



Strategic Plan | 2012 - 2015

Creating Opportunities for Our Shared Future





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To business and community leaders:

During the last three years, the college community implemented a wide-reaching strategic plan – *Relevance and Opportunity: A Strategic Plan Essential to Our Future, 2008-2011*. Together, the HCC Board of Trustees and our leadership team created and executed this bold vision to chart a new course for the college, one that would take us to the next level and position HCC to impact demonstrably the future of our students, our city, and even our peer institutions around the globe.

We have succeeded in raising the college's stature nationally and internationally while enhancing our respect among business and community leaders at home. With all these accomplishments, we recognize that our students and community still need more. There is unfinished work and, more importantly, new needs and opportunities to address.

Houston Community College has grown to be a massive institution. The scale of our impact is grand. The range of our responsibilities is broad. The importance of our leadership to Houston's economic health requires that we build upon our achievements and stretch further, in some cases much further, to provide hope and opportunity as we continue planning and building for the future.

Our previous strategic plan provided the road map for where we are today, and we have exercised tremendous effort to achieve the vision of where we not only can but also must be tomorrow. Led by our Board of Trustees, we have gone to extraordinary lengths to be collaborative inside our institution, while listening intently to community and industry leaders. The result is our new strategic plan – *The 2012-2015 Strategic Plan: Creating Opportunities for Our Shared Future* – that creates new opportunity, has continuing relevance, and is essential to the future of the college and the city.

Beginning September 2012, it will be my responsibility to lead this strategic plan with the support of our board, our faculty and staff, as well as our community. This is not only *our* college; it is also our future. HCC is here for our community and our students. We are appreciative our community is here for HCC.

Sincerely,



Mary S. Spangler, Ed.D.
Chancellor, HCC





EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Through a Board-led, comprehensive and inclusive strategic planning process that utilized environmental scanning, opinion survey, community input, and current literature review, the District's leadership identified seven strategic initiatives, building on the recently completed Strategic Plan for 2008-2011.

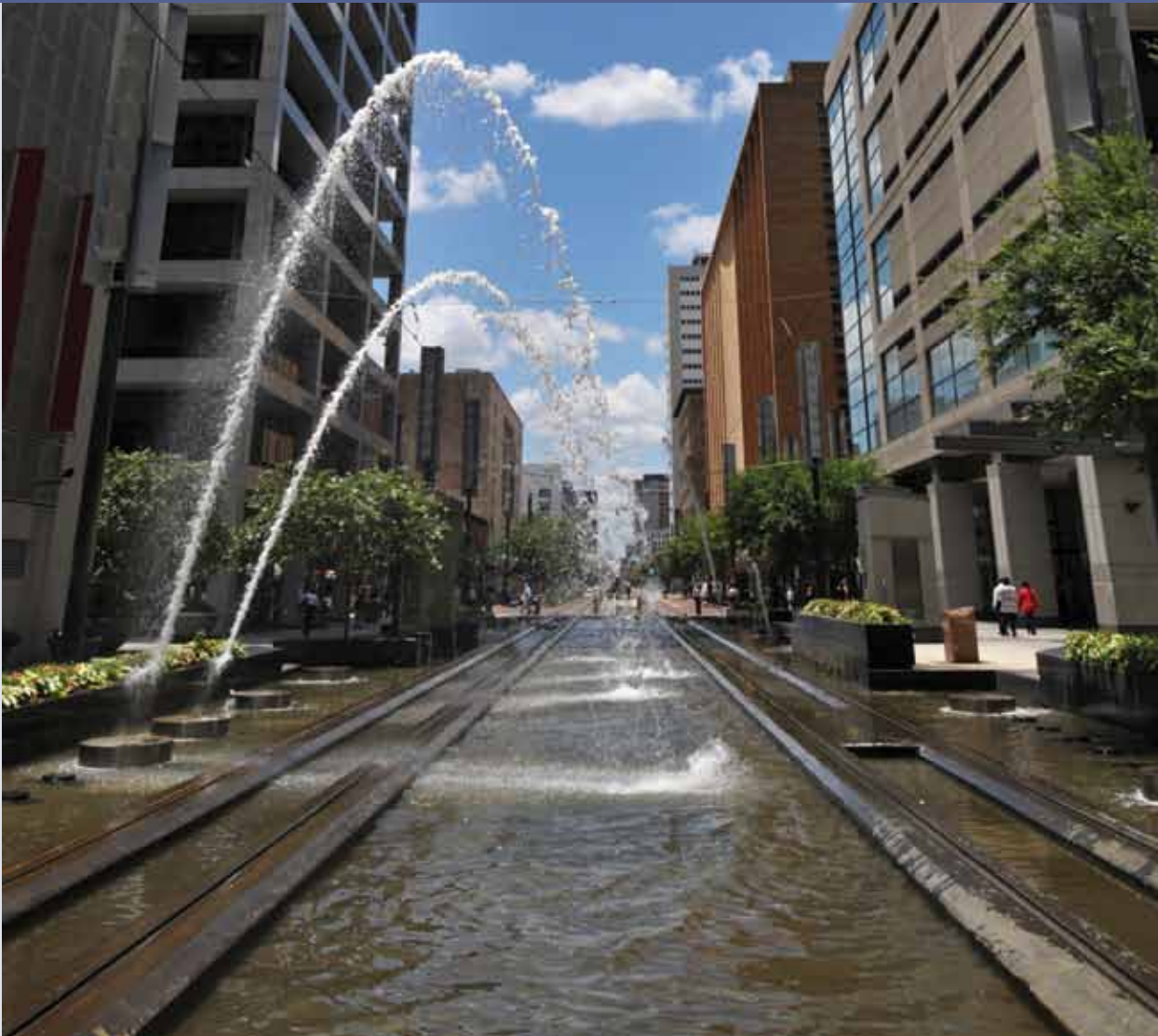
As part of this process, we reviewed the significant accomplishments achieved during that plan that contained seven goals: Student Learning, Effective Leadership, Resource Development and Enhancement, Global Perspective, Effective Communication, and Accountability & Strategic Decision-making.

These initiatives have been incorporated into the new plan to help address what Houston, the college, and our nation require from a premiere higher education institution that strives to be the most relevant in the United States.

Additionally, we reviewed the report from AACC's 21st Century Commission on the Future of Community Colleges – *Reclaiming the American Dream, Community Colleges and the Nation's Future*, to determine if our plan aligned with the recommendations of the Commission. It is not coincidental that our seven strategic initiatives encompass the Commission's seven recommendations for redesigning the educational experiences of community college students – more proof that HCC is the most relevant institution in the country.

This transformation has enabled the college to create a developing set of initiatives as we move forward into the next phase of our commitment to student access and success. The connecting link across this strategic plan and these initiatives is a commitment to **innovation** that creates the resiliency needed by an essential institution of Houston's future.

Houston has been named #19 among the world's top 200 fastest growing cities and is #1 in the United States (Brookings Institute, January 2012). HCC has contributed to this leading role. In fact, the total economic impact on the region is \$2.5 billion annually (EMSI 2012).



We see our city as the city that others emulate for strategies of growth. Similarly, other institutions of higher learning will also emulate HCC for our commitment to enhancing the community and delivering quality higher education.

We will continue to support the community that not only demonstrates a need for community growth and individual success but also values higher education for all. HCC is committed to the reality that Houston's future necessitates a skilled, educated workforce that leverages the diversity of all to create global citizens.

PLAN DEFINED

Seven initiatives provide the framework of the new Strategic Plan. Although these are all important to moving the institution to the next level, the focus is on student success and is HCC's #1 priority. These initiatives have been developed through a rigorous review of academic literature, best practices, and national benchmarks. They reflect HCC's mission.

OUR MISSION

Houston Community College is an open-admission, public institution of higher education offering a high-quality, affordable education for academic advancement, workforce training, career and economic development, and lifelong learning to prepare individuals in our diverse communities for life and work in a global and technological society.

OUR VISION

Houston Community College will be the most **relevant** community college in the country. We will be the **opportunity** institution for every student we serve – **essential** to our community's success.

Approved, 2008

VISION DEFINED

Over the last three years, the HCC team focused on the challenges of creating and enhancing **opportunities** in direct response to the vision. The actions taken by everyone in the HCC family contributed to unprecedented growth in the student body – 28% in the last biennium, expansion of new and study-abroad programs and re-structured offerings – Ready-When-U-R (RWUR) and Salzburg Global Seminar, and critical workforce and business development programs to enhance economic development – the Goldman-Sachs *10,000 Small Business* program. Having moved the institution significantly forward, based on the Strategic Plan 2008-2011 initiative and goals, it is time to reprioritize and focus on another part of this element of the vision – ensuring that students achieve their goals. By doing so, HCC can become the most **relevant** community college. For an institution

of higher education to be relevant, its students must be deemed successful and capable. It is not the buildings or budgets of colleges or even their endowments that bring acclaim; rather, it is what their alumni do.

For years, much of the focus of HCC and most community colleges was access. Access is still a major element of what is needed to support Houston's growth, but access without successful academic and skills attainment provides little for the community's economic and social well-being. Initiatives like Achieving the Dream have been successful and need to be scaled up to ensure that all students can receive the benefits of systemic transformational teaching-learning and support techniques. To do this and to leverage what we have learned from the best practices found nationally, HCC must transform its faculty, its system of programmatic offerings, and its means of helping students learn as it reinvigorates the attitudes of entrepreneurialism and innovation that overcome challenges affecting students.

For the first time since the Truman administration, community colleges are receiving unprecedented recognition as a solution to the nation's critical economic and social ills. In comments by the President and others, community colleges are the **critical and essential link for "the development of the new knowledge-based economy . . . needed in the global marketplace."**^a HCC has become a leader and not a follower amongst its peers. This Strategic Plan ensures institutional resiliency to weather the budgetary storms that plague all governmental agencies and the looming crisis of human capital due to an aging faculty and staff.

This plan looks to greater partnerships with corporations, non-profits, and not-for-profit organizations to improve pathways for students, to refresh faculty, and to leverage limited resources. The accomplishment of initiatives will create a streamlined curriculum that reduces unnecessary credits many students have in their programs and improves articulation agreements with partner colleges and universities. There will be continued emphasis on the readiness of students through the expansion of bridge courses, orientations, testing and evaluations, and collaborations with feeder institutions. The boldness of HCC implementation will allow the college to continue to be a national trendsetter.

Numerous metrics will be used to evaluate the progress of this plan as it is implemented. The most important of these metrics may be how well HCC students perform at their next level of endeavor. As the college takes on what is a bold and dramatic step in Houston's future, there must be an equal commitment to change or break old molds and to reallocate resources to fit the priorities of the 21st century. These next three years will be critical to what HCC is to become – **essential** to this community, the global Houston.

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Our Guiding Principles direct our interactions with students, the internal and external communities we serve, and each other, giving focus to our primary purpose: devotion to the achievement of student success, defined as timely completion of certificates and degrees that drive real accomplishments in the workplace, at universities, and in society.

- **Freedom with Responsibility**

HCC subscribes to and upholds a doctrine of **freedom** that follows the principle of **responsibility**. This includes responsibility to both one's self and others; to perform our prescribed duties in an open, transparent manner; to seek the truth, foster learning, and encourage understanding; and in matters of academic freedom, to adhere to the principles of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) and SACS Guidelines.

- **Commitment to Excellence**

HCC believes that a commitment to doing one's very best without regard to position is the starting point of all expressions of **excellence** and setting of high standards for quality and performance. This includes a genuine passion for pursuits that embody creativity, innovation, and continuous improvement.

- **Respect for the Person**

HCC holds that a principle of **community mindfulness** begins with **respect** for oneself and for others. Respect is the framework of personal **integrity** and provides the tie that binds us together. Respect is the basis of trust, collegiality, teamwork, and well-being with others. Respect allows open communication, sharing, empathy, compassion, and understanding to rule our conduct in daily life.

- **Sound Stewardship**

Stewardship is the path to fulfilling HCC's Mission and acknowledges our guardianship of its resources and positive impact on the lives of our students and community at large. Sound Stewardship incorporates adherence to the highest ethical standards in all professional and personal duties and responsibilities: to deal honestly with others; to stand for what is right; and to secure the benefit of all by the wise care and utilization of our resources, including time, money, and people.



OUR STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

The seven initiatives of the 2012 – 2015 Strategic Plan are detailed in the following section:

1. Increase Student Completion through Advanced Educational Opportunities
2. Respond to the Needs of Business and Industry for Skilled Workers
3. Ensure Instructional Programs Provide the Knowledge and Skills Required for 21st Century Learners
4. Enrich Institutional Capacity for Faculty and Staff Professional Development and Student Leadership Development
5. Support Innovation as a Means to Improve Institutional Resilience
6. Cultivate an Entrepreneurial Culture Across the Institution
7. Leverage Local and International Partnerships for Institutional and Community Development



HCC currently leads the state and is fifth in the nation in the number of students who complete associate degrees. While we are proud of this fact, we can do better. We will strengthen our efforts and scale up those strategies that have been proven to increase the rates of students' persistence and completion.

HCC will continue to serve as a national Achieving the Dream (ATD) Leader College and work hand in hand with our high school partners to ensure more students enter our doors college-ready and leave well-prepared for successful transition to jobs, careers, and further education.

ACTION 1.1:

Improve student preparation for higher education and transition to careers.

- Year One:**
- Implement the Gulf Coast Partners Achieving Student Success (PASS) grant
 - Implement the Houston Innovation Learning Zone (HILZ) project with HISD
 - Require mandatory student orientation via Pre-Enrollment Information Sessions
 - Provide opportunities to receive test preparation prior to enrollment
 - Expand student participation in the Minority Male Initiative (MMI)
 - Establish and implement a plan for the continued expansion of dual credit partnerships and developmental education preparation of feeder high schools
 - Establish and implement an action plan to expand recruitment efforts in local ISDs

- Years Two & Three:**
- Provide clear P-16 pathways for all instructional programs
 - Expand faculty teams with all partner schools to ensure curriculum alignment
 - Expand computer lab facilities at campuses to provide test preparation opportunities for all students
 - Create additional online opportunities for student orientation, test preparation, and academic advising

ACTION 1.2:

Improve academic success of students in their first semester.

- Year One:
 - Implement EDUC 1300: Learning Frameworks as a new student success course
 - Ensure that all students file a learning plan by the end of the first semester
- Years Two & Three:
 - Develop a new student success course for STEM students
 - Coordinate all student success courses so students receive academic advising, career exploration, and learning strategies
 - Participate in a national study of non-cognitive factors that contribute to or hinder student success
 - Implement effective “early warning” systems with timely interventions for students as needed (tutoring, counseling, etc.)

ACTION 1.3:

Revamp developmental education to ensure greater success with more efficient delivery.

- Year One:
 - Begin conversion of developmental (math, reading, and writing) courses from course-based remediation to modularized, individualized assessment and instruction
 - Expand successful strategies as acceleration, contextualization, and collaboration, including learning communities
 - Begin revision of English as a Second Language (ESOL) instruction
- Years Two & Three:
 - Complete conversion of developmental education from course-based remediation to modularized, individualized assessment and instruction
 - Expand utilization of the I-BEST model (Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training) through partnerships among credit, adult, and continuing education
 - Complete revision of English as a Second Language (ESOL) instruction

ACTION 1.4:

Improve students' persistence rates from one semester to the next.

- Year One:**
- Provide students with program-specific faculty advisers by their second semester
 - Expand opportunities for student learning and engagement activities

- Years Two & Three:**
- Commit to upgrading the college infrastructure as needed in terms of personnel, technology, and facilities
 - Provide case management/counseling for students with academic or life issues

ACTION 1.5:

Ensure students complete their programs of study and transition successfully to jobs/careers or further education.

- Year One:**
- Expand and fully automate the HCC degree audit and tracking processes
 - Publicize and expand the reverse transfer process
 - Expand opportunities for students to credential using military, work, and other forms of external and experiential learning

- Years Two & Three:**
- Engage students with active learning strategies and real-world problems (as explained in HCC's Quality Enhancement Plan – HCC INSPIRE: Innovative Science Program Initiatives to Reform Education)
 - Strengthen opportunities for students to participate in cooperative and service learning
 - Strengthen all articulation agreements and establish University Centers at HCC-NE and HCC-NW Colleges for students to complete baccalaureate programs



As the supplier of skilled workers to business and industry, we have a responsibility to build partnerships and to develop the means to respond quickly with the creation and design of programs and student-learning outcomes that meet their requirements.

The employer is our customer. Our clear responsibility to both employers and to students is to narrow the jobs gap and the skills gap for both of these stakeholders.

ACTION 2.1:

Engage industry leaders in dialogue to identify present and future needs.

- Year One:**
- Work hand-in-hand with the Greater Houston Partnership, the Houston-Galveston Area Council, Workforce Solutions, and others to meet regional skills gaps and labor-market needs in the clusters of high-demand, high-skills jobs for the Gulf Coast: Health Care, Energy, Manufacturing/Construction, Education, IT, and related industries
 - Host quarterly “Skills Summits” with the leaders of an industry cluster to ensure we hear their needs and align our curricula appropriately
 - Create “super” advisory boards of cluster industry leaders to guide and support high-quality workforce programs

**Years Two
& Three:**

- Develop a long-range plan, Workforce 2020, to ensure HCC is offering the right programs and teaching the right knowledge and skills for Houston’s future workforce
- Engage industry leaders in a review of HCC facilities and equipment to ensure state-of-the art instruction
- Implement processes by which industry may provide resources for naming rights of buildings/programs and endowed chairs for program instructors/leaders
- Explore the utility of a competency-based transcript (DQP) in a pilot project

ACTION 2.2:

Improve the infrastructure of workforce programs (instruction, curriculum, facilities, and equipment) to meet business and industry needs.

- Year One:**
- Establish appropriate and relevant academic and technical core courses in all workforce programs
 - Enhance opportunities for students to engage in co-op, internship, and clinical experiences
 - Initiate a plan by which all workforce programs will include on-line resources for student learning

ESS AND INDUSTRY FOR SKILLED WORKERS^c

- Establish a plan for the regular review and upgrading of workforce program facilities and equipment as needed
- Select those workforce programs for which HCC wishes to become nationally recognized and develop the processes by which that will happen (locations, resources, leadership, etc.)

Years Two & Three:

- Enhance student experiences for co-op, internship, and clinical learning
- Embed industry-recognized certificates and skill standards in all workforce programs
- Embed the Career Readiness Certificate in all workforce programs
- Secure professional accreditations for all workforce programs as applicable
- Establish a plan for the regular professional development of all workforce program faculty
- Attract industry and business leaders who are experts in their fields to guide program development

ACTION 2.3:

Ensure students have access to information and support services to complete career and technical education programs.

- Year One:
- Fully implement Career Coach as a source of information for students and advisers
 - Coordinate career exploration activities for all student success courses
 - Explore the expansion of the HILZ “career academy” model to additional school district partners

Years Two & Three:

- Develop cluster-specific learning materials/objects for all sections of LEAD 1200: Leadership in the Workforce
- Develop alternative education pathways to strengthen the transition opportunities for students in adult, developmental, and continuing education to high-demand workforce programs

HCC must prepare our students to become citizens and workers capable of productive and meaningful participation in the 21st century. Core competencies of *critical thinking, effective communications, quantitative reasoning, teamwork, personal responsibility, and social responsibility* must be taught in all of our instructional programs.

All classrooms at HCC should meet minimum technology standards, and all faculty must be trained and supported in using effective teaching and learning strategies to promote success for students in their learning today as well as throughout their lifetime.

ACTION 3.1:

Ensure the adoption and commitment by HCC to 21st century core curriculum skills as defined by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB).

- Year One:**
- Ensure the HCC community is aware of and understands the commitment by the state to the new core curriculum competencies: *critical thinking, effective communications, quantitative reasoning, teamwork, personal responsibility, and social responsibility*
 - Redesign the process for creation and approval of HCC core curriculum courses
 - Participate in Liberal Education and America's Promise (LEAP) Texas, the statewide network of Texas colleges and universities for improved assessment of students' core curriculum competencies
 - Examine additional and alternative approaches to core curriculum assessments, including the Lumina project for Degree Qualifications Profile (DQP) and the Voluntary Framework of Accountability (VFA)

**Years Two
& Three:**

- Implement an effective system of embedded assessments by which the core curriculum competencies might be taught effectively
- Complete creation of new HCC Core Curriculum for submission to the THECB in Fall 2013 and implementation in Spring 2014

ACTION 3.2:

Create new platforms and methodologies to teach and support students using effective methods of course delivery, teaching practices, and support services.

- Year One:**
- Implement Camp INSPIRE to initiate modules in biology, chemistry, and physics for active and collaborative learning by students in solving real-world problems
 - Expand training opportunities for faculty in the creation and adoption of open source instructional materials
 - Expand technology-based solutions in all areas of student services, including orientation, advising, financial aid, and case management
 - Develop a long-range plan for the development and revision of HCC model courses

PROGRAMS PROVIDE THE KNOWLEDGE AND FOR 21ST CENTURY LEARNERS^d

- Implement a learner-centered instructional design in the creation of all courses
- Increase hybrid course offerings at all colleges
- Develop two-year enrollment plans at each college to offer cohort-based workforce programs and learning communities for developmental and academic programs

Years Two & Three:

- Expand Camp INSPIRE activities to include all full-time science faculty
- Create and implement a required professional development plan for all adjunct faculty teaching developmental education and core curriculum courses
- Provide a course shell (Eagle Online) for all faculty teaching developmental education and core curriculum courses
- Increase hybrid course offering at all colleges
- Evaluate and strengthen the library-based Learning Guides to increase access and usability
- Implement a patron-driven expansion of library digital collections (books, journals, videos, etc.)
- Develop a plan for the use of learner analytics to diagnose and support students' individual learning needs
- Implement two-year enrollment plans at each college to offer cohort-based workforce programs and learning communities for developmental and academic programs

ACTION 3.3:

Provide an environment conducive to optimal learning that includes consideration of facilities, technology, equipment, materials, accessibility, and concern for students.

Year One:

- Develop standards that meet the needs of the 21st century learner for all HCC classrooms, libraries, labs, and other learning spaces
- Align the HCC Facilities Master Plan for construction of new facilities and refurbishment of existing facilities to meet the standards detailed in bullet one
- Update the HCC Technology Master Plan and ensure its alignment with the HCC Facilities Master Plan

Years Two & Three:

- Update the HCC Educational Plan (including expansion of Workforce programs) and ensure its alignment with the HCC Facilities Master Plan
- Update the HCC Library Plan and ensure its alignment with the HCC Facilities Master Plan
- Update the HCC Student Services Plan and ensure its alignment with the HCC Facilities Master Plan to ensure provision of adequate spaces for students' support, recreational, extra-curricular, athletic, and health needs

HCC has celebrated its 40th year by enrolling and graduating more students than ever before. To ensure we continue to thrive as an essential and relevant institution for the educational development of our students and the economic development of our community, we must prepare students, faculty, and staff for the leadership roles of tomorrow.

We will do this in multiple ways – through the expansion of external resources and support, purposeful mentoring of leadership candidates, infusion of opportunities for leadership development in our instructional programs, student services, extracurricular activities, and human resources.

ACTION 4.1:

Develop a system-wide strategy to encourage leadership development for students.

- Year One:**
- Provide district-wide support for student organizations, such as United Student Council and Phi Theta Kappa, that provide opportunities for students' leadership development
 - Provide district-wide and college-based faculty and staff guidance for student government organizations and extracurricular clubs to ensure congruence with college mission and goals
 - Survey programs to determine the extent to which instructional programs provide opportunities for student leadership development
 - Create an interdisciplinary faculty team to create generic leadership development materials and activities that might be infused in a variety of academic and workforce programs
 - Explore the adoption of an electronic portfolio software for HCC's use in conjunction with Eagle Online

**Years Two
& Three:**

- Provide electronic modules on leadership development that might be infused in a variety of academic and workforce programs
- Implement the adoption of an electronic portfolio software for HCC's use in conjunction with Eagle Online
- Strengthen HCC library holdings that guide and support students' leadership development

ACTION 4.2:

Develop a system-wide strategy for ongoing professional and leadership development for faculty.

- Year One:**
- Conduct a district-wide survey to determine faculty needs for professional and leadership development
 - Ensure all HCC full-time faculty are scheduled and complete Eagle Online Training

FACULTY AND STAFF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT^e

- Align faculty and staff evaluation processes with district and college-based requirements and opportunities for professional development
- Ensure orientation activities for new full-time faculty include training in terms of classroom management and all HCC guidelines and handbooks

Years Two & Three:

- Establish a long-range plan by which meaningful professional and leadership development will be supported for faculty
- Expand topics/speakers covered by programs such as the Leadership Executive Institute, Executive Speaker Series, College Leadership Program, and Supervisor Refresher Training and ensure that events are filmed and available online
- Establish and implement criteria by which college pay/benefits will attract and sustain high-quality faculty and college leaders
- Establish support mechanisms and requirements for all workforce faculty to obtain up-to-date knowledge and skills

ACTION 4.3:

Develop a system-wide strategy for provision of professional and leadership development for HCC personnel at all levels and functions of the organization.

Year One:

- Provide mandatory training for front-line personnel in terms of customer service and HCC-related information
- Develop and implement a plan by which HCC will support the professional and leadership development for all categories of personnel
- Develop a plan by which existing HCC sources of professional development information (Library, Learning Web, iTunes, EduTube, etc.) are supported and strengthened
- Host leadership series opportunities with national organizations to expand access to future leaders' activities and create succession planning for senior administrators

Years Two & Three:

- Develop and implement a plan by which all HCC training and development materials are accessible electronically
- In a format similar to that used to survey members of the HCC community on "cost savings," survey the members on professional development needs and suggestions
- Create a collaborative data environment that enables resource sharing by all members of the HCC community
- Explore and create partnerships with other colleges and universities on regional, state, and national levels to share opportunities for professional and leadership development of personnel

HCC recognizes that in the near term there will be continuing economic turmoil to challenge the funding and stability of the institution. We also recognize that continuous technical challenges will create disruptions and opportunities in the delivery and transfer of knowledge and data.

To counter and overcome these difficulties, we must be an institution where innovation is valued and promoted. However, nothing will be accepted merely on the basis of custom, anecdote, or fad – everything we do must be proven to have long-term value in terms of strengthening our institutional resilience and capacity to serve our students and our community.

ACTION 5.1:

Reduce HCC's reliance on debt to maximize the use of operating dollars for strengthening teaching and learning capabilities.

- Year One:**
- Host community forums each semester for purposes of information/feedback to guide future plans
 - Recommend differential tuition and fees for high-cost programs and services to support their ongoing effectiveness
 - Plan for state-of-the-art facilities that are functional, attractive, clean, safe, and supportive of teaching and learning needs
 - Plan for obtaining adequate funding to support routine preventive and deferred maintenance requirements
 - Monitor financial markets to take advantage of bond refinancing for cost savings
- Years Two & Three:**
- Develop emergency response and business continuity plans across the district
 - Publish annual reports on ways the college is serving the community and planning for its future
 - Work with partner organizations to formulate plans for expansion of resources via bond and/or annexation elections
 - Establish and implement performance standards for all contracted services
 - Develop and maintain a database of assets to ensure maximum utilization of resources
 - Conduct a cost/benefit analysis on all programs and services to determine needs for revision, expansion, or closure

ACTION 5.2:

Leverage current and new grant opportunities to improve the institution's capability to respond to our teaching and learning needs.

- Year One:**
- Establish a district-wide Office of Grants to identify HCC needs and priorities in terms of grant proposals
 - Hire grant managers to assist in the timely and effective expenditure of funds, collection of data, and filing of reports

TO IMPROVE INSTITUTIONAL RESILIENCE^f

Years Two & Three:

- Increase the Chancellor's Innovation Fund Award (CIFA) and the number of awards funded
- Develop and implement a grants master plan in support of the Educational and Student Services master plans
- Establish a district-wide Grants Council with representatives from all colleges to seek, secure, and coordinate grants that serve all students effectively
- Increase the amount of annual grants received at the state and federal level

ACTION 5.3:

Expand opportunities for the HCC Foundation to fund capital projects, program excellence, and faculty development.

Year One:

- Establish guidelines by which dedicated funds may be solicited and utilized to support HCC capital projects, program excellence, and faculty development
- Establish targets for funds dedicated for purposes of capital projects, program excellence, and faculty development

Years Two & Three:

- Initiate fund-raising campaigns for the targeted purposes outlined above
- Designate programs for endowment of academic and workforce program faculty

ACTION 5.4:

Optimize technology and capital assets through planning for business continuity, disaster recovery, replacements, training, and environmental sustainability.

Year One:

- Establish a template by which all college programs and functions will create business continuity plans
- Implement emergency-response site at Odessa College

Years Two & Three:

- Develop and implement administrative and instructional technology acquisition and replacement plans
- Establish and implement a budgetary process for acquisition and replacement of technology and equipment for instructional and administrative purposes

Houston is an entrepreneurial, “opportunity city” where taking a risk, failing, and starting over again are valued. HCC is the “Opportunity College” and is grassroots in its approach to serving its constituents. Therefore, HCC is committed to strategic thinking that not only respects students wherever they are, but also inspires and gives them the tools and confidence to follow their dreams.

HCC will commit to an entrepreneurial culture within the organization to serve as an example of the “spirit of Houston.” For this institution, fostering a culture that encourages inspiration and dreaming helps students actualize their potential.

ACTION 6.1:

Encourage an entrepreneurial culture among all members of the HCC family.

- Year One:**
- Revise and strengthen guidelines for the Chancellor’s Innovation Fund Award (CIFA), to provide incentives for faculty innovations to improve teaching techniques and develop materials to work collaboratively across the colleges
 - Examine means by which additional support might be provided to faculty to “flip” the classroom – providing access to high-quality online materials to be used in class for collaborative activities

Years Two

& Three:

- Establish student scholarships for students to pursue innovative and entrepreneurial academic activities
- Ensure all HCC facilities have spaces and equipment designed to encourage faculty, staff, and student collaboration on entrepreneurial activities
- Establish and offer specific recognitions and awards to faculty, staff, and students for entrepreneurial learning solutions

ACTION 6.2:

Develop and implement promising practices that nurture and reward a spirit of entrepreneurialism throughout the institution.

- Year One:**
- Assess current HR policies and practices to determine how greater flexibility might be introduced into the workplace and classrooms
- Years Two & Three:**
- Develop applications for mobile-learning devices that create pathways to student services and/or instructional materials

ACTION 6.3:

Strengthen HCC assessment and institutional effectiveness (IE) processes and activities.

- Year One:**
- Ensure all HCC programs and offices complete IE assessments and reports
 - Develop and implement a “data warehouse” for improved HCC management of all programs
 - Establish a Data Integrity Council for oversight of data collection processes and activities
 - Develop and implement an annual institutional research agenda
- Years Two & Three:**
- Review IE assessments and reports to glean the “best suggestions” for teaching/learning and operational improvements
 - Implement actions identified in IE assessments/reports for teaching/learning and operational improvements
 - Establish an Institutional Effectiveness Council to work with the Offices of Institutional Research and Assessment to synthesize results of various IE reports and make recommendations for institutional improvement activities
 - Develop and implement a data warehouse for improved HCC management of all programs and services

Houston is a global leader. The diversity of our economic structure and our willingness to embrace and value the partnerships encourage innovation. HCC is a principle partner for educational and economic opportunities, enhancing and advancing the community's quality of life. HCC is a catalyst for creating jobs.

Former U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates described foreign language education, study abroad, and the recruitment of foreign students to U.S. campuses as key strategies in promoting America's national security and economic interests. While addressing the audience at the 2012 NAFSA conference in Houston, Gates stated, "Our economic future depends on Americans who can work successfully in an international setting."

According to an American Council on Higher Education Blue Ribbon Panel on Global Engagement (November, 2011), "It is important that college graduates, whatever their location, be not only *globally competitive* but also *globally competent*, understanding their roles as citizens and workers in an international context. While identifying common problems, we might also discover common solutions (p.6)."ⁱ

ACTION 7.1:

Identify and secure new local partnerships capable of improving the institution's capacity, performance, and resilience.

- Year One:**
- Survey all potential local partners (school districts, universities, non-profits, governmental entities, etc.) to identify areas of mutual interest and potential mutual action
 - Expand HCC participation in local agency initiatives dedicated to community development and improvement (e.g., Greater Houston Partnership, Center for Houston's Future, American Leadership Forum, etc.)
- Years Two & Three:**
- Plan regular meetings among leaders with partner institutions to discuss common activities of mutual benefit, including fund-raising, partner programs, shared facilities, etc.
 - Develop marketing and action plans to promote local partnerships in an effort to increase community awareness

AL PARTNERSHIPS FOR INSTITUTIONAL Y DEVELOPMENT^h

ACTION 7.2:

Identify and secure new regional and state partnerships capable of improving the institution's capacity, performance, and resilience.

- Year One:**
- Participate in the Center for Houston's Future – *My Degree Counts* Initiative
 - Expand HCC involvement with appropriate regional and state professional organizations (TACC, TCCTA, TACTE, and the Gulf Coast Consortium of Community Colleges)
- Years Two & Three:**
- Expand the role HCC plays with local and state governmental entities such as the Coordinating Board, the Workforce Commission, etc.

ACTION 7.3:

Identify and secure new international partnerships capable of improving the institution's capacity, performance, and resilience.

- Year One:**
- Explore opportunities to partner with other U.S. institutions to offer international student exchange and internships
 - Examine criteria by which international partnerships will be established, reviewed, and continued in order to serve institutional needs
 - Work with international partners to provide more opportunities for HCC students and faculty to study abroad
- Years Two & Three:**
- Work with international and local partners to develop standards for internationalizing curriculum for HCC students
 - Establish and implement an action plan to recruit international students to attend HCC

FOOTNOTES

^aTrachtenberg, S.J., & Kauvar, G.B. (Eds.)(2008). *Letters to the Next President: Strengthening America's Foundation in Higher Education*, p. 111.

^bIncrease completion rates of students earning community college credentials (certificates and associate degrees) by 50% by 2020, while preserving access, enhancing quality, and eradicating attainment gaps associated with income, race, ethnicity, and gender. Dramatically improve college readiness: By 2020, reduce by half the number of students entering college unprepared for rigorous college-level work, and double the number of students who complete developmental education programs and progress to successful completion of related freshman-level courses.

^cInvest in support structures to serve multiple community colleges through collaboration among institutions and with partners in philanthropy, government, and the private sector. (AACC 2012 Report)

^dRefocus the community college mission and redefine institutional roles to meet 21st-century education and employment needs. (AACC 2012 Report)

^eImplement policies and practices that promote rigor, transparency, and accountability for results in community colleges. (AACC 2012 Report)

^fTarget public and private investments strategically to create new incentives for all institutions of education and their students and to support community college efforts to reclaim the American Dream. (AACC 2012 Report)

^gInstitutional ingenuity and entrepreneurship can be community game-changers in creating new jobs and industries. Just as important, community college leaders committed to genuine collaboration can reach out to colleagues in other education sectors, helping to pave new and more seamless pathways from K–12 to community colleges, and on to universities and the workforce. (pg. 17) (AACC 2012 Report)

^hClose the American skills gaps by sharply focusing career and technical education on preparing students with the knowledge and skills required for existing and future jobs in regional and global economies. (AACC 2012 Report)

ⁱAmerican Council on Education, Center for Global Leadership and Engagement. (2011, November). *Strength through Global Leadership and Engagement: U.S. Higher Education in the 21st Century: A report from the Blue Ribbon Panel on Global Engagement*. Washington, DC: Author. Available from <http://www.acenet.edu/AM/Template.cfm?Section=ProgramsandServices&ContentID=43034>

References in the Strategic Plan are from: American Association of Community Colleges. (2012, April). *Reclaiming the American Dream: A report from the 21st-Century Commission on the Future of Community Colleges*. Washington, DC: Author. Available from <http://www.aacc.nche.edu/21stCenturyReport> (AACC 2012 Report)

Developing the Plan

A Strategic Planning Process

Critical Indicators of Success

Desired Outcomes for 2015

**HCC – The Relevant Engine for
the Community's Future**



DEVELOPING THE PLAN

Strategic planning should be a collaborative process. Many voices need to be heard. Moreover, the hopes and ideas of the various stakeholders must then be synthesized into a coherent narrative that both inspires and directs specific strategic actions.

Below is the framework we followed to make this plan a reality:

Board of Trustees Subcommittee and Administration Updates and Inputs

The Board Chair created an Ad Hoc Subcommittee to meet with the Chancellor and the Vice Chancellor of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness to monitor key items in the process/plan. Throughout this planning process, a standing item was included on the Board of Trustees' monthly Committee of the Whole meeting. The "Collaboration in Action" document (pp. 35-36) was used by the administration to frame the discussion regarding what activities were occurring and what progress was being made. This approach ensured that the Board-approved process was being followed.

Collaboration in Action: Planning for the Future

A comprehensive timeline was developed in the spring of 2011. Entitled "Collaboration in Action," it identified the stakeholders to be involved, the planning activities that needed to occur, and the timeline associated with the "planning" process. It was approved by our Board of Trustees in May 2011.

Appreciative Inquiry

A Chancellor's Retreat, also in May 2011, was dedicated to a series of reflective exercises associated with our 2008-2011 planning document. We reviewed our vision, mission, and values. We also were very purposeful in looking at the results of the existing planning efforts to ensure that we captured what we had done well.

Environmental Scan

At the same time, we began an exhaustive review of our environment by conducting a PEST analysis – Political, Economic, Social, and Technological factors. This framework of macro-environmental influences helped to define the forces that would be impacting our institution over the new three-year plan period.

DEVELOPING THE PLAN (CONTINUED)

A Conversation on College and Community

In August 2011, we were honored to have more than 100 stakeholders – elected officials, university partners, school district officials, business leaders – join us at one of our colleges. We asked them a series of questions about the future of Houston and HCC's role in that future. The results – a powerful set of emergent themes – were posted on <http://hccs.edu/theconversation> and used to inform this Strategic Plan.

College Visits

Early drafts of key elements of the plan were presented at all college sessions in September and October of 2011. The Faculty Senate was also included. The first session was largely data-driven while the second session provided a framework for review and discussion. Feedback from these sessions was then used to inform the initial draft of the plan.

Consensus of Leadership

The HCC leadership team reviewed and synthesized all of the feedback and working documents to create the strategic initiatives and action items for the 2012-2015 Strategic Plan in several all-day sessions and presented the draft to the Board in February 2012.

Final Board Approval

On February 23, 2012, at its regular meeting, the Board received the vision, mission, and strategic initiatives for their review and approval at a policy level of the 2012-2015 Strategic Plan.

Community Forums

In April and May 2012, ten Community Forums were held throughout the HCC District regarding the colleges' Long-Range Facilities and Finance Plan.

Board Retreats

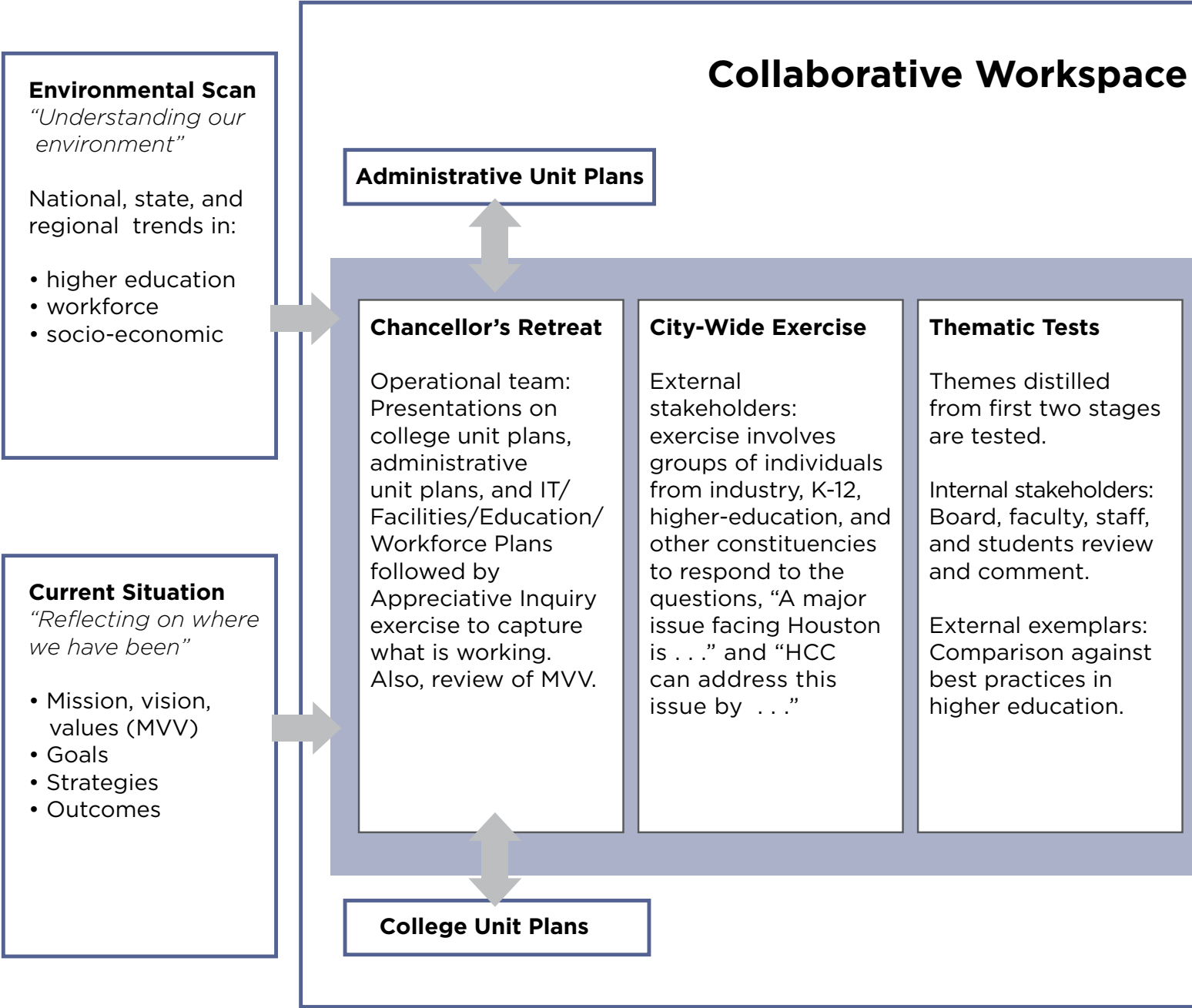
In March 2012, the Board held an all-day retreat facilitated by a strategic planning expert who assisted in reviewing the six initiatives. The trustees expanded and reordered the initiatives into the final seven and approved them for the administration to develop and flesh out. In June 2012, the Board held one more retreat with further materials added in the final form and approved the strategic plan on June 22, 2012.



Collaboration in Action: Planning for the Future



Board Approval of Process ➤ Input on MVV ➤ Observation of City-Wide Exercise



Strategic Planning

A Strategic Planning Process (2012-15)

► Board Update ► Board Approval of Plan ► Monitoring of Plan

(myHCC)

IT/Facilities/Education/Workforce Plans

HCC Strategic Plan

Elements:

- Mission
- Vision
- Values
- Priorities
- Actions
- Outcomes
- Metrics
- Planning process
- Assumptions

Draft plan.

Implementation

Teams and timelines to be developed and associated with each of the priorities and actions.

Further development of *myHCC* to track, report, and manage the strategic plan.

Communication

"Communicating our intentions"

Develop a comprehensive communications strategy that involves: internal and external stakeholders, electronic and print media.

Resource Allocation

"Linking planning and budgeting"

Tie all planning priorities into the development and allocation of scarce resources throughout the College.

SACS/Quality Enhancement Plan

Steering Committee ►

CRITICAL INDICATORS OF SUCCESS

As HCC works to achieve its vision for the future, the institution will utilize the following critical indicators to measure the plan of action and chart progress. Institutional targets will be defined on an annual basis in order to report on each of the seven initiatives to achieve our vision.

CRITICAL INDICATOR	DEFINITION OF SUCCESS
COMPLETION & GRADUATION	The rates at which students complete courses, return from fall to spring, return from fall to fall, and complete programs, certificates, and degrees
ENROLLMENT	The number of enrollments and contact hours and the rates of participation by zip codes in programs and locations
TRANSFER RATES	The rates at which students transfer to other colleges and universities
PLACEMENT RATES	The rates at which program completers or graduates are placed in jobs, further education and training, or the military
STUDENT ENGAGEMENT	Taken from the benchmark scores of the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE), including active and collaborative learning, support for learning, academic challenge, faculty-student interaction, and student effort
PROGRAM EXCELLENCE	Program improvement and excellence as indicated by program reviews, awards, recognitions, and accreditations
FINANCIAL AID	Amount and number of awards made and number of students receiving awards
RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT	Dollar value of gifts, donations, and other activities that increase the financial capacity of the institution
CUSTOMER SATISFACTION	Results of surveys, resolution of grievances, and complaints
ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS	Cost savings, improved productivity, and improved efficiencies

DESIRED OUTCOMES FOR 2015

We see a day in the near future when our city will be the city others emulate for its commitment and access to quality higher education. We will be the community that not only demonstrates the value of higher education for all but also ensures its reality through institutions like HCC. In working to become the most relevant community college in the country – we will provide opportunity for every student we serve and thus be essential to our community's success.

	OUTCOME
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An overall 2% increase in successful course completions • 2% increase in fall to spring persistence rates • 2% increase in fall to fall persistence rates • 10% increase in number of program completers (combined certificate and degree completers)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An overall 5% increase in both student enrollments and contact hours • An overall 2% increase in each ZIP code in terms of participation rates in relevant HCC programs
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An overall increase of 5% in numbers of students who transfer with at least 30 SCH of course work completed at HCC
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A continued performance of over 90% placement for completers of all HCC programs in terms of further education, jobs, or the military
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A continued performance of over 50 (a mark that exceeds the average performance of all peer institutions) in all of the benchmark scores of the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An increase of at least 10% in the number of HCC programs that achieve accreditation by a national professional organization
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An increase of at least 10% in both the amount and number of awards made to HCC students
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An increase of at least 10% in the total dollar value of gifts, donations, and grants awarded to HCC
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A steady improvement in public perception as measured by survey results and in the resolution of grievances and complaints
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A continued performance of successful audit reports, positive fund balances, accountability reports, and operational efficiencies as measured by both internal and external surveys

HCC'S DEFINITION OF STUDENT SUCCESS

What is Student Success?

Student Success results when students have achieved methods of improved learning, acquired new knowledge and skills, and earned those course credits, certificates, and degrees that will allow them to advance in their careers and serve as productive workers and informed citizens – for Houston, the state, the nation, and an increasingly inter-connected world. Student success is vitally important, not only for the students, but for all of us in terms of the productivity of our workforce and the quality of our lives.

Why is Student Success important – now more than ever?

Over 11 million students enter our nation's community colleges, a number spurred by recent economic recession. The jobs in high demand and which pay good wages increasingly require post-secondary education, but our nation is slipping in terms of the numbers of our students who actually complete such education. Twenty years ago, the United States was first in the world in the percentage of adults ages 25–34 with a postsecondary credential. Now we are tied for 10th in the world and heading in the wrong direction. (*Postsecondary Success*, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, 2009).

How will Houston Community College (HCC) improve Student Success?

Several organizations, including the College Board and Complete College America have defined a "Completion Arch" with four distinct phases of activities during which colleges, as Houston Community College (HCC), may assist students in terms of successful college entry, progress, completion, and transition to their next step, whether that be transfer to a baccalaureate institution or entry/advancement in the work force.

1. **Successful Entry** – HCC will work with area schools and agencies to ensure that prospective students are aware of college programs and services and prepared to take full advantage of them.
2. **Successful Progress** – HCC will ensure that students are properly advised and make timely progress in terms of identifying, entering, and advancing in programs of study with customized/contextualized instruction, integrated student support services, and use of the latest technology to improve learning.
3. **Successful Completion** – HCC will reward completion focused student behaviors and ensure that students complete the core curriculum, industry-recognized certificates, and/or relevant associate degrees.
4. **Successful Transition** – HCC will work with university and industry partners to ensure that students move smoothly into baccalaureate programs or jobs/promotions in their careers.

How will we measure Student Success?

The HCC Strategic Plan, 2012-2015 details the critical indicators and desired outcomes by which we will measure Student Success (pp. 37-38). The Plan builds upon the momentum that HCC has gained by participation in various initiatives since 2004, including Achieving the Dream, the Gates Developmental Education Initiative, the Houston Pathways Initiative, and the Gulf Coast PASS (Partners Achieving Student Success). HCC is a recognized leader among regional, state, and national projects that are redefining student success in American community colleges, to ensure that all of our students not only have access to, but succeed in a relevant post-secondary education.

HCC – THE RELEVANT ENGINE FOR THE COMMUNITY’S FUTURE

Over the last three years, HCC has worked to become the most relevant institution of its kind. The college’s relevance can be measured by the significant accomplishments related to our exemplary workforce and instructional programs, the number of associate degrees awarded, student transfer rates, the number of international students enrolled, as well as by the institutions and organizations that have attempted to leverage and emulate our education model. While these accomplishments have been instrumental in propelling the college to a level of prominence among U.S. community colleges, we recognize that we must build on past successes in an effort to meet the growing demand to better prepare tomorrow’s workforce.

Until recently, the U.S. dominated the world in the number of people participating and completing higher education. Now it is losing ground to other countries, posing a concern for America’s ability to compete in a global economy. The Gates Foundation has shown that if a young American has not achieved a post-secondary credential with labor market value by the time he or she is age 26, they will have relatively little chance of escaping intergenerational poverty. HCC, and all community colleges, are the institutions where Houston and the United States will keep the American Dream alive. In fact, community colleges will ensure that all learners have a place to provide for upward mobility for themselves and their family and thereby improve the quality of life for *everyone* in their communities.

The academic success of HCC students will be essential not only for their own futures, but also for the future of the nation’s economy. The challenges that we face as a college and as a community cannot be solved by HCC alone. We must reach out and form new partnerships, augment those we have already established, and leverage them wisely to bring additional resources and assistance to fulfilling our mission. Collectively, we are much stronger as we act in concert with natural partners, at all levels, to improve programs and services for our students and community.

“THE MOST IMPORTANT INSTITUTION
OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN HOUSTON IS
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THE 21ST CENTURY.”

Dr. Stephen Klineberg

Co-Director, Kinder Institute for Urban Research at Rice University

November 2011



We keep Houston working.