

MCC adds honors college designation

By Eli Freund Journal Inquirer | Posted: Wednesday, August 6, 2014 12:39 pm

MANCHESTER — Manchester Community College will step up its efforts to prepare students to transfer to four-year schools with a new honors college.

The program, which would allow students to graduate with an honors distinction added to their diploma and transcript, is a way for students to become more prepared to continue their education beyond MCC, Patrick Sullivan, the honors college coordinator, said in a news release.

“Part of our goal is to prepare our honors college students for transfer to four-year institutions, so there will be no challenges or surprises that they haven’t been prepared for,” Sullivan said.

Students interested in the program, which has been taking applications since the beginning of the summer, face a myriad of requirements to stay in the program and to earn the honors distinction on their transcript and diploma.

MCC’s honors program is one of the very few offered in the state’s community college system.

After being accepted to the program, students must take at least four honors courses or honors options (12 credits minimum) and earn a grade of B or better in each, the school said.

Participants must also engage with their community, completing 20 hours of community service or a civic engagement activity, submitted to the Honors Committee for approval.

In addition, students will also complete an independent study, a one-credit capstone project conducted with a professor in their major area, the school said.

For Sullivan, instituting this honors program is also a way for students to work in a challenging program while also keeping their student debt in control.

“We think this is a very good time for us to start this program, given the changing landscape of higher education in America, where attending a traditional college now requires that most students assume considerable debt,” Sullivan said.

The cost of college is affecting how students choose schools, he added.

“Many students, who in the past would have gone to a traditional four-year institution and not even considered attending a community college are now looking for more affordable options as they begin their college careers.”

After successful completion of the program, the honors college graduate will also be eligible for membership in Phi Theta Kappa, the international honor society for two-year colleges, and will

graduate cum laude or higher, in addition to the honors distinction on their transcript and diploma, the school said.