

## **Defining Jackson Community College**

From time to time, as a college ebbs and flows with operational, environmental, and institutional change, it is helpful to provide touchstones for employees to understand the scope and nature of the institution for which they work. Such touchstones can be as simple as a codification of key terms used in the course of business, or as practiced as institutional behaviors and actions.

To that end, the following definitions are offered as a basis for common understanding, discourse, and progress. These definitions represent the perspective of the President of Jackson Community College.

### **Defining the Learning College:**

Jackson Community College believes that learning occurs in formal and informal environs in and around the college and ultimately should contribute to development of the whole person. All persons who choose to interact at JCC, whether community member, student, instructor, employee, or guest, can become both teacher and learner through our daily interactions with each other, as well as through our unique and linked discoveries. Such connections should be supported through policies, practices, operations, decision-making, and institutional leadership, ensure the achievement of our collective goals as determined through regular assessment, and concomitantly add value to the universality of the organization as well as for those involved.

### **Defining Communities:**

Jackson Community College defines its responsibility for providing learning opportunities to both unique and disparate individuals, as well as collections of individuals, both inside and outside of the college, who share in a common belief, ethnicity, heritage, experiences, limitation, ideal, hope, understanding, interest, gender, field of employment, zeal, or area of living.

### **Defining The Niche College:**

**Both are central to determining what areas the college will specialize in.**

### **Defining Mission-Critical:**

In broad terms, a mission statement is our public pronouncement of our common purpose and function. The College's current mission statement reads: "Jackson Community College is an institution of higher education whose mission is to provide quality-learning opportunities for individual growth and community improvement."

A Mission-Critical assessment seeks to evaluate the college's involvement (i.e. expenditure of resources) in an initiative based upon that activity's relationship to its stated purpose. If there is not an established or clearly understood relationship, particularly in difficult economic times, the initiative should not be undertaken.

### **Defining Core Competencies:**

A next step in assessing whether the college should continue in an activity or program is an evaluation of the college's skill set with the enterprise. If the college has a demonstrated mastery in a particular area, or has distinguished itself in some fashion by its involvement in an initiative, perhaps it should be retained.

Simply stated, core competencies are generally defined as groupings of skills that encompass the knowledge, abilities, attitudes, motives and temperament that distinguish our organization. These factors are definable, observable and measurable. A core competency creates value for the college and the student.