WITC gets high marks from report

Wisconsin Indianhead Technical College’s results from the 2013 Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) indicate that an overwhelming majority of WITC students feel that personal connections they experience at the college are critical to their academic success.

“We participate in CCSSE to continually improve the quality of education we offer our students.” says Bob Meyer, president of WITC. “Quality is about the student experience — about what we do to engage our students, help them achieve their educational goals and ultimately improve the quality of their lives through education.”

CCSSE uses five benchmarks that allow colleges to monitor their performance in areas that are focused on teaching, learning and student success. These benchmarks encompass 38 engagement items on the survey that reflect a variety of aspects of students’ learning experiences.

Among the findings, 96 percent of survey respondents would recommend WITC to a friend or family member and 94 percent of students rated their educational experience at WITC as good or excellent.

“From my perspective of what the results say, WITC isn't just a place to get a quality education, WITC is the place to be for connecting with fellow students, faculty and staff and provides services that help students accomplish their goals,” said Jennifer Kunselman, research and data coordinator at WITC. “Nearly three-fourths of CCSSE respondents have accomplished their goals at WITC or will return to WITC within the next 12 months.”

The study also found at WITC students report strong relationships; find instructors to be available, helpful and sympathetic; and that staff are helpful, considerate and flexible.

The CCSSE survey — administered directly to community college students at participating colleges — helps participating institutions assess quality in community college education, focus on good educational practice, and identify areas in which they can improve programs and services for students. Washington Monthly, an independent national magazine, utilizes CCSSE and IPEDS data to rank colleges and in 2013 they ranked WITC fourth in their listing of “America’s 50 Best Community Colleges.”

WITC will use the results in many ways, from improving and adding services to assist students, with marketing, to its Quality Review Process, as well as Strategic Planning for the direction of the college.
Research shows that the more actively engaged students are — with college faculty and staff, with other students, and with the subject matter — the more likely they are to learn and to achieve their academic goals.

“Students that attend WITC build strong relationships with each other and college staff that not only help them succeed while learning, but also face the many challenges along the way,” Kunselman said. “The study shows that a large portion of our students face multiple responsibilities while they are attending WITC. Many have long commutes to the WITC campus they are attending, they have jobs in addition to taking classes, and many have families that are dependent on their care. The relationships that students build at WITC help them face these challenges and play a big part in their success at WITC.”

Ranked fourth best two-year college in the nation by Washington Monthly magazine, WITC serves the educational and career needs of more than 25,000 residents of Northwestern Wisconsin each year. With multiple campuses, WITC offers career-focused associate degree programs, technical diplomas, short-term certificates, customized business training, and a wide array of courses for personal or career enrichment. WITC is a member of Wisconsin Technical College System. For more information, call 800.243.WITC or visit witc.edu. WITC is an Equal Opportunity/Access Employer and Educator.