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ABSTRACT

This collection contains selected presentations from an annual accreditation and quality assurance conference. The papers are: (1) "Turning around Troubled Institutions" (Matthew Goldstein); (2) "Triadic Hierarchical Planning" (William J. Austin); (3) "Edinboro University's Triangulated Institutional Effectiveness Model" (Michael A. Mogavero and Erinn D. Lake); (4) "Developing the Mission Statement" (David Prensky); (5) "K-16 Collaboration: Seamless School-to-Work Career Pathways" (Rodney Bailey, Anthony S. Digenakis, and Nancy S. Campbell); (6) "Quality Indicators for Distance Education Programs" (Meg Benke, David Brigham, Carolyn G. Jarmon, and Esther H. Paist); and (7) "Innovation, Collaboration, and Experimentation" (James E. Cronin, Kathleen Wessman, and William E. Campbell). (SLD)

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Rethinking Quality Assurance

Examining Established Practices, Exploring New Strategies

Selected Presentations at AQA 2000
The Annual Accreditation and Quality Assurance Conference
Of the Middle States Commission on Higher Education
December 4–5, 2000; Philadelphia, PA

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Turning Around Troubled Institutions

Matthew Goldstein
Chancellor, The City University of New York

Good morning. I am honored to be asked to speak this morning to such an august group of college and university presidents. The institutions we head represent the intellectual cauldrons of our society. It makes me wonder a little, though—if we're so smart, what on earth are we doing here at this hour?

At the request of Jean Avnet Morse, Executive Director of Middle States, I am going to talk this morning about turning around troubled institutions.

I am hesitant to wrap myself in the mantle of "Expert" and pontificate on this, recalling the great physicist Albert Einstein's caution on such an undertaking. He warned, "Whoever undertakes to set himself up as a judge of truth and knowledge is shipwrecked by the laughter of the gods." Hopefully, the gods are not awake yet.

I'm going to speak today from my personal experience in leading three institutions that somewhere in the past had lost their way—Baruch College, Adelphi University, and The City University of New York. In each case, I was recruited to help bring some coherence, a reorientation of values, and to get the institution moving in a positive direction. In each case, I received tremendous help from very dedicated people who wanted those institutions to succeed.

At Baruch, the college had lost the confidence of its alumni. Many people felt the standards had imploded, and that the college had relinquished a cherished tradition of being hard to get into, hard to stay in, and hard to get out of.

Adelphi is a small private institution where an egregious breach of University governance had prompted the New York State Board of Regents to come in and replace the entire Board of Trustees. The faculty was perceived to be difficult; the physical plant was in shambles; enrollment was down; and people had lost confidence in the institution generally.

CUNY was by far the largest challenge. With 200,000 students and a $1.5 billion operating budget, it is the largest urban university in the country and the third-largest public university system. Changes wrought by open admissions had fostered a public perception of lowered standards across the University and of many CUNY colleges as "schools of last resort."

Institutions get into trouble in different ways and different strategies are required to turn them around. We all have been at enough institutions to know they are like families—each wonderful (and a bit crazy) in its own way. However, there are some common lessons I learned in my tenure at these three institutions that I'd like to share with you.

First, pick your troubled institution, and get a mandate. It takes a certain kind of person to go in and fix a failing school. It's very important to have general agreement that something is broken and the institution needs to try another path. This creates a sense of urgency and a mandate for action. You don't want to be the one breaking the bad news; you want to be part of the solution. It's important, too, to avoid casting stones at those who came before you, or made choices that may have led to the current mess. Focusing on the past is pointless—you want people to look ahead.

Next, carefully assess the institution's capacities and capabilities; decide where it needs to go; and then sell that vision. Look at what the competition is doing and find a market niche. Do a thorough analysis of the institution's strengths and capacities and build on them. Half of the job of a leader is to articulate what the institution is capable of becoming. The other half is selling that vision—if you'll pardon that word—to all the obvious constituents. If you can re-engage those communities—the alumni, the faculty, the students, the political leaders, the business and civic community—they will help you implement your plan.

Surround yourself with talented people; empower them, and hold them accountable, but give them credit. Replace the word "I" with the word "we." This is the worst place to be politically correct because these are the people who are going to pull your vision into existence. They also need to be appropriately compensated. CUNY's Executive Compensation Plan, which is part of the University's new Master Plan, aims to be an incentive to big thinking, big achievement, and big rewards.

Take intelligent risks, but only after careful assessment. As you work your plan, ignore conventional wisdom, and trust your gut. Sometimes you should do exactly the opposite of what conventional wisdom tells you. For example, when enrollment and tuition revenues are dropping, the answer may be to raise entry standards, as we did at Baruch and Adelphi. Or close a school, as we did with the school of education at Baruch.

You also need to be prepared to stand up and admit you made a mistake and just put it behind you. I am reminded here of Roberto Goizueta, the CEO at Coca Cola, who made the risky decision to change the formula of Coke. It didn't take long to see the magnitude of that error. He beat a hasty retreat. But he also issued Diet Coke, despite warnings it would harm the trademark name. In 16 years, he took the company value from $4.3 billion to $180 billion.

Don't be afraid to let others carry the message for you. Often, they will be heard when you won't. As President, you are viewed as biased and prejudiced. If the message comes instead from someone others respect, they will be willing to hear it.

Be prepared for all sorts of eventualities. Be adaptive. Things are never going to go as planned.

Plan some early successes and make the most of them. Initial moves often set the tone for an effective administration. Work hard on those early successes—it gets people thinking you really are capable of getting done what you've pledged to do. At Baruch, we were able to secure two major gifts early on, which led to the establishment of the Newman Library.

Find a way to get the trustees and faculty on the same side of the table. In the December 2000 issue of *Trusteeship* magazine, the publication of the Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges, Richard Chait reports that there is a natural tension between faculty and trustees. He writes, "With accelerating intensity, trustees and professors around the country are waging a war of words in the news media and elsewhere about shared governance and the balance of power on campus."

Presidents and chancellors often find themselves in the middle of this firing range, and it's a bad place to be—particularly when troubles have led to an excess of finger pointing. It is imperative that these two groups be brought together. That can be done through joint committee assignments, informal trustee visits to campuses, even cocktail parties—anything that will help develop relationships and trust. It's amazing the progress that can be made when trustees and faculty realize that the "enemy" is competition from outside—not each other.

Track performance, reward it, and publicize improvements. People respond to success. With every step forward, you can gain a legion of new followers and new financial support. Good publicity from performance improvements will drive increases in contributions, grants, enrollments, and top-flight faculty hires. You have to keep the evidence coming and you want to stimulate continuous improvements. For example, the CUNY Master Plan gained approval from the Board of Trustees and the New York State Board of Regents largely due to the compelling data we were able to provide in support of the Plan's proposals.

Focus on the customer. Twenty years ago, we could take the position, "Caveat emptor," or, "buyer, beware!" As colleges face more and more competition, we need to flip this message to "cave emptorum," or "be aware of the buyer"!

Most troubled institutions got that way because they took their eyes off their customers, their students. They operated to please other constituencies. At Adelphi, it was the President and Trustees. At Baruch, faculty schedules took precedence. By focusing on the customer's needs and wants, you will ensure success. Within the context of CUNY as an integrated university, we are targeting our customers by establishing cross-college registration, core curricula, guaranteed transfer of credits and enhanced transfer assistance through the TIPPS system, weekend colleges, and distance learning.

Sometimes I raise eyebrows when I talk about the University in business terms. As an academic, I understand all the reasons we insist on being viewed and treated differently. But by being too insular, many institutions have gotten into trouble. By insisting nothing is measurable, we have precluded opportunities for self-improvement.

In an ironic twist of fate, that has made us vulnerable not to other institutions but to the business sector itself. I don't have to tell you the multiple ways the private sector is going after our students—our markets. We have a lot to learn from business; they have made many of the tough transitions we face.

In the end, good leadership is the key to turning around a troubled institution. It's why I am devoting a lot of energy at CUNY to attracting top talent for presidencies as they come open. Just one person with a strong vision and stronger determination can make a tremendous difference.

In doing a little research for this talk, I ran across a news account of a speech John Brademas gave in 1992 to Fordham University's freshman class. Brademas, after serving 22 years in Congress, made the incredible leap to becoming President of New York University. NYU was a very troubled institution when he took over in 1983. When he left 10 years later, the University's endowment had ballooned to $570 million, its graduate programs were winning acclaim, and enrollments had surged.

Brademas learned academics on the job—he learned leadership in his first 50 years. In his Fordham address, he defined leadership in the context of politics, but as his career showed, it was a concept that translated well to our world. "The essence of leadership," he said, "is to persuade the electorate to do what they as individuals might not want to do, but know in their hearts they should do, for the greater good."

That's as good a description as I've seen—one that I think could even pass muster with Dr. Einstein's gods.

Strategic Planning and Quality Improvement

Triadic Heterarchical Planning
From Formal Plan to Implementation: Aligning Purposes & Values

William J. Austin
Executive Assistant to the President for Advancement, Planning, and Academic Effectiveness, Salem Community College

Salem Community College (SCC) is a public, open admission, two-year institution of higher education authorized by the state of New Jersey to grant associate degrees and certificates. The college, formerly the Salem County Technical Institute (1957-1972), was founded in 1972 and was first accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools in 1979. Salem Community College enrolls approximately
400 first-time students per semester from a pool of about 1,300 for-credit students.

In an analysis of Salem Community College strategic planning outcome effectiveness data, there appeared to be a gap between the institutional and departmental strategic plans and the individuals charged with implementing the plans. A gap in the relationship between individual staff goals and the goals of the college also appeared to exist. This gap in goals and the understanding of decisions related to organizational goal attainment caused a problem of increased communication lags between the administration, the faculty, and the staff. It was thought that the gap could lead to ineffective plan implementation, and a general lack of understanding among staff members about why many decisions are made and carried out and the respective role of each individual to the organization.

A systemized institutional strategic planning process had been developed and implemented (Austin, 1999a), as well as a systematized departmental planning process, known as unit planning (Austin, 1999c). These processes allowed the college to enter the new millennium with a renewed sense of purpose at both the institutional and unit (departmental) levels.

A great deal of research currently supports the notion that strategic planning is an institutional endeavor that should be placed in the hands of decision-makers, leaders, followers, and all stakeholders of a college (Austin, 1999a; Fogg, 1999; Juranski, 1993; Lucas, 1997; Rothwell, 1996; and Senge, Kleiner, Roberts, Ross, Roth, & Smith, 1999). These ideals were a guiding point of the Salem Community College strategic planning and unit planning initiatives, yet a gap in the relationship between the individual and the goals of the college still remained upon initial plan implementation.

The Missing Element

The very essence of the problem of implementing plans at most colleges is the lack of shared responsibility. There is a disconnect between the individuals' values and the organization's values. There are common vision, mission, and values established, but there is not a process in which employees are encouraged to internalize the vision, mission, and values. A process of individual planning and individual appraisal integrated into the current planning schema needs to be created and implemented to ensure institutional effectiveness in meeting organizational goals.

The creation of personal planning and employee appraisal processes should close the final gap in strategic planning (Figure 1). Leaders, managers, faculty, and staff at the college should be asked to realize through an analysis of past ineffectiveness that hierarchical structures limit the role of leadership among those who do not possess power based on authority. "This is the true reason that top-down, hierarchical style of leadership is widely perceived as doomed to failure, even by those who aren't sure precisely why this should be so." (Helgesen, 1996, p. 22). As a newly created planning process is implemented, leaders should be asked to implement a system of personal goal development and evaluation that unites the institutional and departmental values with those of the people who are asked to implement them. This should create a system that is more heterarchical and more likely to have a shared vision and a system of shared responsibility.

Finding the Essential Structure

The model of yesterday was restructuring; the model of the future is emergent heterarchy, which implies no set uniform structure but rather a multilevel, multidimensional, fluid structure of continual adaptation. This system is best created through a practice of triadic heterarchical strategic planning (institutional, departmental (unit), and personal (individual)). The best means of strategic plan implementation is through the development of an encompassing evaluation system that complements the planning system and ensures that management develops the systems of shared communication, responsibility, accountability, and empowerment called for in many institutional planning initiatives.

In attempting to understand colleges (organizations) and their goals for organizational change and synergy it is beneficial to examine the role of structure and social relations within organizations in general. Kontopoulos (1993), in his innovative work on social structure, demonstrates the connection between individuals and the conceptualization of the structures from within which individuals live and work. Kontopoulos has demonstrated that the logic of structures has developed along five basic epistemic strategies: reductionism, constructionism, heterarchy, hierarchy, and trancendence/holism.
This epistemological theory of heterarchy demonstrates that organizational understanding should be shifted to embrace the ideas of emergence and complexity. It is this emergent complexity which should then be considered in any attempt to understand organizational change, which is

related directly to organizational structure and culture. The emergent complexity of a heterarchical structure can best be described as a multifaceted set of networks that rise and fall from prominence as functions and organizational activities emerge, are addressed and resolved, and vanish. This new structure would emphasize the human relationships and complexity of networks and functions that abound in the effort to plan and implement change in the modern higher education organization. It is this new paradigm that suggests the need for planning across all levels of an organization to ensure that the change movement is synergistic with all components, networks, hubs, and levels of the institution.

The current preoccupation with structure is really a preoccupation with management. This preoccupation with management limits the level and complexity of change that can be realized, since it is at the other levels of the organization where change is arguably most often necessitated and where development and local leadership are most often missing. As Wheatley demonstrates, contemporary leaders lust for order in their organizations while failing to see its true nature (1996). She suggests that we must welcome disorder as a partner in our search for order and thus in our search for continuous improvement. Our current structures come and go, so leaders should focus energy on the directions that emerge from deep natural processes of growth and self-renewal.

Creating a Balance through Organizational Synergy

The key to the success of a personal planning process will ultimately depend on the ability of the organization to transform its structure and culture, and most importantly, for current leadership to have the courage to empower their staff to work beyond the command-and-control systems previously in place at many higher education institutions. The basis of measuring the overall effectiveness should be the realization of the heterarchical structure and organizational synergy based on a synergistic triadic planning process (Figure 2). This figure illustrates Salem Community College's attempt to understand how personal planning is interrelated to the departmental and institutional planning processes, and how these processes are structured into a complex network, system, and structure that comprises the institution. It demonstrates the relationships between the three independent planning processes and their respective dependent, interdependent, and independent relationships; as well as the influences of external constituencies (pressures), and the desire for a common vision.

The realization of these dependent, independent, and interdependent relationships coupled with the social relationships that pressure change and transformation should lead to a system that can manage the realization of organizational synergy. The realization that synergy can be achieved through the effective management of the social relations within the institutional planning enterprise can lead to the development of a highly effective organization.

Covey (1992) and Blanchard et al. (1999) have demonstrated the need to integrate and balance the professional life with the personal life. As Stephen Covey (1992) has argued in his work, *Principle Centered Leadership*, the world class competitive organization of the future should concern itself with four levels of natural laws: personal (principle centered), interpersonal (relationships), managerial (leadership, supervision), and organizational (structure). Covey further suggests that these four departments are governed by four principles: personal governed by trustworthiness, interpersonal governed by trust, managerial governed by empowerment, and the organization governed by alignment.

To Covey (1992), these levels and related principles must be aligned and synergized for the organization to succeed. For example, empowerment is tied to trust, and trust is tied to trustworthiness in interpersonal relations, which are the framework of empowerment; therefore, the personal is tied to the managerial (departmental) and the managerial (departmental) is tied to the organizational. Covey's principles demonstrate the underlying point: any planning strategy must be incorporated into every level of the organization, otherwise empowerment is merely a shiny method of command and control, and systems thinking is merely a practiced method of restructuring the hierarchy.

Higher education institutions could begin to become more emergently effective through the development and understanding of complex systems of social and structural relationships (i.e., through accepting and managing the heterarchies that naturally occur within higher education institutions). Higher education institutions can become learning organizations by understanding the limitations of command-and-control mechanisms, the limitations of their current hierarchical structures, and the problems associated with traditional institutional level strategic planning models. Until higher education realizes that their best-laid plans are implemented by living, transformational, social organisms; and it then constructs purposeful systems to initiate and manage change to affect the plans; there will not be real change and growth within our higher education institutions. To create an organization that creates, acquires, and transfers new knowledge in a continuous fashion it is necessary to ensure that all levels of the organization (global, departmental, and personal) have systems in place that are change oriented, forward forecasting, and designed to create organizational synergy.

Triadic Heterarchical Planning

The individual planning and appraisal structures should enhance human resources and move the leaders of the college to a management style of coaching and teamwork. Like sports, "different games call for unique patterns of differentiation and coordination. How closely team members depend on one another's—levels of interdependence--vary widely from sport to sport" (Bolman & Deal, 1997, p. 88). Salem Community College, through a participatory management and planning development process, is attempting to merge the conceptualization of human

resources management, structure, and teamwork into a dynamic environment of success and motivation at the institutional, department, and personal levels (i.e., across the three levels).

The goal of this planning model is the integration of institutional, departmental, and personal missions. Once the missions are integrated, the values of each component (or level) of the organization should become unified (i.e., each person should fully understand his or her role in the organization and their ability and personal power to influence that role). As demonstrated in Figure 3, this integration of missions and values should lead to the development of increased institutional, departmental, and individual effectiveness and success.

Rummler (1995) has suggested that before performance can be managed at any level of the organization, the expectations for performance must be clearly established and communicated (p. 79). The system must integrate the three levels of the organization into one system that unites the efforts of all individuals, departments, and the institution into a shared vision of the future. Finally, for the system to be successful the three levels of performance should be intricately linked to the system and overall guiding strategy of the organization. This strategy should then be continuously evaluated in a system of data based institutional effectiveness.

The End Goal

The development of the final step in Salem Community College's planning efforts was designed to develop a governance and management system where the individual's values are integrated with the college's values (so the spheres of influence (home-life and work-life) no longer compete for the individual's most scarce resource, time). The college has begun to realize that the most effective employees are ones who view their career and families as non-competing interests, and the organization is now continuously changing to become a non-competing enterprise.

All college administration, faculty, and staff are being given greater decision-making power and a larger sphere of influence through the triadic planning process. This power and influence is guided by principles of trust and responsibility. The emphasis is on collaboration and "win-win." The emphasis on quality is paramount in the development of organizational planning and outcomes; measurements of success are emphasizing institutional, departmental, and personal outcomes over the planning process. The traditions and standards are coming into question and are being reviewed systematically, and more staff are beginning to innovate daily practice to produce better results from the administration, faculty, and staff.

Each staff member is an essential decision-maker in the organization. Each staff member will interact with our students and will have the power to influence the lives of the individuals we serve. Ensuring that each of these local decision-makers is part of the departmental and

organizational decision making process ensures the success of the institution. The time is long overdue for systems and processes that help the workers see and feel that they are building the future of the organization, and doing it through the betterment of themselves (this is otherwise known as the development of the learning organization).

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Figure 1

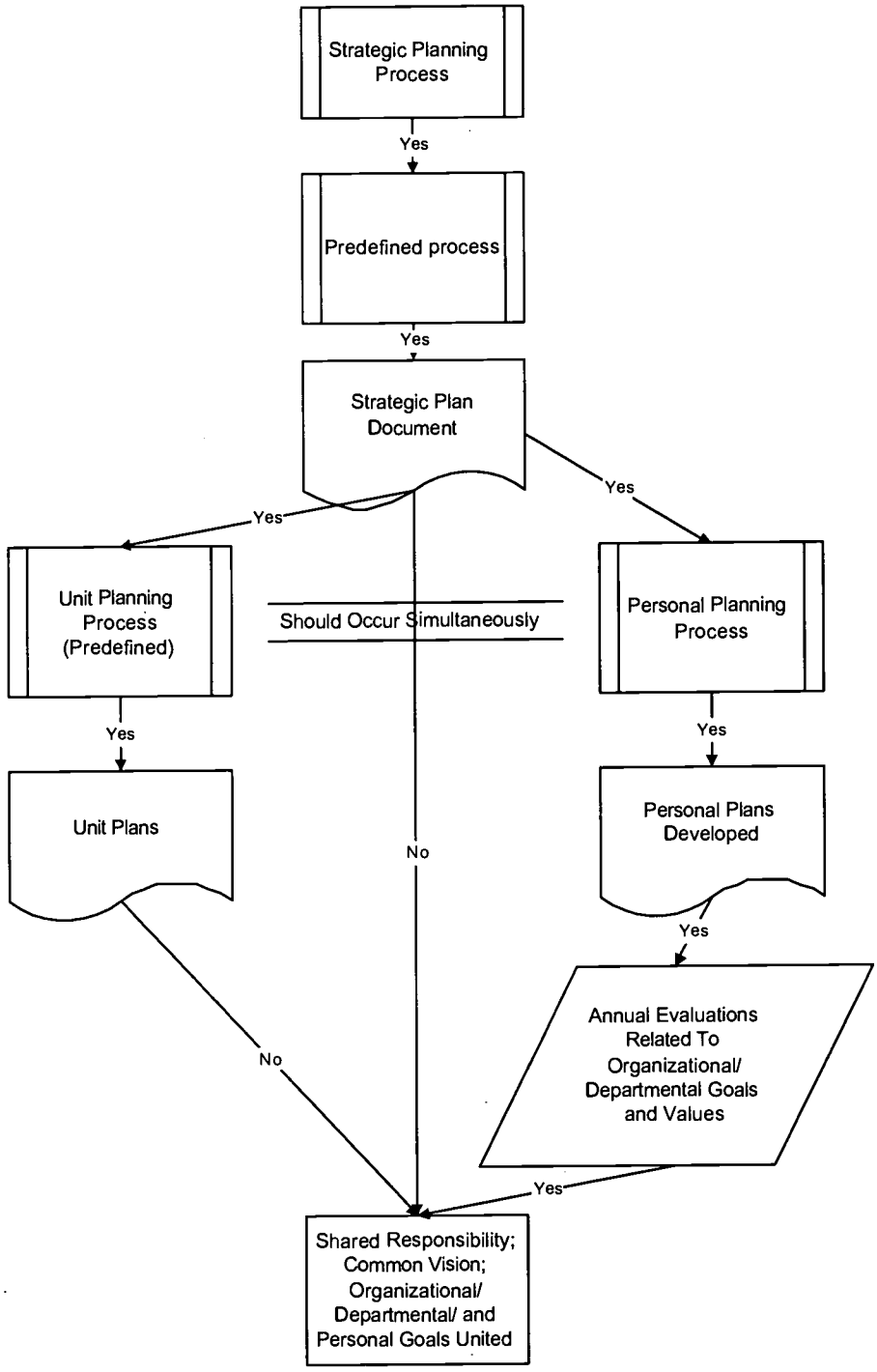
Strategic Planning Process
Yes
Predefined process
Yes
Strategic Plan Document
Yes
Yes
Unit Planning Process (Predefined)
Should Occur Simultaneously
Personal Planning Process
Yes
Yes
Unit Plans
No
Personal Plans Developed
Yes
Annual Evaluations Related To Organizational/ Departmental Goals and Values
No
Yes
Shared Responsibility; Common Vision; Organizational/ Departmental/ and Personal Goals United

Figure 2

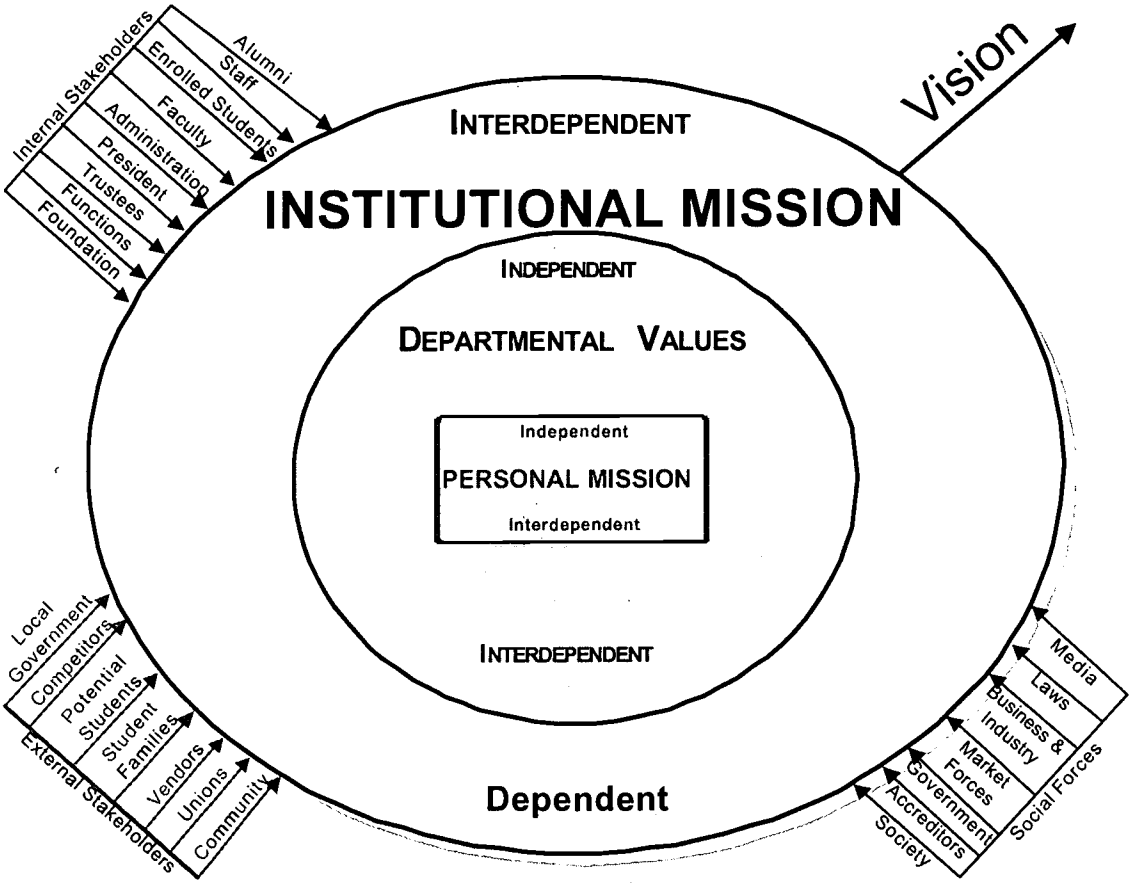

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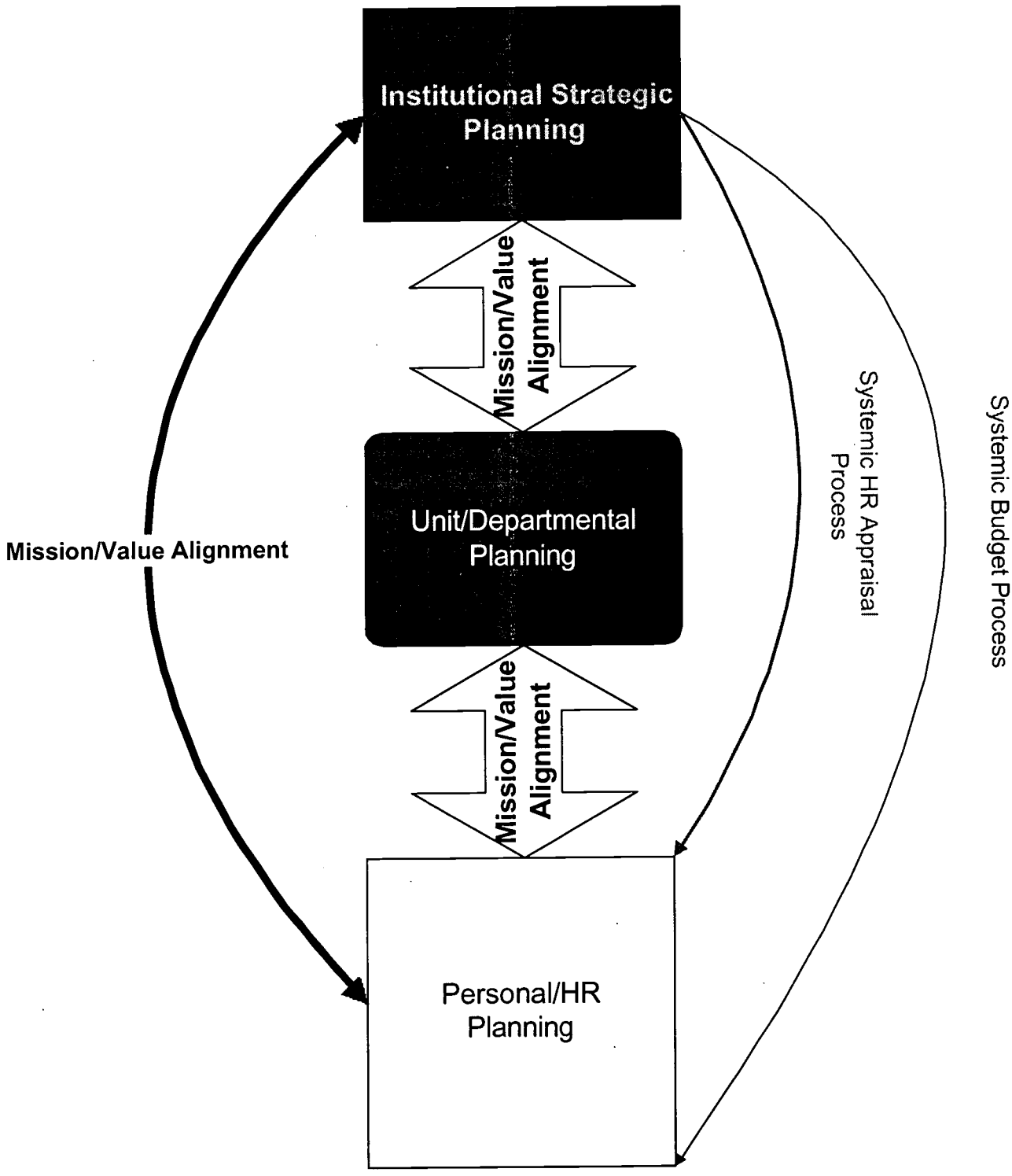
Figure 3


Institutional Strategic Planning
Mission/Value Alignment
Unit/Departmental Planning
Mission/Value Alignment
Personal/HR Planning
Mission/Value Alignment
Systemic HR Appraisal Process
Systemic Budget Process

Edinboro University's Triangulated Institutional Effectiveness Model

Michael A. Mogavero
Vice President for Planning, Institutional Research, and Continuous Improvement
Erinn D. Lake
Director of Planning and Continuous Improvement
Edinboro University of Pennsylvania

Four and one half years ago Edinboro University of Pennsylvania inherited a top-down planning process: one that had few of the characteristics of a democratic planning process. It was a mechanism doomed to failure. It was a process that led to all of those typical scenarios that you find, such as alienation, lack of progessivity of the University, and a stale environment. New leadership focused on the need to breathe life into the institution. There was a recognition that every individual at that institution brings something special, every individual in the university has a window to how we can succeed, and that every individual in the university strives to be at the frontier of his or her literature.

We recognize the need to bring these ingredients into the teaching and learning environment and make ourselves a vibrant and dynamic university. We have attempted to do this through our planning and continuous improvement process.

We looked at existing planning models, and we saw numerous partial equilibrium solutions to the planning process. We did not see a global one and we tried to figure out what truly is strategic planning and continuous improvement: what are its components, and how do we relate them all together. We did that in what we call our triangulated planning and continuous improvement model (Figure 1).

When we talk about planning and continuous improvement, especially in the Middle States context, very often people think of this process in only one of the dimensions that exist. This is the traditional assessment, which takes place at the departmental level, which includes outcomes assessment.

At Edinboro University of Pennsylvania, every program is reviewed every five years. This is mandated by a Board of Governor's Policy, and these reviews have the typical characteristics. We survey constituent groups. We look at what the learning objectives were. We ask how well we doing what we are doing at the departmental level. We also update this for budget purposes every year. In addition, every year, academic and non-academic departments reevaluate their goals and objectives, reevaluate and update their environmental assessments, such as being the premier institution in teaching biology visually in northwest Pennsylvania. This dovetails with the technology issues. What do you need to do that? How do they relate? Where are the gaps that exist and how do

they become addressed in the budget? This represents the first piece of the planning and continuous improvement process.

In order to expand the meaning of a dynamic continuous improvement and planning process, we need to examine the second component of our model: initiative building and the quarterly report planning process. The way in which we take all those needs that we define in step one is to prioritize them in terms of our goals and objectives. The scarce resources that we have must be prioritized to meet these ends. How do we make that transition? An integral part of a democratic planning process is to bring a team together that includes faculty, staff, trustees, and outside people who will advise as to how to develop criteria to evaluate programs. Everyone then becomes part of the process, and we will put resources into those areas that they say were most important.

Figure 1

Edinboro University's Triangulated Institutional Effectiveness Model

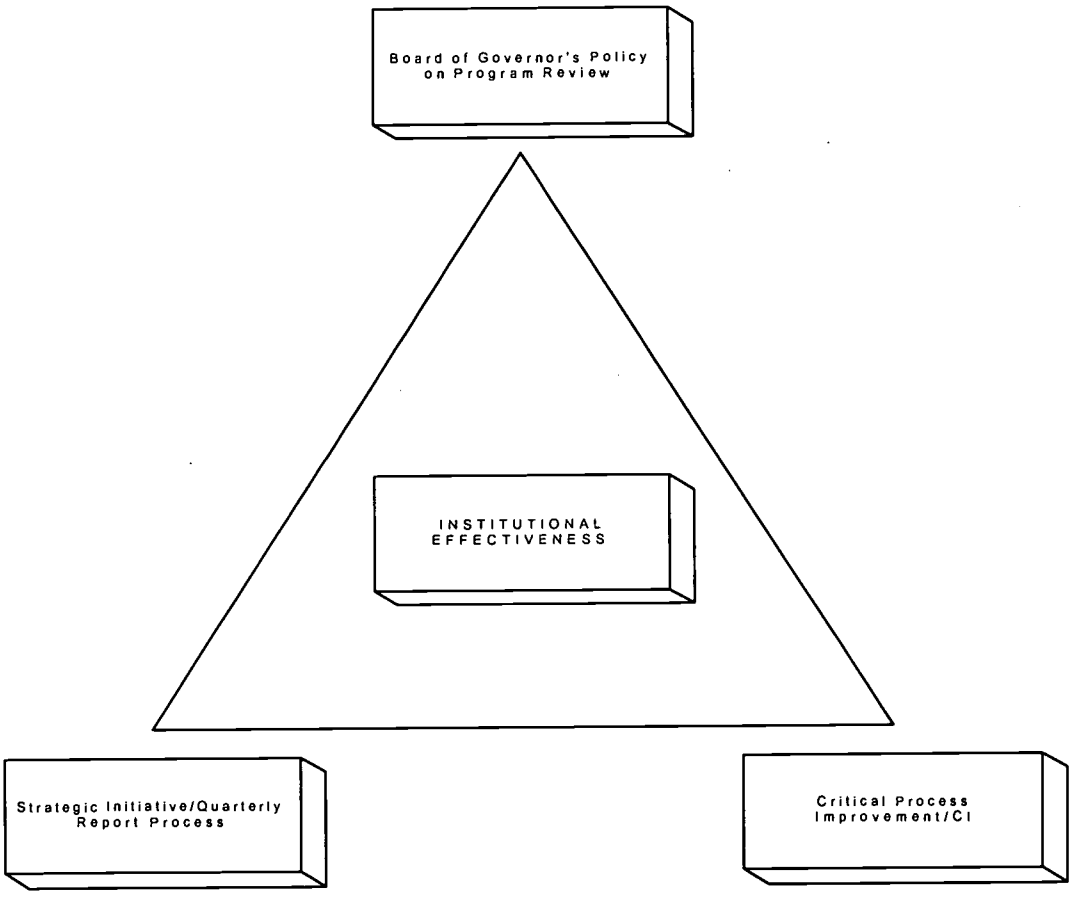


Table 1 shows a summary of what we have done in that context and deals with the academic sector. There are three major criteria: quality, which is broken down into faculty students and program; need and opportunity; and cost. We gather information on all of these elements, and you will see there are worksheets for the provost, deans and directors and vice presidents to fill out. Criteria are spelled out to help measure these. This then feeds into the budget. The vice presidents and directors get together and hammer out a budget designed to accomplish the strategic initiatives that we are going to put forth in the strategic plan for the next year. So the second component of planning and continuous improvement—the first being outcomes assessment on the departmental level—is tying planning to budgeting by developing those initiatives that the community indicates are important to accomplish the priorities of the university and giving money to those ends.

This is represented in Table 2, which includes the initiatives and the hard measures of success. Measures of successes need to be not always quantitative but as concrete as they possibly can be in order to have a successful planning process. This is especially relevant for those in public institutions where there is the ever-increasing requirement for accountability.

In addition, there is a benchmarking among universities in the State System in the form of performance indicators. Funding from the state is a function of each university's relative performance. In Pennsylvania, there are also performance and outcome goals. These are outcome measures that have to do with things like fund raising, etc. These are also tied in to our reporting scheme. A caution is that in order to keep an identity, especially those of you in state institutions, we insist that the planning comes first from the university and they simultaneously meet the needs of the state. We turn this back to the campus every quarter in a document that charts the progress that has been made and also what has failed to be achieved. Finally, the annual report of the president to the community lists those initiatives, basically the fourth quarterly report, which summarizes how well initiatives have been met and what we failed to do.

Table 1
Criteria for Academic Program Evaluation
Dean/Provost Worksheet

Evaluative Criteria		Rating Categories			
QUALITY					
Quality of Faculty		Exceptional	Strong	Adequate	Weak
Quality of Students		High	Medium	Low	
Quality of Programs		High	Medium	Low	
NEED					
Centrality to Mission:		High	Medium	Low	
Student Demand:	Present	High	Medium	Low	
	Projected	Growing	Stable	Declining	
Demand for Graduates:	Present	High	Medium	Low	
	Projected	Growing	Stable	Declining	
Linkage/Potential Linkage to Other Programs/Institutions:	Present	High	Medium	Low	
	Projected	Growing	Stable	Declining	
Comparative Advantage:	Present	High	Medium	Low	
	Projected	Growing	Stable	Declining	
COST					
Cost/Revenue Relationship		Good	Adequate	Poor	
Other Costs and Benefits		(Listing)			

Summary Sheet
Criteria for Non-Academic Program Evaluation
Director/Vice President Worksheet

Evaluative Criteria	Rating Categories			
QUALITY				
Personnel	Exceptional	Strong	Adequate	Weak
Resources	Exceptional	Satisfactory	Weak	
University Coordination	Exceptional	Satisfactory	Weak	
Services/Programs	High	Medium	Low	

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NEED				
Centrality to Mission		Among the most central services	Typical of most services	Less central than most services
Demand for Services:				
	Present	High	Moderate	Low
	Projected	Growing	Stable	Declining
Fulfillment of Mission		Unique service meeting a specific need	Typical of most services	Duplication of services
Support for Student Success :				
Direct		Positive Impact	Typical of most services	Negative Impact
	Indirect	Positive Impact	Typical of most services	Negative Impact
COST				
Net Cost/FTE or other basis		More than current total cost	Less than current total cost	None
Outsourcing Available for Similar Service		Yes, but more than current total cost	Yes, and less than current total cost	None Available
Perceived Value Added		Significant	Moderate	Low

(Adapted from Shirley/Volkwein)

Table 2

EDINBORO UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES 2000-2001

(INCLUDES BOG GOALS FOR THE SSHE AND PERFORMANCE INDICATORS)

Priority One: Increase enrollment to 8,000 students in the next several years through enhanced enrollment and retention strategies.

Enrollment Management and Retention (EMR)

Initiative	Measure of Success	Action Steps/ Timeline/ Cost	Responsible Individual
Improve Scholastic Achievement Test Scores (average combined SAT scores for first-time, full-time, baccalaureate degree seeking students). Edinboro University's combined average for Fall 1999 was 951. **PI#1.**	Edinboro University seeks to achieve the System average (988 in Fall 1999) within three years.		Assoc. VP for Enrollment Mgmt. and Retention
Maintain 99/00 transfer student ratio average of 23.3 percent (System average for 99/00 was 23 percent.) This applies to new degree-seeking undergraduate transfers as percent of new degree-seeking undergraduates. **(Linked to SSHE Funding). PI#2.**	Percentage of incoming class that is composed of transfer students (for Fall 2000, percentage was 25.0 percent-447/1784)		Assoc. VP for Enrollment Mgmt. and Retention
Improve second year persistence of degree seeking baccalaureate students who began in the fall (JCAR). This applies to the percent of students returning to campus for second year (one year retention rate). Edinboro University's average for 1998/99 was 73.1 percent. **(Linked to SSHE Funding). PI#3.**	Edinboro University seeks to achieve the System average (74.5 percent in 1998/99) within three years		Assoc. VP for Enrollment Mgmt. and Retention
Improve four-year overall retention rate (JCAR). This applies to the percent of baccalaureate degree students graduating or persisting after four years. Edinboro University's average for 1995/96 was 55.1 percent. **PI#4.**	Edinboro University seeks to achieve the System average (56.4 percent in 1995/96) within three years.		Assoc. VP for Enrollment Mgmt. and Retention

Critical Process Improvement

The third element in the triangulated institutional effectiveness model is critical process improvement. We have talked about empowering others and about linking initiatives to the broader priorities of the university. For a "real life" example, please refer to Edinboro University's Strategic Study Group process. The University develops core process review teams through the presidential newsletter, communicating with the campus by asking for suggestions for study. On average, 40 suggestions are received each year.

The executive management team reviews the suggestions and then selects three to four suggested processes for study. Studies are distributed across the divisions while linking them to the 8 University-wide priorities. (One such priority is to increase enrollment to 8,000 students.) Once the decisions for studies have been made, they are announced to the campus community and volunteers are solicited to assist in the studies.

The campus responds in a tremendous way. The membership is very diverse—from secretaries to residence hall coordinators to students to faculty. In recent years, waiting lists have had to be developed for study group membership.

The teams receive the following charge in order to keep the study on track, because it is very easy for different agendas to enter into the arena:

- a description of the current process
- baseline data, such as the length of time to complete the process.
- because there are seven unions on campus, the recommendations must respect collective bargaining agreements.
- And, then, a recommended new policy/procedures/process.

Team composition is 9 to 10 people, despite criticism from colleagues in the business environment that the team size is too big. (In academia, team size must be increased to accommodate the various constituencies on campus.)

The guidance team is an integral component, as one or two people responsible for the current process are placed on the team. This is done to be certain that process is described accurately and to understand exactly how and why the process functions. Then the director of planning and continuous improvement is added as a member of each team as the quality advisor.

The following list indicates the study groups that have been completed at the university:

1997

1. Curriculum Committee
2. Faculty Hiring
3. Technology Procurement

1998

4. Classroom Utilization
5. Expenditure Requests/Purchasing
6. Parking

1999

7. Accessibility of Audio-Visual Equipment
8. Admissions Applications
9. Duplicating
10. Financial Aid Service/Loan & Grant Refunds/Work Study

2000

11. Graduate Admissions Process
12. Graduate Assistant Award Process
13. Student Recruitment
    Student Scheduling

You will see that Edinboro University has not been shy about addressing some very critical and difficult topics, such as parking. It seems no one ever wants to talk about that! It is true—campuses do hear many complaints about parking. In 1998, during the course of one semester, nine articles appeared in the student newspaper expressing dissatisfaction with parking.

Each study group develops an improvement statement, with an eye toward improving student satisfaction and reducing cycle time. For example, the parking study group wanted to increase student satisfaction while maintaining faculty satisfaction with campus parking. Then a survey was conducted to determine commuter student satisfaction—a growing population on campus.

Another example would be the graduate admissions process. The flow chart to map the process was convoluted. Four different applications existed and each asked for the same information. The team asked about the cost to produce the applications. The team asked questions about the process cycle time, etc.

Participating in a strategic study group is a tremendous opportunity on the Edinboro University campus. Team facilitators convene the groups and the teams work hard from January to April in order to present results to the University's executive management team in May and subsequently to the community at the summer planning retreat in July. There is nothing secretive about what the study teams are seeking to accomplish. Every one on campus has an opportunity to know what changes are being recommended and, through the quarterly report to the campus, what progress is made in the implementation of the recommendations.

Edinboro University feels the strategic study group process itself is good and sound while being inclusive and democratic. Many individuals have been empowered to assume positions of leadership, and this is very important.

Developing the Mission statement

David Prensky
Dean, School of Business, The College of New Jersey

A clear mission is the touchstone of an educational institution and a key determinant of its success. It defines what an organization is and what it aspires to be. It is the foundation of strategic planning, forming the basis for setting goals and objectives and for decision making about how to implement the programs, structures, and processes that allow the institution to achieve its goals.

In this paper, I will describe a process for developing the mission statement—the tangible representation of the institution's mission. I will begin with a definition of strategic planning and the role that a mission plays in strategic planning, turn to a detailed description of the mission statement, and conclude with an example of a mission statement development process from The College of New Jersey. The College has just completed a year-long process. It provides an excellent example of the collaborative, inclusive process that can produce a mission that is widely accepted by all members of the campus community and, therefore, will provide the basis for future planning and implementation at the institution.

The Role of the Mission in Strategic Planning

Strategic planning is a disciplined process for decision making. It ensures the institution's continued success by adopting a long-term view of how the educational institutions fits into its environment. The first step in strategic planning is to set the direction for the entire institution. The mission provides that direction—it serves as the foundation of strategic planning because it provides a clear picture of what the institution is and what it aspires to be. This broad direction provides guidance about decision making for all of the individual units at the institution. The institution uses this broad direction to allocate resources among individual units in a way that supports the success of the entire institution and to set standards of accountability to ensure that the individual units are each contributing to the institution's success.

Components of Strategic Planning

There are five key components of strategic planning. They are the mission, strategy, programs, structures, and processes. Taken together, they provide the means that an educational institution uses to help students learn. I will discuss the mission—the broad direction of the institution—in greater detail in the next section of this paper. Strategy comprises the goals and objectives of the institution. Goals give detail to the mission by applying the broad direction of the mission in specific, substantive areas. Objectives are specific expressions of goals with well-defined time frames and measurable outcomes. Programs, structure, and processes are the mutually .

dependent tools that we use to achieve goals and objectives. Programs include the academic courses of study that are the core of a college's work, cocurricular activities, and support activities that enable academic programs to function. Structure comprises the units into which students, faculty, and staff are organized. Processes are the formally defined steps by which the mission, strategy, and programs are carried out. Strategy moves the institution toward its mission within the constraints of its resources and the environment in which it functions. Programs, structure, and processes implement the mission and strategy.

It is true, however, that a given mission and attendant goals and objectives may be achieved by many possible combinations of programs, structure, and processes. The difficult work of implementing a strategy is to choose that combination that best supports the mission, goals, and objectives within the constraints of the organization's culture, resources, and external environment. The relationships among programs, structure, and processes are vitally important also. Programs are the academic core of an educational institution—the substantive tools through which it achieve its mission—and should be the first among equals. However, the implementation of programs happens within structures and is facilitated by processes. Therefore, programs will be affected by structure and process decisions. For example, a biochemistry program may be strategically desirable, but would function differently if it was housed in a biochemistry department or as a joint program of the biology and chemistry departments. Also, structures and processes are intimately related, particularly in the daily lives of students and faculty. For example, the structural units of a college are the loci of tenure, reappointment, and promotion processes.

The Mission

The mission of an educational institution defines what it is, what its members believe, what the institution wants to become, and what it wants to achieve. It describes the essence of the institution. The mission should provide a reminder about what the school represents to those who already know it and send a clear message about the school to those who don't yet know it. The mission will show all of those who study and work there which directions are appropriate for the institution, which are not appropriate, and provide standards against which its members will measure their progress. It is the foundation of strategic planning, forming the basis for setting goals and objectives and for decision making about how to implement the programs, structures, and processes that allow the institution to achieve its goals. Mission-based planning and mission-based budgeting use the mission as the touchstone for all decision making at the institution. All decisions—setting goals and defining specific objectives, the creation of new programs and the elimination of old ones, the way that academic and administrative units are organized, budget allocations, the nature of participation and the specific participants who are included in institutional processes—must be consistent with the mission.

There are typical educational issues that should be addressed in every educational institution's mission. The characteristics of the student body, the mix of academic programs, the nature of student and faculty work, and the institution's relationship to its environment are all issues that define an institution and, therefore, should be clearly articulated in the mission. Characteristics of the student body includes such factors as the level of admissions selectivity and the geographic area from which students are drawn. The mix of academic programs addresses the distribution of undergraduate, graduate, professional, and non-degree programs. The nature of student and faculty work includes such factors as the size of classes, modes of instruction, and the relative emphases of teaching and scholarship for faculty. The institution's relationship to its environment addresses the role that the school will play in its local community, its commitment to moral, ethical, and religious traditions, and its positions on social issues such as diversity.

If the mission is to define the essence of an institution and a campus-wide consensus about these issues, it must be developed using an inclusive, collaborative process. All of those with an interest in the institution must be represented in the process of developing the mission. Typically, internal groups are included directly in the process while external groups are consulted on specific topics of interest. This process takes time and requires providing many opportunities for these interested groups to offer their views on the mission. While no mission will completely satisfy everyone, all should feel that their views were considered if the institution wants the mission to be viewed as a legitimate basis for institutional decisions.

The Components of a Mission statement

The mission statement is a clear articulation of the mission and should be the vehicle for reaching a widely shared agreement about the mission of the institution. There are four key components that should be considered during the development of the mission statement. They are core beliefs, stakeholders, constraints and restraints, and aspirations. By considering core beliefs and values, stakeholders, constraints and restraints, and aspirations, there will be ample opportunity to reach agreement on the educational issues that the mission should define.

Core Beliefs

Core beliefs are the values that are shared by the members of the institution. They are the shared view of what is good and true, the commonly held attitudes about the right way to live and to educate students. These core beliefs provide a blueprint for the institution and its members about appropriate goals and the ways to act to achieve those goals. It is important to think about core beliefs at a more detailed level that just lauding the value of education and the scholarly life. Such values are important, but greater specificity is necessary to provide guidance about goals, objectives, programs, structures, and processes. Education is a value held by all educational institutions, but there must be some consensus reached by every college or university about the particular kinds of education that it will provide. For example, knowing that a school's members value education does not provide guidance for institutional decision making

about whether graduate programs are appropriate for that school.

Stakeholders

Every educational institution has a set of people and organizations to which it is accountable—the people and organizations that the institution affects and those that affect it. Those people and organizations in the institution and its environment are called stakeholders. There are a wide variety of stakeholders, both internal and external. Internal stakeholders include students, faculty, staff, and the Board of Trustees. External stakeholders include local community organizations and government, prospective students, alumni, parents, state and federal governments and other funding sources, regulatory agencies, and a wide variety of other public policy makers. A fundamental concern of strategic planning is the fit between the institution and its environment, so all of those who have an interest in the institution and its environment must be considered during the development of the mission statement. As I mentioned earlier, some of those interested parties must be directly included in the development process, others can be consulted as needed on specific issues of interest to them.

Constraints and Restraints

There is a set of things that every educational institution must do and a set of things that it cannot do. These constraints and restraints—legal, financial, cultural, ethical, moral, social—are institutional mandates that must be acknowledged. Some publicly funded universities must maintain specific programs because of legislative mandate. Financial accountability dictates certain strategic choices, and cultural and social issues drive cocurricular programs at some institutions. Forces in the institution's environment can limit the choices that are open to the institution.

Aspirations

Aspirations are the forward-looking components of the mission statement—what the institution wants to become, the direction in which it wants to move, and what it wants to achieve. Given the institution's core beliefs, the interests of its stakeholders, and the constraints and restraints that it faces, it must choose a direction. The direction can be a continuation of the current one or a new direction. It is key to consider aspirations because they are the bridge to the future.

The Example of The College of New Jersey

In this section, I will provide a detailed description of the mission development process at The College of New Jersey. The College began its strategic planning effort shortly after a new president joined the campus community. The effort began during the summer of 1999 when the College's executive staff and Board of Trustees met at separate retreats to discuss the state of campus planning. At their retreat, the Board's members concluded that a formal strategic planning process was necessary and charged the president to begin such a process by appointing an *ad hoc* Planning and Priorities Council to work on drafting a mission statement for

The College. An *ad hoc* Council was appointed because a fundamental revision of campus governance was also underway at this time. The president appointed a faculty member to serve as her co-chair of the Council. The co-chairs symbolized the vital importance of building on both faculty and administration leadership in college strategic planning activities.

The campus community was asked to nominate students, faculty, and staff to serve on the Council, and the chairs selected the members of the Council. The composition of the Council included the two chairs, the Chair of the Board of Trustees Planning Committee, eleven faculty, two students, five members of The College's administrative staff, and one staff member for the Council. Students, faculty, and staff were selected to provide a broad representation of the various parts of the campus community. The Council held a retreat in October 1999 with an educational planning consultant so that its members could work together to forge a common understanding of planning principles and identify important campus issues that would merit consideration during its initial work.

The Council continued its substantive work through the fall of 1999 by working to categorize the issues that were listed during its retreat into a set of key themes that should be considered in developing The College's mission. The themes that were identified include aspirations and excellence, broadening our perspectives, community and campus climate, communication and governance, cultural competence and inclusion, leadership, learning centered environment, and stakeholders. These themes represent important historical issues that have defined The College; current concerns of students, faculty, staff, or the administration; or widely discussed, but yet unachieved, desires of members of the campus community.

Each of eight task forces, chaired by a member of the Council and composed of ten students, faculty, and staff, considered one of the themes. The members of the task forces were chosen in the same way as the members of the Council. The campus community was asked to nominate students, faculty, and staff to serve on the task forces, and the Council co-chairs selected the members of the task forces. The task forces worked during December, January, and February to gather information from a wide range of members of the campus community—several hundred additional people in total—to ensure that all internal stakeholders had significant opportunities to participate in the mission development part of the planning process. They used surveys, in-depth interviews, group meetings, and electronic communication to gather the insights and opinions of students, faculty, staff, and members of the Board of Trustees. Each task force developed a concise report that was distributed to the campus and discussed extensively during the spring 2000 semester by the members of the Council.

A subset of three Council members was selected before the discussions to serve as the writing committee for the mission statement. A small writing committee would be more effective at producing a clear, concise statement than the twenty-two members would be; it also allowed the Council to serve as a knowledgeable, caring editorial board for the drafts produced by the

committee. The Council's discussion of the key themes, one after the other, sharpened the members' understanding of the core beliefs and aspirations held by the students, faculty, and staff. The discussion also offered the writing committee to identify language that the Council and campus community had used in their conversations about key issues. The writing committee produced a draft for the Council members' comments and then revised that work to produce the first draft for campus distribution and discussion. The first draft included a statement of core beliefs, a mission statement, and an action statement that included broad goals that should be addressed by The College in the next several years.

The first draft was widely distributed at the end of the spring semester to students, faculty, and staff on the campus. The draft was accompanied by a memo that asked the campus community to think about the draft during the summer and provide comments to the Council in advance of public meetings to be held at the beginning of the fall semester in September. The spring memo included dates and times for the fall semester public meetings. The Council encouraged comments through written notes and e-mail to the Council and through participation in an electronic discussion group accessible through The College's website. Several days before the beginning of the fall 2000 semester, the Council distributed a reminder about the public meetings. The meetings were scheduled during the second week of the semester on three consecutive days at different times throughout the day. Members of the Council, as well as the president and faculty co-chair, attended the meetings so that they would be able to incorporate campus feedback into the second draft of the mission statement. After the public meetings, the Council members met intensively to discuss the comments from the members of the campus community—both praise and concerns—and produce a second draft of the mission statement. Most of the comments were ones that called for clarification, but there were several substantive issues raised by students, faculty, and staff that required the Council to think about basic mission issues. Again, the writing committee took responsibility for incorporating campus and Council comments and discussion into a second draft.

The president did not participate in these discussions. Recall that the Board of Trustees charged the president with drafting a mission statement. She was responsible for producing the final document for the Board's consideration from the Council's work. Therefore, she did not think that it would be appropriate for her to have direct input into the draft document that she would use as the basis for her work. The Council sent the second draft to the president and the campus community in October. Members of the campus were asked to provide any additional input to the president to use in her work to produce the final document for the Board's review. The president worked through the months of October and November to produce that document. She consulted with members of the Council, her executive staff and other campus leaders, and members of the Board of Trustees. Her work involved no substantive changes to the mission statement, but some minor modifications in language to reflect her style. She made no changes to the statement of core beliefs. She recast the action statements—again in style but not substance—to be specific charges to the standing Planning and Priorities Council created by

the new campus governance structure.

The Board of Trustees approved The College's Mission statement at its December 7, 2000 meeting, a little over 15 months after the Planning and Priorities Council began its work. The standing Planning and Priorities Council began is continuing formal strategic planning at The College through the development of goals and objectives. This reflects a key characteristic of an institution's mission—it is the starting point for strategic planning. It is the strategic goals and objectives, programs, structures, and processes that bring the mission to life.

K–16 Collaboration:
Seamless School-to-Work Career Pathways

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Adaptation to change is the driving force to survival. It was Charles Darwin who said, "It is not the strongest of the species that survive, not the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change." Global economics, mobility and competencies are re-defining political, economic and social borders. Production processes, segmented and separate, are still integrated to allow transfer of materials among stakeholders toward the end point in producing unified end products. Yet, many educators still view learning as a segmented process that is more disjointed than unified.

As the opportunity availed itself, Delaware Technical & Community College responded to the change by developing seamless educational programs with 11 school districts in Delaware. Through STW funds, Delaware Tech assisted many of the school districts in Delaware to develop proposals that allow them to modify existing curriculum and create career pathways beginning as early as the 9th grade and continuing to Associate Degree and beyond.

Although many similar programs have been developed in other states, the unique part of Delaware's efforts focused in the integration of secondary, post-secondary, and industry resources to develop meaningful curriculums which also included career counseling and transfer of academic credit from high school and college.

Developed during the 1999-2000 school year, the model for this program is the Red Clay School District Biotechnology Program. The two major partners in this model are Delaware Technical & Community College and the Red Clay Consolidated School District. Delaware Tech is a two-year, state supported college operating four campuses throughout the state. It offers 84 degree and diploma programs and has a total enrollment of approximately 42, 000 students. Red Clay is the second largest district in the state with 28 schools including three comprehensive high schools with a total enrollment of approximately 15,000 students.

Delaware Technical & Community College in partnership with the Red Clay Consolidated School District embraced the process of changing segmented education into a seamless competency-based education in the form of a biotechnology career pathway. The funding as well as the impetus for a model of this streamlined education came from the federal School-to-Work legislation that provided funds to all 50 states to help a workforce ready to meet the challenges and the technology of the future. School-to-Work is about the fact that all students—high school graduates, community college graduates, technical graduates and 4-year college graduates—will go from school to work.

This biotechnology career pathway was developed in conjunction with the Delaware State Department of Education, business and industry and the Delaware Biotechnology Institute (a business and education partnership sponsored by the state). When these partners decided to develop biotechnology career pathway, the decision was based on three factors: First, Delaware's need for trained biotech technicians; second, the governor's Economic Development Plan that listed the need to attract biotechnology companies to Delaware; and finally, the fact that Red Clay has two international biotechnology firms—AstraZeneca and DuPont—within its school boundaries.

At the same time this partnership was forming, Delaware Tech partnered with the newly formed research and education facility, the Delaware Biotechnology Institute. Delaware Tech's partnership with the Biotechnology Institute included the following initiatives:

- Survey the biotechnology industries in order to determine the competencies needed in the biotech industries
- Upgrade Delaware Tech's existing bioscience associate degree based on the results of the survey
- Help Red Clay develop its biotechnology pathway

In the biotechnology model, the element that provides for a streamlined and seamless transition is the articulation agreement. A formal process requiring partnerships, trust, commitment and the building of relationships among secondary and postsecondary faculties, administrators and counselors that provide students to transfer skills and competencies mastered in order to earn advanced credits. Delaware Tech personnel believes that there are four necessary steps:

- The development of partnerships among the institution and faculties in the broad sense of the word .
- The mutual planning of how its to be done
- The careful review of the curricula that involves looking closely at the competencies
- The actual alignment of the curricula based on competency matches

To create the pathway at the secondary level, Red Clay developed a committee structure whose membership included personnel from:

- Chamber of Commerce
- Delaware Technical & Community College
- Business & Industry Education Alliance
- DuPont
- AstraZeneca
- Delaware Biotechnology Institute
- Red Clay Consolidated School District

The committee structure included a Steering Committee, Program Committee, and Guidance Committee. The Program Committee worked on both curriculum and professional development, while the Guidance Committee concentrated on the career guidance needs and programs.

The tangible success of the program is evident by the ninth graders enrolled in the program and the articulation agreements among Red Clay, Delaware Tech, and the University of Delaware. This current school year, approximately 100 ninth grade students entered this pathway in Red Clay. With proper credentials, these students can earn articulated credits at either Delaware Tech or the University of Delaware. These articulated courses are built on competencies that were determined by industry standards.

The intangible results of the model are the relationships that were built between secondary and postsecondary faculties as well as business and industry. These relationships formed the strong foundation for the current year's work. The partnership has begun working on two more career pathways using the proven procedures developed for the biotechnology model. The two new pathways are in Office Administration and Management Information Systems. As with the biotech model, the decision to develop these pathways was based on fulfilling a need in the community, as Delaware is becoming the banking and corporate headquarter leader in the nation. The stakeholders are optimistic that these two career pathways will encounter the same success that the biotechnology pathway did.

Quality Indicators for Distance Education Programs

Meg Benke
Director, Center for Distance Learning, SUNY Empire State College
David Brigham
Dean of Learning Services, Excelsior College
Carolyn G. Jarmon
Associate Director for Academic Transformation, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
Esther H. Paist
Executive Assistant to the President, Thomas Edison College

As institutions consider which role in the distributed learning environment meshes most effectively with their institutional mission, it is imperative that they have good information about what constitutes quality. The Middle States Commission on Higher Education, along with the other regional accrediting organizations nationwide, have developed a common set of *Guidelines for the Evaluation of Electronically Offered Degree and Certificate Programs.* In concert with this effort, one of the sessions at the 2000 Conference entitled "Rethinking Quality Assurance" dealt with these same issues. Speakers from institutions that have long been engaged in distance and distributed learning provided guidance on four crucial aspects of program quality: faculty (selection, development, and support), course development and design, student support, and technology considerations.

All four components work in concert with the others to ensure that the student receives the quality learning experience he or she expects. Without all four, the student may encounter difficulties that will reduce the likelihood of success for the student and for the faculty members teaching the course. A comprehensive approach is needed so that learning outcomes are met and the student's learning experience is positive.

Quality Indicators in Faculty Development

One of Empire State College's students wrote in a newspaper article that distance learning needs to be "more than just a class." Integrating support and quality review into faculty relationships helps insure that the experience for students is "more than just a class." Mature distance learning programs assess quality in faculty selection, orientation, on-going development, and review, while also providing appropriate administrative supports so faculty can focus their attention on teaching.

Selection of Distance Learning Faculty

Faculty should be hired at an appropriate level, comparable to others within the institution; and the balance of adjuncts and full-time faculty should be appropriate to the institution's mission. Institutions use several different models in hiring distance-learning faculty. In some institutions, full-time, campus-based faculty volunteer for distance learning assignments, and oversight arrangements are managed within the academic departments. Additional sections are taught by adjuncts, as in many evening division programs.

At other institutions, there is a stand-alone distance-learning unit that supervises instruction by hiring faculty from across the institution, it's own faculty from the distance learning unit, and adjuncts. Both models can work effectively, as long as there is evidence of assigned administrative responsibility for all faculty and the infrastructure to support those working at a distance.

In distance education, the faculty member usually has the most impact and strongest relationship with students. Retention research indicates that creating a connection between students and faculty is the best way to encourage student success and satisfaction. Best practices in distance education show evidence of commitment to working with learners at a distance, and the willingness and ability of the institution to provide all student services at a distance. While it may appear obvious, all faculty hired should embrace the idea of working with students in a distributed learning environment.

Targeted Orientation for Teaching at a Distance

Teaching at a distance requires learning new approaches. Faculty should be well oriented and have access to research and resources to aid in the design and teaching of courses. There are a number of good web sites and on-line orientations for faculty engaged in teaching at a distance. Programs concerned about quality create discussion spaces or programs to give faculty the opportunity to ask questions. Faculty also need to be informed about what learning resources are available for students working at a distance.

The size of distance learning courses has been debated across institutions. Somehow people expect distance-learning courses to be larger. In fact, many distance-learning courses reflect the same scale as campus-based instruction. Faculty do report, however, that working on the Web often helps them to manage the student submission of work and review discussions more easily. Quality teaching can be reviewed in the distance learning classroom in much the same way as it is done in other environments. Monitoring can be arranged, as long as administrators are knowledgeable and course evaluations distributed.

Faculty Development

Ongoing opportunities should be provided for individual development and peer group support for faculty engaged in teaching at a distance. Creating a community of on-line faculty helps to support shared responsibility for teaching effectiveness. Institutional recognition for excellence in distance learning course development and teaching should apply the same guidelines as those used for recognition of innovative in-class teaching. The development of distance learning course materials and resources should be considered part of the recognition package.

Faculty Support Issues

Faculty need access to appropriate technology support in both the design and teaching phases. When designing, faculty often appreciate both instructional design support and the experience of talking with another faculty member who has designed a course. Faculty should be provided with easy access to the equipment to teach on-line, which usually means a computer at their desk and appropriate Internet connection speed. Careful planning and dedication of resources to support faculty working at a distance must occur before setting up distance courses.

More experienced distance learning programs are also very clear with their faculty about intellectual property rights. Agreements are generally developed that state the ownership rights and responsibilities and clearances for use prior to engaging in the activity. While institutions have a range of policies, all effective ones have clarity as a consistent component.

Quality Indicators for Course Development and Design

Quality indicators for course development and design in distance education programs remain constant even as technologies change. Course content, the instructional design process itself, and course-contained instructional support for students working at a distance (and in relative isolation) are major factors that determine quality in distance-delivered education.

Quality Indicators for Course Content

As with all courses, the content must be appropriate to the academic level Regardless of the delivery medium, the content must be pegged to the objectives of the academic program, appropriately placed within the larger curriculum of courses, and appropriately rigorous. Course content and the needs of the student audience should drive every other aspect of course development and design. Students need to be prepared to understand and make use of course content and have their learning styles appropriately addressed. Moreover, regardless of the

course content and audience needs, if distance-delivered courses are to be credible, they must, of course, be comparable in scope and depth to an equivalent course taught in residence.

Course content must be current and accurate, both in terms of internal course content and of such course resources as textbooks and Web sites. Faculty must ensure that the internal course content is accurate and current, and that the resource Web sites are equally accurate and current. Online web links must be checked periodically to insure they continue to work. Students also need guidance to discern quality and value in on-line resources; while they seem to develop good search techniques, students are not always skilled at evaluating the quality and usefulness of what they find.

Course content elements (especially repurposed multimedia) imported from other sources must be fully compliant with copyright law, a subject beyond the scope of this paper. Materials and delivery means must adhere to institutional standards of quality regardless of their original source. Finally, institutional infrastructure must be able to support the delivery mode chosen.

Quality Indicators for Instructional Development/Design

Good instructional development and design usually involve a team approach with input from a variety of professionals, including faculty content experts, instructional designers, media specialists, and outside expert reviewers. The faculty member is the advocate for academic content. The instructional designer takes the perspective of the student, looking at the way the course materials are put together, so that these can be well used by students at a distance who are functioning in relative isolation. Media specialists can assist with choosing technologies to best serve course content and student needs. The outside expert takes an objective look at the finished product and suggests refinements. Ideally, the reviewer and the faculty content expert are from two different institutions. When reviewers are neither the friends of, nor competitors of, the content experts, there tends to be greater objectivity.

Instructional alignment of clearly stated course objectives, requirements, timelines, and outcomes with course content, activities, and evaluations/exams is characteristic of good instructional design. The course objectives and course examination elements must be consistent, one with the other. The internal course elements (e.g., academic information, student activities, written assignments) should be consistent to support successful student outcomes. One of the most common complaints of students functioning at a distance is, "The exam tested me on things that the course didn't cover." Sound instructional alignment prevents this.

"Beta testing" leading to refinement and improvement of course materials also ensures quality. At Thomas Edison State College, once a course is developed, it is sent out to students in a beta group. The group uses the course materials and responds to the instructional designer with comments, concerns, questions, and complaints. Likewise, faculty reviewers teach the course

and provide feedback. The course is refined using this feedback and only then sent out in final form.

Regular course revision is necessary to ensure quality. All courses should be revised on a fixed schedule driven by the emergence of new textbook editions, developments in the academic field, and student and faculty feedback.

The evocation of a variety of student skills—including analysis, comprehension, critical thought, and research—marks courses of high quality. Regardless of the course level, all of these skills will be included to varying degrees: introductory courses may emphasize recalling facts, while courses at the graduate level will emphasize critical thought and research. Use of multimedia formats may provide opportunities to include a variety of these learning experiences, from the most basic to the most sophisticated. But regardless of the delivery method, distance courses must be designed to provide opportunities for students to demonstrate skills appropriate to the course content and the academic level.

In courses delivered at a distance, interactivity—from student to student, from student to course content, and from student to instructor—is key for establishing a sense of community and motivating students functioning independently. Interaction need not be synchronous to be effective. Finally, appropriate use of media, with selection driven by course content and learner needs, is essential to realize all the advantages that distance-delivery and multimedia formats.

Quality Indicators for Course-Contained Instructional Support

Access to course materials and academic resources, including access for students with disabilities, is vital in distance-delivered materials. Course materials should be available in formats that address a variety of learning styles (e.g., visual and auditory). To meet the needs of students with disabilities, course content should be available in a variety of ways: for example, tape-recorded for visually impaired learners, transcripted for hearing impaired learners. Learning disabilities also must be considered. Regardless of specific audience needs, distance-delivered course materials must be straightforward and reliable so that students can understand what to expect and can proceed through the course without having to ask, "But what do I do now?"

Self-assessment tools, with the necessary remediation elements, should be built into courses delivered at a distance. This assessment should be interactive, non-threatening, and encouraging. Students need to be able to discover for themselves where they are having success and where they are going wrong. Then they need to have the tools at hand to go back and interact with the course content again (perhaps with a different approach), make use of helpful remediation activities, and experience success. Frequent and regular feedback is key to effective learning.

Appropriate access to instructors depends on the course content, instructor preference, and level of student need. These characteristics are also useful in considering designs for access to technical assistance, including online support.

In sum, sound instructional design is key. Well-organized course content and identified audience needs should be the essential drivers in course design for instruction at a distance.

Quality Indicators for Student Support

Providing a complete array of support services for distance students is essential for the success of a distance-learning program. Services established to enhance the progress of students residing on campus should also be made available to distance learners at times and in a manner convenient to students who are geographically dispersed throughout the United States, if not the world. Distance learners are typically employed adults who must schedule study time around their jobs, family life, and community responsibilities. Therefore, convenient access to efficient and effective support services will have a significant impact on student success in course and program completion and on the richness of the learning experience along the way.

Given the diversity of distance learners likely to enroll in distance learning programs and courses, convenient access to student support services requires multiple forms of access. Students should be able to access services online via the Web, email, telephone, fax, and postal mail. Services for prospective students should include the provision of information about how distance learning works, technological requirements, and learner readiness. Prospective students should have access to the full range of services and information (e.g., information on financial aid, college policies, and procedures) available to on-campus students, including access to admissions counseling resources. Once enrolled, students need access to orientation and registration services, academic advisors, academic records, technical support (particularly for information retrieval and course participation), and library services. Enrolled students should have access to bookstore services, learning support and tutoring services (e.g., online writing and math labs), career services, and services for special populations (e.g., students with disabilities or international students). Enrolled students should also have access to services that promote institutional identity and membership in a learning community.

Establishing these services should be part of a total design for a distance program. As students enroll with the institution, they believe they are members of the institutional community, and they will expect to receive the same level of service as if they were on campus.

Services provided for alumni should promote a continued sense of institutional identity and lifelong learning. Alumni should have access to information about alumni association activities and events and opportunities to interact with college staff and fellow graduates (e.g., chat events, listservs). Alumni should be able to easily obtain information about new programs and

courses, career resources, job openings, and opportunities for giving and mentoring enrolled students. An alumni web site linked to the main institution website will keep alumni involved with the institution and ready to participate.

It is important to note that the mere provision of student support services for prospective and enrolled students and alumni does not necessarily indicate quality. Quality also resides in the way in which these services are delivered, maintained, and continuously improved and modified to meet student needs. All personnel at the institution must be trained to work with students at a distance using the web, the telephone and the fax, along with the mail. Their responses need to be timely and to include all information needed, whether the student or prospective student asked a particular question. Many times the students at a distance do not know to ask all of the questions they need, and college personnel must be prepared to identify areas of likely difficulty and assist the student.

Technology Integration with Distance Education

Although institutions frequently focus on the technology options, and they are important, these choices should be guided by the educational objectives and curricular fit for the course or program, the student audience, and the total infrastructure for the college of university. There are multiple options for technology to be used in distance program, and the institution should think strategically about the program goals and the most effective means to foster student success.

In online and other distributed learning environments, the technology should provide a vehicle for all learning and student services: interactive opportunities, student and faculty training, all student services, help desks 24x7 and other technical assistance and assessment (self assessment and measures of student learning for evaluation by the faculty member). Quality distance learning environments will permit all aspects of student's experience to be integrated in the information technology.

A second consideration in evaluating a quality distance-learning environment in the context of the technology is the characteristics of the student audience. Students need access to the selected technology, whether it is synchronous, asynchronous or a combination of the two. Students may not always have the connection speed found on campus and the learning environment needs to accommodate the student's circumstances. Because distance students will usually have a variety of learning styles and goals, in addition to a range of backgrounds and previous educational experiences, the technology needs to be sufficiently robust to include the kinds of learning experiences needed for such a diverse group. Today that learning environment usually includes the Internet and use of the web.

Faculty and staff needs should be part of the selection and utilization of the technology. Both groups need consistent and robust access. They need ongoing development, so that their skills continue to grow and their creativity in contributing to the learning environment also increases. They, too, will have different learning styles and will bring a range of experiences and backgrounds to the endeavor. This collection of people will benefit from the strengths of the group, and with continuing development, they will leverage the technology for the benefit of students.

As the synchronous technologies of chat and television merge with the asynchronous options of threaded discussion and bulletin boards, hybrid uses of distance learning environments are emerging. These will ultimately demonstrate the strengths of each of the modes and provide the highest quality experiences for students. As institutions grow in their ability to use the technology, faculty will be able to design courses and learning experiences that leverage the best of each mode. In addition, students will have greater choices for learning, which they will find adds to their ability to succeed. Finally, the multiple modes seen today will converge on the web, and institutions are well served to consider migration strategies as student access increases.

Key to the success of students at a distance using technology is clear information upfront about what the learning environment will require from them. The *Guidelines* under development by the Middle States Commission include many specifics that provide good information for students. Here the student is told exactly how the learning environment will function and what technology the student must have, along with information about the student services provided and how to access these.

Overall, the technology should support all aspects of course development and design, faculty and staff development, student services, and the interactive learning environment. Quality distance education requires effective integration of all aspects of the student's learning experience. It should provide them with convenient access to information; access to learning activities; interaction with faculty, other students, support personnel and outside guests; and evaluation and self-assessment. A robust system of people, resources, and technology that are integrated and flexible for students are the hallmarks of quality distance education.

Innovation, Collaboration, and Experimentation

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This is a presentation on the formation of the Council for the 21st Century that Montgomery College created in 1999. During this MSA conference you have heard a number of sessions on strategic planning. The first element of the planning process is always a discussion of the mission statement of a college and how it informs and drives the other college educational processes. This presentation is a case study of what Montgomery College did to develop the Council report on the College's future and, based on the report, to re-define the College's identity. As you will see later in the presentation, the mission statement that the College adopted this summer is a radical departure from the "normal" academic mission statement.

The nature of Montgomery College is important to comprehend the scope of the Council's work. A fairly complex institution, the College has three campuses, Continuing Education and a Distance Learning component. In the fall of 1999 the College had 21,000 students, taking 176,000 credit hours. The College white student population is 44.2 percent. International students make up 32.6 percent of the College enrollment.

Montgomery County is in the suburbs of Washington, DC, just to the north of the District. The county has 850,000 residents. The majority-minority population in 1970 was 90-10 percent; in the year 2000, the county is 70-30 percent. The county school system is 51 percent majority and 49 percent minority. Thus, one of the interesting social phenomena in the future—perhaps, within 10 years—is the range of age and racial characteristics. The school system will be 60 percent students of color, while the senior population will be 85 percent white. This polarity becomes particularly critical, if the county ever gets to the stage of putting tax measures on the ballot. What tensions will arise as the aging, white population is asked to pay for services for a growing, younger minority population?

Forty-five percent of the Hispanics in the State of Maryland live in Montgomery County. When you examine the population growth in the county between 1980 and 1990, you will find that one out of every five persons moving into the county were foreign born. This social phenomenon is not one usually associated with Montgomery County which is still battling a perception from the early 70's as a wealthy, white community.

One of the other issues for the College is the education level of persons living in the county who are over the age of 25. This is a number often used to assess the statistical success of community colleges in meeting the needs of their community. This number works to the disadvantage of Montgomery College. Sixty-four percent of the over-25 population has at least a community college or higher degree. Another 16.4 percent have had some community college experience. Thus, a great majority of the county's population already has what Montgomery College has to offer. One of the clear implications is that we have to change our basic product, because our consumer base is not looking at the College in the traditional sense.

The other significant issue that forces drastic change at the College is the need to meet the rapidly growing hi-tech needs of our community. Consider, if you would, an analogy based upon the hands of a clock. If the clock shows 9:00, the 9 hand is the I-66 corridor out towards Reston, Virginia. This is a very hi-tech community, perceived by many as Silicon Valley East. The 12 hand is Montgomery County. This is the I-70 corridor that is becoming a bio-medical technology community. Included in this community are the Human Genome Project labs. So, if you start examining what employers need, the hi-tech sector requires many services from us that are both difficult to fund and to maintain currency in discipline.

To return to the formation of the Council for the 21st Century. In April 1999, Montgomery College inaugurated a new president, Dr. Charlene R. Nunley. At her inauguration she announced the formation of the Council for the 21st Century. One of the points she made in her speech, and has repeated several times since, was that she was taking a risk with this Council in that she was entrusting the College's future to the hands of the Council members. The Council was requested to look at our environment and examine who we are at the present time. Then the Council was to come back to the College and tell us what, in 5 or 10 years, we should be. Further, Dr. Nunley told the Board of Trustees that her evaluation as a successful president would be based on the implementation of the Council's report. She was willing to trust the process to generate something that would be invaluable in guiding the future steps of Montgomery College.

The planning process for the Council actually began in March of 1999. Knowing in advance of Dr. Nunley's plans to announce the Council's formation in April, a small committee was formed to develop an overall plan for the Council's activities and to identify potential members for the Council itself and for the Council's Executive committee. The planning committee was composed of Mr. William E. Campbell (then Acting Vice President for Administrative and Fiscal Services), Ms. Sarah Meehan (Director of Institutional Advancement) and Dr. James E. Cronin (Professor of History and Administrative Associate in the Office of Planning and Institutional Research). From time to time a number of other administrators and faculty joined the group to add their expertise to the discussion. It is important to note that, as a college sets up an advisory group, the group members must be persons who are respected in their own right

before they become group members. An advisory group cannot succeed if its members are perceived as "belonging to the administration" and are prepared to give the administration "any recommendations it wants to hear."

In the selection of Council members, the experience of each member of the planning group was critically important. Mr. Campbell has been at the College over 17 years and widely known in county government as a College spokesman. Ms. Meehan, as Director of Institutional Advancement, meets constantly with county groups, alumni and advisory boards, talking about the College's achievements and seeking funding and support for College initiatives. Dr. Cronin has been at Montgomery College for 30 years, serving as chair of virtually every governance committee during that period of time. He was also a member of the county Human Relations Commission in the 1970's and a member of the county school board in the 1980's. His contacts in the county were extensive and his knowledge of influential county leaders was very helpful to the planning group.

The members of the Council were leaders in the county community. Among the members were:

Bruce Adams—former member of the County Council
Sol Graham—president of Quality Biological, a bio-technology firm in the county
Chuck Lyons—publisher of the county Gazette newspapers
Kathy Gemberling—deputy superintendent of the Montgomery County Public Schools (retired)
Roscoe Nix—civil rights leader and past president of the county NAACP.

It was having this level of support that gave the final report credibility when the report was made public.

The planning group began to discuss the major issues the Council should consider. One issue that was immediately apparent was current and emerging technologies. There were a number of Council members representing high technology businesses and they could give the Council the benefit of the current thinking on technology in their firms. High technology is definitely coming to the College in the future and the planning group decided that the College has to get out in front of the issue while there is still time.

Another issue was the integration of credit and Continuing Education program offerings. There are a number of courses in the Continuing Education offerings that are intellectually creditable and could be combined with credit offerings to become part of an important alternative delivery system for workforce skills. This thinking is consistent with the current thinking in Terry O'Banion's works: a college cannot function simply with 3 credit hour courses offered at fixed hours during the day.

Another issue that arose was that the County Executive wants the College to be more involved in assisting in the economic development of the county. That concept does not mean that the

College will become an arm of county government, but that the College has many academic programs that can be of assistance to county businesses. How could the College maximize publicity about those programs? How could the College become partners with the business community, a partnership which subsequently enhances the economic development of the county. It is not "what have you (business) done for me (the College) lately; it is, rather, how can we partner to benefit each other and the county.

The world is changing rapidly. So, how could the College prepare students to become life-long learners? This theme came up constantly in the Council report. Consider the technology field. In the 18 months after a student graduates with a degree, the field changes dramatically. Students coming out of college after 18 months passes have a more advanced technology base. So, how does a college enable its students to become life-long learners—for their own benefit. How can the college build an environment that welcomes them back and enables them to continue their studies long after their degree has been awarded?

A college can get hide-bound and stagnant. It can say "this is where we are. This is our mission and we will continue to follow it." Are there major opportunities a college can be missing simply because its mission or vision are too myopic? So, what should an institution be doing in other markets that it hasn't yet entered?

The following slide was projected for the audience:

Expected outcomes of the Council's activities were to be the following:

Identification of issues, challenges and opportunities in the next 3-5 years;
Preparation of a proposed shared vision of the future for Montgomery College;
Preparation of a list of proposed priorities

Our planning group asked the Council to tell us what the College could expect over the next five years relative to important issues, challenges and opportunities. In most planning processes, there is a term "SWOT." It stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. It requires an institution to look at its internal world (strengths and weaknesses) and its external world (opportunities and threats). Consistent with this approach, the planning group asked the Council to define the issues before the College, examine the College's strengths and give it direction on its opportunities. If the College has a clear view of its strengths, it can look outside itself for its major opportunities. If it can fully analyze its weaknesses, it can also clearly see the threats that can exploit those weaknesses and prevent the College from achieving its true potential.

The accent at the College was upon the shared concept of vision. One of the approaches that often fails is that of a president who comes into office and says "I have a vision." It will be a successful vision only insofar as everyone else in the institution shares it. If not, it leads to a

period of frustration because what the president envisions may not be in any way what inspires and enervates the College staff. It can establish a failed presidency from the very beginning.

The Council for the 21st Century was asked to give the College proposed priorities. The point of that request was fairly simple. If an advisory group simply identifies 30 or 40 issues, the College can pick those that fit its pre-existing priorities. It likes those priorities because that is what it's doing already. The Council was asked to tell the College what the priorities should be and to seek the College's reaction. The College would then be left with the task of bringing its present state into a new set of priorities and of developing an internal dialogue on how the College will change for the better.

On May 10, 2000 the planning group convened the first meeting of the Executive Committee of the Council. The planning group introduced the members and explained the process that would be used in developing the task force reports and the Council's final report. It is important to note that the accent was on process; the Council would be responsible for the content of the reports. On May 24 the full Council held its first meeting, discussing the function of the Council and its task forces and approving a futurist speaker who would come in September to keynote the start of the Council's work.

On June 29 the Council held its second meeting, hearing from Dr. Clifford Adelman from the Office of Educational Research and Improvement in Washington, DC. Dr. Adelman is a truly interesting person. He is a very cantankerous individual who started his talk: "I am going to break the paradigm of higher education." Then he proceeded to describe the new tasks that higher education faces. He used one of his recent publications, "Certification without Credentials," as his starting point.

People are coming to higher education institutions without wanting to achieve a degree. They want the skills that help them in their workplace. They want to know what they can learn from an institution in a short period of time through a workshop or a single course that helps them gain workforce competency but does not culminate in a degree. When a college seeks to bring working adults back into its environment, it will be highly important how flexible the institution is in meeting what they need and not simply try to provide what it normally does. Fifty minutes a class, 3 classes a week, 15 weeks a year is not longer acceptable. How many employers will commit to 15 weeks and 3 hours each day (considering that travel time must also be factored in)? How many employers will commit to having an employee out of the office for 10 hours of the workweek, or for essentially ¼ of their worktime? One of the key points that Dr. Adelman was making, therefore, was that institutions must shift the paradigm to fit the learner, rather than trying to make the learner fit the institution's preexisting patterns.

As an aside, the College established a Webpage for the Council. As minutes were completed and as the reports were submitted, they were published on the site. Council members also received e-mail notices with attachments of the minutes. The minutes of the June 29th meeting and Dr. Adelman's full remarks, along with all Council minutes, task force reports and the final report can be seen at: http://www.mc.cc.md.us/council21/finalreport.htm

During the spring and summer, the planning group completed preparations for a convocation on September 25. This would be the kick-off ceremony for the Council's work. Over 1,000 College and community members were specifically invited to attend, including College student organizations, College governance groups, and the Department chairs. As well, the invitation list included the State Board of Education, State legislative leaders, and local civic and community leaders. As the convocation approached, a Collegewide announcement invited all members of the internal College community to attend. Almost 400 people attended the convocation.

The speaker at the convocation was Dr. Willard Daggett, a very challenging and stimulating speaker. The planning committee was able to work with his organization to tailor his presentation to the Council's needs. He has about 12 areas for his speeches, ranging from K-12 education to higher education, including community colleges, and to the cutting edge of technology and science. The committee was able to select portions from each of his presentations to construct its own unique convocation.

Dr. Daggett began his talk by saying: "I'm going to challenge everything you think you know." And, indeed, he did just that. He examined the community college today and pointed out that we are using both an agricultural model and a factory model. We schedule our heaviest load of classes in the Fall to the Spring, leaving sufficient time for planting and harvesting. We treat students like they are component parts. We put them in the assembly line process of our classrooms, process them according to our locked-in routines and, eventually, out of the assembly line comes a student with a degree.

Dr. Daggett urged us to break the model. He described one of his children who is very bright. She has spoken with her high school and college counselors and outlined her course of studies as an honors student. He has a son who is severely handicapped. That son, by virtue of the ADA legislation, has an Individual Education Plan that specifies which services he will receive at school. Then he said: "I know where my daughter and my son will end up, because they are at either end of the academic spectrum and the system works well with them on their academic plans. Where will my children in the middle end up? They don't have an IEP and no one has talked with them about their goals and how to achieve them?" He asked the College whether it really knows who its students are and what they want out of their educational experience. Do we help them achieve their goals or do they do what we want them to do in order to finish our prescribed course of studies?

After Dr. Daggett's presentation, the participants at the convocation had lunch and went into concurrent workshop sessions in the afternoon. There were five topic areas that became the five task forces of the Council:

- Defining the Evolving Role of the College in the Midst of Change
- Learning as a Lifelong Process—Student Focus
- Learning as a Lifelong Process—Faculty and Staff Focus
- Engaging Employers in the College's Mission
- The College as an Intellectual, Social, and Cultural Force

There were College facilitators and recorders at each session. Within a week of the sessions, each task force had the minutes of the workshops and was able to proceed with their deliberations. During September, October and November, the task forces met. Each task force had two chairs, one a College faculty member and one a community leader. One of the things the College did to ease the workload on the chairs was appoint a College faculty member to assist each task force. That person was responsible for all logistical arrangements, for recording and providing minutes, and for securing any resources the task force needed. The Office of Planning and Institutional Research had amassed a library of books and monographs for the use of the task forces and the faculty staff member was responsible for providing appropriate research material for the task force.

By November 19, all task force reports were submitted to the Council for review. During the time the task forces were meeting, Dr. Cronin, the Administrative Associate who was charged with the overall coordination of the Council and task force efforts, received a copy of their minutes. Aware of their direction, he began a draft of the Council report. When the Council accepted the reports on November 19, they also had the first draft of the Council report to consider.

At this point Dr. Cronin introduced Ms. Kathleen Wessman who was the chair of the task force: "Defining the Evolving Role of the College in the Midst of Change." Ms. Wessman then began a description of how the task force approached its charge. She explained that this was a very exciting opportunity for the business members of the community. They came to the task force wanting to get a job done and to accomplish it quickly and professionally. For the College members of the task force there was some apprehension about the reforms that the task force might propose. The external members were convinced that this should not be a document that would be presented and then ignored.

A lot of questions were asked and many issues were put on the table. Eventually in the process there was a bonding that developed and a mutual understanding of points of view. The task force had major issues before it to stimulate its thought process. However, the suggested issues were never meant to constrain the task force deliberations; they were to serve simply as a starting point for discussion.

The following slide was projected for the audience:

Major Issues to be Examined

Assure that the College adheres to its mission statement and maintains the quality of instruction in its programs;

How to determine the appropriate balance between providing quality instruction and services in the traditional academic format and making needed changes;

How to develop ways to demonstrate that the MC experience is different from those of other educational institutions in the county.

As they considered these issues, the community members wanted to see as much internal information about the College as they could get. They received a number of internal College studies; indeed, the internal College members also found this information very informative. While it always was available to them, they frequently did not examine them in depth and apply them to their daily activities. It was also not only the business executives who wanted this information; there were members from 4 year colleges and community groups who were also seeking to be completely informed.

The task force did a lot of reading and consolidating. The task force finally saw certain improvements that it would recommend to the College—improved accessibility, adaptation to the varied learning styles of students and easier transition through the College.

The following slide was projected for the audience:

Major Recommendations

Develop a new mission statement and internal spirit document;

Develop a process that connects its mission statement to resource deployment more effectively and decide about eliminating those activities that do not reflect the priorities in the College's overall mission;

Refocus on the major programs that underpin the College's transfer and career programs;

Develop a more efficient, "data driven" planning and budgeting process.

The task force posed an important question for the College: "Your current Mission statement proposes that you be all things to all people. So what is it that you really do?" The task force pointed out that there were many internal studies and reports, but none of them seemed to be consistent with each other and with the Mission and Strategic Planning. The task force recommended that the College refocus and determine what it does really well and what it does not do well. The College should then consider eliminating those things it does not do well. This concept was difficult to address at the College, because, like so many other institutions, it has

kept adding commitments and never dropping any. The task force made no attempt to tell the College which initiatives it should eliminate. Rather, it identified a need for self-examination and left it to the College to reexamine its priorities and its commitments.

The task force broke its recommendations into six areas: Philosophy and Mission; Access and Competency; Business and its Employees; Curriculum Delivery and Learning Styles; Resources; and Competition.

The following slide was projected for the audience:

Major Results

New Mission statement and Internal Vision Statement;

Revised Planning Process with a four year time frame, risk assessment and cost of inaction section;

New Program and Discipline Review with more accountability measures.

Ms. Wessman reviewed these major results and also showed how they fit well with other task force recommendations. She pointed out that the new planning process provides for much more integration of internal College documents and that the new review process included specific assessment measures for program elimination. The Mission statement is trying to be more learning centered and more accountable for student learning. The Mission is linked directly to a new internal spirit in the College. (Both documents are attached to these proceedings as an appendix.)

The College is presently undergoing a transformation of spirit. There is a perceived revitalization at the College, directly tied to these two documents. The College has also developed two new institutes: The Macklin Business Institute that directly links honors students to the business world and allows faculty to work in the business world for a period of time as part of their regular College commitment; and the Paul Peck Honors Institute in the Humanities. The College is examining how to vary its delivery systems and evaluate the rigor of those new courses.

There were many recommendations in the first task force that also related to the "Learning as a Lifelong Experience—Student Focus" task force. Some of the major recommendations included how to increase the knowledge the College has of student goals and the achievement of these objectives. The College is currently seeking ways to expand that information and share it more widely within the institution. The College is examining the registration process to eliminate barriers to admission, registration and on-going re-registration. The College also is developing a strategic plan to drastically overhaul and improve student services.

The College has introduced a section on its Web page that includes on-line course schedules, registration, student access to their grades, and a secure method to pay tuition bills. Faculty members will develop a common syllabus template and all syllabi will be on department Websites. More faculty are using computer labs and putting more technology into their courses. There is a single contact point for students to call for information.

The College has developed a cooperative relationship with other area 4-year institutions. It has done a community survey to determine the needs of county businesses. To meet these needs, students will be able to begin a course of studies in high school, take two years at Montgomery College and complete their BA/BS program at a site in the county. The state colleges will give students degrees for the program completed in the county, even though the students did not attend the main campus of the 4-year institution. This advantage is particularly helpful to minority students, many of whom have to stay at home and work to contribute to the support of their family. It is helpful, as well, to the 4-year institutions that are being pressed for facilities, as the influx of high school students begins to tax their capacity.

The College has increased its international education programming, sending students overseas and bringing in speakers for a lecture series. The College has also created the Millennium Scholars program, allowing 25 students to study at the College on scholarship, study at Cambridge over one summer, and work in the Smithsonian Institution as interns. Many of these innovations are direct results of the impetus provided by the Council task forces.

The task force "Learning as a Lifelong Experience—Faculty and Staff focus" followed up on the need for change. How would faculty receive the training required as major technology is introduced into the classroom? How does the College determine the appropriate place for alternative delivery within the traditional set of program offerings? How does the College implement a comprehensive, coordinated professional development program for all faculty and staff?

The task force noted that, while the College has committed major resources to professional development, there was no comprehensive plan on how that money should be used to best advantage. To accomplish this, the task force recommended formation of a Professional Development Institute. The task force recommended more partnerships with business and industry, so that both faculty and staff could work outside of the College environment and bring their experience back into the College workplace. This recommendation has already begun to be implemented at the College.

The task force recommended a mentoring program between full time faculty and adjunct faculty, particularly those coming from the business world who have not had teaching experience. This recommendation will be very important at Montgomery College, where a major number of the faculty are able to retire and many new faculty will be employed.

The College's Human Resources unit has begun development of a Professional Development plan, one part of which is that faculty, staff and administrators will have professional development as a part of their annual evaluation. Opportunities will be made available through the College's Center for Teaching and Learning, other internal programs, and external programs. Everyone at the College will have a professional development plan against which their progress will be judged. The College has a Leadership Development Institute and will start a Professional Development Institute, as well. There is a new mentoring program for both faculty and staff. They receive the routine introductory exposure to the College and each new faculty member will have a senior faculty mentee. A staff or administrator also will have an appropriate mentee.

Dr. Cronin then introduced the "Engaging Employers in the College's mission" task force. Mr. George Payne was the internal College co-chair of the task force. He has remarked that, as the external task force members talked about the College needing to have partnerships, internships, etc., he was reacting internally. "But we do have that. We do have that." Then he realized that, while the College did have those programs, they were poorly advertised and the very community they were designed to assist had no idea of what they were. The same issue arose in the last task force on social issues. The College was working very hard in areas that were invisible to the external community. It was clear that the College had a good inner loop going; however, it was only talking to itself and not to its user community. The task force's major recommendation was to maintain and expand the relationship with the business community, but in a way that made the relationship much more visible and user friendly.

The College's markets are changing drastically and constantly. Montgomery College's area is becoming increasingly high technology dominated. In the state of Maryland, health services is the fastest growing job sector. Senior aging is a key issue. There is a new market in the state for training teachers, given the growth of the K–12 population we are facing. There is a need to sponsor teacher training at every level of educational achievement, since the current teaching force at the college and higher level is invariably aging and must be replaced.

In the current, competitive market how many institutions are vying to teach skills to the new workforce? How varied are the experiences they offer? One of the pieces of wisdom that emerged from the September worksessions was a comment by a community businessman. Addressing the difficulty a community college has in maintaining its position in the face of ever-changing high technology training needs, he stated: "You don't have to have the high tech machines. I've got them. You teach the students how to write, read, think critically, communicate, and work as a member of a productive team. I'll teach them the machines." This accent on the fundamentals of general education came up constantly in the task forces. The basic skills are critical and it is our role to see to it that students leave our institutions as competent learners.

The task force recommended that the College play a pivotal, coordinating role in the continuum of learning from K-12 through University. The College should be a convenor of training education and an agent that brings together the various learning experiences in the county. There are many business and technology entities in the College, all seeking to bridge the gap with business and serve that community. The task force recommended that the College establish a single point of contact Business Center, so that business can be efficiently directed to College services. This makes the College the lead partner in providing services to business. The College does not have to do it itself. It just has to know how to bring business and the education community together. This approach brings together the educational community of the county and builds a web of service that is collaborative rather than competitive.

The College is changing the nature of the typical sabbatical. Traditionally it has been viewed as a research experience in an esoteric area of faculty interest. However, at the College, faculty and staff will be able to take the same time and financial commitment of a traditional sabbatical and apply it to the business world. They will work for a semester, receiving a salary from the business world for their services. Upon their return to the College, they will be expected to bring what they have learned to their classroom, their colleagues and their workplace. As this approach succeeds, it also opens avenues of opportunity for our students as interns and apprentices in the business community. This also will expand consciousness in our students of the importance of lifelong learning.

The College has begun working with the Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) as an extension of this workforce training partnership concept. The state of Maryland has required teachers to have more credits in reading for continued certification. Montgomery College faculty will offer those reading certification credits. The College will develop an Institute with MCPS to teach in those subject areas where teachers need certification credits and to provide other professional development opportunities. This is an area that has formerly been reserved to the 4-year and graduate school level; it is not longer at that level alone. As a further advantage, it allows high school faculty who counsel students to be much more familiar with the Montgomery College advantage. This familiarity further advances the 2+2+2 program.

Dr. Cronin then turned to the last task force "The College as an Intellectual, Social, and Cultural Force." As noted above, lack of communication about the College's efforts was a major issue. One of the strengths of the College is the diversity of its student population. Such diversity should not be viewed as a difficulty but, rather, as a resource to be celebrated. Our students should have a major role in being change agents in our community. Diversity is, thus, operceived as a positive element, rather than as the more traditional hurdle to be overcome. An overly minority community often brings a set of problems to an institution. However, they do not relate as much to minority status as to economic disadvantage, lack of fundamental skills, and an over-extended set of commitments to provide a decent environment for their families.

How could Montgomery College begin to see itself as a leavening force in the community? The task force suggested development of an advisory group with members from inside and outside of the College. This group would examine issues of importance in the county and develop an inter-linked set of discussion opportunities on those issues. The task force was suggesting selection of a single issue for a year's discussion, utilizing such tools as a lecture series, a public forum, a film series, cable television and radio exposure, among others. The major accent here was making the College a safe, open and neutral site for the discussion of major county issues.

One issue, for example, could be adult literacy and preparation for a career in an advanced workplace environment. Montgomery County citizens are perceived as highly educated. However, one out of every eight adult residents cannot read or write. How will those people be prepared for employment in this county? There is also a growing shortage of affordable housing in the county. How can a person who cannot read or write hold down a job in a high-priced apartment market?

The task force urged the College to go outside of its borders and become involved in service leadership with its civic and community organizations. Use the College's resources, for example, to bridge the "digital divide." Many persons in the community do not have experience with computers and fear the technology. They will not be able to function in the workforce community for much longer until they are enabled to work with computers and overcome the fear of the technology. The Takoma Park campus has opened a community computer lab wherein access to the computers is available via a county library card. The College is presently working with the County Council to become a major partner in community-based projects to introduce computer literacy in the disadvantaged community through community centers.

When the task force reports were completed and reviewed, the Council approved the draft of its final report in December. The draft was shared with the entire College community for feedback. On February 8, 2000 all comments were given to the Executive Committee of the Council for consideration. The final report was submitted to the President on March 10 and was submitted to the Board of Trustees in April. The final report went from the Council to the President to the Board uncensored and with no request for change from the administration.

The Board of Trustees took an unusual approach to the recommendations. Two Board members each took one task force report, met with the task force leaders and formulated a position they would bring back to the full board. At a retreat in June, the Board came together and received the sub-group recommendations. The Board set its priorities for implementation at the June retreat and approved the new Mission statement and Internal Spirit Statement. In July a group of administrators began development of New Goals and Objectives. Those Goals and Objectives are now being reviewed by the College community.

At the end of the presentation, Dr. Cronin again called attention to the Council for the 21st Century's Web page. It contains a full documentary history of the Council's work. He also distributed an Executive Summary of the Council's report. Persons interested in the summary and/or a copy of the slides from this PowerPoint presentation can obtain them by writing to: Dr. James E. Cronin, 900 Hungerford Drive, Room 325, Rockville, MD 20850; or by sending an email to Dr. Cronin at jcronin@mc.cc.md.us.

Figure 1
OUR COLLEGE
OUR MISSION

CHANGING LIVES

We are in the business of changing lives.
Students are the center of our universe.
We encourage continuous learning
for our students, our faculty, and our staff.

THE COMMUNITY'S COLLEGE

We are the community's college.
We are the place for social and political dialogue.
We are a global institution.

ACCOUNTABLE FOR RESULTS

We are accountable for key results centered around learning.
Every high school student will consider Montgomery College as a choice.
We are the first choice for business training and education.

We will tend to our internal spirit.

Figure 2
OUR INTERNAL SPIRIT

We are committed to high academic and performance standards and take pride in our collective achievements.

We are welcoming, compassionate, and service-oriented to our diverse communities.

We operate in a creative, innovative, flexible, and responsive manner.

We practice collaboration, openness, honesty, and widely shared communications.

Integrity, trust, and respect guide our actions.

We value and respect academic vitality and excellence.

Our spirit is renewed through enthusiasm, celebration, a sense of humor, and fun.

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