

Theme 1: What students will we teach?

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Strategic goal #1: *Create a statement of core values.*

Rationale: In order for CCRI to become more effective in delivering important educational outcomes, the college needs to develop a list of its core values to provide a benchmark for expected student learning attainments, student placements, and overall institutional assessment and program evaluations. Having a core values statement will also assist in establishing strategic goals, data tracking mechanisms, and assessing our institutional successes.

Responsible areas: Committee appointed by the president.

Performance indicators: Creation and charging of a committee.
Development and implementation plan.
Creation of document.

Strategic goal #2: *Per the college’s mission and commitment to student success, it is recommended that a committee comprised of academic chairs and representatives from Student Services be formed to discuss the feasibility and impact of setting “ability to benefit” criteria, as well as basic skills placement prerequisites for courses and programs. The committee also recommends a phased-in process model to implement these standards.*

Rationale: For the past couple of years, more than 70 percent of CCRI entering freshmen placed into one or more of the following courses: MATH 0500 and 0600 and ENGL 0250, 0700, 0850 and 0890. This segment of our student population has an array of needs which must be addressed to help their success and retention.

Responsible areas: Academic deans and chairs, Student Services and Business Affairs

Performance indicators: Creation and charging of a committee.
Development and implementation of a research plan.
Development and implementation of an action plan.

Strategic goal #3: *Study the feasibility of expanding online and distance learning options, including complete degree and certificate programs and support services for online students.*

Rationale: National trends in higher education are featuring an increased option for online learning options. There is a general consensus that “What Students Will We Teach?” must include online student populations. The popularity of distance learning creates an opportunity for CCRI to increase its market share of student enrollments.

Responsible areas: Academic Affairs, Student Services, Marketing & Communications, Institutional Research, Information Technology, Distance Learning Committee and the Center for Workforce and Community Education

Performance indicators: Increased enrollment (freshmen, transfer, adult and international).
Increased number of workforce education agreements.
Increased enrollment in distance learning programs.
Increased visibility for the Community College of Rhode Island.
Increased workforce readiness.

Strategic goal #4: *To review and/or redefine the criteria for high school student enrollment (CCRI’s Running Start, High School/CCRI Partnership Program, High School articulation agreements and High School Enrichment Programs) for the purpose of establishing consistent and specific criteria and guidelines related to high school student eligibility and competency.*

Rationale: As the state continued to emphasize the significance of dual enrollment programs as an important tool to increase access to higher education, numbers for CCRI dual enrollment students rose from 200 in 2007 to 346 in 2008. CCRI will continue to market dual enrollment programs as a vehicle to enrich the high school experience and to reinforce the need for student’s academic readiness for college-level learning. CCRI will continue to partner with high schools to clarify standards of competency and expectations related to college ready status.

Responsible areas: Enrollment Services, Advising and Counseling, Marketing and Communications, Information Technology and Institutional Research

Performance indicators: Increased cumulative GPA for dually-enrolled students.
Increased retention and persistence of dual enrolled students.
Increased enrollment of high school graduates.

Strategic goal #5: *Require high-school transcripts, diplomas and GED certificates for admission to all degree programs and archive this information to assist in the advising process.*

Rationale: Research on peer institutions with higher completion rates – for example, Bergen Community College and Monroe Community College require the above. Our CCRI statistics indicate that students enrolled in degree programs that do not have high school diploma or GED certificates show considerably lower retention, persistence, transfer and completion rates compared to those who do.

Responsible areas: Academic deans and chairs, Enrollment Services and Institutional Research

Performance indicators: Creation of policy.
Tracking of effects on retention rates.

Strategic Goal #6: *Expand array of articulation agreements to increase the number of transfer students enrolled at CCRI over the next three years.*

Rationale: As budget cuts and decreased state financial support to higher education across the U.S. continues, the cost of higher education continues to increase over the next few years. Four-year institutions are becoming less and less accessible (cost-wise) to students who are college ready, but cannot afford the rising cost of tuition. Expanding CCRI articulation agreements and partnerships with four year colleges and universities will provide these students with a chance to cut the costs of their education by attending CCRI for the first two years (e.g. 2+2 programs). This will have a positive impact on CCRI's retention and graduation rates.

Responsible areas: Academic deans and chairs and Student Services

Performance indicators: Identification of potential partnerships with four-year colleges and universities.
Development and implementation of an action plan.

Strategic goal #7: *Charge CCRI's Honors Committee with promoting comprehensive honors options to attract and increase the number of college ready students in mainstream classes.*

Rationale: As an open access institution, CCRI's student body is disproportionate with over 70 percent of students who need one or more remedial courses and only 30 percent of students who are college ready. This ratio continues to negatively impact the college's retention, persistence and completion rates. In pursuit of a more diverse student population, the committee recommends the establishment of a comprehensive Honor's Program where college ready students will be aggressively recruited. Research indicates that the gradual increase in this particular population

will most likely result in gradual improvement of retention and graduation rates.

Responsible areas: Academic deans and chairs and Student Services.

Performance indicators: Development and implementation of an action plan.
Establishment of Honor's Program.

Strategic goal #8: *To develop comprehensive and strategic marketing and recruitment plans that create greater visibility for the college and strengthens CCRI's ability to target various student populations.*

Rationale: As Rhode Island's only community college our mission is to respond to community needs and economic development in the state. The implementation of coordinated marketing and recruitment plans – where Academic Affairs, Student Services and Marketing and Communications work collaboratively to communicate the value of a CCRI education – is imperative to the college's growth.

Responsible areas: Academic Affairs, Student Services, Marketing and Communications, Institutional Research, Information Technology and the Center for Workforce and Community Education

Performance indicators: Increased enrollment (GED graduates, freshmen, transfer, adult and international).
An increase in strategic partnership activities.
An increase in college articulation agreements.
Increased number of workforce education agreements.

Strategic goal #9: *Create a standing committee on retention that is charged by the president to identify and develop reliable and valid data on "at risk" students and retention (including classroom retention rates). The committee should focus on data-based recommendations and strategies that are likely to improve retention including changes in systems, programs and services.*

Rationale: Current retention efforts are piecemeal, based upon slim data or anecdotal evidence, under-resourced and have little to show for the investment of time and money. While the idea that retention is everyone's responsibility at the community college is noble, it is not widely embraced. A committee, charged and structured to research and implement change, is needed.

Responsible Areas: Academic Affairs, Student Services, Institutional Research

Performance indicators: Increase in targeted retention and student success.
Development and implementation of an action plan.

Strategic goal #10: *Create options in the General Studies program to allow for the selection of ‘tracks’ that group students by educational outcomes or other significant variables so that services and support can be targeted more directly and efficiently. In addition, create degree prep-programs for students that allow them to develop college-level skills in math, reading and writing.*

Rationale: National data (Tinto) has always indicated that students without a strong motivating goal in mind drop out of school more frequently. The option of choosing specific tracks within general studies along with a tracking system for easy identification and communication will help facilitate a planned program of interventions designed to help students achieve their academic goals. Track categories would include pre-degree program, undecided, transfer and career. The college should also develop even a track for developmental students. The clarity such identification would provide, as well as the opportunities for the targeted promotion of career discernment and planning services would be an invaluable tool to faculty, staff and administrators. This change can increase the number of students who identify a career goal in which to frame their college experience and will improve their overall motivation and, potentially, retention.

Responsible areas: Information Technology, Institutional Research, Academic Affairs, Student Services, Enrollment Services

Performance indicators: Agreement on tracks.
Development and testing within Banner.
Training of Student Services and Enrollment Services staff.
Development of communication program to connect students to targeted services and programs.

Strategic goal #11: *Assemble a college-wide master schedule committee to review the availability of classes, including examination of distance learning and satellite campus options, to ensure that students’ needs are met. The committee will also be charged with developing mechanisms to increase offerings of classes with high enrollment.*

Rationale: Research indicates that conflict with work schedule is the single most important reason cited by community college students for leaving higher education. In 2007, 85.3 percent of our students worked while attending CCRI and 17.4 percent worked 30 hours or more per week. More recently, 53.9 percent of responding students attempting to register during late registration in August 2008, did not register for as many classes as they intended to because classes they sought were full or offered at times that they could not make. This indicates that most of our students have to balance work and school as well as family obligations. Therefore, it is critical that the college offers a variety of class schedules to meet the diverse needs of the students. Short-term, evening, weekend and online

classes can all serve this purpose.

Responsible Areas: Academic dean and chairs, Registrar and Advising and Counseling

Performance indicators: Creation of college-wide committee.
Annual review of master schedule.

Strategic Goal #12: *Begin a comprehensive review of our student life program with the aim of developing a full co-curriculum of out of class leadership and service learning opportunities as well as a broad range of extra-curricular activities.*

Rationale: As the number of our enrolled, traditionally-aged students increases (full time enrollment for students age 19 and under grew 68.5 percent from 1998 to 2008), we will need to develop a more vibrant and diverse student life program that addresses social needs and student development strategies. This should be a two-pronged effort to expand leadership development and service learning opportunities to foster a culture of civic engagement, as well as create a coordinated and dynamic activities program that engages students socially, recreationally, intellectually and artistically. Both areas can be used to promote greater community involvement on each campus for students, faculty and staff. This will improve the quality of the student experience and improve visibility and perception of the college in our communities.

Responsible Areas: Student Services, faculty and Student Government

Performance indicators: Initial and annual survey of student interest.
Initial survey of faculty interest.
Establishment of pilot programs.
Program assessment.