Together with the Handbook, emphasis on faculty involvement and instructional quality is the foundation for the mission of the College.

### **Staff**

Personnel at the College of the Muscogee Nation undergo annual performance evaluations to determine whether position goals are being met, and to communicate needs of employees to superiors. These evaluations provide an opportunity to analyze on an individual level, the goals of the college in relation to an employee's achievements. To heighten college awareness on all levels, regular departmental meetings are held and the President conducts meetings at the beginning of each term with all employees. Additionally, meetings are held as necessary for special purposes, i.e. Title IV, grant applications, external correspondence to inform all affected parties of new developments. The College recognizes that communication with staff is at the base of ethical and responsible conduct, and attempts to lessen the gap that can exist between levels of employees.

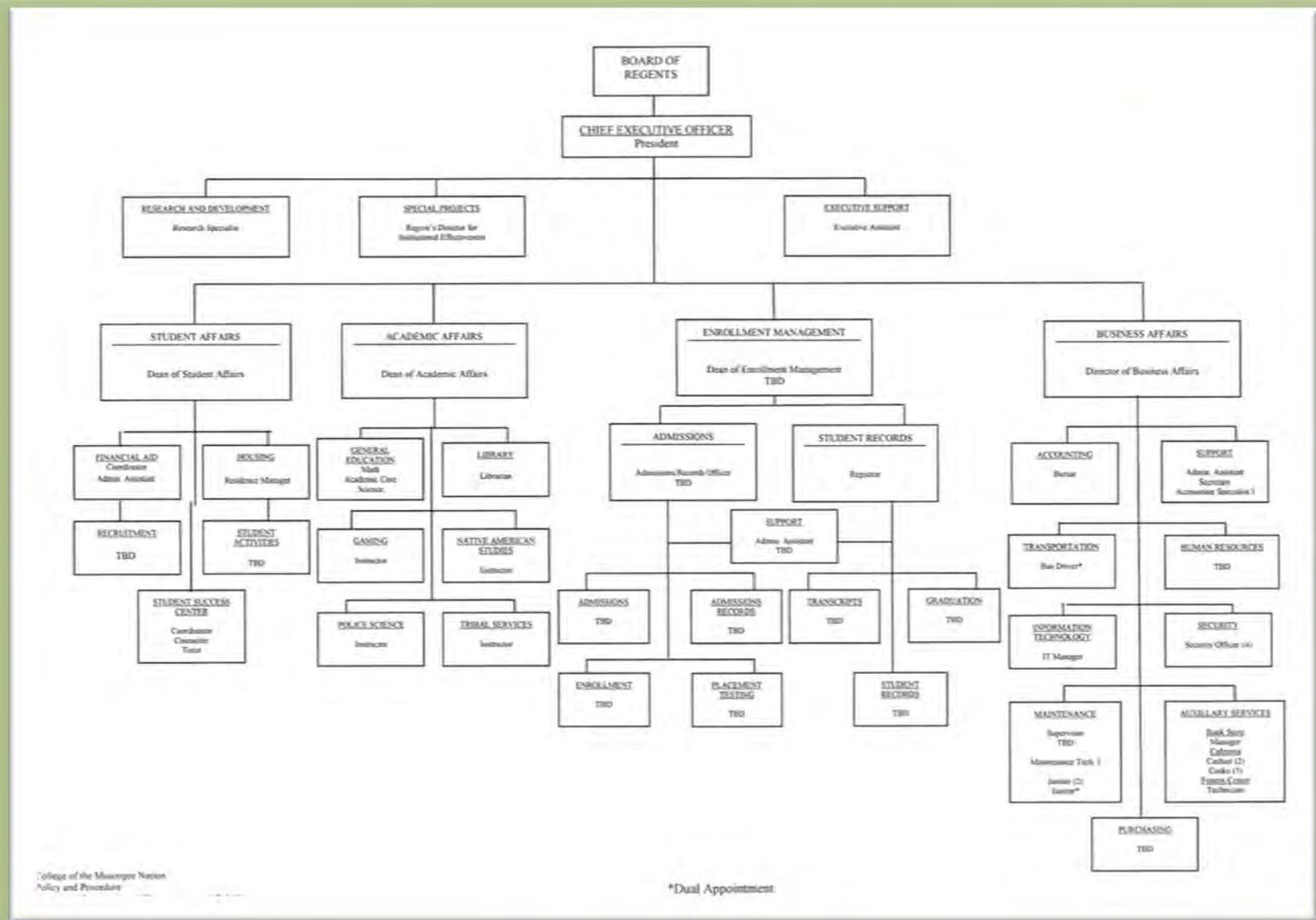
CMN has seven standing committees and numerous other several ad hoc committees to plan and implement policy, projects and events, which allow employees to have a voice in decisions. This committee approach promotes employee buy-in, and in turn increases an employee's commitment to the success of the College.

## Criterion Two. Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

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Further clarification of staff roles and responsibilities is provided in the organizational chart that is functionally organized and shows staffing relationships. Faculty and staff are provided access to the organizational chart, their position description and handbooks appropriate to their classification to help them fully understand what is expected of them at the College. The leadership of CMN believes that roles and responsibilities with grounding in a well-defined organization chart and position descriptions are the tools in which effective collaboration can be achieved.

Figure 6: Organizational Chart, Approved 7/8/13



## Criterion Two. Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

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**Core Component 2.B:** *The institution presents itself clearly and completely to its students and to the public with regard to its programs, requirements, faculty and staff, costs to students, control and accreditation relationships.*

### College Documents

The College presents itself clearly to our students and to the public, listing documents on the CMN website [www.mvsktc.org](http://www.mvsktc.org). A link located on CMN's home page directs the public to the HLC website, which clearly shows CMN's Candidacy status with HLC. This information is easily accessed by any individual looking for information regarding the College's relationship with HLC.

The CMN website lists the four degree programs and two certificate programs under Academics tab. Admission requirements are also detailed on the website for prospective students. So that the public can easily contact individuals associated with the College, a Faculty and Staff directory and names of Regents are provided. The CMN Mission, Cultural Context and audio samples of the Mvskoke language are located on the website, showing the importance of the Mvskoke tribal foundation.

For the purposes of this self-study, CMN has created an electronic resource room available for referencing key information. Documents in the resource room are organized by college function, and are accessed through the [Emetat Evketecvket \(Self-Study\)](#) webpage. Documents throughout this self-study are linked to this page as well, and can be accessed by simply clicking the hyperlink.

The CMN Catalog and Student Handbook are the primary sources of information for degree programs and services provided at the College. These documents are available to all students via the CMN website and paper copies are provided upon request. The College Catalog and Student Handbook contains a comprehensive list of all programs of study, program

## Criterion Two. Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

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requirements, course descriptions, any additional pre-requisite courses or certifications that may be needed, as well as students' rights and responsibilities. In addition to the Catalog and Student Handbook, on-campus residents are provided a copy of the [Student Housing Handbook](#). The Housing Handbook covers the rights and responsibilities pertaining to residential life.

The College provides information on cost of attendance, federal financial aid, transcripts and other related items in the annual Consumer Information Guide as a part of College's federal compliance. CMN will also provide consumer information regarding campus safety/security report and fire report, sexual assault/harassment and drug and alcohol prevention in order to comply with federal regulations.

### **Website**

The College of the Muscogee Nation's website is available to students, public and external constituents, and is compliant with federal laws and regulations as required by Higher Learning Commission and Department of Education policies. The College is presented accurately and wholly on the website, as discussed in detail in the respective sections in this core component.

The CMN website committee consists of five members (Research Specialist- Chair, Regents Director for Institutional Effectiveness, Registrar, Website Assistant and Librarian) who meet as needed. In order for the website information to be presented clearly and completely, the committee consistently monitors the visibility and accuracy of the CMN website. Changes or updates to the website will be reviewed by the committee and completed in a timely manner.

CMN has made available to students through the website a Net Price Calculator, a free calculator provided by the National Center for Education Statistics, as required by The Higher

## Criterion Two. Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

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Education Opportunity Act. This calculator was specifically customized with CMN financial data that is intended to provide to potential students and their parents an estimate based on cost of attendance — including tuition and required fees, books and supplies, room and board (meals) and other related expenses. However, the estimate provided using this calculator does not represent a final determination, or actual award, of financial assistance or a final net price. This information can be located under the heading “Links” on the CMN homepage. Additional links required by the Department of Education are located under this heading and connects directly to the Consumer Information Guide, voter registration sites for both State and Tribal elections and access to the U.S. Department of Labor’s O\*NET occupational profiles. Also, links that give CMN employees and students access to EMPOWER, our student information system and the CMN WebMail are located on the main webpage.

To enhance knowledge of CMN Website Resources, computer technology, information resources, SMARTBoards and iPad usage, training and technical assistance is provided for students, faculty and staff. The College provides a wireless network to ensure high-speed access to all forms of information. Workshops and seminars on FAFSA completion which require competent knowledge of website resources are regularly scheduled and include student, faculty and staff participation.

### **Presentation of Information**

Through an announcement in the CMN Catalog and on the website, the public is made aware of the Candidacy status with HLC. Students earning a CMN degree may have courses transferred to an accredited institution via an OSUIT transcript. When students complete courses, they will be dually transcribed on both a CMN and OSUIT transcript. Thus, CMN

## Criterion Two. Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

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students will be able to transfer coursework to any institution accepting courses from Oklahoma State University, which is indicated in our Agreement and in the Course Catalog.

CMN advertises four degree programs and two certificate programs on the website and in the Course Catalog. A full description of each program and the admission requirements is also included in the Catalog, and is accessible to the public. Degree and certificate plans are available to show course requirements for general education, core and specialized components. Course descriptions are also provided for all courses in the Catalog.

By providing clear information on the website, in the College Catalog and through recruitment, the tribal college has demonstrated honest efforts to ensure that a student is fully aware of the accreditation status of CMN and the degree programs that it offers.

### **Programs**

As stated, academic programs are presented to the public through open access to the CMN website, admissions packet and course catalog. Academic policies, general education and specific degree requirements, program learning outcomes and degree program descriptions are accessible by simply clicking on the appropriate tab and a specifically identified link that will answer students' questions and/or respond to their informational needs. Furthermore, all academic related items are also available from the Academic Dean and faculty.

To make students fully aware of what will be learned in each degree program, outcomes are clearly posted in respective classrooms in which degree courses are taught. Ensuring the consistency between learning concepts and outcomes, the scope of degree programs are validated through a periodic review of each degree program. Findings from these reviews are translated to appropriate faculty and revisions are incorporated into the degree program to stay aligned with the mission.

## Criterion Two. Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

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### Requirements

The College of the Muscogee Nation is required to follow policies and procedures of two primary entities, Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools and U.S. Government (Federal Student Aid- Title IV and FERPA) in presenting itself to its students and the public. The tribal college is very conscientious and diligent regarding publishing accurate and clear information in relation to its HLC status. It is our responsibility as an institution of higher education and as professionals to provide information that will help students to make informed decisions relating to their education and future, and to present ourselves honestly to the public. Guided by the CMN Mission Statement and Core Values, faculty and staff communicate this information to students and public which is reflected by the Mark of Affiliation on the CMN Website and Catalog, clearly indicating our relationship with HLC.

Title IV Federal Student Aid and Family Education and Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) are two major federal initiatives for which CMN demonstrates compliance and presents information accurately and ethically. Public disclosure is constantly followed by CMN. An example is the Title IV Consumer Information Guide that is distributed to every student annually and is available electronically. A paper copy of this Guide is provided upon request to students and the public as well. In order for all faculty and staff to be cognizant of the application and use of FERPA rules and regulations, mandatory training is provided every year. It is the position of the college to be informed, open and transparent with information for students and the public; however, it must be within the limits of FERPA guidelines.

As an institution of higher education for the Muscogee (Creek) Nation, the College is required to be in compliance with tribal legislation that enabled the College to be established. Basically, the requirements include quarterly reports, annual financial audits and the Board of

## Criterion Two. Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

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Regents governance responsibilities. Tribal sovereignty is important to CMN, however, it does not prohibit the College from complying with Federal guidelines and the requirements set forth by relevant external constituencies.

Academically, requirements for an Associate Degree, Admission, Tuition/Fees, Net Price Calculator, Satisfactory Academic Progress, Refund Policy and Graduation Requirements are all presented in the Consumer Information Guide, Catalog and/or Website, which are readily accessible to students and the public. In the preceding Overview, details of each requirement is presented

### **Faculty and Staff**

The College of the Muscogee Nation maintains a faculty and staff directory on its website, as well as in the College Catalog. This allows students and the public to identify and locate faculty and staff offices or contact information. The catalog list names, titles and degree credentials. Listed on the website is faculty and staff names, titles, email addresses, college address and phone number. Also included in the Student Handbook are the name, degree and title of all faculty and staff.

Published each trimester, both online and in the Class Schedule, is a listing of Advisor Contact information and the name of the instructor teaching each course offered. Provided to students on the first day of classes is the course syllabi which list the name and contact information for the respective instructor.

### **Costs to Students**

Costs to students are presented to students and prospective students through the CMN Catalog. Students can obtain a catalog from their advisors, from the Library, the Office of Admissions and Records and on the CMN website.

## **Criterion Two. Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct**

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A primary objective of CMN is to assist first generation college students in adequately preparing for their financial aid needs for attendance. So students can estimate their educational costs prior to enrolling, net price calculator can be found on the website for students and prospective students to use, as required by The Higher Education Opportunity Act. It is the responsibility of CMN to provide accurate and up to date information about the cost of attendance, for each prospective student to make informed decisions about actual expenses of CMN.

### **Control**

The College of the Muscogee Nation is a public tribal college, as defined in Muscogee (Creek) Nation legislation NCA 11-040. The Board is made up of five individuals nominated by the Principal Chief and confirmed by the MCN National Council. Proper notice of meetings is provided by posting meeting times and location at least five days prior to the meeting to inform the public of their right to attend. Members of the public and employees of the College are given reasonable time during regularly scheduled and special meetings to ask questions and have discussion with the Board. Minutes of each meeting, excluding executive sessions, are kept on record by a Recording Secretary.

Board members are paid a monthly stipend as defined in the legislation. The College is a public institution and has no shareholders looking to benefit financially, either by receiving financial payments or dividends.

### **Accreditation Relationships**

Publically available information regarding the accreditation status of CMN is found on the website and in the College Catalog. Specifically, the Higher Learning Commission-North

## Criterion Two. Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

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Central Association of Colleges and Schools awarded Candidacy to CMN in November 2013.

No other accrediting agencies have a relationship with College of the Muscogee Nation.

***Core Component 2.C:** The governing board of the institution is sufficiently autonomous to make decisions in the best interest of the institution and to assure its integrity.*

### **Relationship with the Muscogee (Creek) Nation**

The Board of Regents is identified in Article XIII of the Muscogee Creek Constitution, and in Tribal Legislation NCA 11-040 as the governing body of the College of the Muscogee Nation. This enables the Board to act independently and in concert with all of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation branches of government. As stated in the Self-Study Overview, the significance of this relationship is that the support of the Principal Chief and/or the National Council is not required, because the legal status of CMN within the Muscogee Nation was approved through a vote of the citizens, and cannot be modified by the Chief or National Council. Only the citizens, through an appropriate referendum, can amend that authority in the Muscogee (Creek) Constitution. As defined in the Charter, the Board reserves the legal authority to confer degrees granted by the Tribal College. The primary source for the relationship with the Principal Chief or National Council is through the nomination and confirmation of the Board of Regents.

Additionally, bylaws and policies protect the Board from external influences, which authorizes them to act solely in the best interest of the College, and to refrain from micromanagement of CMN daily operations. Title 31 Chapter 1 under the heading, “Removal of Officers” protects the College from unlawful action of board members.

### **Constitutional College**

Clearly the autonomy of the CMN Board of Regents was strengthened when Creek citizens voted for the college to be added to the Muscogee (Creek) Constitution. Identified as

## Criterion Two. Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

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Article XIII, this public act, published in the Muscogee (Creek) Code Books, authorized by its citizens and its citizens alone, empowered the Regents as the governing body of the college.

With this type of foundation, only the citizens have the power to revoke that authority through referendum vote; therefore, this status insulates the college from external political influence and coercion.

Consequently, when students enroll at the college they can be assured that the college is stable and will maintain its status under the tribal government without external limitations. For the benefit of the students the Board acts independently, but in cooperation with all of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation branches of government.

### ***2.C.1. The governing board's deliberations reflect priorities to preserve and enhance the institution.***

As the governing body of the College, priorities of Regents are to ensure the institution is adhering to its Mission, to make decisions in the best interest of the institution and to assure its integrity. Utilizing the Strategic Plan, the Board provides direction for the tribal college's development by approving goals, objectives and priorities that focus on the future.

The Regents review and approve the annual audit, evaluate the President and oversee policies and procedures. The Board approves management policy, employs the President and has responsibility for general governance, which includes the authority to make decisions affecting institutional integrity.

### ***2.C.2. The governing board reviews and considers the reasonable and relevant interests of the institution's internal and external constituencies during its decision-making deliberations.***

The Regents hold public meetings on the second Monday of every month to act on items for the operations of the College. Reports may also be given by student organizations, new employees or administrative departments, additionally, public comment is welcomed by the

## Criterion Two. Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

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Board. All new policy and procedures or revisions to current policies are approved by the Regents in the monthly meetings. During these meetings, the Board reviews and considers the reasonable and relevant interests of internal and external constituencies.

Internal constituencies of the Board include employees of the College, students and organizations within the college. The Board regularly considers policy revisions as requested by faculty and staff. Also, the Board considers all requests placement on the agenda by faculty, staff, students and student organizations.

It is also the intent of the Board to remain transparent and engaged with external constituencies. These external groups include our partner institution, OSUIT, the Muscogee (Creek) Nation and the surrounding community. In an effort to remain connected with stakeholders, items for discussion can be requested to be on the agenda by these constituencies, including the general public. The Board of Regents maintains integrity with these groups by publicly posting all meetings in accordance with NCA 11-040 §4-108 B. Regents recognize the importance of acting with integrity in all actions pertaining to the interests of the College of the Muscogee Nation.

***2.C.3. The governing board preserves its independence from undue influence on the part of donors, elected officials, ownership interests or other external parties when such influence would not be in the best interest of the institution.***

The Board of Regents is guided by eight primary sources: Article XIII of the Muscogee Nation Constitution, the College Charter, the College Legislation, Board of Regents By-laws, Board Manual, College Mission, Laws of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation and the CMN Strategic Plan. Article XIII establishes the Board as the governing body of the College. With the Regents at the head of the college, their decisions must be in accordance with the primary source documents as identified.

## Criterion Two. Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

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These documents clarify powers, duties and responsibilities of the Board, which in turn establishes the framework for decision-making and protects the College from undue influence, both internal and external. As with any organization, the political environment is such that the Board strives to always act with uprightness and always put the interests of the College first.

Through Board analysis and assessment of propositions that may come before it, the Board has always exhibited focused decision-making with clear direction for the college to follow. Whether a request comes from tribal, state or independent interests, the internal checks and balances involving the Board and administration enable the integrity of the college be maintained.

### ***2.C.4. The governing board delegates day-to-day management of the institution to the administration and expects the faculty to oversee academic matters.***

Legislation, bylaws and policies protect CMN's daily operations from micromanagement by the Board of Regents. Within the legislation which serves as the foundation for the Bylaws, Sections 4-107, B. 7 and 4-111 D. both delegate authority to the President for expenditure of funds and hiring. Also, in Section 4-107, B. 16 specifically states, that the Board "will abstain from the involvement in day to day operations." Bylaws for CMN are consistent with the legislation. Should conflicts arise for the Board or College, there are remedies within the laws, policies and precedents in the tribal courts to ensure that the Board and the College administration are able to act on behalf of the College of the Muscogee Nation.

Therefore, the governance structure of the College affords all academic responsibilities to the Academic Dean and faculty members. Through the Faculty Council, faculty members have a mechanism by which instructional policy items can be proposed and adopted by the Board.

The governing board has delegated the operational responsibility to administration and faculty, based on the confidence placed on their demonstrated ability to maintain the

## Criterion Two. Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

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organization at a high level of effectiveness. The Board maintains a significant interest in the daily happenings at the College, but understands the importance of delegating these tasks to the qualified individuals leading the College, which creates a natural check and balance system that promotes effective leadership which enables the organization to fulfill its mission in providing a positive learning environment for all students.

***Core Component 2.D:** The institution is committed to freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth in teaching and learning.*

### **Freedom of Expression**

As stated in the Faculty Handbook, instructors have responsibilities to their students. They shall encourage among students the free pursuit of learning, while holding before them the highest of scholarly and professional standards. Freedom of expression is a fundamental right that CMN staff enjoy not only as American and tribal citizens, but also as active participants in the realm of higher education. Freedom of expression is synonymous with intellectual freedom and both are vital to the higher education experience.

At CMN, faculty actively use a variety of formats (individualized instruction, small group assignments, computer assisted instruction, etc.) necessary to research, communicate and acquire ideals and information. Generally, this may be the first time in their educational career when students are free to select their own topics for presentations, speeches, research papers, etc. The practice of freedom of expression by CMN students is an essential part of the Mission, and is consistent with the College's core value Hoporenkv (*Wisdom*) that evolves over time from what is learned at the College.

By welcoming freedom of expression, CMN is ensuring that our Mission of encouraging lifelong learners and intellectual advancement is achieved. Even though freedom of expression is fostered, it is not absolute. At all times, information must be obtained and utilized with the

## Criterion Two. Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

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College's core value *Fvtcety (Integrity)*. To ensure that students are aware of the ethical constraints associated with using information, the CMN Librarian provides database/research workshops to students throughout the year. In these workshops the ethical use of information, including plagiarism, is discussed at great lengths. Students are also informed of the consequences of not following academic honesty and integrity, as set forth in the CMN Catalog and in Course Syllabi.

### **Pursuit of Truth**

Faculty are committed to compelling students to pursue truth through information received in the classroom discussions, assignments and co-curricular activities. Freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth go hand-in-hand in accomplishing CMN's Mission. College faculty view the pursuit of truth as one of the tenets at the base of higher education, and strives to encourage students to build upon this foundation.

At CMN, a number of scholarly activities are utilized to showcase pursuit of truth, including but not limited to, writing research papers, presenting speeches, giving presentations and utilizing critical thinking skills. The pursuit of truth is fundamental to encouraging lifelong learners, as it enables students to dutifully express themselves. Research is essential at CMN as it allows students to define themselves within their own intellectual interests and to pursue truth vigorously. However, students must convey their research and thoughts responsibly and ethically.

By fostering an environment that encourages freedom of expression and the pursuit of truth, students utilize the learning opportunities presented to freely express their thoughts and ideals with enthusiasm. Therefore, it is crucial these are practiced systematically among faculty and students, with an understanding of ethical responsibility and integrity. This ensures personal

## Criterion Two. Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

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growth, which is at the heart of this institution. At CMN, freedom of expression and pursuit of truth are always approached with the Mission, Goals and Values in mind.

*Core Component 2.E: The institution ensures that faculty, students and staff acquire, discover and apply knowledge responsibly.*

***2.E.1. The institution provides effective oversight and support services to ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice conducted by its faculty, staff and students.***

Structured to serve the fourth largest (approx. 70,000 members) Native American Tribe in the United States, the College of the Muscogee was established to provide exemplary academic programs that meet student, tribal and societal needs. With that concept in mind, CMN follows the design of the College Charter, which enables the College to establish the academic curriculum, academic programs and award degrees and certificates.

The Academic Affairs department reviews course syllabi and holds curriculum committee reviews to ensure the quality and accuracy of instruction and course information. The College encourages scholarly development of faculty by budgeting funds for conferences and seminars to keep faculty abreast of current research within their respected fields.

CMN regularly participates in institutional research as well as research studies from outside organizations. To ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice conducted by faculty, staff and students wishing to utilize data gathered from human subjects, an Institutional Review Board (IRB) was established in 2010. The IRB reviews all research conducted by CMN Faculty/Staff and students, and also reviews research applications from outside agencies and individuals. Incoming requests must have IRB approval before beginning any research, either on or off campus, and all research findings must be reported to the IRB for final review. This ensures the proper protocols for protecting the rights of the subjects are being followed and an accurate representation is being reflected in the findings.

## Criterion Two. Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

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Students acquire and discover knowledge through classroom instruction, but also gain knowledge and information through tutoring, participation in student groups and clubs and special offerings both from the College and the community.

CMN facilitates the mission to provide a positive learning environment for tribal and non-tribal students by establishing and enforcing policies on academic honesty and integrity through standards of student conduct. To ensure the integrity of research and scholarly practice by students, there are several policies in the Student Handbook addressing academic integrity. The Standards of Student Conduct clearly defines academic misconduct and outlines academic misconduct procedure. If there is no question that an act of academic dishonesty has occurred, the instructor has the authority to not accept the assignment or test in question and record a “zero” for the assignment or test, require the student to redo the assignment or test or require the student to complete a substitute assignment or test. Decisions of the faculty are submitted according to established college policy.

A written appeal must be filed by the student within ten working days of notification and submitted to the Academic Dean. The appeal is heard by a committee consisting of the Academic Dean, two faculty members and a student member. The student and instructor will be present, and after the meeting they will be informed in writing of the action taken. It is the intent of the College to provide a timely process in addressing academic misconduct and to bring about awareness among students of the severity of infractions to this policy.

### ***2.E.2. Students are offered guidance in the ethical use of information resources.***

Students are offered guidance in the ethical use of information resources via educational sessions during orientation programs, through library instruction and syllabi for classes. Several courses require at least one research paper calling for the students to research and properly cite

## Criterion Two. Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

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their sources. In addition the research paper must properly demonstrate the students' acquisition of knowledge throughout the entirety of the paper.

Class instructional sessions cover topics on and relating to the ethical use of research. Specifically, instructors provide materials for citation formats to help avoid intentional and accidental plagiarism as well as information on the reasoning behind citations.

CMN responsibly promotes academic honesty through the core value of Fvtcctv (*Integrity*). Procedures are in place to effectively address instances of academic dishonesty. Students are responsible for the honest completion and representation of their work, for the appropriate citation of sources and for respect of others' academic endeavors.

### ***2.E.3. The institution has and enforces policies on academic honesty and integrity.***

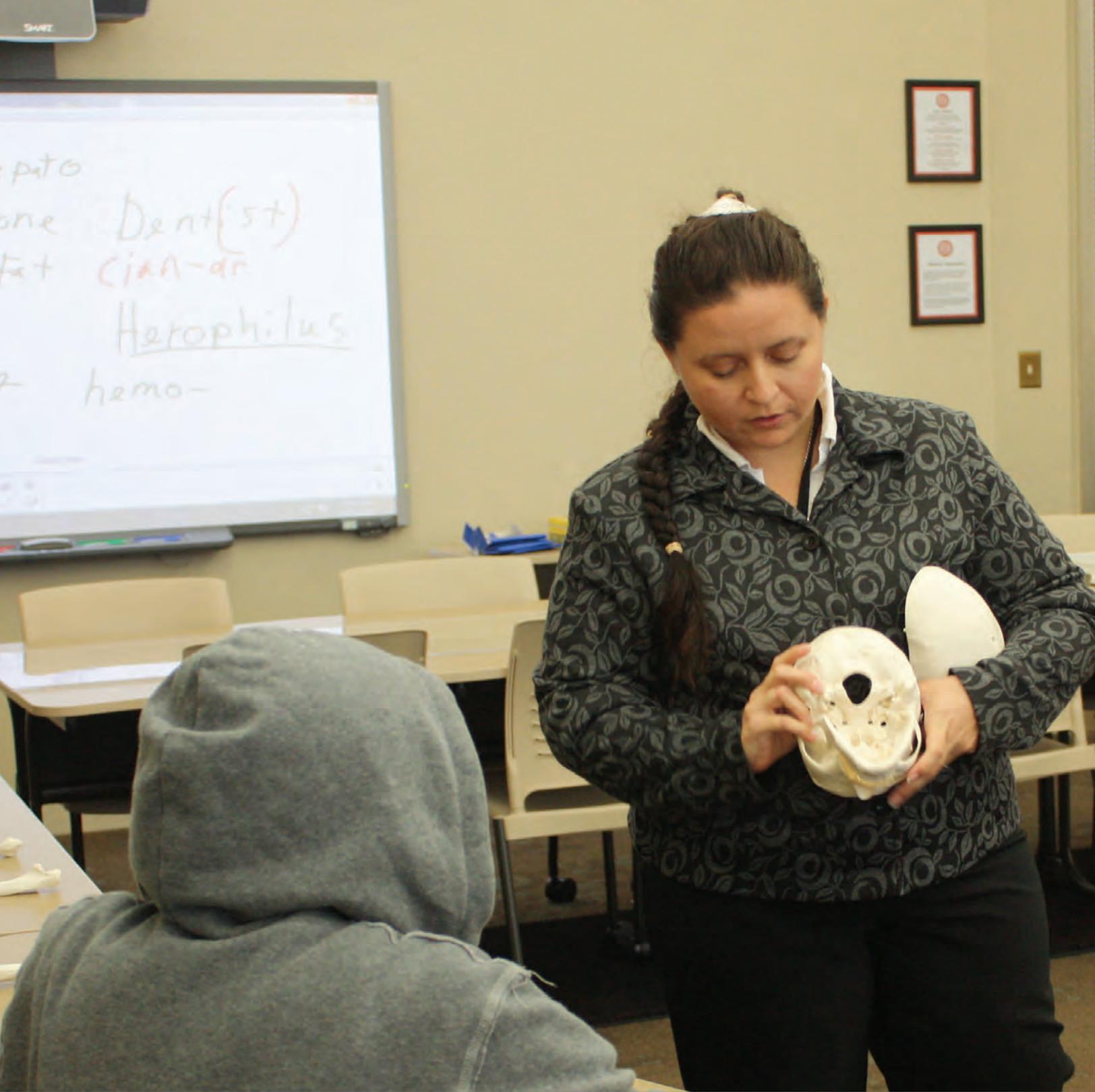
The College of the Muscogee Nation promotes the integration of traditional Native American values within all of its programs. CMN expects students to respect the rights and property of CMN and its students, the Muscogee (Creek) Nation community and its citizens, and to know and observe tribal, federal, state and local laws. The basis of academic life at CMN is rooted in Fvtcctv (*Integrity*).

CMN students are expected to be honest in their endeavors to attain a college education. The Student Handbook contains strict policies against academic dishonesty. This includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, communicating with other students during an exam, or other behavior that relates to the student's academic integrity at the college. This policy can also be found on our website and in the Catalog. Faculty members also include in their course syllabus a statement of their policy with regard to Academic Dishonesty, as well as the appeal process, should one be requested.

## Criterion Two. Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct

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As described previously in section 2.E.1, there are three courses of action that can be taken when an incident of academic dishonesty occurs. If and when an occurrence of academic dishonesty presents itself, CMN follows the process in place for addressing it fairly, allowing due process. In keeping with the spirit of the institution, students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner which is a credit to themselves, the College of the Muscogee Nation, their families and communities.



TEACHING AND LEARNING: QUALITY, RESOURCES,  
AND SUPPORT

## Criterion Three. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

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### **Criterion Three. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support**

*Core Component 3.A: The institution's degree programs are appropriate to higher education.*

*3.A.1. Courses and programs are current and require levels of performance by students appropriate to the degree or certificate awarded.*

Courses in all degree and certificate programs have appropriate and relevant resources for teaching and learning, which are related to the content of the subject matter. CMN remains up-to-date in courses/degree programs by using current edition textbooks, SMARTboard technology, online research databases, having access to the computer lab and laptops available for checkout through the Library and Online Public Access Catalog. A critical part of the formula for the courses and programs to be current involves the CMN faculty to stay abreast of changes in the field they are teaching through ongoing professional development. Seminars, trainings, webinars and involvement with professional groups associated with their field are utilized in keeping current on new ideas and concepts in their subject area.

From the broad perspective of CMN degree programs remaining current, each goes through a periodic review to ensure coursework and learning outcomes are relevant and maintain the rigor expected in courses of higher education. The Gaming degree has been reviewed by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education to establish its continued feasibility and to ensure that the program remains true to its developed goals. The remaining degree programs are to be reviewed by degree coordinators, following the same process to assess the level of currency.

The level of performance by students appropriate to the degree awarded is addressed in the design of each degree's general education component, which exceed the General Education Minimum Requirements of the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education. Thus, students have more exposure to a broad spectrum of general education courses than would have been received at other institutions. Although General Education components are not required of

## Criterion Three. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

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Certificate programs, the specialization courses in the associate degree programs are required. Certificate seeking students are not required to take general education courses but are assessed using the same measures established for degree seeking students.

It is the intention of this institution that courses provide instructional quality which translates into expected levels of performance, presenting students with opportunities for intellectual advancement as specified in the course syllabus. Students are challenged by their instructors to develop and use their critical thinking skills, which results in a higher level of performance with significant meaning and implications for all students.

There were 17 graduates in the spring 2008 semester, with the majority representing the Tribal Services and Police Science majors. In 2009, among a class of seven, three students graduated as the inaugural class of Gaming graduates. In 2010, CMN graduated a class of 32 students, which was the largest group to date. This number was exceeded in 2012 when a class of 38 students graduated from CMN. The following table details graduation numbers for the past six academic years.

Table 4: *Graduates by Degree*

Academic Year	Gaming	Gaming Certificate	NAS	MLS Certificate	Police Science	Tribal Services	Total
<b>2008</b>				1	10	6	17
<b>2009</b>	3			2		2	7
<b>2010</b>	3		3	3		23	32
<b>2011</b>	5	3	4	7		9	28
<b>2012</b>	8	8	6	4		12	38
<b>2013</b>	3	1	2	2		8	16
<b>Total</b>	22	12	15	19	10	60	138

*Source: CMN Registrar 9/2013*

To date, the highest number of graduates is represented by the Tribal Services program, which has 60 graduates, followed by the Gaming degree, MLS Certificate, Native American Studies, Gaming Certificate and then Police Science.

## Criterion Three. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

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### *3.A.2 The institution articulates and differentiates learning goals for its undergraduate, graduate, post-baccalaureate, post-graduate and certificate programs.*

The tribal college only offers programs for associate degrees and certificates. Thus, the learning outcomes for the institution are appropriate for the degrees/certificates awarded. Each of the four degree programs shares in the responsibility of developing and learning outcomes. Faculty members collaborate to discuss goals and outcomes, solve issues and concerns that involve student learning and prepare achievable goals for students in the classes that they teach. Additionally, faculty members ensure the inclusion of traditional cultural aspects in the learning outcomes.

The learning outcomes for degree programs are posted in the classroom by respective instructors. Faculty members develop measurable goals and objectives in the course syllabi along with course assessment, which are consistent with learning outcomes. Faculty members interact to mentor one another in assessment and clarification of student learning outcomes. Subsequently, faculty distinguish and differentiate learning outcomes specific to the degree program, and look to reinforce the process of student success. The instructional focus is to create a positive learning environment conducive to achieving student learning outcomes.

To demonstrate the articulation and differentiation in the various degree programs, a list of learning outcomes are presented for each:

#### Tribal Services

- Demonstrate a working knowledge of Native American governments.
- Give examples of tribal commerce and service programs within a Native cultural context.
- Recognize administrative and organizational principles within a tribal context.
- Identify fundamentals of human services and community resources that promote welfare in tribal family and community environments.

#### Gaming

- Understand the industry's foundation of laws, rules, and regulations as it pertains to the Minimum Internal Control Standards (MICS), State Tribal Compact, and Title 31.
- Illustrate the relationship between customer service and employee relations.

## Criterion Three. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

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- Use customer-related data within casino operations.
- Demonstrate the knowledge and basic concepts of the industry's administrative needs and processes.
- Recognize unique elements and culture of the tribal casino environment.
- Identify the importance of public relations and marketing as it pertains to customer service.
- Identify the overall functions of the casino and its relationship to tribal government. Recognize the relationship between the casino environment and tribal government.

### Native American Studies

- Exhibit cross-cultural competence through the living legacy of tribal people.
- Demonstrate knowledge of Mvskoke history, culture, and contemporary Mvskoke life or other tribal perspective.
- Demonstrate proficiency in reading, writing and speaking the Mvskoke Language within the Mvskoke cultural context or other tribal perspective.

### Police Science

- Apply current federal, state and tribal laws.
- Explain the U.S. and tribal justice system and its agencies.
- Apply current ethical standards.
- Utilize current law enforcement procedures as recommended by the Council of Law Enforcement Education and Training (CLEET).
- Demonstrate officer safety when performing daily duties as a police officer.
- Exhibit knowledge of the organization of police departments, with an emphasis on tribal police.
- Students who complete the Collegiate Officer Program (COP) will be prepared to take the Council of Law Enforcement Education and Training (CLEET) Certification Examination for basic Police Officer.

### ***3.A.3. The institution's program quality and learning goals are consistent across all modes of delivery and all locations.***

The College of the Muscogee Nation ensures program quality and learning outcomes are consistent across all modes of delivery and all locations. The college is located on a single campus in Okmulgee, Oklahoma. The College offers a majority of its classes in the traditional face-to-face format; however, a small number of select classes are offered online and off-site. For these classes, the learning outcomes remain the same and instructors are required to use the same syllabi.

## Criterion Three. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

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To ensure that on-line and hybrid course offerings meet the same requirements of traditional classes, instructors have participated in training offered by OSUIT, designed to examine the complexities of online learning and teaching. Faculty has also participated in training for our online delivery system Desire2Learn (D2L). Some learners may find online delivery more challenging, however, instructors work to support their needs by providing individual assistance.

The College assures quality and consistency in our HLC approved off-site classes through an arrangement with both OSUIT and OSU- Oklahoma City. Administrators, as well as faculty, are in constant contact. For instance, the Academic Vice President reviews course syllabi, instructor credentials and enrollment numbers. CMN also submits proposed class schedules for review.

Courses taught across all modes of delivery still require qualified faculty. The philosophy of the college is to provide the proper support of student learning, which starts with a faculty of excellence. Therefore, all full-time faculty possess an academic degree one level above the level at which they teach. All faculty teach in fields in which they have eighteen credit hours in the specific or related field. The institution has one full-time, permanent faculty member per degree program and two additional full-time, permanent faculty for General Education/Core subjects.

Specific examples of off-site classes are evident in CMN's gaming and language programs. Gaming classes are held in area casinos. The students' learning experiences are expanded with the real-world environment provided by those facilities. In addition, Mvskoke language classes have been held in Muscogee (Creek) Indian communities. The off-site locations are periodically reviewed by the Dean of Academic Affairs to ensure they meet the

## Criterion Three. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

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same standards as CMN's main campus. All courses, regardless of location or delivery, meet the same high standards.

***Core Component 3.B:*** *The institution demonstrates that the exercise of intellectual inquiry and the acquisition, application and integration of broad learning and skills are integral to its educational programs.*

***3.B.1. The general education program is appropriate to the mission, educational offerings and degree levels of the institution.***

General Education coursework is the cornerstone for the degree programs. The purpose of the General Education component of all degrees at CMN is as paraphrased from the Mission, to prepare students to be lifelong learners and gain a broad, interrelated appreciation of cultural, economic, political, tribal and social contexts. Students participate in broad and extensive experiences, which are both rich and important in preparation for living in a tribal and democratic society. Based on the traditional distributed curricula (15 semester credits for technical associate's degrees, 24 for transfer associate's degrees), each of the degree and certificate programs meet the General Education requirements.

Taken as a whole, General Education courses provide the opportunity for the development of individual talents and a satisfying educational experience at the College of the Muscogee Nation. The faculty and Dean of Academic Affairs are currently in the process of implementing assessments and a plan to evaluate CMN programs, teaching and student learning to insure effective learning outcomes. This is a work in progress being developed for General Education and Degree Programs.

Each degree's General Education Component requires that students complete 27-39 general education credit hours depending on the degree program, in addition to the core and specialization requirements. These requirements exceed the commonly accepted minimum

## Criterion Three. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

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program length of 60 semester credits for an Associate's Degree. Semester credits are based on the standard of 800 minutes of instruction per credit hour.

These courses establish a framework for the curriculum that supports their academic preparation for the degree they are seeking. The rationale for the general education requisites is to foster intellectual growth through informed understanding and critical thinking skills. The Philosophy of General Education is included in the Catalog and in the Faculty Handbook.

***3.B.2. The institution articulates the purposes, content and intended learning outcomes of its undergraduate general education requirements. The program of general education is grounded in a philosophy or framework developed by the institution or adopted from an established framework. It imparts broad knowledge and intellectual concepts to students and develops skills and attitudes that the institution believes every college-educated person should possess.***

All students participate in common academic experiences, defined as the general education requirements. This program of general education provides broad and extensive experiences in order to prepare students for living in a tribal and democratic society. These experiences are the Tribal College's general education program's purpose and description is as follows:

General Education coursework is the foundation for the degree programs at the College of the Muscogee Nation (CMN). The purpose of the General Education component of all degrees at CMN is to prepare students to be lifelong learners and gain a broad, interrelated appreciation of cultural, economic, political, tribal and social contexts. Students participate in broad and extensive experiences, which are both rich and important in preparation for living in a tribal and democratic society. Taken as a whole, General Education courses provide the opportunity for the development of individual talents and a satisfying educational experience at the College of the Muscogee Nation. *(Source: CMN Catalog)*

The general education (institutional) outcomes listed below were recently reviewed and revised in a collaborative effort by the faculty, in order to align outcomes and the Assessment Plan. They were established with a combination of the many courses CMN offers across its

## Criterion Three. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

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academic programs. As a result of differences in curricular design, the outcomes may be achieved in a variety of methods and/or approaches. Students earning a degree from CMN must complete a minimum of 27-39 credits of general education. These credits are satisfied through a combination of required courses from the following categories: College Cornerstone, Language Arts, Social Science, Physical Science, Political Science, Biological Science, Humanities, Quantitative Analysis, Behavioral Science, Health and Physical Education, Computer Literacy and Electives. Students are made aware of these outcomes through the catalog, the website and they are posted in classrooms.

In keeping with the mission and core values of the tribal college, core learning outcomes were designed to enrich our tribal communities and students' lives and are as follows:

- Demonstrate oral and written skills in the Mvskoke language.
- Utilize processes for making ethical and responsible (*mecvlke*) choices as engaged lifelong learners.
- Communicate effectively through written, verbal and multi-media skills.
- Engage in the processes of intellectual inquiry and critical thinking (*hoporenkv*).
- Exhibit the core values inherent in the Mvskoke culture.
- Respect (*vrakkueckv*) other cultural traditions in a global society.
- Identify how human values, perceptions and humility (*eyasketv*) affect social diversity.
- Demonstrate integrity (*fvctetv*), respect for others, and the ability to work collaboratively with others.
- Utilize computer technology to gather, analyze and communicate information.

### **General Education Philosophy and Framework**

This institution of higher education is dedicated to an academic program that reflects the core values based in rich tribal culture, language and history. Students, community and Muscogee Creek people are the true foundation for every class taught and every degree offered at CMN. Faculty members have excellent qualifications and knowledge of our Muscogee culture which is blended into their instruction. The Board of Regents issues degrees, determines the curricula and course study and established student fees in accordance with policies.

## Criterion Three. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

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For ease of access to all students, the general education requirements are published in the CMN Student Handbook. Students must have successfully completed the general education requirements, core requirements and specialization courses as required in the degree plan and for graduation.

CMN fosters the spirit of enthusiasm for learning, identity embedded in culture and appreciation for tradition that will serve our students well into the future, thus benefiting the interests of the Muscogee Nation and enhancing greater participation within the tribal, local and global communities.

***3.B.3. Every degree program offered by the institution engages students in collecting, analyzing and communicating information; in mastering modes of inquiry or creative work; and in developing skills adaptable to changing environments.***

The four degree programs offered engage students in collecting, analyzing and communicating information. Mathematics courses at CMN are primary examples of students involved in this process, which includes computation and tabulation of data in relation to course competencies. Through a hybrid teaching model requiring traditional teaching modes and computer assisted instruction, students have greater independence through self-paced progression of the course, while still benefitting from face-to-face instruction. Hybrid courses place significant responsibilities on student participation and mastering competencies. It is the responsibility of the instructor to keep students focused on key concepts throughout the progression of learning modules. Students are responsible for completing assignments and consulting with the instructor as to their level of understanding. The instructor is available for individualized assistance to students as necessary. Faculty use similar methods to fulfill the mission by providing a positive learning environment that offers exemplary academic programs to meet the needs of the student, tribe and the needs of society.

## Criterion Three. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

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The methodology of Service Learning courses dictate that a clear link exists between the service experience and course objectives. An example of students engaging in collecting, analyzing and communicating information is specifically described in the competencies of a Service Learning Project. The processes in which students are involved include: identify community service need and develop a plan to fulfill the need, implement and complete a community service project, manage a community service project effectively and document the effect of community service project on community life.

At the conclusion of the project, students plan, compile and prepare a creative portfolio that describes the details of the project from beginning to end. Students provide photographs, anecdotal evidence, personal reflections and significant evaluative findings that will be submitted to the instructor for their assessment.

The coursework included in degree programs is designed to develop critical thinking skills in students, enabling them to adapt to an ever changing work environment. The Service Learning component of the Native American Studies program is designed to encourage students to give back to their community and make it a better place for others. It is also structured to give students real world experience in managing community programs which is excellent preparation for adapting to environments they will experience in their future career.

### ***3.B.4. The education offered by the institution recognizes the human and cultural diversity of the world in which students live and work.***

An emphasis is placed on exposing students to the global community in which all of us live. The world view is a significant part of our Mission and Core Values that emphasizes the rights and dignity of all people. The College has a reputation for welcoming visitors to our campus from throughout the world. Recently, CMN hosted Indigenous people from Brazil and provided the visitors with an insight on the development of a Tribal College and the relationship

## Criterion Three. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

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between Native peoples and the U.S. Government. During a Chinese delegation visit to campus, faculty and staff shared facts about Native American history and culture. International perspectives about Native American culture were presented to visitors from Hungary after they toured campus. An ex-officio member and visiting scholar from England provided an international viewpoint on CMN's Creek Curriculum Committee and presented his impressions of Creek and Native American historical events within the United States.

Other visitors to the campus include: Native American tribal members representing the Pawnee Nation College, Cheyenne-Arapahoe College, Choctaw Nation, Chickasaw Nation, American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC) President, Bureau of Indian Education and Title IV Tribal College Liaison. Their presence at the College enhanced CMN's standing in the Tribal College network and fostered supportive, diverse relationships between institutions.

Human diversity is promoted through involvement with various women's and youth groups. The Oklahoma Federation of Indian Women and the Mvskoke Women's Leadership Initiative have held events on campus, inviting CMN students and staff to participate and gain a better understanding of the impact women have on tribal and global societies. The Muscogee (Creek) Nation's Summer Youth placement program provides young tribal citizens with a worksite during the summer, and brings these students to the CMN campus for seminars on resume building and interviewing techniques. CMN students and staff are presented with an opportunity to give tours to these young citizens and answer any questions they may have about the College.

Over the last ten years, CMN has emphasized the issues of human and cultural diversity within the curriculum of its academic programs. These issues are inherent in the College's general education philosophy, goals and course requirements. All students are required to take

## Criterion Three. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

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general education course requirements which include subjects in humanities, orientation, Mvskoke Language or any other Tribal Language. The CMN Humanities class introduces students to the diversity of the world through the teaching of art, music and literature from the classical era through the Renaissance. The Orientation class introduces students to human diversity on the CMN campus by focusing on students' transition into college life by providing skills to navigate campus life and encouragement to interact with other students. Finally, the Mvskoke Language or Tribal Language classes introduce students to the complexity of the Mvskoke or Tribal culture through the subtle nuances of Native American Languages.

### ***3.B.5. The faculty and students contribute to scholarship, creative work and the discovery of knowledge to the extent appropriate to their programs and the institution's mission.***

Students collaborate with faculty when conducting term paper research, conversing in Native language, carving flutes from cedar or conducting scientific experiments. These examples demonstrate curricula that intertwine academic scholarship with cultural based inquiry, a natural characteristic of a tribal college academic program. Students are mentored during their learning experience by faculty members who take pride in the development of students' personal and intellectual growth.

Demonstrating scholarship, creative work and the discovery of knowledge relevant to degree programs is achieved when faculty and students collaborate. As an example, faculty members may apply traditional ways of thinking and indigenous knowledge of culture and language to solve important problems in their communities. Students in turn use the traditional ways of thinking, as in the execution of a Service Learning Project where a student designed the "Community Food Security Project." The purpose of this project was to identify food that can sustain and provide nutritional healing to native people. In the student's own words, it is

## Criterion Three. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

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described that a research analysis of the Mvskoke traditional foods with community elders would be conducted to document the findings, ensuring the knowledge and information of food sovereignty will survive future generations. This information is now used to educate Mvskoke consumers through the Muscogee Food Sovereignty Initiative.

Students have the opportunity to collaborate with CMN faculty while attending academic co-curricular activities held at CMN and at both regional and national conferences. Recent activities have included a Student Forum held by Student Affairs, attendance at the American Indian Higher Education Consortium annual conference and attendance at a Mvskoke Language Symposium.

As students prepared to hold a forum, attend conferences, symposiums and enter the workforce they gain valued hands on knowledge from instructors serving as mentors and colleagues. When faculty and students prepare for these events, they worked together to create power point presentations, speeches, curriculum lessons in the Mvskoke language and professional resumes. Students present materials to their peers, instructors and to the general public.

Other forms of collaboration between students and faculty can be found in student organizations that have been formed and sponsored by faculty members. These additional activities are not included as primary responsibilities of the faculty, but are voluntarily taken on to help serve CMN students.

The Science Instructor has created the American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES) organization to promote the sciences and to attract students interested in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) opportunities. As a result, two students and the instructor attended the Society of Scientists Advancing Chicano and Native American

## Criterion Three. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

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Scientists (SACNAS) “Strengthening the Nation through Diversity, Innovation & Leadership in STEM” Conference held in San Antonio Oct. 3-6.

Instructors see the importance of cultural representation in the classroom and through outside activities as well. CMN faculty regularly imparts cultural knowledge passed to them by elders on to students through traditional activities such as stickball and stompdance. For example, CMN’s math instructor often donates his time to work with students by providing opportunities to increase their knowledge about Mvskoke cultural events. Students have participated in Mvskoke to-kanhe (stickball) making and traditional opvnkv-haco (stompdance) activities at the tribal college and in public presentations that have been led by the math instructor. This commitment is not unusual in faculty members, as they strive to assist student’s academic achievement by supporting their cultural education as a whole.

*Core Component 3.C: The institution has the faculty and staff needed for effective, high-quality programs and student services.*

***3.C.1. The institution has sufficient numbers and continuity of faculty members to carry out both the classroom and the non-classroom roles of faculty, including the oversight of the curriculum and expectations for student performance; establishment of academic credentials for instructional staff; involvement in assessment of student learning.***

The institution has one full-time, permanent faculty member per degree program and three additional full-time, permanent faculty for General Education/Core subjects totaling seven full-time faculty. The average tenure for faculty is 3.3 years, which when compared to the ten years of existence of the institution is significant.

Although each faculty member has freedom of expression and liberty to instruct class, faculty must teach for the learning objective and assess the performance of students in relation to the competencies as addressed in each course syllabus. As instructors analyze student learning and the quality of educational course offerings, each must structure course material relative to

## Criterion Three. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

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meeting the academic needs of students. With consideration and compassion, faculty members instruct students who are college-ready and students who are not college-ready. Student assessment and evaluation are key components that faculty members address on a daily basis. Rubrics incorporate the processes designed to promote the continuous improvement of student learning.

Academic accommodation is another factor that faculty address as students need individualized instruction. With proper documentation requiring extra services, students are granted additional time to complete testing. Other accommodations are provided to disabled students as requested. In a cultural context, when a student loses a family member to death, the time of bereavement is honored by faculty members. The role of faculty encompasses not only instructing and advising but also mentoring and serving.

Along with the preparation of lessons to match course goals and objectives, the capacity and role of faculty members covers effective advisement of students within each degree program. Faculty advisors enroll students in courses based on ACT and COMPASS scores for placement within the degree plan of study. Advisors also bring awareness to financial aid availability at CMN, as well as when students express interest in pursuing a four-year degree.

The Faculty Council meets twice per year to consider course recommendations and other topics specific to faculty. Course recommendations, academic standards, curriculum and credentialing among other topics specific to faculty are placed on the agenda for each session. Faculty utilizes this general forum to share teaching experiences and identify common needs that can be incorporated into curriculum changes. An important aspect of the Faculty Council is that it has provided an opportunity for the President to have open dialogue with faculty.

## Criterion Three. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

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An important responsibility that faculty have is full representation on the Assessment Committee, and have been the driving force behind the revision and adoption of Learning Outcomes. Several faculty members have attended an assessment workshop hosted by the Higher Learning Commission, and have brought the knowledge gained through this training and shared it with their colleagues. Through the combined efforts of CMN faculty and OSUIT Assessment staff, instructors have updated Learning Outcomes for each degree program and participated in the development of an Assessment Plan for the College.

Instructional staff are members of organizations relating to degree programs, such as: The National Indian Education Association, Tribal College Librarians Association, Public Relations Society of America, Oklahoma Bar Association, National and Oklahoma Indian Gaming Associations and the National Congress of the American Indian. Workshops, seminars and webinars allow faculty members to achieve professional development unique to tribal and cultural aspects of education. All faculty are members of the Oklahoma Native American Students in Higher Education (ONASHE) and the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC) by virtue of our institutional association.

### ***3.C.2. All instructors are appropriately credentialed, including those in dual credit, contractual and consortial programs.***

In order to build a faculty of the highest qualifications, extreme care is taken during the employment process to follow the requirements of the position descriptions and procedures for selection. Position descriptions for full time faculty advertise preferred requirements of a Master's degree in the field or related field in which they will instruct. Additional required qualifications include emphasis on related work experience in higher education, teaching experiences, tribal organizations and knowledge of the Muscogee language. Applicants must

## Criterion Three. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

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also adhere to the mission of the College through emphasizing native culture, values, language and self-determination.

Applicants are screened following Personnel Policy and Procedures and in accordance with the specifications of the position description. Candidates are interviewed by a committee, which has the responsibility to select the most qualified individual. Qualified faculty is retained through competitive salaries and benefits, comparable to other institutions of similar mission and capacity and an effective faculty evaluation process. As defined in the Faculty Handbook, the purpose of the Faculty Review and Evaluation process is to encourage and assist all members of the faculty to develop and perform to the best of their ability.

All full-time faculty possess an academic degree one level above the level at which they teach. Within the current faculty, four have required Master's degrees, one holds a Juris Doctorate and two have a Bachelor's degree and are currently enrolled in Master's programs in order to meet the requirements set by CMN. All faculty teach in fields in which they have eighteen credit hours in the specific or related field.

In addition to these very important qualifications, a majority of CMN faculty are also Muscogee (Creek), and know the students' families, communities and cultural heritage. Being able to relate to the students in these ways sets the stage for faculty to effectively teach and mentor the students.

Faculty has primary authority for the assignment of grades, as noted in their position descriptions and in course syllabi, and are required to provide a syllabus for each student in the class.

## Criterion Three. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

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### ***3.C.3. Instructors are evaluated regularly in accordance with established institutional policies and procedures.***

Faculty are evaluated from two perspectives; by students attending their class and by the Academic Dean for performance. Following is the description of the evaluation process that is utilized by each student of their instructor.

Instructor/Course Evaluations were developed to provide administrators and faculty members with data to clearly determine the perception of students regarding the instructor and effectiveness in which the course is taught. The purpose behind conducting these evaluations is to encourage faculty members to reflect on their teaching strategies and how they may need to adapt to more effectively reach students.

The survey contains two primary types of items, closed response and open-ended. The closed response items are tabulated for weighted mean scores and the open-ended comments give students the opportunity to express themselves freely. Upon completion of the surveys, the results are tabulated and a report is generated for faculty on each class.

Performance of faculty is evaluated by the Dean of Academic Affairs for the purpose encouraging and assisting all faculty members to develop and perform to the best of their ability. The Faculty Evaluation Report is completed by each faculty member on an annual basis, documenting specific evidence of teaching, contributions to the institution, professional and tribal community, as well as tribal cultural enrichment. The Dean reviews the Report and schedules a meeting with the faculty member, discussing performance and establishing goals and objectives for the next year.

## Criterion Three. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

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### ***3.C.4. The institution has processes and resources for assuring that instructors are current in their disciplines and adept in their teaching roles; it supports their professional development.***

The College of the Muscogee Nation considers the faculty as a valuable resource for the organization. Quality instruction is vital to the sustainability of the institution; therefore, faculty and Staff are encouraged to take advantage of and participate in activities that promote staff, student and instructional improvement. These activities assist in advancing institutional effectiveness, which ultimately reinforces student success by helping make teaching more effective. Instructors are evaluated annually as required by the MCN Policy and Procedures Manual, and are also self-evaluated with the Dean of Academic Affairs on a bi-annual basis. This requires an instructor to think critically about their teaching effectiveness and ways they can improve in various areas.

Beginning in 2012, funds have been allocated up to \$100 per year for each faculty member and administrative staff to obtain membership and participate in a professional organization directly related to his or her function. Aligning with the Strategic Plan, instructors are expected to use these trainings to, in part, incorporate new technology into curriculum and the classroom.

Professional development available to faculty and staff includes traveling to conferences and training, continuing education classes, webinars, course and degree completion, sabbatical leave, basic website design and in-house training activities. Training sessions have been held at CMN for all faculty and staff to become CPR/AED and Fire Extinguisher certified, web system EMPOWER training and various safety and focused trainings offered through the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Human Resources department. Two groups of faculty members have attended the Assessment Academy hosted by the Higher Learning Commission in order to strengthen our Assessment program at CMN.

## Criterion Three. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

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Adjunct instructors are given the opportunity to attend the in-house professional development activities, as well. By presenting an occasion to attend specialized activities that promote professional growth, CMN ensures quality programs and institutional awareness with respect to the evolving needs of the students and the programs. The opportunity for adjunct instructors to participate in local professional development provides more continuity among instructors across classes offered.

Through our partnership with OSUIT, faculty and staff have the opportunity to attend training sessions that are offered to their personnel. Full-time faculty members are involved in a variety of associations specific to their disciplines as described previously in section 3.C.1.

In addition to these offerings, a fringe benefit available to full time employees of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation is Career Development through Tuition Reimbursement if they wish to seek further educational opportunities. Employees of the tribal college have taken advantage of this program to take classes toward a Bachelor or Master's degree.

### ***3.C.5. Instructors are accessible for student inquiry.***

The faculty maintains accessibility for students to encourage retention and successful completion of educational goals. This is accomplished by encouraging students to be in contact with faculty in several venues.

Syllabi are used for all course offerings and include instructor contact information. This information consists of email address, office location and office hours. Students are able to communicate with faculty members by phone, mail, e-mail and occasionally through text messaging. All full time and adjunct faculty members also have mailboxes on campus that can be used for written correspondence as well.

## Criterion Three. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

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Faculty members are also required to publish their office hours and course schedule each semester, outside their classroom and/or office locations.

### ***3.C.6. Staff members providing student support services, such as tutoring, financial aid advising, academic advising and co-curricular activities are appropriately qualified, trained and supported in their professional development.***

CMN's commitment to providing a positive learning environment for tribal and non-tribal students is evidenced in the free tutoring offered on campus. Initially, CMN was awarded funding from a Federal Home Loan Bank grant in 2010 to establish a college tutoring center for students attending CMN. The purpose of the program was to focus on providing academic support to students in order to increase their ability to succeed as they pursue their higher education degree. Since 2012, CMN has taken on this commitment financially to provide tutoring services to our students, and has expanded the offering to Muscogee (Creek) students in K-12 grades.

Two types of tutors are provided: 1) Peer tutors who are enrolled students with a minimum GPA of 3.0 and 2) Mentor tutors who are citizens from the community and have at least a bachelor's degree. The two types of tutoring that are available include: by appointment, designed for a student needing more in-depth service; the second type of tutoring is the shorter walk-in service for more immediate needs. To make the most of their time students are asked to have prepared questions for each scheduled tutoring session. Walk-in students are served on a first-come, first-served basis. The program currently uses three locations; the library, computer lab and the conference room with the library serving as the main site where hours are listed. Four mentor tutors have provided students assistance in Math, Science, Reading, English Comp I and II and Speech.

## Criterion Three. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

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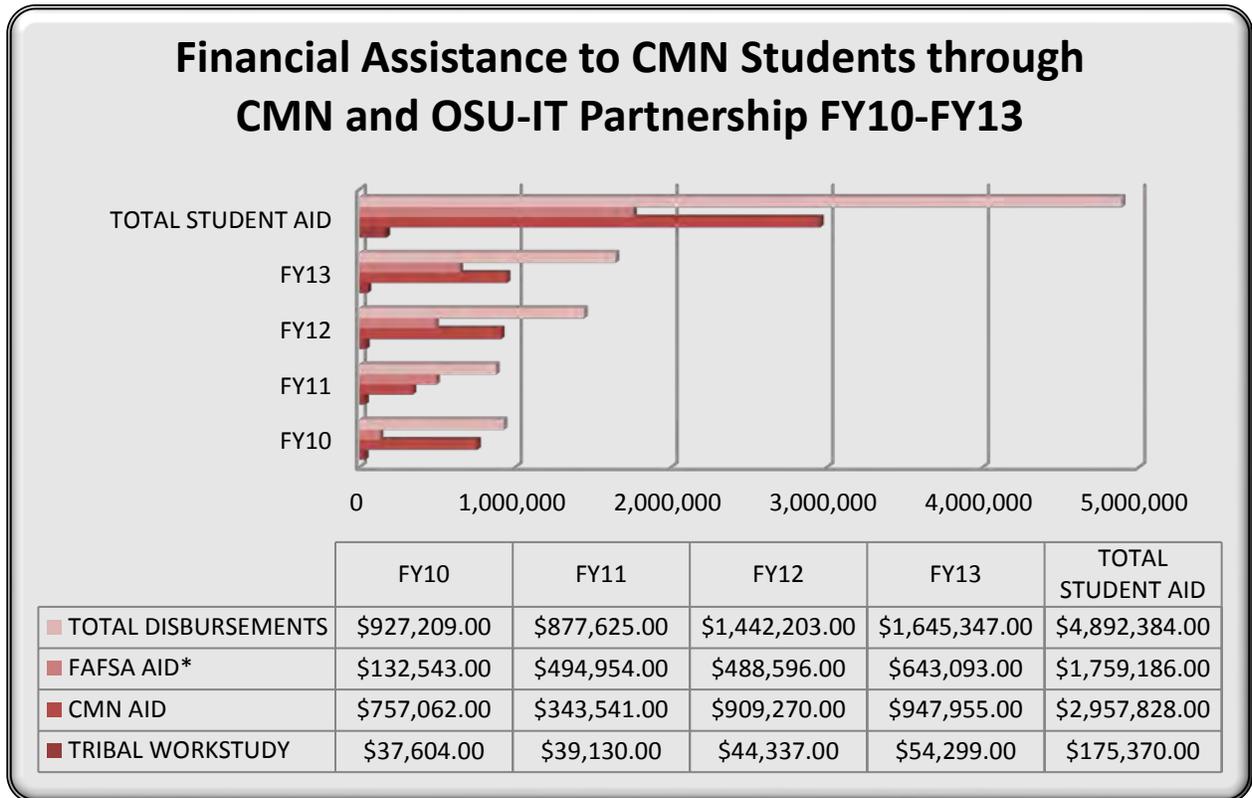
CMN has further committed to Academic Student Support by applying for and was recently awarded funding from the Department of Education Title III grant. This grant will allow the College to add additional space in the existing Education/Administration building for admissions and placement testing. CMN will also use this funding to support a Student Success Center staffed with a coordinator, counselor and an administrative assistant. Center staff will assist first time college students in making a seamless transition into college life. Preliminary planning has included attendance tracking, continued tutoring, orientation seminar, degree program advisement and student retention.

In pursuit of providing comprehensive services to our student body, CMN has recently received approval to administer Title IV, HEA Federal Student Aid, a multifaceted structure that affects many departments. In preparation for administering Title IV, HEA funds, the College managed American Indian College Fund scholarships, as well as tribal scholarships, tuition waivers and work study, which was funded by the Muscogee (Creek) Nation. (See Chart 3: Financial Assistance to CMN Students.) Through this process, CMN was able to gain valuable experience for when it would take full responsibility for the Title IV, HEA Financial Aid program and when it would receive Initial Accreditation.

Extensive planning has been initiated because CMN is at the ground level and financial aid advising is a complex objective, where strict Federal regulations and student needs must be balanced. Financial aid advising is primarily handled within the financial aid office under the administrative responsibility of the Coordinator; a well-qualified professional with a bachelor's degree and experience in financial aid processing and advising.

## Criterion Three. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

Chart 3: *Financial Assistance to CMN Students*



*Source: CMN Bursar 1/4/2014*

Before enrolling in classes, a student must successfully complete the requirements of admission while receiving financial aid advisement. The Financial Aid Coordinator and Admissions/Records Officer work closely to complete our Title IV, HEA objectives. In the admissions packet is information regarding the CMN Scholarship, CMN Tuition Waiver and American Indian College Fund scholarships. There is also a Financial Aid Process 2013-2014 information guide giving instructions on filing the FAFSA, receiving a PIN, verification paperwork and award letters. The Admissions/Records Officer advises students regarding these aspects of Financial Aid.

Financial Aid advising also includes loan counseling, awards, packaging, scholarships, FAFSA, verification, special considerations and more. The Coordinator has open office hours to

## Criterion Three. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

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assist students and their families in completing any facet of financial aid. The Financial Aid office stays current with federal, state, and tribal regulations, laws and government policy which could impact policies and procedures, whereby changing how students are advised.

Open dialogue is maintained with faculty and advisors, speaking to them regarding their role in Title IV, HEA regulations, Satisfactory Academic Progress standards, attendance and Return of Title IV funds. Regular communication with the staff ensures degree program advisors are conveying accurate information to students as regulations may necessitate.

Mvskoke Etlwv Nakcokv Mvhakv Svhlwecvt Toknawa Vnickv (*College of the Muscogee Nation Financial Aid*) will continue to keep the staff and faculty informed and trained regarding financial aid advising.

A critical service to CMN students is academic advisement to ensure they achieve their academic objectives within a reasonable amount of time. One of the main functions of faculty members is the responsibility of academic advisement. Faculty members provide support to students pursuing degrees in their respective academic areas. To support the advisement process, the Student Success Center will provide advisement and follow-up services to all entering freshmen.

The purpose of academic advisement is to assist students in completing official degree plans that will lead to graduation. It is the responsibility of the advisor, in cooperation with the student, to prepare their degree plans by the end of the second semester. An Advisement and Enrollment Handbook has been developed for advisors to use as a resource, including valuable information to keep students on track for graduation.

In supporting student success through co-curricular activities, CMN offers activities and events that supplement academic programs in which students are enrolled. The success of the

## Criterion Three. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

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co-curricular program is attributed to the contributions of faculty and staff that design, plan and participate in these events. As an emerging institution with limited faculty and staff, all employees are adequately qualified and perform their jobs at the highest level, including multitasking, such as leading students through co-curricular activities. All employees realize the importance of CMN's unique mission, by contributing their skills and knowledge to a program (see section 3.E.1) which emphasizes native culture, values, language and self-determination among students. Through the dedication of faculty and staff, the College translates the core value vrakkueckv (*respect*) into the various events by valuing native culture, language and community and honoring the rights and dignity of all people.

***Core Component 3.D:*** *The institution provides support for student learning and effective teaching.*

***3.D.1. The institution provides student support services suited to the needs of its student populations.***

CMN serves a student population with a wide range of life experiences and academic backgrounds, including significant numbers of non-traditional, first generation and low-income students. Student support services focus on co-curricular activities, student residence environment, counseling support, student advisement and unique cultural needs of our student body. Students are also involved in a broad perspective of activities that relate to Native culture, academic topics, social issues and Native History through co-curricular activities. Through these services, students are given an opportunity to expand their world view in relation to their own life. The student housing environment is complemented by co-curricular activities, as students live on campus full-time and interact with one another through their social activities and on an informal basis. This is the first time that many of the students have had the opportunity to live in

## Criterion Three. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

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an educational environment where Native students are in the majority. Many have expressed positive comments about their experience.

An integral part of our student support services involves independent and group counseling. Through an agreement with MCN Behavioral Health, counseling services are provided to students for suicide prevention, drug and alcohol awareness, personal issues and cultural activities to support student engagement. Moreover, the advisement system emphasizes one-to-one interaction between faculty advisors and individual advisees to help students engage in planning that meets their academic needs and interests.

The Student Affairs mission statement reflects our commitment to providing a student-centered environment that embodies an open door policy and relevant programming. In line with the mission, CMN works intentionally to provide quality services that meet student needs. For example, during the spring 2013 semester the Student Affairs Office held a Resume Writing Workshop and Interview Tips Presentation where students were given the opportunity to create an outline for a resume and given valuable knowledge on the interview process. Following these activities a Job Fair was hosted on the CMN campus to apply the lessons learned. Several students took advantage of opportunities to network with the many businesses on site and some were successful in their job search.

The financial aspect of a student's education, perhaps has the greatest impact on their retention and graduation. In recognizing this fact, the College has upgraded its financial aid program to address the educational expenses of students attending CMN. Following is a chart that illustrates the progressive increase in educational expenses and aid provided through FAFSA sources and college scholarships.

## Criterion Three. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

Table 5: *Educational Expenses Category and Aid by Term: Fall 2009 - Fall 2013*

Term	Tuition & Fees	Books & Supplies	Housing	Meal Plans	Fees	Total Expenses	FAFSA Aid*	CMN Aid	Total Student Aid
FA 2009*	\$265,674.00					\$265,674.00		\$265,674.00	\$265,674.00
SP 2010	\$83,949.00	\$ 36,563.00	\$65,862.00	\$18,253.00	\$4,539.00	\$209,166.00	\$15,229.00	\$193,937.00	\$209,166.00
SU 2010	\$170,987.00	\$24,719.00	\$45,311.00	\$9,640.00	\$804.00	\$251,461.00	\$117,314.00	\$134,147.00	\$ 251,461.00
FA 2010	\$235,592.00	\$34,442.00	\$46,030.00	\$16,782.00	\$816.00	\$333,662.00	\$187,699.00	\$145,963.00	\$333,662.00
SP 2011	\$249,067.00	\$32,181.00	\$54,936.00	\$19,142.00	\$6,158.00	\$361,484.00	\$188,405.00	\$173,079.00	\$ 361,484.00
SU 2011	\$166,661.00	\$25,936.00	\$24,873.00	\$7,584.00	\$2,930.00	\$227,984.00	\$118,850.00	\$109,134.00	\$227,984.00
FA 2011	\$268,586.00	\$41,373.00	\$76,008.00	\$31,783.00	\$2,541.00	\$420,291.00	\$177,828.00	\$261,307.00	\$439,135.00
SP2012	\$267,115.00	\$44,479.00	\$39,413.00	\$51,707.00	\$3,281.00	\$405,995.00	\$183,237.00	\$246,046.00	\$ 429,283.00
SU 2012	\$199,707.00	\$25,664.00	\$39,891.00	\$32,106.00	\$466.00	\$297,834.00	\$127,531.00	\$170,476.00	\$298,007.00
FA 2012	\$329,666.00	\$64,696.00	\$35,034.00	\$ 69,114.00	\$2,413.00	\$500,923.00	\$220,974.00	\$284,068.00	\$505,042.00
SP 2013	\$263,094.00	\$44,551.00	\$31,960.00	\$54,020.00	\$1,675.00	\$395,300.00	\$161,412.00	\$221,034.00	\$382,446.00
SU 2013	\$184,641.00	\$30,587.00	\$24,592.00	\$35,031.00	\$1,756.00	\$276,607.00	\$144,364.00	\$139,162.00	\$283,526.00
FA 2013	\$206,468.00	\$32,947.00	\$65,409.00	\$54,257.00	\$980.00	\$360,061.00	\$149,650.00	\$207,164.00	\$356,814.00
TOTAL	\$2,891,207.00	\$438,138.00	\$549,319.00	\$399,419.00	\$28,359.00	\$4,306,442.00	\$1,792,493.00	\$2,551,191.00	\$4,343,684.00

Source: CMN Bursar, 12/20/2013

\*Received through OSU-IT Financial Aid Office

Dollar amounts rounded to the nearest dollar

Student Affairs supports the overall mission of the College of the Muscogee Nation by identifying and responding to students' needs with personalized student services. CMN is committed to cultivating positive relationships among students, faculty, staff and the broader community.

***3.D.2. The institution provides for learning support and preparatory instruction to address the academic needs of its students. It has a process for directing entering students to courses and programs for which the students are adequately prepared.***

This College is dedicated to building an institution that provides students access to a high-quality and culturally sensitive education. It accomplishes that goal, in part, by supporting the learning needs of its students. The library, tutoring program, disability accommodations, Student Notification System (formerly Early Alert) and COMPASS testing, as well as faculty development, all ensure students have the necessary tools for advancing their education.

The library supports its educational programs by providing students, faculty and staff with access to books, periodicals, electronic resources and audio/visual materials. A steady

### Criterion Three. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

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increase in the number of holdings highlights CMN's diligence in supporting the academic needs of the school. The library provides students with access to an abundance of materials on-site, as well as many more materials available through the school's Inter-Library Loan capabilities. Also crucial in learning support is information literacy and library instruction.

Continuing collaboration between faculty, administration and the librarian help ensure the collection contains the materials necessary for full academic support. A highly qualified librarian is on campus ten hours each day classes are held to assist with the reference needs of students, faculty, staff and Muscogee (Creek) community members. The College has supported the librarian's attendance in local, regional and national conferences. Continuing education provided by conferences allows the librarian to remain current of trends in the field of academic librarianship, ensuring the librarian is equipped to assist in delivering a high-quality education.

The library will strengthen its support of CMN's educational programs in the future by continuing to allocate the funds necessary to build its collections. With an ever increasing reliance on electronic resources, the library will continue to augment its holdings in that area so that students will be able to excel in the information age. Also, the library will continue to write grants to fund additional materials and technological advances. The Student Center will house a new library with increased square footage of usable space, equipped with technology and computers for students. The new library facilities will continue to provide students with upgraded scholarly materials in support of their learning.

The Federal Home Loan Bank grant funding established a college tutoring center for students, to enhance their learning. The purpose of the program focuses on providing academic support to students, increasing their ability to succeed as they pursue their higher education degree.

## Criterion Three. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

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Students may access tutoring services through a personal request or referral by faculty and/or staff. If a student recognizes that they have academic deficiencies, he/she may directly request a tutor in the library or through the Dean of Academic Affairs. Students placed on academic notice will be referred by faculty for tutoring. When a student is placed on academic probation, a contract is signed between the student and advisor outlining the hours and days a student is required to attend tutoring sessions. If a student is placed on financial aid suspension for not meeting the minimum GPA or Completion Ratio requirements, they may be recommended to take advantage of tutoring sessions by the Special Considerations Committee.

This process is to ensure students have access to tutoring when needed. Provision of learning support, through the tutoring program, has been successful for CMN and its students. Students take advantage of this opportunity, and generally, at least ten students per week come in for tutoring sessions.

Academic and physical accommodations are provided to students with disabilities to promote individual independence and maintain academic progress. Assistance is based on each student's individual need and is designed to remove barriers that hinder learning and campus access, thereby providing an equal opportunity for academic success and individual freedom. As an initial step in accommodating students with disabilities, CMN has designed its campus to be in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act guidelines.

To initiate accommodations, students must self-identify or disclose a disability to the Dean of Academic and/or Student Affairs. Once services have been requested, a student must provide documentation that is within the last three years from a qualified professional stating the nature and severity of the disability, diagnostic procedures used and recommendations for assistance. Students will complete a "Request for Accommodations" which lists the specific

## Criterion Three. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

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academic or student support services needed. The services requested are subject to approval by the Dean of Academic and/or Dean of Student Affairs. This request must be submitted each semester to continue accommodations. Instructors and/or staff will be contacted to activate and adopt accommodations as requested. On occasion, CMN consults with the OSUIT Office of Student Disability Services to provide accommodations and support for students with documented disabilities. Services may include assistance with college student administrative procedures, academic counseling, adaptive equipment and auxiliary aids.

The intent of CMN is to assure that the student has an equal opportunity to demonstrate his/her mastery of course material and to participate in the educational programs and activities offered by CMN. Academic accommodations to which a student may be entitled include changes in the length of time allowed to complete course requirements, and adaptation of the manner in which specific courses or examinations are conducted. Students are encouraged to make requests for accommodations prior to or at the beginning of each class in which he/she is enrolled.

The process for entering students to courses and programs for which they are adequately prepared begins with proper assessment. COMPASS testing is provided for all students with a score of lower than 19 on each area of the ACT test. The COMPASS assessment determines one's academic proficiency in the areas of reading, science, math and writing, and the results of these are utilized in advising students to appropriate class levels. If the student scores below the level, they will be placed in the appropriate remediation class(es.) Testing is provided at the OSUIT assessment center, weekdays between 8:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.

CMN offers remedial/developmental courses for math, which includes zero level classes for Math Fundamentals, Algebra Fundamentals and Intermediate Algebra. The approach used for teaching the class is self-paced learning based on math competency achievement levels. In

## Criterion Three. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

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addition to the math classes, other remedial/developmental courses include Reading, English and Science for which students do not receive degree credit. Student pass rates for math classes are provided in the table following.

Table 6: *Remedial/Developmental Math Courses Attended by CMN Students*

Year	Semester	Course	No. Enrolled	No. Passed
2012	Spring	Math 0143 Math Fundamentals	17	12
2012	Spring	Math 0153 Algebra Fundamentals	11	5
2012	Spring	Math 0163 Intermediate Algebra	16	10
2012	Summer	Math 0143 Math Fundamentals	14	6
2012	Summer	Math 0153 Algebra Fundamentals	15	5
2012	Summer	Math 0163 Intermediate Algebra	13	7
2012	Fall	Math 0143 Math Fundamentals	18	10
2012	Fall	Math 0153 Algebra Fundamentals	38	16
2012	Fall	Math 0163 Intermediate Algebra	19	9
2013	Spring	Math 0143 Math Fundamentals	7	2
2013	Spring	Math 0153 Algebra Fundamentals	25	10
2013	Spring	Math 0163 Intermediate Algebra	16	6
2013	Summer	Math 0143 Math Fundamentals	7	5
2013	Summer	Math 0153 Algebra Fundamentals	9	7
2013	Summer	Math 0163 Intermediate Algebra	7	3
2013	Fall	Math 0143 Math Fundamentals	21	16
2013	Fall	Math 0153 Algebra Fundamentals	26	14
2013	Fall	Math 0163 Intermediate Algebra	19	15
Total			298	158

*Source: CMN Math Instructor, 12/2013*

Many CMN students are the first in their family to attend college and often times they need additional guidance, which may start with our notification system. If a student is failing to meet the requirements of a class or not attending class regularly, instructors are able to issue an EMPOWER Student Notification. When an instructor issues a Student Notification, it is forwarded to the student's advisor as well as the Dean of Academic Affairs. Attendance is commonly the first indicator that a student needs more learning support and this notification alerts staff to help students get back on track. Our faculty, staff and administration all work

## Criterion Three. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

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together to give our students the tools they need to succeed not only at our institution, but as they advance on to other universities and/or careers. Habits students learn during their time at CMN are carried on as they further their higher education.

### ***3.D.3. The institution provides academic advising suited to its programs and the needs of its students.***

At CMN, faculty plays a critical role not only in the academic advisement of students, but also in their success after graduation. The faculty's role as academic advisors is an essential part of their commitment to the College, and is consistent with College's core value *Mecvlke* (Responsibility). Faculty is given an Advisement and Enrollment Handbook that guides the advisement process and answers any questions that may arise during the advisement process. As academic advisors, faculty is charged with, but not limited to, meeting with students to review degree plans, to compare transcripts with the upcoming class schedule to select proper courses, and to aid in the transfer to a four-year institution. Furthermore, faculty discusses with students/adviseses program residency, financial aid, successful academic progress and student academic load requirements as set forth in the CMN Catalog. Faculty also address academic problems as they arise, ensuring the students' satisfactory academic progress toward completing their degree. Finally as degree-program coordinators, faculty is required to schedule courses in a manner in which students can meet associate degree program requirements within a two-year time period.

Of the utmost importance in this one-on-one relationship with students is when faculty assists students in achieving successful academic progress toward degree or certificate program requirements. As mentors, faculty is responsible for assisting students with defining career goals, encouraging cultural awareness, encouraging lifelong learning and achieving intellectual

## Criterion Three. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

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advancement. Academic advisement occurs continuously throughout each trimester, as the faculty constantly monitors student progress. Students are required to meet with faculty prior to enrolling for each trimester. This required face-to-face advisement allows faculty to make sure that students are “on the right track” toward degree or certificate completion and their future success. The student friendly atmosphere of CMN makes academic advisement a productive, yet comfortable experience.

### ***3.D.4. The institution provides to students and instructors the infrastructure and resources necessary to support effective teaching and learning.***

The commitment of this institution to provide support for student learning is evident in the continued growth and progress of our physical campus. Examples of this commitment are state of the art classroom facilities, a science lab, on-campus housing, technologic infrastructure and a growing library, which all contribute to our students receiving a quality education.

Through EPSCoR grant funding, the College has recently installed a science lab to upgrade general course offerings. It has been a major achievement for CMN to acquire the necessary equipment for courses in biology, anatomy and physical science. The grant helped to purchase lab specimens, skeletons, anatomic models, microscopes, secure chemical storage unit, sink, autoclave and other science lab materials. Of note for the future, the Student Center will house a state of the art science lab when it is opened in the summer of 2014.

### Student Housing

A critical aspect of the infrastructure is student housing. Residence units have access to internet support which allows for access to multiple data bases for research to complete assignments and have closer contact with their instructors. The units are adequately furnished to provide comfortable living and designated study space for each student to encourage a

## Criterion Three. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

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positive learning environment. Certainly, living on campus gives students the opportunity to be close to their classes, faculty and library, bringing them closer as a part of their campus community.

### Student Center

Upon completion, the infrastructure and resources for the College will be substantially expanded and will provide extensive support for effective teaching and learning. The new Student Center will further supply CMN students, faculty and staff with tools needed to support student learning and effective teaching. The building will contain a larger library space, science lab, bookstore, cafeteria, gym and three adjoining classroom with collapsible walls which can be converted to a large meeting space. There will also be more office space in the Student Center. The new library will provide a dedicated information literacy instruction area, complete with a SMARTBoard. The library will offer a total of 24 computers to accommodate increased student usage and enrollment.

### Technological Infrastructure

Fiber Optics services for the tribal college were approved by the National Council and supplemented by a grant from University of Oklahoma and the National Science Foundation. The capacity of the fiber optics is 10 GB backbone with a 100 MB internet line; thus allowing for increased capacity needs in the future. Funding from different sources facilitated the purchase and installation of IT equipment for student housing, expanding the capacity to provide a technologically supported education for students. To initiate the IT program, OSU/EPSCoR funded half of the IT Manager's annual salary.

In addition, support services such as the computer lab and servers, security system, interactive telecommunications and SMARTBoards in all classrooms accommodate effective

## Criterion Three. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

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classroom learning technology. Instructors have access to Desire2Learn, a classroom management software or Learning Management System for online teaching.

The College uses a manual backup system with Backup Exec 12. External hard drive backups are changed daily throughout the week. These hard drives are taken off campus employing an offsite storage method which is vital in the event of a natural disaster, thus ensuring continued operation of crucial systems. Our off site back-up storage location enables replication in close proximity a mile away (the Data Center located at the Muscogee (Creek) Nation tribal headquarters.)

Eight servers are used on campus. Two of the main servers in the network are a Dell PowerEdge R710 2008 Primary domain controller, and a Secondary backup Dell PowerEdge R710 2008 domain controller, which is configured for redundancy. Hosting a public website from within the local network required a little more preparation and segmenting. A Dell PowerEdge 1950 windows server running Internet Information Services (IIS) on a 2003 Operating System hosts the [www.mvsktc.org](http://www.mvsktc.org) website. Employee documents are backed up nightly on the CMN server. In addition, a decommissioned domain controller now connects CMN to Muscogee (Creek) Nation's Access Control System (ACS) for additional security.

For the future of technology at the College, virtualization has been introduced. Virtualizing services allow an organization to grow resources without the bulk cost of multiple servers. There is also an added layer of security using multiple virtual servers. As the data is not directly written to the virtual server with the Operating System, data can be hosted from another virtual hard drive, or from a network share located on a different server. As the College grows in number and the need increases for data services and resources, a stronger backup and disaster recovery method will be employed to be more responsive to students' technology needs.

## Criterion Three. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

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### Student Technology Resources

Students are given access to computers within the library. Currently there are 44 computers available to the students in the computer labs and in the library, which all include Microsoft Office 2010 Suite. There is also a stand-alone computer located in the library for public use that has been dedicated solely to the library catalog.

### Library

The College is fully committed to providing the resources necessary to support student learning and effective teaching. The library makes a wide range of materials available to students, faculty, staff, community members and Muscogee (Creek) citizens. The library utilizes a Collection Development Policy as well as feedback from faculty and students ensuring that books, periodicals, electronic resources and audio/visual materials fully support the curriculum and research needs of the College. In addition to an abundance of materials available on-site, the library's Inter-Library Loan capabilities support CMN's educational programs by providing students with access to a tremendous number of additional resources. The [Library Handbook](#) was designed to ensure the library's policies and procedures are utilized effectively.

Collection holdings are related to the four degree programs and two certificate programs that are currently offered, and include an extensive collection of Native American resources, course specific academic journals, a copy of all current textbooks (course reserves), electronic resources, reference materials and audio/visual materials. The library also houses an extensive collection of tribal newspapers as well as the CMN archives. Due to the implementation of a Collection Development Policy and a Deselection (weeding) Policy, the library's collection has become more focused and current.

## Criterion Three. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

Table 7: *Library Collection Holdings*

Academic Year	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012	2012/2013
Books and Serial Back files	2070 CMN 9,000 OSUIT	1250 CMN 9,000 OSUIT	3000 CMN	3612	4224
Current Serial Titles	22	25	23	23	23
Electronic Databases	--	--	21 CMN 32 OSUIT	21 CMN 39 OSUIT	28 CMN 45 OSUIT
Audio-Visual Materials	92	120	222	350	455

*Source: Librarian 11/2013*

In the near future, an additional 12 laptops and six desktop computers will be added to meet the demands of our growing student population. There is seating available for 32 in the library. Many of CMN students are single parents with limited transportation and monetary funds; therefore, the library also provides a small collection of children's books. Constant collaboration and continuing education allows the librarian to stay abreast in the field of library science, ensuring the library continues to provide useful resources.

Open 48 hours weekly, this 2,200 square foot facility serves approximately 5,500 patrons a year. A full-time librarian and two work study students are available to serve patrons. Library usage patterns are tracked and changes in the library's hours can quickly be adjusted to support the needs of the College and its students. The librarian is available to assist with the reference needs of students, faculty, staff and Muscogee (Creek) community members. Quiet study areas, 12 fully equipped computers, six circulating lap-top computers, an on-line catalog, a high resolution scanner, a mobile television/DVD player and a cost-free printer/copier are available for student use.

## Criterion Three. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

Table 8: *Library Service Statistics*

Academic Year	2008/2009	2009/2010	2010/2011	2011/2012	2012/2013
Public Service Hours (per week)	53	56	48	48	48
Reference Transactions (per week)	20	20	50	55	65
Hours staffed by professional librarian (per week)	53	40	40	40	40
Inter-Library Loan	--	--	--	--	--
Computer Workstations in Library	22	22	14	15	15
For library patrons	20	20	12	12	12
For library staff	2	2	2	3	3
Information Services to Groups	16	5	13	17	20
Number of Presentations	16	5	13	17	20
Number of patrons served by presentations	250	100	105	211	157
Circulation Transactions	260	744	1017	1894	2009
General Collection Transactions	160	294	417	1414	1529
Reserve Transactions	100	450	600	480	480
Library Space (square feet)	2000	2000	2200	2200	2200
Library Committee	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes

*Source: Librarian 11/2013*

Access to the Internet and word processing programs is available through 12 wireless computers in the library, as well as a computer lab containing an additional 32 wireless computers. Students often spend the day on campus and these resources allow them to use their time more efficiently. The available circulating lap-top computers are also essential to commuting students and those who often lack access to a computer at home. The majority of campus is equipped with Wi-Fi technology allowing students to utilize the lap-tops in convenient locations. The lap-top computers and Wi-Fi technology help reduce the digital divide faced by many of CMN's students.

## Criterion Three. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

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The CMN Library equips students with the tools necessary to succeed academically, and also in the work force. The library also fosters life-long learning skills by providing culturally relevant and enriching items such as Muscogee artifacts, regalia and books. Welcoming students in their Native Language and providing the needed academic support encourages student excitement in the library, which creates a circle of use. In addition to materials used to support the curriculum and research needs of the College, the library is building a popular fiction collection through donations to support reading for pleasure, which in turn supports life-long learning.

Necessary information literacy skills are taught to ensure students thrive in a global economy. Providing library tours, electronic database workshops and reference help ensures the CMN library gives its students' academic support. The library continually assesses the effectiveness of its information literacy instruction by having students anonymously rate how helpful the sessions are and provide feedback. Utilizing the assessment results allows the librarian to make timely changes in the information literacy sessions. The library also provides opportunities for feedback in the form of a prominent suggestions box. Suggestions are reviewed on a regular basis and addressed as necessary. The librarian also informally surveys students regarding library services. A library committee comprised of the librarian, a faculty member, a staff member and a student has been instituted to assist in providing targeted resources to support student learning and effective teaching.

The Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC) supports academics by allowing students the ability to search the CMN Library holdings while on campus as well as off-site via the College's website, which further supports distance learners. Students are also able to access high quality online academic databases through both CMN's website and the OSUIT website. These

## Criterion Three. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

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databases give students access to the types of academic materials needed to succeed at the college level. CMN is able to provide access to these electronic databases through participation in the Oklahoma State Department of Libraries Digital Prairie program. A few of the relevant electronic databases we are able to provide our students via the Digital Prairie program include: Academic Search Premiere, MEDLINE, Topic Search, Bibliography of Native North Americans, Newspaper Source Plus and ERIC.

The librarian is a member of the Faculty Council, as well as other committees. These memberships allow the librarian to remain in-sync with the needs of instructors and students. Due to the librarian's expanded hours, she is in the unique position to interact on a daily basis with part-time adjunct faculty who often teach during the evening. This interaction also strengthens the library's ability to support its educational needs. Collaboration and networking with other professionals in the field via local, regional and national conferences, as well as participation in library related committees and active utilization of list-servs allows the librarian the opportunity to maximize the library's objective of supporting the College's curriculum and research needs. The librarian is a member of the American Library Association, the Association of College and Research Libraries, the Oklahoma Library Association, the Oklahoma Library Association's Tribal Libraries Committee and also the Tribal Colleges and Universities Library Association.

There are inherent challenges in a Tribal College Library setting. The library is tasked with providing services for a population that has had limited experience with college libraries. The librarian is committed to ensuring CMN's student body, faculty, staff and Muscogee (Creek) citizens are aware of the services the library can provide. The librarian communicates with the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Tribal Library and the Okmulgee Public Library Director to create

## Criterion Three. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

greater community involvement. The CMN library and its staff are fully dedicated to providing students, staff, faculty and Muscogee (Creek) community members with access to a wide range of quality materials in a variety of formats. The librarian and staff work to improve the library and its offerings every year. Ensuring the library remains an integral resource to the students of the College of the Muscogee Nation is its highest priority.

The budget for the Library over a five year period, has averaged 5.3% of the total general education expenses, and will continue to maintain or exceed that percentage with the move to expand the library and its services.

Table 9: *Library Expenditures*

Year	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010 *	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013
Library Expenditures	105,668	87,573	174,536	90,164	87,186	95,366
Salaries for Library Staff	62,521	67,123	79,805	79,805	80,805	82,291
Materials Expenditures	3,214	13,650	6,597	2,610	4,234	5,283
Other Library Expenditures	19,843	6,800	44,750	7,749	2,147	7,792
Total Library Technology Expenditures	20,090	0	43,383	0	0	0
Total Educational and General Expenditures	1,549,000	1,917,000	2,276,000	1,179,344	1,795,850	1,673,236
Total Library Expenditures as Percentage of Total Educational and General Expenses	6.82%	4.57%	7.67%	7.65%	4.85%	5.70%

Source: Librarian 11/2013

\*costs associated with moving Library to new building

### Instructional Equipment and Technology

CMN's technological resources strengthen educational programs both in the classroom and throughout the campus. Faculty have access to wireless networks to be able to gather resources on iPads, desktop computers and the classroom computers to which the

## Criterion Three. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

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SMARTBoards are connected. In addition, faculty communication with student residents is facilitated by technologically-equipped residence units.

In preparation for future administration of student data and records, CMN recognizes the need to secure the tribal college website as it becomes interfaced with the EMPOWER system and the course management software, in addition to the Sage 100 Fund Accounting (MIP) Systems.

To upgrade support for teaching and learning, CMN purchased nine SmartBoards for each of the eight classrooms and one for the conference room. Instructors may write on the touch screen boards, display images or other educational resources routed through the desktop computer, as well as record teaching sessions for later use. The instructors have utilized the technology since moving into the new Administration/Education building, and have found it to be a great resource for their teaching and also for student presentations.

As mentioned in the preceding Library subsection, students are given access to work on computers within the computer lab, library and laptops checked out through the library. The library has an online searchable electronic catalog system for student access. A web search is available through the college website, which makes the catalog accessible anywhere there is Internet access. There is also a standalone computer located in the library for public use that has been dedicated solely to the library catalog.

### ***3.D.5. The institution provides to students guidance in the effective use of research and information resources.***

Students are guided in the effective use of research and information resources for a quality education. Providing and maintaining the appropriate learning and teaching resources are a vital part of the equation. Students are able to access a multitude of scholarly resources both

## Criterion Three. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

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on-campus and online by utilizing the CMN website. The library's webpage includes access to our online catalog link, electronic databases and the library handbook. Not only do the students have access to quality resources, they are counseled in the use of those resources during information literacy instruction, which is provided for classes in each of the degree programs.

Research is required during the coursework for each of the four degree programs. The librarian, in conjunction with faculty, works to ensure students are effectively guided in their research and information needs, which helps support their learning goals. To gauge the students' research capabilities, the librarian administers a short survey to all freshmen in the ORIE 1011 College Cornerstone class. The survey helps the librarian determine areas of focus for information literacy instruction, which is taught to all Freshman Composition I and Freshman Composition II classes, as well as the Reading and English Fundamentals classes. The librarian also provides research instruction, as requested, in other classes.

In information literacy sessions, the librarian discusses how to find, analyze and ethically use information. The information literacy sessions also include instruction on how to navigate electronic databases available to our students, as well as information on style guidelines and plagiarism. The librarian also provides research instruction on an individual basis as requested by students. Four tutors work to ensure students are counseled in using information effectively. In addition to assisting students with their learning needs, the librarian ensures faculty have the necessary resources for effective teaching, such as scholarly journals, books and audio visual materials.

One of the first steps in an exceptional education is teaching students their responsibilities. The College informs students of its academic dishonesty policy in several ways. Students are able to access a digital copy of the academic dishonesty policy in the online student

## Criterion Three. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

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handbook. In addition to the student handbook, the academic dishonesty policy can be found on each syllabus.

When students enroll, they are required to read and sign the Internet, E-mail and Computer Usage Policy. A copy of the agreement is retained in each student's file in the Registrar's office. CMN's Network Administrator is available to help with technology issues and provide user accounts for all students. Also, a firewall filters content not conducive to learning. By guiding our students in effectively and ethically using resources, the college helps students succeed in a digital and global society.

***Core Component 3.E:*** *The institution fulfills the claims it makes for an enriched educational environment.*

***3.E.1. Co-curricular programs are suited to the institution's mission and contribute to the education experience of its students.***

As stated in the Student Handbook, individual students and student organizations shall be free to examine and to discuss all questions of interest to them and to express opinions publicly and privately. Students have the right to assemble, to select speakers and to discuss issues of their choice. However, CMN Faculty/Staff will ensure a reasonable time, place and manner restrictions are set in order to maintain the regular class schedules and the rights of other students on campus.

Students have embraced the opportunities of college life by being involved with the Native American Student Association, Student Housing Organization, newly organized Student Senate and other college activities. Students who participate and are involved in college activities impact other students and the campus community. Students in these organizations are involved in the community, OSUIT, CMN and Muscogee (Creek) Nation activities. Students exhibit *vraakkueckv (Respect)* for the College and themselves as they participated in activities

## Criterion Three. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

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such as the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Festival Parade, winning the top honors in 2012 and 2013. It is also demonstrated through participation in OSUIT co-curricular activities.

In November, Native American Heritage activities on campus are scheduled and many of the students participate in events such as traditional StompDances, Hymn Singings, cultural and historic presentations and student forums. Also a ceremony was held to honor our Native Veterans and a presentation was given by Joe Taylor, a Native Veteran and poet.

Student Affairs offers student-centered services necessary to provide an environment that supports positive individual growth while encouraging participation of our students through social, recreational, cultural and wellness activities. Several examples include: presentations, open to the public, in February 2013 by Ron Graham entitled: “The Freedmen Saga in the Dawes Commission” in observance of African-American History Month and in March 2013 by Thomasine Fife entitled “Stress Management”. This is an integral part of the campus setting to encourage exploration of a breadth of knowledge and learning opportunities to coordinate with curricular learning. In addition, cultural arts classes were provided for students to craft a pair of traditional southeastern style moccasins.

The Native American Student Association (NASA) enhances student development and initiative by providing opportunities for students to share cultural experiences with students that have common interests. In conjunction with NASA, students participate in off-campus co-curricular activities such as the American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC) and the Oklahoma Native American Students in Higher Education (ONASHE) conferences. Students attending these conferences also participate in the annual hand game and knowledge bowl competitions.

## Criterion Three. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

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Students are encouraged to accept leadership positions for planning and participating in these state and national student organizations. A former NASA President and CMN Alum was selected for a fellowship at George Washington University, serving as an intern for Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid. Most recently four CMN students and the Dean of Academic Affairs attended the 2012 Winter American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC) Meeting, in Washington, D.C. from February 13-16. The purpose was to meet with the Oklahoma state congressmen in order to advise them of Tribal Colleges and Universities' (TCUs) priorities and garner their support for TCU funding. Meetings were scheduled with Oklahoma Senators Jim Inhofe, Tom Coburn and House Representatives Dan Boren and Tom Cole.

This experience provided an excellent opportunity for students to not only understand the legislative issues concerning Tribal Colleges and Universities, but to get involved in matters that impact the sustainability of TCUs. The students took advantage of their meeting time with the congressmen to educate and update them in regards to Tribal Colleges by providing the elected officials reports on the "pulse" of their constituents. These students' advocacy efforts allowed their voices to be heard and will possibly contribute to legislation that can shape the future of TCUs. This annual meeting was an excellent co-curricular opportunity for CMN students to practice and strengthen their civic responsibilities and leadership skills.

***3.E.2. The institution demonstrates any claims it makes about contributions to its students' education experience by virtue of aspects of its mission, such as research, community engagement, service learning, religious or spiritual purpose and economic development.***

Claims that a positive learning environment is provided for tribal and non-tribal students is demonstrated through the service learning component. As defined in the Service Learning Handbook, service learning means a method under which students learn and develop through

## Criterion Three. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

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thoughtfully organized service. Service learning is conducted in, and meets the needs of the community; it is coordinated by CMN and with the community. It is our intent to foster civic responsibility through the course, which is integrated into the academic curriculum of the students, including time for students to reflect on the service experience.

CMN employs a service learning component in its degree programs in order for students to apply their knowledge in a real world setting. Students are partnered with organizations, businesses and MCN programs that are in line with the degree curriculum and/or the student's prospective career. Students have conducted service learning with the MCN Office of Child Welfare, Social Services, National Council and Lighthouse Police. Other locations include Okmulgee Indian Community, Elderly Nutrition and Okmulgee Indian Health Services. Students are able to address the many challenges associated with the duties of these workplaces as well as gain experience that addresses local needs, documents civic responsibility and highlights project achievements.

Within the Service Learning component, projects have been completed that relate to the CMN Mvskoke garden, Muscogee Community Food Security project, Creek Nation Reintegration Program and Diabetes Awareness Summit. Students have indicated that their desire to upgrade their knowledge and personal development were reasons for participating in the Service Learning Project. Upon completion of their experience, students indicated they had a more positive attitude toward CMN and that it enhanced their ability to work and learn independently. Students reported a sense of personal achievement, and perhaps the greatest impact was their sense of social responsibility was increased. A student was quoted to say:

*“Although this was only class credit, I would greatly recommend this class to any other student because I think this is a great experience. It was great and I enjoyed every bit of information and [hands on] training that I received.”*

## Criterion Three. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support

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Experiential learning in this format gives students the opportunity to plan, implement and participate in a tribal service learning project. The course culminates with students developing a portfolio of their service learning experience that addresses local needs, documents civic responsibility and highlights project achievements.

The College envisions experiential learning as a process which will involve student participation in community activities and serve as a capstone for their Associate degree studies. By virtue of aspects of the mission such as emphasizing native culture, community engagement, professional development and intellectual advancement, Service Learning brings a special and unique approach to the students' educational experience.



TEACHING AND LEARNING: EVALUATION  
AND IMPROVEMENT

## Criterion Four. Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

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### **Criterion Four. Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement**

*Core Component 4.A: The institution demonstrates responsibility for the quality of its educational programs.*

#### ***4.A.1. The institution maintains a practice of regular program reviews.***

It is critical to the quality of CMN degree programs that each be reviewed to determine their effectiveness by assessing whether or not the program is fulfilling its goals, continues to be feasible and the supports the mission of CMN. When a program is reviewed, the following are presented in the review report: 1) Productivity Criteria-Minimum number of majors and graduates, 2) Background of program, 3) Identification of successes, concerns and disconnects, 4) Ensuring a seamless path to the success of the program - Enrollment and graduation rates, 5) Plans to meet productivity requirements-Marketing efforts, Retention efforts and 6) Formal request for continuation if goals are not met.

While to date not all degree programs have been reviewed, plans are such to complete reviews within the next academic year. The initial plan was to review the Gaming Program first, by using an established process which the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education has implemented for state institution degree programs. Addressed in this process include unnecessary duplication, faculty requirements, cost and funding of the program, the process for program evaluation and assessment, in addition to the evaluation plan for the proposed program.

As noted, the CMN Gaming Degree Program is the first example of a regular program review, having been reviewed twice or every three years since its origination in 2007. CMN will review all degree programs using the same format as used for the Gaming program. The results of the assessment revealed that the program needed to continue and that time would be given to

## Criterion Four. Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

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increase enrollment and the number of graduates. A follow-up report was submitted to update the CMN Regents, as well as the Oklahoma Regents on the progress of the Gaming Program.

In support of the program reviews, CMN periodically audits the syllabi for quality and internal consistency as well. The purpose of the audit is to determine if the: 1) Syllabus Course Description matches the Catalog course description, 2) Objectives have compatible Methods of Assessment, 3) Assessment of Competencies are consistent with the grading tasks; Points should be given for each grading task as well as percentages, 4) Course Outline Assignments include the Syllabus Assessment Competencies/Grading Tasks and 5) Format is consistent.

Faculty members revise syllabi to note changes in text editions. Text changes are to be discussed with the Academic Dean prior to ordering the text. Any major revisions for a course must be submitted to the Curriculum Committee and approved. Students are given the opportunity each term to evaluate classes in which they are enrolled through the Instructor/Course Survey.

Regular reviews provide feedback to the college leadership from a broad and comprehensive perspective for each degree program. Thus, academic decisions relating to the degree programs will be based on substantive data and activities. It is CMN's goal to build a coherent and focused academic program that supports effective teaching and learning.

### ***4.A.2. The institution evaluates all the credit that it transcripts, including what it awards for experiential learning or other forms of prior learning.***

All credits that are received for courses taken at CMN are recorded on official transcripts to document the successful or unsuccessful completion of coursework. The evaluation of credit is based on the assessment by faculty of a student's work; grades are then submitted to and verified by the registrar. Other grading criteria that are not academic grades include a student

## Criterion Four. Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

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withdrawal, incomplete and/or audit, etc. These criteria follow the same consistent process for transcribing.

Course titles, credit hours, semester/year and grades are recorded in the EMPOWER Student Information System. The Registrar is responsible for entering grades into the system at the end of the term. Instructors submit grades for their courses on the EMPOWER Web module. The official transcript of the college is a complete academic record for all students who have taken coursework at CMN.

### ***4.A.3. The institution has policies that assure the quality of the credit it accepts in transfer.***

This institution accepts transfer credits earned at institutions who are fully accredited by any of the six U.S. regional associations. Students must submit official transcripts from all previous institutions attended. Once the official transcripts are received and verified by the Registrar, courses and grades are keyed into the EMPOWER Student Information System. Students receive credit for courses that are successfully completed. Transfer students that have cumulative GPA below a 2.0 are admitted on probation.

For Oklahoma colleges and universities, the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education Course Equivalency Tables are used to approve transfer credits. The tables provide course-by-course equivalency at other institutions. If a course is not listed in the tables, transfer credit is evaluated on a course-by-course basis. The evaluation is based on course description, as presented in the college catalog of the respective institution. Evaluation of transfer credit may require documentation such as program requirements and course syllabi to determine acceptable transfer credit courses.

## Criterion Four. Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

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***4.A.4. The institution maintains and exercises authority over the prerequisites for courses, rigor of courses, expectations for student learning, access to learning resources and faculty qualifications for all its programs, including dual credit programs. It assures that its dual credit courses or programs for high school students are equivalent in learning outcomes and levels of achievement to its higher education curriculum.***

In the enabling legislation and Charter, the College Board of Regents maintains and exercises authority over all courses offered by CMN. Every degree/certificate program must be approved by the Regents before being offered as an official degree/certificate program of the college. Prior to submission to the Regents, the college Curriculum Committee will ensure the rigor of courses, prerequisites and expectations of student learning by reviewing the degree program curriculum and course content.

The Deans of Student Affairs and Academic Affairs collaborate to design a program of learning resources that is easily accessed by the student body. To achieve a program that benefits the whole student, they discuss and consider events that will improve the aspects of student life and academics on campus. As a result, students are provided with relevant co-curricular activities, program specific tutoring, technology accessibility and counseling services.

The Board of Regents has adopted Personnel Policies, Faculty Handbook and position descriptions for all instructors, with the intent of maintaining a highly qualified faculty. As mentioned in Criterion Two, faculty is required to meet minimum qualifications described in the job descriptions. Those qualifications include a Master's degree with 18 college hours in the subject area in which they are teaching. Specifically, the faculty has an established tenure of 3.3 years which is significant for the length of time that the college has been in existence, and five of the seven have a Master's degree or above, which exceed HLC requirements.

## Criterion Four. Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

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Currently, there are no dual credit courses offered by CMN. However, high school students have concurrently enrolled in our college classes, and are held to the same requirements as college students.

***4.A.5. The institution maintains specialized accreditation for its programs as appropriate to its educational purposes.***

The College of the Muscogee Nation does not currently offer any programs requiring specialized accreditation. In the event that CMN creates a program that requires discipline specific accreditation, CMN will apply for accreditation through the appropriate agency.

***4.A.6. The institution evaluates the success of its graduates. The institution assures that the degree or certificate programs it represents as preparation for advanced study or employment accomplish these purposes. For all programs, the institution looks to indicators it deems appropriate to its mission, such as employment rates, admission rates to advanced degree programs and participation rates in fellowships, internships and special programs.***

In its short history, the college has held five graduation ceremonies with a total of 138 graduates. Since moving to the current CMN campus, each of the three graduating classes has been surveyed using the Graduate Survey to obtain feedback on the quality of their higher education experience. The Student Success Center recently conducted a Follow-Up Survey using a limited sample of graduates.

The intent of the Graduate Survey is used to obtain feedback about the impact of their CMN experience and future plans. The responses that have been received from our graduates are described as follows. The information presented in these findings reflects the result of a survey conducted with the graduating class of 2013 during spring commencement. All of the respondents volunteered to participate during graduation rehearsal on April 25 and the graduation exercises on April 26, 2013.

## Criterion Four. Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

Results from the Graduate Survey indicate that graduates participating in the survey were entirely Muscogee (Creek) tribal citizens (100%), with 31% residing in Okmulgee County, where the Tribal College is located. Seventy-seven (77%) of the graduates responding to the survey were female. The respondents' age ranges were as follows: 40-49 was 38%, 22-29 and 30-39 were both 23%, less than 21 and 50 and above were 8%. When asked to prioritize qualities of Campus Environment, students rated Native American Faculty and Students the highest. As shown in the following table, response to the item related to satisfaction with experiences at CMN, the top three answers were: Admission (5.00), Enrollment (4.80) and Advisement (4.75).

Table 10: *Student Satisfaction with CMN Experiences*

Item	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree	Not Applicable	Weighted Mean	Rank
Recruitment			2	6	3	1	4.09	13
Admissions					5	7	5.00	1
Enrollment				1	4	7	4.80	2
Advisement			1	1	10		4.75	3
Financial Aid	1			3	9		4.46	6
Instruction	1		1	4	7		4.23	11
Residential Housing				3	3	6	4.50	5
Tutoring			1	5	4	2	4.30	10
Student Activities	1		1	6	4	1	4.00	14
Library	1			3	9		4.46	6
Facilities				3	9		4.75	3
Information Technology (IT)	1		1	4	7		4.23	11
Security/Safety	1			3	9		4.46	6
Technology in Classroom	1			3	9		4.46	6
<b>Total</b>	7	0	8	53	97	10	4.39	

Source: 2013 Graduate Survey Report

Conclusions support the validity of the College of the Muscogee Nation's mission by first, reaching the specified target audience, Muscogee Creek citizens. By providing

## Criterion Four. Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

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scholarships for Creek students, the costs associated with higher education are less of a deterrent. The survey also concluded that graduates live within the Muscogee (Creek) Nation boundaries, and all graduates live in the district in which the college is located or in adjacent districts.

Accessibility is a key factor in students choosing to attend the College of the Muscogee Nation.

Additionally, females represented the majority of the graduates. This statistic is representative of previous graduating classes. This could be inverse of typical national graduate averages because of the incidence of household needs of single parent homes within the tribe. Males typically seek work rather than higher education, and single mothers are seeking education to provide a better future for their children and household.

Students reported that they valued the tangible characteristics (i.e. Native American Faculty and Students and Affordability) more than the intangible atmosphere (i.e. Cultural Campus and Ease of Commuting). This reflects the environment that the College has aimed for in recruiting instructors and providing scholarships to tribal citizens. Satisfaction with CMN experiences was strongest in the early stages of a student's time with the college, as reflected in the highest rankings of admissions, enrollment and advisement. This shows students are most impacted with the services they initially receive when they become students at CMN.

From the data analysis a list of recommendations was compiled to include: recruitment, career development, co-curricular activities, cultural curriculum and distance education. Although indicators of graduate success were not obtained, personal knowledge of our students' successes are generally known and recognized. For example, many graduates are employed with tribes, mostly with the Muscogee (Creek) Nation tribal service programs, language preservation, gaming and law enforcement. Some are continuing their education at the research and regional institutions throughout the state.

## Criterion Four. Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

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Recognizing the need to document these success criteria, the Research Specialist, in conjunction the Department of Student Affairs has administered a Graduate Follow Up survey. As a supplement to the graduate survey, the follow up is designed to evaluate specific indicators of long term success as it relates to the effect of their higher educational experience on their respective careers.

Results from the brief telephonic survey revealed that 67% of CMN students were employed, and that 33% were pursuing a bachelor's degree. With regard to salary range, 45% of students surveyed had an annual salary of \$20,000 or less, 22% had a salary of \$20,000-\$40,000 and 22% had a salary above \$50,000. When asked how beneficial the experience at CMN was, 45% indicated that it improved their personal life skills, 56% indicated that it significantly helped to translate knowledge into real work skills and 34% indicated that it improved their overall academic skills. When asked if their experience at CMN contributed to fulfilling an employer requirement, 34% of respondents revealed that the experience was an average contributor, while 22% indicated it was a significant contributor and 11% noted it was an exceptional contributor. When asked about CMN contributing to preparation for changing careers, it was distributed between average and significant with 33% and 34% respectively. When asked about the benefit of CMN when transferring to another college/university, 22% rated significantly and 45% rated average.

The graduate survey also concluded that CMN should continue developing its distance learning through interactive televised coursework and online learning. The Department of Student Affairs and Research Specialist should be the responsible department for the development of surveys, and surveying graduates. The graduate survey instruments should be updated and revised to meet survey research goals. CMN Student Affairs should develop an

## Criterion Four. Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

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annual Student Activities Calendar, with events scheduled with ample time for students to make arrangements to be involved as they desire.

***Core Component 4.B:** The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational achievement and improvement through ongoing assessment of student learning.*

***4.B.1.** The institution has clearly stated goals for student learning and effective processes for assessment of student learning and achievement of learning goals.*

Within the course syllabi for all degree programs, competencies with related assessments are provided for determining student progress and performance. Each of the assessments are assigned a value to determine the quality and completion of the tasks for the grade received. The course competencies and assessments are clearly stated and relate closely to the degree program learning outcomes which are posted in each classroom, faculty offices, catalog and the CMN website. Following the assessment process, faculty analyzes how well the students met the course competencies for the classes taught, and use that information to adapt and update learning objectives.

Syllabi have served as the basis for assessing students; however, there has been a need to synchronize learning outcomes with the mission. Therefore, a process of upgrading the learning outcomes was initiated following faculty and staff attendance at assessment workshops hosted by HLC. Meetings between the Dean of Academic Affairs and all faculty have produced updated institutional learning outcomes, as well as degree program learning outcomes including those that are more specific to the cultural context promoted at CMN. These updated learning outcomes have become an integral part of a more effective assessment program that has been developing since CMN's Candidacy site visit.

In general, the college's learning outcomes address communication, engagement of critical thinking, comprehension of Mvskoke language, understanding of respect and culture,

## Criterion Four. Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

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development of stewardship to community as a citizen, and the application of computer technology. These learning outcomes are fundamental to the assessment instruments through which students are assessed for their knowledge.

Students are assessed on their depth of knowledge in these areas. Some of the ways that assessment occurs is through examinations, presentations and research assignments. A student's overall grade is based on the completion of these assignments. When taking into consideration GPA requirements to remain in good standing, students who can demonstrate their understanding of at least seventy percent of the material will have successfully met the applicable course objectives.

At CMN, faculty use examinations as an integral part of the assessment in any course. For example, faculty design instruments to assess the level of understanding of course objectives. Effective processes as demonstrated in the classroom are when faculty present problems to students which they analyze and solve, and explain its occurrence. Faculty expects that students will think critically and apply knowledge during the exam.

CMN faculty utilizes student presentations in the classroom as an assessment by observing their ability to communicate to an audience, and other skill sets. Indirect benefits that faculty recognize are ancillary activities relating to the presentation, such as computer technology used to research and create the presentation. Examples such as this validates that the faculty use multi-layer assessments.

Another assessment practice employed by faculty relates to research assignments which require students to demonstrate a level of comprehension utilizing research principles and engagement of critical thinking. These various methods of assessment demonstrate effective processes for assessing student learning and effective teaching.

## Criterion Four. Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

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There are many ways to assess collegiate student learning, but by focusing on research assignments, presentations and examinations, the evaluation becomes more quantitative, objective and measurable. The core competencies are elements of learning which all students will have achieved before completing their degree. The intent is that after they have achieved success in the classroom setting, the students will fulfill their career aspirations and recognize that learning is like growth; it is continuous.

### ***4.B.2. The institution assesses achievement of the learning outcomes that it claims for its curricular and co-curricular programs.***

The philosophy of CMN is to assess the curricular and co-curricular program learning outcomes. Each of the programs has learning outcomes that help in determining the effect on students attending the college. These learning outcomes are assessed through a variety of methods and instruments.

The assessment process for determining the achievement of learning outcomes for our co-curricular programs is addressed by the graduate survey where students are asked to rate student activities based on their value to the student using a likert scale. Also, open-ended comments give the students opportunities to give their opinion of co-curricular activities. For example, when asked to identify significant events they participated in at CMN students responded with:

- “I played stickball with students and faculty.”
- “I really enjoyed the spring fling and stompdance demonstration at OSUIT.”
- “The language symposium at NSU.”
- “NASA, college garden.”
- “Join NASA when I first started school.”

Comments such as these have been used to develop activities such as the Fall Fest to enhance student-faculty interaction in a non-academic atmosphere. By using these evaluative statements CMN has implemented positive changes for program improvement through Student Affairs.

## Criterion Four. Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

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With regard to curricular assessment, faculty use a variety of methods to determine if students are successfully achieving the stated learning outcomes. Like other higher learning institutions, CMN faculty uses traditional (tests and oral examinations) and performance (written assignments and projects) assessments. Summative (information gathered at the end of the course) and formative (information gathered during the course) assessments are also utilized. Faculty use direct (research projects and classroom response systems) and indirect (course grades, retention and graduation rates) evidence.

All of the above-mentioned methods are considered to be valid measures and provide reliable information that can assist faculty in insuring claims are met. Faculty utilize a variety of methods and techniques to measure the success of learning outcomes by students. In order to accurately assess students' achievement of the learning outcomes, CMN advocates that all forms of evidence and assessments must be implemented.

### ***4.B.3. The institution uses the information gained from assessment to improve student learning.***

Data collected from CMN assessment instruments and processes have been used to improve student learning by adjusting pedagogical strategies, teacher expectations of the students, in class participation, and resource accessibility. As an example, in the College Cornerstone class, a learning style test is administered which informs the individual of the most effective learning style for them. The student can then use these results to implement more effective study skills which are more conducive to their learning style. In implementing student practices consistent with their learning style, individuals will most likely achieve academic success.

## Criterion Four. Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

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The Cornerstone Class is part of a more comprehensive program designed by CMN to increase student learning. The other component is the remediation program which is structured to properly place students in select academic subjects. Specifically, the COMPASS, an academic placement test for reading, math and writing skills is an important part of assessment in that it determines placement in remedial classes during a student's first semester of enrollment. It is the intent of CMN's remedial/developmental courses to prepare students for success in higher level academic subjects. By applying these assessments, students are placed into appropriate level classes, increasing student learning and decreasing academic risk.

Indirect assessment is an important part of CMN's plan to determine the achievement of students at the college. At the end of each term students complete an Instructor and Course evaluation, which gives them an opportunity to provide instructors feedback from a different perspective. Information from the evaluations is used to improve student learning by having faculty modify instructional strategies to bridge the gap between what CMN expects students to learn and what assessment tools indicate that they have learned.

Based on faculty assessment of student work, students can be referred to the tutoring program. Faculty are at the center of the assessment loop, which includes the use of tutoring resources as a supplement to help students achieve success in each of their classes. Participants of the tutoring program are surveyed to determine the level of effectiveness and applicability to their subject needs. With the use of these surveys, the tutoring program showcases CMN's process of using information gained through assessment to improve student learning.

Different types of assessments occur at three levels: Course, Program and Institutional. Combined, each provides a comprehensive source for obtaining data that feeds into improving student learning. At the course level, faculty use assignments to evaluate class participation,

## Criterion Four. Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

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projects, research papers, presentations, quizzes and exams for the purpose of quantifying performance and understanding. Results from these assignments are used by faculty to advise individual students on how to improve their mastery of appropriate concepts.

A type of indirect assessment at the program level is administered to improve identified deficiencies so that corrections can be incorporated for improving student learning. The primary instrument used for this process is the Post Audit Report, which assesses the viability of the degree program. In accordance with the criteria of the Post Audit Report, revisions are considered for curricular requirements and content that affects student learning.

Overall, assessment is used to provide the validation of all college functions and operational processes. Annual audits validate the expenditure of funds that support teaching and learning, and quarterly reports submitted to administration verify teaching achievements of faculty. Information from the audits is used by administration to direct funds and resources to appropriate learning platforms for the continued improvement of student learning.

The final component of assessment is obtaining feedback from recent graduates and alumni of CMN, verifying the learning that students experienced. Therefore, Graduate and Follow-Up surveys are administered that reveal significant findings on how the curricula, degree programs and co-curricular activities impacted their future plans. When considering enrollment and numbers of graduations, the Office of Institutional Effectiveness has gathered relevant information which has been translated into increased student learning. These surveys are a key component in the ongoing assessment process and evaluation system currently in place at the College of the Muscogee Nation.

In these ways, CMN seeks to engage in continuous improvement based on the feedback from the most important constituency—our students.

## Criterion Four. Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

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***4.B.4. The institution's processes and methodologies to assess student learning reflect good practice, including the substantial participation of faculty and other instructional staff members.***

An assessment plan has been initiated that is designed to evaluate the quality of educational programs, and to maintain a pattern of continuous improvement. The learning outcomes framework developed by faculty has been reviewed in two different HLC phases. Initially reviewed as part of the Preliminary Information Form (PIF), a recommendation to develop measureable outcomes was offered, to which the Academic Dean worked with faculty on revising the learning outcomes. During the HLC Site Evaluation for Candidacy, the Team recommended that CMN develop an overall assessment plan.

Following this recommendation, an eight member assessment team was formed in March 2013, including faculty and staff to begin the process of planning. In addition, four faculty members, the Academic Dean and one support staff from the Office of Institutional Effectiveness attended the HLC Assessment Workshop. Individuals attending the workshop shared their experience with other faculty and staff on campus, to ensure development of good practices throughout assessment.

Subsequently, faculty began the overall process by participating in local assessment training and workshops designed to facilitate the revision of learning outcomes. Faculty received guidance from the OSUIT Director of Assessment in order to fine tune learning outcomes to be aligned with the mission and be more measurable. CMN recognizes that in order for the academic assessment process to be successful, it must be faculty driven. In the spring of 2014 other departments including Business Affairs, Student Affairs, Admissions and Student Records will begin their process for non-academic assessment.

## Criterion Four. Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

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The Assessment Plan and timeline has been introduced to the faculty and will be provided to other college staff as learning outcomes are finalized. Access to learning outcomes is available to faculty and staff through the shared drive, which is open to all employees for their comment and suggestions.

***Core Component 4.C:*** *The institution demonstrates a commitment to educational improvement through ongoing attention to retention, persistence and completion rates in its degree and certificate programs.*

***4.C.1.*** *The institution has defined goals for student retention, persistence and completion that are ambitious but attainable and appropriate to its mission, student populations and educational offerings.*

In the College Strategic Plan Objective Three and Priority 4.3.1, it indicates that the college will continue to define goals for student retention, persistence and completion. Also in Priorities 4.3.2, 4.3.3 and 4.3.4, all relating to retention, persistence and completion—the college will collect and analyze, use information to make improvements, and the processes will reflect good practices. In the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) 2013 report, CMN was shown to have a 22% retention rate (first time, full-time students initially enrolled in fall 2010 returned for the fall 2011) and a 4% graduation rate (150% time limit of their program length) for the fall 2010 cohort.

The defined goals for student retention are set at 40% and graduation rate at 20%, both of which are ambitious but attainable. In comparison to like institutions, these goals exceed what has been reported. Goals for effective retention are addressed in the Retention Plan and are intended to provide focus and direction for CMN's retention efforts.

A committee will be formed to update the Retention Plan who will be charged with developing priorities and revising goals as necessary. The committee will address a strategy to

## Criterion Four. Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

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optimize the student notification system to identify students who are not meeting adequate progression in courses either through low attendance or poor performance.

The elements for a successful retention program that graduates students is a collaborative effort among administration, faculty and staff, and more specifically staff of the Student Success Center. The Center is designed to focus on incoming freshman and other priority students to receive advisement, counseling, tutoring and specialized academic services to meet their needs and support them through graduation. This will positively impact retention, persistence and completion and aid in CMN reaching its defined goals.

### ***4.C.2. The institution collects and analyzes information on student retention, persistence and completion of its programs.***

To maintain awareness of student performance there is a need to monitor retention and graduation rates. Although CMN has not formally reported statistics to IPEDS until fall 2013, data collected at the tribal college is consistent with the IPEDS definitions. The retention rate is defined as the enrollment of first-time, full-time students from the Fall Semester through the following fall semester of the following year. Graduation rate is defined as first-time, full-time students enrolled in the fall semester that graduate within 150% of normal time (three years).

Table 11: *Retention and Graduation Rate*

Cohort	Number	Retention Number   Rate	Graduation Number   Rate	Completion Number
2010	45	10   22%	2   4%	24
2011	33	13   39%	2   6%*	30
2012	40	13   33%	DNA	18
Total	118	36   31%*	4   5%	72

Source: CMN Registrar 10/30/13

\*Calculated at 100% rather than typical 150% rate for graduation

\*\*Average rate

Although ethnicity and gender are not included in the preceding table, statistics for each are included in the discussion to follow, as per IPEDS data. The retention rate for the 2010

## Criterion Four. Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

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Cohort (first time, full-time students) is 22 percent. Of the 45 first-time, full-time students 10 students returned in the fall of 2011. The cohort of 45 consisted of 24 American Indian males and 21 American Indian females. Of the 24 American Indian males four (17%) returned in the fall of 2011. Of the 21 American Indian females six (29%) returned in the fall 2011.

The retention rate for the 2011 Cohort is 39 percent. Of the 33 first-time, full-time students 13 students returned in the fall of 2012. The cohort of 33 consisted of 12 American Indian males, two White males, 18 American Indian Females and one White female. Of the 12 American Indian males four (33%) returned and of the two White males one (50%) returned in the fall of 2012. Of the 18 American Indian females 8 (44%) returned in the fall of 2012.

The retention rate for the 2012 Cohort is 33 percent. Of the 40 first-time, full-time students 13 students returned in the fall of 2012. The cohort of 40 consisted of 19 American Indian males and 21 American Indian females. Of the 19 American Indian males 4 (21%) returned in the fall of 2013. Of the 21 American Indian females nine (43%) returned in the fall of 2013.

IPEDS Data Center is used to benchmark the fall 2010 Cohort retention rate with other like institutions that have similar missions. Institutions sorted by one variable which is retention rates: full-time adjusted fall 2010 cohort (reported in 2011) using EZ groups Tribal Colleges, the report states that there are 33 Tribal Colleges. However, four do not have a retention rate and five have retention rates over 100 percent thus reducing the survey group of 33 Tribal Colleges. Excluding these nine, there are 24 other institutions reporting retention rates from 76 percent to three percent. The mean of the rates of the 24 Tribal Colleges reporting is 27 percent and the median is 22 percent.

## Criterion Four. Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

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CMN's retention rate of 22 percent is below the mean with the 22 percent median being the same as other Tribal Colleges. As an emerging Tribal College with a special mission to fulfill, CMN and other Tribal Colleges often times have retention rates lower than national averages. Tribal Colleges attract students that would not attend other institutions of higher learning, if not for the Tribal Colleges.

Another way CMN monitors students and demonstrates a commitment to educational improvement is through graduation rates. The graduation rate for the 2010 Cohort is four percent. Of the 45 first-time, full-time students two students graduated within 150% of their initial fall semester. One of 24 the students was American Indian Male and the other graduate from the cohort was one of the 21 the American Indian Female.

The graduation rate for the 2011 Cohort is 6 percent. However, this is calculated at 100 percent of normal time because only two years have passed. There is still another year to fully complete the graduation rate as defined. Two American Indian Females have graduated from the 2011 Cohort.

IPEDS Data Center is used to benchmark the fall 2010 Cohort graduation rate with other like institutions that have similar missions. Institutions sorted by one variable which is graduation rates: Degree/Certificate seeking students at two-year institutions, within 150 percent of normal time. Using the EZ Group, Tribal Colleges list 33 institutions; however, only 19 provide a graduation rate. The graduation rate range for the 19 institutions was 27 to one percent. The mean was seven percent and the median four percent.

CMN's 2010 graduation rate of four percent falls below the mean of seven percent of the 19 like institutions. However, the four percent graduation rate is the same as the median for the three other schools with a four percent rate.

## Criterion Four. Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

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In addition to graduation and retention rates, data relating to student completion is presented as follows. A completer is defined as students completing a degree in excess of 150 percent of normal time. Students are only counted once regardless of how many awards have been earned by the student. The intent is to collect an unduplicated count of total completers.

Data for CMN students classified as completers is presented by gender and race and ethnicity earning an award between July 1, 2012 and June 30, 2013. Between July 1, 2012 and June 30, 2013 CMN had eighteen completers. Seven of the completers were American Indian Males and eleven were American Indian Females. Between July 1, 2011 and June 30, 2012 CMN had thirty completers. Ten were American Indian Males and eighteen were American Indian Females. The other two completers were one White Male and one White Female. Between the July 1, 2010 and June 30, 2011 CMN had twenty four completers. Nine were American Indian Males and fifteen were American Indian Females.

This statistic noted in the completion rate of CMN students, upgrades the numbers of students graduating from the institution not included in the graduation rate as defined. Students enrolling at CMN may typically have had prior college attendance, employment and family obligations, which can all affect the time it takes for a student to graduate, thus graduation numbers increase significantly when these students complete their degree. Because of college support for all students, graduation becomes more of a realistic goal for those who may not have previously had the opportunity.

These three components, graduation, retention and completion rates, are an indicator of how CMN, a newly developing American Indian college, demonstrates responsibility for the quality of educational programs and evaluating the effectiveness for student learning. Using the

## Criterion Four. Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

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data collected, the College evaluates and assesses its performance to guide your future decision making in order to fulfill greater improvement.

### ***4.C.3. The institution uses information on student retention, persistence and completion of programs to make improvements as warranted by the data.***

As an institution of higher learning, it is vital that CMN utilizes data collection to make program improvements to ensure the retention, persistence and completion of students. Also, Native values of the college community through faculty and staff benefits student retention at CMN. The College is dedicated to this learning environment and support system that encourages students to achieve their educational goals.

Currently, the College employs several data collection processes, which reflect good practices and provide CMN with the information necessary to improve in these areas. A student notification system is in place that allows instructors and administrators to identify at-risk students. Upon receiving notification, instructors provide students the support and encouragement needed to continue attending classes regularly, thus improving retention. If a student decides to completely withdraw from the institution a Student Withdrawal Request must be completed, and provides a Reason for Withdrawal to be reviewed by Student Success Center staff.

Another connection, specifically between CMN and at-risk students, occurs with our tutoring services. Started with grant funds in 2010, CMN's tutoring program is an integral part of improving retention. After analyzing the tutoring program and its effectiveness, the College continues to support the program by dedicating necessary funds from the budget. In case a student is placed on academic probation resulting in financial aid loss, students are referred to the Special Considerations Committee where an individualized academic plan for

## Criterion Four. Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

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the student's success is developed. Students are monitored at intervals during the semester as necessary to be in compliance with the academic plan.

Another data source is COMPASS placement testing, designed to evaluate a student's competence in basic subjects prior to enrollment, which propels students to be successful in appropriately leveled classes. A feature of this placement test allows students to tests a total of three times, allowing time for students to participate in the tutoring program and perhaps result in an improved score. Students who remain deficient in core subjects are placed in developmental courses to build competence in the subject, preparing them for college level coursework.

Graduate and Follow-Up Surveys have been developed and administered to gain insight into positive aspects of the institution, gaining feedback from individuals who were successful at the College. Findings indicated CMN should develop activities that assist in the transition of graduates to Bachelor's programs and provide placement opportunities, particularly in tribal settings. As a result, the Dean of Student Affairs organized college/career days held annually on the CMN campus. Assessment has focused Mvskoke cultural and language competency development through curricular and co-curricular educational opportunities. Campus-wide activities provide opportunities for students to interact with peers, faculty, staff and administration occur throughout the year. These activities help promote retention by providing campus wide personal interaction by allowing students to be a part of a community.

Traditionally, student organizations also help improve student retention and academic persistence. Therefore, CMN encourages student participation in the following organizations: Native American Student Association (NASA), Student Housing Organization (SHO), Student Senate, American Indian in Science and Engineering Society (AISES), as well as a

## Criterion Four. Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

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Writing Club. Another manner in which CMN promotes academic persistence is to offer an incentive for students. Multiple scholarships are available, based on grade point averages.

These programs described that reflect good practice are how CMN has impacted the components of graduation, retention and completion rates. Through these elements of good practice, CMN demonstrates a responsibility for translation of data into meaningful educational programs to affect student learning.

### ***4.C.4. The institution's processes and methodologies for collecting and analyzing information on student retention, persistence and completion of programs reflect good practice.***

Information on student retention, persistence and completion reflect good practice. Data is generated from admissions and enrollment information that is consistent with the EMPOWER student information system, IPEDS and AKIS AIMS Report requirements. The Registrar generates reports for IPEDS and AKIS AIMS that address the criteria set forth by each. Reports are distributed internally and to the appropriate agencies respectively, Department of Education and the American Indian Higher Education Consortium.

By using Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) definition and terms, the Registrar has completed the 2013-14 Fall Collection Survey. In consideration of the status of CMN, the IPEDS data is not on their website, however, will be included in the fall 2014 report. The Registrar has also attended the Association for Institutional Research (AIR) and American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC) co-hosted IPEDS Workshop.

Since 2008, CMN has been annually completing AIHEC's American Indian Measures of Success (AIMS) Key Indicator System. The AIMS Survey is the annual report to the AIHEC Board of Directors for institutions to remain in good standing. The AIMS Survey has two parts regarding quantitative and qualitative indicators. These are examples of the processes and

## Criterion Four. Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement

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methodologies in practice at CMN, and how they reflect good practices for collecting and analyzing information on retention, persistence and completion.



RESOURCES, PLANNING, AND INSTITUTIONAL  
EFFEECTIVENESS

## Criterion Five: Resources, Planning and Institutional Effectiveness

### **Criterion Five. Resources, Planning and Institutional Effectiveness**

*Core Component 5.A: The institution's resource base supports its current educational programs and its plans for maintaining and strengthening their quality in the future.*

***5.A.1. The institution has the fiscal and human resources and physical and technological infrastructure sufficient to support its operations wherever and however programs are delivered.***

The majority of funding for operations is received from the Muscogee (Creek) Nation, and is used for daily operations, payroll, fringe benefits and student scholarships. In order to expand the CMN campus, class offerings and services available to students, the College has pursued and received grant funding from HUD, EPSCoR and the Department of Education.

Being cognizant of the possibility of funding challenges possible in the future, it is a priority for the college to remain debt free and continue to meet obligations to students. With the signed Provisional Participation Agreement with Title IV and development of the Financial Aid office, CMN is preparing to process its own students' financial aid. As CMN achieves an independent status, a transition plan with OSUIT has been negotiated to detail the responsibilities for administering federal financial aid, transcription issues and other educational expenses, fees for CMN students and to prepare for Initial Accreditation.

The College has been approved for student scholarship funding through the American Indian College Fund, which allows CMN to retain a certain portion of scholarship funds currently allocated for Native students. The introduction of new scholarship funds, such as AICF, will allow CMN to fund a greater number of students.

College of the Muscogee Nation prides itself on the quality of faculty and staff, and the College strives to maintain a resource base that supports plans to strengthen educational programs into the future. By selecting individuals with the necessary educational requirements for higher education, paired with the native culture that many faculty and staff learned from a very early age,

## Criterion Five: Resources, Planning and Institutional Effectiveness

the dynamics of CMN are very unique. The College is committed to the educational and cultural requirements necessary to continue its operation and cultural richness.

The physical infrastructure of the CMN campus is inclusive of the culture that is infused to all other components of the college. As previously indicated, grant funding was received specifically for hiring a science instructor, which has led to the College bolstering science class offerings in-house. This presents a need for a dedicated science lab, which is being built into the Student Center. The development of the College has been based on calculated growth in physical infrastructure as enrollment at CMN has indicated a general trend of increasing.

Technology has been included in each classroom, is accessible by all faculty and students and has also been expanded through grant funding. For online classes, faculty use Desire to Learn (D2L) to improve the quality of educational offerings. A grant from EPSCoR was received to provide network equipment and hard-wired internet access for students in residence units on campus. Wireless access in outside areas is also provided for students in housing units. Other grant funding was received for virtualization and disaster recovery, which allowed the purchase of servers located at CMN and an off-site location. Computers are continually maintained and replaced, as well as software upgrades as needed by students and faculty.

Staff and faculty have received training on systems purchased for the electronic records of students, encompassing all phases from enrollment through graduation and beyond. This program has been customized to provide notifications for students' attendance and grades, provide surveying capabilities to students as well as facilitating the college in going paperless with student records.

These facts demonstrate that CMN has the fiscal resources (see Table 12) to support the human, physical and technological infrastructure sufficient to support operations.

# Criterion Five: Resources, Planning and Institutional Effectiveness

Table 12: *CMN Budget for FY 2014*

ITEMS	CURRENT BUDGET (FY 14)
<b><u>PERSONNEL</u></b>	
Personnel Salary & Wages - Full-Time	\$1,427,729
Personnel Salary & Wages - Part-Time	119,616
Fringe Full-Time	796,673
Fringe Part-Time	14,294
Incentive Payment	21,000
Fringe Incentive Pay	2,509
<b><u>TRAVEL</u></b>	
Travel	50,000
Mileage	9,288
<b><u>SUPPLIES</u></b>	
Supplies	70,806
<b><u>OTHER</u></b> (direct cost-reproduction, printing, advertising, consultant, misc.)	
Expense Account	250
Staff Development	1,250
Conf/Seminars/Meetings	1,500
Software/Licenses	15,000
Educational Materials	1,250
Transporation	250
Fuel Purchases	5,000
Memberships/Fees	10,000
Publications/Periodicals	5,000
Printing/Publishing	2,000
Textbooks	7,500
Advertising	8,977
Postage	275
Equipment Main/Repair	12,000
Library Services	5,000
Contractual <\$5K	15,000
Legal Services <\$5K	500
Storage-Offsite	1,200
Grounds Maintenance	20,000
Stipends/Honorariums	575
Youth/Student Activities	1,500
Training/Tech Assistance	30,000
<b><u>BUILDING OPERATIONS &amp; MAINTENANCE</u></b>	
Utilities	90,000
Bldg Maint/Repairs	7,500
<b><u>TELEPHONE</u></b>	
Telephone/Fax On Site	50,000
Communications-Other	7,500
<b>TOTAL DIRECT</b>	<b>\$2,810,942</b>
<b><u>INDIRECT COST @ 27.05% OF TOTAL DIRECT</u></b>	
Administrative Costs	428,957
	<b>\$3,239,899</b>
<b><u>CLIENT SERVICES</u></b> (pass thru-scholarships, grant awards, direct asst, etc)	
Scholarships	773,043
Tuition/Books/Fees	70,000
<b><u>CONTRACTUAL</u></b> (contracts in the amount of \$5,000.00 and above)	
Contractual	75,000
Financial Audit >\$5K	10,000
<b><u>CAPITAL EXPENDITURES</u></b> (equipment purchases of \$5,000 per item)	
Vehicles	0
Equipment	0
<b>TOTAL BUDGET</b>	<b>\$4,167,942</b>

Source: *CMN Business Affairs 10/2013*

## Criterion Five: Resources, Planning and Institutional Effectiveness

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***5.A.2. The institution's resource allocation process ensures that its educational purposes are not adversely affected by elective resource allocations to other areas or disbursement of revenue to a superordinate entity.***

The CMN annual budget, strategic plan, master site plan, anticipated government funding, economic conditions and current needs of students and the community are all considered when planning and allocating funds for both day-to-day operations and potential growth. First and foremost in all decisions is how the students will be impacted. Checks and balances built into the college organization structure, the accounting and budgeting principles utilized and the auditing standards of independent auditors all ensure that the resource allocation process is not adversely affected by elective resource allocations to other areas or disbursement of revenue to a superordinate entity.

A governing board oversees the college, but does not receive any dividends, stipends, or other benefits directly from the college budget. The college is a nonprofit institution, therefore, no employees or Board members benefit from the funds received by the college. It is noted that the Board of Regents has an independent budget separate from the college from which stipends are provided as described in NCA 11-040.

An important aspect of the College is that it is debt free, including all land forming the campus site, the administration building, student housing units and the Student Center under construction.

***5.A.3. The goals incorporated into mission statements or elaborations of mission statements are realistic in light of the institution's organization, resources and opportunities.***

When the Mission statement was developed, substantial discussion was held to ensure that it was realistic, focused, and the capacity to fulfill it was there. Recognizing the importance of the mission, the students, faculty and staff are continually reminded of its value and need to

## Criterion Five: Resources, Planning and Institutional Effectiveness

remain within its scope. As one might notice, the statement is on our website, primary college documents, posted in buildings and promotional items.

Organizational elements such as college functions, departments, staff and faculty, degree programs, curricula and projected enrollment were considered as the mission was implemented. The mission was a critical aspect for determining the level of resources that the college needed to fulfill the three goals: positive learning environment, exemplary academic programs, and encouraging lifelong learners. Through ongoing budget projections that require analysis of mission goals and organizational needs, CMN submits its budget to tribal government and resources are provided to maintain operations.

Because mission goals are realistic, they provide guidance that enabled the college to take advantage of opportunities as it has grown and became a Candidate for Accreditation. The positive learning environment was considered first when the mission was developed. The discussion focused on creating a college atmosphere that would welcome students and encourage learning in a positive way. As a basic part of the learning environment, exemplary academic programs are identified in the mission along with teaching excellence that faculty exhibit in each of their classrooms. In conclusion, it is the goal of the college to encourage lifelong learners to impact their future as a citizen of tribal and global societies.

### ***5.A.4. The institution's staff in all areas are appropriately qualified and trained.***

The processes followed by CMN to employ appropriately qualified staff results in finding the best qualified individual. To achieve this, the Human Resources office reviews the appropriate job description and discusses the position needs with the supervisor. All positions are advertised internally, locally, regionally, or nationwide to attract a wide range of qualified applicants. A selection committee is convened to review the applicant pool, select for interviews

## Criterion Five: Resources, Planning and Institutional Effectiveness

and recommend a choice. The President approves all hires, after a background check and pre-employment drug test are passed.

Personnel at the college have the following educational qualifications: One Doctorate, two Juris Doctorate, nine Master's degrees, eleven Bachelor's degrees and five Associate degrees, demonstrating that staff in all areas are appropriately qualified and trained. By requiring higher education and/or distinguished cultural experience, CMN ensures that staff have administrative and/or educational experience, and faculty and instructors are capable of teaching excellence.

All staff receive annual evaluations to assess performance and training needs to ensure that they understand their status within the organization and how they will contribute to institutional goals. Recommendations from performance evaluations are the foundation of promoting professional growth for all. For individuals who do not have a degree, the administration urges all employees to pursue college degrees; this also allows for in-house promotions.

All personnel on campus have participated in training in such areas as CPR, AED and fire suppressants, sexual harassment and family violence, Active Shooter on Campus, FERPA and assessment. Faculty/Staff are also encouraged to attend training opportunities provided by MCN and OSUIT. Administration and faculty are active members in professional organizations (NASPA, NACUBO, OACRO, etc.) that benefit and strengthen their classroom abilities and function-specific knowledge.

Included in the budget are funds for staff development for such activities as training sessions or to order literature in their chosen fields. Qualifications and training go hand-in-hand for the College to appropriately provide exemplary academic programs, visionary leadership and

## Criterion Five: Resources, Planning and Institutional Effectiveness

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instructional quality. The institution's resource base continues to offer opportunities for all staff to attend sessions aimed at keeping appropriately trained staff, and enhances the implementation of plans to maintain and strengthen college programs in the future.

### ***5.A.5. The institution has a well-developed process in place for budgeting and for monitoring expense.***

Budgets are developed by following budget policy of the tribal government. According to tribal law, an Executive Order from the Principal Chief's office directs the Controller to initiate the budgeting process, which includes the College. Every fiscal year CMN prepares its budget consistent with requirements detailed in the Budget Call from the Controller of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation. Basic costs considerations for the budget includes fringe benefit rate, indirect cost rate, travel for in state and out of state, per diem and other overhead costs. The budget is based on historical costs and functional activities planned for the future fiscal year.

Upon completion, the budget is reviewed and approved by the Board of Regents before being submitted to the Tribal Executive Budget Committee. The Committee, under the direction of the tribal Controller, reviews and adjusts, if necessary, budgets for departments and constitutional agencies such as the College, within the parameters of the Tribal Comprehensive Annual Budget. All budgets are reviewed and approved by legislative committees and the full National Council. When the budget becomes operational, it is entered into the tribal college MIP system with appropriate account numbers.

Since reaching the Candidacy Status for Accreditation, CMN has begun to apply for and receive grants from different federal government agencies. These grants award federal funding to the college, making it necessary for CMN to meticulously follow procedures that are in place to ensure grant compliance and generally accepted principles of accounting are followed.

## Criterion Five: Resources, Planning and Institutional Effectiveness

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Monitoring of the budget is part of the College's internal control. In order for the administration to be informed of the budget status, SEBA reports are generated on a regular basis reporting expenditures, encumbrances and balances of each line item. The Director of Business Affairs is charged with the general supervision of all accounting procedures. All orders or bills are paid in accordance with policy and are approved by both the Director and the President.

As required in legislation, audits are required on an annual basis to verify the appropriate expenditure of funds. Public and nonprofit schools must comply with the Single Audit Act. The Single Audit Act requires these schools to have an audit conducted in accordance with the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) Circular A-133, Audits of States, Local Governments and Nonprofit Organizations. To maintain the goal of transparency, audits are provided to the Executive and Legislative branches, the Board of Regents, CMN personnel and to the public as requested from the Business Affairs office. These audits without findings are the result of a well-developed process that is in place for budgeting and monitoring expenses.

***Core Component 5.B:** The institution's governance and administrative structures promote effective leadership and support collaborative processes that enable the institution to fulfill its mission.*

***5.B.1.** The institution has and employs policies and procedures to engage its internal constituencies – including its governing board, administration, faculty, staff and students – in the institution's governance.*

The College engages its internal constituencies through a structured process that involves a series of policy handbooks for the Board of Regents, faculty and students. The Board of Regents that derives its authority from the Legislation is engaged through their by-laws and Regents Handbook. Within these documents are clarifications for their authority, powers, duties and responsibilities that guide them in their role as the governing board.

## Criterion Five: Resources, Planning and Institutional Effectiveness

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Faculty roles are enhanced by the availability of information in the handbooks for Faculty and Advisement and Enrollment. Furthermore, communication is improved because the Faculty Council and its by-laws provide an avenue through which a unified voice is developed. Considering the availability of faculty policy documents, collaborative processes are more productive.

Students are an internal constituency who reference policies through the Student Handbook, resulting in defining their rights and responsibilities at the college. Each student organization has by-laws to provide a framework that will enable clarity and cohesion, which results in a greater understanding of how organizations shape them to be citizens of a tribal and global society.

By providing access to documents discussed through the CMN shared drive, internal constituencies can reference and review material that is relevant to promote effective leadership and collaborative processes. The ease of accessibility of these policies is important as CMN strives to include all relevant constituencies in the fulfillment of its mission.

***5.B.2. The governing board is knowledgeable about the institution; it provides oversight for the institution's financial and academic policies and practices and meets its legal and fiduciary responsibilities.***

Through monthly meetings with administration, the Board stays current on activities and events happening at the college. Qualifications that the Board possess enables them to be more knowledgeable about higher education, teaching and Muscogee (Creek) culture. Also, all of the Board members have had experience with the college since the Board was seated in February 2005, adding to their knowledge base of operations. The Board also reviews and approves institutional policies that are developed concerning all educational programs. The governing Board has the final responsibility to ensure that it protects the

## Criterion Five: Resources, Planning and Institutional Effectiveness

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academic and social interests for the students.

Two of the financial responsibilities identified in the legislation are to expend funds and maintain books and records relating to the financial affairs of the college. Academically, the Board is required to establish an institution of higher education to provide collegiate level education to tribal and non-tribal members and to review and approve educational projects.

It is important that the Board provides leadership that is experienced and knowledgeable in governance for the college. Recognizing the importance of the Board's responsibility, CMN is also fortunate to have a governing board that is fully aware of their authority and also the importance of allowing administration and faculty to do their jobs. As the final authority for proposed policy and college development, Board members envision and are committed to the educational legacy left to us by our ancestors.

***5.B.3. The institution enables the involvement of its administration, faculty, staff and students in setting academic requirements, policy and processes through effective structures for contribution and collaborative effort.***

The tribal college exists in a collaborative environment, one that involved Muscogee (Creek) citizens voting for the Creek Constitution to include the college as Article XIII. In addition, as a federally recognized American Indian tribal government, citizens have historically coexisted in a confederation of tribal towns, a natural setting that promotes contributions and collaborations among its people.

With this background it is understandable that several internal tribal constituents collaborated to open the college. For example, the enabling legislation that authorized the college; required contributions of the Tribal Attorney General's office to develop the legislation, the legislative body to review and approve, and to be signed into law in the executive branch by the Principal Chief.

## Criterion Five: Resources, Planning and Institutional Effectiveness

A significant aspect ensuring stability, which is necessary for an effective structure through which academic requirements, policy and processes are approved, is that the Regents serve staggered terms. Because the Board approves policy relating to academic requirements for the institution including faculty and students, it is important that they involve these parties for contribution and collaborative effort. The Board determines management policy, employs Board personnel and has responsibility for general governance, which includes the authority to make decisions as the institution plans for the future.

To fulfill the responsibility of college governance, the Board uses the effective structures for policy-making as clarified by the enabling legislation, by-laws and board handbook. Further definition of their role and collaborative responsibilities is provided in the Muscogee (Creek) Code of Laws. Reports at Board meetings are commonly given by student organizations, new employees, or administrative departments.

Administration, faculty, staff and students all work together in collaborative roles within the college organization, facilitated by standing committees. Academic Affairs/Curriculum, Accreditation Steering, Publications/Website and Executive Committee are established committees that meet as necessary. Other standing committees such as the Special Events and Student Services meet for other special related purposes. As an example, the Special Events committee meets several times a year for planning graduation and is referred to as the Graduation Committee. For Student Services, several activities convene committees for Fall Fest, Special Considerations and Disciplinary.

Students are involved in several committees such as, Student Housing Organization, Native American Student Association, Grade Appeals and Accreditation Steering Committee. College wide committees are the Institutional Review Board, Library Committee, and for all

## Criterion Five: Resources, Planning and Institutional Effectiveness

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faculty, the Faculty Council was established. Within the structure of the college, internal constituencies use committees as conduits through which communication flows from individuals and/or groups for contributing and collaborating to set policy.

The Faculty Council enables faculty to participate through a general forum of involvement in policy formations, implementation and to facilitate communications between faculty, staff and administration. Items such as curriculum, enrollment management, academic standards, academic support activities and other matters of common interest are of major concern that the faculty Council may address in their meetings. These processes of contribution and teamwork enable faculty to play a significant role in the creation and revision of academic requirements and policy affecting students.

Through the effective structures that are currently in place, the College enables involvement of the Board, all employees and students in setting academic requirements, policy and processes.

***Core Component 5.C: The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning.***

***5.C.1. The institution allocates its resources in alignment with its mission and priorities.***

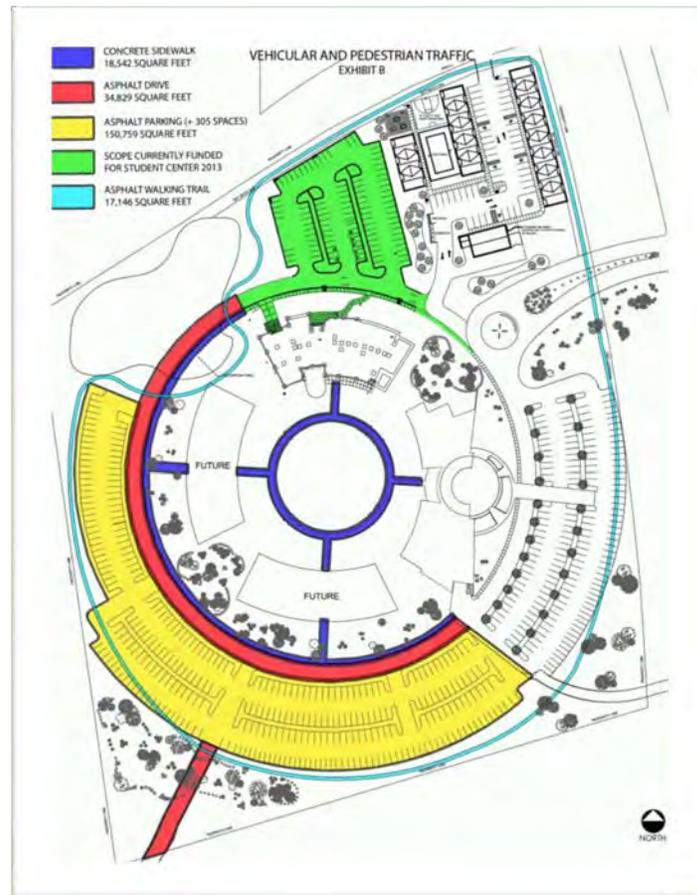
This institution's ability to carry out its mission is evident in its effective strategic planning and careful management of resources which enhances institutional effectiveness. Alignment of resources has been critical in the ability of the College to continue to fulfill its mission and priorities, and to guide the institution's operations. An example is when CMN prepares its annual budget from a list of program priorities and projected events.

For instance, the Student Center development showcases CMN's resources being aligned to further the Mission. With an expanded library, fitness facilities and on-site food services, CMN is fostering a positive learning environment for tribal and non-tribal students.

## Criterion Five: Resources, Planning and Institutional Effectiveness

Furthermore, this new center will allow faculty more technology and better equipped space, which supports teaching excellence and offering exemplary academic programs to meet student, tribal and societal needs. This development of future budgets requires that the Strategic Plan must be considered to focus on the Mission and priorities set forth for the college.

Figure 7: *Master Site Plan*



Strategic planning sessions held over the past year have taken into consideration the future of the college, in keeping with the mission. This plan will be a guiding document as budgets are forecast over the next several years. Also considered is the Master Site plan as CMN applies for grant funding to expand the campus, maintaining the goal of encouraging life-long learners for personal growth, professional development and intellectual advancement. By

## Criterion Five: Resources, Planning and Institutional Effectiveness

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providing an institution that operates within its capacity and scope, CMN will be fulfilling mission goals and priorities.

### ***5.C.2. The institution links its processes for assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning and budgeting.***

With the development of the College of the Muscogee Nation, assessment is becoming a more organized and integrated process for determining College and student performance levels. Student learning involves the mastery of subject content, application of knowledge, utilization of resources, and problem solving in a Muscogee context. College faculty, staff and administration work to support a positive environment for student achievement and development. The primary function for determining effective student learning is the assessment process that uses a variety of established measures to monitor and improve courses, services and programs.

With that in mind, the institution links its processes for assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning and budgeting. As much of a key role as Academic Affairs serves in assessment, so do the Offices of Student Affairs, Business Affairs, Registration and Admissions. They warrant and demonstrate how all facets of the campus contribute to student learning and development in support of the mission. By using assessment as a resource to measure the efficacy of programs and services CMN provides, they exhibit examples of good stewards of the campus' assets. These departments will be initiating the process for assessment in spring 2014.

One of the ways CMN currently evaluates operations is by making sure we are upholding the standards and goals set by our Core Values and our Strategic Plan. Operating under guidelines set by governing agencies such as the US Government Auditing Standards Board, the Department of Education, etc. are crucial to effectiveness as well. As the student population grows CMN is constantly looking for avenues to meet the needs of the students. Evaluations of

## Criterion Five: Resources, Planning and Institutional Effectiveness

operations, planning and budgeting are not an annual event but rather an ongoing daily process. A Strategic Plan and a Site Plan that guides processes, but because CMN is in a growth stage it must be adaptable to changes affecting the needs of the student population and the stakeholders.

Everything the college does relates to assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, Strategic Planning and budgeting, demonstrating the commitment to the success of the student population. When creating the budget, planning student assessment strategies, evaluating operations or planning projects everything links back to our commitment to the success of the student. If CMN is performing each function properly, these areas become a seamless circle.

### ***5.C.3. The planning process encompasses the institution as a whole and considers the perspectives of internal and external constituent groups.***

Strategic planning for CMN began with the Tribal College Work Study Group in 2003. This group composed of Muscogee (Creek) citizens, tribal employees, tribal leaders and Oklahoma State University Executives provided a broad spectrum of representation for the planning process. Organized to determine the feasibility and to initiate a Strategic Plan for the proposed institution, stakeholders were identified, forming the fourteen member group.

The first action item was to assess needs data and select priorities to be considered when developing the tribal college. Also, the analysis of internal and external environments and available resources revealed that tribal and intertribal support was essential for the proposed college to be successful. As a result, in 2003 a Resolution of Support was obtained from the Intertribal Council of the Five Civilized Tribes (Cherokee, Choctaw, Chickasaw, Muscogee (Creek) and Seminole Nations).

During early stages of tribal college development, planning activities were designed to accommodate an evolving organization climate, limited faculty/staff, as well as minimal funds

## Criterion Five: Resources, Planning and Institutional Effectiveness

and facilities. Specifically, the college program was limited primarily to student services and academics; therefore, planning had to be adjusted to effectively plan for these functions.

Likewise, the Group reviewed the Tribal College Checklist developed by the Bureau of Indian Affairs and assessed the potential for establishing a Tribal College. A study was organized according to twelve Tribal College Work Statements using quantitative and qualitative data that, when summarized, provided a list of priorities for developing the institution.

Data and resource analysis took place during the first three years of college development, from 2003 through 2006. In 2004 institutional feasibility was assessed, utilizing the data and resource analysis which contributed significantly to The Strategic Plan (2007-2012). Unit and Master Site plans were added as supplements to provide key elements for college development. During the five year period (2007-2012) the Plan was updated periodically to address new growth.

Planning for CMN has been an effective tool for its coordinated development. As an example, the CMN Master Site Plan including Strategic Goals and Objectives enabled the institution to take immediate advantage of unanticipated capital funding opportunities such as the Student Residence Units. Recognizing the benefits, the Board of Regents promoted the Strategic Plan and adopted it in August 2007. Currently the College has completed and adopted a ten year Strategic Plan (2013-2023).

The fundamentals for planning are in place, and provide clarity for the many functions and activities at this newly developing institution. Additional data analysis is conducted to support the need for grants and special projects, as well as for projecting fiscal needs to the National Council. A significant amount of student data used for planning purposes is collected through the EMPOWER Student Information System in the Registrar's Office. Types of student

## Criterion Five: Resources, Planning and Institutional Effectiveness

data collected are related to the constructs of student performance, enrollment tracking and graduation information. The Registrar's Office prepares the AKIS report which includes American Indian Measures of Success; an Annual Report is submitted to AIHEC for inclusion in their Congressional Report.

Another critical aspect for institutional planning which the college employs is an information technology vision, strategy and infrastructure for providing a current state of the art campus that supports student learning. Academic planning utilizes the New Program Request process to establish the need and feasibility for proposed degree programs such as the Associate Degree in Gaming. A follow-up planning activity involving a Post-Audit Review of the Gaming Degree Program was completed to document areas of effectiveness in relation to goals for enrollment, graduation and plans for meeting determined degree program goals.

Driven by the CMN Board of Regents Bylaws, planning has been integrated into the foundational structure. The delegation of planning as a primary function to the President demonstrates its importance to the institution as shown below:

*“To ensure accountability, the President is given, in the Board of Regents Bylaws, the responsibility to propose long range plans for College programs, recommending to the Board on occasion such changes in programs and services as he or she deems desirable to fulfill and is consistent with the scope of the mission, stated philosophy and goals of the College.”*

In consideration of the available data and resources, strategic planning provides clarification of the college organization and community with a presentation of events and timeframes compatible with the mission. Through this process of planning, the College is more focused for addressing the higher educational needs of Native students in a changing society.

## Criterion Five: Resources, Planning and Institutional Effectiveness

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### ***5.C.4. The institution plans on the basis of a sound understanding of its current capacity. Institutional plans anticipate the possible impact of fluctuations in the institution's sources of revenue, such as enrollment, the economy and state support.***

Through resource analysis used for developing the Strategic Plan, CMN has a better understanding and ability to respond to future needs. For example, should enrollment fluctuations occur, the College through experience and planning will be prepared to address the tests to the college capacity. Effective planning has been at the foundation of college development since the very beginning, by relying on needs assessment data, funding projections and unit planning; resources have been set aside for those potential unforeseen challenges. The College of the Muscogee Nation makes plans for future growth based on the historical needs of students and staff, and uses the Strategic Plan as a guiding resource for decisions made.

Revenue has, throughout the years, remained constant or increased from its primary source, the Muscogee (Creek) Nation. However, as the college has developed and is closer to becoming accredited, as evident by achieving HLC Candidacy and being full members of AIHEC, CMN funding opportunities have increased. These funds allow CMN to diversify its economic base by providing a variety of program specific resources based on identified student needs. The College monitors upcoming grant opportunities and is confident that more funding will be forthcoming based on our experience with successful proposals that have resulted in significant grant awards. Cash outlays for any major debts are not an issue as CMN is debt free, therefore an economic downturn, fluctuation in income or reduction in enrollment are less of a concern. CMN does not plan to incur any long-term debt.

### ***5.C.5. Institutional planning anticipates emerging factors, such as technology, demographic shifts and globalization.***

The current planning effort consists of a working task force representing main functions of the College. Specifically, the core group included the Regents Director of Institutional

## Criterion Five: Resources, Planning and Institutional Effectiveness

Effectiveness, Research Specialist, Administrative Assistant, Research Assistant and the President who served as an Ex-Officio member. These members developed and articulated the Strategic Plan goals, objectives and priorities that were closely aligned with the Higher Learning Commission's Criteria for Accreditation. During writing sessions, each section was discussed and consensus was achieved for appropriateness of each item as related specifically to the College's future.

Following established criteria provided by the college's accrediting agency, the organizational framework of the college and the criteria were coordinated within the long range strategic plan. The team analyzed each departmental function and addressed the anticipated growth and development as compared to specific criterion. Emerging factors such as technology demographic shifts and global and tribal issues were considered and addressed. At the onset, input was obtained from the major department heads for their comments on the process.

The core planning group began analyzing the former strategic plan, in relation to where the college is today. By reviewing the many developments and amount of growth since the previous plan, the group was able to focus on a realistic strategy for future development. Taking into consideration the faculty/staff, budget and facility constraints of the former plan, the work group was able to project into the next ten years by looking back on the accomplishments of the college since that time.

Communication among departments in the college was a critical step in achieving an effective process of reviewing and adopting the Plan. Members of the Strategic Planning Committee were the primary source through which intricacies of the plan were translated to all members of the organization. This process guaranteed participation by all and an opportunity to provide their opinion and suggestions.

## Criterion Five: Resources, Planning and Institutional Effectiveness

This Strategic Plan is a living document that is expected to be revised over time. It offers a common framework and flexible guide for future decision-making within the College of the Muscogee Nation, and should foster unity across departments. However, it is also designed to be adaptable enough to leave significant room to pursue academic freedom and excellence.

The Plan has been divided into three major sections: The Introduction provides CMN historical events and the Strategic Planning focus since the college began in 2004. Addressed here is the educational legacy and foresight of our ancestors which established precedence for the tribal college to open its doors. This section explains the importance of planning for the college to continue the vision of our Mvskoke Creek ancestors.

The development and growth for the fledgling institution is described in the Second Section - Strategic Planning. It explains the short term operational planning function used in the first strategic plan to accommodate an evolving and growing organization. Further discussion was on adjusting the process to match the ever-changing environment with the understanding that it would be the future basis for a more conceptual long-range strategy to guide decision-makers.

Section three is the Strategy for Growth which focuses on planning priorities for the future. Reflective discussions relating to the CMN Plan by the Core Planning Group were used as a catalyst to synthesize Strategic Planning components, incorporating college variables and logically addressed HLC's Criteria for Accreditation. Each of these was shaped into a statement specifically relevant to the activities and programs available through this College, and speaks to where it plans to be in ten years.

The College of the Muscogee Nation's future was the focus of college leadership dialogue - recognizing that a strategic document was needed for guidance as the college

## Criterion Five: Resources, Planning and Institutional Effectiveness

developed. Much of the discussion from meetings, planning research, CMN data and HLC's Criterion for Accreditation were translated into five major goals, objectives and priorities—a blueprint for the tribal college.

***Core Component 5.D:*** *The institution works systematically to improve its performance.*

***5.D.1. The institution develops and documents evidence of performance in its operations.***

This Core Component which relates to performance improvement of the institution is directly aligned with the mission of the college to provide "... a positive learning environment, teaching excellence and exemplary academic programs through quality and visionary leadership." Throughout the organization and at all levels, CMN addresses performance of personnel, programs and the institution overall.

Beginning with the Board of Regents, all members whose terms are to be renewed are interviewed by the Executive Branch for nomination and the Legislative Branch for confirmation thus, assessment by the tribal government of each Regent's term performance and capability to serve. In compliance with the tribal legislation the Board evaluates the President as one of its primary responsibilities.

Performance reviews are conducted for all personnel annually by their respective supervisors. In accordance with the personnel policies, staff performance is assessed for quality of work, accomplishments, expectations and goals. Faculty Performance Evaluations submit professional summaries to the Academic Dean that describes 1) Teaching, 2) Contributions to the Institution, Profession and Tribal Community and 3) Tribal Cultural Enrichment. All faculty are assessed annually by the Dean and reviewed by the President.

In regard to instruction of courses, students evaluate the performance of faculty in each of the classes they attend. Results are tabulated and summaries are provided to instructors after

## Criterion Five: Resources, Planning and Institutional Effectiveness

grades are submitted. (See succeeding table.) The library administers surveys to students to determine the effectiveness of its Information Literacy presentations. Results are used to revise presentations for purposes of improvement. Program audits have been conducted for the Gaming degree since its inception.

Table 13: *Instructor/Course Survey Results for Summer 2013*

College of the Muscogee Nation INSTRUCTOR/COURSE SURVEY		
Survey Items	Weighted Mean	Rank
	Summer 2013	
<b>I. As a student in this class</b>		
1. I attended class regularly	4.33	9
2. I prepared for each class	4.36	8
<b>II. At the beginning of the course</b>		
3. The instructor explained the syllabus thoroughly	4.69	1
<b>III. Throughout the semester</b>		
4. The instructor was well prepared for each class	4.58	4
5. The instructor was patient with students in class	4.62	2
6. The instructor treated all students equally	4.60	3
7. The instructor returned graded work as promised	4.49	7
8. The instructor's attitude toward the subject matter was enthusiastic	4.62	2
9. The instructor responded to students questions in a manner that was respectful	4.60	3
<b>IV. Summary of course</b>		
10. The instructor was excellent.	4.51	6
11. Overall, I would recommend this instructor to other students.	4.55	5
<b>Cumulative Weighted Means</b>	4.54	

*Source: Institutional Effectiveness, 2011*

Students are given the opportunity to rate college performance by responding to the appropriate survey, students or graduates. Results are presented in quarterly reports that are distributed to Legislative and Executive branches, as well as all faculty and staff. A graduate follow up survey will be sent to all CMN graduates to determine the value of their CMN experience and how it benefitted them in furthering their education and/or career.

## Criterion Five: Resources, Planning and Institutional Effectiveness

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Financial Audits are conducted on an annual basis by a Certified Public Accounting firm. The independent auditor's report is consistent with Government Auditing Standards and is required by the college legislation. Copies of the audits are distributed to the College Board of Regents, Principal Chief and National Council. The Accounting firm staff presents the audit to the Board for their review and acceptance in a regularly scheduled meeting.

***5.D.2. The institution learns from its operational experience and applies that learning to improve its institutional effectiveness, capabilities and sustainability, overall and in its component parts.***

Planning, evaluation and assessment have been woven into the fabric of the institution from the very beginning of the college. Tribal leaders recognized that careful and cautious decisions were necessary for sustaining the college through the early years of development. Before opening the college doors, tribal leaders who were proponents of the college conducted a needs assessment upon which the institution would be based. Decisions relating to the framework of the college were aligned with significant findings from this first assessment, which would become a routine for integrating institutional effectiveness activities into the planning process.

Because the first step for building CMN was data driven, drawn from opinions of future stakeholders - this systematic routine served as an excellent source for designing the Strategic Plan which mapped out a strategy for institutional effectiveness. Recently the college updated its Strategic Plan to provide goals that will increase CMN's focus for overall effectiveness. Each year the college utilizes its strategic goals in preparing the annual budget for the main functions of the institution.

In addition, CMN has received several grants from such sources as the Federal Departments of Housing and Urban Development, Energy and Transportation. The funding

## Criterion Five: Resources, Planning and Institutional Effectiveness

received by the college is an example of effective planning to benefit the college and its students, and optimize leverage funds provided by the Muscogee (Creek) Nation. Without a strategic plan, college growth and development would have been inhibited and unable to take advantage of opportunities presented to the CMN. Also, the Master Site Plan works hand-in-hand with the Strategic Plan as its goals and priorities are translated into the campus design and layout. Due to the nature and size of the campus and the cultural and tribal emphasis it is necessary that both the Site and Strategic Plans complement one another.

Student input is an important component of institutional effectiveness. The college solicits opinions and attitudinal data from students through questionnaires, surveys and assessment instruments. Significant findings are used for departments to design and plan programs or for instructors to modify instruction. It is the intent of the college to follow-up with graduates and determines the benefit and value of their CMN degree and if the alumni have any recommendations for the college.

Performance of Faculty and staff are reviewed on an annual basis. This process allows departmental supervisors to guide staff by communicating job expectations and accomplishments as well as developing goals for improvement. Since the Strategic Plan has been adopted supervisors and staff have institutional goals and priorities within which their consultations can be conducted to address individual staff contributions for CMN to become an improved institution.

The College of the Muscogee Nation has demonstrated that it values the processes of institutional effectiveness from the very beginning of the institution with the use of its needs assessment to open the College. Following that precedent the college has adopted an updated Strategic Plan to be used for guiding the institution through the next ten years. With the success

## Criterion Five: Resources, Planning and Institutional Effectiveness

in securing grant funds, the campus has sustained growth and become more diverse in the capacity to serve students. Former and current students are called on to provide information and recommendations to the college to adjust and strengthen its programs. As this journey is continued, faculty and staff will be the sustaining variable for the college overall and in its component parts to achieve the strategic goals and priorities.



Preserving the Vision of our Ancestors:  
An Educational Legacy

## COLLEGE OF THE MUSCOGEE NATION

### Supporting Documents



# Strengths, Areas for Improvement and Recommendations

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The Self-Study for the College of the Muscogee Nation provides a formal, comprehensive, tribal college-wide process of self-examination in preparation for the scheduled initial accreditation site visit. Throughout this process we have identified strengths and areas for improvement for each of the five Criteria for Accreditation, as follows:

## **Criterion One: *Mission-*** Strengths

The support for the mission which guides the college is reflected in Muscogee citizens voting to add the College to the Tribal Constitution.

Mission documents are clearly presented throughout the College.

The mission is correlated to Budget priorities.

The value that the college places on the Mission is noted in the Strategic Plan by including it as Goal One.

As a tribal college, CMN emphasizes the role that the Native perspective has in a multicultural society.

The institution engages with identified external constituencies on a regular basis, both tribal and non-tribal.

The college publishes reports on a quarterly basis.

Communication with the public has been enhanced by the tribal communications network.

## Areas for Improvement

Develop a process for reviewing the mission to obtain input from internal constituencies.

Publish an Annual Report to inform the community of its achievements is being developed.

Continue to focus recruitment efforts on all degree programs specifically those that have low enrollment.

## Recommendations

Remain focused on the mission as an institution of higher education for the Muscogee (Creek) Nation by emphasizing Native student enrollment, Native faculty and staff and a curriculum to maintain and strengthen the Tribal College identity.

# Strengths, Areas for Improvement and Recommendations

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## **Criterion Two:** *Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct*

### Strengths

Annual audits are conducted by an Independent Certified Public.

The college is adding to its student services by building the Student Center, scheduled for completion in June 2014.

The stability of the Board of Regents has been continuous since being first appointed in 2005.

The functional organization structure enhances the operational capacity of the institution.

The college Strategic Plan has been updated and provides an excellent foundation for growth and development.

The college has an Institutional Review Board to review and approve the research at the college.

The budget support from the tribal government has contributed a sound financial base from which the college can build.

### Areas for Improvement

The Strategic Plan should be monitored on a regular basis.

Implementation of the assessment plan.

A comprehensive review of the website.

### Recommendations

Convene a Strategic Planning Committee.

Present the Assessment program to the college.

Obtain technical assistance to support maintenance of the website.

## **Criterion Three:** *Teaching and Learning: Quality Resources and Support*

### Strengths

CMN remains up-to-date in courses/degree programs by using current edition textbooks, SMARTboard technology, online research databases, access to computer lab, laptops available for checkout and an online public access catalog.

The program of general education provides broad and extensive experiences

## Strengths, Areas for Improvement and Recommendations

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in order to prepare students for living in a tribal and democratic society.

All faculty are well qualified possessing an academic degree one level above the level at which they teach.

The Faculty Council has begun developing its focus and has held open dialogue meetings with the President, Deans and Registrar. CMN students have been actively involved in community outreach and tribal programs through student activities.

Approval has been given to CMN to administer Federal Student Aid.

Counseling services are provided to students through an agreement with the Tribal Behavioral Health Program.

The budget for the library has averaged 5.3% of the total general education expenses over a five year period and will continue to maintain or exceed that percentage with the move to expand the library and its services.

Information Literacy instruction is provided for CMN students in classes and workshops by the Librarian.

The Service Learning Program provides students opportunities to apply knowledge into service action and address real problems within their own communities.

The Tutoring Program is active in supporting academic success of students.

Faculty and administrative staff have participated in professional development and the College has provided funding for membership in professional associations.

Currently, the College has a number of assessment instruments and methods for measuring the performance of the institution.

### Areas for Improvement

Student data to measure student satisfaction and impact of their CMN experience.

Online course offerings.

Student involvement in developing an annual co-curricular activities calendar.

## Strengths, Areas for Improvement and Recommendations

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The student pass rate in remedial/developmental classes.

### Recommendations

Administer a student follow-up survey.

Implement a strategy for improving the student pass rate in remedial/developmental classes.

### **Criterion Four:** *Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement*

#### Strengths

The college has a process for conducting program reviews.

Institutional and degree learning outcomes have been developed.

The college has an Assessment Plan that provides details for college-wide involvement in the process.

The college collects data relating to student retention, completion and graduation.

The Student Success Center has been implemented at the college.

#### Areas for Improvement

Redefine goals for student retention, persistence and completion.

Survey the success of all graduates.

College wide clarification and awareness of learning outcomes.

#### Recommendations

Re-establish the Gaming Advisory Committee.

Provide reports on retention, persistence and graduation on a regular basis.

Form a student data collection committee.

### **Criterion Five:** *Resources, Planning and Institutional Effectiveness-*

#### Strengths

Budgets are monitored regularly.

The Board of Regents is knowledgeable about the institution in all major functions.

The college has a master site plan to coordinate campus growth and

## Strengths, Areas for Improvement and Recommendations

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development.

The college practices strategic planning processes.

### Areas for Improvement

A timely electronic process for administering instructor/course surveys and faculty provided reports for their files.

An approach for coordinating projections for the budget and student enrollment.

### Recommendations

Instructor course surveys must be managed electronically.

The College committee structure and process should be strengthened.

As CMN achieves initial accreditation, an articulation agreement should be coordinated with OSUIT.

# Response to Site Review Team and IAC Recommendations

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## **Response to the Site Review Team Determination and Institution Actions Council (IAC) Recommendations**

During the HLC Site Evaluation for Candidacy and the IAC both recommended that CMN develop an overall assessment plan. Following this recommendation, an eight member assessment team was formed, including faculty and staff to begin the process of planning. An important responsibility that CMN faculty has is full representation on the Assessment Committee, and has been the driving force behind the revision and adoption of Learning Outcomes.

## **Response to the Site Review Team Determination and Institution Actions Council (IAC) Recommendations**

CMN has addressed both 1) The determinations in the Site Review Team Report following the Candidacy Site Visit (May21-23, 2012) and 2) the committee concurrence rationale based on the hearing before the Institution Actions Council (August 13, 2012). Preceding the CMN response are the statements from Site Review Team and the IAC Committee.

## **The Site Review Determination and to the IAC Hearing Committee Report Committee Rationale**

**CRITERION THREE: STUDENT LEARNING AND EFFECTIVE TEACHING.** The organization provides evidence of student learning and teaching effectiveness that demonstrates it is fulfilling its educational mission.

1. **Findings on Core Component 3A.** *The organization's goals for student learning outcomes are clearly stated for each educational program and make effective assessment possible.*

### **Evidentiary Statements:**

*Goals for student learning are clearly stated in the document "Degree and Certificate Learning Outcomes" posted on the College Website. Outcomes are stated in measureable terms and generally reflect appropriate expectations for the degree level. Review of course syllabi reveals learning outcomes for each course taught by CMN faculty. Outcomes for the Police Science degree may need revision to reflect measureable outcomes.*

*At this point, CMN's assessment program is incomplete. CMN instructors currently follow Oklahoma State University IT assessment processes. The academic division of*

## Response to Site Review Team and IAC Recommendations

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*CMN may wish to develop its own assessment program mapped on the CMN degree outcomes. The Dean of Academics and faculty acknowledge the need to develop systematic assessment procedures.*

**Team Determination:** *This core component is not met in regard to Initial Candidacy.*

### IV. IAC HEARING COMMITTEE RATIONALE

*The IAC committee members concur with the Team's recommendation for Initial Candidacy. The institutional governance structure is sound and appears to be operating with integrity, the administration is dedicated to and capable of providing requisite leadership, the college's finances are sound, enrollment is sufficient, and appropriate.*

*1. The IAC recommends that the College revise a more fully developed assessment program of student learning that uses key sources of data for strategic planning.*

*2. It is also recommended that the College develop a process of continuous institutional assessment and routine environmental scanning.*

### **College of the Muscogee Nation's Response to Both the Site Review Determination and IAC Hearing Committee Report**

It is the philosophy of CMN that assessment of student learning is a key item that contributes to the reliability of the academic programs. The tribal college has initiated an assessment plan that is designed to evaluate the quality of educational programs, and to achieve a pattern of continuous improvement. The learning outcomes framework developed by faculty has been reviewed in two different HLC phases. Initially reviewed as part of the Preliminary Information Form (PIF), a recommendation to develop measureable outcomes was offered, to which the Academic Dean worked with faculty on revising the learning outcomes. During the HLC Site Evaluation for Candidacy, the Team recommended that CMN develop an overall assessment plan. Following this recommendation, an eight member assessment team was formed, including faculty and staff to begin the process of planning.

## Response to Site Review Team and IAC Recommendations

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An important responsibility that CMN faculty has is full representation on the Assessment Committee, and has been the driving force behind the revision and adoption of Learning Outcomes. Several faculty members, Academic Dean and one support staff from the Office of Institutional Effectiveness have attended the Assessment Academy (HLC Assessment Workshop) hosted by the Higher Learning Commission, and have brought the knowledge gained from this training and shared it with their colleagues to promote development of good assessment practices. Through the combined efforts of CMN faculty and OSUIT Assessment staff, instructors have updated Learning Outcomes for each degree programs and participated in the development of an Assessment Plan for the College.

Subsequently, faculty began the overall process by participating in local assessment training and workshops designed to facilitate the revision of learning outcomes. Faculty received guidance from the OSUIT Director of Assessment in order to fine tune learning outcomes to be aligned with the mission and be more measurable. It is our experience that in order for the academic assessment process to be successful it must be faculty driven. In the spring of 2014 other departments including Business Affairs, Student Affairs, Admissions and Student Records will begin their process for non-academic assessment.

The Assessment Plan and timeline has been introduced to the faculty and will be provided to other college staff as learning outcomes are finalized. Access to learning outcomes is available to faculty and staff through the shared drive, which is open to all employees.

In the spring of 2012, the faculty and Academic Dean began the progression of establishing and implementing an assessment plan for CMN. Both entities have been heavily involved in the process of reviewing and revising of institutional and program learning outcomes to identifying the tools that will be used to assess and analyze assessment data in the upcoming

## Response to Site Review Team and IAC Recommendations

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year. As this process continues, an annual practice of assessment will be implemented in order to monitor best practices and weed out ineffective methods in the academic programs.

The assessment process for determining the achievement of learning outcomes for our co-curricular programs is addressed by the graduate survey where students are asked to rate student activities based on their value to the student using a Likert scale. Also, open-ended comments give the students opportunities to give their opinion of co-curricular activities.

A strong focus on assessment is crucial for meaningful student learning. The college is actively working on improving its assessment practices. Assessment in CMN classrooms takes place using quantitative and qualitative measures. Quantitative measures include testing, quizzes and writing assignments; whereas, qualitative approaches such as class participation and observation of presentations are also used to assess students.

The primary method for establishing student assessment in college classes is directly related to the course objectives that are clearly identified in the syllabus, correlated with the text and presented to the students at the beginning of the course. Grading criteria are quantified for students according to points assigned to the list of assessment tasks. In order for students to have a broader perspective of how assessment tasks fit into overall coursework, specific assignments are identified in the course weekly schedule to assist students with the planning of their studies.

With the further development of the College of the Muscogee Nation, assessment is becoming a more organized and integrated process for determining college and student performance levels. At CMN, student learning involves the mastery of subject content, application of knowledge, utilization of resources, and problem solving in a Muscogee context. College faculty, staff and administration work to support a positive environment for student

## Response to Site Review Team and IAC Recommendations

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achievement and development. The primary function for determining effective student learning is the assessment process that uses a variety of valid and reliable measures to monitor and improve courses, services and programs.

## Formal Request for Initial Accreditation

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### **Formal Request for Initial Accreditation**

The College of the Muscogee Nation Self-Study Report provides specific evidence documented in our history, growth and development in relation to the Higher Learning Commission's Criteria for Accreditation and the CMN Institutional Mission and Goals, and serves as partial fulfillment of the HLC requirements for initial accreditation. This report is the product of the work of all CMN faculty and staff and demonstrates the commitment of the Muscogee Nation and its leaders to building a quality institution of higher education.

The process for developing the Self-Study report resulted in an excellent opportunity for faculty and staff to come together throughout the College to discuss their specific responsibilities within the major functions of the institution and to reflect on the character of CMN. Based on evidence that is presented in the Self-Study Report and confirmed at the Site Review, the College of the Muscogee Nation requests Initial Accreditation with the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools.



# Preserving the Vision of our Ancestors: An Educational Legacy

**COLLEGE OF THE  
MUSCOGEE NATION**

**SELF-STUDY  
APPENDICES**



## **Self-Study Appendices**

SS Appendix 1: College Charter

SS Appendix 2: Vita for President

SS Appendix 3: Administrative Staff Vitae  
Dean of Academic Affairs  
Director of Business Affairs

SS Appendix 4: Transcript (Revised)

SS Appendix 5: Sample Diploma

SS Appendix 6: Institutional Snapshot

SS Appendix 7: Glossary of Acronyms

SS Appendix 1: College Charter

# College of the Muscogee Nation

## Charter of Formation

The National Council of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation, pursuant to its inherent authority, has enacted NCA04-151 as amended by NCA05-072, codified as Chapter 4 in Title 18, "Education," of the Code of Laws of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation which established the Muscogee Nation Tribal College as a non-profit public corporation (hereinafter referred to as the "College") and an independent agency of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation, does hereby charter the College of the Muscogee Nation as a non-profit public corporation.

**Article I. Name:** The name of this non-profit public corporation will be the College of the Muscogee Nation (hereinafter referred to as the "College").

**Article II. Principal Office:** The principal office of the College shall be located at the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Complex, Division of Human Development Building, Loop 56 and Highway 75, mailing address being P.O. Box 580, Okmulgee, Oklahoma 74447.

**Article III. Duration:** The existence of the College shall be perpetual.

**Article IV. Establishment of Board of Regents:** The governing body of the College shall be its Board of Regents. The Board shall establish all rules and regulations upon which this corporation shall operate and they shall be consistent with this Charter.

**Article V. Purposes and Powers:** The College shall be created exclusively as a charitable and educational institution of higher learning. The College will provide curricula and academic programs awarding degrees and certificates for post-secondary and continuing education. The College will promote scholarly research, preserve the Muscogee language, history, and culture and provide educational activities to further the cultural integrity of the Muscogee (Creek) people.

**Article VI. Limitation:** No part of the net earnings of the College will inure to the benefit of, nor be distributed to its regents, administrative officers, or any other entity, except that the College shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered or goods provided in furtherance of the purposes set forth in Article V above.

**Article VII. Limited Liability and Indemnification:** The regents and administrative officers of the College shall not be personally liable for any of the obligations of the College. The College shall indemnify any regent or administrative officer of the College against any judgments, penalties or fines including attorneys' fees asserted against and incurred by that person in or arising from his / her official duties.

**Article VIII. By-Laws:** The Board of Regents shall create By-Laws to govern the conduct of the business before the Board of Regents. The By-Laws shall be adopted by the Board of Regents at a regular meeting or at any special meeting of the Board of Regents that is duly called for that purpose. The By-Laws shall identify the overall structure and operation of the College through the Board of Regents. The By-Laws of the Board of Regents may be amended by a two-thirds majority vote of the Board of Regents, provided, however, that the By-Laws or any amendment to the By-Laws shall not be inconsistent with this Charter.

**Article IX. Implementation:** This Charter shall take effect and be in full force from and after its approval and passage by the National Council of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation and shall remain in effect until dissolved by resolution of the National Council.

**Article X. Severability:** The provisions of this Charter are severable; if any part or provision hereof shall be held void by the National Council or Tribal court, that decision shall not affect or impair any of the remaining provisions of the Charter.

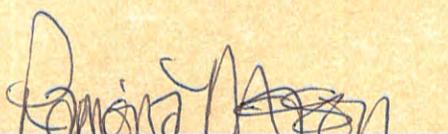
**Article XI. Sovereign Immunity:** The College is clothed by both federal and Tribal Law with all the privileges and immunities of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation, including sovereign immunity from suit in any state, federal or Tribal court. Nothing contained in this Charter shall be deemed or construed to be consent to the jurisdiction of the Courts of the United States, or of any State with regard to the business or affairs of the College. Nothing herein nor any action of the College shall be deemed or construed to be a waiver of the sovereign immunity of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation. The Board of Regents may request a waiver of sovereign immunity through the governing body of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation if the Board deems it is necessary to conduct the business of the College.

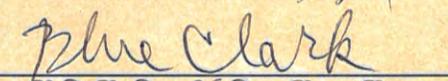
**Article XII. Reporting to Tribal Governing Authority:** To establish and maintain effective communications on institutional activities, goals, accomplishments and needs the Board of Regents of the College will be responsible for providing annual, or, as requested, reports to the National Council of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation.

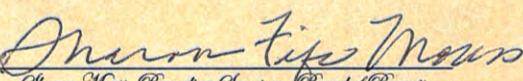
**Article XIII. Amendments to the Charter:** This Charter may be amended by a two-thirds majority vote of the Board of Regents of the College.

**Article XIV. Dissolution:** The property of this College is irrevocably dedicated to charitable and educational purposes and no part of the net income or assets of the College shall ever inure to the benefit of any Regent or employee thereof or to the benefit of any private person. The College may be dissolved only upon the affirmative unanimous vote of the Board of Regents of the College. Upon dissolution or liquidation of the College, the Board of Regents will, after paying or making provision for the payment of all of the liabilities of the College, dispose of all of the assets of the College to any organization or organizations organized and operated exclusively for charitable or educational purposes and shall at the time qualify as a tax exempt organization or organizations under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law) as the Board of Regents shall determine. Any College assets not so disposed will be disposed of by the Muscogee (Creek) Nation District Court, to an organization or organizations which are organized and operated exclusively for charitable or educational purposes.

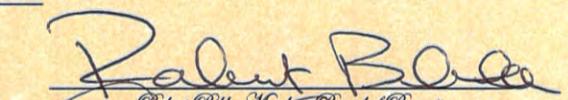
**Article XV. Charter Enactment Date:** This Charter was approved at a duly convened and held meeting of the College of the Muscogee Nation Board of Regents on July 19, 2006, and was duly granted by the Principal Chief of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation on July 19, 2006.

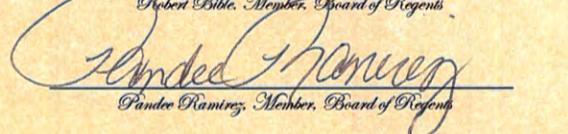
  
Ramona Mason, Chair, Board of Regents

  
Dr. C. Blue Clark, Vice-Chair, Board of Regents

  
Sharon Moss, Recording Secretary, Board of Regents

  
H.D. Ellis, Principal Chief

  
Robert Bible, Member, Board of Regents

  
Pandoe Ramirez, Member, Board of Regents

# College of the Muscogee Nation Charter of Formation

The National Council of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation, pursuant to its inherent authority, has enacted NCA 04-151 as amended by NCA 05-072, codified as Chapter 4 in Title 18, "Education," of the Code of Laws of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation which established the Muscogee Nation Tribal College as a non-profit public corporation (hereinafter referred to as the "College") and an independent agency of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation, does hereby charter the College of the Muscogee Nation as a non-profit public corporation.

**Article I. Name:** The name of this non-profit public corporation will be the College of the Muscogee Nation (hereinafter referred to as the "College").

**Article II. Principal Office:** The principal office of the College shall be located at the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Complex, Division of Human Development Building, Loop 56 and Highway 75, mailing address being P.O. Box 580, Okmulgee, Oklahoma 74447.

**Article III. Duration:** The existence of the College shall be perpetual.

**Article IV. Establishment of Board of Regents:** The governing body of the College shall be its Board of Regents. The Board shall establish all rules and regulations upon which this corporation shall operate and they shall be consistent with this Charter.

**Article V. Purposes and Powers:** The College shall be created exclusively as a charitable and educational institution of higher learning. The College will provide curricula and academic programs awarding degrees and certificates for post-secondary and continuing education. The College will promote scholarly research, preserve the Muscogee language, history, and culture and provide educational activities to further the cultural integrity of the Muscogee (Creek) people.

**Article VI. Limitation:** No part of the net earnings of the College will inure to the benefit of, nor be distributed to its regents, administrative officers, or any other entity, except that the College shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered or goods provided in furtherance of the purposes set forth in Article V above.

**Article VII. Limited Liability and Indemnification:** The regents and administrative officers of the College shall not be personally liable for any of the obligations of the College. The College shall indemnify any regent or administrative officer of the College against any judgments, penalties or fines including attorneys' fees asserted against and incurred by that person in or arising from his/her official duties.

**Article VIII. By-Laws:** The Board of Regents shall create By-Laws to govern the conduct of the business before the Board of Regents. The By-Laws shall be adopted by the Board of Regents at a regular meeting or at any special meeting of the Board of Regents that is duly called for that purpose. The By-Laws shall identify the overall structure and operation of the College through the Board of Regents. The By-Laws of the Board of Regents may be amended by a two-thirds majority vote of the Board of Regents, provided, however, that the By-Laws or any amendment to the By-Laws shall not be inconsistent with this Charter.

**Article IX. Implementation:** This Charter shall take effect and be in full force from and after its approval and passage by the National Council of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation and shall remain in effect until dissolved by resolution of the National Council.

**Article X. Severability:** The provisions of this Charter are severable; if any part or provision hereof shall be held void by the National Council or Tribal court, that decision shall not affect or impair any of the remaining provisions of the Charter.

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corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law) as the Board of Regents shall determine. Any College assets not so disposed will be disposed of by the Muscogee (Creek) Nation District Court, to an organization or organizations which are organized and operated exclusively for charitable or educational purposes.

**Article XV. Charter Enactment Date:** This Charter was approved at a duly convened and held meeting of the College of the Muscogee Nation Board of Regents on July 19, 2006, and was duly granted by the Principal Chief of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation on July 19, 2006.



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A.D. Ellis, Principal Chief

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Ramona Mason, Chair, Board of Regents

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Robert Bible, Member, Board of Regents

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Dr. C. Blue Clark, Vice-Chair, Board of Regents

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Pandee Ramirez, Member, Board of Regents

---

Sharon Mouss, Recording Secretary, Board of Regents

SS Appendix 2: Vita for President

# VITA

## **President, Robert F. Bible**

College of the Muscogee Nation  
2170 Raven Circle  
Okmulgee, OK 74447

### **1. Academic Degrees**

1989 - B.A. Social Studies, Northeastern State University  
1993 - M.Ed., School Administration Northeastern State University  
Post Masters – The Impact of College on Students and Society (21 hrs)

### **2. Professional Experience**

2009-Present President, College of the Muscogee Nation, Okmulgee OK  
2005-2009 Regent, College of the Muscogee Nation, Okmulgee, OK  
2004-2009 Superintendent, Checotah Public Schools, Checotah, OK  
2001-2004 High School Principal, Checotah Public Schools, Checotah, OK  
1996-2001 Assistant Principal, Union Intermediate High School, Tulsa OK  
1993-1996 Assistant Principal/Dean Tulsa Public Schools, Tulsa OK  
1989-1993 Classroom Teacher, McLain High School, Tulsa, OK

### **3. Selected Collegiate Assignments**

CMN Accreditation Committee  
CMN Graduation Committee  
AIHEC Membership and Accreditation Committee  
EPSCoR Broader Impact Committee  
Oklahoma Indian Education Advisory Committee  
University of Oklahoma National Institute of Health Advisory Committee  
Oklahoma Diversity Officers/Practitioners Committee  
Bacone College Tribal Services Degree Committee

### **4. Professional Activities**

Council for Resource Development Presidents Fundraising Academy  
National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development  
Rural Community College Alliance Conference  
Advance Level for Oklahoma Center for School Business Management, Oklahoma State University.  
Intermediate Level for Oklahoma Center for School Business Management at Oklahoma State University.  
School Budget Management Level I  
Introductory Level I for Oklahoma Center for School Business Management at Oklahoma State University  
Criteria for Effective Teaching and Administrative Performance Workshop  
Regent member for the College of the Muscogee Nation  
Member of Oklahoma School Advisory Council.  
Member of Oklahoma State School Board Association.  
Member of Oklahoma Association Serving Impacted Schools.  
Member of Organization of Rural Oklahoma Schools.  
Chairman, North Central Accreditation Committee  
Member of Glenpool City Council

SS Appendix 3: Administrative Staff Vitae

Dean of Academic Affairs  
Director of Business Affairs

## VITA

### **Bunner, Angela D.**

Dean of Academic Affairs  
502 Yuchi Dr.  
Okmulgee, OK 74447

#### **1. Academic Degrees**

1998 B.S. in Education, Oklahoma State University  
2003 M.S. in Education, University of Kansas  
2007 Certificate in Management Development Program, Harvard University  
2008 Certificate in Diversity and the National Interest, Oxford University

#### **2. Professional Experience**

2006-Present Dean of Academic Affairs, College of the Muscogee Nation  
2006-2006 Curriculum Specialist/Instructor, College of the Muscogee Nation  
2005 Adjunct Instructor, College of the Muscogee Nation  
2000-2005 Elementary Teacher, Liberty Public Schools, Liberty, MO  
1998-2000 Elementary Teacher, Fort Worth Independent School District, Fort Worth, TX

#### **3. Selected Collegiate Assignments**

Chair of Academic Affairs/Curriculum Committee  
Steering Committee for Pursuing HLC Accreditation  
Steering Committee for Seeking Affiliation with HLC  
Steering Committee for Seeking Accreditation with HLC  
Publications/Website Committee  
Executive Committee  
Chair Graduation Committee, 2007 - current  
CMN Interview Committee – Gaming Instructor, Librarian, Tribal Services Instructor, Native American Studies Instructor, Curriculum Specialist/Instructor, Research/Financial Aid Specialist, Academic Core Instructor, Math Instructor, Science Instructor  
Student Advisor  
CMN/OSUIT Steering Committee, 2007 - current  
OSUIT Presidential Search Committee, 2010  
Eligibility Interview with the Higher Learning Commission 2009  
Higher Learning Commission Annual Conference, April 2007-2013, Chicago, IL  
Interview with Higher Learning Commission Institutional Actions Committee, 2012  
Chair, Assessment of Student Learning Committee, 2011 - current  
American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC) Annual Meeting, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013  
American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC) Chief Academic Officers Meeting, 2012, 2013  
Title IV Committee, 2013  
Super Saturday Committee, 2013

Special Considerations Committee, 2011, 2012, 2013

Teaching Assignment:

ORIE 1011: College Cornerstone

CS 1013: Computer Literacy & Applications

#### **4. Professional Activities**

Oklahoma Tribal Colleges Roundtable, Oklahoma State University, 2010

Oklahoma Native American Students in Higher Education (ONASHE), 2010

Muscogee (Creek) Nation Johnson O'Malley Scholarship Judge, 2009

Oklahoma Regents for Higher Education PowerPoint Presentation, 2007-2013

College of the Muscogee Nation Catalog 2008, 2013

Muscogee (Creek) Nation Family Advisory Committee, 2012, 2013

Muscogee (Creek) Nation Tribal Child and Youth Coalition Committee, 2013

Jim Thorpe Native American Games (JTNAG) 2012 Advisory Committee, 2012

Chair for the JTNAG College and Career Fair Committee, 2012

Higher Learning Commission Assessment of Student Learning Workshop, 2013

Presenter at the 2013 Higher Learning Commission Annual Conference "Reflections on Moving Through the Eligibility Process for Accreditation" Workshop, 2013

Tribal College Forum, Indian Youth Career Day, Oklahoma State University, 2013

Oklahoma Council for Indian Education Board of Director, Northeast Representative, 2012, 2013

Oklahoma Literacy Council, 2012, 2013

Shots Fired Workshop, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013

Meth Prevention Program, 2013

Suicide Prevention Program, 2013

Sexual Harassment Professional Development Program, 2013

Winning at Work...and Home Professional Development Program, 2013

American Indian Resources Meeting, 2013

National Congress of the American Indian, 2013

## VITA

**JAN L. HART**  
12355 S 194<sup>th</sup> S W  
Council Hill OK 74428  
Cell phone 918-520-3768  
[mjmhart@yahoo.com](mailto:mjmhart@yahoo.com)

**College of the Muscogee Nation**  
PO Box 912; 2170 Raven Circle  
Okmulgee OK 74447  
918-549-2803  
[jhart@mcn-nsn.gov](mailto:jhart@mcn-nsn.gov)  
[www.mvsktc.org](http://www.mvsktc.org)

### **Education**

- December 1992** Bachelor of Science in Business Education, Northeastern State University, Tahlequah, Oklahoma
- December 1989** Associate of Science, Connors State College, Warner, Oklahoma
- May 1983** Associate of Technology in Accounting, Oklahoma State University School of Technical Training, Okmulgee, Oklahoma

### **Employment**

- March 2008** College of the Muscogee Nation, Okmulgee, Oklahoma  
**To Present** Director of Business Affairs, July 2013 to present  
Business Manager, March 2008 to July 2013
- September 2007** College of the Muscogee Nation, Okmulgee, Oklahoma  
**To December 2007** Adjunct Instructor, Financial and Governmental Accounting
- January 2006** Muscogee (Creek) Nation, Okmulgee, Oklahoma  
**To March 2008** Personnel Specialist, January 4, 2006-December 24, 2006  
Training/Recruiter Coordinator, December 25, 2006-March 2008
- September 2005** Oklahoma State University, Okmulgee, Oklahoma  
**To December 2007** Adjunct Instructor, Financial and Managerial Accounting
- January 1997** East Central OK Electric Cooperative, Okmulgee, Oklahoma  
**To March 1999** Staff Secretary, Member Services Department
- December 1993** Citizens Bank & Trust Company, Okmulgee, Oklahoma  
**To December 1996** Loan Secretary
- January 1987** Muskogee Rural Water District #3, Council Hill, Oklahoma  
**To June 1993** Secretary/Bookkeeper
- September 1983** First National Bank, Okmulgee, Oklahoma  
**December 1985** Loan Department Teller

***Professional Memberships and Organizations***

*Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM)*  
*National Association of Professional Women (NAPW)*  
*National Association of College and University Business Officers (NACUBO)*  
*Southern Association of College and University Business Officers (SACUBO)*

***Continuing Education***

*College Business Management Institute, University of Kentucky, 3 year program*  
*Indian Country Human Resource Certification Program, Falmouth Institute*  
*OMB Circulars: Guidelines for Administering Federal Funds and Grants, Falmouth Institute*  
*Indian Country Resource Professional Program, Falmouth Institute and NNAHRA*  
*Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Compliance Certification Training for Tribal Housing*  
*Job Analysis Training, Muscogee (Creek) Nation*  
*IRS for Nonprofits*  
*National Native American Human Resources Association (NNAHRA) 2012 Annual Conference*  
*Employment Law, Fred Pryor Seminars*  
*Sexual Harassment Awareness, Fred Pryor Seminars*

***Special Skills***

*Computer literate, Microsoft Works, Excel, and other computer software; Typing Proficient; Basic Accounting Principles; Communication skills, both oral and written; Organizational skills; Maintain quality work ethics and standards.*

***References provided upon request***

SS Appendix 4: Transcript (Revised)

**College of the Muscogee Nation**  
 Office of the Registrar  
 P.O. Box 917  
 2170 Raven Circle  
 Okmulgee, OK 74447  
 (918) 549-2820 FAX (918) 549-2881

The College of the Muscogee Nation is the Muscogee (Creek) Nation public tribal college initiative created by an act of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation National Council and signed into law by Principal Chief on September 1, 2004. The College grants associate degrees in: Gaming, Native American Studies, Police Science, and Tribal Services and certificate programs in Muscogee Language Studies and Gaming. The College is a Candidate for Accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (230 South LaSalle Street, Suite 7-500, Chicago, Illinois 60604-1411; 1-800-621-7440; <http://www.ncahlc.org>). The College of the Muscogee Nation's OPEID is 042249.

**SEMESTER CREDIT HOURS**

Currently, as a general guideline, a three semester credit hour theory course involves a total of two class periods (170 minutes) per week for 15 weeks under the guidance of a designated faculty member.

**HONOR ROLLS**

The Nakcokv Mvhakv Svhlwecvt Ohhecv Vrakkuectv Etokvkketv (President's Honor Roll) consists of all students who, upon graduation, have achieved a graduation grade point average of 3.75 or higher. The Vrakkuectv Etokvkketv (Honor Roll) recognizes all students who have achieved a graduation grade point average of at least 3.5 but less than 3.75.

**ACCREDITATION**

The College of the Muscogee Nation programs of study are approved by the Board of Regents for the College of the Muscogee Nation. The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) of the North Central Association Board of Trustees granted the College of the Muscogee Nation the status of **Candidate for Accreditation** on November 1, 2012. Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education (OSRHE) Institutional Accreditation (3.1) policy allows for credits earned at CMN to transfer at face value into like programs at institutions in the State System and on a voluntary basis by private-independent institutions.

**EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY POLICY:**

The College of the Muscogee Nation complies with the policies of Title VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Executive Order 11246 as amended, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (Higher Education Act), and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, disability, or status as a veteran in any of its policies, practices, or procedures. This provision includes but is not limited to admissions employment, financial aid and educational services.

**GRADING LEGEND**

**Academic Forgiveness** Courses identified as repeats are not used in calculating the retention/graduation grade point average, but they are used in calculating the cumulative grade point average.

**Grades/Symbols**

<b>GRADES USED IN CALCULATING GRADE POINT AVERAGE</b>		
<u>GRADE</u>	<u>NOTE</u>	<u>POINTS/HOUR</u>
A	EXCELLENT	4
B	GOOD	3
C	AVERAGE	2
D	BELOW AVERAGE	1
F	FAILURE	0

**GRADES NOT USED IN CALCULATING GRADE POINT AVERAGE**

<u>GRADE</u>	<u>NOTE</u>
P	PASS
NP	NO PASS

**SYMBOLS USED TO INDICATE COURSE STATUS**

<u>SYMBOL</u>	<u>NOTE</u>
I	INCOMPLETE
AW	ADMINISTRATIVE WITHDRAWAL
AU	AUDIT
W	WITHDRAWAL
N	GRADE NOT REPORTED

**TO TEST FOR AUTHENTICITY:** Translucent globe icons *MUST* be visible from both sides when held toward a light source. The face of this transcript is printed on burgundy SCRIP-SAFE® paper with the name of the institution appearing in white type over the face of the entire document.

COLLEGE OF THE MUSCOGEE NATION • COLLEGE OF THE MUSCOGEE NATION

**ADDITIONAL TESTS:** When photocopied, a latent security statement containing the institutional name and the words COPY COPY COPY appear over the face of the entire document. When this paper is touched by fresh liquid bleach, an authentic document will stain brown. A black and white or color copy of this document is not an original and should not be accepted as an official institutional document. This document cannot be released to a third party without the written consent of the student. This is in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974. If you have any questions about this document, please contact our office at (918) 758-1480. ALTERATION OF THIS DOCUMENT MAY BE A CRIMINAL OFFENSE!

SS Appendix 5: Sample Diploma

# College of the Muscogee Nation



By the authority of the Board of Regents  
and in the exercise of powers granted by the Muscogee (Creek) Nation,  
this certificate verifies that

**Mekko J. Tyner**

has successfully completed the requirements for the

## **Certificate in Muskoke Language Studies**

Whereof the seal of the College of the Muscogee Nation  
and the signatures as authorized by the Board of Regents are herunto affixed.

Given at Okmulgee, Oklahoma on the  
Twenty-sixth day of August, Two thousand and eleven.

*Robert Bille*

President

*Ramona Nason*

Chair, Board of Regents

*Angela Bunn*

Dean of Academic Affairs

*Cynthia Bonker*

Registrar

## SS Appendix 6: Institutional Snapshot

College of the Muscogee Nation  
Institutional Snapshot

1) Student Demography Headcounts

a. Undergraduate Enrollments by Class Levels (Freshmen-Senior)

Student Demographics Fall 2012 and Fall 2013			
		Fall 2012	Fall 2013
<b>Student Count</b>			
	Full-time		119
	Individual		191
<b>Gender</b>			
	Male		75
	Female		116
<b>Tribal Affiliation</b>			
	Muscogee (Creek)		167
	Five Civilized Tribes		16
	Other Native Affiliation		7
	Non-Native		1
<b>Major</b>			
	Gaming		27
	Native American Studies		18
	Police Science		15
	Tribal Services		121
	Non-Degree		10
<b>Age</b>			
	21 & Under		99
	22-24		16
	25-29		23
	30-34		16
	35-49		20
	50 & Over		17
<b>Marital Status</b>			
	Single		159
	Married		26

b. Undergraduate Students by Degree Seeking and Non-degree Seeking Status (showing totals, with breakdowns by gender and by race/ethnicity per IPEDS report) **See above.**

c. Graduate/Professional Students by Degree Seeking and Non-degree Seeking Status (showing totals, with breakdowns by gender and by race/ethnicity per IPEDS report) **N/A**

d. . Age Range of Undergraduate Students (24 and under; 25 and older) **See above.**

e. Numbers of Students by Residency Status of Credit-seeking Students who come to a Campus or Site for Instruction:

- In-State Resident **100%**
- Out-of State Resident **0%**
- Non-US Resident **0%**

2) Student Recruitment and Admissions

a. Number of Applications, Acceptances and Matriculations for Each of the Following Categories of Entering Students

- Freshman **Fall 2012=44 part-time; 72 full-time/Fall 2013=29 part-time; 52= full-time**
- Undergraduate Transfer **N/A**
- Graduate/Professional **N/A**

b. If your institution requires standardized test scores as a condition of admission, what instrument(s) do you require and what is the mean score for each? **Not required.**

- Name of Test(s) Mean Score of Students Accepted **N/R**

3) Financial Assistance for Students

a. What percentages of your undergraduate and of your graduate students applied for any type of financial assistance? **100%**

b. How many of your undergraduate students and of your graduate/professional students received financial assistance of any type? What percentage is this of your total enrollment? **100%, 100%**

What percentages of your total enrollment received assistance in each of the following categories? Undergrad

Graduate/Professional

- Loans
- Work-Study
- Scholarships/Grants
- Academic Based Merit Based Scholarships

<b>Financial Assistance to CMN Students through CMN and OSU-IT Partnership FY10-FY13</b>					
	<b>FY10</b>	<b>FY11</b>	<b>FY12</b>	<b>FY13</b>	<b>TOTAL STUDENT AID</b>
TRIBAL WORKSTUDY	\$37,604.00	\$39,130.00	\$44,337.00	\$54,299.00	\$175,370.00
CMN AID	\$757,062.00	\$343,541.00	\$909,270.00	\$947,955.00	2,957,828.00
FAFSA AID*	\$132,543.00	\$494,954.00	\$488,596.00	\$643,093.00	\$1,759,186.00
<b>TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS</b>	<b>\$927,209.00</b>	<b>\$877,625.00</b>	<b>\$1,442,203.00</b>	<b>\$1,645,347.00</b>	<b>\$4,892,384.00</b>

Source: CMN Bursar 1/2014

- c. Using the formula cited below, what was the tuition discount rate (TDR) for undergraduate and graduate student populations? If this rate cannot be separated for these two categories, so note and simply report aggregate figures.  $TDR = \frac{\text{total institutional financial aid dollars}}{\text{total income that would result from all students paying full tuition}}$ . I = Institutional Financial Aid Dollars Awarded for Tuition P = Payments of Tuition Expected of Students and their External Aid  $TDR = \frac{I}{I + P}$  as a percentage **N/A**

4) Student Retention and Program Productivity

- a. What percentage of your first-time, full-time fall entering undergraduate students in the previous year returned for study during the fall semester on which this report is based? Please provide the following data in aggregate and with breakdowns by race/ethnicity per IPEDS categories. Number Entering (NE) Number Returning (NR) NR/NE as percentage:

Cohort	Number	Retention Number   Rate	Graduation Number   Rate	Completion Number
2010	45	10   22%	2   4%	24
2011	33	13   39%	2   6%*	30
2012	40	13   33%	DNA	18
Total	118	36   31%*	4   5%	72

Source: CMN Registrar 10/30/13

\*Calculated at 100% rather than typical 150% rate for graduation

\*\* Average Rate

- b. How many students earned graduate or professional degrees during the past year, and what was the distribution by race/ethnicity per IPEDS categories? **N/A**
- c. Report the number of graduates in the previous academic year by college/program in keeping with the following  
 Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) codes.
- Agriculture/Natural Resources (1, 3)
  - Architecture/Engineering/Engineering Technology (4, 14, 15)
  - Biological & Physical Science (26, 40, 41)
  - Business (52)
  - Communications/Communication Technology/Fine Arts (9, 10, 50)
  - Education/Library Science (13, 21, 25)
  - Humanities/Interdisciplinary (5, 16, 23, 24, 30, 38, 39, 54)
  - Health (51)
  - Law (22)
  - Mathematics/Computer Science (11, 27)
  - Military Technology/Protective Services (29, 43)
  - Personal Services/Consumer Services/Fitness (12, 19, 31)
  - Psychology/Social Sciences & Services (42, 44, 45)
  - Trades/Production/Transportation Health (46, 47, 48, 49)

Academic Year	Gaming	Gaming Certificate	NAS	MLS Certificate	Police Science	Tribal Services	Total
2008				1	10	6	17
2009	3			2		2	7
2010	3		3	3		23	32
2011	5	3	4	7		9	28
2012	8	8	6	4		12	38
2013	3	1	2	2		8	16
<b>Total</b>	22	12	15	19	10	60	138

Source: CMN Registrar 9/2013

- d. List, by discipline and by name of test, the separate pass rates of undergraduate, and graduate/professional students sitting for licensure examinations as appropriate. N/A

5) Faculty Demography

- a. Indicate the headcount of faculty in the full-time and part-time categories according to highest degree earned. **See below.**
- b. Indicate the headcount of faculty in the full-time and part-time categories according to each of the following breakdowns.
- Race/Ethnicity (using the standard IPEDS categories)
  - Gender
  - Rank

Classification	Number	Gender		Ethnicity			Average Age	Highest Degree				
		Male	Female	NA	C	AA		HS	ES	AA	BA	MA+
Administrative Staff	10	6	4	9	1	0	42.2	0	0	0	4	6
Faculty	7	2	5	6	1	0	46.6	0	0	0	2	6
Support Staff	13	7	6	11	1	1	37.9	6	0	4	3	0
Adjunct	10	3	7	7	3	0	50.5	0	3	0	1	6
<b>Total</b>	40	18	22	33	6	1	44.3					

Source: CMN Business Affairs 11/12/13

- c. Report the number of faculty by college/program (full-time and part-time together) in keeping with the following Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) codes.
- Agriculture/Natural Resources (1, 3)
  - Architecture/Engineering/Engineering Technology (4, 14, 15)
  - Biological & Physical Science (26, 40, 41)
  - Business (52)
  - Communications/Communication Technology/Fine Arts (9, 10, 50)
  - Education/Library Science (13, 21, 25)
  - Health (51)
  - Humanities/Interdisciplinary (5, 16, 23, 24, 30, 38, 39, 54)
  - Law (22)

- Mathematics/Computer Science (11, 27)
- Military Technology/Protective Services (29, 43)
- Personal Services/Consumer Services/Fitness (12, 19, 31)
- Psychology/Social Sciences & Services (42, 44, 45)
- Trades/Production/Transportation Health (46, 47, 48, 49)

**At present the four Degree Programs utilize the following number of full-time instructors: Gaming Degree—one, Native American Studies Degree—one, Tribal Services Degree—one, Police Science Program --one, Academic Core—one and General Education—two instructors.**

**The four Degree Programs utilize the following number of adjunct instructors: the Gaming Degree—two, Native American Studies Degree—two, the Tribal Services Degree—three instructors, General Education—three and Police Science currently does not require adjunct instructors.**

6) Availability of Instructional Resources and Information Technology

- Provide an account of the technology resources dedicated to supporting student learning (library sites, residence hall hookups, Internet Cafes, etc.) and explain how you monitor the level of their usage.

Year	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010 *	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013
Library Expenditures	105,668	87,573	174,536	90,164	87,186	95,366
Salaries for Library Staff	62,521	67,123	79,805	79,805	80,805	82,291
Materials Expenditures	3,214	13,650	6,597	2,610	4,234	5,283
Other Library Expenditures	19,843	6,800	44,750	7,749	2,147	7,792
Total Library Technology Expenditures	20,090	0	43,383	0	0	0
Total Educational and General Expenditures	1,549,000	1,917,000	2,276,000	1,179,344	1,795,850	1,673,236
Total Library Expenditures as Percentage of Total Educational and General Expenses	6.82%	4.57%	7.67%	7.65%	4.85%	5.70%

\*This includes costs associated with moving Library to new building

7) Financial Data

- Please provide the following information for the past two completed fiscal years. A. Actual Unrestricted Revenues
  - Tuition and Fees

- State/Local Appropriations (if applicable) Denominational Income (if applicable) Investment and Annuity Income Contributions
  - Auxiliary
  - Other
  - Total
- b. Actual Unrestricted
- Expense Instructional/Departmental/Library Student Services
  - Operation and Maintenance of Plant
  - Administration Fundraising Auxiliary
  - Other
  - Total

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
MCN Appropriation	2,382,592	2,432,592	3,328,846	3,435,378	4,167,942
Grants		25,000	32,000		55,000
Total Budget	2,382,592	2,457,592	3,360,846	3,435,378	4,222,942
<b>Appropriation % of Budget</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>99.0%</b>	<b>99.0%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>98.7%</b>
<b>By Function, in dollar amount:</b>					
Instruction	326,343	397,787	482,492	491,079	519,020
Academic Affairs	157,449	281,692	433,551	324,936	455,787
Student Affairs	152,446	176,374	414,680	668,073	738,150
Business Affairs	772,500	668,980	786,317	809,596	870,869
Operation	240,941	174,846	298,875	228,763	569,685
Scholarships	732,913	732,913	912,931	912,931	1,014,431
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,382,592</b>	<b>2,432,592</b>	<b>3,328,846</b>	<b>3,435,378</b>	<b>4,167,942</b>
<b>By Function, % of budget:</b>					
Instruction	13.7%	16.4%	14.5%	14.3%	12.5%
Academic Affairs	6.6%	11.6%	13.0%	9.5%	10.9%
Student Affairs	6.4%	7.2%	12.5%	19.4%	17.7%
Business Affairs	32.4%	27.5%	23.6%	23.5%	20.9%
Operation	10.1%	7.2%	9.0%	6.7%	13.7%
Scholarships	30.8%	30.1%	27.4%	26.6%	24.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Business Affairs 9/18/13

- c. If, in either of the past two completed fiscal years, the total in 7B exceeded the total in 7A above, how did the institution cover its shortfall? **No Shortfalls.**

## SS Appendix7: Glossary of Acronyms

## **Glossary of Acronyms**

ACT- American College Testing

AED- Automated External Defibrillator

AIHEC- American Indian Higher Education Consortium

AIMS- American Indian Measures of Success

AIR- Association for Institutional Research

AISES- American Indian Science and Engineering Society

AKIS- AIMS Key Indicator Systems

CAB- Comprehensive Annual Budget

CLEET- Council of Law Enforcement Education and Training

CMN- College of the Muscogee Nation

CPR- Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation

D2L- Desire2Learn

EPSCoR- Experimental Program to Stimulate Competitive Research

ERIC- Electronic Resources Information Center

FAFSA- Free Application for Federal Student Aid

FERPA- Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

FSA- Federal Student Aid

FY- Fiscal Year

GPA- Grade Point Average

HEA- Higher Education Act

HUD- Housing and Urban Development

IIS- Internet Information Services

IPEDS- Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System

IRB- Institutional Review Board

IT- Information Technology

JOBS- Joint Opportunities for Building Success

MCN-Muscogee (Creek) Nation

Mvskoke- Traditional Creek Spelling of Muscogee

NACUBO- National Association of College and University Business Officers

NASA- Native American Student Association

NASPA- National Association of Student Personnel Administrators

NCAI- National Congress of American Indians

NSU- Northeastern State University

OACRO- Oklahoma Association of Collegiate Registrars & Admissions Officers

OMB circular A-133 – The Office of Management and Budget Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations

ONASHE- Oklahoma Native American Students in Higher Education

OPAC- Online Public Access Catalog

OSHRE- Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education

OSU- Oklahoma State University

OSUIT- Oklahoma State University Institute of Technology

OSU-OKC- Oklahoma State University-Oklahoma City

PIF- Preliminary Information Form

SEBA- Statement of Expenditures vs. Budget Appropriations

SHO- Student Housing Organization

STEM- Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics

TCU- Tribal Colleges and Universities'

USDA- U.S. Department of Agriculture



## Preserving the Vision of our Ancestors: An Educational Legacy

**COLLEGE OF THE  
MUSCOGEE NATION**

**UPDATED ELIBILITY  
FILING**



## Document II - Updated Eligibility Filing

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Document II of the Required Materials for the Comprehensive Evaluation for Initial Accreditation requires an Updated Eligibility Filing which is provided herein. In accordance with the HLC instructions CMN addresses each eligibility requirement, indicating either the evidence is the same or has changed since the eligibility filing.

On October 1, 2010 the College of the Muscogee Nation submitted the Preliminary Information Form (PIF) and supporting documents to be examined by two eligibility reviewers to determine whether the evidence appeared to be strong enough to warrant scheduling a comprehensive visit. The Higher Learning Commission President Sylvia Manning responded to CMN on June 7, 2011 that the Eligibility Process Panel had considered the documentation we submitted was sufficient to warrant an on-site visit.

Therefore, each of the Eligibility Criteria is listed below in bold followed by the CMN response which indicates whether or not the evidence is the same or has changed since eligibility filing.

***Hold an appropriate legal status to operate as an organization offering higher learning in one of the states or sovereign nations within the North Central region, and have the legal authority to award higher education degrees and any other educational offerings wherever and however delivered.***

Evidence provided in the Preliminary Information Form addressed this requirement, and is the same since the eligibility filing.

***Publish and make available to students and the broader public statements of mission approved by its governing board defining clearly the nature and purpose of the higher learning provided by the organization and the students for whom it is intended.***

Evidence provided in the Preliminary Information Form addressed this requirement, and is the same since the eligibility filing.

***Have students enrolled in degree programs before achieving candidacy or have graduated students from its degree programs before achieving initial accreditation.***

Evidence provided in the Preliminary Information Form addressed this requirement, and is the same since the eligibility filing.

***Document governance and administrative structures that legally enable the organization to protect its institutional and educational integrity.***

Evidence provided in the Preliminary Information Form addressed this requirement, and is the same since the eligibility filing.

***Document that it has core values and strategic priorities that assure its graduates will be capable of contribution to the communities in which they live and work.***

## Document II - Updated Eligibility Filing

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Evidence provided in the Preliminary Information Form addressed this requirement, and is the same since the eligibility filing.

***Demonstrate that it has engaged qualified academic personnel essential to assure effective curriculum, instruction and academic programs.***

Evidence provided in the Preliminary Information Form addressed this requirement, and is the same since the eligibility filing.

***Demonstrate the ownership of or responsibility for assuring access to the learning resources and support services necessary to facilitate that learning expected of its enrolled students.***

Evidence provided in the Preliminary Information Form addressed this requirement, and has not changed since the initial filing period.

***Provide documentation of existing and future financial capacity.***

Evidence provided in the Preliminary Information Form addressed this requirement, and has not changed since the initial filing period.

***Provide students with electronic or print documents that outline educational program requirements appropriate in terms of length, content and required learning outcomes for the credential awarded.***

Evidence provided in the Preliminary Information Form addressed this requirement, and has not changed since the initial filing period.

***Document that it presents itself to the public and prospective and enrolled students fairly and accurately with up-to-date information published electronically or in print about admissions, credit transfers, costs and refunds, financial aid and the accreditation status of the organization and its programs.***

Evidence provided in the Preliminary Information Form addressed this requirement, and has not changed since the initial filing period.

***Document that it provides its students, administrators, faculty and staff with the policies and procedures informing them of their rights and responsibilities within the organization.***

Evidence provided in the Preliminary Information Form addressed this requirement, and has not changed since the initial filing period.

***Present evidence of ongoing planning that includes a realistic action plan for achieving accreditation with Commission within the period of time set by Commission policy.***

Evidence provided in the Preliminary Information Form addressed this requirement, and has not changed since the initial filing period.



# Preserving the Vision of our Ancestors: An Educational Legacy

**COLLEGE OF THE  
MUSCOGEE NATION**

**ASSUMED PRACTICES**



## **Document III - Assumed Practices**

A. Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct .....	1
B. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources and Support .....	7
C. Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement.....	18
D. Resources, Planning and Institutional Effectiveness .....	21

## Assumed Practices

As required by HLC, CMN is providing this document to demonstrate evidence that we meet all the Assumed Practices which are foundational to the Criteria and Core Components. Addressed below are these Assumed Practices which are 1) generally matters to be determined as facts, rather than matters requiring professional judgment and 2) unlikely to vary by institutional mission or context, except for CMN's tribal uniqueness and cultural context.

### **A. Integrity: Ethical and Responsible Conduct**

As an institution, CMN values integrity and recognize the importance of being accountable to, and maintaining the confidence of the Muscogee community. Therefore, actions are consistently taken to safeguard the integrity of the institution in all its affairs.

1. Conflict of Interest – Governing Board and Senior Administrative Personnel: In NCA 11-040, Law of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation entitled “College of the Muscogee Nation Board of Regents,” Conflict of Interest is addressed in sections 113.E.2 (prevention of nepotism) and 113.F (procurement policies and procedures.) Additionally, these subjects are addressed in the Personnel Policies and Procedures, Section 403 Chapter C Title 2, and apply to all employees of the College of the Muscogee Nation, including Administrators.
2. Ethics Policies- Faculty and Staff: This institution maintains documents which contain valuable policies and expectations for faculty and staff. The Faculty Handbook, Catalog and MCN Policy and Procedures Handbook cover a multitude of policies that faculty and staff are expected to follow. Included in these documents are policies regarding nepotism, conflict of interest, recruitment and admissions, financial aid, privacy of personal information, and contracting. Each are clearly covered in these documents,

## Document III - Assumed Practices

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along with other policy, and are readily available to employees of the college.

Additionally the Faculty Handbook contains statements on Academic Freedom and Academic Responsibility.

3. Clear and Fair Policies- Rights and Responsibilities: Both the CMN Personnel Policies and Faculty Handbooks provide essential information for personnel as they fulfill their responsibilities at CMN. All faculty have a copy of the Faculty Handbook while an electronic copy is also available on the shared drive, and hard copies of the Personnel Policies are available upon request from the Business Office, Library, and the shared drive as well. A pocket-sized Employee Handbook is given to every employee at the time of employment by MCN Human Resources. In addition, every employee is provided an orientation by the Business Office to give a clearer understanding of their positions and their role at the college.

With regard to policies that affect students, clear and fair policies have been developed and are addressed in the College Catalog. Information relating to College Services, Student Life, Admission, Financial Aid, Academics, and the Degree Programs is contained in this document. In the College of the Muscogee Nation Student Handbook, standard policies are presented as Student Rights and Responsibilities, Due Process and Student Services at CMN. Both the Student Handbook and Catalog are available online on the College website.

The rights and responsibilities of students are clearly defined in the Student Handbook. This document spells out the right to a quality education, right to religion and culture, among many other rights and responsibilities. Financial Aid

## Document III - Assumed Practices

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responsibilities, access to student records and conduct are also addressed in the College Catalog.

4. **Complaints and Grievances:** As found in the Student Handbook, a grievance is a claim by a student, a group of students, a CMN employee or the student government regarding alleged improper, unfair, unsuitable, arbitrary or discriminatory treatment by another member of the CMN community. When a claimant and perpetrator cannot reach a reasonable resolution through discussion, students may submit a written grievance to the Dean of Student Affairs who will meet with both parties separately to hear issues of the grievance. All parties will be notified in writing of what action, if any, shall be taken—all records will be kept confidential in the Dean of Student Affairs' Office. Students may appeal the decision of the Dean of Student Affairs through a Formal Hearing conducted by the Dean of Academic Affairs.

Any member of the College of the Muscogee Nation community (student, faculty, and/or staff) may file a grievance against a student. Grievances should be submitted within thirty (30) days of the incident, and will be resolved as soon as possible. The grievance policy states that grievances will be addressed within ten days of submittal to the Dean of Student Affairs.

Employee grievance procedures are found in the CMN Personnel Policies, which were adopted by the CMN Board of Regents. Since 2005, MCN has provided personnel services and policies for College employees. Employee grievances are dealt with through the Business Affairs Office in conjunction with the President. Forms to file an employee grievance are available from the Business Manager, who acts in a Human Resources/Personnel capacity.

## Document III - Assumed Practices

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### 5. Clear and Complete Information

- a. Statements of mission, vision and values are included in the Catalog and on the website. CMN prominently displays the Mission Statement and Core Values in the college, and includes that information as well as the Vision Statement, Cultural Context, and Philosophy of the College in all college documents. Additionally, promotional items with the Core Values and Mission Statement have been produced and given to students, faculty, and staff.
- b. Available in the Course Catalog is a full description of the requirements for admission and the policy for acceptance of transfer credits to the College of the Muscogee Nation. Each degree program is listed in the catalog, along with the coursework required for each of the prospective degrees offered at the college. Also covered in the document is detailed cost of attendance, CMN's financial aid policy, information regarding academic standing, our statement of affiliation with Oklahoma State University
- c. CMN advertises its four Degree Programs and its two Certificate Programs on the website and in the Catalog. A full description of each program and the admission requirements is also included in the Catalog and is accessible to the public. The process for admission is clearly explained and the application is available on the website and by request through mail or in person. Degree and Certificate plans are available to show course requirements for general education, core, and specialization components. Course descriptions are provided for all of the courses in the Catalog.

## Document III - Assumed Practices

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- d. Policies on the acceptance of credits are explained in the Catalog and in person through the advisement process. In the Student Handbook, the additional services that the College offers are clearly indicated with information on how to access them. To facilitate transfer of courses, intentional planning and collaboration was the foundation of the course numbering system in order to be consistent not only with our partner institution, but also commonly held practices in higher education. The Tribal College has made honest efforts to ensure a smooth process for transferring unaccredited courses.
  - e. The Tribal College provides information to the students regarding all costs such as tuition, fees, training, and incidentals in the Catalog and on the CMN website. Specific timelines for refunds are provided to students on the website and Catalog and also through flyers, the marquee sign, and emails.
  - f. Policies regarding academic good standing, probation, and dismissal; residency or enrollment requirements are located in the Catalog and/or Student Handbook, both of which are online.
  - g. A comprehensive list of full-time and adjunct faculty with their credentials is included in the catalog which is available on the website.
  - h. The College is a public tribal college that is non-profit and does not have owners of the institution.
6. Accurate and Complete Data made Public: In the Catalog and website, the public is made aware that a student earning an unaccredited CMN degree may have courses transferred to an accredited institution via an OSUIT transcript. When students complete courses, they will be dually transcribed on both a CMN and OSUIT

## Document III - Assumed Practices

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transcript. Because of our commitment to students in obtaining their educational goals, we recognized the importance of our courses needing to be transferrable, which is the basis of our agreement with the Oklahoma State University system. Thus, CMN students will be able to transfer coursework to any institution accepting courses from Oklahoma State University, which is indicated in our Agreement and Catalog.

7. Clear and Accurate Status to the Public: Our relationship and status with the Higher Learning Commission is prominently displayed with a mark of affiliation on our website, as required by HLC. When interested parties click on this banner, they are directed to the HLC website and are provided with detailed information regarding the relationship between the College of the Muscogee Nation and the Higher Learning Commission.
  - a. The college does not have programs that require specialized accreditation.
  - b. The college does not have programs that are eligible for specialized accreditation.
  - c. The college does not advertise or have a program as preparation for a licensure, certification, or other qualifying examination.
8. Governing Board: All members of the Board of Regents are tribal publically nominated by the Principal Chief to individual staggered five year terms and confirmed by the National Council. No member has a significant administrative position with college, ownership interest, a company that does substantial business with the college, a company that has a substantial partnership with the college, a corporate relationship, an investment group or firm substantially involved with one of the above organizations. All board members are appointed and confirmed by tribal publically elected officials,

## Document III - Assumed Practices

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Principal Chief and National Council Members.

9. The Board has the authority to approve the budget and to engage and dismiss the chief executive office in accordance with Muscogee (Creek) Nation enabling legislation Section 4-111. *Powers and Duties of College of the Muscogee Nation Board of Regents.*
10. The college is not outsourcing any services.
11. The college has no contractual partners for which it will need to take responsibility.

### **B. Teaching and Learning: Quality, Resources, and Support**

1. Programs, Courses, and Credits
  - a. The college conforms to commonly accepted minimum program length: 60 semester credits for all of its associate's degrees. The Gaming Degree is a 61-credit hour program that focuses on casino operations, marketing, management, hospitality and customer relations. The Tribal Services Degree, a 66 credit hour program emphasizes administration and human services in the tribal organization. The Native American Studies Degree is a specialized 66 credit hour program that focuses on Mvskoke Studies and language or an alternative program for other tribal groups. The Police Science Degree is a 65 credit hour academic program designed for tribal law enforcement officers.
  - b. The college requires that 15 of the 60 credits for an associate's degree be credits earned at the institution itself. As described in the CMN Catalogue (pg. 10), credit acceptance toward a degree is described in detail as follows:

## Document III - Assumed Practices

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1. Students must have a minimum of 30 credit hours earned through CMN. (No more than one-half (50%) of any degree can be earned outside of CMN or transferred into CMN.)
2. At least 15 of the 30 credit hours must be satisfactorily completed in residence at CMN.
3. The last 15 credit hours of any degree program must be completed in residence at CMN.

As described in the CMN Catalog (pg. 10), credit acceptance toward a degree is described in detail as follows:

4. Students must have a minimum of 30 credit hours earned through CMN. (No more than one-half (50%) of any degree can be earned outside of CMN or transferred into CMN.)
  5. At least 15 of the 30 credit hours must be satisfactorily completed in residence at CMN.
  6. The last 15 credit hours of any degree program must be completed in residence at CMN.
- c. The college does not offer graduate degrees.
  - d. A full-time student at the college is one who carries a minimum load of 12 credit hours in a regular trimester. Students should carry a normal load of 15-18 credit hours per regular trimester. This enrollment should lead to the successful completion of all associate degree requirements in four regular trimesters.
  - e. CMN courses that carry academic credit have in place a process for assuring appropriate content and rigor. The college offers curricula that are routinely

## Document III - Assumed Practices

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reviewed by the faculty and academic dean in order to examine the significance of its content to the learning outcomes of the program and mission of the institution.

Also, course syllabi are audited to ensure consistency and appropriateness.

Further, an academic affairs/curriculum committee is in place in order to review/approve of any course and/or degree revisions. The committee consists of, but is neither mutually exclusive nor exhaustive, the following individuals: Dean of Academic Affairs, Chair; Regents Director of Institutional Effectiveness; Faculty Representative(s); and the Librarian. (p. 5, Faculty Handbook)

- f. A process is in place to ensure the acceptance of transfer courses and applied toward CMN degree requirements are of equivalent rigor. CMN accepts course credits from other regionally accredited institutions of higher learning. However, CMN reserves the right to determine for itself those credits it will accept in transfer to meet the graduation requirements. Courses will not be accepted in transfer and applied to degree programs until approval has been granted by the registrar. The advisor may submit a “substitution” form along with a course syllabus or course description to the Dean with a copy to the Registrar’s office. (p. 7, CMN Catalog)

Transfer credit will not be evaluated until an official transcript from issuing school(s) has been received by the Registration/Admissions office. Although all courses may be transferred into CMN, no more than one-half (50%) of the degree may be transfer credit. The last 15 credit hours earned for any CMN degree must be taken in residency.

## Document III - Assumed Practices

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- g. CMN has a clear established policy on maximum allowable credit for prior learning in that students who successfully complete proficiency tests that are developed and administered by the department responsible for the course offering. Students must be validated by successful completion of twelve or more trimester hours of academic work at CMN.
- h. The college maintains a minimum requirement for general education for all of its associate degree programs. In order to obtain an associate's degree from College of the Muscogee Nation, students' must complete 27-39 general education requirements. These courses establish a foundation for the curriculum that supports their academic preparation for the degree they are seeking. The rationale for the general education requisites is to foster intellectual growth through informed understanding and critical thinking skills. Courses and credit hours vary as determined by the academic program. Note that courses generally will be selected from the list that follows:

Orientation	1 hr
English	6 hrs
Social Science	9 hrs
Political Science	6 hrs
Science	8 hrs
Humanities	6 hrs
Mathematics	3 hrs
Behavioral Science	6 hrs
History	3 hrs
Communications	3 hrs
Computer Literacy	3 hrs
Electives	3-6 hrs

(pp. 12-13, CMN Catalog)

### 2. Faculty Roles and Qualifications

- a. Tribal college instructors possess relevant academic degrees to subject taught and

## Document III - Assumed Practices

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the earned degrees are in a field relevant to the individual's assignment. All faculty have at least a degree that is above the level at which they teach, at the college five of seven full-time faculty have master's degrees or above. For eminent scholars, artist-in-residence and experts (i.e., Mvskoke language, culture, history and/or specialized knowledge) they will have expertise relevant to the mission and charter as well as qualifications demonstrated by record of achievement and recognition as a foremost expert. (Section 5.2 Education Requirements, p. 11 of the Faculty Handbook).

CMN identifies faculty as being qualified to teach through their acquired academic preparation and/or professional experience that is relevant to the curriculum they are instructing. A Master's Degree is required as a professional qualification to serve as a fulltime faculty member at CMN. Although, there are two fulltime faculty members whose highest degree obtained is a Bachelor's Degree, they are currently enrolled in a master's program. The two adjunct instructors without an academic degree are fluent speakers in the Mvskoke language and participate in traditional activities in the Mvskoke culture. Therefore, their special skills qualified them as an Eminent Scholar for teaching the specialized courses in the Native American Studies program.

- b. CMN does not have doctoral level courses.
- c. Faculty participate substantially in:
  - 1. Faculty participate substantially in oversight of curriculum and along with the academic dean routinely review the curricula to assess the content. A faculty delegate is also represented on the academic affairs/curriculum committee that

## Document III - Assumed Practices

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reviews and/or approves of any course and/or degree revisions. Further, in order to provide a means of collective action of the faculty in dealing with matters of concern to the faculty, including matters of curriculum and the academic community, the Faculty Council was established, adopted bylaws and meets accordingly.

2. Faculty participate substantially in assurance of consistency in the level and quality of instruction, and in the expectations of student performance, including mentoring and monitoring of student progress, fostering communication and collaboration, guiding and evaluating student project work and other assignments, and responding to individual student requests. They maintain student records, such as grades on a weekly basis and student attendance is documented using CMN's Empower Registration System every class period. This helps faculty in keeping the student accountable for coursework and classroom presence.

The faculty post office hours on a schedule located outside their office and hours are also listed in their course syllabi. These hours are posted to communicate to students when they are available to discuss grades and/or assignments, clarify course material covered during class, or just to discuss general advisement issues/concerns.

In order to maintain currency in their specific degree program and to advance their teaching skills & strategies, faculty are encouraged to participated in professional development activities. Faculty are members of professional organizations specific to their curriculum. Through these

## Document III - Assumed Practices

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memberships, they remain up-to-date on current issues through webinars, organization newsletters, periodical email updates, etc.

3. Establishment of academic qualifications for instructional personnel is reflected in the Position Descriptions (PD) for the college. The faculty PD contains the purpose, job description, minimum requirements and preferred requirements. Fulltime faculty assist in the process of recruiting adjunct instructors for their program. Once a potential instructor has been identified, the faculty member reviews the individual's resume and official transcripts from all degree granting institutions to determine if the person obtains the qualifications to teach the course. If it is deemed the potential instructor has at least 18 hours of coursework to support their qualifications, the faculty member begins the process to bring the person on as part of the instructional personnel.

In instances in which specific coursework and/or degrees are not granted for specialized courses, (i.e., Gaming courses, Mvskoke language, culture, history and/or specialized knowledge) the instructors will have expertise relevant to the mission and charter as well as qualifications demonstrated by record of achievement and recognition as a foremost expert. (Section 5.2 Education Requirements, p. 11 of the Faculty Handbook). Again, the faculty member recruiting the adjunct instructor will make the determination to hire the individual to teach in the program.

4. Faculty participate substantially in analysis of data and appropriate action on assessment of student learning and program completion. Faculty have been

## Document III - Assumed Practices

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actively participating in the process, design and implementation of an assessment of student learning plan at CMN. Also, as an integral component of assessment, the relationship between analysis of student data and learning outcomes is the focal point is addressed. There has been collaboration with the Academic Dean to support and coordinate a process to assess student achievement, which will serve as a resource for the continuous improvement of the quality of education at CMN, and to assist in the development of materials to assist in the preparation, implementation and review of future assessment plans.

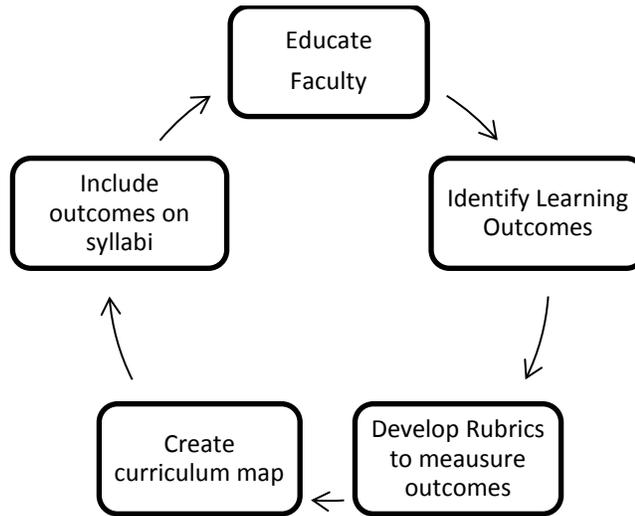
In order to prepare faculty for this process and introduce them to the concept of using assessment evidences to improve teaching, three of the seven fulltime faculty, librarian and Academic Dean have attended the Assessment Academy in St. Charles, IL. Upon the completion of these programs (Feb. & July), those who attended were asked to share with those who didn't attend what was learned at the academy.

As a result of what was learned, faculty and the Academic Dean have met every 4-6 weeks to develop an assessment plan for student learning. Thus far, the meetings have been comprised of developing student learning outcomes. Through this process, faculty have discussed their goals for student learning by having an introduction to assessment of student learning, review and revision of institutional and program outcomes. As the year progresses, rubrics, curriculum mapping and identifying resources will be implemented, as indicated in the chart listed below.

# Document III - Assumed Practices

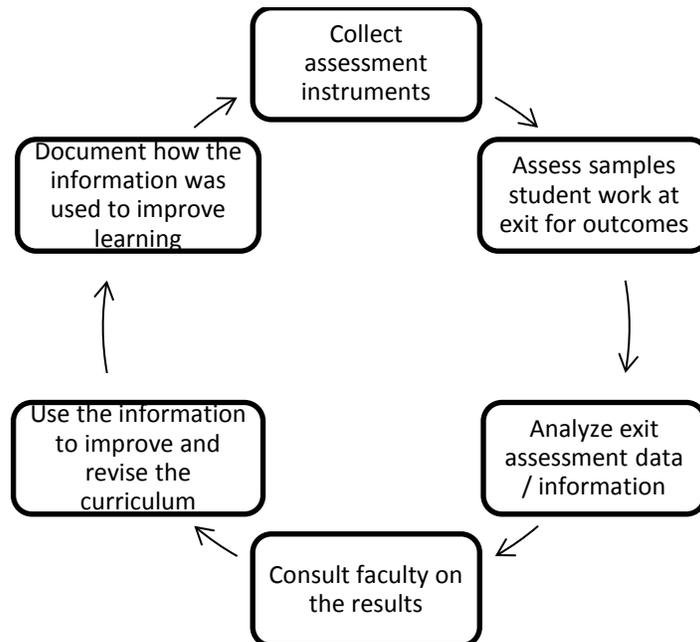
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## Development of Student Learning Outcomes



As assessment of student learning is not only about developing the outcomes, but also implementing them, the chart below demonstrates the next key step in the assessment process in which faculty will be key participants.

## Process for the Implementation of Student Learning Outcomes Process



### 3. Support Services

- a. Financial aid advising at the tribal college is critical to meet the needs of students who, without such aid would be unable to attend college. The importance of financial aid to CMN students is underscored in a comprehensive Needs Assessment as the number one priority need by tribal citizens wanting to attend college.

To ensure clear and comprehensive advisement, a Financial Aid and Scholarship Policy and Procedures Manual has been developed and is followed by the Financial Aid Coordinator in providing assistance to students. The manual addresses the strict federal regulations as well as student needs to ensure that both are addressed. The College of the Muscogee Nation Financial Aid/Scholarships mission is to help students finance their education and achieve their educational goals. With this mission in mind it is important that students gain a full understanding of their responsibilities.

Many levels of advising happen within the Financial Aid/Scholarship Office from loan counseling, awards, packaging, scholarships, FAFSA, verification, special considerations, and more. Advising students in these areas helps students understand their eligibility as well as the financial aid process and if applying for loans, the consequences of accruing debt. Financial aid advising is a commitment that the College of the Muscogee Nation has made on many levels for the success of our students. It is the goal of Mvskoke Etlwv Nakcokv Mvhakv Svhlwecvt Toknawa Vnickv (College of the Muscogee Nation Financial Aid) to continue to

## Document III - Assumed Practices

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provide clear and comprehensive financial aid advising for students and their families.

- b. The college maintains timely and accurate transcripts and records for course credits generated at the College of the Muscogee Nation. Credits are recorded on transcripts for students who earn passing grades. Enrollment and grades in courses is processed through the Empower Student Information System. Grades are entered into the system through the Registrar's Office and are available to students through Empower Web or from the Registrar's office. Also, student requests for transcripts, grade reports and student schedules may be obtained from the Registrar's Office. Consistent with the transition plan to separate from OSUIT our partner institution, beginning Spring 2014 students will have access to the Empower Web for printing class schedules and grades. Transcript requests will continue to be processed by Registrar's Office.

The admissions office is responsible for admitting students to the college. The office maintains documentation of ACT/COMPASS scores, high school/GED transcripts, tribal citizenship, and driver's license. As part of the admissions application an Enrollment Agreement/Consent for Electronic Business, Medical Treatment Release, Residential Life Contract, Internet Usage Form, Consent for Release of Student Information, and Voter Registration Applications are maintained. For financial aid students, it is documented on the Application Checklist that the student is aware of the FAFSA, CMN Scholarship Application, CMN Tuition Waiver/Grant Application and American Indian College Fund Scholarships.

### **C. Teaching and Learning: Evaluation and Improvement**

1. Instructors have authority for assignment of grades as indicated on each course syllabus provided to every student in class. It is the instructor's right and responsibility to evaluate their students' academic performance. The instructors are afforded the autonomy in creating the standards, expectations, evaluation methods and assignment of grades for the courses they teach. Faculty members are expected to maintain a systematic method for marks used to determine student grades. The faculty member completes the final grade roster for the course(s) he/she teaches and submits to the Registrar by the established deadline.

The policy listed below gives the Grade Appeals Committee, with faculty representation, the authority to supersede a grade on appeal. The process is provided in the Student Handbook and in the Catalog. A student must first discuss his/her grade with the instructor prior to grade appeal process, however if the issue is not resolved the student may petition a grade change by using the Grade Appeals Process. The Grade Appeals Process must be formally initiated from the student with a written appeal to the Degree Program Coordinator within four months after the original grade is awarded, or six weeks after the student begins a new trimester, whichever comes first. If no resolution is achieved or if the Degree Program Coordinator is the instructor of the course grade in question, the student must submit the written appeal to the Academic Dean for presentation and discussion with the Grade Appeals Committee. If the Degree Program Coordinator of the course grade in question is seated on the Grade Appeals Committee, a replacement Degree Program Coordinator will be seated for the process. The decision of the Grade Appeals Committee is final and the student will be notified in writing by the

## Document III - Assumed Practices

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Grade Appeals Committee Chair.

2. The institution refrains from the transcription of credit from other institutions or providers that it will not apply to its own programs in that credit is awarded only for courses similar to the courses on degree programs offered at the College of the Muscogee Nation. The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education Matrix is used to check the list of courses that are transferrable.
3. The institution has formal and current written agreements for managing any internships and clinical placements included in its programs such as the Native American Studies and Tribal Services programs that require a Service Learning component in their curriculum. This course, which has a Service Learning Handbook, specifies that students to participate in a tribal community service project. This unpaid internship requires an agreement between the student and the organization in order to clarify the responsibilities of both student and agency. It also identifies the activities in which the student will be involved with at the organization in relation to the learning objectives for the course.
4. A predominantly or solely single-purpose institution in fields that require licensure for practice is also accredited by or is actively, in the process of applying to a recognized specialized accrediting agency for each field, if such agency exists - This does not currently apply to CMN.
5. Instructors communicate course requirements to students through syllabi in writing and in a timely manner. A standard template is used for all course syllabi at CMN in order to facilitate clear communication in regard to the class between the students and instructor. In the Faculty Handbook, instructors are to provide students the syllabus the first week of class. Instructors have the option to include information they deem pertinent for their

## Document III - Assumed Practices

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course, however, the following **must appear in all course syllabi**:

- A. Course title, instructors contact information including office location, phone number and email address.
  - B. Required textbook, references and materials.
  - C. Course competencies and assessment of the competency.
  - D. Course activities
  - E. Methods by which students will be evaluated and assignment/activity grades determined.
  - F. Information on how the students' final grade will be determined.
  - G. A weekly course outline listing topics and assignments.
  - H. A statement relating to the instructors policy on late work and classroom policies.
6. Institutional data on assessment of student learning is accurate and addresses the full range of students who enroll. Student learning data is collected from several sources, including: Needs Assessments, Course Tests, Course Assignments, Grade Reports, Student Portfolios, Service Learning Faculty Course Evaluations, Library Presentation Evaluations, Ability to Benefit Test and Satisfactory Academic Progress report. Currently, student learning data is related to individual course objectives and institutional learning outcomes, however, in the near future, as mentioned in Assumed Practices B, CMN has designed and implemented an Assessment Plan that will result in a coordinated college-wide assessment program. The faculty and Academic Dean have been meeting to complete implementation of the process to assess student achievement.
7. Institutional data on student retention, persistence, and completion are accurate and address the full range of students who enroll. Although CMN has not formally reported statistics to the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System until Fall 2013, the college collects Student Retention, Persistence, and Completion data according to IPEDS definitions and terms, reflecting good practice. Also, graduation data is collected for first time, full-time students enrolled in the Fall Semester that graduate within 150% of normal time (three years). The College of the Muscogee Nation has registered to

complete 2013-14 Fall IPEDS Collection Survey. In addition, the CMN Registrar has attended the Association for Institutional Research (AIR) and American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC) Co-hosted IPEDS Workshop.

### **D. Resources, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness**

1. The institution is able to meet its current financial obligations. It is evident that the financial ability of the tribal government that provides primary funding for the college, underscores the stability and inherent capacity within the MCN government to provide funding for the college on a continuing basis. The recent Muscogee comprehensive tribal budget-2013 was \$235 million, and in comparison the Tribal College budget was \$4.2 million. Although the CMN appropriation has been growing annually, an analysis of the MCN Comprehensive Annual Budget (CAB) reveals that the 2013 Tribal College budget was just a small fraction (1.7%) of the 2013 annual budget. In addition, the financial capacity of the Creek Nation is much greater when factoring in investments, capital assets and other revenue sources. Muscogee (Creek) Nation tribal support is substantially vested in, and dedicated to the success of the College. The tribe has provided more than \$14 million for a 15 acre campus, the first building, student housing and student center.

Along with the \$4.2 million budget the college has more than \$2 million in reserve for emergencies, remains debt free and has no plans to incur any long term debt. In consideration of these facts, the college is able to meet current financial obligations.

## Document III - Assumed Practices

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2. The institution has a prepared budget for the current year and capacity to compare with previous years. The CMN budget is developed and funded in accordance with the budgeting legislation of the tribal government as required by law and in compliance with the Constitution of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation. Each fiscal year a budget is developed using prior budgets and projected activities for the upcoming year. Budgets must be approved by the Regents, the Legislative Branch and the Principal Chief of the Executive Branch. Budgets are computer generated and can be compared with prior years.
3. The institution has future financial projections addressing long-term financial stability. Considering that the college has no debt nor intends to incur any long term debt and has no cash flow issues, at this point, financial projections are only prepared for project specific items such as scholarships, construction and furniture, fixtures and equipment (FFE). However, as enrollment continues to increase we recognize the need for financial projections and will implement a comprehensive process. We are confident in our financial capacity and believe the budgets document our stability which is critical to a new and developing institution. In the future the revenue stream will evolve and diversify including funding from the federal government for tribal colleges and universities through the Bureau of Indian Education which will begin in the Fall of 2014 on an annual basis. These conditions also show the strength of the viability and financial capacity of the College of the Muscogee Nation.
4. The College maintains effective systems for collecting, analyzing, and using institutional information. The primary source of data is the Empower Student Information System for Admissions Tracking, Student Billing, Student Records, Financial Aid, and Student Housing. In the near future the modules for Protective Services (Incident Reports,

## Document III - Assumed Practices

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Parking Violations, and Vehicle Tracking), Alumni Development and Intern/Job placement and perhaps Inventory Control will be added. Budgetary reports are produced by the office of Business Affairs. Other sources of data provided by the Muscogee (Creek) Nation include Human Resources and Payroll/Personnel.

Since founding of the college, its leadership has focused on building an institution that adheres to acceptable college management and organizational principles. With the development of the College of the Muscogee Nation, Resources, Planning and Effectiveness is a set of practices that are becoming a more organized and integrated process as a major component of the college foundation. Accordingly, an approach to coordinated implementation of these practices will be guided by the College Strategic Plan.

5. The institution undergoes an external audit by a certified public accountant. To maintain accountability, the enabling legislation for the tribal college requires that the Board of Regents have annual audits conducted and provided to the executive and legislative branches. Annual audits of the college financial records are conducted in accordance with Government Auditing Standards and in compliance with OMB circular A-133, audits of States, Local Government, and Non-Profit Organizations. Since 2005 the tribal college has been audited. Audits of its financial records provide a Statement of Revenue, Expenditures and Fund Balance for the fiscal year. Currently, the firm Arledge & Associates, P.C. Certified Public Accountants conducts the annual audit.
6. The institution's administrative structure includes a chief executive officer, chief academic officer and chief financial officer. To ensure appropriate leadership and oversight of the institution, the administrative structure for the college has individuals

## Document III - Assumed Practices

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with appropriate credentials and experience and sufficient focus on the institution. These individuals include the President, Dean of Academic Affairs and Director of Business Affairs. The President, who holds a Master Degree in Education with an emphasis in School Administration, is appropriately credentialed having served 8 years as a public school superintendent and principal in the public schools. As the chief executive officer, he is employed by the Board of Regents to whom he directly reports. The Dean of Academic Affairs (chief academic officer) holds a Master Degree in Education with teaching experience in the public schools. The Director of Business Affairs (chief financial officer) has a Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Education and experience in human resources. Both are appropriately credentialed and both report to the president. The chief academic officer has the responsibility for the academic function of the college. The chief financial officer is responsible for the college business operations and financial management.



## Preserving the Vision of our Ancestors: An Educational Legacy

**COLLEGE OF THE  
MUSCOGEE NATION**

**FEDERAL COMPLIANCE**



## **Federal Compliance**

Assignment of Credits, Program Length and Tuition.....	1
Institutional Records of Student Complaints .....	2
Publication of Transfer Policies.....	5
Practices for Verification of Student Identity .....	6
Title IV Program Responsibilities .....	6
Required Information for Students and the Public .....	8
Advertising and Recruitment Materials and Other Public Information.....	8
Review of Student Outcome Data.....	9
Standing with State and Other Accrediting Agencies.....	9
Public Notification of Opportunity to Comment .....	9

**Assignment of Credits, Program Length and Tuition**

Term hours earned for major programs are comparable with good practice in higher education, and mirror those of our partner institution, OSUIT, which operates on a trimester calendar system. All course work is transcribed by CMN and OSUIT in trimester credit hours. One credit hour equals 800 minutes of instruction and CMN’s four Associate degree programs range in length from 61 – 66 credit hours, consistent with Associate’s transfer degrees at other institutions. The certificate programs range in length from 21-24 credit hours, again consistent with other institutions. In addition, CMN programs conform to the requirements of State Regents’ policies on credits and program length.

According to HLC PIF Reviewer’s Comments regarding Eligibility Requirement 10, “The College follows approved tuition/fees and refund policies of OSUIT through the partnership with OSUIT. These have been approved by the Board of Regents for the Oklahoma Agricultural and Mechanical Colleges and the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education. There are no differential charges for the academic programs offered by the College.”

The College has since independently adopted tuition and fees in accordance with OSUIT’s stated tuition and fees. Tuition and fees for Audited courses are the same rate as courses taken for credit. Tuition and enrollment fees are \$146.50 per semester hour (No out-of-state rates) . Additional fees include Remedial Supplementary Fee, \$18.50 per credit hour; Advanced Standing Examination Fee, \$5.00; Late Enrollment Fee, \$10.00; Off-Campus Electronic Media Fee, \$25.00 per credit hour. Tuition and/or other fees may change after the printing of the CMN catalog, notice of any change(s) will be posted where appropriate and on the web.

Tuition and fees due to CMN are paid at the Bursar's office. Financial aid is disbursed through the CMN Bursar's office and is managed by the *Tokenawa Vnickv* Financial Aid & Scholarships Office. Accounts are payable for the fall, spring and summer sessions by the first day of each class. A late payment penalty of 1% per month is assessed on delinquent accounts. Students who have not received a completed financial aid award in advance or who are not paying their account in full at the time of regular enrollment will be encouraged to meet with the Financial Aid Coordinator to complete the FAFSA or make financial arrangements with the Bursar. CMN reserves the right to withhold grades, academic transcripts and diplomas, and will not permit students to complete enrollment or attend class until all financial obligations to the college are satisfied.

CMN Scholarship/Tuition Waiver monies are remunerated after all other forms of Financial Aid have been utilized. Information relating to the financial aid processes is provided in the *Tokenawa Vnickv* Financial Aid section of the CMN Catalog, website, Student Handbook and the *Tokenawa Vnickv* Financial Aid Policy and Procedures Manual located in the Financial Aid office. Tuition and billing processes are provided in the Bursar section of the CMN Catalog, website, Student Handbook and the Bursar Policy and Procedures Manual located in the Bursar's office.

### **Institutional Records of Student Complaints**

Student incident reports are on file with the Dean of Student Affairs. Students have the right to use the grievance and grade appeal procedures as outlined in the Student Handbook. Consistent with the student right to due process, the following procedures are available for resolution of student issues and concerns.

A grievance is a claim by a student, a group of students, a CMN employee, or the student

## Document IV – Federal Compliance

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government regarding alleged improper, unfair, unsuitable, arbitrary, or discriminatory treatment.

Initial grievances should be directed to the party(ies) involved, and if not resolved, further inquiries may be directed to the Dean of Student Affairs. All grievances should be made within the same term, or within a similar reasonable timeframe for proper follow-up. There are several ways a student can approach their concerns regarding a grievance:

- If the grievance is regarding another student, the student should:
  1. First discuss the concern with the student. If discussion is not possible or the grievance is unable to be resolved at that level, the student should then;
  2. Prepare a written grievance, which is then submitted to the Dean of Student Affairs. The Dean of Student Affairs will discuss the issue with the student to determine what the next step should be. The Dean of Student Affairs makes a decision and will then notify, in writing, all parties involved of the decision and whether or not further action shall be taken.
    - a. Any member of the College community (student, faculty, staff, or guest) may file a grievance against a student.
    - b. A grievance must be submitted in writing, ideally within 30 days of the incident, but at least within the same trimester or a similar timeframe.
    - c. Sufficient detail must be given in order to make an appropriate determination of whether disciplinary action may or may not be warranted.

If the student appeals the decision of the Dean of Student Affairs, there will be a Formal Hearing. The student will be referred to the office of the Dean of Academic Affairs, who will set the Formal Hearing date and describe the formal hearing procedures to the student. A seven step process is used to address Formal Appeal Hearings:

- a. The Dean of Academic Affairs will put in place an ad hoc committee comprised of one faculty member, a second faculty or staff member, and a student, and chaired by the Dean of Academic Affairs, who is non-voting.
- b. The hearing will proceed even if the student(s) is/are not present. However, a student may have a designated representative present, who is not legal counsel.
- c. The student will be provided an explanation of the allegations made against him or her.
- d. A summary of the facts and information which substantiate the allegation will be provided.
- e. If applicable, the student and/or CMN is given the opportunity to refute the

## Document IV – Federal Compliance

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allegations by giving his/her account of the incident or circumstances involved with the allegation(s).

- f. The Committee makes a decision for action or non-action.
- g. The Committee's decision is final and all parties will be notified in writing of the decision.

Disposition of charges will be handled by the Dean of Student Affairs who will notify the student in writing of charges against him or her. The written notice will be hand-delivered directly to the student or mailed to the student's local address on file in the Registrar's Office.

Possible sanctions include, but are not limited to:

- Probation from CMN clubs or activities;
- Suspension from CMN;
- Expulsion from CMN;
- Financial restitution to injured party;
- Community Service;
- Other appropriate sanctions as determined.

Non-compliance with sanctions may include, but is not limited to:

- Mandatory counseling;
  - Expulsion from CMN
- If the grievance is regarding an employee of CMN, the student should:
    1. First try to meet with the employee to discuss and resolve the issue. If a meeting is undesirable or does not resolve the issue, the student should;
    2. Submit a written grievance to the Dean of Student Affairs or in situations of conflict of interest, submit to the Dean of Academic Affairs.
    3. The appropriate dean and the student determine if a meeting with the employee and/or the employee's supervisor is necessary.
    4. Should such a meeting be necessary, the appropriate Dean notifies the employee and the employee's supervisor in writing of the grievance and the purpose of the meeting.
    5. After the meeting, the appropriate Dean will notify the student(s) in writing of the decision and the supervisor will notify the employee in writing of the decision and any repercussions or sanctions.

Any written grievance received by the College of the Muscogee Nation will be acted on or action will be initiated by the Dean of Student Affairs within ten working days, barring extenuating circumstances. If the grievance is not satisfactorily resolved or rectified within a

reasonable amount of time after following the above steps, the grievance may be given to the President for further resolution.

These procedures are to be used when a student has a concern about his/her treatment at the College. The objective of the procedures is to resolve problems as quickly and efficiently as possible at the level closest to the student so that student progress may continue. The student may have a representative in attendance for any and all such meetings, barring legal counsel. Nothing within this process precludes a student from seeking legal counsel.

A student must first discuss his/her grade with the instructor prior to the grade appeal process. A student may appeal a grade change by using the Grade Appeals Process if satisfactory resolution cannot be achieved after consulting with the instructor. The Grade Appeals Process must be formally initiated from the student with a written appeal to the Degree Program Coordinator within four months after the original grade is awarded. If no resolution is achieved or if the Degree Program Coordinator is the instructor of the course grade in question, the student must submit the written appeal to the Academic Dean for presentation and discussion with the Grade Appeals Committee. The instructor who has issued the grade in appeal will not sit on the Grade Appeals Committee. The decision of the Grade Appeals Committee is final and the student and the instructor will be notified in writing by the Grade Appeals Committee Chair.

### **Publication of Transfer Policies**

CMN accepts course credits from other regionally accredited institutions of higher learning. This is disclosed to students and to the public in our Catalog and Student Handbook. These documents are available in paper form and distributed to students and laminated copies are available in the Library. The policies are also available electronically on our website.

CMN reserves the right to determine transfer credits it will accept to meet the

graduation requirements. Courses will not be accepted in transfer and applied to degree programs until approval has been granted by the Registrar.

Transfer credit will not be evaluated until an official transcript from issuing school(s) has been received by the Registration/Admissions office. Although all courses may be transferred into CMN, no more than one-half (50%) of the degree may be transfer credit. The last 15 credit hours earned for any CMN degree must be taken in residency.

### **Practices for Verification of Student Identity**

Students are issued a Student Identification Card upon enrollment with CMN. This card is used to verify identity as necessary for the purposes of exams and assignments completed during courses. The picture taken for the ID is also included in a student's electronic file through Empower, resulting in a photo image readily available for all departments to verify student identity when a person comes for inquiry. There is no additional fee for Student IDs, however there is a replacement charge for lost IDs.

In addition, the College verifies citizenship with the Muscogee (Creek) Nation or other federally recognized tribes as part of our application process for admission and receipt of the College of the Muscogee Nation Scholarship or Tuition Waiver/Grant. These files are securely kept in locking fire-safe filing cabinets in our file room.

### **Title IV Program Responsibilities**

In keeping with the 2013 updated Department of Education *Title IV Program and Related Responsibilities* requirements CMN presents the following:

1. General Program Responsibilities: Financial Aid consists of scholarships, grants and part-time employment. The purpose of these programs is to assist students who, without such aid would be unable to attend college. The Financial Aid office must be aware of issues affecting students and advocate their interests at all levels. Other

responsibilities of the office include, but are not limited to: Support efforts to encourage students to aspire to and plan for education beyond high school, educate students and families through quality consumer information, respect the dignity and protect the privacy of students, ensure the confidentiality of student records and personal circumstances, and provide services that do not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, disability, age or economic status.

2. **Financial Responsibility Requirements:** The Financial Aid Coordinator is responsible for compliance with all financial standards to participate and maintain eligibility for Title IV, HEA, state and tribal funds.
3. **Default Rates:** College of the Muscogee Nation Board of Regents has decided that CMN will not participate in the William D Ford Direct Loan Program. The College does not participate in any Alternative Loan programs. CMN has discouraged students from borrowing loans and does not market them in any way. CMN does not have a preferred lender list or any preferred lender arrangements.
4. **Campus Crime Information and Related Disclosure of Consumer Information:** Pursuant to the “Campus Crime Awareness and Campus Security Act of 1990,” the College of the Muscogee Nation monitors criminal activity and will annually publish a campus Police Crime Report.
5. **Student Right to Know:** In keeping with the “Student Right to Know Act,” CMN provides information concerning the completion or graduation rates of certificate or degree seeking full-time students. The Consumer Information Guide is compiled following Title IV, HEA requirements and available on the website.
6. **Satisfactory Academic Progress and Attendance Policies:** The satisfactory academic progress of students is tracked at the end of each term. Students are notified of their status. An Academic Progress statement may be found on the college’s Empower portal. When a student’s eligibility for Federal Student Aid is suspended, an appeals process is in place for the student. A three-member committee chaired by the Financial Aid Coordinator and comprised of the Dean of Student Affairs and Bursar makes decisions on all Financial Aid suspension appeals.

Attendance is tracked, following the end of the first ten days of each semester (the free drop and add period.) The Dean of Academic Affairs monitors the campus’s Student Notification System and accepts referral information regarding student attendance. Please note that attendance is taken every day and logged into the Empower Student Information System. Students may be subject to Administrative Withdrawal depending 85% of attendance, as defined in the attendance policy. In the event of excessive

absences/withdrawal, a student's aid is appropriately adjusted by CMN.

7. **Contractual Relationships:** College of the Muscogee Nation Board of Regents has decided that CMN will not participate in the William D Ford Direct Loan Program. The College does not participate in any Alternative Loan programs. CMN has discouraged students from borrowing loans and does not market them in any way. CMN does not have a preferred lender list or any preferred lender arrangements.
8. **Consortial Relationships:** CMN has agreements through the OSU System via OSUIT and OSU-OKC.

### **Required Information for Students and the Public**

The College of the Muscogee Nation presents itself clearly, completely and accurately in all documents and on its website, [www.mvsktc.org](http://www.mvsktc.org). Policies regarding grading, admissions, academic program requirements, tuition and fees and refund policies, among others, are covered in appropriate documents that are available to students and the public. Handbooks and policies are available online and also in print from the respective departments within CMN. The academic calendar is available to students on the website, and also in the Catalog.

### **Advertising and Recruitment Materials and Other Public Information**

Our Catalog clearly states both in paper form and online that our accreditation status with the Commission is as follows:

CMN currently enjoys a partnership with the Oklahoma State University system to transcript courses. Through this partnership, students are dually enrolled with CMN and OSUIT. Students may take classes at either school with those courses transcribed through OSUIT. Thus, a student earning an unaccredited CMN degree may have courses transferred to an accredited institution via an OSUIT transcript.

Displayed clearly on the CMN website home page is the Commission's Mark of Affiliation, which links readers directly to the HLC website with information regarding the accreditation status of the College.

**Review of Student Outcome Data**

The College has implemented a Graduate and Graduate Follow Up Survey as a part of the Assessment Plan. The data collected from these surveys has been reviewed in order to implement changes as suggested by students and the data gathered. The Graduate Follow Up instrument is designed to evaluate specific indicators of long term success, such as job placement and the completion of further educational goals. The surveys will continue to be updated and revised to meet survey research goals.

**Standing with State and Other Accrediting Agencies**

CMN has no relationship with other accrediting agencies. Since beginning the college, meetings have been held to inform the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education Chancellor and staff about the progress of CMN. On May 21, 2010 the OSRHE Assistant Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs sent a letter to the CMN President stating that, "...CMN is operating through a partnership with OSUIT, it is in full compliance with Oklahoma laws and State Regents' policies."

Our status within the Oklahoma System was further clarified as follows, "Once CMN achieves candidacy status with the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges, it will be recognized (as approved by the Chancellor) as an accredited Tribal College operating as a stand- alone entity. It is important to note that this agency does not interfere with the day-to-day operations of accredited colleges and universities operating in Oklahoma."

**Public Notification of Opportunity to Comment**

The College of the Muscogee Nation's Public Notification of Comprehensive Evaluation Visit and Third Party Comment was publicized for two months in the Muscogee Nation News

and on the College's website.

Figure 1: *Public Notification of Comprehensive Evaluation and Third Party Comment*

