Strategic Plan

PROGRESS REPORT

2006

2004 - 2010

Miami Dade College
Implementing the Vision

Miami Dade College’s 2004-2010 Strategic Plan is a product of many perspectives. Faculty, staff, administrators and students helped to build a plan rooted in the daily realities of College life. The inclusion of community partners and an ongoing awareness of shifting influences ensured that the Strategic Plan would respond to changing community needs.

Commitment to a dynamic Strategic Plan has been the guiding principle of these planning efforts. The first progress report reflects the determination of individuals, departments, and disciplines in fulfilling that principle. Under the guidance of campus presidents and College vice provosts, the five theme areas have gathered work groups to catalyze and review ongoing efforts to ensure that goals and objectives are operationalized.

A key ingredient of successful strategic implementation is the alignment of planned priorities with existing and ongoing projects.

While the work groups have generated a wealth of strategies and insights relative to the plan’s themes and goals, members have also served as liaisons with relevant projects and personnel throughout the College, reviewing progress, identifying gaps and prioritizing new initiatives.

The Strategic Plan Coordinating Committee and work groups continuously stay current on issues and changes that may impact the Strategic Plan themes and goals. The College’s Environmental Scan will be updated and shared during the next year of implementation.

Annual priorities related to strategic goals are established by the Executive Committee through a planning session in which core indicators, progress and strategies are discussed.

The Strategic Plan Coordinating Committee is pleased to present the initial progress report of the 2004-2010 Miami Dade College Strategic Plan.
**Strategic Goal 1:** Enhance systems and processes that facilitate orientation, advisement, registration and financial aid for students.

**Year One** saw the implementation of a range of advancements for students, faculty and staff:

- **Student Services Institute** that will require ongoing training for Student Services personnel in areas such as customer service excellence, conflict management and knowledge of the College.

- **FACTS.org**, an advisement tool that provides online access to a wealth of advisement resources including self-guided career exploration tools, transfer information, electronic transcript forms and more for students, faculty and Student Services employees.

- “How to” advisement workshop series for faculty.

- **Web enhancements** to facilitate student admission and registration.

- The **Online Orientation** was completed and launched to reach many more students with important information about the College.

- Phase one of the **Student Communication System** ensures that all students have e-mail accounts and receive information about registration, College events, academic progress and program specific opportunities. The system also reaches prospective students.

- **Transfer process enhancements** include orientations at each campus, which were improved through student and university feedback. A campaign was launched to inform students and MDC staff.

- The many benefits to **completing an associate degree before transferring** were highlighted through a new information campaign.

- An exciting **dual degree opportunity** for students to be admitted to both FIU and MDC was finalized and will establish critical early connections with FIU to ease the transfer process.

**Year Two** priorities will make Web Advisor a reality, offering students a “webs-eye” view of courses completed and remaining to complete major and graduation requirements. This advance will be accompanied by completion of the **online long-term academic planner**, which provides students with a term by term roadmap.

A **faculty advisement seminar** series will be developed.

MDC will provide a specialized **dual enrollment orientation**, giving students a headstart on a college degree.

Redesign of the **prospective student website** will incorporate varied students’ perspectives and provide an important tool for establishing positive relationships and encouraging enrollment. E-mail communication with enrolled and prospective students will also be enhanced.
Strategic Goal 2: Improve systems and processes to encourage student enrollment, enhance transfer experiences, and support a variety of educational goals.

Year One focused special attention on the needs of adult learners, with emphasis on assessment via the national “Institutional Self Assessment Survey for Adult Learners” and a review of institutional research.

• Adult students are more likely to be enrolled in A.S. programs and have more risk factors, including academic under-preparation, financial responsibilities, and competing work schedules. The self assessment survey suggested several opportunities to improve service to adult learners that will be explored in the next year.

• Review of the state’s targeted occupation list for the South Florida region offered the chance to match occupational programs and curriculum to the listed career specialties, ensuring that programs lead to high wage, in-demand jobs in the community; further dialogue with the state led to establishment of a supplemental demand list to include occupations and their matching academic programs in demand in the South Florida region.

Year Two efforts will focus on analyzing enrollment and market needs. Workforce programs will receive a boost from the Handbook for Prospective Occupational Students, which describes programs that lead quickly to lucrative employment. Additional enhancements to career counseling, new student services, and proactive assistance for returning students and career changers will be explored and implemented.

Strategic Goal 3: Explore establishment of new campuses in under-served areas of Miami-Dade County.

Year One saw phenomenal progress in expanding access to Miami Dade College:

• The Hialeah Campus, home to more than 6,000 students in one of Miami-Dade County’s most vibrant neighborhoods, was granted status as a campus by the Florida Legislature. A federal grant supplied funding to expand the campus library and learning resources for MDC’s seventh campus.

• MDC’s West Campus will fulfill a significant need in rapidly developing areas of the county. The 270,000 square foot facility on a 9.89 acre site was approved by the state and opened for classes in the spring of 2006.

Year Two activities will focus on renovations and additions to the existing MDC West facility, establishing programs and growing the enrollment to meet community needs. Hialeah Campus is establishing a new campus plan to capitalize on its strengths and plot its future growth.
Measures of Success:

MDC Core Indicators Report
• High school draw
• Enrollment data
• Student ratings of services and accessible class times and locations are among the indicators that will provide evidence of progress toward strategic goals.

Additional Strategic Measures
• Percent of students who register online using web enhancements
• Percent of applicants who enroll at MDC
• Percent of students who complete an associate’s degree before transferring to the State University System (SUS).
Strategic Goal 1: Ensure success in each discipline by identifying barriers and implementing strategies to overcome the challenges faced by our diverse and non-traditional student body.

Year One emphasized successful student learning as the paramount aim at MDC:

- Built a foundation for inquiry by establishing definitions of student success and the value students reap from their experience at MDC, even beyond the knowledge acquired through coursework.
- Reviewed state accountability measures, existing and new research to further understand the barriers students face, and evaluated potential strategies to address these challenges.
- Identified stumbling blocks to success, primary among them a student’s academic preparation for college. Additional challenges include poor alignment in some areas of the curriculum and between programs, and the need to repeat an entire course even when failing only a portion of the course.
- Modular segments in college prep are being researched to enable students to take and repeat only those necessary segments.
- As part of the Strategic Plan theme, the College participated in a webcast presentation of “Scanning the Future.” Faculty and staff learned about the Seven Revolutions Initiative, which forecasts important global trends likely to impact us all by the year 2025. Key to this presentation is the inherent responsibility of institutions of higher education to prepare graduates for the future.

Year Two priorities will focus on college preparatory reading and writing completion rates, as well as enhancing A.A. and A.S. graduation rates. Other projects include:

- Investigation of an improved mentoring program.
- A more prescriptive major and course selection process to support self-advisement and self-selection of courses.
- Discipline committee inquiries into key skill and knowledge achievement.
- Increased use of learning communities to pair college preparatory and college level courses.
- More cooperative learning opportunities.
- Redesign of courses into competency-based modules.

Additional input is being sought from disciplines and programs on the variety of student success indicators currently being used, additional factors that impede students’ success and current strategies to enhance student performance.
Strategic Goal 2: Document and enhance the quality and consistency of student learning across the spectrum of programs, courses and student educational goals.

Year One offered MDC faculty and student support personnel the chance to embark on an ambitious goal of redefining general education goals and outcomes. Discussion centered on:

- Identifying methods for collecting and tracking evidence of students’ development and abilities in these areas.
- Monitoring progress in gathering information about value added to students, success measures and effective strategies.
- Expanding development of learning outcomes assessment at the program, discipline and course level as part of the College’s institutional effectiveness plan.

Year Two will see greater involvement with general education, program review, assessment of general education outcomes and institutional effectiveness annual reports and documentation.

Measures of Success:

MDC Core Indicators Report
- Retention
- Graduation
- Success in first college-level course
- Student ratings of skill and personal development
- Transfer rate
- Job placement rate

Additional Strategic Measures
- Evidence of successful transition within course and program sequences
- Number of disciplines, schools and service areas that are systematically assessing learning outcomes and using the results to improve programs and student performance
- Progress made toward redefining and assessing general education goals
**Strategic Goal 1:** Provide cultural and educational programming, and partner with the community to respond to needs.

**Year One** offered a community-wide perspective on MDC via a *Community Satisfaction/Awareness Assessment*, including a poll of county households and a series of focus groups with business, educational and community leaders. The results laid the groundwork for future surveys of diverse employers, their satisfaction with graduates and the currency and effectiveness of their preparation.

MDC has also taken a lead role in *Imagine Miami*, a countywide initiative to address the dissolution of the community’s middle class and the impact of extensive poverty. MDC and access to higher education are primary building blocks in accomplishing the ambitious goals of this project.

**Year Two** will see continued efforts to meet pressing financial needs faced by the College through dedicated local support. Additional funding would ensure sufficient funds are available to support new and expanded programs to best meet community needs.

The team will also establish a more systematic process for collecting *employer feedback* to strengthen programs and services.

**Strategic Goal 2:** Provide multiple opportunities for students to gain practical experience, and for communities to reap benefits of student contributions.

**Year One** asserted the growing theme at MDC of students as citizens of their community. Theme Three efforts aimed to instill *social responsibility* and *civic engagement*. Strategies have been developed to:

- Increase internships, cooperative education opportunities, career and employment services, service learning and alumni involvement with our students.

- Increase collaboration between the Career Services departments at all campuses and workforce development departments such as Aviation, Banking, Biotechnology, Business and Computer Information Systems, with the goal to increase the number of internships and job placements.
The College’s Service Learning program received special recognition in a national research study on college/campus integration by Campus Compact, the national association of colleges and universities engaged in service learning.

<table>
<thead>
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<th>SERVICE LEARNING</th>
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<td>Number of students participating</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hours of service contributed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of faculty participating</td>
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Year Two priorities focus on continuing implementation of Acumen, including training and sharing information for most effective use of the software. A dedicated budget and additional assessment of service learning’s contribution to student development are expected in the next year.

- The new Acumen software is being customized and phased in to allow posting of student and alumni resumes and employment opportunities. The new Collegewide Career Services Web Page also expands awareness of career news, transfer options, internships and employment opportunities.

Strategic Goal 3: Provide a professional and helpful environment for all who interact with the College.

Year One included a review of the College’s Institutional Effectiveness Survey and preparation of a plan to administer again in 2006:

- The survey highlights areas that contribute to professional development of College personnel, as well as service to those interacting with the College.

- Survey includes areas of Student Learning and Success, Serving the Community, Service Excellence, Leadership, Communication and Cooperation, Job Satisfaction and Diversity. Responses to questions in several of these areas are included in the MDC Core Indicators Report on collegewide effectiveness.

- A culture of continuous service improvement is being fostered through departmental surveys within the College. Almost a dozen collegewide surveys, and many more point-of-service surveys were conducted within the last year with more to come. Results are used to make adjustments and implement strategies to improve services.

Year Two will see expansion of efforts to assess and improve service at the College through additional collegewide, departmental and point-of-service surveys. Results and improvements made based on survey information will continue to be included in Service Area, School and Discipline Annual Reports.
Visitors to the Miami Book Fair International. Community participation in events presented by the College is one factor in gauging success.

Measures of Success:

**MDC Core Indicators Report**
- Total student market penetration
- Community participation rate in events and activities
- Service Learning hours contributed and faculty/student participation

**Additional Strategic Measures**
- Alumni and Employer survey feedback
- Employee Institutional Effectiveness survey results
- Number of internship and co-op education opportunities available for students
Strategic Goal 1: Develop mutually beneficial partnerships to enhance resource contributions from business and industry, public sector sources, private foundations and individuals.

Year One addressed the economic foundation for the growth of the institution. Progress included:

- Development of fundraising software that includes the range of existing and potential partnerships and contribution sources. The software is designed to match the College’s critical growth projects with natural partners from the realms of private industry, philanthropy, and the public sector, as well as individuals.

Additional planning for year two focused on:

- Development of more extensive grant and fundraising strategies and materials.

- Training for an extended team of MDC spokespeople capable of addressing the College’s value and contribution to the community.

Year Two priorities include strengthening the MDC Foundation through new leadership and additional staff. Additional emphasis will be on implementation and use of the new fundraising software, as well as strengthening connections between the Foundation and other Strategic Plan theme work groups. Another priority in the coming year will involve the School Directors in evaluating and enhancing business/industry partnerships for fundraising purposes.

Strategic Goal 2: Ensure that MDC provides equitable opportunities for all groups, including those under-represented in the business community, to participate in College business activities.

Year One focused on expanding opportunities for minority- and female-owned businesses through numerous vehicles:

- Informational seminars.

- Presentations to small and minority business associations on the procurement process.
• Publicizing bids, RFP’s and RFQ’s more extensively to include minority business associations.

• Participating in minority- and female-owned business expos.

Year Two will see continuation and expansion of these strategies to ensure equity and continue to showcase MDC as a model business partner in the community.

Measures of Success:

MDC Core Indicators Report
• Dollar amount of new and continuing federal grant funding
• Dollar amount of private contributions and gifts to the College

Additional Strategic Indicators
• Amount/percent of state support for MDC
• Percent of salary expenditures for direct services to students
• Amount/percent of scholarship funds available for eligible students

Increase in funding from both government grants and private contributions would be seen as a resounding success for Theme Four efforts.
Strategic Goal 1: Develop and implement a process for employee growth that will encourage creativity and accomplishment and facilitate progression to higher levels.

Year One was highlighted by research throughout academia and the private sector to capture data and best practices to ensure the growth of MDC’s personnel.

• Salary surveys and career ladder models came from Florida’s community colleges, University of Wisconsin, University of New Mexico, The Container Store, Arizona Department of Education, Connecticut Advisory Committee and more.

• Existing career ladder groups at MDC were identified. Employee promotions increased due to internal job posting practices.

• Review of performance evaluation strategies from local government entities and other higher educational institutions, with an eye toward creating a new, more goal oriented, performance evaluation process that incorporates suggestions from employees.

• Training and educational requirements for support staff positions were reviewed and matched against available Collegewide Training and Development workshops and educational incentives.

• Tuition assistance was raised to match the 2004-05 FIU state rate.

• Cross training needs will be evaluated and recommendations for increasing educational incentives, including tuition reimbursement, are forthcoming.

Year Two priorities include a compensation study and a review of training and educational requirements for higher level and administrative positions, aiming to identify additional opportunities to contribute to the growth and career development of employees. The team will develop specific recommendations and strategies to support the objectives within the goal areas.

Strategic Goal 2: Employ a diverse workforce that mirrors the Miami-Dade community.

Year One saw the College expanding its tradition, employing one of higher education’s most diverse personnel rosters:

• The College’s workforce was compared to U.S. Census data to determine diversity representation on a local versus national level. The changing demographics in Miami-Dade County were studied and a companion study was developed to identify MDC job categories with inequitable representation by minorities.

• A succession plan was drafted that provides leadership opportunities within the College and addresses recruiting and replacement strategies, especially for hard-to-hire and high turnover positions.

Year Two offers recommendations related to initiatives in progress including a plan for adjusting job categories with any degree of inequitable representation for minorities. All recommendations will be reviewed by Executive Committee during 2006.
Measures of Success:

**MDC Core Indicators**
- Employee feedback related to:
  - Opportunities for advancement
  - Satisfaction with salary
  - Encouragement for creative and innovative ideas
  - Opportunities to participate in setting direction and goals
- College’s investment in employee development/training
- Employee turnover

Professional Development Day for all College employees – one of many tools used to enhance employee development.
Monitoring Future Trends

A long-range strategic plan is only as effective as the constant monitoring that keeps the plan current and viable. MDC continues to scan the many factors that influence our strategic plan, ensuring that it remains a living, vibrant reflection of the College’s commitment to students and the growth of the institution.

The High Cost of Living
The cost of living in South Florida poses enormous challenges for MDC’s student population. With two-thirds of students in low-income strata or living beneath the federal poverty standard, the elevated cost of housing, transportation and health care can threaten continued enrollment at the College. Efforts to lower the cost burden in these essential areas rank high on the College’s future agenda.

Standardized Testing
With both state and federal governments considering standardized tests in higher education, MDC continues to hone specific competencies and outcomes in all disciplines. Via the Learning Agenda II, the College embraces its responsibility to provide evidence of learning and prepare students as effectively as possible for the challenges of the workplace and continued learning.

MDC’s Competitive Position
The marketplace of learning continues to be very competitive. MDC is conducting a market-needs analysis to ensure that the institution continues to provide students and the community with relevant and cost effective learning opportunities.

K-12 and Student Preparation for College
A college education is the irreplaceable entry pass to the mainstream economy. MDC continues to expand collaborative efforts with K-12 administration and schools to improve college readiness.

Immigration and Undocumented Students
One of the thorniest and most complex issues for the nation, this subject compels higher education to explore solutions that ensure continued educational opportunity within the context of changing public concerns and new laws.
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