



New England Commission of Higher Education
3 Burlington Woods Drive, Suite 100, Burlington, MA 01803-4514
Tel: 781-425-7785 | Fax: 781-425-1001 | neche.org

COVER PAGE FOR SUBSTANTIVE CHANGE REQUESTS

Name of Institution	Washington County Community College
Type of proposed change (See Substantive Change Policy Pp72)	Report on the Establishment of Academic Programming Offered at Maine Department of Correction sites
Effective date of implementation	Summer 2023
Date of institutional governing board approval	January 8, 2020
Is state approval required?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, approved (date) (Attach verification.)
Contact Person:	Name: Darin L. McGaw Title: Dean of Academic Affairs Phone: 207-454-1003 Fax: 207-454-1026 e-mail: dmcgaw@wccc.me.edu
Please summarize the proposed change	This request for substantive change is to offer more than 50% of course work in an online modality in Business Management, Entrepreneurship, Production Technology, Human Services, Substance Use and Recovery, and Liberal Studies with PELL qualified students at four Maine Department of Corrections locations.
Signature of CEO:	<i>Susan H. Mingo</i>
Date:	3/20/2023

INTRODUCTION

Washington County Community College (WCCC) is one of seven community colleges that operate under the authority of the Maine Community College System and the State of Maine. WCCC is a non-profit, residential, post-secondary institution supported, in part, by appropriations from the Maine State Legislature. WCCC was founded in 1969 and is located in the small rural community of Calais on the international border between the United States and New Brunswick, Canada. The college has modern classrooms, labs, and residential buildings situated on a hillside overlooking the St. Croix River, a tidal river. The college offers 34 programs of study at the associate degree, diploma, and certificate levels.

WCCC serves an area of Maine that is historically economically challenged. The county is demographically notable for its aging population and the decreasing number of young people and families with school-aged children living in the County. Washington County's population has achieved among the lowest levels of educational attainment in the state. The county leads the state in the percentage of people receiving SNAP assistance (nearly one quarter of the population) and in subsidized school lunches. Additionally, Washington County consistently has among the highest levels of unemployment and percentage of people living in poverty in all of Maine. Eighty-four percent of WCCC's student body is eligible for and receives federal educational grants and seventy percent receive state educational assistance. All of this points to the importance of WCCC to its service area. As the region and the individuals living, returning, or relocating here gain economic stability through education and employment, WCCC has been and will continue to be central to those efforts. Although there are significant challenges for Washington County, the economic and social conditions here illustrate the importance of WCCC playing a proactive role in the economic development of the county and the region. The community and our partner agencies highly value the institution for the vital economic role we play within the region. Recent mission-driven work to support economic and workforce development is evidenced by WCCC's critical role in the training of a workforce to support current, newly established, and growing industries. The College collaborates regularly with statewide and regional industry partners to increase and advance skill levels that will fill critically low workforce needs within Maine. One such partnership is WCCC's Prison Education Program (PEP).

WCCC began our partnership with the Maine Department of Corrections (MDOC) at Southern Maine Women's Re-Entry Center (SMWRC) in late fall of 2018 delivering online courses in Production Technology through our workforce division. We packaged several credit and non-credit courses in modularized, accelerated, and alternative delivery modes and designed this offering with intent to provide industry identified technical knowledge, skills, and competencies to prepare students for entry into or advancement within the workforce. Workforce courses provide an entry point into a career pathway, an onramp for matriculation into programming, and many of the courses result in industry certification or micro-credentials.

The initial offering through our newly formed partnership with MDOC was a pilot program that consisted of five courses within our Production Technology associate degree that is aligned with the Manufacturing Skills Standards Council (MSSC). These courses are rigorous and challenging, and each culminates in a national exam. Successful completion of this five course sequence results in a nationally recognized industry Certified Production Technician (CPT) credential, 13 college credits, and a clearly defined career pathway to college and employment, through a highly supported, learner- focused instructional model. Twelve women completed this course sequence and two continued with pre-release employment opportunities in a Registered Maine Apprenticeship. This pilot program was so successful that we were invited to apply to become a Second Chance Pell Experimental site in late Fall

2019. Through the pilot project experience, we were confident that the distance between our institution and our MDOC partners could be overcome and WCCC was able to offer quality programming through our online delivery. As stated by Abbie Embry-Turner, a MDOC employee and faculty member, *“In addition to the training, the responsive and engaged community support WCCC gives the SMWRC CPT students is of the highest quality. Despite geographical distance, through technology, students are in weekly, sometimes daily, contact with their WCCC instructor, WCCC administrators, and their Maine Department of Labor Caseworker. For some of these women, these are the first professional relationships that they have forged, and they are fortunate to be learning with and supported by the best.”*

As a well-established comprehensive community college, WCCC offers courses in many modalities, including online. We have offered our PEP courses online only to date and therefore have not previously submitted a substantive change proposal due to already having general approval from NECHE for online course delivery. While we plan to continue to offer PEP through online modalities only for the foreseeable future, we now have a need to submit this new substantive change proposal for PEP due to [statutory requirements](#) implemented by the U.S. Department of Education.

Through the abovementioned MDOC/WCCC pilot program and our prior accreditation approval, we completed the process to become an approved SCP experimental site. In our SCP application, WCCC sought Department of Education approval for online program delivery at four institutions in the State of Maine: Southern Maine Women’s Re-Entry Center (SMWRC) in Windham, The Women’s Center (WC) in Windham, Mountain View Correctional Facility (MVCF) in Charleston, and Downeast Correctional Facility (DCF) in Machiasport, Maine. At the time, DCF, located in Washington County, was shuttered by the Governor of the State; however, WCCC was intent on ensuring that when the proposed reopening of this facility occurred that it was positioned to offer PEP in the future. DCF reopened in Summer 2022, with WCCC PEP programming beginning Spring 2023.

Upon approval from the USDOE, WCCC and MDOC collaborated to set guiding principles, established in a memorandum of understanding, for our postsecondary prison education program. We equally valued the importance of quality of the program, and created a model that ensured comparability to campus programming; shared a strong commitment to communication between the college, corrections and students enrolled in the program; incorporated inclusion and student voice into the planning process and to inform continuous improvement; provided for equitable access by embedding gender and racial equity into program design; and had a focus on the importance of evaluation and data to implement strategic improvements based upon lessons learned.

As you will see throughout this request, WCCC’s Second Chance Pell Program foundation is built on student voice, strong student support that includes trauma-informed and recovery-focused practices, and essential partnerships with external wrap-around support and funding. The PEP goes beyond the original source of funding from SCP and includes partnerships that are essential in filling gaps and increasing access to postsecondary education while we work with individuals to become PELL eligible. WCCC is a member of the Association of Recovery in Higher Education, has extensive experience with two-generational and family-focused programming, and is making significant contributions to technology upgrades, college transitions and pathway advancement, and enhanced re-entry planning within Maine’s prison system through various funding opportunities.

STANDARD ONE: MISSION AND PURPOSES

WCCC's mission is to serve as an educational, community, and economic development resource for Washington County and beyond by providing educational and workforce training opportunities with individualized attention to all who desire to gain technical skills, develop career specializations engage in self-improvement, and/or prepare for transfer.

The essence of WCCC's mission is providing opportunities and individualized attention to our student body. We are proud of our longstanding history of being student centric and in keeping with this value, the development of our Prison Education Programming (PEP) was no different. We purposely included barrier removal, recovery-focused programming, trauma- and poverty-informed best practice, and increased exposure and access to college experiences as key foundational tenants of the program. WCCC understood that the pursuit of higher education while incarcerated reduced recidivism rates, provided opportunities for hope upon release, and that the investment in the futures of justice-involved individuals would have economic and fiscal benefits for our region and the State. Although many shy away from these large-scale endeavors that address the needs of our society, WCCC has a history of working collaboratively with community partners to tackle systemic issues providing for increased opportunities for the students we seek to serve. This is a hallmark of our institutional traditions and incorporates the future vision of our college as we work to provide second chances for all students that are typically disproportionately impacted by societal inequities. WCCC strives to be part of the solutions that empower individuals and provide our community members with opportunities to thrive and not just merely survive.

In alignment with our mission, WCCC partnered with the Maine Department of Corrections (MDOC) in a shared goal of improving pathways for individuals who are justice-involved to further their education while incarcerated. According to The New England Commission on the Future of Higher Education Behind Bars, "New England is home to 202,000 justice-impacted individuals who are far less likely than the general population to receive a postsecondary credential." WCCC wishes to engage in this important work to assist the region with "maximizing the human capital potential, increase workforce participation and productivity and improve justice-impacted residents' and families' well-being." The MDOC is "committed to providing individuals with supportive behavioral health treatment and programming to meet individual needs," and WCCC's mission and guiding principles aligned to this mission. WCCC developed the PEP to become more behavioral health recovery-focused with various learner supports, faculty training, barrier removal, and a holistic approach to individuals and families experiencing recovery. According to Commissioner Randall A. Liberty in his Letter of Support, "This is a perfect example of the foundational commitment the team at WCCC has for the learner in general, specifically of the population of incarcerated individuals."

Our mission provides the framework for the goals of the College and sets the principles management utilizes in our decision-making processes. In our endeavors to enhance the communities we serve, WCCC engaged in seeking approval to become an eligible SCP Pilot institution in September 2019, was invited to participate in the SCP Experiment on April 4, 2020, by the U.S. Department of Education, and became an approved location on June 2, 2020. The academic programs included in this approval are offered through distance education and include our certificate in Entrepreneurship, associate in applied science in Business Management, certificate in Production Technician, and the associate in applied science in Production Technician. Embedded within the Production Technician degree program are five,

three credit courses which lead to a national portable credential as a Certified Production Technician through the Manufacturing Skills Standards Council (MSSC). The listed academic programs were previously approved by NECHE through the Substantive Change process to be delivered 100% online. They are stackable credentials allowing the MSSC industry credential, certificate degree and associate level coursework to seamlessly apply toward progressive degree attainment.

With blanket approval during the pandemic to deliver all our courses and programs in an online modality, WCCC expanded our PEP offerings to include the Liberal Studies and Human Services associate degrees, as well as the certificate in Substance Use and Recovery which is embedded within the associate degree. We have successfully been offering these programs since Spring 2021 and are seeking approval to add them into our PEP on a permanent basis through this substantive change request.

To begin our PEP through the SCP Experimental Site approval, we collaborated and partnered with SMWRC in Windham, Maine to improve upon our existing successful workforce development innovation project that existed since October 2018 at that location prior to seeking SCP approval from the DOE. This project provided an incredible opportunity by linking women, who were incarcerated, to emerging, high-tech, high-wage, and in-demand occupations in the manufacturing sector, while helping to meet the needs of Maine's manufacturing businesses who were experiencing a significant skilled labor shortage. Registered Apprenticeship was braided into this training opportunity for a Production Technician I apprenticeship at an employer who provided women with pre-release employment opportunities at SMWRC. This project laid significant groundwork for pathway mapping from [short-term workforce training to matriculated programming](#).

The major source of funding for the PEP was from SCP; however, WCCC worked to access other financial resources through philanthropic investments to ensure success of programming. Through a grant from the Betterment Foundation and Wildflower Foundation, WCCC was able to work with DOC to determine their technology infrastructure needs and provide funding to make much needed improvements at three facilities to ensure continuity of education. This included servers, necessary safety and security upgrades, laptops, and improved computers for their educational delivery. In addition, these same grant funds were instrumental in developing a unique and highly successful college transitions course called You Matter to ME that not only addressed traditional barriers that impede our student's college successes but also incorporated trauma- and poverty-informed best practices. WCCC found ways to braid together funding sources through allocations for short-term training within our Workforce Development department to offer additional opportunities for our population of students who are justice-involved.

STANDARD TWO: PLANNING AND EVALUATION

WCCC follows the Maine Community College Systems (MCCS) model for program planning and evaluation which is all encompassing regardless of delivery modality. Programs at WCCC are reviewed by the MCCS Board of Trustees (BOT) on a rotating five-year basis. In keeping with this rotation schedule, the PEP programs were last reviewed and approved by the MCCS BOT on the following dates: Business Management/Entrepreneurship June 2019, Production Technician Certificate and Associate June 2020, and Human Services/Substance Use & Recovery Certificate November 2021, Liberal Studies Associate September 2020. WCCC has as a well-defined and dedicated process to create new programming options and for the discontinuation of a program. Our review of programs is governed by [MCCS Policy 306.1](#) and is approved by our System President and the MCCS BOT. WCCC utilizes internal

processes through the Community Council and the Academic and Curriculum Committee, both of which have broad representation from constituent groups across the campus. The policies and committees are responsible for oversight of campus planning, policy making, and evaluation to ensure the integrity of our policies and procedures.

Program Advisory Boards meet annually, and the President's Advisory Council meets biannually to elicit external feedback regarding programmatic improvements. There is a well-established PEP Advisory Council that evolved from the SCP implementation team that meets monthly with representation from the college including the Dean of Enrollment and Student Services, Academic Dean, Financial Aid Director, Dean of Workforce Development, Education Equity and Advancement Coordinator, Coordinator of Apprenticeship Programs, Student Navigator, and adjunct and full-time faculty; from MDOC including the Director of Education, Faculty, Deputy Warden of MVCF, Administrator of DCF and Director of Apprenticeship; partner agencies including Community Caring Collaborative, Sunrise County Economic Council, and students who are justice-involved and/or incarcerated. This important group provides oversight and the opportunity for the free exchange of ideas and information in support of our PEP. The Advisory Council discusses and brings forward to the campus and MDOC leadership teams information regarding potential changes to policies and procedures necessary to support the PEP, the intersectionality of College and Corrections policies and procedures and strategies for mitigating pinch points to ensure continuity of education for our students, recommendations for course and academic program improvements, concerns regarding academic success, student and facility code of conduct, technology use concerns, students transferring to other facilities and strategies to ensure lack of disruption of their learning during the transition, security related issues, etc.

WCCC has identified PEP measures of student success and monitors the outcomes of our justice-involved student population in relation to our general population statistics. WCCC evaluates PEP rates of progression, retention, transfer, and graduation rates and comparative data with students in the same program that are not justice-involved. We also compare the datasets to our general population as you will see in [Standard 8](#). Our program, currently in year two of the implementation phase, presently has data limitations regarding licensure pass rates, and employment.

Planning included ensuring equitable access for all justice-involved students to our PEP. Understanding during the planning phase, that we may have higher rates of loan default, WCCC secured philanthropic funding to assist justice-involved students wishing to enter our PEP that previously defaulted on their loans. Our PEP provides a financial pathway to help pay off a portion of student indebtedness that is preventing them from access to SCP funds. This grant funding initiative allows justice-involved students the opportunity to access postsecondary education by working with them to rectify the financial barrier and begin programming as soon as possible.

Planning

WCCC is presently engaged in a comprehensive strategic planning process at the institution. Concurrently, the MCCS is also working on their 3–5-year strategic plan. WCCC involves both internal and external constituents within our planning processes. Due to the global pandemic and unprecedented change that was accelerated during this period, WCCC began our strategic planning process one year in advance to ensure our current plan is as accurate and up to date as possible and aligns with the goals and initiatives of the institution as we navigate this new, post-pandemic landscape.

WCCC has benefited from strong institutional plans that allowed swift response to the financial priorities necessary to administer a PEP while simultaneously ensuring the financial health and well-being of our various other contingencies to ensure management of realistic goals and objectives during an ever evolving need to pivot to remote learning due to the circumstance of the pandemic. Albeit, our plans were accelerated in the distance education modality of delivery, the college was well-positioned for success and able to promptly adapt and thrive due to the prior investments in technology infrastructure upgrades, including a newly implemented Learning Management System. This pivot shows a demonstrable record of our successful planning that allowed the institution to adapt and pivot our plans due to circumstances beyond our immediate control to prioritize the needs of our students, faculty and staff.

Evaluation

PEP creates a set of unique opportunities and challenges and requires significant planning and evaluation to ensure academic quality and integrity of offerings that are appropriate and supportive of the population we are striving to serve. The model of delivery of our PEP allows the institution to ensure the same quality, integrity and effectiveness of this program as the aligned campus-based programs within these disciplines. The PEP student population is not further isolated from the general population within our program but rather integrated into the same courses as the general population and learning alongside their peers within the same courses. Therefore, the PEP is evaluated just as our academic programs are otherwise evaluated at the institution. Justice-involved students are afforded the same opportunity as any student enrolled in our Business Management, Production Technology, Liberal Studies, and/or Human Services programs because of this integration of delivery. Students participate in the exact lectures, discussions, assignments, projects, and learning activities as their peer counterparts; they are not segregated into a group of only justice-involved students. PEP students are provided with course evaluations at the end of each semester to provide their feedback and relevant improvements needed for institutional advancement.

WCCC has developed understanding of the unique challenges for our justice-involved students upon release from incarceration and continues to strengthen our commitment to ensure continuation of studies for those released. Services we've incorporated to help with this include: SARC, navigation and outreach from Student Services staff, technology deployment, community-based partnerships to support the transition and reintegration into their communities. In addition, through MCCS Foundation funds and MDOC funding, WCCC has hired an Education Equity and Advancement Coordinator who has mapped technical and vocational programming across all Maine's DOC facilities, as well as programming at WCCC to identify synergies, gaps, and opportunities for enhancement or further collaboration. Part of this work will complete coordinated pathway mapping between the two entities to allow for seamless transition into matriculated programming with opportunities for concurrent enrollment and articulation. In addition, this shared added capacity will examine the re-entry process and explore innovative models for re-entry that begins at intake.

STANDARD THREE: ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNANCE

In addition to our traditional MCCS and WCCC governing entities as outlined extensively within our NECHE 10-Year Comprehensive Review ([pages 35-49](#)), the PEP has established additional governance structures that inform the program.

In collaboration with our partner agencies, we developed a PEP Implementation Team/Advisory Council as outlined in [Standard 2](#) which is a collaboration of internal and external agencies to support the implementation and continued success of the WCCC PEP. The composition of this Team can be found in [Standard 2](#) of this Substantive Change request. WCCC collaborates with the MDOC Unit Management Teams to coordinate services for college transitions as well as justice-involved students being released from incarceration. WCCC offers a multi-faceted program around recovery. The college is in close partnership with regional social service agencies, health care providers, and employers to develop and sustain a highly supportive learning environment and career pathways for individuals and families in recovery. Through our work with justice-involved individuals, we find these services valuable assets to support students and families as they transition back into their communities. WCCC offers Recovery Coaching referrals for our students and works with external agencies to connect individuals in need of additional support to assist with their academic pursuits. This work is conducted through the on-campus SARC.

Traditional College governance committees responsible for the quality and integrity of programming are the WCCC Community Council and the Academic and Curriculum Committee (ACC). Community Council conveys recommendations to the College President and their leadership team as part of the shared governance process. The Council has representation from all stakeholders across campus to include faculty, staff, administration, and students. The Council is responsible for approving campus policy and dissemination of campus updates to the broader community. Last academic year, the student representative to the Council was one of our justice-involved students. The Academic and Curriculum Committee is responsible for the development, improvement, and integrity of our academic offerings at the College. This committee ensures that all academic courses and programs align with policies, maintain rigor and integrity, and include learning outcomes that align with our mission and vision. The ACC is committed to initiating, vetting, and recommending academic policies and procedures for the College. The ACC and Community Council, meeting monthly, review policies and make appropriate recommendations to the President for final approval.

The PEP is governed by an established Memorandum of Understanding ([Appendix B](#)) between WCCC and the MDOC. The goals of the PEP are to seek to encourage students to pursue higher education while incarcerated and/or once they are released and re-enter their communities. These efforts align with numerous studies conducted that show evidence of reduced recidivism rates for individuals engaged in college studies while incarcerated. “Few evidence-based reforms have as much untapped potential as postsecondary education in prison. Incarcerated people who participate in such programs are [48% less likely](#) to recidivate than those who do not. The odds of recidivism decrease as incarcerated people achieve higher levels of education.” WCCC’s PEP seeks to expose and increase access to postsecondary training opportunities in high-wage and in-demand occupations, attainable to individuals with criminal records. The PEP seeks to build, increase and nurture new and existing relationships with partners throughout the State of Maine to enhance services and programming available to incarcerated individuals while promoting persistence, retention, completion, and employment. The MOU clearly articulates each partner’s areas of responsibility and establishes a process for ongoing consultation between the two parties.

The WCCC PEP program is also governed by the rules and regulations established for the awarding of SCP by the U.S. Department of Education. WCCC has a Title IV Program Participation Agreement for

administering PELL for students who are incarcerated under the SCP experiment sites initiative. Please find a copy of the participation agreement [here](#).

WCCC has developed a partnership with the Vera Institute of Justice and has received invaluable technical assistance from staff. The PEP Program Coordinator has been meeting monthly with our Vera staff liaison to seek assistance with challenges, hear about nationwide best practices, and highlight our innovative programming. This relationship has grown over the past four years and Vera often refers other institutions or agencies to WCCC for technical assistance or program insights. For example, Vera recently referred a colleague from the Small Business and Entrepreneurship Council to WCCC to learn about the innovative work in building entrepreneurship pathways for students who are justice-involved and working on very important issues like business transition opportunities for individuals releasing back into their communities.

WCCC's PEP is governed by Academic Affairs policies at the Maine Community College System. Academic policies and procedures [Section 300](#) as published on the MCCS intranet govern all programs at WCCC including the PEP. All program offerings, regardless of modality of delivery, are vetted by the same review and governance procedures as outlined within these guiding documents. The Academic Dean in consultation with the faculty, has ultimate responsibility for the quality of distance education programming and the PEP curriculum. In collaboration with the Dean of Enrollment Management and Student Services and the Associate Dean of the Teaching and Learning Center for Excellence, the Academic Dean works within the policies and procedures of the institution and those of MDOC to develop strategy, resources, and infrastructure necessary to ensure quality of PEP in an online modality. The Academic Dean in collaboration with the College leadership team, makes necessary recommendations for digital infrastructure improvements, ensures adequate human resources to support online teaching and learning and the PEP, faculty professional development, and that the appropriate policies and procedures are in place to support online learning and the PEP at the institution. The Academic Dean coordinates with the newly hired Education Equity and Advancement Coordinator to ensure WCCC policy and procedures that misalign with MDOC policy and procedures are reviewed through an equity lens and makes recommendations to the College leadership team which then would submit a change, if warranted, through the governance committee process for policy review and implementation. Proposed changes would be vetted by the faculty leadership with the expertise in teaching within the discipline and their recommendations would be incorporated into the proposed policy or procedural change prior to being submitted to the governance committees for review.

The Dean of Workforce Development and Community Engagement is a member of the Board of Visitors at Mountain View Correctional facility in Charleston, Maine. This board is a legislatively required entity in four of the MDOC facilities. In this governor appointed role, she is responsible for aiding facility administration in ensuring the facility meets the mission of the department. In addition, WCCC's Dean has been invited to sit on the New England Commission on the Future of Higher Education Behind Bars. This is a regional endeavor of the New England Board of Higher Education (NEBHE) and the Educational Justice Institute (TEJI) at MIT. The purpose of the Commission is to "develop an action agenda, policy recommendations, strategies, and next steps to best align corrections and higher education institutions, as well as understand ways to create interstate reciprocity between and amongst state correctional facilities and higher education institutions across the region."

STANDARD FOUR: THE ACADEMIC PROGRAM

WCCC assures the academic quality of its programs through a governance process that is based around our Academic & Curriculum Committee (ACC). This committee reviews and approves all course and program curriculum changes through a formal application and review process. Once the committee approves a curriculum change, it is sent forward to the campus President for final approval. The ACC is also involved in reviewing the College's academic policies. The ACC, with the leadership of the Academic Policy Subcommittee, reviews proposed academic policy changes. It then presents its recommendations for policy changes to the Community Council. If approved, the policy is then forwarded to the campus President for final approval. Committee membership consists of a majority of faculty members, including the three department chairs and two faculty members from each department. In addition, the Academic Dean, Dean of Enrollment and Student Services, and the Coordinator of Enrollment and Student Services are standing voting members on the committee. One at-large staff member also serves on the committee. The course requirements of each program made available through our PEP can be found [here](#).

Currently our online and hybrid courses are delivered through our Learning Management System, D2L Brightspace. Each student has a unique login and password to the system portal, they are required to keep confidential. Students log onto the portal to participate in their distance education courses. Coursework is submitted to the instructor through this secure process, which protects student privacy.

A sampling of courses from each program; Supervisory Management, College Composition, Interviewing and Counseling, Quality Practices and Measurement, College Algebra, and Ethics are available online at WCCC and have been designed and reviewed for quality and equity when compared with the live version of the same courses. All courses required by these majors have been designed for online delivery by experienced faculty members, then reviewed and adjusted by the internal processes of the campus. The MCCS requires [minimum standards](#) for the design of courses in all modalities.

Students may opt to pursue their studies either full-time or part-time and courses are scheduled such that students can make appropriate progress in their programs regardless of credit hour enrollment status.

Respondus software is integrated within Brightspace which simplifies the use of the product for faculty and students. It provides test integrity on multiple-levels, starting with a basic level of a lock-down browser and password, to use an Artificial Intelligence (AI) scanning tool to ensure test integrity, to having a live proctor invigilate exams.

The past three years have in some cases afforded and other cases required the College to move to an online format in a lot of courses in many programs. We have done a lot of curriculum work to provide asynchronous course delivery as well as synchronous electronic delivery through Brightspace, Zoom, and Microsoft Teams.

As demonstrated in [Standard 8](#), WCCC is confident in our ability to deliver quality instruction and academic support to all students, regardless of modality, in our PEP. Data supports that we are providing an opportunity for comparable levels of student success for PEP students.

STANDARD FIVE: STUDENTS

One of the ways we fulfill our mission is by providing postsecondary education access to justice-involved students through SCP and PEP. [Research](#) shows that justice-involved individuals who receive postsecondary education while in a corrections facility are far less likely to recidivate and are better equipped to play productive and positive roles within their communities upon release.

When working with all students, including prospective and enrolled justice-involved students, WCCC practices a student-centered approach and provides comprehensive support services throughout the entire student lifecycle, from onboarding to graduation and transfer. WCCC is proud of our ability to provide individualized navigation and support for our justice-involved students to provide positive outcomes and experiences that lead to persistence and success.

Admissions

WCCC maintains a rolling open admissions policy that creates an academically diverse student body, fostering the individual intellectual and personal development of all students. The College has well-articulated program requirements and admissions criteria, which are readily available in print publications provided to justice-involved students and posted on the WCCC [website](#).

When the SCP Experiment started in the Fall 2020 semester, Entrepreneurship, Business Management, and Production Technician were the only three distance education programs being offered at WCCC and therefore available for SCP students. Human Services, Substance Use & Recovery, and Liberal Studies were added during the Spring 2021 semester.

A total of fifty-six students have been accepted as matriculated students as part of WCCC's participation in the Second Chance Pell Experiment. Eighteen students matriculated into programs approved for Second Chance Pell in the 2020-2021 academic year, twenty-three students matriculated into programs approved for Second Chance Pell in the 2021-2022 academic year, and fifteen students matriculated into programs approved for Second Chance Pell in the 2022-2023 academic year.

Almost half (48.2%) of the students participating also completed short-term workforce training opportunities, either as part of their pathway to matriculation or as value-added courses during their programs of study. Out of the 48.2%, 28.6% completed short-term workforce development training through pathways prior to matriculation and 19.6% completed short-term workforce development training as value added courses in addition to their matriculated program courses.

The students who have participated in our SCP Experiment since the Fall 2020 semester have varying backgrounds and experiences adding to the overall diversity, equity, and inclusion of the WCCC student body. Demographic data of PEP participants in comparison with our overall student body can be found in [Standard 8](#).

The College has a well-established admissions procedure to ensure consistent and equitable treatment of all candidates for admission to the institution. The National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC) statement of principles of good practice governs our admissions and enrollment processes and procedures. The College maintains an ethical process of admitting students to the institution and values our open admissions policy, which provides an access point to higher education for all who seek the opportunity. Prospective students must show evidence of high school completion by submitting official high school transcripts or documentation of successful completion of the HiSET or

GED. Applicants for admission must also submit official transcripts for any prior colleges they have attended.

As part of the admissions and enrollment process and to ensure academic success, WCCC uses multiple measures to determine student enrollment into college level english and mathematics courses. The admissions office uses available information provided by the student (such as high school or past college grades, or test scores) to determine enrollment in the appropriate courses which meet student skill and knowledge level. Our Admissions Office partners with education coordinators at the MDOC to provide Accuplacer testing to students who request it, although it is not a required item for course placement.

Our Enrollment Services Office has worked to remove barriers in the admissions application process for justice-involved students. As soon as a student applies to WCCC, they work individually with our Student Navigator who assists them with all aspects of onboarding, including admissions and registration. The Student Navigator continues to support our justice-involved students throughout their enrollment and meets regularly with students virtually and in-person at Maine Department of Corrections facilities. The Student Navigator assists justice-involved students with course selection and registration each semester to ensure they remain on track for graduation. Additional information about the Student Navigator can be found in [Standard Seven](#).

All students that apply to programs that require licensure prior to employment are required to submit the Student Disclosure of Criminal Convictions form. Disclosure does not preclude a student from admission into a program, but it is utilized to advise students of their potential ability to benefit from specific programs based on prior convictions. Justice-involved students who apply for the Human Services or Substance Use and Recovery Programs have a meeting with the Dean of Enrollment Management & Student Services so that they can be provided with resources to assist them with effectively navigating the licensing and employment process with a criminal history.

Financial Aid

As a Second Chance Pell Experiment participating postsecondary education institution, WCCC was provided a waiver to our Title IV Program Participation Agreement that exempted us from Section 401(b)(6) of the HEA (Higher Education Amendment) and 34 CFR 668.32(c)(2)(ii) which made incarcerated students ineligible for Federal Pell Grant funding. Students participating in the Second Chance Pell Experiment are not eligible for student loans. In the rare event that students were not eligible for Federal Pell Grants due to a high estimated family contribution or default on past loans, we sought outside philanthropic funds and strived to provide institutional financial aid. The chart below highlights SCP disbursement during the experiment.

Financial Aid Data		
Academic Year	Number Awarded	SC PELL Disbursement
2020-2021	15	\$16,284
2021-2022	28	\$60,163
2022-2023	19*	\$33,399*

*Thus far in AY

Students in PEP can complete virtual meetings with the WCCC Director of Financial Aid for assistance with completion of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). In addition, there are many

partners that assist students with FAFSA completion, including federal TRiO grant programs. WCCC's TRiO Student Support Services Program has completed seventy-three separate sessions to provide financial aid counseling for a total of forty hours and forty minutes of time spent assisting students participating in the SCP Experiment. Federal Pell Grants are provided to eligible justice-involved students for the purchase of textbooks and the Student Navigator coordinates with the campus bookstore to ensure students have access to their course materials prior to the start of each semester.

Orientation, Student Affairs, and Co-Curricular Programming

In addition to one-on-one support provided to justice-involved students through the Student Navigator, they are also enrolled in an online new student orientation program. The orientation is accessible electronically through our Brightspace learning management system. By participating in the online new student orientation program, justice-involved students gain knowledge of resources that are available such as free and unlimited access to on-demand counseling and behavioral health services. In addition, students receive direct in-person support to access College services through MDOC educational coordinators, under the direction of [MDOC administration](#).

A first-year experience (FYE) course is fully implemented and institutionalized and is a requirement for graduation within all degrees conferred at the College. This course is an integral part of the retention strategies at WCCC. The curriculum is Skip Downing's On Course: Strategies for Creating Success in College and in Life. Students learn the necessary skills for success through a curriculum that emphasizes self-responsibility, self-motivation, self-management, interdependence, self-awareness, the adoption of life-long learning, emotional intelligence, and self-belief. The course is designed to assist students with understanding their barriers to success, to create a life and college plan with specific goals, and to understand the available student support resources on campus to support retention. Each semester, justice-involved students are enrolled as a cohort in an online section of FYE taught by the Student Navigator.

We provide equivalent opportunities for our justice-involved students as all other distance-education students in access to student services and co-curricular engagement activities. A [campus newsletter](#) is emailed to the entire student body each month which lists a wide variety of resources and student engagement opportunities for both in-person and virtual students, including justice-involved students. We have developed four co-curricular learning outcomes that we intend for students to meet by participating in student engagement events. The co-curricular learning outcomes are related to critical thinking, communication, teamwork, problem-solving, inclusiveness, and empowering others. These outcomes are aligned with our Institutional Learning Outcomes and Student Affairs Pillars/Values. We have developed a rubric to assess co-curricular learning outcomes at the individual student level and continue to have staff training on effective assessment measures, and the collection, analysis, and use of data for improvement of the student experience. One example is a recovery ready snack and paint event that we hosted for both on-campus and distance education students. We partnered with our Maine Department of Correction facilities and had justice-involved students sign up ahead of time and we mailed supplies to the facilities so they could participate.

Our TRiO services offer four full-time staff members as well as up to five part-time tutors. Students can access these services through Zoom and Microsoft Teams videoconferencing software. Tutoring is also available online for students 24 hours per day through Brainfuse. Staff in the TRiO department use

Calendly software for students to easily schedule time for tutoring, academic advising, or accommodation requests. Calendly is embedded directly into our employee directory on the college website to provide easy access to students. Over half (55.4%) of the justice-involved students participating in PEP from Fall 2020 to present have received virtual support from our TRiO SSS program and Study Center. During the Second Chance Pell Experiment, justice involved students participated in the following TRiO/Study Center services:

Virtual Support Provided to PEP Students through TRiO SSS				
Academic Advising	Academic Tutoring	Financial Aid Counseling	Career Counseling	Transfer Counseling
377 separate sessions	89 separate sessions	73 separate sessions	35 separate sessions	40 separate sessions
103 hours and 43 minutes	80 hours and 10 minutes	40 hours and 40 minutes	37 hours and 40 minutes	24 hours and 10 minutes

Student Rights, Responsibilities, and Privacy

WCCC disseminates its policies and procedures for nondiscrimination, affirmative action, and sexual harassment on our website, in our student handbook, and in the course catalog. All policies and procedures impacting students are available, and regularly updated, on the consumer information page on our website. Justice involved students have access to computers and the internet to view these policies and are provided electronic versions during their online new student orientation.

All students who participated in the SCP Experiment voluntarily completed signed FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) release of information forms to allow us to communicate with their assigned MDOC educational coordinators. To ensure student privacy, student records are securely accessed, maintained, and retained on a need-to-know basis only with legitimate educational interest as outlined in FERPA. Student records are maintained electronically within our Jenzabar database. A Privacy Statement is posted on the College website providing students with the Annual Notification of Rights under FERPA for Postsecondary Institutions to which the school adheres. This statement includes informing students how their student academic records are inspected and recorded, what the student’s rights to disclosure are, and how their permanent academic record is maintained. The Student Handbook also provides students with the Notification of Rights under FERPA for Postsecondary Institutions.

Assessment and Evaluation of Effectiveness Through Student Feedback

The collection and evaluation of student feedback is a vital aspect of ensuring that our justice-involved students are receiving the same quality of education as all enrolled students at WCCC. This is accomplished through a monthly [PEP Advisory Council](#) meeting which is attended by all partners and student representatives from each facility. The monthly meeting has a set agenda and time is used to review our guiding principles behind Prison Education Programs and to address feedback and concerns by all.

Students who are justice-involved participate in shared governance at WCCC through monthly Community Council meetings. In fact, a student participating in the SCP Experiment was appointed as

the official student representative on Community Council in 2021-2022. That same student was also elected as a Senator in the Student Senate.

Additional success data, retention data, and course and program outcomes data for our justice-involved students, distance education students, and in-person students can be found in [Standard Eight](#).

Projections

Based on trends in the prior three years, we are projecting the following matriculations of PEP students in the next three years:

SCP Matriculated Students		PEP Matriculated Students	
Academic Year	Matriculated Enrollment	Academic Year	Enrollment Projections
2020-2021	18	2023-2024	18 new; 21 returners=39
2021-2022	23	2024-2025	20 new; 24 returners=44
2022-2023	15	2025-2026	23 new; 27 returners=50

STANDARD SIX: TEACHING, LEARNING AND SCHOLARSHIP

The College faculty are committed to preparing students to enter the workforce or transfer to four-year institutions through high-quality instruction. Effective andragogical techniques and engagement with academic best practices, both synchronous and asynchronous modalities, enable instructors to support the diverse learning needs of the student body. This student-centered approach aligns with WCCC’s mission and vision statements.

WCCC currently employs twenty-two full-time faculty members and approximately twenty adjunct faculty members per semester in three academic departments: Liberal Studies, Career Studies, and Technologies. The College serves approximately five hundred students, including live, online, SCP, workforce development, and secondary school students for dual and concurrent enrollment courses.

WCCC has highly qualified instructors with expertise and experience in their fields. Seven full-time faculty members teach in the Career Studies department and well as seven adjunct faculty members. Six full-time faculty members teach in the Liberal Studies department along with usually 10 adjunct faculty members. Nine full-time faculty members teach in the Technology Department along with 3 adjunct faculty members. The faculty teaching online to justice involved students majoring in business, entrepreneurship, human services, substance use and recovery, liberal studies, and production technology are members of each of these departments.

WCCC offers a variety of programs and courses that serve the local area and the state of Maine. Each program has characteristics unique to WCCC. Historically, we provide a student-to-faculty ratio not greater than twelve-to-one and a teaching and learning environment that is student-focused and friendly. Our small size allows everyone on campus and online to be on a first name basis. We provide resources that help create unity in how faculty members deliver the expected curriculum. This includes WCCC’s Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) System, currently Jenzabar and shortly in the future Anthology, and our Learning Management System (LMS), D2L Brightspace. Every course at WCCC has

the option for an online presence, as each course can be created within the ERP and exported into the LMS for faculty and students to take advantage of all the tools and resources available within the LMS. D2L Brightspace provides the ability to track attendance, post grades, award digital badges, align learning objectives, host videos, and maintain a repository for documents and files for any course modality.

Courses that are delivered live or synchronously by Zoom, Brightspace, or Teams also have a presence in the system; faculty can upload documents and multimedia items for student use or just track attendance and grading. When choosing which portal resources they will utilize in their courses, faculty consider how electronic access to course information and materials will enhance student success. Approximately 90% of faculty members use the electronic grade book and the attendance functions in the portal. The College requires that all faculty file their final grades at the end of each semester electronically through the portal to the Registrar's office. Faculty members adhere to the [Universal Design for Learning \(UDL\)](#) principle when applying assessment solutions to fulfill student academic accommodations.

WCCC employs Read Speaker software that provides text-to-speech access to all html content within D2L Brightspace. The text-to-speech includes simultaneous highlighting of words, word enlargement, page masking (showing only the line being read, and shading all other content), setting options to personalize reading speed, font, color and highlighting preferences as well as the ability to download audio files to listen to the content on another platform or device.

As well, WCCC uses Panopto software to record, upload, edit, store, and share video presentations and content. Viewers can watch videos on any device. Editing features include automatic closed captioning, downloadable transcripts, variable speed playback, and keyboard navigation ability on all uploaded videos.

Both distance and face-to-face learning modalities require effort and time, use a variety of instructional techniques and strategies, and provide opportunities for feedback and evaluation. The modalities diverge on flexibility and personal interaction. Traditional face-to-face learning provides stronger support around personal interaction with fellow students and faculty members, while distance learning courses provide greater flexibility for when and where the learning can take place. Distance programs minimize the loss of personal interaction by planning and preparing opportunities to embed communication and support for online students. Recognizing that our PEP is only through distance learning, WCCC utilizes multiple platforms such as Microsoft Teams, Zoom, college email, and discussion boards to connect with online learners.

An additional resource that maintains unity across program curricula is a [syllabus template](#), which all faculty use in each of their courses. This template is designed to provide consistent, relevant, and pertinent information to students in an organized manner. Faculty members are free to add items to the template beyond the required minimum information. Use of the template ensures consistency in how course information, policies, and practices are communicated to students. Students know what to expect, which enhances the teaching and learning process.

The College employs an Associate Dean for Teaching and Learning with responsibility for instructional technology in collaboration with our faculty. This position focuses on improving the teaching and learning environment. This position oversees the portal and works with each faculty member to improve

the online presence in their courses. The position also works with faculty who wish to adapt or improve their curriculum for the online environment and coordinates workshops using the Analyze, Design, Develop, Implement, and Evaluate (ADDIE) model of curriculum design and change. Faculty utilize instructional technology to create solutions to any challenges faced in delivering courses to justice involved students. An example of a recent challenge was the strict firewall system employed by the MDOC at its facilities and making video material accessible to the students residing behind that firewall. Last semester this was overcome by the Instructor, our Associate Dean, and the MDOC IT technician collaborating to provide access for our impacted students.

Many training opportunities are provided for our faculty to heighten the teaching and learning process and increase the likelihood of student success. As stated in Standard Four, MCCS and WCCC utilize standards for the design of online courses. Ongoing PEP and online professional development are provided, and a schedule is included [here](#).

The Associate Dean of Teaching and Learning also provides individualized training and assistance to support full-time and adjunct faculty in their design and development of online course content. Training sessions typically cover everything from basic navigation and set-up of the online learning environment to more specialized work in creating novel and interactive online learning content and assessments. This individual also works with the information technology department and/or the campus librarian to enhance access or solve issues related to technology and resources provided through our online platforms such as setting up direct embed links through our learning management system for open-source learning content, video content, eBooks, and databases; these embeds help mitigate security firewall, security protocol, and other security technology issues that limit or impeded course resources and content viewing at institutions with their own information security policies.

Faculty provide fully online synchronous advising to students in all programs by using the LMS chat, forum, instant message, and virtual classroom resources. Classrooms are set up to host and record Zoom presentations which allow for both synchronous and asynchronous viewing of live lectures and class discussions. [Academic and student support services](#) are readily available using these resources to provide tutoring, counseling, and advising to our distance education and justice involved students.

The senior leadership team at the College will continue to evaluate the need for hiring any additional full-time program instructors to support the added student numbers as the PEP grows. While we currently have capacity to increase some sections in our academic offerings, as future enrollment increases, we will have a need to add additional Liberal Studies faculty and adjunct faculty in all areas. We are advertising for a Director of Institutional Effectiveness and Assessment who will collaborate with our Associate Dean of Teaching and Learning and faculty on learning outcome development, assessment, and curriculum.

STANDARD SEVEN: INSTITUTIONAL RESOURCES

Human Resources

The College has appropriate human resources in place to support our PEP students and provide equivalent services to all members of our student body. The program is overseen by the college's Academic Dean and Dean of Workforce Development and Community Engagement. An Education Equity and Advancement Coordinator works to ensure and promote equitable access to postsecondary and workforce educational opportunities for our justice involved students.

The Student Navigator is the main link between campus resources and the students. The Navigator provides advising, assists in course selection, problem resolution, and assists the students with accessing the campus's physical resources (i.e., textbooks, library resources, etc.). In addition, they conduct facility visits to meet and work with the facility coordinators and new students who wish to continue with WCCC in matriculated programs by assisting with application preparation and submission.

Our TRIO services offer four full-time staff members as well as part-time tutors. PEP students can access study and tutoring services remotely without needing to travel to campus. Zoom videoconferencing software and Microsoft Teams are used to facilitate opportunities for student support.

Information, Physical, and Technological Resources

Students involved in our PEP courses have the same access to electronic resources as all other students. Resources in the College's library are available in both physical and digital form and include books, magazines, periodicals, and electronic databases. The library utilizes an array of online services for reference material. These services are EBSCO, Flipster, Credo Reference, Proquest, Kanopy Video Streaming, Noodletools, Pro Demand, MINERVA/Maine Infonet Download, and LibGuides.

The library's LibGuides program embeds library resources and services into hybrid and online courses, so distance learning students have ease of access to our library resources and services. For students who are in courses that do not have LibGuides as part of their course we provide an option on the Campus Library Webpage called "Ask the Librarian." This initiates an immediate online chat with our Librarian and during off-hours, outside 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., sends an email to the library staff; response time is within twenty-four hours.

Tutoring is also available online for students 24/7 through Brainfuse software. Staff in the TRiO department use Calendly software for students to easily schedule time for tutoring, academic advising, or accommodation requests. The Calendly software is embedded directly into our employee directory on the college website to provide easy access to students.

Faculty provide course content electronically via our Learning Management System (LMS) D2L Brightspace. PEP students can access all the requirements for an organized course including online textbooks, library databases, videos, and supplemental resources. D2L Brightspace is committed to maintaining and updating their software technologies to current WCAG and Section 508 VPAT standards. They have a mature accessibility program that aligns their product process with accessibility criteria contained in the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 and they publicly report on their conformance against the success criteria contained in levels A, AA, and AAA within the WCAG 2.1 checklist and Section 508 VPAT. These reports indicate whether D2L Brightspace support or partially support each WCAG criterion (partial supports include statements of exception). The latest reports are included [here](#).

The college recently upgraded our technology infrastructure by purchasing and installing new network servers and a network security system which increased scalability to serve a growing or fluctuating number of devices, users, and workload. These upgrades provide a solid information technology support structure for the college's community members. Through grant funding, the College has provided upgraded software and hardware to MDOC facilities, including Dell PowerEdge servers; wireless access points; network switches; cabling; solid state drives; battery backup units; installed a wireless point to

point connection between SMWRC and MCWC buildings in Windham, so that MCWC can share SMWRC internet connection and server; and setup an isolated VLAN for security purposes. These upgrades provided the facilities with state-of-the-art infrastructure, so PEP students have a solid connection to WCCC human, informational, and technological resources. In addition, WCCC provided laptops for computer labs in three MDOC facilities. Upon release students are provided with a laptop to ensure continuity of education. We currently have approximately \$17,000 from a private source for laptop refreshment in-facility and student laptop distribution through December 2023 and will seek additional funding to continue this important support for our PEP students.

Financial Resources

WCCC is committed to maintaining the financial stability of the institution to continue providing quality educational resources to our student body. Through various funding resources and sound fiscal management, the College continues to provide students with a high-quality, cost-effective education, both on campus and online.

WCCC is financially stable as evidenced by the College's unqualified audited financial statements, continued financial support from the State, and increasing reserve funds. The College relies on varied funding sources to underwrite the costs of operation. In addition to the tuition and fees collected from students, WCCC also receives funding through sources such as state appropriations, grants, and financial aid, the Foundation for Maine Community Colleges (FMCC), philanthropic investments, Maine Quality Centers, statewide workforce funding sources, and State of Maine bond packages.

As part of the MCCS, WCCC has access to deeper and broader resources and support. The Board of Trustees and the Board's Finance Committee provide oversight and guidance for the institution's planning and monitoring control over financial resources. WCCC's comprehensive financial planning and budgeting are concurrent with the State of Maine's two-year budgeting cycle.

The College develops a budget based on the strategic plans of the College and the MCCS. The MCCS system office supplies the College with wage, benefit, and state appropriation forecasts. The College determines the enrollment, staffing levels, and use of the operating budget. To better allocate and manage College resources, WCCC uses a zero-based budget process. Managers submit the detailed zero-based budgets to the Dean of Finance who reviews the submissions for consistency and reasonableness. Other than grant budgets, PEP is not budgeted separately, but embedded within program-specific budgets and analyzed in accordance with the process above.

Through the appropriate allocation of resources, the College has demonstrated sound fiscal management that serves the institution's mission, vision, and values. As well as approving budgets, the WCCC finance department produces monthly reports to approximately twenty cost centers and compiles a monthly budget variance analysis. The WCCC President and the MCCS Chief Financial Officer review this analysis monthly. Click [here](#) to access our Statement of Revenues, Expenses, and Changes in Net Assets.

STANDARD EIGHT: EDUCATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

A total of fifty-six justice involved students have matriculated as part of WCCC's SCP participation. Of these participating students, 69.6% are female and 30.4% are male, primarily because our justice-

involved programming began in Maine Department of Corrections facilities housing female residents. Also, 76.8% of participating students are White, 3.6% are American Indian or Alaska Native, 1.8% are Black or African American, 7.1% are Hispanics of any race, 5.4% are Two or more races, and 5.4% are Race and Ethnicity unknown. In comparison the student body in the 2021-2022 academic year consisted of 66% females and 34% males. Of that group, 80.8% were White, 6.3% were American Indian or Alaska Native, .3% were Black or African American, 4.3% were Hispanics of any race, 3.3% were Two or more races, and 3.7% were Race and Ethnicity unknown.

The tables below provide persistence and retention data for our PEP program participants:

Fall 2020 Cohort: Outcomes by the end of Fall 2022		
	PEP Credential Seeking Cohort	First-time in College
Cohort Count	18	9
Associate	55.6%	33.3%
Certificate	44.4%	66.7%
Still Enrolled	11.1%	22.2%
Left with ≥ 30 Credits	27.8%	44.4%
Left with < 30 credits	61.1%	44.4%
Graduated	0%	0%

Fall 2021 Cohort: Outcomes by the end of Fall 2022		
	PEP Credential Seeking Cohort	First-time in College
Cohort Count	23	7
Associate	87%	71.4%
Certificate	13%	28.6%
Still Enrolled	73.9%	57.1%
Left with ≥ 30 Credits	0%	0%
Left with < 30 credits	21.7%	42.9%
Graduated	4.35%	0%

WCCC recognizes a major concern needing more attention is the reintegration of our PEP students back into their communities. This will take additional efforts and strategic planning in partnership with our campus, community-based organizations and MDOC partners. Our retention and completion data supports the need for advancements in this area. The ability to continue once students are released from incarceration is a challenge. Students entering back into society oftentimes have difficulty with resources and allotting time to continue as they assimilate back into work and home responsibilities. WCCC and MDOC are keenly aware of this barrier to success and presently provide customized advocacy and resources through WCCC's Student Navigator as described in [Standard Five](#). However, the College recognizes this as an area of emphasis with a need to continue to strengthen our resources and support for the PEP in collaboration with partner agencies. Our Education Equity and Advancement Coordinator is presently collaborating with MDOC partners to strengthen transitional reentry services and develop a

process for reentry planning at intake, which will improve the ability to plan for release at an earlier stage. This body of work will inform us of our future strategies to support students during this transitional phase and improve upon our retention rates at this phase of the student life cycle. Additional data on cohort retention and withdrawal rates, including those who were released from incarceration, can be found [here](#).

Students participating in the SCP Experiment over the past five semesters have successfully earned 86.7% of the credits they have attempted, while all matriculated students over that time earned 91.2% of the credits they have attempted. The average Grade Point Average of all students participating in the Second Chance Pell Experiment is 2.92 while the average GPA of all matriculated students over that time is 3.01. Of the 56 students that have enrolled thus far in the PEP, 6 students have been named to the President's List, 11 students to the Dean's List (30% with honors of distinction), and 5 students (9%) have been academically dismissed. The strong success rates and data for the PEP, along with faculty and staff professional development, assist WCCC with overcoming the initial negative and/or stereotypical assumptions about the intellectual potential of our PEP cohort that existed when we first engaged in this important work. Twelve justice-involved students completed the MSSC licensure and two continued with pre-release employment opportunities in a Registered Maine Apprenticeship.

Nationwide students at community colleges are unsuccessful in their courses, defined as achieving a grade lower than a C, 30% of the time. A recent study of the failure rates of students in the Fall 2022 semester at WCCC disaggregated by modality; live, hybrid and Zoom (synchronous) courses as compared to online (asynchronous) courses found students were unsuccessful in synchronous courses at a rate of 10.09% while students were unsuccessful in asynchronous courses at rate of 9.69%. These rates are clearly well under the national rate, and students being slightly more successful in online courses compared with live, hybrid & zoom course success rates, demonstrates the capability for comparable success within an online delivery modality.

WCCC analyzes the PEP student success comparatively with their peers at the program level. An example would be within the Business Management student cohort for the 2021-2022 academic year. Disaggregating the PEP students enrolled within this program, the findings showed 72% of PEP students were successful with a grade of C or higher, 28% were unsuccessful with C- or lower grades. Comparing those results to all other students within the business management program whose success rate was 75% and their unsuccessful rate was 25%, despite the limitations of being incarcerated, PEP students are successful at a commensurate rate with their peers.

WCCC did a comparison to students enrolled within our Family Futures Downeast (FFD) program with our PEP program enrollees. This comparison cohort was chosen for the study as both groups face many similar barriers to success in higher education. Albeit, FFD students are not incarcerated, they are oftentimes from impoverished households, face food and housing insecurity, are single parents, are first-generation students, and have unreliable transportation. The study recently conducted showed some interesting data that also supports success rates for online delivery. FFD is a WCCC program that has existed for the past seven years and enrolls parents of young children in Washington County aiding these parent students with the pursuit of a college education while also providing services for their children. Since the program's inception, courses were delivered live for the first three years; and remote, online or through Zoom, for the following three years because of the pandemic. Our statistics show that FFD program students had a success rate, C or better in courses, of 66.2% during the first

three years of live delivery and 81.7% during the second three years of online and remote delivery. This small sample shows further evidence of online delivery success and the ability of our online programming to support students with significant external barriers to persist and succeed.

WCCC utilizes a systematic method of assessment for determining the outcome success of our students at the institutional, program and course levels. Our Liberal Studies faculty started the learning outcomes and assessment process several years ago over eight learning domains: Creative Arts, Written Communications, Ethical Reasoning, Diversity, Natural Science, Social Science, Humanities and Quantitative Literacy. They identified where each of these learning outcomes is introduced, reinforced, and assessed within the course offerings for the associate in arts degree. The remaining two departments at WCCC, career studies and technologies, have adopted that model to map out and assess all course learning outcomes as they relate to their program learning outcomes. All programs have determined within which courses the outcomes are accessed and develop various methods of assessment methods for data capturing and reporting related to our student success. With the help of our Associate Dean of Teaching and Learning, faculty continue to refine their learning outcomes, their methods, processes, and goals of assessment, updating curriculum and measuring student success. This process includes all programs previously offered and proposed to be offered to justice involved students in our PEP. Due to the iterative nature of this work, it remains ongoing and continues ad infinitum with our live and online versions of each program as they are approved and delivered.

Our Learning Management System (LMS) D2L Brightspace provides a vehicle for assessment and reporting of learning outcomes and student success. Because our current Student Information System (SIS) Jenzabar is thirteen years old, the Maine Community College System is actively engaged with the SIS replacement and has chosen Anthology software. As we implement the three-year phased replacement plan for the SIS, enhanced data capacity and streamlining the data integration between the SIS and LMS are key components for assessing learning outcomes and providing enhanced ability for data utilized to measure student success. The College has a defined [timeline](#) for training, updating and assessment of learning outcomes and data collection for gauging student success.

The established learning outcomes in each program, despite the modality in which the coursework and learning experience is delivered, remain the same. Whether live or online, on campus or on location at a MDOC facility, the College and faculty maintain the same standards and expectations of teaching and learning to ensure students will have the best possible opportunity for success and achievement of the learning outcomes. Course outcome data for our academic programs offered through PEP can be found [here](#).

Each program at WCCC and in the MCCS is formally reviewed on a five-year rotating basis. The review is prepared by a team consisting of the faculty, department chair, associate dean of teaching and learning, and academic dean. Each of the programs in our PEP have been reviewed in the past years and will continue to cycle through the review process. That review is presented to the MCCS Education Policy Committee and is evaluated for enrollment and graduation rates, Advisory Committee activity, student success and goal achievement, as well as strengths, weaknesses, and future plans. Most recent program review data can be found [here](#).

In addition to the quantitative data above, WCCC also utilizes qualitative data to analyze the success of our PEP. As stated by an instructor in our PEP college transitions course, *“the positive impact was not only on the students and DOC staff, it was also on us as facilitators. Working with such a wonderful*

group of women- all of [whom] faced tremendous obstacles in their lives, gave me hope. It gave me hope that our correctional systems can be different, gave me hope that in spite of earlier life challenges the next chapter for these women can be different, hope that education is the pathway towards growth, and hope that with one small connection at a time people's lives can be profoundly changed. Thank you for inviting me to be part of this amazing work."

We value the student voice throughout the planning, development and implementation of our PEP. The following student quote is taken directly from a student course evaluation. Speaking about the stories that define us, another student writes, *"I have been able to learn who the sober me is and learn how to express the thoughts that are trapped in my head. I miss the me that I was before I started losing myself in using. I like the feeling of getting her back. Before this I forgot how to actually focus on living in the moment and be happy with just myself and being able to focus on the future and not simply worried about the next treatment or the next fix. This class has changed the way I can now put words to all of the thoughts trapped inside my head so that I can process things and be able to move on to the next chapter of my life, without letting my addiction and incarceration experience define me."*

Additional student letters of support providing qualitative data about the success of our PEP can be found [here](#).

STANDARD NINE: INTEGRITY, TRANSPARENCY, AND PUBLIC DISCLOSURE

WCCC adheres to the MCCS code of ethics which outlines twelve core values that guide all employees. These values are practiced and supported on our campus. In addition, many faculty and staff belong to professional organizations and practice the detailed ethical policies and procedures relevant to their discipline or area of expertise. Monthly meetings are held with representatives from all partner MDOC facilities, including students, to ensure that operations are administered with integrity and follow our [PEP guiding principles](#). Additionally, we have a signed MOU from the start of SCP that outlines expectations for both the MDOC and WCCC regarding the program.

In accordance with the expectations of faculty and staff conduct, the College seeks to protect the rights of its employees honestly and consistently. In the collective bargaining agreement with the MCCS Board of Trustees and the MEA: Faculty, the academic freedom and privacy rights of faculty members are established and defined. Administrative and support personnel rights are assured and supported through individual collective bargaining agreements. These documents include statements of professional ethics and the terms and conditions of employment.

Policies and procedures relating to academic honesty, privacy rights, and fairness are in place and periodically reviewed to ensure the rights of all students and are published in the College catalog, available on the College website, and in the student handbook. The academic policies section clearly outlines the College's academic integrity policy, defines plagiarism, and explains the consequences of policy violation. The code of conduct and academic misconduct policies are approved by the MCCS Board and allow distance education and justice involved students to have equal access through virtual participation in any procedures. Justice involved students have access to the internet to view these policies and they are provided with an electronic version of all student policies during their online new student orientation course. Students' academic records are safeguarded by the College. This guarantee of confidentiality is codified through FERPA. All employees annually receive FERPA training during professional development sessions. Except in FERPA allowable circumstances, student records are not released to third parties without the student's written authorization.

The College recognizes the benefits, both inside and outside of the classroom, of a diverse and representative student body throughout the institution's academic programs and strives to foster an atmosphere of inclusion and respect. We take a variety of approaches to equity and adherence to the spirit of affirmative action at the institutional level. Our Education Equity and Advancement Coordinator ensures equitable access to WCCC's PEP. In addition, staff and faculty have participated in trainings involving working with justice involved students, students in recovery, and students impacted by trauma.

WCCC strives to ensure that all college-related materials and publications, both print and digital, are timely, useful, accurate, comprehensive, and readily available. The Dean of Enrollment Management and Student Services and the department staff review all print and electronic materials related to enrollment services prior to their distribution. The Academic Affairs Office is responsible for the review and publication of the college catalog annually. Department chairs are asked to review their segments of the catalog and website annually for accuracy and content.

The College website provides detailed explanations of admission policies and procedures, financial aid policies and procedures, financial aid resources, curriculum requirements for academic programs, course descriptions, campus facilities and resources. Members of the public, including our PEP students, can easily access the campus directory, organized by personnel type, with departments, names, email addresses, and phone numbers of college personnel who can respond to inquiries promptly. Information regarding WCCC's participation in the Second Chance Pell program can also be found on the [website](#), in the [2021 NECHE Two-Year Interim Report](#), as well as in the [press release](#) announcing our participation under Campus News.

The College provides prospective and current students with necessary information concerning admissions, curriculum, grading, assessment, discipline, and consideration of complaints and appeals via the course catalog and the student handbook. Both are available in print and on our website. The catalog, updated and published annually, clearly outlines the institution's mission and guiding principles as well as policies and procedures relating to admission, financial aid, attendance, and continued enrollment. It also provides a listing of all college personnel with information relating to any credentials they may hold. The student handbook is available on the College's website and student portal and contains much of the same information as the catalog, but with added information on the code of conduct, procedures for conflict resolution, and students' right to privacy, and other resources available for students. WCCC staff regularly visit our partner MDOC facilities to discuss the admissions and enrollment process and provide marketing materials that are distributed to prospective justice involved students. In addition, students can access short-term workforce courses and pathways, which are consistently communicated with MDOC staff.

Through print and digital communications, WCCC documents and publicizes program excellence, learning outcomes, faculty achievements, and the success and accomplishments of graduates. Information is compiled through the Maine Department of Labor for graduate employment data. Information regarding PEP student outcomes (i.e., student retention, graduation, and licensure passage rates) is available on the Consumer Information page of the WCCC website. Institutional information such as the price of attendance, net price calculator, financial aid and scholarship information, and student loan information are also available under [Consumer Information](#).

APPENDIX A: DATA FORM FOR REPORT ON DISTANCE EDUCATION PROGRAMS

TABLE 1. Proposed Degree Program and Certificate Information

Proposed Degree Program or Certificate Name	Level of Degree (A, B, M, D) or Certificate (C)	Initiation Date (First Enrollment) (Year Only)	Number of Required Credits	No. of Credits Which May be Completed Online	Projected Student FTE Enrollment Year 1 2023	Projected Student FTE Enrollment Year 2 2024	Available to Teach in Proposed Program or Certificate
Certificate in Entrepreneurship	C	2020	34	34	8	12	1
Certificate in Production Technology	C	2020	33	33	8	18	0
Certificate in Substance Use and Recovery	C	2021	37	37	20	20	1
Associate in Applied Science in Business Management	A	2020	61	61	28	36	1
Associate in Applied Science in Human Services	A	2012	62	61	40	40	1
Associate in Arts in Liberal Studies	A	1998	62	62	25	28	5
Associate in Applied Science in Production Technology	A	2020	61	61	6	8	0

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE MAINE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS AND
WASHINGTON COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

Background

Washington County Community College (WCCC) and the Maine Department of Corrections (MDOC) are entering into this Memorandum for the purpose of bringing college courses to qualified incarcerated individuals. This partnership has been initiated as part of the national Second Chance Pell Pilot from the U.S. Department of Education and is an expansion of a successful delivery model for workforce training. WCCC has been offering workforce programming at the Southern Maine Women's Re-Entry Center since October 2018 and is developing larger scale parallel projects around increased student supports and barrier removal, recovery-focused programming, and increased exposure and access to college experiences.

This Second Chance Pell Pilot will aim to be delivered at the Southern Maine Women's Re-Entry Center, the Women's Center, the Maine Correctional Facility, Mountain View Correctional Facility, and eventually the Downeast Correctional Facility. Programming will be delivered exclusively online in Entrepreneurship and Business Studies and Production Technology tracks. Programming will begin Fall 2020 at the Southern Maine Women's Re-Entry Center with a small cohort.

Goal

This program seeks to encourage students to pursue higher education while incarcerated and/or once they have reentered their communities.

- a. Studies have shown that students who seek education during and after their time in prison have lower recidivism rates compared to others.
 1. This program seeks to expose and increase access to postsecondary training opportunities in high-wage and in-demand occupations, attainable to individuals with criminal records.
 2. This program seeks to build, increase, and nurture new and existing relationships with partners throughout the state to enhance services and programming available to incarcerated individuals while promoting persistence, retention, completion, and employment.

Implementation Plan

Planning and implementation of this Second Chance Pilot will begin Summer 2020, with recruitment and enrollment beginning in July 2020 and instruction beginning September 2020. This will be a small cohort of up to six women from the Southern Maine Women's Re-Entry Center.

Recruitment and enrollment at the Women's Center and Mountain View Correctional Facility will begin once technology opportunities have been addressed. The Maine Correctional Facility and the Downeast Correctional Facility will come online last.

All programming is reliant upon access to technology including computer and internet access. SMWRC is equipped with the necessary technology, but all other facilities named in this Memorandum will be part of larger scale conversations and collaboration between WCCC and MDOC to increase technology in those facilities. WCCC is committed to working collaboratively in an effort to assist MDOC in overcoming these barriers.

The target population to be served under this project are individuals within 5 years of release who have attained their high school diploma or equivalent.

Responsibilities of the Parties

The list of responsibilities below is not intended to be exhaustive. The Parties will consult on these duties periodically (at least twice per year) to determine whether responsibilities should be modified, removed, added, or expanded. Such a revision shall be effective upon the mutual, written agreement of the parties; an email between the designated Points of Contact is sufficient for this purpose.

MDOC

- Provide computer lab space in the facilities for college degree courses offered during the academic semesters.
- Provide storage space for instructional materials.
- Review and approve program materials and curriculum prior to the start of the semester.
- Facilitate the recruitment and screening of students to determine qualification including providing WCCC application and related materials.
- Assist in disseminating student textbooks and supplies required for the course.
- Training and orientation for college faculty and staff, as needed.
- Notify WCCC Student Services at secondchancepell@wccc.me.edu when student is not available to participate in courses.
- Notify WCCC Student Services at secondchancepell@wccc.me.edu when an individual is starting the transition planning process and prior to release.
- Coordinate with DOC unit team staff to interview and select candidates for the college program, to ensure appropriateness of student placement and success. Clear any behavior issues through the facility's administration before full application is processed.
- Maintain regular communication with the unit team related to students enrolled in the college program.
- Ensure that CORIS (MDOC's data management system) records are up to date on all prisoners enrolled in the college program.
- Communicate requests to hold prisoners who are enrolled in the college program to the Classification Department and by entering an "edu hold" in CORIS Program Enrollment to avoid the student from being transferred.
- Serve as a liaison between the students and WCCC for general academic issues or questions. Students who have email access should handle this themselves.
- Proctor exams for online courses.
- Designate a schedule for all college students to access necessary resources and equipment in the education department.
- Ensure all WCCC staff and volunteers have necessary MDOC training.
- Provide support and guidance to students in their pursuit of higher education.
- Administer Accuplacer testing.
- Support college students with access to technology.

- Ensure that the appropriate technology is in place for students to participate in distance FAFSA/financial aid meetings, advising sessions and classes, at designated facilities.
- Ensure FERPA is followed and maintained.
- Manage CLEP registration and administration of course offerings in alignment with college programming, at designated facilities.
- Set and enforce guidelines, expectations and boundaries for students as they work through the college program.

WCCC

- Develop and implement courses, certificate, and degree programs.
- Provide specialized training for faculty and staff in support of working with individuals who are incarcerated.
- Provide an overview of the program goals and structure to corrections staff.
- Faculty and staff will attend required DOC training.
- Follow MDOC policies and procedures (including confidentiality of prisoners, staff, and security)
- Lead orientation for new students and faculty prior to the beginning of each semester.
- Prior to the beginning of the semester, provide corrections facilities with a list of classes to be offered and a schedule of the times classes will be offered.
- Provide syllabus for students of the assignments and curriculum being taught over the semester.
- Collaborate with students and MDOC to assist students with completion of admissions and financial aid processes including FERPA, application, transcripts, disclosures, and testing, if needed.
- Continue to provide supports after an individual transition from incarceration status to release status, if enrolled in a WCCC program.
- Complete background checks to determine an applicant is unable to participate in a particular course due to sex offense violations.
- Participate in the MDOC transition planning process.
- Work with financial aid to secure appropriate Second Chance Pell funding, anticipate enrollments and needed aid from the Federal DOE.
- Work with Maine Educational Opportunities Center to facilitate the admissions process and track applicants.
- Check to be sure all interested parties are completing the FAFSA with the help of MEOC. Track these students through FAFSA completion.
- Propose course scheduling, including course sequencing, days and times and faculty recommendations. Propose schedule to the academic coordinators and deans in keeping with the needed degree requirements of enrolled students.
- Orient new faculty to the teaching of the incarcerated population, including expectations of the environment, academic quality and special challenges.
- Register students and process add/drops and withdrawals as needed in a timely way.
- Facilitate communication between college library services, the faculty and the correctional facility to be sure all students have the appropriate access to academic resources.

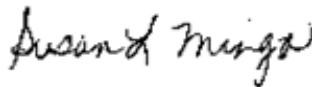
- Provide support, guidance, and advocacy for this population to the MDOC and the College administration.
- Work to provide FAFSA eligible students with the best possible financial aid package and award them as deemed appropriate by USDOE regulations.
- Identify funding gaps and scholarships, where available, for those who may have delayed financial aid or financial aid ineligibility.
- Support college students and advocate for appropriate access to technology.
- Identify and schedule regular advising and student support sessions.
- Process faculty book orders, oversee book vouchers, collect and deliver books to the correctional facility. Return books and process credits to student accounts as needed.
- Arrange for guests and special lectures or programming to enhance the academic program.

Joint Duties (MDOC and WCCC)

- Discuss and draft policies for student disciplinary procedures and dismissal for the WCCC program and consult/apply WCCC’s Code of Conduct where applicable.
- Consider the issue of student movement to and from different corrections facilities and draft policies covering this information.
- Communicate in a timely and efficient manner about program participants, program integrity, challenges, and successes.
- In collaboration with members of the WCCC and MDOC staff, coordinate graduation ceremonies and other academic recognition events.
- In collaboration with WCCC and MDOC staff, coordinate reentry services and education for students who will be released.

Term of the Agreement

This agreement will be executed once signed by both parties. The agreement will be reviewed and evaluated in December 2020 before moving into other facilities.



09/22/2020



9/22/2020

Susan Mingo, President WCCC

Date

MDOC

Date

Exhibits and Attachments

WCCC Code of Conduct

Policies for Student Movement and Transfer

Guiding Principles

WCCC Second Chance Pell Experiment Guiding Principles for Postsecondary Education in Prison

Guiding Principle 1: Quality comparable to campus

Provide quality education in prison that is comparable to community campuses and that will facilitate success for students continuing their education when they return home.

Guiding Principle 2: Communication and collaboration among partners

Commit to a communication structure that will foster partnership between the college, corrections department, and students. Facilitate meetings to support open dialogue and create a culture where clear, honest communication can lead to continuous program improvement.

Guiding Principle 3: Inclusion and student voice

Promote inclusive spaces. Opportunities for student voices to be heard is vital to creating a community that empowers students and cultivates leadership and self-efficacy.

Guiding Principle 4: Equitable access

Embed gender and racial equity as well as accessibility into the program design. Ensure programs have on-ramps gauged to different ability levels to ensure an equitable opportunity for success.

Guiding Principle 5: Collect data and build college expertise

Begin collecting data from the start of the program to support data-driven implementation strategies and identify areas for improvement. Ensure program consistency by documenting policies and procedures specific to prison-based education. Build college expertise by supporting the professional development of faculty and staff.