

## **A Philosophy and Process Aimed at Quality: One-Stop Service**

Since opening its doors in 1992, the Student Services Division has focused on a commitment that their services would offer quality and convenience to the students and community. The Komatke Building (Student Services Building) was designed to provide one-stop service by having all services needed to enroll in one building. It is our belief that the challenge in higher education should not be in admission and access to the college support services. The challenge should come in the classroom where individuals are seeking knowledge and skills in order to reach their goals. A major component of being a good service provider is ensuring customer convenience and satisfaction with service.

At EMCC, a focus on quality has been critical to implement services that respond to our student / customer needs. During the Fall semester of 1995, a change in leadership in the student and administrative services area provided an opportunity to evaluate and reengineer processes. The Provost charged the Student Services Division to:

- reengineer processes that impact customers and improve service through the elimination of divisional barriers and obstacles;
- investigate and make recommendations as to the feasibility of merging and coordination of services;
- be sensitive to employee needs and concerns while recognizing the impact that change will create within the culture.

Initial outcomes of the reengineering process were: redesign of the Admissions and Records physical facilities to allow for more effective flow and increased customer interaction; cross training of student services staff; basic flow charting of processes; and greater emphasis on collection of needs and satisfaction data. The redesign of facilities and process, cross training, and data collection resulted in more effective delivery of services.

However, responding to service from the customer's perspective demands a new definition of one-stop service. According to the 1997, *Federal Benchmarking Consortium Study Report on Best Practice in One – Stop Customer Service*, in the new one- stop paradigm, “all of a customer's business can be completed in a single contact be it face to face or via phone, fax, internet, or other means. One-stop customers do not have to hunt around, call back, or repeatedly explain their situation. One-stop customer service is convenient, accessible, and personalized.” The best one-stop organizations recognize that customers want fast, seamless, convenient, and consistent service. Services from the customer perspective also require cross – functional teamwork thinking together, planning together, and doing together.

To achieve its goal of implementing one-stop student services, EMCC created three new positions that support the one-stop model. These positions are: Coordinator, Student Services, Student Services Specialist, and Student Services Technician. These positions provide the services of the major functions within the student services area: admissions; placement testing; academic advisement; providing initial financial aid information; registration; and referrals to other required student services. Since hiring new staff for these positions, we have been able to respond to the majority of the customer's needs by providing service at “one-seat.”