

## ***Piedmont Community College Planning Assumptions 2009-2011***

The information provided by the North Carolina Community College System, and gathered Institutional Effectiveness Committee research was used to develop the planning assumption and forecasted impact on the College. The plan is reviewed yearly by the Institutional Effectiveness Committee, and updates are made to the planning assumptions. The planning assumptions are arranged in the following six categories: education/training, technology, economic, social, demographics, and legal/political.

### **Education/Training**

1. Removing the "digital divide" will require a literate population. People can't surf the net if they can't read.
2. Students are entering poorly prepared for college-level work.
3. Colleges are continuing to be held accountable for outcomes by the public, students, accreditation agencies, auditors, business and industry, universities, and the local, state, and federal governments.
4. The challenge will be to align curriculum and testing with standards that the College expects and wants to meet. The College is further challenged to increase student learning.
5. The College must focus institutional planning and program review processes on academic excellence, continuous improvement, and accessibility to college services for all students and accountability.
6. The College must be creative in program development and offerings to compete with the changing environment. The College must increase its capacity to evaluate and act upon emerging opportunities.
7. Community colleges play an increasingly important role in providing higher skills to the underemployed, unemployed and dislocated workers.
8. Alternative delivery classes will continue to grow in popularity. The push for "education on demand" will require expansion in both classes and services. The College will need to "take education" to service area through expanded distance learning and "remote sites."
9. The College needs additional facilities for services, learning resources, classrooms, and technical/occupational instructional space.
10. In order to meet the challenges, the College must recruit and sustain a diverse and qualified faculty and staff.
11. The College must provide an environment that is safe for all students, faculty and staff.

### **Technology**

1. Connectivity is ever changing in the new economy. The number of PCs doesn't matter if they aren't connected.
2. Removing the "digital divide" will require universal connectivity in even the most rural communities.
3. Technology's impact is not only in the growth of technology-type jobs, but a critical part of every job from manufacturing to management.

4. Libraries are not what they used to be because technology is now an intricate part of the services provided. The College must ensure that the LRC continues to keep pace with technology as an integral part of the services provided.
5. Technology has increased the competition with proprietary schools for students globally.
6. The College should increase the use of technology to expand and enrich literacy programs.
7. Changes in technology will increase the need for the College to provide professional development for faculty and staff.
8. Legislative plans to increase access to technology in rural areas (i.e. Internet access), should be supported by the College.

### **Economic**

1. Employment in North Carolina will continue to fluctuate for the foreseeable future.
2. Most of the jobs lost in textiles and tobacco will be replaced by emerging technology, healthcare, and advanced skill driven jobs when the economy strengthens. If technology dependent workers engage in lifelong learning, they and their companies remain competitive.
3. Higher Education is a major force for economic development in the South.
4. Since more and more commercial interface will occur across the globe, citizens will need to be more sensitive on global diversity. In preparation for this global shift, the College needs to expand its course offerings of foreign languages and internationally – influenced programs/courses.
5. New positions will require the workforce to have more technical skills.
6. Companies must address global competition therefore employees must be more flexible and amenable to moves, flex-hours and other changes.
7. Limited funding growth for the Community College will hamper the ability of the College to develop new programs of study to respond to emerging educational and workforce development needs.
8. The College will need to continue to collaborate and partner with other educational institutions, governmental agencies, business, and industry to serve the needs of the area.
9. The College needs to secure external funding to extend college services, even as competition for such funding becomes increasingly competitive and as application requirements from funders become more complex.
10. Reduce College operating costs by investing in sustainable, energy-efficient technology.

### **Social**

1. Educational consumers are interested in a consumer-friendly campus including: better signage; better communication of offerings; and breaking down barriers and addressing fears.
2. Childcare issues continue to affect participation rates.
3. The College must work hard to maintain a realistic approach to serving students.
4. All faculty and staff must function as marketers for the College.

5. The College must do a better job of making the campus population aware of childcare services.
6. Transportation issues continue to affect participation rates.
7. The ratio of full-time students to part-time students will fluctuate. The College will have to adjust its resources accordingly.
8. The College must develop a greater awareness and appreciation for the increasing social and cultural diversity of the state's population.
9. Financial assistance is limited and may provide additional challenges for students.
10. Employees may have to travel further to get jobs.

### **Demographics**

1. The "displaced worker" programs have precipitated a growth in the number of individuals who wish to return to school to update their job skills or train for a new career. The unemployment rate as of 11/2010 was 11% vs. 12% the previous year for Caswell County. Person County's unemployment rate was 9.4% as of 11/2010 vs. 10.6% the previous year.
2. The number of single-parent families is projected to increase along with the percentage of women working outside the home.
3. There will continue to be a wide variation between the economic health of rural and urban areas, as well as between different population groups.
4. Caswell and Person Counties will continue to have large parts of the population employed outside of the service area. Approximately 17,000 residents (approx. working population 28,140) travel outside of the service area to work. A higher percentage of them (13%) travel 30-34 minutes (one-way).
5. The number of older adults who are potential students will increase due to the need seek new employment as the industry needs of the service area change (median age of service area residents is 41).

### **Legal/Political**

1. Regulatory legislation (ADA, OSHA, FERPA, and Student Right to Know), along with the current political shift towards performance-based funding, will place continued emphasis on the College's accountability to the general public and to federal, state, and local government.
2. North Carolina Driver's License Law requires college staff to be involved in the suspension of licenses of minors who drop out of high school and do not meet their attendance and program requirements in ABS. This has added another unfunded responsibility and hardship on the College's ABS staff.
3. To meet the demand for facilities on Campus, a Bond Referendum will need to be considered.
4. The sustainable energy shift will eventually link to regulations that the College will have to stay abreast of and comply to.