SOUTH MOUNTAIN
COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Helping you climb higher

STRATEGIC PLAN

2008 - 2009

integration **+** communication **+** linkages

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Our Vision

South Mountain Community College educates minds, transforms lives, touches hearts, and builds community.

Our Mission

South Mountain Community College provides quality higher education for our diverse community. We create a caring teaching and learning environment that fosters student development and supports productive citizenship in an increasingly global and technological society.

Our purpose is to meet these needs by offering:

- General education courses
- Transfer programs
- Occupational education and career development
- Continuing education
- Developmental studies and English as a second language
- Cultural, civic, and social events
- Academic support and student services

Our Values

We are inspired and guided by our core values:

- Excellence in teaching, learning and service
- Integrity as the foundation for actions
- Inclusiveness of people and ideas
- Collegiality, respect and cooperation
- Creativity, leadership and innovation
- Nurturance of self, others and our community

STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

In May 2007, Dr. Ken Atwater, SMCC President, formed a task force to review and recommend improvements to the college's strategic planning process. This task force was headed by Dr. Ken Roberts, and included representation from the Academic Affairs, Administrative Affairs, and Student Affairs areas of the college.

The three areas of focus of the project included:

Integration: to develop methods of integrating multiple planning efforts within the college, coordinating these efforts, and ensuring their integration into the college-wide strategic plan;

Communication: to improve college-wide understanding and awareness of the planning process and the strategic plan; and

Linkages: to ensure that all planning efforts are linked to the budget, and that the college's strategic planning process drives budget development.

The task force met for a period of six months, and submitted the following recommendations to the President in October 2007:

1. The Strategic Planning Process would not affect existing college Long Term Plans (5 – 15 year), but addresses only "strategic" issues (2 – 4 year). The Executive Team develops College Priorities every 3 years, and revises them annually only if necessary. These priorities will be developed and revised early in the spring semester of each academic year.

2. The Strategic Planning Committee accepts Priorities developed by Executive Team without alteration, and seeks clarification as necessary.

3. The membership of Strategic Planning Committee includes: the President, all Vice Presidents, the chairs or co-chairs of Strategic Planning Teams (e.g., SEM, Student Services, Facilities, Technology, etc.), Division Chairs, Associate Deans and the Director of Research Planning & Development (though not all may be required to attend working sessions).

4. The Strategic Planning Committee will be co-chaired by two co-chairs appointed by the President from the membership of the Strategic Planning Committee.

5. Immediately following the development of the College Priorities, the Strategic Planning Committee will meet to develop and revise the Strategic College Goals based upon College Priorities. (For the 2008/2009 plan, due to delays in process, a subcommittee met to review previously developed Goals.)

6. During the spring semester the Strategic Planning Committee Goals are used by Strategic Planning Teams / Departments to develop detailed Departmental Objectives, Activities, and Anticipated Measurable Outcomes. (For 2008/2009, the subcommittee reviewed and documented previously announced objectives, activities, and outcomes.)

7. Late in the spring semester there will be a Strategic Planning Retreat comprised of the members of the Strategic Planning Committee. During that Retreat the work of the Strategic Planning Teams/ Departments will be discussed and integrated. The Strategic Planning Committee will be responsible for developing a process for integrating all of the Strategic Planning Teams / Departments work into the campus strategic plan. (For 2008/2009, due to the delays in process no retreat was held. Instead the campus community was invited to participate in the process, to review the draft and provide new or updated information.)

8. The comprehensive Strategic Plan is shared with the Leadership Advisory Council to provide them with an overview of college priorities for the coming budget cycle.

9. These Strategic Plans form the basis for developing Budget Requests (using the existing budget process). The Strategic Planning process will inform the 2009-2010 budget cycle.

10. This is a dynamic, non-linear process designed to foster better communication across Strategic Planning Groups.

These recommendations were accepted by the President in October 2007 and implemented during the 2007/2008 fiscal year.

The 2008/2009 SMCC Strategic Plan was built around three key priorities:

- Student, Community and Staff Success
- Opportunities for Access
- Persistence

Within each priority area, a number of goals were identified; and subsequently, specific objectives were identified for each goal, to be managed and completed by different college departments, divisions and work areas.

A complete operational plan was established, including responsible agent, measures, and timelines, and is available on the SMCC website. For summary purposes, this document focuses on priority areas, goals and objectives for 2008/2009; and previous accomplishments for each priority.

SOUTH MOUNTAIN COMMUNITY COLLEGE
2008/2009 Strategic Plan

PRIORITY:
Student, Community and Staff Success

Accomplishments, 2007/2008
South Mountain Community College continued its long tradition of student and staff success with a number of notable achievements this past year. SMCC's TRIO-funded STEP program served more than 160 students, with 39 graduating and transferring to four-year colleges or universities. An Upward Bound program was also initiated, targeted at students at Central and South Mountain High Schools. Two SMCC students, Anthony Brown and Kambriel Booth, were named to AZ All-Academic First and Third Teams, respectively. Nine SMCC visual arts students were selected as District "Artists of Promise," more than any other Maricopa college. SMCC's women's volleyball team was named NJCAA Academic Team of the Year, with a team GPA of 3.72; five other SMCC teams received All-Academic status, with 11 individual Academic All-Americans. The SMCC Men's Basketball team competed on a national level and finished seventh in the year-end NJCAA tournament.

Among faculty and staff accomplishments, four SMCC faculty members were awarded Maricopa District Learning Grant Awards; Library faculty achieved a 31% increase in student reference desk service and increased formal literacy instruction by 41%; the Teaching and Learning Center presented more than 330 staff workshops on a variety of topics; two multi-year grants totaling $493,000 from Undergraduate Bioscience Engagement Track (UBET) were awarded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture; and the Montessori Early Childhood training program received national accreditation.

2008/2009 Goal:
Maximize student achievement in academic, personal and career goals

Objectives:
- Maintain at least the minimal level of technology currency specified by the Technology Master Plan (in keeping with HLC requirements).
- The DRS will facilitate and host a series of two hour workshops for DRS students to improve: knowledge of FA process, quality of FA application.
- TLC will support student achievement by providing in-class Blackboard orientations, Blackboard orientations in the TLC, student helpdesk support for all administrative systems, in-class presentations for computer applications (i.e. PowerPoint).
- The Library will support student achievement by increasing library faculty involvement in students' learning by 10 % (10.7 classes) as reflected by formal information literacy instruction as part of a subject-based course.
- The Library will maximize student achievement by increasing the currency of the library book collection by 2%.
- Increase the student governance officer participation by 40% from 6 to 10 board members.
- Career Services will help students select a major and associated career.
- Career Services will assist students in either transferring to a four year institution or securing employment at graduation.
- IE/AA Committee will focus on improving student learning.

- Guadalupe Center will create student database for advisement follow-up & referral. Promote communication with students & staff.

2008/2009 Goal:
Provide quality services in a timely manner to meet diverse community needs

Objectives:
- Schedule adequate SES staff to meet needs of students enrolled in weekend courses.
- Review content, delivery and marketing of ESL program and courses.
- Focus on changes in the Learning Assistance Center and improvements to support student learning.
- Communicate college information effectively to non-English speaking residents in service area and beyond.
- Ahwatukee Foothills Center will offer a variety of times, locations and classes.
- Guadalupe Center will create a flexible work schedule to assure coverage to meet student educational needs.
- Childcare Center will offer more students opportunity to gain work experience in the childcare center.
- Institutionalize Bilingual Nursing Fellows Program.
- Support and facilitate APRASL review process for the following programs/areas – ESL, Music, Art, ACE, LAC, and AGS.
- Upgrade college-wide phone system to VoIP and "soft phones."
- Continue to provide leadership and support for new SIS implementation. Review current leadership procedures. Continue to provide faculty staff and training. Address/troubleshoot system issues.
- Admissions and Records will enhance international student processes and procedures.
- The Library will support student achievement by designing and conducting an assessment instrument that measures students' learning as reflected by one-to-one on-demand reference assistance.

2008/2009 Goal:
Provide a nurturing working environment for staff professional development

Objectives:
- The teaching and learning center will:
  a) Develop and implement new training for faculty and staff for Office 2007
  b) Develop, update, and implement SIS training for faculty and adjunct faculty
  c) Develop and implement a Web 2.0 series
  d) Develop, update and implement Blackboard training for faculty and students
  e) Manage training for proprietary applications
  f) Support the Title V Instructional Designer (who develops and implements Critical Thinking workshops for faculty)
  g) Provide "just in time" assistance for faculty and staff regarding technology and teaching challenges
- Continue to provide customer service training for new staff and managers.

PRIORITY:
Opportunities for Access

Accomplishments, 2007/2008
South Mountain Community College took major steps to expand and enhance community access to its educational offerings during the past year. The newly implemented My.Maricopa.Edu website and online registration system enabled students to enroll and register online more easily than ever before. The grand opening of the newly expanded SMCC Guadalupe Center was held on Saturday, May 31, 2008; the expansion nearly doubled the size of the facility, adding several new classrooms, support offices, additional parking and a community room. The Ahwatukee Foothills Center also expanded its campus by relocating to a new leased facility in the heart of that community. The new space included nine classrooms and administrative office space. SMCC worked with Betty Fairfax High School in Laveen to establish office space and confirm use of classroom space for the 2008/2009 year, establishing a new base of operations in that community.

On the Main Campus, two new buildings were completed and opened for use: one by Northern Arizona University, now offering baccalaureate degree programs on the SMCC campus; and the other, a new lab science annex funded through Title V Cooperative grants. The MCCCD Governing Board approved an intergovernmental agreement between the college and the City of Phoenix for joint design and construction of a new library for the campus and community, and the college partnered with the Joyner-Walker Foundation to offer financial literacy classes to area high school students. Also, the use of library electronic databases of periodical resources grew by more than 65%, reflecting the demand for more readily accessible information resources.

2008/2009 Goal:
Expansion of locations, delivery methods, times, programs and services to meet the needs of our different populations.

Objectives:
- CTS will expand number of classrooms and other venues available for instructional delivery.
- The iStartSmart program will allow students to connect with academic support services and other students. Students will be more confident their first semester at SMCC.
- Engage student athletes in community service activities.
- Lease space in a commercial building.
- Maximize use of campus facilities.
- Develop a "Hybrid Friday" and "Hybrid Weekend" and use the format to market specialized blocks of courses and/or market to targeted populations.
- Conduct CLARUS schedule scan to improve class schedule to meet student needs and optimize building and site utilization. Use scheduling tools to assist in developing college class schedule.
- Serve all populatns in Ahwatukee, Ahwatukee Foothills and surrounding communities by maintaining multiple sites, if necessary.
- Submit a Title V proposal to provide academic and student support services for developmental students including mentoring, tutoring, learning,, tracking, and transition.

- Communication faculty and Division Chair meet the diverse needs of students.
- Continue offering a greater diversity of hybrid/on-line courses using the *Quality Matters* standards for any new course development.
- The TLC will:
    a) Maintain the newly created eLearning website linked to SMCC's website
    b) Develop materials used to update the Blackboard default template used to create all Bb classes
    c) Dispense, collect and post courses descriptions forms for eLearning Courses
    d) Act as a student help desk for eLearning Courses
    e) Work with faculty to develop quality instruction
    f) Maintain staff status as Quality Matters reviewers
    g) Use Quality Matters to review up to 4 eLearning Courses
    h) Encourage faculty to become Quality Matters reviewers
    i) Develop and implement an assessment to gauge faculty's ability to effectively use Blackboard to teach eLearning courses
    j) Further develop the standards and processes for eLearning
- Centralize Laveen offering at Betty Fairfax High School to provide a consistent, recognizable site and establish a strong presence in Laveen.
- The Library will increase remote access to electronic databases.
- The Library will expand access to services by collaborating with Phoenix Public Library on the design of the new South Mountain Community Library.
- Increase enrollment in Dual Enrollment high school courses
- Increase enrollment in Community Education classes
- Increase enrollment in evening courses
- Increase offerings in alternative delivery including eLearning, short-term, and open-entry/open-exit modalities
- Move toward a Centralized Developmental Studies Program at SMCC
- Develop, implement, complete and evaluate an integrated marketing/communications plan for SMCC.
- Enrollment Services will maintain and expand college-wide recruitment effort.
- The New Student Orientation will allow students to connect with support services and other students.
- Increase retention through engaging students in an online learning environment that enables them to understand the college environment, services and procedures and successfully navigate the systems therein.
- TLC will work with the marketing department to maintain the "What's New at SMCC" blog
- Ahwatukee Foothills Center will prepare effective schedules, catalogues, fliers, movie ads, newspaper ads.
- Guadalupe Center will utilize student learning environment experience to promote center.
- Create traffic in Center by collaborating with community partnerships.
- Utilize workforce development courses.

- Utilize multimedia opportunities.
- Maintenance of web page.
- The Library will evaluate the existing library website, incorporating user feedback, and make changes based on this process.

PRIORITY:
Persistence

Accomplishments, 2007/2008
South Mountain Community College successfully implemented a wide variety of initiatives and strategies in support of student persistence during the past year. A total of 226 degrees and 37 certificates were conferred at the 2008 SMCC commencement, taking place on May 9, 2008. 65 students graduated with distinction. A new District-wide student information system was implemented in February 2008, enabling students to complete virtually all tasks pertinent to their academic careers online. Five million dollars in financial aid was made available to SMCC students, including $2.6 million in Pell grants and $1.2 million in institutional and private grants. Efforts were intensified to encourage persistence among current students, including the implementation of a call center in January 2008 and the designation of "Priority Registration" periods for fall and spring semesters. These efforts helped the college achieve a 1.6% increase in FTSE for the 2007/2008 academic year.

2008/2009 Goal:
Maximize student access to, and utilization of, support services.

Objectives:
- Plan and prepare pilot SMCC Reads program, incorporating podcasts for iTunes U, and others.
- Reorganize Advisement per Advisement Model Task Force recommendations.
- Implement a Tutor Training and Certification program to improve services to students
- Increase "undeclared student" usage of Career Services resources. Students who declare a major are more likely to "persist" in college.
- Effected departments will have greater opportunity to communicate with students requesting their information/services.
- Continue to improve student participation in orientation programs.

2008/2009 Goal: Increase the number of students who successfully complete their courses.

Objectives:
- Provide course syllabus to each student and make them aware of the Learning Assistance Center and other supportive services at the college.
- Guadalupe Center will create open door policy.
- Maintain academic services for students.

- Continue classroom-based retention strategies, including the MySMCC card and informal early alerts. Move toward a more formal and systematic Early Alert process.
- CTS will upgrade classrooms to LCD-integrated student desks with instructor-controlled and remotely-managed computers.
- The Library will examine the OE/OE format for use by LBS/IFS course offerings in 09/10.
- The Library will establish LBS/IFS courses to meet student learning needs in honors, developmental and online areas.
- Librarians will investigate appropriate learning connections with other divisions, such as ENG 102, etc.
- CTS will continue on-going standardization of classroom technology, furniture and layout.
- Pilot the District-wide iStartSmart program at SMCC.
- Strengthen college-wide participation in student retention activities by establishing a new retention committee to review attrition rates, evaluate campus resources and establish a retention plan.
- Increase the college retention rates by 2% by establishing specific retention activities.
- TLC will:
  a) Maintain the eLearning website
  b) Survey to help students determine their preparedness for eLearning
  c) Collect and upload course description forms
  d) Update and upload online eLearning Orientation materials
  e) Deliver face-to-face eLearning Orientation sessions
- Successfully implement make-up testing by Assessment Services.
- Increase enrollment by 2% from the previous similar semester, i.e. fall to fall, spring to spring.

2008/2009 Goal: Increase the number of students who re-enroll in order to complete their educational goals.

Objectives:
- Increase the number of FAFSA applicants by 10% from prior year.
- Guadalupe Center will provide user friendly registration, advisement, & instruction.
- Work with students on education plans that fulfills student goals.
- Increase the number of scholarship applicants by 10% from prior year.
- Assess first-time student experiences with SMCC in order to find out their needs and initial impressions.
- Respond to the need for additional funds for professional services increases by Athletic Conference.
- Athletics will provide academic student tracking 3 times each semester to ensure student success.
- The STEP program will hire Math and English tutors to provide supplemental instruction and tutoring.

- Focus on building "transfer readiness" in students
- Focus on advisement toward degree and certificate completion
- The TLC will perform comprehensive support of students in courses that use the Blackboard Learning Management System so that our students will have a high-touch experience.
- Enrollment Services will hire two P/T employees to respond to calls generated by the automated calls.
- Re-instate students in to their courses
- Use automated phone calls:
  a) During all Enrollment Cancellation periods to inform students of their enrollment status
  b) During course cancellation periods to inform students of their course status

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2008/2009 Goal: Increase opportunities for students to connect to the college beyond the classroom.

Objectives:
- Ahwatukee Foothills Center will increase lifelong learning/non-credit courses, add summer youth camps & programs
- Guadalupe Center will make student aware of existing opportunities (professional clubs, associations, peer groups, community events, partnerships).
- Utilize technology.
- Career Services will develop Service Learning partnerships with faculty and community entities for student participation in service learning activities.
- Investigate web 2.0 technology library applications to enhance student learning.
- Athletics will provide a Life skills class (CPD150) for all incoming student athletes.
- The Upward Bound program will create a student database to track and monitor student progress.
- CTS will implement student electronic services project (i.e. student email, server/web space, portal, and access to key applications.)
- Provide desktop IP video streaming, conferencing, and video-taping capabilities.