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STRATEGIC PLAN: 2012 - 2014

ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

February 29, 2012

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1. PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The environment of higher education is changing rapidly, and no level is changing faster than in the community college. Greater attention at the Federal, State and County levels is being paid to the role of the community college as a "community career center," economic stimulator and crucial link in ensuring that the workforce skills match the needs of evolving businesses and economies. While continuing to emphasize our core role as a degree granting institution, we also focus on the college as a valued source of knowledge, whether for skills development, workforce preparation, or technological training. We are proud of our three campuses serving students from all over Erie County and beyond, and intend to continue to invest in those campuses to make them as attractive and relevant as possible. At the same time, though, SUNY ECC has to be outside the classroom, in businesses, and in homes via the internet.

The process for completing this new Strategic Plan for SUNY ECC, while on a fast-track, was inclusive and robust. Transparency and inclusiveness in the process started with a presentation to the ECC Senate, which also had the opportunity to discuss our direction at a second meeting. The Board of Trustees as a whole had two opportunities for input and review, and an Ad Hoc Planning Committee of the Trustees provided an opportunity for in-depth discussion. A general update was provided at "Opening Day" in January. See Appendix D for details of the entire process. Also, please note that the planning terms as we use them for this document are defined in Appendix E.

The hard work of the Institutional Planning & Assessment Committee over several months is evident. They have been listening to all of the constituencies, building consensus and moving forward issues in a prudent process. We received over 700 usable responses to our planning survey in December. Casting a broad net led to an unprecedented response, including significant numbers of surveys from full- and part-time members of the faculty, staff, administration, advisory board members, and members of the Board of Trustees. The key issues emerging from the survey made it into the *Situation Analysis* document (Appendix A), which was then used to focus the Strategic Plan on eight key imperatives and five major priorities.

SUNY ECC is committed to strategic planning as an ongoing activity, and as such this plan will be developing with the College and its environment. Comments or suggestions regarding the Strategic Plan should be addressed to my office at SUNY Erie Community College, City Campus. Thank you very much for your interest and support

Jack Quinn
President, SUNY Erie Community College



2. MISSION, VISION, STRATEGIC INTENT & VALUE PROPOSITION

Mission

SUNY Erie Community College meets the needs of a diverse student body and contributes to regional economic vitality by providing excellent, flexible, affordable and accessible educational programs in a multi-campus environment committed to continuous improvement.

Vision

SUNY ECC strives toward a future of accessible education – convenient to all – where students can acquire career competencies and a college degree along with the resources to achieve their goals.

Strategic Intent

SUNY ECC will become a national and regional model for the community college of the 21st century. We want to be known as the most student-friendly and accessible college where success begins. SUNY ECC will be an aspirational choice where students of all levels of ability attend because it is the best match to their lifestyle wants and a respected institution among employers, within higher education and throughout the region.

Value Proposition

SUNY ECC offers the best access to achievement of a quality degree, academic credits or the acquisition of skills/certification that will propel the learner to his or her desired goal at any point in life, in the most cost-effective way.



3. CORE VALUES AND PRINCIPLES

Core Values

Student Centeredness: Service to students is the primary reason for our existence. The student is at the center of all SUNY ECC programs and services.



Accessibility: SUNY ECC serves the needs and wants of all students, including those not having educational opportunity elsewhere. Access means inclusion by overcoming financial, location, physical, language or other impediments.

Academic Excellence: SUNY ECC expects academic rigor in all curricula and from all students. We believe that quality teaching with comprehensive support results in positive learning outcomes and student achievement.

Openness and Respect: A broad range of cultures, attitudes and viewpoints creates an environment of respect, caring and trust. All members of our ECC community, no matter their limitations, should be recognized for their intrinsic dignity and unique capabilities.

Principles

Academic Freedom: SUNY ECC values the free exchange of ideas, and encourages diverse points of view and the rigorous examination of assumptions.

Collaboration: Collaboration is beneficial within the context of our mission and is fundamental to achieving our goals.

Commitment: All those associated with the college have a commitment to the well being of SUNY ECC and the community it serves. We believe that a strong community is important to a strong SUNY ECC, and a strong SUNY ECC is important to a strong community.

Equity and Diversity: In its many forms and as enhanced through multiculturalism, diversity is a positive force that provides an environment in which people from all groups feel welcomed, respected and valued as full members of our campus community.

Excellence: There is an expectation of a high level of competence in all areas. We provide each individual with the opportunity and support to reach his or her highest potential.

Integrity and Accountability: The College leadership, faculty, staff, and students are expected to conduct themselves in an ethical manner, while being responsible for their actions and accountable for resulting outcomes.

Learning Experience: Students have the ability and opportunity to examine their world and voice a position and their personal beliefs. Critical thinking is an integral part of the learning process.

Lifelong Learning: Learning is a lifelong process. SUNY ECC students learn how to learn, and learn to love learning for personal growth and achievement in life.

Student Success: The two year associate's degree is not the only test of success for SUNY ECC. Students achieving their goals – training, skills, transfer credits, knowledge – is the challenge SUNY ECC accepts.



4. STRATEGIC PRIORITIES IN THE THREE YEAR PLANNING CYCLE

- 1. Enhanced productivity**
 - Efficient/Effective
 - Reduce redundancies
- 2. Information for decision-making at all levels**
 - Assessment
 - Institutional Research
 - Information Technology
 - Systems investments
 - Human resources
- 3. Meet accreditation requirements**
 - SUNY ECC
 - SUNY ECC academic programs
- 4. Invest in highest potential growth areas**
 - New academic building at North Campus
 - Modernization of North Campus (building, grounds, technology)
 - New instructional sites
- 5. New/enhanced revenue streams and student markets**
 - Alumni giving
 - Non-traditional/training
 - Improved retention and graduation rates
 - Aggressive promotion across a wider geographic area
 - On-line expansion and alternative course delivery



5. DRIVING STRATEGIES

1. Rationalization: While maintaining three campuses and multiple sites, create one SUNY ECC with a shared mission and goals, consistent service delivery, reduced duplication of services, and strategically placed resources. Implement programs and services where they can be most effective and where the facilities and infrastructure allow them to fulfill their purpose. Establish clear criteria and processes for making decisions on programmatic and facilities investments.

2. Clustering: Integrate and develop programs in close proximity to the economic sectors offering the greatest opportunity in those sectors. Create centers of excellence as clusters that create the critical mass to attract students no matter where they live or work, and that attract quality students who recognize professional and academic excellence.

3. Positioning: Position SUNY ECC as the logical and intelligent choice for students who have the academic credentials and financial means to choose among higher education alternatives, yet select SUNY ECC for the quality of education and the value they will receive.

4. Public-Private Partnerships: Partner with our community, including business, education, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), government and individuals, to identify and pursue mutual goals. Synchronize SUNY ECC programs with area-wide economic development priorities and continue aggressive engagement within workplaces through long-term mutually-beneficial relationships.

5. Student-centered: Create a clear perception of value by building systems, services and programs around the wants and goals of current and potential students. Serve students whenever and wherever we can.

6. Market sensitive: Increase flexibility to meet the changing demands of students and the economy. Move with markets using program portfolio management to ensure that we offer the programs that offer the best potential for future employment and for attracting students.

7. Reduced dependence on government: Create our own success by developing financial resources from sources other than government and tuition. Increase enrollment in non-traditional markets and niches, especially around workforce training, alternative delivery systems/certificates, etc. Continue to modify internal systems and processes to reduce inefficiencies and eliminate duplicative processes including those of Erie County.

8. Vertical Integration: Expand student opportunities at the high school level and continue to be relevant to individual success throughout life. Maintain SUNY ECC's commitment to traditional students while increasing our relevance to non-traditional students throughout all life stages.



9. Engaged faculty and staff: Build the trust between faculty and administration by sharing responsibility for mutually-important initiatives that have clear outcomes and benefits to the college. Include faculty and staff in planning and implementation, and ensure that communications systems are in place to keep the college community accurately apprised of priorities.

10. Accountability: Build accountability throughout the college using outcomes measurement, budgets tied to clear objectives, and continuous planning, monitoring and assessment processes.

11. Change agent: Build increasing flexibility into the SUNY ECC infrastructure, always looking for new and better ways of doing things, and not assuming that what is should continue to be.

12. Collaborate to compete: Where possible seek out opportunities to collaborate with community and academic partners, and especially SUNY schools, but only when such partnerships increase the competitiveness of SUNY ECC as it relates to the College's ability to attract students and serve its community mission.

13. Best practices: Identify and implement best practices from our peer institutions across the state and nation, adapting them to our unique circumstances within the priorities laid out in this plan.



II. GOALS, OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES

PLANNING IMPERATIVES

- 1. Academic Quality & Learning Outcomes**
- 2. Facilities Enhancement and Development**
- 3. Optimal Use of Resources**
- 4. Planning, Assessment and Outcomes**
- 5. Information for Decision-Making**
- 6. Enrollment, Retention, Transfer and Graduation Rates**
- 7. Capital Development/Fundraising**
- 8. Making a Difference in a Changing Environment**

For each imperative there is at least one long-term goal. In addition, there is a box connecting the imperative to the College's mission-based institutional effectiveness indicators. Strategies for achieving the goal(s) and addressing the imperative follow the goal statements. Measurable and time-sensitive objectives (steps on the way to addressing the imperative and goals) are found at the end of each imperative section.



1. Academic Quality & Learning Outcomes

MISSION CONNECTION: Excellent Educational Programs, Continuous Improvement, Accessible, Diverse

Goals:

- 1. All SUNY ECC offerings will be academically rigorous and challenging for students, and will adequately prepare students for their next academic degree programs and/or their chosen careers.**
- 2. All SUNY ECC graduates will demonstrate achievement across student learning outcomes*.**

Strategic Initiatives:

- 1.1 Increase diversity across faculty, and administrative leadership, in terms of ethnicity/race and gender, through inclusive and aggressive hiring practices, community outreach through the network of organizations and community groups with which ECC has relationships, featuring minority faculty and administration in ECC marketing and public relations initiatives, and expanding the pool of potential applicants through use of our extensive alumni database.**
- 1.2 Adopt new learning outcomes and a learning outcome structure that reflect ECC's mission and goals and move toward positive learning outcomes. Learning outcomes should be applicable to every student and reflect student achievement, helping to ensure that each student has the opportunity and supports to reach his/her highest potential.**
- 1.3 Utilize and integrate non-academic programs to meet students' needs and goals.**
- 1.4 Create and use a rubric for bringing on new full-time faculty within prioritized academic program areas, with the net result being growth in the number of full-time faculty.**
- 1.5 Conduct annual faculty and staff assessment retreats and workshops, along with Center for Teaching, Learning and Assessment (CTLA)-sponsored webinars, to create a culture of assessment and specific assessment skills development. Develop the internal capacity to train people by employing an individual to oversee the operationalizing of the skills assessment.**
- 1.6 Refine and continuously improve the curriculum development process through the New Curriculum Development Committee (NCDC) and the College Wide Curriculum Committee (CWCC), and with SUNY/NYSED.**



1.7 Continuously emphasize curriculum development and course redesign in all areas of the college. Concentrate especially on Developmental Education, Math, and English in order to improve student learning outcomes and to minimize the time-to-degree completion.

1.8 Develop, organize and facilitate clear career hierarchies including academic and career paths.

1.9 Align SUNY ECC with SUNY mandates and make the transfer process as easy and transparent to the students as possible. Demonstrate and measure the ease of transfer to our affiliated four-year colleges.

OBJECTIVE/Desired Outcome	MEASURE/Key Performance Indicator
1. By fall 2015 the racial and ethnic diversity of SUNY ECC's employees will mirror that of ECC's service delivery area.	Percent employees by race and ethnicity compared to Erie County 2010 US census results. KPI: Percent ECC employees Hispanic and non-white/Percent Erie County Hispanic and non-white.
2. In each year 100% of ECC professional programs will be fully accredited by the appropriate accrediting organizations.	Percentage of accredited professional programs KPI: Number of accredited professional programs/total number of professional programs
3. By fall 2014 ECC will meet or exceed the SUNY CC median success rate for developmental studies.	Math, writing and reading success rates KPI: ECC enrollee success rate/SUNY Median success rate
4. By fall 2014 the average time to degree completion will be reduced.	Average time to degree completion in years KPI: Average time to degree completion using baseline of 2011
5. By fall 2015 full-time faculty members will be teaching 70% of all course sections taught at SUNY ECC.	Percentage of course sections taught by full-time faculty members for the Fall & Spring semesters KPI: Number of course sections taught by full-time faculty members/all course sections offered at SUNY ECC

*NOTE – Current (2011) student learning outcomes are:

- *Communicate effectively*
- *Read and think critically*
- *Apply appropriate mathematical procedures and quantitative methods*
- *Demonstrate a knowledge of the process of science and technological change and the impact of that change on the individual, the culture and the environment*
- *Demonstrate a historic perspective and knowledge of artistic and literary traditions*



- *Demonstrate civic responsibility including an understanding of ethics, diversity, citizenship and community involvement*
- *Demonstrate personal and interpersonal integrity and maturity through leadership*
- *Exhibit the research skills needed for lifelong learning*
- *Demonstrate adequate preparation for a career or continuing education*
- *Demonstrate competence with computers and technology*



2. Facilities Enhancement and Development

MISSION CONNECTION: Multi-campus environment

Goals:

- 1. Facilities will provide enhanced support for teaching, learning and student activities in every SUNY ECC location.**
- 2. Buildings and grounds will be attractive as well as functional, and supportive of the intent to be an aspirational choice for all students.**

Strategic Initiatives:

- 2.1 Update the existing facilities master plan, or if necessary create a new plan based upon the priorities set forth in this Strategic Plan.**
- 2.2 Modernize the North Campus, including building the new Center for Academic Excellence building. Develop the buildings and grounds to be more attractive to students.**
- 2.3 Explore additional parking opportunities at the City Campus for students, faculty and staff.**
- 2.4. Develop an improved capital project development process, including self-financed projects. The process should provide recommendations based upon prioritized institutional needs – including priorities identified in this Plan.**
- 2.5 Continuously improve practices in delivering maintenance and housekeeping services. Establish performance standards for addressing Help Desk requests as well as day-to-day needs.**
- 2.6. Continue investment in smart room technology to enhance program delivery. Convert a significant number of classrooms into “smart” classrooms each year until all classrooms have “smart” capabilities.**
- 2.7 Maximize technology/classroom usage through efficient academic program scheduling and delivery.**

OBJECTIVE/Desired Outcome	MEASURE/Key Performance Indicator
1. By fall 2015 modernization of the North Campus existing buildings and grounds will be complete.	Facilities plan for ECC North Campus KPI: Plan is fully implemented
2. By fall 2015 the Center for Academic Excellence building will be open and operating.	Building in operation KPI: same
3. In each year through 2014 fifteen traditional classrooms will be converted to smart classrooms.	Number of smart classrooms converted KPI: greater than or equal to 15
4. By 2015 ECC student opinion results pertaining to facilities and technology will be at or above the SUNY mean.	Results in the SUNY Student Opinion Survey KPI: ECC mean satisfaction with facilities and technology/SUNY mean satisfaction with facilities and technology



3. Optimal Use of Resources

MISSION CONNECTION: *Affordable educational programs, Flexible*

Goals:

- 1. SUNY ECC resource allocation will be in full alignment with the priorities of the Strategic Plan.**
- 2. All students attending ECC will be provided with the academic and student support resources to achieve their self-defined goals.**

Strategic Initiatives:

- 3.1 Rationalize the distribution of resources across the campuses by examining all college operations for opportunities to streamline, combine and consolidate in order to increase effectiveness while continuing to be responsive to the college community. Communicate the rationale for decisions impacting resource allocations.**
- 3.2 Re-think the SUNY ECC revenue model, including the identification and pursuit of new revenue sources beyond tuition. Create systems and engage faculty/personnel to understand the importance of new revenues and to effectively capture revenue opportunities. Examine delivery to specific markets (e.g. business and industry) needing non-traditional short-term learning opportunities.**
- 3.3 Create an environment of continuous improvement based on a new culture of assessment. Affix the culture in policy and procedure by linking the annual and long-term budget processes and related decision-making processes to the SUNY ECC *Strategic Plan* and its stated priorities (see also strategy 4.1).**
- 3.4 Move to a three-year budget planning process to better examine long-term solutions for potential problems. Link the long-range budgeting process to the SUNY ECC *Strategic Plan* and to realistic enrollment projections.**
- 3.5 Utilize technology to make financial information available so that employees can better manage their operations (see also Imperative 5) and for increasing operational efficiencies.**
- 3.6 Continuously move from a paper-based environment to a paperless environment.**
- 3.7 Utilize the Admissions Office experience as a model for operational change, with specific emphasis on leveraging technology to achieve efficiencies.**



3.8 Continue to re-engineer operations to maximize efficiency and create reliable processes and systems that are predictable and efficient. Reduce the number of people involved in administrative decisions.

3.9 Establish and assess a baseline for customer service satisfaction. Enhance the quality of services to students and staff by engaging in benchmarking as a part of continuous assessment and quality improvement.

3.10 Offer courses at one campus with distance learning to other campuses, thereby sharing teaching resources and expanding offerings at each campus.

3.11 Work with the WNY Consortium of Higher Education, SUNY Alliance, Erie County and New York State Government to identify and pursue opportunities for collaboration and eliminate unnecessary duplication.

OBJECTIVE/Desired Outcome	MEASURE/Key Performance Indicator
1. By the end of FY 2013 ECC's operating expenses per FTE will be at least 10% below the SUNY community college average while maintaining academic excellence.	SUNY Annual Report Summary KPI: (SUNY Operating Expense Per FTE CC Avg.- ECC Operating Expense Per FTE)/SUNY CC Average Operating Expense per FTE
2. By 2015 there will be stronger non-academic and/or academic programs in response to market demands and economic realities.	# of programs and units created, realigned, and /or merged KPI: Count number of programs between 2012 and 2014
3. In each year 100% of ECC academic programs will be fully accredited by the appropriate accrediting organizations.	Percentage of accredited programs KPI: Number of accredited academic programs/total number of academic programs



4. Planning, assessment and outcomes

MISSION CONNECTION: *Continuous Improvement*

Goal:

1. SUNY ECC will have in place a comprehensive institutional assessment process, including measures of outcomes related to the mission and goals, and meaningful learning outcomes, to support continuous improvement initiatives.

Strategic Initiatives:

4.1 Establish a culture of planning and assessment and an ongoing commitment to strategic planning and assessment, including a process for updating the Strategic Plan every year. An organized, sustained planning and assessment effort throughout the college should include both continuous process improvement and planning for new models of educational delivery and revenue.

4.2 Upgrade the Institutional Research and Academic Assessment office capabilities so that the college can systematically gather, analyze and act on evidence about student learning and outcomes and student satisfaction.

4.3 Establish standard operating procedures for internal communications so that everyone in the college will know where to access information. Use the newly-designed ECC Portal, *ECC Today* and SharePoint as the primary vehicles for college-wide internal communication. Promote the internal communication strategy.

4.4 Provide opportunities for campus-wide open discussion and feedback on issues concerning mission, vision, planning, and resource allocation. Enlist College Senate involvement.

4.5 Utilize the SUNY ECC *Strategic Plan*, program reviews, action plans and outcomes assessment to assess and evaluate all academic and institutional areas. Develop needed assessment tools, including setting outcomes for academic and institutional areas and creating surveys etc. for environmental analysis.

OBJECTIVE/Desired Outcome	MEASURE/Key Performance Indicator
<p>1. 100% of all accreditation and mandatory reports will be completed on time and accurately in each academic year.</p>	<p>Percent of accreditation and mandatory reports that were completed on time and accurately in an academic year. KPI: Number of accreditation and mandatory reports that were completed on time and accurately in an academic year/Total number of accreditation and mandatory reports that were required to be submitted</p>
<p>2. 100% of scheduled programs will have gone through academic program review or institutional review at the appropriate time.</p>	<p>Percent of scheduled programs going through academic program review or institutional review at the appropriate time. KPI: Number of scheduled programs going through academic program review or institutional review in an academic year/Total number of scheduled programs for academic program review or institutional review in that academic year.</p>
<p>3. The Strategic Plan and the mission assessment process will be updated in each academic year.</p>	<p>Strategic Plan and mission assessment updates KPI: Updates completed in an academic year</p>



5. Information for decision-making

MISSION CONNECTION: *Continuous Improvement*

Goals:

- 1. SUNY ECC decision-makers at every level will have available accurate and current information to support the best possible judgments about resource allocation and return on internal investments.**
- 2. Information systems will have the capacity and capability of supporting the academic and administrative enterprise of SUNY ECC, including fully automated processes and reporting.**

Strategic Initiatives:

5.1 Establish a user-friendly college portal allowing all ECC staff access to timely information needed to perform the daily functions, assess operations and make strategic decisions. Include (but don't limit to) establishing a reporting and operating analytics dashboard containing relevant data and information for all college functional areas that can be utilized to identify trends, examine processes and evaluate outcomes.

5.2 Re-establish the College Training Committee (CTC) and insert it into the GAP structure. Use the CTC to strategically and effectively educate the workforce and better leverage technology.

5.3 Establish a training matrix for each college functional area to maximize training efficiency.

5.4 Use the College Information Technology Committee to create three-year information technology plan that is in concert with this *Strategic Plan*.

5.5 Make necessary investments in the college networking services infrastructure to ensure compliance with industry standards to support the business and academic operations of the college, including academic and administrative computing and course delivery technology.

5.6. Leverage available technology and investigate new software solutions to improve efficiencies across the college (see also Imperative 3).

OBJECTIVE/Desired Outcome	MEASURE/Key Performance Indicator
<p>1. In each year the institutional effectiveness indicators will be updated, modified, completed and made accessible to all affiliated with ECC.</p>	<p>Institutional Effectiveness Indicators (see Appendix E) KPI: Update complete and communicated</p>
<p>2. By Fall 2014 the college networking services infrastructure will be in compliance with industry standards to support the business and academic operations of the college which include academic and administrative computing and course delivery technology.</p>	<p>ECC networking services infrastructure in compliance with industry standards to support the business and academic operations of the college; includes academic and administrative computing and course delivery technology. KPI: Level of compliance</p>



6. Enrollment, retention, transfer and graduation rates

MISSION CONNECTION: Excellent Educational Programs, Regional Economic Vitality, Diverse

Goals:

- 1. ECC retention, transfer and graduation rates will be in the upper half of its State and National peer groups.**
- 2. The number of students served by SUNY ECC (degree, certificate, and non-matriculated) will increase in every year.**

Strategic Initiatives:

- 6.1 Maintain a mix of traditional (direct from high school) and non-traditional students, accommodating the needs of non-traditional students through Pre-Collegiate Studies, Career Pathways, Disabled Student Services, Veterans' Services, and the Educational Opportunity Program. Increase our focus on becoming a regional two-year educational destination for international, honors, and distance learning students.**
- 6.2 Provide more flexibility in course offerings by developing multiple start dates for the semesters, weekend offerings, expanded distance learning, winter/summer intercessions and off-site courses.**
- 6.3 Further develop partnerships with area high schools and other academic institutions to create a 2+2+2 curriculum integration that allows students to begin their higher educational process while in high school. Students would, through advanced studies and articulation agreements, enroll at SUNY ECC and transfer to four-year institutions in a clearly defined process.**
- 6.4 Maintain and enhance joint admissions opportunities with other institutions of higher education.**
- 6.5 Offer more credit and non-credit courses in cooperation with school districts as an academic tool to attract students and new revenue.**
- 6.6 Partner with private developers to create residential housing opportunities to be available at North Campus by Fall 2013 and at South Campus by Fall 2014.**



6.7 Position SUNY ECC as a recognized regional educational site by developing and enhancing niche academic programs that are responsive to market needs and priorities, and that have potential interest to students. Look especially at workforce opportunities including degree programs in Health & Wellness, Physical Therapy Assistant, Cybersecurity, Geospatial Technology, Renewable Energy Technologies, Diversity & Community Studies, and BioManufacturing. Explore certificate programs in Solar and Geothermal Energy, CISCO & ORACLE Technician, Web and Mobile Application Development, Diagnostic Medical Sonography, Pharmacy Technician, Medical Informatics and Waste Water Management.

6.8 Develop reverse transfer programs with four-year colleges and universities (especially SUNY) where students at those institutions that are having academic difficulties in their first two years can take courses and skill remediation at SUNY ECC, then move smoothly back into the four-year college to complete their program.

6.9 Prepare *Pathways* students (differentially-prepared students and students disaffected from school) to be more competitive in the classroom by developing “wrap-a-round” services beginning with the initial point of contact (often in high school) and continuing with a tracking program based on specific goals. Continue to apply an intensive case management approach, including counseling and specially trained staff, to move differentially prepared students (high-risk) into training and degree programs.

6.10 Develop a comprehensive marketing strategy that will differentiate ECC’s value to potential students through branding and target marketing. Build a strategy to focus on “value” of ECC education, transferability and job readiness. Expand market research into neighboring counties. Take advantage of student success stories and successful curriculums in advertising campaigns.

OBJECTIVE/Desired Outcome	MEASURE/Key Performance Indicator
<p>1. By Fall 2013 retention of first year full-time degree track students will be at or above the SUNY CC peer group average.</p>	<p>Percent of all first year full-time degree track students attending in their second year. KPI: Fall 2013 ECC retention rate – Fall 2013 SUNY CC peer group retention rate</p>
<p>2. The 3-year graduation rate for the fall 2011 freshman class on a degree track will meet or exceed the SUNY CC peer group average.</p>	<p>Percent of all first year full-time degree track students in fall 2013 graduating by May 2014. KPI: 2014 ECC 3-year graduation rate – 2014 SUNY CC peer group 3-year graduation rate</p>
<p>3. The 3-year transfer rate for the fall 2011 freshman class will be at or above the SUNY CC peer group average.</p>	<p>Percent of all first year full-time students transferring within 3 years. KPI: Fall 2013 ECC transfer rate – Fall 2013 SUNY CC peer group transfer rate</p>
<p>4. The total number of students served by SUNY ECC will increase in each year of the Plan.</p>	<p>Full- and part-time degree, certificate and non-matriculated students served in all ECC programs. KPI: Total students served in an academic year – Total students served in the previous academic year</p>



7. Capital development/Fundraising

MISSION CONNECTION: Affordable education, Multi-campus environment

Goals:

1. SUNY ECC will have access to the necessary capital for investment in its facilities and programs.

Strategic Initiatives:

7.1 Work in concert with the ECC Foundation and its Strategic Plan by:

- **Enhancing internal relationships**
- **Expand external relationships**
- **Increasing Foundation financial resources**
- **Effective and consistent communications**

7.2 Re-engage alumni in the future of the college. Develop alumni fund drives as a part of creating a giving culture.

7.3 Initiate a capital campaign aimed at supporting the redevelopment of the North Campus, including construction of a new academic building and modernization of all facilities and grounds.

7.4 Actively pursue a naming rights strategy for key areas that offer strong potential for public recognition (e.g. athletic venues, visible buildings, etc.)

7.5 Increase significantly the number and value of scholarships available to incoming first-year students. (see strategy 6.11)

7.6 Engage stakeholders, faculty, staff, retired employees, vendors, current and past donors, philanthropic leaders and corporations in a concerted effort to develop partnerships and new revenue opportunities.

7.7 Maintain, monitor and improve if necessary the college grant development process and grants implementation policies and procedures that will lead to the identification and pursuit of available grant funding from all sources.

7.8 Develop special events that raise the awareness of ECC and its impact to the community and which will lead to increased revenues.



OBJECTIVE/Desired Outcome	MEASURE/Key Performance Indicator
1. Funding for modernization of the North Campus and the new academic building will be in place by Fall 2012.	Capital funds for investment at North Campus KPI: Total dollars available
2. Erie County support of the capital needs of SUNY ECC will increase in each year of the Plan.	Capital dollars made available by Erie County in each fiscal year KPI: increase in each year



8. Making a difference in a changing environment

MISSION CONNECTION: Regional economic vitality, Accessible

Goals:

1. SUNY ECC will be the partner that business, government and other organizations trusts and wants to work with to ensure well-qualified graduates for their workforces.

Strategic Initiatives:

8.1 Continue to develop and provide re-training opportunities and continuing education linked to the needs and demands of WNY. Ensure that SUNY ECC programs reflect the community's priorities for investment for job growth and overall economic vitality

8.2 Establish academic clusters around existing and planned economic development within the region as reflected by program offerings at campus locations. Develop and enhance academic programs, certificates, and workforce development around the following Erie County priority clusters for economic growth: green energy, health sciences, advanced manufacturing, and health information technology. Participate with regional leadership in the further development of each of these clusters.

8.3 Collaborate with community-based organizations to deliver courses in alternative settings (e.g. St. John Baptist auto program, Buffalo Medical Campus, Faith based).

8.4 Partner with the Buffalo Public Schools to increase the number of students able to successfully attend and complete college as part of the YES Program.

8.5 Integrate service learning activities (civic engagement) into departmental course offerings as a part of students' "road map" to success and career development.

8.6 Expand opportunities to involve SUNY ECC in community-based service projects that are inclusive of faculty, staff, and students

8.7 Enhance the SUNY ECC *One-Stop* as an effective, self-sufficient strategic business unit of the College, with the capabilities of generating targeted revenues and reinvesting portions of its profits in improved service delivery capabilities.

OBJECTIVE/Desired Outcome	MEASURE/Key Performance Indicator
<p>1. At least 85% of SUNY ECC 2013-14 graduates will be employed in an occupation related to their program or continuing their education.</p>	<p>Percent of SUNY ECC graduates employed in an occupation related to their program or continuing their education. KPI: SUNY ECC graduates employed in an occupation related to their program or continuing their education/total number of ECC graduates</p>
<p>2. In each year of the Plan at least 90% of employers of ECC graduates will report at least a satisfactory rating for overall performance of those graduates.</p>	<p>Percent employers reporting that SUNY ECC graduates overall performance is satisfactory, very good or excellent. KPI: Percentages as responded to on the annual Employer Satisfaction Survey</p>
<p>3. The number of community partnerships and collaborations will increase in each year of the Plan.</p>	<p>Number of community partnerships KPI: Number in each year is greater than that of the previous year.</p>

APPENDICES

- A. Situation Analysis 2011**
- B. Assessment of Plan Progress**
- C. One Page Plan Summary**
- D. Planning Process 2011 – 2012**
- E. Lexicon of Planning Terms**

Appendix A: SITUATION ANALYSIS 2011

SUNY Erie Community College

December 26, 2011

ABOUT THE SITUATION ANALYSIS

The Middle States Commission on Higher Education's Evaluation Team Report from spring 2011 indicated that "Vision 2015 appears to lack some of the rudimentary elements expected in a strategic plan such as an environmental scan, and documentation on participation, particularly the involvement of external stakeholders." ECC is committed to effective planning and continuously monitors the internal and external environment. This document, using the SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) model, documents the issues driving the development of a new Strategic Plan in the 2011-12 academic year.

Strengths/core competencies and weaknesses are aspects of the internal environment over which ECC has control. The College should build on strengths in order to achieve the mission and goals and eliminate or at least neutralize weaknesses toward the same end. Based on the available information, factors are highlighted as the most strategic strengths and weaknesses that have to be considered as the College develops its strategic approaches. Each can be documented and supported.

Opportunities and threats or risks are aspects of the external environment over which ECC has no control. The College can take advantage of opportunities for the continued progress of the college. Threats should be controlled for and/or guarded against if the organization is to achieve its mission. The important thing is to emphasize only those opportunities and threats that are of a strategic nature – that are key social, economic, political, competitive and other trends or expected changes that will actually influence our decision-making. Each can be documented and supported.

"The College should develop, implement and document a comprehensive and systematic planning process for ECC that considers both internal and external forces affecting the institution..." (Middle States Commission on Higher Education)



KEY ISSUES

Among the factors that the College must account for in its planning for 2012 - 2015 and beyond are:

- Economic pressures in WNY (and elsewhere) leading to students choosing cost-effective options for obtaining degrees and/or knowledge.
- Aging facilities and growing space needs with limited capital capabilities.
- Strong SUNY and Federal interest in community colleges as important for economic development.
- Reduced government support.
- Growth of the non-traditional student market in terms of age and their goals.
- Market pressure to keep tuition and fee hikes to a minimum are offset by the need to increase revenues.¹
- Retention and graduation rates are below where they need to be.
- Recruitment is more difficult; there is increased competition from on-line and alternative sources for degree completion.
- Clearly delineated expectations of the Middle States Commission and the ability of ECC to address those expectations. Especially assessment, planning and resource allocation.
- Developing role of the College Senate.
- Shrinking core of full-time experienced faculty.
- A non-aggressive culture in an environment that requires pro-active change.
- General lack of awareness involving enrollment declines and financial pressures impacting ECC.
- Declining high school graduation numbers in Erie County.
- Increasing labor costs.

CORE COMPETENCIES/ADVANTAGES

1. **Accessibility.** ECC's three campuses across Erie County provide a strong accessibility factor for students,

An Overview of Issues to Direct Planning Initiatives
Please send comments to Kenneth A Rogers, Planning Consultant (plankar@aol.com)

especially since they are almost all commuters. ECC's locations in three areas within Erie County especially optimize the convenience factor important to non-traditional students and increase its exposure in all the markets. There is plentiful parking at North and South.

2. Cost. ECC is affordable. Even with increases in tuition (2011-12 tuition is \$ 3,300 and cost of attendance is \$4,070/year) the cost of attending ECC is significantly less than attending a four-year SUNY college (e.g. Buffalo State's tuition is \$5,270 & cost of attendance is \$6,353/year) .

3. Comprehensiveness. ECC's programs provide a large variety of options for any student wishing to attend. The 53 degree programs, 27 certificate offerings and 13 online degrees and certifications meet "the needs of a diverse student body and contribute to the regional economic vitality by providing excellent, flexible, affordable, and accessible educational programs..."⁴ Along with the 99 or 100 off-site course offerings, the breadth of relevant academic and workforce programs also provides balance to the college's portfolio.

4. Careers. Fully 31% of ECC associate degree graduates⁵ were employed in their field and another 51% were pursuing education full or part-time. ECC's workforce development initiative is one of the largest of the 30 community colleges in New York State. ECC offers many career tracks, of which several are in the top 10 employment growth opportunities.

DEVELOPING COMPETENCIES

1. ECC has made significant progress in governance, especially with the newly-formed College Senate and continuation of the GAP Committee.
2. **Housing options.** The college has attracted outside investors to develop housing options. The options now exist at the City location, and housing is being developed at North and, eventually, South.
3. There has been significant investment in and improvement of the Learning Resource Centers on all three campuses.⁴

OTHER STRENGTHS

ACADEMICS & ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

1. ECC faculty members are appropriately prepared and qualified teachers, genuinely committed to

excellence in teaching and to generous service to students, the College, and the local community.⁴

2. ECC ranks among the top 50 community colleges nationwide in associate degrees conferred.
3. ECC is one of the few community colleges that offers Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET) accredited programs in Civil Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering and Construction Management Engineering Technology.⁴
4. ECC is attractive to students who are not necessarily looking to obtain degrees. According to the Incoming Student Survey about 58% of students entering ECC in 2010 were there to take courses necessary for transferring. Almost 40% were there to take a few courses for personal growth.
5. ECC offers a significant number of articulation and transfer agreements with area 4-year institutions, and successful completion of an associate degree at ECC leads to automatic acceptance at a SUNY 4-year college.

ENROLLMENT AND GROWTH

6. **Pathways to Success** has been moving students from basic educational programs to college completion through partnerships that include a common design of student intake, seamless education services and timely connections between the participating institutions.
7. **Open enrollment** creates great opportunities for new markets with few restraints.
8. Enrollment has fallen for 2011², but the number of associates degrees granted (1,845 in 2010, 1,952 in 2011) increased over the past two years.³ ECC retains the highest market share of Erie County residents attending colleges.
9. In general students enroll at ECC because they want to be there, and not because they were not accepted elsewhere. In fact, 67% of incoming students had ECC as their first choice.⁷

PLANNING

10. The mission is recognized and supported throughout the campus. ECC periodically conducts a review of its mission through a structured assessment process that has been required by the SUNY Chancellor.^{4,6}

STUDENTS AND SERVICES

11. The student population is diverse overall, with opportunity for all students - no matter their background - to optimize their experience.
12. ECC offers 15 intercollegiate sports.

MANAGEMENT AND FINANCE

13. **Fiscal responsibility.** The College's financial management team is highly professional and provides informative and compliant financial statements, along with a thorough analysis at year end.⁴

14. **ECC maintains a relatively low operational cost per student.** The college is 30th of 30 community colleges in administrative costs/student. Management has pursued efficiency measures in procurement practices and other operational areas and reviews best practices, all with a focus on operational efficiencies and cost containment.⁴

15. **A strong and dedicated senior administration is in place, supported by an administrative structure and staff that is dedicated to the mission/goals of the College.**⁴

CAPACITY AND RESOURCES

16. The college has generally **strong placement of graduates in targeted careers or into four-year academic programs.** For the Class of 2010 it was determined that 49% were continuing their educations full-time and 25% were employed full time in their selected fields.⁵

17. **Increasingly classrooms are being equipped with "smart" technology and the resulting improved capabilities for integrating technology into the learning process.**

OTHER/OPINION – FACULTY/ ADMINISTRATORS/ STAFF⁶

18. **There is an under-tapped well of interest, ideas and energy among the faculty and staff who make up the college.**

19. **There is a general but not overwhelming sense that ECC has made some progress over the past two years. This is true across all categories of ECC personnel.**

20. **Almost everyone at least somewhat agrees that they have an important responsibility to contribute to the progress of ECC. Administrators felt most strongly in this regard.**

21. **Almost everyone believes that their personal work on behalf of ECC has contributed to its overall success. Staff are less likely to totally agree with this statement.**

22. **People mostly agree that they feel respected and listened to by their peers. There are small but significant numbers that do not feel respected, however.**

23. **Priorities for moving ECC forward are somewhat understood, but there is a sizeable minority that do not understand the priorities.**

24. **About 2/3 of faculty, staff and administrators at least somewhat agree that they feel part of a dynamic and professional organization.**

25. **Across the board individuals are proud to be associated with ECC.**

26. **Across the board, individuals would recommend ECC to a friend or relative as a good place to get a degree. Similarly, but with less enthusiasm, they would recommend ECC as a good place to work.**⁷



KEY VULNERABILITIES

1. **Assessment.** The Middle States Commission cited many areas requiring planning and significant progress in the area of assessment. Examples cited are:

- **Plan to assess the effectiveness of the administrative structure, the GAP, and the College Senate**
 - **Regular process for evaluation of the Board of Trustees and use of assessment for continuous improvement**
 - **Assessment of the student learning outcomes (SLO) and communication of results with students**
- in addition, the College does not track student satisfaction on an annual basis, nor does it track faculty and staff satisfaction.

2. **Enrollment decreases.** The reduced FTE student count at ECC is accompanied by losses in both tuition and NYS aid which is based on the number of FTE students.

3. **Retention and graduation rates.** ECC's 36 month graduation rate is below that of its peers statewide (23% in 2009-10) and nationally (28% in 2009-10⁸) and a significant issue related to mission success and fiscal health. The first-to-second year retention rate of 61% means that the College has to bring in more students to remain fiscally healthy. ECC serves a high risk student, both academically and economically (Tap and Pell recipients). Financial strain and academic under-preparation combine to become factors of a higher risk for lower retention and graduation rates. Also, a large number of students do not enroll with a goal of obtaining an associate's degree.⁹

4. **Cost structure.** The ECC cost structure is challenging. Retiree health is 4% of the annual budget. Employee costs go up in each year despite the decreasing number of full-time employees. ECC, like other institutions, faces great

pressures from increasing employee benefits costs (especially health care and retirement) at the same time that revenues are falling.

5. Facilities. The three campuses were constructed in different time periods; therefore the condition of buildings and infrastructure is vastly different. Certain facilities are state of the art while others are in need of upgrades. Classroom technology levels are often below those of area high schools. The main City Campus building requires a significant amount of maintenance and repair and capital project work yearly. The North campus' eight buildings were constructed some fifty years ago and are showing their age. They are not competitive or attractive to potential students or those using the buildings. South campus was constructed in the 1970's and is in fair condition. Across the board there are issues related to cleanliness of facilities.⁶

6. Systems and Productivity. Managers do not have the information to make good decisions or to carry out effective assessments. While improved, the college is still very much siloed by campus. All decisions have to go through many hands before being carried out. Individuals that should be working toward the goals of the college are instead spending significant time on routine operations, and resources are deployed ineffectively. Productivity could be significantly higher if the proper systems investments and reliable processes were in place and employees were appropriately trained. The Erie County relationship is also a complicating factor.

7. Proportion of Full-Time Faculty. The number of full-time faculty has shrunk significantly due to a hiring freeze, putting at least one department at risk for losing accreditation if corrective action is not pursued, and reducing the continuity necessary to achieve academic goals. Only 3 full-time faculty have been hired in the past four years. The college is short of many full-time faculty. Part-timers, are not supported sufficiently to become "part of the team."

8. Outdated Network Information Technology. The Network IT (Sysco) infrastructure and its related equipment is at the end of its useful life. There is a 20% maintenance cost each year that can't be capitalized so the infrastructure continues to erode, even as demand increases. The 4,900 computers must be maintained. Replacement is pegged at \$ 2 million that the college does not have.

9. Inability to Fully Address Student Needs. A high percentage of students coming to ECC have many socio-economic, educational and emotional needs that are complex and that require added and very personal attention. The college does not have the capacity to provide the level of counseling and other comprehensive support services required so the students are at high risk of dropping out.

OTHER WEAKNESSES

ACADEMICS & ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

- 1. Traditional model in an increasingly non-traditional market.** ECC continues to make some progress in setting up its academic programs to accommodate the adult and non-traditional learners that will be the growth market. However, issues such as increased weekend schedules, totally on-line programs and flexible student support centers (e.g. office hours) are important areas for future attention if the college is to really increase its share of the non-traditional market.
- 2. The uncompetitive salary structure** for full-time faculty in some departments, and especially for part-time faculty, makes it difficult to attract faculty to ECC. This is especially true when compared to other NYS institutions.
- 3. Student advisement** is not always available to all students⁴ and in some cases when available the students are not availing themselves of the services.
- 4. Faculty are not choosing to participate in governance** of the college beyond their departments to the extent expected.⁴

MULTI-CAMPUS

- 5. Multiple campuses** create a disconnect – unity of purpose, programs, etc. There continues to be some duplication of offerings at the same time that there is a disparity in the course offerings and quality of facilities between the 3 campuses.

ENROLLMENT AND GROWTH

- 6. The college, by being an open access school,** accepts a significant number of freshmen who are **academically underprepared** for college and at higher risk for not achieving their goals.
- 7. The underlying assumptions and trends** which drive the 5-year enrollment outlook and related budget profiles is not reviewed in concert with the strategic planning process.⁴

STUDENTS AND SERVICES

- 8. Students without specific career ambitions** are not receiving the best possible counseling and presentation of

options, and are therefore floundering and at high risk of dropping out.

9. There are continuing issues related to student services, especially in the perception that students receive the "runaround" when seeking administrative services. Financial aid and academic advisement are two areas that have been indicated as needing improvement.⁶

10. **Downtown parking**, despite some expansion and spaces available at Sheehan Health Network, remains a significant perceived issue for current and potential students.

PLANNING, RESOURCES AND SUPPORTS

11. Middle States identified the need to assure close alignment between strategic planning decisions and the tough realities of resource allocation limits and assure that resulting decisions are communicated with clarity of linkage to the agreed priorities.⁴

12. There is not a coordinated planning process and there are no direct planning resources within the college structure.⁴ Sustained planning is not valued in the culture; there are few contingency plans created.

13. **Institutional Research** does not have the functionality – workspace, computer power, personnel and data sources required for the complexities of ECC. "It is not clear that this arrangement is capable of supporting even a core institutional research program..."⁴

MARKETING AND AWARENESS

14. The College is not as good as it needs to be in telling people how good it is and the value it provides to students and citizens of Erie County.

15. The college is enrollment-driven in a competitive market with limited opportunity to use tuition as a marketing tool. ECC cannot, by law, provide tuition discounts. The market is very sensitive to tuition increases.

16. ECC is unclear about its brand identity within its target audiences and the county in general. Similarly, the return on ECC's marketing strategies, investment and approach is unclear. There is no measurement in place to determine market position.

HUMAN RESOURCES

17. **Automation** has not been utilized in the human resources area, leading to the inability to collect and use meaningful personnel information.

18. Managers in many areas of the college are not effectively holding their employees accountable for outcomes and efficiency. A business-as-usual

attitude therefore is pervasive across ECC. Work rules sometimes handcuff the college in terms of an effective response. Most faculty teach 30 out of 52 weeks per year.

19. ECC has difficulty building and maintaining diversity in full-time administrative, faculty and staff positions because so few positions are open at any given time. This is especially true for faculty positions. Overall about 12% of employees are non-white.

INSTITUTIONAL ADVANCEMENT

19. **Alumni relationships.** Alumni are not engaged with ECC to the extent that might be expected. Without engagement they are less likely to be long-term financial supporters of ECC.

20. The ECC culture is not one of "giving" to the cause. The Board, staff, and faculty are not contributing financially at the level of peer institutions.

21. There is a lack of time, support, and in some cases interest, leading to low participation in the grants process on the part of many of the faculty.

22. There are relatively few significant academic or need-based scholarships available to students in their first year of college that can be used to improve retention and recruitment efforts.

COMMUNICATIONS

23. Faculty, staff and administrators all tend to feel that there is insufficient communication with the leadership of ECC.⁶

OTHER/OPINION – FACULTY/ADMINISTRATORS/STAFF⁶

24. About half of ECC faculty, staff and administrators feel that they do not get some or all the information that they need to understand decisions.

25. There is a perception that safety issues have not been adequately addressed at the City campus.



BIGGEST POTENTIAL OPPORTUNITIES

1. The SUNY strategic plan focuses on six "big Ideas":
 - **Encouraging entrepreneurship:** Capitalize on the innovations that flow from SUNY campus laboratories and research facilities, by more quickly delivering them to the marketplace.
 - **Creating an education pipeline:** It emphasizes teacher training in rural areas to help students from schools located there better prepare for college.
 - **Improving health care in the state:** Schools would work to train more health care professionals.

- **Becoming more energy efficient:** Decreasing the carbon footprint of all of the campus through green initiatives and partnerships.
- **Being involved in the surrounding community:** Getting the college population involved in more services and volunteer programs.
- **Developing more international relationships:** The plan targets increased recruitment of foreign students and encourages more students to study abroad.

2. Under-prepared students. There are many potential students interested in college and careers requiring a college education, but who are not truly prepared for the rigors of a college education. These are students, who would not have pursued a college education in the past, and who presently have a significantly higher college dropout rate. If properly addressed, this group represents a significant continuing market for community colleges since 4-year schools have less capabilities and more restrictions. This is a NYS Board of Regents priority.

3. The need for health care and allied health professions will continue to increase. Growth in health care professions and services will continue no matter the condition of the economy. These professions will, however, follow employment cycles. The health professions will be evolving, with many opportunities for moving up or changing focus. The national shortage of health professionals is more acute than the local shortage.

4. Alternative Delivery Mechanisms. The fast growth of the on-line education industry (6 times that of traditional higher education) is proof that individuals want the degree credential and are less concerned about the source of the degree. (*threat, also*) National studies show that online and distance education students prefer to stay locally or at least have preference for brand names that they know.

OTHER OPPORTUNITIES

5. Non-traditional students. The traditional track of graduation from high school and graduation from college two or four years later is now the exception rather than the rule. The returning adult learner market became 51% of the higher education population in 2010 (US Dept. of Education). With almost half of undergraduate college students over the age of 24 (nationally) it is clear that this is a market. Jobs are moving from manufacturing to the

knowledge sector. The jobs not only required more education, but also continuing education.

6. Lifelong learners. The USA is becoming a nation of lifelong learners. College is the *beginning* of a lifelong learning process. ECC should be thinking about lifelong learning plans and providing tools that are usable for the rest of the students' lives. ECC can bring its delivery system out into the community – to hospitals, other clinical sites, educational institutions, etc.

7. Non-matriculated market. Formal undergraduate education is a small portion of the learning environment. At ECC 21% of students report that their goal is other than an associate degree.¹⁰ Six times more individuals are engaged outside of the college learning structure. Addressing the opportunity requires flexible curriculum planning.

8. Social networking is changing the student environment very quickly. Tools like *Facebook* provide the opportunity to partner with students at different points of their lives.

9. New YMCA - North. The newly developing YMCA adjacent to North will be an opportunity for ECC through discounts, Internships, co-ops, and the opportunity to rent space at a preferred rate.

10. Health care systems. Western New York is blessed with a growing orientation to health –related services and education. The Buffalo Niagara Medical Corridor will be a major recipient of investment and remains a high potential source of ECC student placements and careers in the health sciences.

11. Counties adjacent to Erie. Student populations (traditional and non-traditional) in Niagara, Genesee, Wyoming, Cattaraugus and Chautauqua counties are looking for quality programs that have specific career opportunities. They will attend out-of-area colleges to obtain those degrees if they are not available at home.

12. Veterans. Individuals returning from Iraq and Afghanistan are eligible for significant student aid and direct funding.

13. Federal Student Aid. Federal student aid remains the lifeline to higher education access. In 2009-10, close to 3 million community college students received more than \$9.7 billion in Pell Grant funds. Community college students are fortunate in that the low tuitions they pay result in a reduced reliance on loans, and they account for 10% or less of all federal loans.

14. Erie County. While not providing increases in per-student funding the County has set aside \$ 7.5 million in capital dollars to help fund the new "Center for Academic Excellence" academic building at North Campus.

15. SUNY shared services in the WNY region. The leaders of the four SUNY schools in Erie and Niagara counties are beginning to explore how shared services arrangements

could benefit all. This will be difficult considering how hard it is for ECC to do that with three campuses.

16. *Say Yes to Education*. The Buffalo Board of Education and local foundations are in the final stage of negotiations to bring this “game changer” to 30,000 students who would have their college tuition paid for and a strong college preparation track in high school.



MOST OMINOUS THREATS

1. ECC is feeling the effects of a declining population of potential students in the traditional-age Erie County markets. The number of young high school graduates in Erie County is expected to drop by 18% by 2019. The 22-29 year old non-traditional market is the age group that is most likely to leave the region for better economic opportunity. Within that decline, the future crop of students will be increasingly diverse (race, age, ethnicity, preparation).

2. **Commoditization of the undergraduate degree.** To most students it matters little where they obtain their undergraduate degrees. The degree is a credential, not the place. For-profit and on-line institutions are the fastest growing segment of higher education and are becoming more accepted and prominent. They do not have to deal with the issues and costs related to maintaining campuses.

3. **Competition among community and two year colleges for students and fundraising is increasingly intense – especially as the options for students increase.** In Erie County only ECC remains as a pure two-year institution. There is an outflow of over 1900 FTE students from Erie County that attend community college in other NYS counties.

4. **Reduced State and County funding.** In this time of tight government budgets and looming deficits it is more likely than not that ECC will see reduced State appropriations, and at best, steady County appropriations (there has not been an increase from Erie County in many years). Enrollment is now the basis for 80% of revenues, putting ECC in the “tuition-dependent” category of colleges. There is

little public support for increasing funding for community colleges.

OTHER THREATS

1. **Local economy.** ECC’s primary market area has been affected by the slow recovery of the economy – although not as intensely as in other recessions. There has been a negative impact on jobs overall. The national economic malaise will not help efforts to grow the local economy.

2. **Few flexible funds.** ECC’s budget is severely constrained by contracted costs. There is little flexibility in any year for significant investments or re-allocation of existing resources.

3. **Increasing alternatives for traditional and non-traditional students.** There are many educational options available to students in WNY, and even more non-educational options that pull qualified people from the potential pool of applicants to ECC.

4. **GASB 45.** The requirements of GASB 45 have mandated the recognition and inclusion of long-term liability for the legacy costs of post retirement health benefits.⁴

5. **The complexity of communication with a variety of generations in college forces institutions to use different strategies simultaneously, thereby increasing costs without necessarily increasing yields.**

6. For college students from families with annual incomes of \$25,000 or less, slightly more than 1 in 4 earns a bachelor’s degree within 6 years, compared to 56% for students from families with incomes of \$70,000 or more (US Dept. of Education.). Assuming this holds true for associates degrees, the issue of retention becomes much more difficult.

7. **The fast pace of technological change and increased expectations of students at every level create great pressure to enhance offerings.** Elementary and secondary level teachers are using computers and “smart board” technology in their classrooms. Colleges have to be teaching with that same level of technology if they are going to be attractive to potential students.

8. **Niagara County Community College is promoting its programs in the regional market.** Like all schools they are looking for new markets in the face of changing demographics.

9. **The Blogosphere – social networking applications – is fast to spread rumors and unconfirmed stories.** There is a real chance that false information can lead to panic among students and faculty. These lines of communication represent the first information that most students receive and therefore have to be taken seriously.

10. **Nursing programs are expanding.** Trocaire College began a BS in Nursing degree in 2010, and Niagara

University has announced its intention to re-start its BSN program in 2012 (with NYS approval). This will increase competition for faculty and students.

11. Applicants come to SUNY ECC with vastly different levels of preparation (*differentially prepared*).
12. The *socio-economic situation of students* coming to us is much more complex. Many if not most of our students do not come from “traditional” households.
13. The *student loan default rate* for fiscal 2009, at 15.6%, was the highest in the region. This compares to a national rate of 8.8%.¹¹
14. *New, higher academic requirements for state and federal financial aid* leaves out some students that might otherwise attend ECC.
15. *Developmental education* as it is currently practiced in community colleges is under constant economic and political threat nationally and is also being threatened competitively through on-line programs.¹²
16. The *changing NYS and Erie County political landscape* adds to the uncertainty regarding policies, capital investments and funding.

PLANNING IMPERATIVES

1. Academic Capacity and Outcomes
 - Full-time faculty growth
 - Learning outcomes
 - *Diverse*
 - *Excellence*
 - *Flexible*
2. Facilities enhancement and development
 - *Accessible*
 - New academic building – north
 - Modernize north
 - Enhance the appeal of the buildings and grounds across the 3 campuses
3. Optimal use of resources
 - *Flexible*
 - *Continuous improvement*
 - Reduced duplication – greater efficiencies
 - Examine program array and rationalize
4. Planning, assessment and outcomes
 - *Continuous improvement*
 - Resource allocation tied to plan priorities
 - Structure and sustainability of planning Initiatives
 - Satisfaction
 - Planning for a new model of educational delivery (and revenue model)

5. Information for decision-making
 - *Resources to help students achieve their goals*
 - *Continuous improvement*
 - *Systems/automation*
 - *Reporting*
6. Enrollment and graduation rates
 - *Excellent*
 - *Diverse*
 - *Affordable*
 - *Accessible*
 - *Other counties*
 - *Retention and recruitment*
 - *Branding and marketing*
7. Capital development/fundraising
 - *Activated alumni*
 - *Capitalize growth*
8. Making a difference in a changing environment
 - *Regional economic vitality*
 - *Impact on the community*

¹ The College Board’s 2011 *Trends in College Pricing and Trends in Student Aid* reports on college pricing and student aid underscore two ongoing realities for community college students and institutions. Those realities are continuing tuition increases coupled with a strong and essential federal role in helping students meet their educational expenses.

² Fall 2011 student headcount was down 4% from the previous year (600 less students) and there are 400 less FTE’s than in the previous year.

³ As a comparison, in 2004 ECC awarded 1,753 degrees, 1,588 in 2002, and 1,705 in 2000.

⁴ Report of the Middle States Evaluation Team – Spring 2011

⁵ *Survey of 2010 ECC Graduates*

⁶ *Planning Input Survey of all ECC Personnel*, December 2011. Based on 705 responses.

⁷ 88% of responding faculty somewhat or fully agreed with this statement

⁸ Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation

⁹ in the *Fall 2002 Survey of Incoming Students*, only 67% indicated that obtaining a degree was their purpose for attending ECC.

¹⁰ ECC Incoming Student Survey 2010

¹¹ *Business First*, October 14-20, 2011

¹² Rutschow and Schneider, June 2011 *Unlocking the Gates What We Know About Improving Developmental Education*

APPENDIX B: ASSESSMENT OF PLAN PROGRESS

Introduction

The Middle States Commission on Higher Education clearly “expects institutions to assess their *overall* effectiveness, with primary attention to the assessment of learning outcomes, which are fundamental to the accreditation process.” The tradition of learning effectiveness assessment has been at the program and classroom level; institutional measurement is therefore a true challenge. While the college approaches and methodologies for learning outcomes are our own prerogatives, the key to success is engagement, consistency, acceptance, and clear utilization of the findings for more effective resource allocation. Our goal in this process has been to identify a clear set of measures across the college while encouraging additional measures at the departmental level.

The Board of Trustees and the President of SUNY ECC are ultimately responsible for establishing and achieving the SUNY ECC mission. To do so, they need routine information and measures on how the college is doing relative to its mission. More important, however, is that to achieve the mission there is a strong need for alignment of the mission focus of the campus from the department level through to the Board of Trustees. That is, the SUNY ECC mission has to be alive at every level of the college, and everyone has to be measuring our progress the same way. The only way to do that is to measure – and hold individuals accountable for – our mission effectiveness.

This assessment chart ties together the mission of the college, the Imperatives of the Strategic Plan, goals related to those imperatives and measurable objectives (outcomes) in the Plan. A dashboard chart will be established for marking progress.

MISSION AND PLAN ACHIEVEMENT

SUNY ECC Mission Statement

SUNY Erie Community College meets the needs of a diverse student body and contributes to regional economic vitality by providing excellent, flexible, affordable and accessible educational programs in a multi-campus environment committed to continuous improvement.

MISSION	IMPERATIVE	GOAL	OBJECTIVES ¹
Diverse	1. Academic quality and learning outcomes	1. All SUNY ECC offerings will be academically rigorous and challenging for students, and will adequately prepare students for their next academic degree programs and/or their chosen careers.	1.1 By fall 2015 the racial and ethnic diversity of SUNY ECC's employees will mirror that of ECC's service delivery area
	6. Enrollment, retention, transfer and graduation rates	1. ECC retention, transfer and graduation rates will be in the upper half of its State and National peer groups. 2. The number of students served by SUNY ECC (degree, certificate, and non-matriculated) will increase in every year.	6.1 By Fall 2013 retention of first year full-time degree track students will be at or above the SUNY CC peer group average. 6.2 The 3-year graduation rate for the fall 2011 freshman class on a degree track will meet or exceed the SUNY CC peer group average. 6.4 The total number of students served by SUNY ECC will increase in each year of the Plan.
Regional economic vitality	6. Enrollment, retention, transfer and graduation rates	2. The number of students served by SUNY ECC (degree, certificate, and non-matriculated) will increase in every year.	6.4 The total number of students served by SUNY ECC will increase in each year of the Plan.

¹ The objective numbering is related to the planning imperative. Objective #1.2 is imperative #1, objective #2. An objective may be used as a step toward more than one goal.

MISSION	IMPERATIVE	GOAL	OBJECTIVES ¹
	<p>8. Making a difference in a changing environment</p>	<p>1. SUNY ECC will be the partner that business, government and other organizations trusts and wants to work with to ensure well-qualified graduates for their workforces.</p>	<p>8.1 At least 85% of SUNY ECC 2013-14 graduates will be employed in an occupation related to their program or continuing their education.</p> <p>8.2 In each year of the Plan at least 90% of employers of ECC graduates will report at least a satisfactory rating for overall performance of those graduates.</p> <p>8.3 The number of community partnerships and collaborations will increase in each year of the Plan.</p>
Excellent educational programs	1. Academic quality & learning outcomes	<p>1. All SUNY ECC offerings will be academically rigorous and challenging for students, and will adequately prepare students for their next academic degree programs and/or their chosen careers.</p> <p>2. All SUNY ECC graduates will demonstrate achievement across student learning outcomes.</p>	<p>1.2 In each year 100% of ECC professional programs will be fully accredited by the appropriate accrediting organizations.</p> <p>1.3 By fall 2014 ECC will meet or exceed the SUNY CC median success rate for developmental studies.</p> <p>1.5 By fall 2015 full-time faculty members will be teaching 70% of all course sections taught at SUNY ECC.</p>
	6. Enrollment, retention, transfer and graduation rates	1. ECC retention, transfer and graduation rates will be in the upper half of its State and National peer groups.	6.3 The 3-year transfer rate for the fall 2011 freshman class will be at or above the SUNY CC peer group average.
Flexible educational programs	3. Optimal use of resources	1. SUNY ECC resource allocation will be in full alignment with the priorities of the Strategic Plan.	3.2 By 2015 there will be stronger non-academic and/or academic programs in response to market demands and economic realities.
Affordable educational programs	3. Optimal use of resources	2. All students attending ECC will be provided with the academic and student support resources to achieve their self-defined goals.	<p>3.1 By the end of FY 2013 ECC's operating expenses per FTE will be at least 10% below the SUNY community college average.</p> <p>3.3 In each year 100% of ECC academic programs will be fully accredited by the appropriate accrediting</p>

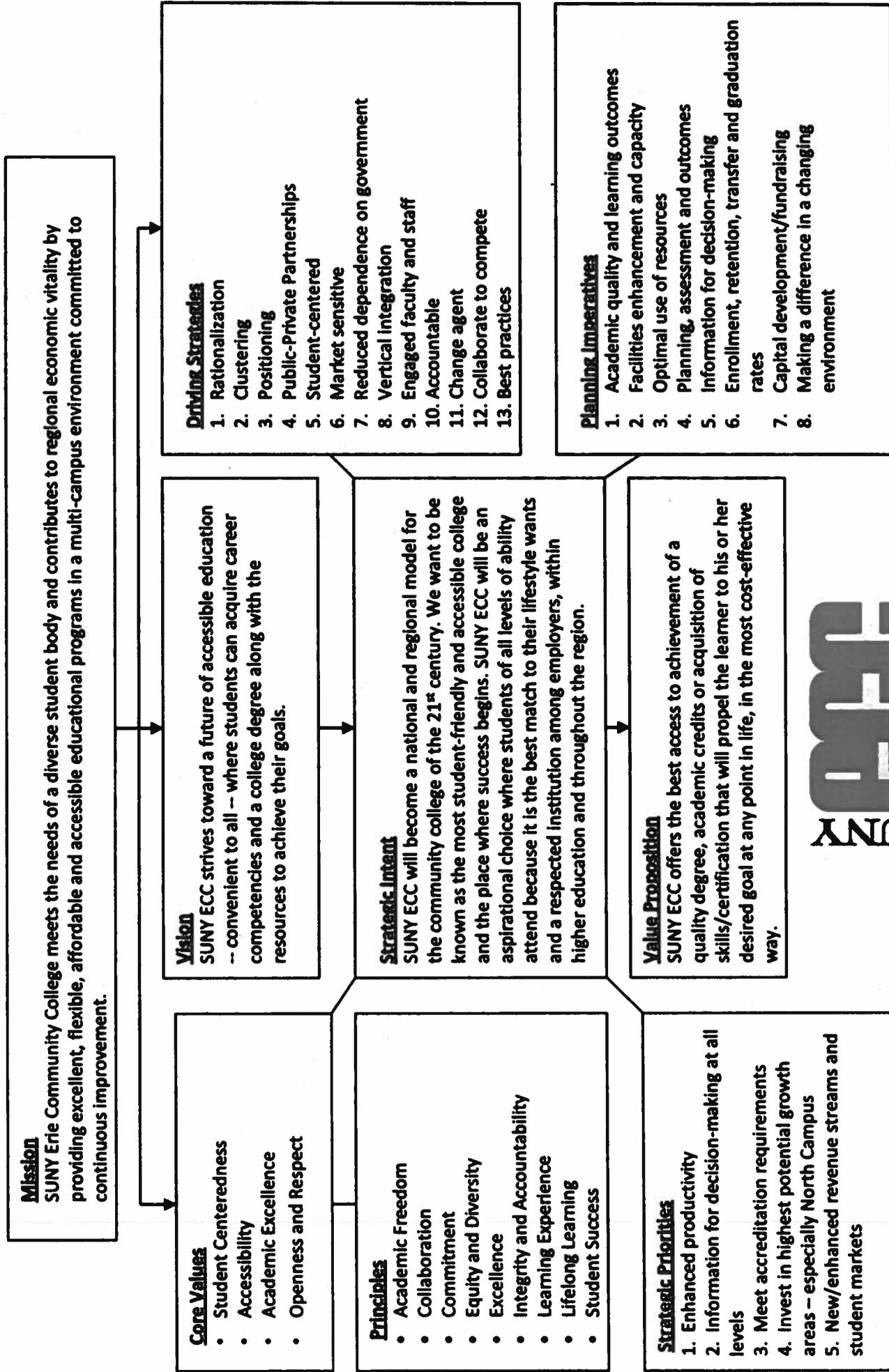
SUNY ECC Strategic Plan Appendix B.

MISSION	IMPERATIVE	GOAL	OBJECTIVES ¹
			organizations.
	7. Capital development/ fundraising	1. SUNY ECC will have access to the necessary capital for investment in its facilities and programs.	7.1 Funding for modernization of the North Campus and the new academic building will be in place by Fall 2012. 7.2 Erie County support of the capital needs of SUNY ECC will increase in each year of the Plan.
Multi-campus environment	2. Facilities Enhancement and Development	1. Facilities will provide enhanced support for teaching, learning and student activities in every SUNY ECC location.	2.1 By fall 2015 modernization of the North Campus existing buildings and grounds will be complete. 2.2 By fall 2015 the Center for Academic Excellence building will be open and operating. 2.3 In each year through 2014 fifteen traditional classrooms will be converted to smart classrooms.
		2. Buildings and grounds will be attractive as well as functional, and supportive of the intent to be an aspirational choice for all students.	2.4. By 2015 ECC student opinion results pertaining to facilities and technology will be at or above the SUNY mean.
	7. Capital development/ fundraising	1. SUNY ECC will have access to the necessary capital for investment in its facilities and programs.	7.1 Funding for modernization of the North Campus and the new academic building will be in place by Fall 2012.
Continuous Improvement	1. Academic Quality & Learning Outcomes	1. All SUNY ECC offerings will be academically rigorous and challenging for students, and will adequately prepare students for their next academic degree programs and/or their chosen careers.	1.3 By fall 2014 ECC will meet or exceed the SUNY CC median success rate for developmental studies.
	4. Planning, assessment and outcomes	1. SUNY ECC will have in place a comprehensive institutional	4.1 100% of all accreditation and mandatory reports will be completed on time and accurately in each academic year.

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MISSION	IMPERATIVE	GOAL	OBJECTIVES ¹
		<p>assessment process, including measures of outcomes related to the mission and goals, and meaningful learning outcomes, to support continuous improvement initiatives.</p>	<p>4.2 100% of scheduled programs will have gone through academic program review or institutional review at the appropriate time.</p> <p>4.3 The Strategic Plan and the mission assessment process will be updated in each academic year.</p>
	<p>5. Information for decision-making</p>	<p>1. SUNY ECC decision-makers at every level will have available accurate and current information to support the best possible judgments about resource allocation and return on internal investments.</p> <p>2. Information systems will have the capacity and capability of supporting the academic and administrative enterprise of SUNY ECC, including fully automated processes and reporting.</p>	<p>5.1 In each year the institutional effectiveness indicators will be updated, modified, completed and made accessible to all affiliated with ECC.</p> <p>5.2 By Fall 2014 the college networking services infrastructure will be in compliance with industry standards to support the business and academic operations of the college which include academic and administrative computing and course delivery technology.</p>

2012-14 Strategic Plan



APPENDIX D

SUNY ECC STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS 2011-12

SEPTEMBER 2011

- **Request for Proposal Process for planning consultant/facilitator**
- **Consultant/facilitator selected**
- **Institutional Planning & Assessment Committee initiated**

OCTOBER 2011

- **Consultant agreement reached**
- **Consultant and President meet**
 - **Expectations and time frame**
 - **Potential interviewees**
 - **Board process and meeting requirements**
- **Meet the coordinating team (Reuter, Washousky, Orrange)**
 - **Assessment process and approach**
 - **Mission indicators**
- **Initial discussion with the ECC President**
 - **Interviews to carry out**
 - **Themes and concepts**
- **Background documents shared/past plans reviewed**
- **Situation Analysis document drafting begins**
- **First interviews are conducted (Key informant interviews – 13 in total)**

NOVEMBER 2011

- **Presentation of process to ECC Senate and open up for questions and feedback**
- **Develop a campus-wide survey and implement (faculty, staff, administration, board, advisory board)**
- **Review evaluation processes and information available for reporting purposes**

DECEMBER 2011

- **Interviews completed**
- **Student survey administered**
- **Complete draft Situation Analysis document**
- **Identify planning imperatives, major planning issues and five top priorities**
- **Begin plan development – create draft document**

- Incorporate “belief system¹” concepts from 2005 Strategic Plan
- Develop goal statements within the imperatives
- Review and update with Coordinating Team
- Review and update Situation Analysis with Planning & Assessment Committee
- Review Situation Analysis document and findings with the Board of Trustees
- Complete analysis of campus-wide survey and student survey results

JANUARY 2012

- Review draft belief system and priorities with Planning & Assessment Committee; update and amend
- Presentation of Situation Analysis and draft Belief System/Priorities at *Opening Day* to faculty and staff
- Compile potential strategies
- Meet with President to review all documents to-date and make necessary changes
- Meet with Plan team to establish draft objectives and tie objectives to the ECC mission assessment process
- Meet with Board Planning Committee: Review and update Belief System and process to-date. Board Planning Committee recommends the Belief System to the full Board of Trustees.
- Strategy development session with the Planning & Assessment Committee
- Integrate strategies and objectives into the draft Strategic Plan. Continue to review and update the Plan document working with the Planning & Assessment Committee and the coordinating team.
- Present the Belief System to the Board of Trustees. There is consensus among Board members present that the Belief System can be used as the basis for the plan development process.
- The Planning & Assessment Committee reviews potential strategies and hones down a draft list of priority strategies within the time frame of the Strategic Plan.

FEBRUARY 2012

- Using input from the Planning & Assessment Committee the strategies and objectives are clarified and cross-referenced by the consultant and coordinating team.
- The draft Strategic Plan is more closely aligned with the budget process; resources are tied to the priorities of the Plan.
- Develop the Plan assessment process, tying mission to imperatives, goals and objectives.
- The Belief System and priorities are presented to the ECC Senate for endorsement.
- The final draft Strategic Plan is completed.
- The Board of Trustees adopts the Strategic Plan (02.29.12)

¹ Belief System includes fundamental planning statements: Vision, mission, strategic intent, core values and beliefs, goals.

APPENDIX E: SUNY ECC LEXICON OF PLANNING TERMS

Belief System and Guiding Statements

The belief system statements are the "roadmap and guidebook" that the college uses to guide its strategic thinking. These statements tell us where we are going and help us to prioritize our strategy options. They also help by telling us what to bring along on the journey, and provide us with benchmarks for determining our progress.

a. Vision. A description of the future that captures the attention and imagination of our stakeholders and potential supporters. The Vision Statement is our expression of the ideal future that gives us purpose; a future that we have to create to be successful and relevant in a changing environment. It creates a shared sense of purpose and direction for all of those associated with and affected by the organization. If planning is a journey, the vision is the picture that we have in our minds of what our destination looks like. The vision is what inspires us to get going.

b. Mission. A description of the college's role in achieving the broad vision, and its domain (what it does and does not do). The mission statement tells our audiences about the business we are in, and our boundaries of operation, providing a guide for all policy development. The mission should be the touchstone for every decision and should be revisited in decisions concerning long-term strategy and day-to-day operations. The mission describes the "box" in which we operate; It is not a strategy statement.

c. Core Values and Principles. These statements serve as the "rules" of doing business and guides to strategy development. *Core values* are the fundamental ethical standards and the basis of the culture of ECC, or what they should be. They are the beliefs we hold most closely. A *principle* is a fundamental truth for SUNY ECC - a rule of action or conduct that helps shape how the college does business. Knowledge of values and principles must come before policies, processes and goals. They often reflect the "culture" that an organization has or is striving for.

d. Strategic Intent. The strategic intent is the visible focus point of our priorities and driving strategies, and the motivation for fast action. Simply put, the strategic intent is the defining statement that inspires our strategies and suggests a path that will allow us to achieve our goals. It is like our internal vision – the desired outcome that can allow all involved to understand our basis of operation and decision-making.

e. Value Proposition. The value proposition states clearly the reason (attributes and features) why an individual would purchase from ECC rather than from a competitor. It answers the question of what the value is of our services that we are presenting to the marketplace.

f. Strategic Priority. A strategic priority is an area of concentration that cut across the plan and guides the choice of strategies and also the resource allocation within the imperatives.

g. Driving Strategy. A driving strategy is the statement of how we will achieve our strategic intent. The driving strategies guide actions and priorities, and as such have resource allocation implications. The statement of driving strategies makes clear to everyone that we know what we have to be doing. The driving strategies are not time sensitive, but can change as circumstances require.

Imperative Planning Statements

The imperative planning statements narrow the focus of the Strategic Plan to the most important areas that we can be addressing, and as such prioritize the use of resources and effort. They do not preclude routine activities, nor do they imply that other important issues should not be addressed in other planning processes (e.g. marketing plan, capital allocation plan, master facility plan). Instead, the imperatives and their action plans allow decision-makers to work as a team to address cross-functional issues.

a. Planning Imperative. A planning imperative, is an issue, concern or problem that (a) confronts the college now, or will soon; (b) cuts across and affects several major components of the college; (c) will require strategic rather than administrative or short-term action to resolve; (d) will have serious consequences if not resolved; and (e) has not yet been resolved in the planning processes to-date. imperatives, are the main focus of strategic planning. They are where we put our main strategic thinking and resources. These imperatives are constantly re-visited by the management team and board to ensure that they are being addressed properly. We try to limit the number of imperatives so that the focus of the organization is clear.

b. Goal. A goal is a broad statement of proposed achievement which, when accomplished, significantly contributes toward the achievement of an organization's mission and addresses a planning imperative. Goals should be broad enough to be something toward which we are constantly moving.

c. Strategies. A strategy is the statement of how we will achieve a goal and/or address a strategic imperative in the time frame of the Plan. Strategies guide actions and have resource allocation implications. Strategies are fluid; they change as the environment or imperative changes. The choice and success of strategies are very much affected by the culture of the organization and the resources available to put toward the strategy.

d. Objective. An objective is a measurable step toward achievement of a goal. Objectives always are time sensitive. Progress on the Plan is usually measured by achievement of objectives.