BUILDING FOR TOMORROW

COCHISE COLLEGE STRATEGIC PLAN
FOR 2009-2014
Note: As outlined in Attachment A, the College used a broad-based, participatory process to update its Strategic Plan. The planning assumptions noted below framed the strategic discussions leading to five goals/priorities to guide the college’s work over the course of the next five years. One to three year objectives have been identified in support of each goal/priority.

Twelve Essential Planning Assumptions

1. **The global economy will create a global marketplace.**

   As other nations forge ahead of the U.S. in effectively educating their young people for a high tech future, it will become more important to help students develop skills and abilities in the critical STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) fields. A major goal of the state of Arizona and the national Perkins grant is to produce local workers who are well-prepared for high-skilled, high-tech and high-wage jobs. These economic changes are also increasing the demand for more entrepreneurial learning and enhanced communication skills.

2. **Political and economic developments will continue to impact the fiscal stability of the College.**

   This will affect the College’s ability to grow, to maintain its quality and affordability, to coordinate with other institutions, and to respond to the needs of its communities and students. Continued low funding for higher education from the State of Arizona may result in reduction in quality or quantity of programs and services and/or increased costs for students across the state unless alternative sources of funding and financial aid are identified and sought.

3. **Transparency and accountability will grow in importance.**

   Therefore, the College needs to be proactive in demonstrating that it is an effective institution, whose students are successful and whose finances are handled responsibly and appropriately.

4. **An increasing amount of sophisticated technology will be necessary.**

   The College thus needs to continually update and expand its technology capabilities. The technologies employed will require an ongoing commitment to providing ample Internet bandwidth for all campuses and centers as well as ongoing investments to improve the required infrastructure capabilities.
5. The College will continue its commitment to providing affordable opportunities and services to help under-prepared students succeed.

Affordability will help people who want to improve basic skills, to start, change, and advance careers, to pursue the baccalaureate and/or to access educational enrichment for lifelong learning. Providing services will help minimize the barriers to completion. The types of services provided will expand to meet more needs and diversify to meet student needs in different ways.

6. It will become more difficult to hire and to retain qualified faculty and staff.

Due to demographic changes, there will be a shortage of faculty and other professionals unless the College takes a strong, deliberate and creative role in responding to this trend.

7. Poverty will continue to be a problem and low-income residents will face significant barriers to furthering their education.

Affordability will become increasingly important as costs increase while both loan and grant programs face uncertainties and higher education is likely to experience low funding from state and federal governments.

8. Cochise County will have steady population growth with diverse populations in need of services.

As demographics change, target populations are likely to include young people who are under-prepared for college-level work and who possess a different approach to technology, communications and learning; an older population seeking increased opportunities to prepare for new careers and to improve their quality of life; a Hispanic population facing challenges regarding finances, educational attainment, and English fluency; single parents who are financially disadvantaged; military personnel with needs for specific curricula and flexibility, and seasonal visitors, particularly in Benson, Tombstone, Bisbee, and Willcox.

9. Cochise College will need to strengthen its ability to retain students and prepare them for the next level of their education.

This prediction is based on local demand and the steps recommended by the Feasibility and Demand Study of the State of Arizona commissioned by the Governor’s P-20 Council.
10. **Implementation of the Master Facilities Plan positions the college to be more competitive, but further investments will depend upon stakeholder demand and available revenue.**

11. **The College will reinforce and expands its outreach to, and partnerships with, the community.**

   This will include families, children, school systems, community organizations, and businesses that will need to be reached through an increased leadership role, multiple partnerships, improved marketing, and other activities.

12. **Increasing emphasis on environmentally sound, sustainable technologies will present both opportunities and challenges to the College.**

   Environmental issues will have an impact both in terms of how the College conducts its operations and the type of programs offered by the College.
PRIORITY/GOAL: Enhance and expand access to more students and a wider variety of student populations.

Objectives: Initiate implementation phase of strategies determined by the Enrollment Management Team leaders and Senior Administration as mission critical and of highest priority. (Attachment B)

Increase the percentage of area K-12 students attending Cochise College by Cochise County and Santa Cruz County students currently in the K-12 pipeline.

Expand credit and non-credit opportunities for senior adults.

Encourage 4-year college completion.

Expand enrollment through the College’s Online Campus in areas of greatest interest and demand.

Expand nursing from 75 admissions per year to 100 admissions per year incrementally over a 5-year period, improve retention, and increase NCLEX-RN pass rates.

Recruit students into non-traditional programs.

Develop an early alert system in support of improved student retention and success.

Provide the required technology infrastructure in order to enable continuous accessibility of instructional and technical resources.

Ensure faculty, staff and student awareness of available Information Technology resources and access to training.
**PRIORITY/GOAL:** Ensure a learning-centered environment and improve student success by increasing student engagement and mitigating barriers to completion.

**Objectives:**

- Review appropriate college policies and practices regarding their impact on student success.

- Encourage growth of the Honors Program, learning communities, service-learning programs, student clubs and organizations.

- Implement retention strategies as prioritized in the Enrollment Management plan.

- Increase faculty skills and abilities as master teachers.

- Continue utilizing survey results to inform best practices regarding student engagement in learning.

- Encourage continuation and growth of collaborative classes.

- Provide mobile accessibility and resources to accommodate student learning regardless of student’s geographic location.

- Promote online information research and communications best practices.
**PRIORITY/GOAL:** Meet the educational and workforce development needs of diverse communities within the context of a global economy.

**Objectives:** Prepare the College and students for success in a world involving rapidly changing technologies, concerns about sustainability, a global economy and a diverse society.

Produce graduates who are well-prepared for high-skilled, high-tech and high-wage jobs by expanding STEM programs.

Seek opportunities for expanding existing instructional programs and developing appropriate new programs.

Assist local entrepreneurs and business owners.

Provide the required technology infrastructure in order to enable continuous accessibility of instructional and technical resources.
**PRIORITY/GOAL:** Promote and sustain quality improvement and accountability in all facets of college operations.

Objectives:

Continue strategies designed to improve the quality of instruction and student services throughout the district.

Deepen the commitment to a culture of excellence across the College by promoting and sustaining quality improvement and accountability measures.

Increase transparency and accountability through ensuring consistent, regular communications to the public and to the various governmental and private entities with oversight responsibility for the College.

Promote best practices to eliminate outdated business processes.

Utilize all college-licensed Banner modules to streamline operations.

Develop dashboard tool within Argos to inform stakeholders and to include key performance indicators and threshold values.

Promote ease of access to data and information through use of Argos reporting tool, completed Web site, and customer-friendly staff.

Develop and maintain a purchasing user manual outlining internal processes in order to educate customers so that they may efficiently carry out duties/functions to support the college district, students, and community.

Develop and implement a plan for continuous training and development to help ensure retention of high-quality financial talent, including cross-training for all key roles.
**PRIORITY/GOAL:** Develop and utilize resources effectively and responsibly to advance the mission of Cochise College.

Objectives:

Expand financial resources in ways that support the College’s mission, vision and goals through such means as seeking grants, partnerships, and foundation activities.

Update and expand the instructional technology infrastructure and capabilities for the entire college.

Incorporate accepted environmentally-friendly information technology practices across the district.

Establish an information/training program to minimize the use of non-official information technology resources.

Improve customer service by providing efficient on-line tool to end-users to procure materials/services in a more timely manner.

Develop, document and communicate updated processes supporting Finance and Administrative policies, procedures and manuals (A/R, A/P, Payroll, Investment, etc.)

Define, create and disseminate processes for pre- and post-award administration of grants and contracts. Prepare proposal and successfully establish a negotiated overhead rate that will be accepted by all federal funding agencies.

Provide meaningful and productive professional development opportunities to faculty and staff in order to assure all employees remain current in their profession, improve their skills, and prepare
themselves for advancement opportunities within the college.

Assure the College’s compensation and benefits programs remain competitive within the market in order to recruit and retain high quality employees.

Review and revise human resources policies and procedures as necessary to assure that College practices comply with applicable regulations; provide fair and equitable treatment of employees, contribute to sound fiscal stewardship, and contribute to the College’s mission.
ATTACHMENT A

PLANNING PROCESS
OVERVIEW

Background: Established in 1961, Cochise College initially served 700 students at its campus near the rural community of Douglas. As the population expanded and the demand for educational services grew, so did the College, its offerings and its locations for providing learning opportunities. Today the College enrolls approximately 5,000 students a semester through offerings at different sites, such as the Douglas Campus, the Sierra Vista Campus, the Willcox Center, the Benson Center, the Fort Huachuca Center, the Nogales Center, the Arizona State Prison Complex near Douglas, and numerous area high schools, as well as through the Internet.

Changing to meet the emerging needs of the communities it serves has been a guiding principle at Cochise College through the years. As the College and its communities now face a transformed global economy, it is dedicated to developing ways to meet the challenges of this new environment.

In 1998 a provisional vision statement was adopted, reinforcing the commitment of Cochise College to becoming a dynamic learning community. Stimulated by this vision, the College embarked on a strategic planning process designed to make the learning community concept a guiding principle for the institution. Through an intense and participative process, the College developed a strategic plan entitled “Mission Possible” that was closely linked with the budgeting and the operational planning processes. Since 2001, this strategic plan has provided a mission, vision and philosophy that have helped guide Cochise College by modifying its mission and vision statements and annually translating these into operational planning goals, thereby providing a clear direction for the College since 2001.

Mission, Vision and Values: As noted in the 2008-09 edition of the Cochise College catalog, the current mission, vision and values statements are as follows:

Mission: Cochise College provides accessible educational opportunities that are responsive to a diverse population and lead to constructive citizenship, meaningful careers, and lifelong learning.

Vision: Cochise College strives to be a learning community held in high esteem by members of its communities, providing high quality learning opportunities for its citizens.

Core Values: In all that we do – in teaching, learning and serving – we value quality, integrity, and diversity.
These commitments have helped maintain the College’s quality and strength while stimulating a wide range of positive changes. As such changes have accumulated, it has become necessary to re-visit the institution’s core values, re-examine its environment, and revise its responses to emerging challenges and opportunities. The challenges and opportunities faced by the College since 2001 have included a successful comprehensive accreditation visit by the Higher Learning Commission, continually changing technologies, and the increasingly obvious limitations of its aging physical facilities.

**PROCESS OF STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR 2009-2014**

**Strategic Planning Group:** With the goal of producing a strategic plan designed to provide a vision for the future of the College and to offer guidance regarding how to achieve this vision, President Karen Nicodemus appointed members from a cross-section of the College faculty and staff to a newly-created Strategic Planning Group (SPG) at the end of 2006. She made clear that the continuing goal for this planning process was to “create a 21st century learning environment.”

**Information Gathering:** The SPG began by reviewing the overlapping elements of the strategic planning outlines from both the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) and the Society of College and University Planning (SCUP). They then selected and divided these pertinent areas for gathering relevant data and perspectives and preparing summaries to assist in group discussions.

The SPG also organized meetings in the various communities served by the College and invited an array of people to provide their perspectives on the future of their communities, the likely changes in their environments, how effectively the College has been serving their areas and how they envision the College satisfying their needs in future. Such meetings occurred during the late spring and summer of 2007 in Douglas, Bisbee, Willcox, Benson and Sierra Vista and produced an excellent set of insights and suggestions. *(Note: Information on these meetings is available through the President’s Office page on the College website.)*

During the annual all-college Convocation Day in August of 2007, the participants were divided into groups in order to stimulate discussions regarding the various strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing the College. Participants were also asked to provide recommendations for actions to help the College ensure a positive future that would involve achieving the mission, vision and goals of the College. Numerous insights and
more than 150 suggestions for improving the College’s future were produced through these small discussion groups.

Initial Analysis: After gathering and absorbing this wide range of information and suggestions, the Strategic Planning Group began analyzing and categorizing the data, insights and ideas gleaned from their months of exploration. Among the environmental factors expected to have a significant impact on Cochise College and its students over the next five to 10 years were the following:

- Increasing globalization
- Technological changes
- Shifts in governance and leadership
- Increased demands for accountability
- Demographic and economic trends
- Financial prospects for the College
- Pedagogical changes
- Apprehension about the changing physical environment and the need for the College to have a “sustainable environment.”

Among the assumptions initially perceived as being of importance for strategic planning were those related to:

- Institutional commitment
- Demographics
- Economics
- Politics
- Physical Environment
- Technology

After specifying the major environmental factors and assumptions, the SPG delineated an initial set of priorities and potential goals to be considered by the College as appropriate pro-active responses to the changing environment.

Feedback and Modifications: The SPG sought feedback from various external and internal stakeholders of the College. The initial planning document was presented to the Senior Administration and shared with community members from across the College’s service area, with a request for responses designed to strengthen and sharpen the plan’s focus and effectiveness.

During the summer of 2008, the President convened a county-wide group of community leaders to participate in a strategic planning day to refine the plan and to confirm and/or revise its primary assumptions and priorities. This led to some modifications to the draft of the plan.

In the fall of 2008, a thorough re-examination of the assumptions and priorities was accomplished at a final planning meeting which involved members of the
Strategic Planning Group, the Vice President for Instruction/Provost’s Council, and the Senior Managers. This meeting produced some adjustments to the assumptions and priorities.

The key components of the strategic plan that resulted from this process of research, committee discussions, college-wide dialogue, and meetings with community representatives include the list of essential planning assumptions and the set of strategic priorities (with objectives), as presented in this document.

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Note:

Members of the Strategic Planning Group were Tasneem Ashraf, Rose Berumen, Robert Carreira, Sheila DeVoe Heidman, Judith Doerr (Chair), Denise Merkel, Clyne Namuo, Diane Nadeau, Michel Ouellette, Nanette Romo, Trevor Smith, Darleen Spoor, and Monte Surratt.

The July 2008 Community Planning Session was facilitated by Brenda Beckman. Participants were Brett Agenbroad, Ron Aguillo, Yolanda Anderson, Tasneem Ashraf, Dartle Atherton, Dan Bailey, Jeffrey Barnes, Trudy Berry, Ben Berry, Holly Berryhill, Rose Berumen, Michael Boardman, Mark Boggie, Bruce Brown, Sandy Bryan, Kathleen Bullock, Kevin Butler, Del Cabarga, Robert Carreira, Kathy Carrillo, Carlos Cartagena, Marguerite Connors, Ron Curtis, Sheila DeVoe Heidman, Jessica Dilworth, Judith Doerr, Faye Douglas, Lloyd Duvall, John Eaton, Charles Flanagan, Randy Fox, Sharon Gilman, Bubba Hall, Bo Hall, Mignonne Hollis, Bob Howell, Chuck Hoyack, Carol Huddleston, Don Hudgins, Doris Jensen, Ken Kimmel, Kathy Klein, Jennifer Lakosil, Leanne Marston, Denise Merkel, Joanna Michelich, Deb Munson, Clyne Namuo, Karen Nicodemus, Becky Orozco, Danny Ortega, Jr., Michel Ouellette, Earl Pettit, Herman Ponder, Debbie Quick, Dan Rehurek, Becky Richardson, Bruce Richardson, Richard Rundhaug, Carol Sanger, George Self, Lucia Spikes, Rafael Vega, James Vlahovich, Jerome Ward, and Ron York

Participants in the final planning session were Tasneem Ashraf, Kevin Butler, Robert Carreira, Carlos Cartagena, Sheila DeVoe Heidman, Judith Doerr, Pat Hotchkiss, Chuck Hoyack, Doris Jensen, Denise Merkel, Joanna Michelich, Karen Nicodemus, Michel Ouellette, Nanette Romo, and Trevor Smith.
ATTACHMENT B

ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT PLAN

MISSION CRITICAL STRATEGIES
Cochise College’s strategic enrollment management plan is the culmination of more than a year of work involving approximately fifty people representing a cross section of the campus community. The development of the plan began with a comprehensive audit of existing practices followed by various planning activities, strategy development, and the development of enrollment targets.

In total, ninety-six enrollment strategies were developed by the six cross-functional planning teams (Integrated Marketing Team, Student Recruitment Team, Student Retention Team, Needs Assessment Team, External Relations Team, and Hispanic Serving Institution Team). Of all the strategies created by the teams, thirty-four were prioritized as mission critical (MC), forty-seven as essential (E), and fifteen as desired (D). The strategy development teams submitted their prioritized recommendations to the Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) Team for further vetting. Members of the SEM Team identified thirteen of the mission critical strategies as “high priority” for immediate implementation—some of which were merged strategies from the original mission critical strategies.

A detailed description of all strategies is provided in the plan and a synopsis of “high priority” strategies is listed below by enrollment strategy category. It is important to note that the development of a marketing plan and a Web redesign were identified as mission critical priorities but are not listed here because both are in progress currently.

Communication and Promotion

- Develop and implement promotional campaigns and communication strategies relevant to each target population and program.

- Disseminate college information to all prospective student inquiries via multi-channel communications with audience-tailored messages. Automate the communication flow to prospective students; enhance the capacity to segment communications; and measure the effectiveness of communications.
• Make effective, culturally sensitive communication an institutional priority.

• Provide financial aid information in a timely fashion, and offer more scholarships for more populations so recruiters can use awards to influence enrollment decisions.

_Cultivation of Relationships_

• Reengineer the Cochise College visit experience and individualize according to prospective student interests.

• Improve front-line student and public interfaces.

• Reach out to Hispanic students and prospective student families to include intrusive recruitment and registration providing step-by-step guidance through the enrollment process. Contact students via direct mail, e-mail, and by referral to encourage a session. Work with community organizations for referrals. Engage in targeted recruiting of Hispanic high school students from Cochise & Santa Cruz counties.

• Establish an alumni program.

_Improvement of Student Retention_

• Identify and track student goals at matriculation and each later registration. Evaluate student success in achieving their goals.

• Ensure a successful transition into the College by redesigning the new student orientation, developing a welcome week with a passport concept, and offering an FYE (Freshman Year Experience).

• Establish an "Early Alert System" for students at risk of failing/dropping out including the capability to predict at-risk students for intervention, so an intervention can occur as early as the third week of classes and periodically thereafter.

_Response to Market Demand and Student Needs_

• Identify target programs with the most potential for the College. Evaluate, assess, and modify transfer and other credit programs/offerings.