



Norwalk Community College Strategic Plan 2011-2016



Creating Our Future: Five Year Strategic Plan 2011-2016

Norwalk Community College

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I. *Statement from the President*

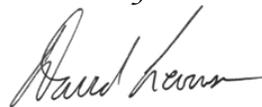
Dear NCC Community Members,

*I am very proud to present you with Norwalk Community College's 2011-2016 Strategic Plan, **Creating Our Future**. The plan reflects the culmination of a multi-faceted planning process that took place during the 2010-2011 academic year. Our course of action was both comprehensive and broad-based, gathering input from several sources which included faculty, staff, students, administrators, our Foundation and several of our community partners. Everyone's participation and insight facilitated in establishing six institutional goals which reflect the vision, mission, and core values of the College.*

These goals promote NCC's solid foundation as an educational institution of excellence, while positioning the college to meet the needs of students and the community in the future. Our Strategic Plan is the foundation on which our college operations will be centered and measured. Having identified our goals for the next five years, it is incumbent upon us to keep the conversations going and provide continuous feedback as we move toward each of these goals. I also realize that we operate in a rapidly changing environment and that it is essential to view this as a living document.

We are committed to providing excellence in academics, being responsive to workforce needs, utilizing innovative technology and engaging our community partners. We will carefully manage our campus growth while expanding our role in promoting environmental responsibility. It is these strategic goals that will drive our institution through 2016 as we collectively create our future at NCC.

Sincerely,



*David L. Levinson, Ph.D.
President*

II. *Executive Summary*

Norwalk Community College (NCC) commits itself to achieving our six strategic goals during 2011-16. These goals are as follows:

Goal 1: *Excellence in academics*: Implement interventions and practices to increase student success

Goal 2: *Response to workforce needs*: Establish a cohesive infrastructure to support workforce development

Goal 3: *Technological innovation*: Increase and leverage the use of information technology for educational purposes

Goal 4: *Community engagement and strategic partnerships*: Expand and leverage community partnerships and strategic alliances to increase stakeholder participation

Goal 5: *Carefully manage campus growth*: Meet the evolving postsecondary educational needs of lower Fairfield County

Goal 6: *Environmental responsibility*: Expand NCC's role in promoting environmental sustainability in our region

Our goals were identified through a comprehensive and collaborative process in which faculty, staff, administrators, students and community members came together to provide their insight and analysis of the College's past, present and future. Based on that analysis, and framed by an understanding of our mission and our commitment to our southwestern Connecticut service area, we determined the six goals listed above which will shape the future of NCC.

An important component of this plan is the understanding that evaluation of results has a critical role to play in shaping our decision making. We therefore envision this to be a working document, which can be systematically informed and adjusted over the course of the next five years as the plan is executed.

III.

How We Developed Our Plan: Overview of NCC's Planning Process

The strategic planning process took place during the 2010-2011 academic year and was characterized by the collaboration and commitment of a broad range of stakeholders. Over the course of a year, faculty, staff, students, and community members came together to develop and affirm the college's Core Values and identify strategic priorities that will direct the course of the college over the next five years.

The process began in the May 2010, with a presentation to the All College Senate about the goals and expectations for the planning process. In fall 2010, President Levinson convened a college-wide Strategic Planning Task Force representing a broad cross section of the college departments and divisions. The committee was co-chaired by Jacek Bigosinski, Professor and Coordinator, Art, Architecture and Design Department and Vanessa Smith Morest, Dean of Institutional Effectiveness. The committee sought to structure itself around the idea that our progress towards meeting institutional goals should a) be guided by our mission as a comprehensive community college, and b) should to be measurable. Richard Alfred's *Core Indicators of Effectiveness for Community Colleges* (2007) provided a framework for this, as it offers a methodology for accountability in six mission areas. The six mission areas were used as the basis for the creation of five subcommittees within the taskforce. Our subcommittees included Student Success, General Education, Outreach and Contribution to the Public Good, Workforce Development, and Transfer Preparation.

The Task Force Subcommittees began their work by conducting Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analyses in each of the Core Indicator areas. These efforts were brought to the College community in the form of a college-wide planning day on January 19, 2011. This Planning Day was facilitated by three Learning and Development leaders from GE Capital, an important strategic partner of the College, in coordination with NCC's Department of Institutional Effectiveness. On this Planning Day, subcommittee members

facilitated planning discussions among 130 faculty and staff based upon guiding questions which resulted from the work of the subcommittees.

Additionally, in order to ensure maximal participation in the planning process, all departments at the college were invited to conduct their own SWOT analyses and submit the results of their inquiries along with proposed strategic goals. Seventeen departments and divisions conducted and submitted to the committee SWOT analysis specific to their areas.

Concurrent with the work of the Strategic Planning Taskforce, the College Integrity Committee led an initiative to discuss and propose Core Values for the college. On October 6, 2010, nearly 150 faculty and staff members participated in a *World Café* planning exercise. Tables of faculty, staff and administrators from across the College held discussions guided by two questions:

- Thinking broadly from the perspective of the role played by NCC in the lives of the students and community, what is a core value that guides your work here at the college?
- Based on what you have heard today, how would you refine the ideas generated by the first table to become a more complete reflection of the core values of the College?

Data from this meeting were collected and analyzed by Institutional Effectiveness staff and the Integrity Committee, resulting in five potential core values. These values were then brought back to the College at a second college-wide meeting. Large groups worked together on each of the values to develop the language ultimately used to describe them. Together, these meetings led to the drafting of our Core Values statement. The Integrity Committee reviewed and refined the proposed Core Values, and presented them to the greater NCC community in February 2011 at an All College Meeting.

During March 2011, President David Levinson and Dean of Academic Affairs, Dr. Pamela Edington, hosted two dinners for external stakeholders. The menu for these events was prepared by our culinary arts students under the guidance of their faculty and the leadership of Dr. Tom

Failla, Hospitality Management and Culinary Arts Programs. The first dinner included representatives from area businesses, industries, NCC program advisory committees, and transfer institutions. The second dinner included representatives from a wide variety of community partners. At each of these dinners, table leaders guided focus groups through a series of questions and recorded the responses on templates provided by the Department of Institutional Effectiveness. Focus group facilitators for the business and industry dinner were faculty program chairs at the College. Focus group facilitators for the community partners' dinner were members of the Strategic Planning Taskforce. The results were summarized by the Department of Institutional Effectiveness and presented to the Strategic Planning Taskforce.

On March 25, 2011, the Strategic Planning Taskforce held a retreat at which they performed a review of all of the data generated by the year-long planning activities. This review was structured on a thematic analysis conducted by the Dean of Institutional Effectiveness. The Strategic Planning Taskforce members arrived on six key priorities and 25 objectives at this meeting. These strategic goals and objectives form the basis for the plan elaborated in this document.

NCC Strategic Planning Taskforce Members:

David Bahr, Information Technology Technician

Jacek Bigosinski, Professor, Coordinator, Art, Architecture and Design Department

Lynn Boyer, Director, Special Programming

Bill Chagnon, Associate Director, Admissions

Helen Cloherty, Professor, Mathematics Department

Estelle Dattolo, Professor, Italian, Humanities Department

Barbara Drotman, Dean of College Advancement

Pamela Edington, Dean of Academic Affairs

Tom Failla, Director, Hospitality Management

Phyllis Fitzpatrick, Research Specialist, Office of Institutional Effectiveness

Debbie Golden, Professor, Developmental Math Department

Andres Gomez, Director, Student Activities

Gail Howard, Director, Cooperative Education

Louisa Jones, Secretary, Admissions Office
Ana Jusino, Professor, ESL
Jane Kiefer, Executive Director, NCC Foundation
Moira Lyons, Director, Community Development
Stephen Mersereau, Adjunct Instructor
Carrie McGee-Yurof, Director, Finance and Administration
Bepin Mgushi, President, Student Government
Fnu Mihir, Director, Institutional Effectiveness
Vanessa Smith Morest, Dean of Institutional Effectiveness
Erik Rambusch, Adjunct Instructor, Business Department
Mary Schuler, Director, Nursing and Allied Health
K.C. Senie, Director, Institutional Advancement & and Strategic Planning
Melissa Slattery, Associate, Public Relations
Desiree Stephens, Chair, Business Department
Gail Stevens, Coordinator, College Pathways Initiative

Integrity Committee members

David Bahr, Information Technology Technician II
Jennifer Cohen, Faculty
Margaret Dana-Conway, Associate Professor Early Childhood Education
Tom Failla, Director, Business & Industry Services; Acting Director Hospitality
Management/Culinary Arts
Karen Gray, Associate Professor/Coordinator Business Administration/Transfer
Ed Grippe, Professor, Philosophy & Religion
Vanessa Smith Morest, Dean of Institutional Effectiveness
K.C. Senie, Director, Institutional Advancement & Strategic Planning
Serena Savariau, Student
Arlette Werner, Professor, Sociology, Psychology

General Electric Capital partners

George L. Anderson, Chief Learning Officer

Vicky McGrath, VP Learning & Development Americas

Rich Rischling, Global Learning & Development Leader

IV. Background and Assumptions

NCC serves the 10-town region of southwestern Fairfield County including Norwalk, Stamford, Greenwich, Darien, New Canaan, Westport, Wilton, Ridgefield, Redding, and Weston. The College has an annual enrollment of more than 15,000 credit and noncredit students. The fall 2010 enrollment of NCC was 6,740 students. Fifty-nine percent of the credit students are female. We are a racially and ethnically diverse college with a rapidly growing population of Hispanic students. Many of our students were born internationally, with large numbers coming from Columbia, Poland, Haiti and Peru. Each fall, nearly 800 of our new, first-time students are recent high school graduates (graduating in spring of the same year). This includes just under one-third of the college-bound students from Stamford and Norwalk public schools.

National Distinction

NCC is one of 15 colleges nationwide to receive a major grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and MDC, Inc. to participate in a national initiative to reform developmental education and boost the college completion rates of low-income and minority students.

NCC was named an Achieving the Dream Leader College by Achieving the Dream: Community Colleges Count, for being a national leader in the college completion movement and for demonstrating exemplary advances in student achievement indicators.

NCC is a recipient of Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching's 2010 Community Engagement Classification on the basis of the College's commitment to serving the community.

Key Current and Emerging Issues: Critical Trends Impacting NCC's Future

A. Hispanic Population Growth

NCC's region is more diverse than the state in terms of race and ethnicity. In fact, this difference has increased over the past decade, based on Census 2010 data. While Hispanics make up 13.4% of the state's population, Hispanics represent 16.2% of the region's population.¹ In particular, 24.3% of Norwalk residents and 23.8% of Stamford's residents are Hispanic. NCC's student population is 24.6% Hispanic, closely reflecting the demographic make-up of Stamford and Norwalk. This diversity is both an asset and a challenge for the programs and services offered by the college.

B. The Achievement Gap

Though the average scores for Connecticut students in reading and math at grades 4 and 8 are higher than the national averages, Connecticut has some of the largest achievement gaps in the nation. Connecticut is one of between 5 and 8 states that has a larger than average Black/White and Hispanic/White achievement gap in math at grades 4 and 8, and in reading at grade 4.² These achievement gaps persist into high school. Connecticut students overall score higher than the national average in math and reading in grade 12, but the achievement gaps between black and white students in reading and Hispanic and white students in math are higher than the national average.³

Connecticut also leads the nation in household income inequality, with Fairfield County ranking the most inequitable in the state by far, and third most inequitable in the nation.⁴ Another achievement gap reflects this disparity in household income, as poor students scored significantly lower than their non-poor peers in reading and math at grades 4 and 8.⁵ These differences in achievement for different student groups are likely to be present in the College's student population.

¹ Data source: SWRPA.

² Data source: NCES, *Achievement Gap Reports*.

³ Data source: NCES, *The Nation's Report Card State Snapshot Reports*.

⁴ Hero, J. (2009). *Connecticut Leads the Nation in Multiple Measures on Income Inequality*. Connecticut Voices for Children.

⁵ Data source: NCES *The Nation's Report Card: State Snapshot Reports*.

C. Healthcare Industry Growth

As the United States health care industry is adapting to current reforms that strive to increase quality while reducing costs, it is facing shortages in both the number of caregivers and the number of health information technology workers.⁶ The healthcare reforms passed in 2009 by Congress and the Obama administration require the adoption and “meaningful use” of electronic healthcare records.⁷

In anticipation of the significant role that electronic medical records will play in the delivery of effective and efficient health care of the future, all students enrolled in Nursing & Allied Health credit/noncredit and certificate programs must be instructed and trained in medical record technology. With the construction of the new Center for Science, Health & Wellness, the College is poised to integrate this technology into all its healthcare programs.

D. Graduation Challenges and Accountability Demands

In 2009, the Connecticut Community Colleges graduated only 10% of their first-time degree or certificate seeking students in 3 years or less. This ranks the CT Community College system as 47th in the nation.⁸ While NCC has increased its retention rate to 66%, the highest rate among the CT community colleges and the first step toward improving graduation rates, NCC still has a three-year graduation rate of 10%.⁹ Additionally, the State of Connecticut is restructuring its higher educational system, combining the administration of the community college system with the state university system. As this process unfolds, higher education institutions should expect an increased demand for public accountability.

E. Green Career Expansion

Connecticut has been a leader in the green movement as one of the first states to develop a climate change action plan, and to create an energy vision calling for 20% of all energy produced

⁶ Computer Sciences Corporation, (2010). *U.S. Healthcare Workforce Shortages: Caregivers and U.S. Healthcare Workforce Shortages: HIT Staff*.

⁷ New England Journal of Medicine, (2010). *The “Meaningful Use” Regulation for Electronic Health Records*.

⁸ State of Connecticut Department of Education, (2011). *Higher Education Counts: Achieving Results 2011*.

⁹Data Source: U.S. Department of Education, IPEDS 2007-08 Graduation Rate File.

or consumed in the state to come from renewable sources by 2020.¹⁰ An integral part of reaching these energy goals is education and workforce development that focuses on the knowledge and skills necessary to support an emerging green economy and fill green jobs. NCC has already committed to supporting environmental sustainability on campus through NCC CARES (Committee for Active and Responsible Environmental Sustainability), but it will need to continue to offer a curriculum that stays abreast of current trends.

¹⁰ *CT's Energy Vision: For Cleaner, Greener State*, 2006

NCC Mission and Vision Statements

NCC Mission Statement

Norwalk Community College is the southwestern Fairfield County leader and partner in the academic, economic and cultural lives of our communities, providing comprehensive, accessible, innovative and affordable learning opportunities to diverse populations. To realize this distinctive mission, NCC:

- Provides a broad range of credit and non-credit liberal arts, sciences, career, technical, associate degree and certification programs leading to transfer, employment and lifelong learning
- Supports economic development through partnerships with labor, business, industry, government and our communities, providing workforce development, business development and technology transfer
- Promotes learner success and inclusion through a stimulating, nurturing learning environment, high quality instruction, support services and co-curricular activities
- Builds community through the sponsorship of intellectual, cultural, social and recreational events and activities
- Engages students and community members to become active and responsible leaders in their communities

NCC Vision Statement

Norwalk Community College is the educational center of the community, providing opportunities for intellectual inquiry, open dialogue, multicultural awareness and lifelong learning. Recognizing the diverse needs of its students, the college strives to provide an environment in which they are empowered to achieve their highest potential.

NCC Core Values

Civility and Respect

We value our diverse community and seek to ensure that we create a welcoming and encouraging environment, and one in which fairness, impartiality, and accountability are evidenced in open, transparent, and respectful exchanges at all levels and in all relationships.

Excellence in Teaching

We value excellence in teaching and providing the best education possible for our students, delivered by experts in their fields using the most current methodologies. We believe that the learning process is directly affected by its environment and students deserve the best resources and support we can offer.

Student Success

We value and support student learning across the lifecycle. We seek to foster a love of learning in our students, and support the development, pursuit and achievement of academic and career goals.

Community Engagement

We value NCC as an integral part of the Fairfield County community. We wish to enrich our community, while at the same time being enriched by it. Our partnerships help us to address community needs and identify opportunities for our students; resulting in pathways for transfer, career employment and community service for the public good.

Student Centered Focus

We value a holistic approach to student education by recognizing the intellectual, social, and professional diversity of our students. We provide opportunities and resources for our students to succeed academically and to integrate knowledge and skills acquired in the classroom into everyday practice.

VII.

Overarching Strategic Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Excellence in Academics: Implement interventions and practices to increase student success

Objectives:
1.1 Engage every new student in at least one <i>High Impact Educational Practice</i> during their first semester at the College
1.2 Reduce the number of students receiving GPAs of 1.0 or lower in their first semester at NCC
1.3 Double the graduation rate of NCC students
1.4 Establish student learning outcomes and processes for student learning outcomes assessment in all programs and general education
1.5 Increase capacity for evaluating and registering students transferring into the institution
1.6 Develop a system of “educational planning” for our students that engages students in academic and career advisement from admissions to completion

NCC prides itself on the quality of its academic programs. The College maintains a strong system of prerequisites and emphasizes critical thinking and interdisciplinary learning as fundamental to student learning. Students report that they are challenged by the College’s curriculum. The Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) ranks NCC at the 90th percentile nationwide on its Academic Challenge benchmark.

Nevertheless, NCC wrestles with many of the academic difficulties that are common to community colleges nationally. Approximately 85 percent of the College’s new, first-time students enter college requiring one or more remedial course in English or Math. There is a serious achievement gap among our students, wherein 17 percent of white students enter NCC at college level compared with only 4 percent of black students.

During the past five years, NCC has actively participated in a national agenda aimed at increasing student success. The college sought out interventions and practices that can help our students to achieve their college goals. These may be described as “high impact” educational practices. Among these practices are learning communities, e-portfolios, case management, tutoring, experiential learning opportunities and math and science recitations to name a few.

- 1.1 Engage every new student in at least one *High Impact Educational Practice* during their first semester at the College.** During the past five years, NCC has focused on piloting and expanding strategies to increase student success. Our framework of High Impact Educational Practices is based on those identified by Kuh (2008). Practices are identified as “high impact” when a body of literature provides evidence of their efficacy. These practices include among others, first year experience courses, learning communities, service learning, and internships. The College will continue to expand, monitor, and evaluate interventions that demonstrate positive impacts on student outcomes and seek to engage every degree-seeking student in a success strategy during their first semester.

- 1.2 Reduce the number of students receiving GPAs of 1.0 or lower in their first semester at NCC.** Student achievement in the first semester of college is also low. 22 percent of students earn a grade point average of 1.0 (D) or lower on a four-point scale. Sixteen percent complete no classes successfully during their first semester, and approximately 22 percent of our new, first-time students do not return for the spring semester.

- 1.3 Double the graduation rate of NCC students.** NCC’s graduation rate¹¹, while comparable to other large community colleges in Connecticut, is approximately 10 percent, which is well below the national average of approximately 25 percent. Over the next five years we will focus on planning and implementing strategies known to increase graduation rates.

¹¹ Graduation rates are measured using IPEDS definitions. It is a three year graduation rate for first-time, full-time, degree-seeking students.

1.4 Establish student learning outcomes and processes for student learning outcomes assessment in all programs and general education. NCC has undertaken a process of building a system of student learning outcomes assessment as part of its commitment to upholding the standards established by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC). Our General Education Taskforce has completed the process of establishing core competencies and developing a process for assessment. They will be implemented and assessed during the next five years. In addition, programs and courses will have in place and documented the assessment of their student learning outcomes. NCC is committed to the ideal of establishing a complete system of student learning outcomes assessment by 2016.

1.5 Increase capacity for evaluating and registering students transferring into the institution. Approximately 45 percent of our new students in the fall semester are transferring in from other institutions and overall 15 percent of our students have transfer credits on file with the College. Many students delay officially transferring credits from other institutions, and so by the time they reach graduation, 50 percent of our graduates have received credit for courses at other institutions. Given the increasing volume of students' needs in this area, NCC is committed to expanding and improving our capacity to serve our transfer-in students.

1.6 Develop a system of “educational planning” for our students that engages students in academic and career advisement from admissions to completion. NCC enrolls many students who need extensive academic advising and support. As our enrollment has grown, so has student need in this area. During the past decade, annual enrollment at NCC increased by more than thirteen percent. In the fall semester, the college welcomes close to 2,000 new and transfer students. Many of our students are undecided about their short- and long-term academic and career goals. For example, in fall 2010, 1,621 of our students were degree seeking

undeclared students and 1,563 were in the General Studies program. Our students, faculty, staff, and external stakeholders have described a need for advising that extends beyond course selection, and requires the College to support students in multiple dimensions of educational planning. These dimensions include career planning, long- and short-term academic planning, assessment of academic and career oriented skills, and knowledge about self-presentation, employment, financial stability, and transfer. This system should include one-on-one advising as well as group, classroom, and electronic activities.

Goal 2: Response to workforce needs: Establish a cohesive infrastructure to support workforce development

Objectives:
2.1 Incorporate experiential learning as a <i>high impact educational practice</i> by monitoring and increasing participation in service learning, internships, co-op, and on-campus work
2.2 Increase the availability and use of employment data by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.2a establishing access to occupational forecasting data for college faculty and staff; and, 2.2b tracking student outcomes in the areas of placement, pay, and promotions
2.3 Increase the involvement of employers with the College by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2.3 a establishing systems of managing alumni records to increase opportunities for alumni interactions with the college; and, 2.3b increasing the number of internships, events, and committees that bring employers to campus

NCC plays a major role in workforce development in Fairfield County. Through its credit and non-credit programs, the College serves a broad range of industries, including education, restaurant, hospitality, healthcare, building, banking, marketing, engineering, real estate, finance, veterinary care, and criminal justice, to name a few. Our programs are noteworthy for the quality of our graduates; the flexibility of our curriculum to respond to economic needs; the support and involvement of local employers; and the collaboration between credit and non-credit programs.

At NCC, responsibility for these programs and activities remain widely distributed, involving many individuals and departments across the college. NCC can better leverage its resources for our students and employers by coordinating and formalizing a system that is currently informal and decentralized.

2.1 Incorporate experiential learning as a *high impact educational practice* by monitoring and increasing participation in service learning, internships, co-op, and on-campus work. A first step in the process of building a cohesive infrastructure for workforce development involves recognizing the important role of current and future employment in the lives of our students. More than a third of NCC students are employed 30 or more hours per week. After graduation more than half of our students continue to work in the same jobs they held in college. NCC seeks to strengthen the availability of experiential learning as a high impact educational practice for all of our students, recognizing that most of our students seek employment regardless of whether they are in a career or transfer-focused major. This goal will include identifying and assessing student learning outcomes in experiential learning that receives college credit.

2.2 Increase the availability and use of employment data by:

2.2a establishing access to occupational forecasting data for college faculty and staff; and,

2.2b tracking student outcomes in the areas of placement, pay, and promotions. A major strategic initiative of the past five years has been to develop a culture of evidence at NCC. Currently, the College has only limited information about employment of our students and the job outlook in our service area. An improvement in the quality and quantity of data available to inform our occupational programs and our students will help focus our programs and contribute to the success of our student in the workforce.

2.3 Increase the involvement of employers with the College by:

2.3a establishing systems of managing alumni relations to increase opportunities for alumni interactions with the college; and,

2.3b increasing the number of internships, events and committees that bring employers to campus. Through our planning process and through the work of our department chairs and program advisors, we have learned the potential exists for increased employer interaction with NCC. As a matter of fact, we recognize that today's NCC students become tomorrow's employers. Currently, NCC devotes limited resources to employer interactions, however increasing the scope and frequency of these interactions will strengthen our programs and the employability of our students.

Goal 3: Technological Innovation: Increase and leverage the use of information technology for educational purposes

Objectives:
3.1 Analyze and enhance the College website to better serve our student's needs
3.2 Expand the use of Blackboard to include all classes and all College faculty, staff and students
3.3 Increase the use of e-Portfolio
3.4 Improve NCC's capacity for communicating electronically with students and integrate electronic communication into existing processes

NCC prides itself on being at the cutting edge of technology. We prioritize teaching our students using the most current technologies and promote in the use of technology where appropriate in everything we do. Despite widespread availability of and enthusiasm for technology, we recognize that there are many ways in which our information technology resources are underutilized. Over the next five years, NCC will seek to achieve the following four goals in the area of information technology:

- 3.1 Analyze and enhance the College website to better serve our students’ needs.**
- 3.2 Expand the use of Blackboard to include all classes and all College faculty, staff, and students.** One anticipated benefit of reaching this goal will be a reduction in photocopying at the college as syllabi and reading materials are made available through Blackboard.
- 3.3 Increase the use of e-Portfolio.** E-portfolio will serve not only as an educational tool for faculty and students, but as a platform for student learning outcomes assessment and educational planning.
- 3.4 Improve NCC’s capacity for communicating electronically with students and integrate electronic communication into existing processes.**

Goal 4: Community Engagement and Strategic Partnerships: Expand and leverage community partnerships and strategic alliances to increase stakeholder participation

Objectives:
4.1 Reduce the need for remediation among our Norwalk and Stamford students
4.2 Increase the proportion of high school students that attend college
4.3 Cultivate business and community support of the College through the NCC Foundation
4.4 Streamline transfer to four-year colleges and universities by:
4.4a providing clear, transparent information about articulation for students; and,
4.4b improving the availability of advising for transfer students through advisor training

4.1 Reduce the need for remediation among our Norwalk and Stamford students. Approximately 75 percent of recent high school graduates enrolling at NCC require some form of remediation in English and mathematics and another 5 percent require English as a Second Language. Among students coming from our two urban school districts, these numbers can be much higher.

4.2 Increase the proportion of high school students that attend College.

4.3 Cultivate business and community support of the College through the NCC Foundation.

4.4 Streamline transfer to four-year colleges and universities by:

4.4a Providing clear, transparent information about articulation for students, and

4.4b improving the availability of advising for transfer students through advisor training.

Goal 5: Carefully Managed Campus Growth: Meet the evolving postsecondary educational needs of lower Fairfield County

Objectives:
5.1 Conduct a needs assessment and develop a plan for an NCC campus in Stamford
5.2 Expand on-line and hybrid courses and support for on-line students
5.3 Meet student demand for science courses

In order to meet the postsecondary needs of lower Fairfield County, it is important for the College to have in place a long-term expansion plan that takes into account the limitations of its Norwalk campus and population growth in the City of Stamford. In addition, the College will open a new Science, Health and Wellness facility in fall 2011. During 2011-12, NCC will undertake planning for a third phase of the expansion of its Norwalk campus.

5.1 Conduct a needs assessment and develop a plan for an NCC campus in Stamford. Together, students living in Stamford and Greenwich make up 38 percent of NCC enrollments. Over the past decade, the number of students from Stamford and Greenwich rose by 32 percent, which is higher than the overall

increase of 25 percent in our student headcount. The volume of students commuting to the College from the Stamford area has significant implications for the campus, including pressure on our limited parking, the environmental impacts and costs associated with driving, and the time and costs of commuting by bus as an alternative.

5.2 Expand on-line and hybrid courses and support for on-line students. During fall 2010, 17 percent of NCC students enrolled in on-line or hybrid courses. On-line or hybrid seats represented 8 percent of all credit bearing seats, meaning that almost all of these students took only one course electronically. NCC seeks to expand the number of on-line and hybrid offering. This improvement will be accompanied with student learning outcomes assessment in order to ensure the success of our on-line students. Currently, successful completion rates of on-line and hybrid courses are on average ten percent lower than other courses (63 percent completion in on-line compared with 74 percent for other teaching modalities).

5.3 Meet student demand for science courses. By the first week of July 2010, there were no seats available in Anatomy and Physiology I or introductory physics, 25 percent were available in Introduction to Biology, and only 19 percent in our introductory chemistry course. These courses are needed by our students to complete their degree programs. Part of the institutional challenge to meeting this goal involves increasing success rates in science courses, since many of the seats are taken by students attempting the courses for a second or third time.

Goal 6: Environmental Responsibility: Expand NCC’s role in promoting environmental sustainability in our region

Objectives:
6.1 Pursue climate neutrality
6.2 Establish and expand curriculum in environmental science and “green” jobs
6.3 Aspire to leadership in environmental sustainability

6.1 Pursue climate neutrality. The NCC Committee for Active and Responsible Environmental Sustainability (NCC C.A.R.E.S.) is leading efforts to reduce the college's carbon footprint. To date, NCC CARES has examined college operations for the use of environmentally friendly materials in the cafeteria and offices, established recycling protocols for the college, surveyed student and staff commuting patterns and coordinates bus routes with state and local transit districts. NCC CARES was instrumental in ensuring that the new Center for Science, Health and Wellness slated to open in August 2011 will be LEED certified. The committee also encouraged NCC President, David L. Levinson, to sign the American College & University (ACUPCC) President's Climate Commitment in April 2010 to create a Climate Action Plan that will make climate neutrality and sustainability a part of the curriculum and educational experience for our students.

6.2 Establish and expand curriculum in environmental science and "green" jobs. Developing an environmental science course (BIO181) and enhancing our science curriculum with inquiry based laboratories (IBLM) and service learning experiences became part of our strategies for meeting our institutional climate commitment. Concurrent with these developments, the college was selected to participate in a Connecticut Community and Technical College system initiative to offer credit and non-credit certificates for emerging "green jobs." The resulting credit certificate in Building Efficient and Sustainable Technology includes the newly developed Environmental Science course BIO181 and further highlights the need for the Science Department to offer environmental science coursework on an ongoing basis. This is a bridge between the two major responsibilities of the community college: preparing competent students for further education and developing a workforce with a solid education foundation.

6.3 Aspire to leadership in environmental sustainability. One of the ways that NCC can serve our community is not only by becoming climate neutral but by inspiring and educating others to pursue an environmental sustainability. We will do this in a variety of ways, including through our campus culture, teaching, and the engagement of our faculty and staff in the community.

VIII.

The Next Steps: Implementation and Accountability

Over the course of the next five years, NCC will devote resources and attention to implementing our goals and objectives. Deans, directors and chairs will be primarily responsible for organizing divisional and departmental planning with their constituents that serve the overarching goals of the institution. The President will have ultimate oversight of this process.

It is noteworthy that the Connecticut Community College system is undergoing major restructuring as part of Governor Dannel Malloy's initiative to merge the Community College and State University Systems. These systems will report to a combined Board of Regents effective January 1, 2012. It is therefore understood that implementation of this plan may be shaped by fiscal and policy developments at the state level as the new higher education system of the state of Connecticut takes form in the coming months and years.

A factor critical to successful implementation of the plan involves the development of indicators that will allow the college to chart its progress over time. Progress towards these indicators will be measured and regularly reported by the Department of Institutional Effectiveness to the President and the college-wide community. Deans will be responsible for reporting on their progress towards annual goals and objectives.

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