

# Gateway to Excellence



*Strategic Plan*  
**2010-2015**



**Schenectady  
County  
Community  
College**

## President's Message



To the Friends of Schenectady County Community College:

At no time in our College's 40 year history has demand for educational services and programs been more evident. Enrollment for both full and part-time students is at an all-time high and, fortunately, so is the number of students we graduate each year in our many degree and certificate programs. My initial contacts with business and community leaders and prospective students and their parents have elicited strong sentiments for the College to develop new programs and services to meet pressing, changing community needs. Our constituents have embraced the historical open access mission of Schenectady County Community College (SCCC) and they have endorsed our commitment to serve the underserved and to keep the College affordable.

In years past, new programs and services were developed to support our community constituents and students, with the trust that the College's funding triad—the state, the county, and the students—would finance the growing enterprise. Given the fiscal “perfect storm” we are all now experiencing—a national recession with persistent high unemployment, a state government struggling to find a way to adopt a viable budget and a state university facing deep cuts—it was evident to me that SCCC needed to develop a strategic plan for its future. No longer can the College leave its direction entirely to its traditional partners. No longer can we graft new programs onto traditional stock, no matter how established. SCCC needs at least partially to “reinvent” itself—to keep and embellish programs and services that continue to meet community needs, to develop new educational paradigms that will better accommodate learning styles of busy students, to vigorously pursue private and business partnerships and to disconnect from initiatives that no longer meet the demands of our service area.

In fall 2009, I established a Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) of faculty and staff representing the broadest collegiate spectrum to offer input to the College Trustees and me on a plan to chart our course for the next half-decade. Before this plan could be delineated, the SPC undertook an important prelude: the committee refined SCCC's Mission and Vision Statements and stated our professional cohort's consensus on Core Values that drive all our professional interactions. I welcome our faculty's input and agreement on these values which make future planning initiatives more realistic and validated. Moving forward using our new Mission and Vision Statements and our Core Values, the SPC spent nine months developing a comprehensive strategic plan which, after review and input from the College Trustees appears below. This plan was debated widely among campus constituents using a series of focus groups held at different times to maximize professional participation. Literally dozens of excellent suggestions to temper and modify the plan were adduced during these campus communication sessions, and the final plan includes most of them.

The College Trustees have approved this Strategic Plan which will guide our actions going forward. Since some college strategic plans tend to be highly ambitious, SCCC's plan concentrates on four major goal areas. Major plan initiatives include upgrading the physical plant, putting the student at the center of institutional decision-making, strengthening teaching and learning, developing a residential component and increasing external institutional support. These initiatives, and others, will not simply be lofty goals—they will be incorporated into the College budget and their success will be carefully monitored and evaluated.

I look forward to working with all sectors of the Schenectady County community to help SCCC meet our higher educational needs despite difficult economic challenges. Our faculty and staff have signed on to meeting these challenges and we look forward to being a responsive, affordable and innovative institution of higher learning where the student is at the center of our enterprise and the quality of teaching and learning is paramount.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Quintin B. Bullock". The signature is stylized and fluid, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Quintin B. Bullock  
President

# Mission and Vision Statements

After a comprehensive focus group and College community review process, a new Mission Statement and a new Vision Statement were endorsed by the College Board of Trustees on January 25, 2010.

The Mission and Vision Statements will be reviewed every two years for current relevance and consistency with the College's goals and plans.

## Mission Statement

Schenectady County Community College provides quality, comprehensive education for transfer, careers, training and workforce development to a diverse population in a student-centered environment. We are committed to accessible and affordable education. Utilizing innovative practices and contemporary technology, SCCC fosters success through excellence in teaching and support services.

## Vision Statement

Schenectady County Community College is committed to being a premier community college that empowers individuals to reach their greatest potential through exceptional and innovative education and training.



# Core Values

Core values are behaviors and attitudes accepted by College constituents as essential for institutional effectiveness. As an initial step in strategic planning process, a list of SCCC core values was developed. These core values, together with the Mission Statement and Vision Statement, provided guidance in establishing Strategic Plan goals and objectives.

- Academic integrity
- Student success
- Teamwork
- Assessment
- Access
- Diversity
- Innovation
- Teaching excellence
- Partnering
- Civility and citizenship
- Lifelong learning
- Dynamic curriculum
- Effective communication
- Data-based decision making
- Student centeredness
- Engagement in our community
- Shared mission and vision

## Performance Indicators

Performance indicators are quantitative measures that reveal the extent to which objectives are met. While developing, listing and promoting goals and objectives are crucial steps in determining institutional effectiveness, unless the goals are measured against accepted performance measures, the exercise becomes more academic than practical and transforming. Therefore, SCCC will utilize a number of performance indicators against which most goals and objectives can be analyzed and measured. College leaders have developed a suggested performance indicator list which is dynamic and which will be supplemented by other timely indicators developed by faculty and College departments as goal attainment responsibilities are delineated and pursued throughout the college.

- Retention by program
- Economic impact on local community
- Various cost comparisons with other SUNY community colleges
- Enrollment penetration within service area high schools
- Instructional and support square foot comparisons with other SUNY community colleges
- Student transfer and job placement rates
- Student satisfaction opinion surveys, including SUNY instruments
- Attainment of SUNY Mission Review goals
- Compliance with Middle States recommendations
- Enrollment by degree, program, course, instructional modality, session, etc.
- Energy usage
- Employee satisfaction
- Faculty, staff and student ethnicity comparisons
- Participation in professional development activities
- Expenditures for technology and instructional equipment compared to SUNY community college averages
- Attainment of expressed student goals: graduation, transfer, job placement/advancement
- Impact of assessment on stated learning outcomes
- Revenue source comparisons: county share, foundation, state aid, grants, etc.
- Faculty, student and staff participation in community and professional leadership activities
- Program evaluations
- Employer satisfaction
- Transfer persistence at four year institutions



## Overview

The Schenectady County Community College (SCCC) five-year Strategic Plan is the result of a nine-month effort by the Strategic Planning Committee with inputs from the College community including faculty, staff and students. The purpose of the Strategic Plan is to provide a framework for detailed College Division planning to meet the tenets of the College's Mission and Vision statements.

The SCCC Mission and Vision Statements are encompassing documents, collegially developed and endorsed. All the tenets embraced in the Mission and Vision statements will be pursued with results evaluated, although some with greater vigor depending on contemporary institutional influences. Notwithstanding external factors, SCCC reaffirms its paramount commitment to meet the academic needs of its students and place students in the center of institutional focus and consideration. The SCCC 2010-2015 Strategic Plan pivots, to a large degree, around the major drivers of the local and state economies—diminution of the traditional college cohort; expected increased competition from public, private and proprietary colleges; continued

disruption of the local economy; dissatisfaction with state government; continuing uncertainty and evolution of the community college role within the parent university, and significant and potentially long-lasting fiscal challenges. The collegially endorsed goals outlined in the Strategic Plan form the backbone for defining institutional excellence. Four major goals were developed with several relevant initiatives subsumed under the rubric of improving teaching and learning. Thus, the College can focus on attaining all major goals and, as circumstances and resources evolve, can proceed to other initiatives flowing from these goals. Objectives have been developed for each of the four goal areas.

There is inevitable overlap in the major goals identified by the Strategic Planning Committee explained in part by the Committee's agreement that the goals be limited in number thus emphasizing their relative importance. Imbued within the goals are the College's abiding interests in fostering effective and efficient internal communication, strengthening the use of technology across the range of college programs and services, developing its campus to serve as one of the region's anchors, better marketing SCCC to the community and attracting and nurturing special student cohorts. College executives and leadership will extrapolate these values imbedded in the goals and will use performance criteria to measure their attainment.

Subsequently, College Divisions will provide detailed plans, in a matrix format, addressing the objectives in each goal area. Within each goal area, objectives will be separately delineated with specific plans including strategy, responsibility, time frame, measurement, documentation, outcomes and required resources. Relevant supporting documents exist outside the Strategic Plan and will be consulted as the Plan's objectives are pursued.

## Goal One: Strengthen Excellence in Teaching and Learning

The College places excellence in teaching and student success at the apex of its commitment to its constituents and community. Students enter SCCC with varying educational goals and differing levels of prior educational achievement. The College succeeds when its students achieve their educational goals.

College faculty and instructional staff require ongoing, significant institutional support to facilitate student success. The College remains steadfast in its commitment to provide faculty with the educational and pedagogical supports they need to help students succeed. Likewise, SCCC will increase its efforts to recruit and orient a diverse faculty and staff dedicated to student success, especially with underserved populations. Finally, since the College is committed to innovation in curriculum, services and pedagogy, emphasis in faculty and staff recruitment will be placed on finding individuals who share that predilection.

The College will continually examine the curriculum to ensure that it exemplifies the College Mission and Vision statements and meets contemporary student and community needs. Efforts to increase community and employer input into the curriculum architecture will be made. Assessment of the College's programs and services will be made using SUNY and national best practices and guidelines.



# Objectives

- 1.1 Adapt design, content and delivery of courses and programs to enhance student learning; eliminate programs and courses that no longer align to the academic mission of the College
- 1.2 Globalize the curriculum and relevant co-curricular activities
- 1.3 Sponsor faculty activities to support teaching and learning including those that foster assessment best-practices
- 1.4 Ascertain student preferences and develop course schedules, academic calendars and instructional modalities that best meet evolving student needs
- 1.5 Advance innovations in instructional technology to support teaching and learning
- 1.6 Recruit faculty and staff to support strategic planning goals
- 1.7 Develop standards for assessment and professional compensation for distance learning, internship and transnational education activities
- 1.8 Improve faculty mentoring programs for new hires
- 1.9 Foster a culture that supports academic honesty, civility and personal responsibility
- 1.10 Ensure that developmental courses and related activities are integrated into the academic program
- 1.11 Ensure that writing activities and information literacy skills are integral to the academic program
- 1.12 Develop and deliver college seminar and study skills coursework and enhance student retention and success through an improved first year experience
- 1.13 Respond to identified regional workforce demands; seek relevant grant funding and establish public and private partnerships
- 1.14 Identify and pursue grant opportunities to support teaching and learning
- 1.15 Address different learning styles and accessibility by employing Universal Design concepts
- 1.16 Enhance the College's web site to highlight teaching and learning excellence



## Goal Two: Enrich the Student Experience

SCCC students who plan to transfer to four year institutions will experience co-curricular programs commensurate to those they would have experienced in the four-year setting. Students seeking specific occupational and workforce skills will have access to quality career planning, cooperative and internship experiences and employment services. Excellence criteria, such as are applied to academic programs and services, will also be applied to co-curricular activities and to the ways students are informed about the College, recruited, registered and advised. As appropriate, contemporary technology will be employed to complement personal communication in delivering support and co-curricular activities.

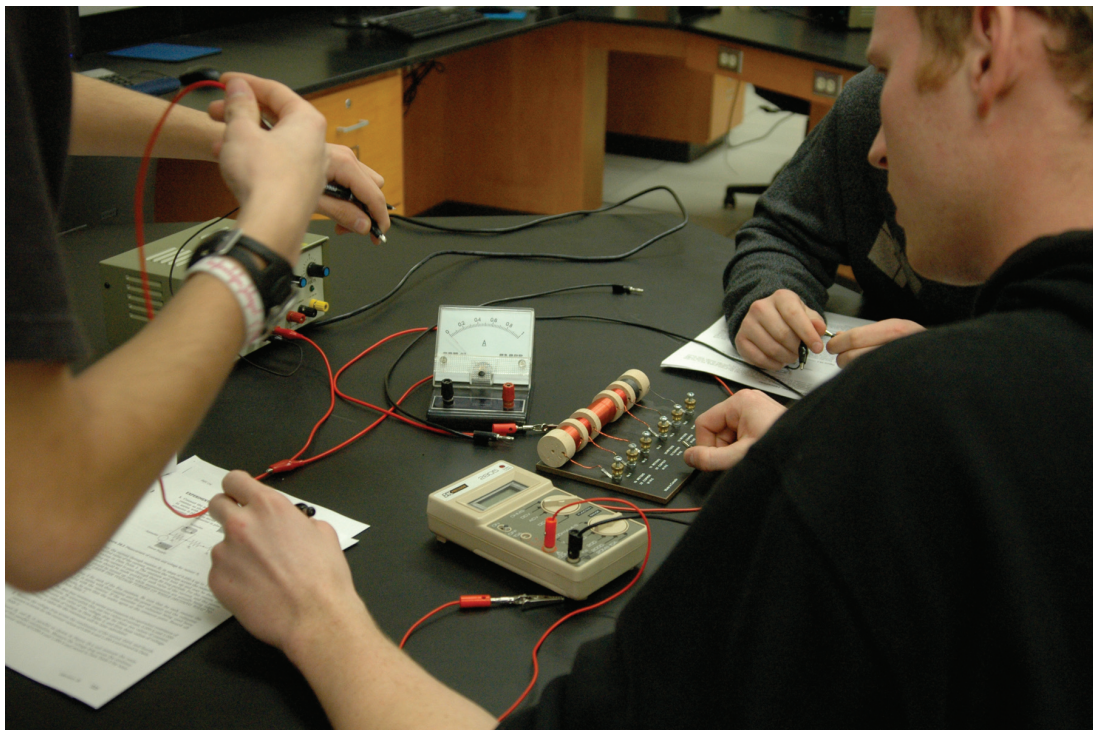
SCCC recognizes that its students who participate in co-curricular activities tend to persist longer, attain their stated educational goals and manifest the highest overall satisfaction with the college experience. SCCC will continue to offer rich and diverse student activities, and cultural and athletic programs consistent with student interest and the availability of resources. As appropriate, international education and cultural exchange programs will be promoted to interested students.





## Objectives

- 2.1 Place student-centeredness at the forefront of all college decision-making
- 2.2 Develop opportunities for students to engage in cooperative work activities, internships and international education
- 2.3 Expose students to globalization and relevant cultural activities
- 2.4 Explore and implement innovations to improve academic advisement
- 2.5 Evaluate co-curricular activities to ensure they meet student needs and are commensurate with those at peer colleges and transfer institutions
- 2.6 Develop opportunities for interested students to participate in honor societies and professional organizations and programs
- 2.7 Enhance transfer, career and employment counseling services to meet evolving student needs
- 2.8 Ensure an equitable and appropriate level of co-curricular activities for full-time, part-time, day, evening and distance learning students
- 2.9 Strengthen the College Web site to stress student-centeredness



## Goal Three: Enhance the Campus Physical Environment

The important work to update the College's physical facilities is ongoing and must continue regardless of anticipated fiscal challenges, no matter how pressing. The campus learning environment is enhanced by aesthetically pleasing, clean, safe and flexible physical facilities. SCCC competes with colleges that possess attractive and secure campus settings, thus nothing less should be the standard at the College. Classrooms must feature the latest in educational technology since such innovations permit the faculty to offer flexible learning options for students who require such flexibility to begin and continue their studies, and ultimately to succeed educationally. Establishing modern pedagogical options via technology will also help the College compete for students, many of whose work and family circumstances may not permit them to study in the traditional learning paradigm.

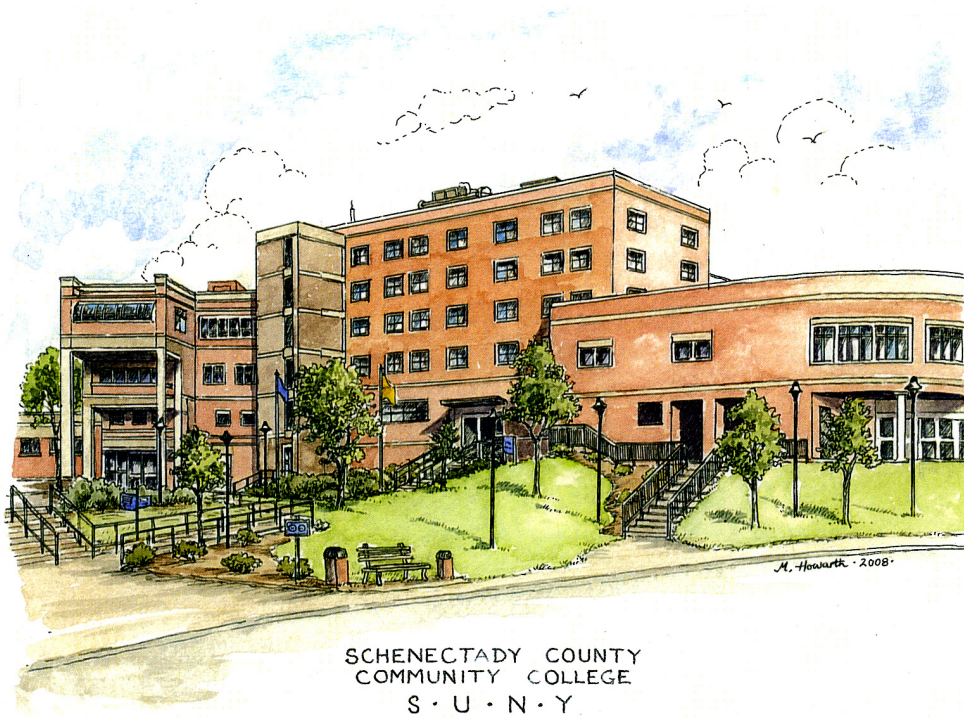
Anticipated changes in statute and policy will hopefully permit the College to develop a modern student housing component. Such an enhancement to student life will be carefully and expeditiously studied, and state-of-the-art student housing will be built pending availability of funding and logistics. Student housing, properly designed and supervised, can supplement the learning environment and positively impact student degree completion rates in addition to increasing enrollment.

Continuing planned improvements to the campus physical and safety environment and the introduction of campus student housing can in the aggregate convince interested students (and often their parents) to choose SCCC as their first-choice college, a primary facet of the College's vision for the future. Recent high school graduates and younger returning veterans will be vital to the College's future and these populations are often physical campus focused. Communication with county and city officials should be ongoing and focus on the win-win scenario that will result by enhancing the SCCC campus environment.



# Objectives

- 3.1 Maintain and enhance the appearance and aesthetic environment of the campus
- 3.2 Make significant efforts to obtain funding, including grant funding, to improve campus energy usage
- 3.3 Develop and implement realistic sustainability initiatives
- 3.4 Implement innovative strategies to enhance the College's ability to acquire new instructional modalities and technologies
- 3.5 Work with county and city officials to recognize and enfranchise the College as both an economic engine and an anchor of regional activities
- 3.6 Assess the College's current and future space needs and align them to enrollment projections
- 3.7 Implement capital improvements and space modifications to advance the College as an anchor institution for the region, encouraging future public and private
- 3.8 Continue to improve the College's commitment to campus safety



## Goal Four: Respond Positively and Responsibly to Fiscal Challenges

Given the precarious state and local fiscal environments, the College must use its persuasive resources to convince policy makers it needs fiscal flexibility to increase its revenue potential, including allowing SCCC to charge appropriate tuition levels and rid itself of unfunded mandates. Such a sea change in fiscal flexibility will be approached carefully and collegially with all permutations studied and debated. Any resultant tuition flexibility should be applied relative to the anticipated duration of the state's fiscal problems and their severity in conformity with the College's access mission.

Faculty and staff workload, the academic and administrative calendars, administrative cost and the approaches to evaluate cooperative work and life experiences will be re-interpreted to reflect fiscal realities and the overall demand for college programs and services. Academic and administrative structures will be re-examined to reflect contemporary realities and will be evaluated as to how well they positively impact enrollment, market penetration and student success.

In an enrollment-driven environment, the relationship between demand for services and fiscal stability is obvious. Less obvious, however, (and less pressing to some college stakeholders) is the relationship between marketing the College's quality and uniqueness and attracting new student cohorts to the campus. The College will look anew on its marketing, recruitment and partnering activities with an eye toward increasing market share. Similar efforts will be made to increase academic productivity, retention and graduation.

The College will significantly deepen its initiatives for fundraising and external resource development. A more external focus requires coordination and cooperation from all college cohorts.

The use of technology to produce fiscal efficiencies will be studied and employed as developed.



## Objectives

- 4.1 Develop and implement an external fundraising plan to support the College's mission
- 4.2 Engage the College leadership, Board of Trustees and Foundation Board of Directors in advocating for public funding
- 4.3 Actively seek new private funding with the assistance of the Foundation Board of Directors and the College Trustees
- 4.4 Study and implement internal institutional efficiencies
- 4.5 Studying and implementing partnering strategies and activities paying special attention to positioning the College to participate meaningfully in the Pre K-16 continuum
- 4.6 Provide assistance and support for faculty and administrators to seek goal fulfilling grant funding opportunities
- 4.7 Align resource allocations with the enrollment plan subsumed into the Strategic Plan
- 4.8 Enhance the College's Web presence to improve internal and external communication and to promote and strengthen fundraising activities



## College President

Quintin B. Bullock, D.D.S

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## Additional Information

The Strategic Plan, 2010-2015, Gateway to Excellence, is also available on the College Web site at [www.sunysccc.edu](http://www.sunysccc.edu) under "About SCCC."

For additional information on the Strategic Plan, contact:

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## Strategic Planning Committee

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