March-May, 2020

In conjunction with Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker’s COVID-19 Plan for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the Middlesex Community College Emergency Management Team (Addendum 1.1) has been working since the beginning of March to ensure that the College protects all of its personnel, students, and community partners by creating a safe plan for cessation of on-campus operations centered around business and learning continuity, as well as continuing operations moving forward.

As the public health threat in the U.S. posed by COVID-19 became clearer, the College began planning a response. We developed our plans by utilizing guidance from the National Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), MA Public Health (MPH), and the Baker administration. The latter did not directly issue guidance for higher education, but their consistent, evidence-based, and incremental approach is one we have followed at the College.

After senior level discussions in February, the MCC Emergency Management Team (EMT) began meeting on March 6. At the first meeting, it was decided to expand the EMT meetings with additional people, including representatives from the Faculty Staff Association (FSA), the faculty and professional staff union MCCCPA, and the staff union AFSCME. EMT meetings became more frequent and now continue on a weekly basis.

Beginning in March, the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) and the MA Department of Health (MPH) began weekly briefings. President Mabry and Patrick Cook, Chair of the College’s Emergency Management Team, participated in each of these briefings.

To communicate with the College community, the EMT issued frequent email bulletins (Addendum 1.2) outlining how the College was responding to the rapidly evolving situation. A new mailbox emergencymanagement@middlesex.mass.edu, monitored by the Executive Director of Public Affairs and the Dean of Students, was created to collect all communications from personnel and students who had questions about the College’s response to the pandemic and plan to keep our community safe. Just as significantly, the mailbox became the vehicle by which students and employees communicated with the College if they themselves contracted COVID-19. These communications were used to provide Human Resources support for employees, and also support services for the students. Communications were established with the health departments and governance in the College’s two host communities – Bedford and Lowell.
The Marketing and Communications Department quickly built an informative website [Addendum 1.3] that was featured prominently on the College’s home page, and was easy to navigate, comprehensive, and continually updated. The page included a FAQ link as well as redirects to external health partner websites

https://www.middlesex.mass.edu/disclosurestatements/covid_19.aspx

This allowed all of us who were communicating with various constituencies to refer each group to a common site where everyone was getting the same information.

To address various constituencies directly, additional communication channels were developed. Provost Phil Sisson took the lead on communicating directly with faculty through direct emails and through his Academic Deans. Dean of Students Pam Flaherty sent out emails to students and along with updating her webpage regularly, her team created a dedicated page with information on remote services and resources for students

https://www.middlesex.mass.edu/deanofstudents/remoteres.aspx

Student Services staff monitored the chat function on the MCC Mobile App and responded where needed [Addendum 1.4]. Patrick Cook issued EMT emails to keep the College continually informed throughout the crisis, and emails from President Mabry to faculty and staff outlined the situation in more general terms.

On March 27 and May 5, the President held virtual Town Hall meetings to connect with the College community and answer questions. The first Town Hall saw 265 participants while the second had approximately 335. Each event allowed the College community significant time for productive dialogue. On March 30, President Mabry updated the Board of Trustees through an extended conference call. On April 2 and May 8, President Mabry updated the College community at virtual FSA meetings.

All non-essential travel for employees and students on College business was canceled and will be resumed in accordance with state and local regulations and guidance.

MCC’s Facilities Department continued with the ongoing cleaning of community spaces and classrooms. The College secured additional contracted cleaning resources to help in this effort. The College currently has sufficient free-standing and wall-mounted sanitizing supplies on campus and has ordered more. Hand sanitizer stations already located around campus are constantly filled and repaired.
Supplies of disinfectant and paper towels were distributed to each classroom to use on keyboards and table tops. Additional disinfectant was made available.

Mirroring Governor Baker’s Phasing Plan, the College created a Phasing Task Force to address specific timeline issues that would allow the College to successfully close out the spring semester for its students and prepare for the first portion of the summer, leading up to June 23, the anticipated start date of Summer classes.

Phase 1 (Start)

Chronology of Key Actions Taken During MCC Phase 1

- March 6—EMT meetings begin
- March 16—22—Spring Break
- March 19—College notifies all spring classes are moving to remote mode
- March 20—College begins offering workshops to faculty to convert courses
- March 20—Provost requests academic continuity plans from all faculty
- March 23—Some faculty resume teaching their online courses
- March 23—Gov. Baker issues stay-at-home notice
- March 24—MCC buildings close to the public and administrators and staff move to remote work
- March 30—Spring classes resume in remote form
- March 30—60 laptops and 150 network access tokens distributed to administrative staff by Public Safety personnel enforcing strict social distancing and hygiene guidelines.
- April 2—Chromebook and hotspot distribution (pickup and delivery) to students begins; to date, more than 75 have been given to students
- April 22—Distribution of an additional 150 laptops to faculty and staff begins
- May 11—With appropriate protocols in place, a small number of students and faculty (less than a half dozen at a time) return to campus to complete critical lab work
- May 18—CARES Act Part I distribution to students begins
- May 18—Baker administration announces outline of plan to begin reopening MA economy; Secretary Peyser briefs public higher education leaders
- May 21—MCC hosts its first ever virtual commencement celebration

The entire College community rallied to provide academic continuity and to support our students through this difficult spring semester. Faculty members quickly moved their courses to remote learning experiences and supported each other through this process. Student services
professional staff adapted existing tools and adopted new technologies and developed new practices and procedures to continue their support for student success. We established protocols that continued to provide access to our food pantries for our students in need. We created guidelines that allowed for the distribution of musical instruments for our music classes, pounds of clay for our art classes, and technology support for students. Our Transportation services began safe home deliveries to help with the students unable to make it to our campuses.

Information signage about staying healthy and stopping the spread of the virus was posted on both the Bedford and Lowell campuses. This information was also shared across all of the College’s social media platforms. [Addendum 2.1].

Employees must log in and out with our Public Safety department upon arrival and departure, and designate the room number they are visiting.

Without this collective effort, we would not have been able to help our students complete this semester in such an effective way. These efforts have enabled our students to graduate, transfer, and begin new careers.

In partnership with local banks, through community donations, and with recently approved government aid, MCC established several sources for student financial/economic relief [Addendum 2.2].

The Federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act includes a Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF) that provides emergency financial aid grants for students' expenses related to the disruption of campus operations due to the COVID-19 crisis. Bursar Christopher Fiori and our Financial Aid office worked diligently through the spring to ensure eligible students were able to access CARES and HEERF support; https://www.middlesex.mass.edu/deanofstudents/mcccares.aspx

Judy Burke, our Executive Director of Institutional Advancement worked with President Mabry and our College Foundation to establish the MCC Student Emergency Fund [Addendum 2.3]. The fund is a resource to help students who are dealing with unexpected, short-term emergencies, which makes it challenging for them to focus on their courses/academics. Qualified emergencies include, but are not limited to, sudden loss of housing (fire, eviction, unsafe conditions), domestic violence, loss of reliable transportation, sudden unemployment, food
insecurity, or inability to purchase required textbooks or course materials, issues heightened during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

The College was able to transition and scale up our online and remote classes and services quickly and effectively for a number of reasons:

1. MCC had a strong culture of online learning excellence and many well-prepared faculty
2. MCC had implemented many college-wide technologies over the last few years, including Blackboard Collaborate, the Navigate student advising platform, Target X CRM for admissions, and the HelioCampus data analytics system
3. MCC had a strengthened and responsive IT department
4. MCC had a strengthened Purchasing Department with new leadership and was able to rapidly procure needed equipment and technology licenses

We continued to meet our mission of access and excellence for our diverse community through hard work and creative use of technology throughout the closure of the spring semester and the beginning of the summer. This widespread willingness to adapt and innovate has made us a stronger and more resilient institution. As we look forward to continued uncertainty, MCC is preparing to carry our efforts to the next level and be even more prepared for the coming semesters.

**Phase 2 (Caution) – June 2020**

During this cautionary phase, some individual employees have begun returning to campus, working from their private offices. Masks are mandatory for everyone and social distancing is required.

The Phasing Task Force ([Addendum 3.1](#)), which meets weekly and addresses individual concerns or issues raised by College personnel or students, has focused on several areas:

- Classroom occupancy analysis – determining the maximum number of individuals allowed in a room, allowing for social distancing of six feet or greater;
- Elevator occupancy restrictions – limiting the number of passengers allowed in any elevator at any one time;
- Unidirectional flows of foot traffic through common hallways and corridors;
- Single Point Access – restricting entrance to any of the College’s 18 properties through one entrance only; exits are allowed as needed through any egress;
COVID-19 Control Plan

- Extensive educational signage has been installed in all the College properties – reinforcing hygiene, distancing, and safety protocols in place for everyone;
- Contact tracing plans (Addendum 3.2) for students and personnel to be instituted at any point during Phase 2, 3, and 4 if an infected individual visits either campus;
- Employees must bring any food, drink and other items they need to campus and must remove those items when departing (no food trash left in work space)

The College bookstore began receiving returns, including curbside drop-offs for books. Working with our Environmental Health Officer, CDC-guided quarantining for all books and technology began, with specific cleaning materials used to disinfect post-quarantine for any materials returning to inventory.

Social Distancing Guidelines

Offices and workplace areas must have the capacity to allow at least 6 feet of distancing.

Utilization of shared work spaces must be kept to a minimum. Until state guidelines are altered, no more than 25% of any division can return to our campuses at one time. Whenever possible, private offices will be used.

All employees, students, and vendors are required to wear an effective face covering or mask and other appropriate personal protection equipment (PPE) at all times while on campus. Masks are available for distribution through either of our Public Safety offices in Bedford or Lowell.

The vast majority of employees who can work remotely will continue to do so via telecommuting.

State required certification, employee responsibilities, and other educational posters have been installed on both of our campuses.

Access to laboratories and classrooms needed for students in specific pathways is provided in partnership with academic deans and faculty. The focus is to allow completion of spring semester courses that require hands on, face-to-face learning experiences. Strict adherence to social distancing protocols and PPE usage are mandated.

Employees must review the Employee Mandatory Workplace Safety Standards prior to coming on campus. These standards have been sent repeatedly via email to all MCC employees by our Human Resources Department.
**COVID-19 Control Plan**

**Phase 3 (Vigilant) – July, August 2020**

The work provided by employees can be accomplished in half-day or full-day increments, but do not necessarily have to be Monday through Friday schedules. Managers can coordinate scheduled shifts, staggered days, or utilize both of our campuses, along with continued remote work with the approval of the department manager. Student visits to campus must be scheduled in advance. Whenever possible, those encounters should still be performed remotely.

College for Kids (Summer Camps) moved 100% to a virtual experience.

Cleaning and sanitizing supplies distributed into all common kitchen, copy, and mail areas. Signage on all of these areas restricts usage at any one time to one person (Addendum 4.1).

**IMPORTANT DATES:**
- **TUESDAY, JULY 7, 2020** — Summer 2020 Session III Classes Begin
- **MONDAY, AUGUST 17 – FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 4, 2020** — New Student Virtual Onboarding Courses Start
- **WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2020** — Fall 2020 Classes Begin

Phase 3 protocols will remain in place until the Governor allows the Vigilant Phase to move forward to Phase 4, the New Normal, potentially by the end of August.

**Phase 4 (New Normal) – September 2020**

MCC is committed to the health and safety of our community and is dedicated to making the campus a safe place for learning. Phase 4, or the New Normal, will represent campus activities as permissible to reopen and provide safe support to our employees and students.

Based on evolving information and guidelines from Governor Baker’s Office, the College anticipates that most of MCC’s fall courses will be delivered either fully or partly online. The College is looking at each fall course individually, and if necessary, adjusting the delivery format to meet the state’s social distancing guidelines while providing a quality education that prepares students for the next step on their path.

Over the next three months, faculty will be designing and preparing courses that deliver the award-winning high-quality online and hybrid learning experiences that MCC is known for.
We understand that this process will create changes, questions, and apprehension, particularly for those students who have already registered. Student success is still at the heart of the College’s mission.

Detailed information, guidelines and specifics for each course will be made available during the month of June. We encourage students who have already registered to wait for this information before making changes to their schedules.

The campus facilities will be open and under New Normal safety and health protocols, as established by the State Administration and public health agencies. Social distancing requirements will be in place (but have not yet been determined). Business and student travel in-state and out-of-state may potentially resume with social distancing. Larger gatherings resume, indoor and outdoor social groupings may potentially resume without caps but with safety and health as a priority. More face-to-face learning opportunities, as appropriate, might resume. The cafeteria food service is not expected to resume until Spring 2021. Limited public access will be provided to our campuses, with appropriate social distancing in place under New Normal guidelines.
1.1 Emergency Management Team

The Emergency Management Team consists of personnel from different areas of the College, including but not limited to, the President’s Office, Public Affairs, Academic and Student Affairs, Administration and Finance, Enrollment, Research and Planning, Facilities, and Information Technology. Each division is responsible for assigned personnel within the that area. A second tier of personnel from each of those divisions is also included in the comprehensive emergency plan in order to carry out the orders and actions of the Emergency Management Team.

The standing Emergency Management Team consists of the following:

Patrick Cook, Executive Director of Public Affairs — Chair
James C. Mabry, President
Phil Sisson, Provost
Frank Nocella, Chief Financial Officer
Mary Emerick, Vice President of Human Resources
Joseph Patuto, Chief Information Officer
Colleen Cox, Chief Administrative Officer
Pamela Flaherty, Chief Student Affairs Officer
Audrey Nahabedian, Dean of Enrollment
Brian Butler, Director of Facilities
Daniel Martin, Director of Public Safety
Frank Morande, Environmental Health and Safety Officer
Beth Jendro Noël, Director of Marketing
Jeffrey French, Bedford Campus Resource Officer
Thomas Hickey, Lowell Campus Resource Officer
Donna Corbin, Staff Assistant, President’s Office
Aleksandra Tugbiyele, Staff Assistant, President’s Office
Abby Vergados, Administrative Assistant, Public Affair

COVID-19 participants include the following:

Susan Anderson, Dean, Resource Development
Rick Bass, Assistant Director, Construction and Maintenance
Pramod Bhardwaj, Manager, Computer Services/Telecom
Judy Burke, Executive Director of Institutional Advancement
Joanna Delmonaco, Faculty, Math MCC President
Chris Fiori, Director, Student Financial Services
Kathy Gehly, Dean, Nursing and Allied Health
Ellen Grondine, Dean, Education and K-16 Partnerships
Steve Hentz, Assistant Director, Facilities Management
Judy Hogan, Dean, Business/Legal Studies/Public Service
1.2 Email Correspondence

Figure 1. Email communications sent out from the College's Emergency Management email account.
1.3 COVID-19 Information Hub

Figure 2. Screen shot of MCC’s COVID-19 Information Hub web page.
1.4

MCC App

Figure 3. Screen shot of the MCC app home screen featuring two buttons for COVID-19 information.

Figure 4. Screen shot of a student post on the MCC app and MCC staff response.
2.1

Signage and Social Media

Figure 5. 1 of 3 20x30 posters displayed in each building starting Monday, March 30.

Figure 6. 1 of 6 tips from the CDC, shared across the College’s social media starting in March.

Figure 7. 1 of 3 College branded graphics, shared across social media starting in March.
2.2

MCC Cares

Figure 8. MCC Cares website resource for students.
2.3 MCCF Emergency Fund

Figure 9. MCC Foundation Website for the Emergency Fund Appeal.

Figure 10. Facebook Post to a GoFundMe Campaign shared across social media.
3.1

**Phasing Task Force Members**

Patrick Cook, Executive Director of Public Affairs — *Chair*
Marielle Abou-Mitri, *HR Labor Relations Specialist*
Rick Bass, *Assistant Director, Building Services*
Kayla Boyd, *Registrar*
Brian Butler, *Director of Facilities*
Colleen Cox, *Chief Administrative Officer*
Pam Flaherty, *Dean of Students*
Christina Kelley, *Director of Procurement*
Dan Martin, *Director of Public Safety*
Donna Maturi, *Director of Libraries*
Audrey Nahabedian, *Dean of Enrollment*
Rebecca Newell, *Associate Dean of Student Affairs*
Aleksandra Tugbiyele, *Staff Assistant, Office of the President*

3.2

**Contact Tracing Protocol**

**Middlesex Community College**
**Contact Tracing Protocol**

Contact tracing is the systematic identification of persons who have come into close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19. Initially, this process was administered by MDPH or a local DPH. However, due to the increased number of cases, a Community College may be required to administer this protocol when it receives notice of a confirmed COVID-19 case in its community and the MDPH or its local DPH is unable to conduct contact tracing.

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1 Defined as (a) being within approximately 6 feet of a COVID-19 case for a prolonged period of time (at least 15 minutes); or (b) having direct contact with infectious secretions of a COVID-19 case (e.g., being coughed on).
2 Individuals who have tested positive for the virus that causes COVID-19.
COVID-19 Control Plan

1. Initial Protocol Considerations

☐ This is a confidential process. The name of the individual who has tested positive shall not be disclosed to a close contact, or any other individual or entity outside of MDPH/local DPH(s), nor should sufficient details be provided that makes their identity readily identifiable.

☐ Protocol administered through Human Resources, College’s health officer or other designated individual (“Tracing Officer”).

☐ Protocol is administered in coordination with the UPDATED Responding to Confirmed Cases of COVID-19 policy, issued by General Counsel’s Office on March 27, 2020.

2. Upon notification of a confirmed COVID-19 case in the College community

☐ Contact your local DPH to inform it of the confirmed case and determine if it will conduct the contact tracing process. If the local DPH does not return the College’s call within three (3) hours, contact MDPH at 617-983-6800.

☐ If the local DPH is going to conduct the tracing, provide it with the confirmed case’s contact information.

☐ If not, the College’s Tracing Officer should confirm with the local DPH that the College will conduct contact tracing in accordance with this Protocol.

3. Initiate Contact Tracing

☐ Contact the confirmed COVID-19 case and complete the Contact Tracing Reporting Form, including identifying all individuals the confirmed case came in close contact with in the college community during their period of infectivity.³

☐ Contact those that had close contact with the confirmed case during the period of infectivity. Indicate: (a) that they have been identified as coming in close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19; and (b) the date and location of the close contact.

☐ Instruct close contact(s) to contact their health care provider and self-quarantine for up to 14 days or as directed by their health care provider.

☐ Inform close contact(s) that upon completing their period of self-quarantine they will require a doctor’s note indicating they are cleared to return to work.

☐ Inform local DPH of notification to close contacts. Provide information to local DPH as requested.

³ Defined as the date the COVID-19 patient developed symptoms up to the time the patient went into isolation.
## Contact Tracing Reporting Form

### (1) Confirmed Case Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date last on campus or at a college event</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of first symptoms (infectivity)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date of positive test results</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify who conducted the testing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### (2) Close Contacts Identified by the Confirmed Case

| Name of close contact |  |
| Date of close contact |  |
| Location of close contact |  |
| Length of close contact |  |

| Name of close contact |  |
| Date of close contact |  |
| Location of close contact |  |
| Length of close contact |  |

| Name of close contact |  |
| Date of close contact |  |
| Location of close contact |  |
| Length of close contact |  |

### (3) Tracing Officer contacts Close Contacts

| Name of close contact |  |
| Inform of close contact with confirmed case |  |
| Instruct to contact health care provider |  |
| Instruct to self-quarantine up to 14 days or as directed by health care provider |  |
| Inform of written medical clearance to return to work |  |
| Experiencing symptoms (sore throat, runny nose, cough, shortness of breath)? | □ Yes □ No |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| Name of close contact                                           |         |
| Inform of close contact with confirmed case                   | □       |
| Instruct to contact health care provider                       | □       |
| Instruct to self-quarantine up to 14 days or as directed by health care provider | □       |
| Inform of written medical clearance to return to work         | □       |
| Experiencing symptoms (sore throat, runny nose, cough, shortness of breath)? | □ Yes □ No |

4.1

**Phase 3 Campus Signage**

![MCC Logo and Signage]

Welcome to MCC! We need your help to keep our campus community healthy and safe, and to keep our students on their paths to a better future.

- You must **wear a mask**. Do not enter the building if you feel sick.
- Please follow all posted guidelines and walk to the right of the hallway.
- Remain 6 feet apart from others at all times.

*Figure 11. 3’ to 6’ Graphics installed in on the floor of building lobbies.*
Figure 12. 20”x30” posters installed on easels inside each lobby. Separate poster with Lowell Public Safety contact also made.

Figure 13 a. 8.5”x11” posters installed on each building door. Separate poster with Lowell Public Safety contact also made.

Figure 13 b. 8.5”x11” State mandated reopening checklist posted on the front door of the Cowan Center in Lowell.
COVID-19 Control Plan

Figure 14. 14”x12” graphics installed on each elevator door on each campus. Separate graphics with Bedford Public Safety contact also made.

Figure 15. 8.5”x11” signs installed across campus in common areas, hallways and restrooms. Separate signs made with campus specific Public Safety contact numbers.