

# Beaufort County Community College Strategic Planning Handbook

## Introduction

The purpose of the Beaufort County Community College (BCCC) Planning Manual is to guide institutional planning by describing ways that stakeholders of the College participate in and contribute to institutional planning. The handbook describes the planning activities performed on a regular cycle and how they relate to evaluation and resource allocation in continuous quality improvement. The document is reviewed and revised annually by the Planning Committee.

## The Planning Committee

The Planning Committee membership is broad-based to include representation from all areas of the College. The committee is comprised of the following individuals:

President

Representative, Administrative Services

Representative, Continuing Education

Faculty from Associate in Applied Sciences (AAS) Programs

Faculty Senate President

Arts and Sciences Faculty

Staff Association President

Learning Resource Center (LRC) Representative

Vice President (VP) of Research and Institutional Effectiveness (Resource)

The purposes of the committee are to:

1. Research best practices for strategic planning in business, industry and higher education to aid the College in the development of strategic initiatives to ensure the successful development of the workforce for BCCC's service area.
2. Annually review and update the planning process for maximum efficiency and effectiveness.
3. Ensure a planning process that is closely tied to the budgeting process.
4. Develop a self-help planning handbook for BCCC's planning process.
5. Maintain compliance and documentation for Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) standards 2.4, 3.1, 3.11.3, and 4.1.

## The Planning Process

The planning process at BCCC is grounded in our vision, mission, goals, and core values and results in the development of annual strategic directions. The process is continuous and structured so that new ideas can be introduced at any time in response to an ever-changing environment.

The Planning Committee began the task of improving its planning process in 2012-2013 to restructure the framework for planning and data driven decision-making. Emphasis is placed on shared governance with all employees participating in some aspect of planning to connect their daily work to overall efforts of the College.

The planning process follows a plan, do, study, act model to improve student learning and success. There are five steps in the strategic planning process:

1. Review and update of the vision, mission, goals, and core values
2. Gather external and internal input from shareholders
3. Analyze data and develop the strategic plan
4. Implement the plan including resource allocation
5. Close the loop through review and evaluation

Refer to Appendix A for a cyclical diagram of the process and Appendix B for a comprehensive chart that includes a timeline for completion of specific tasks to assigned responsible parties.

### **Needs Evaluation**

A needs evaluation identifies the gaps between where the College is and where it wants to be. It determines the areas to focus on as the strategic plan is developed to take the College from its existing to desired state. Defining needs helps to ensure resources are used effectively as the College faces the challenges of limited funding and increased demand. The College must understand the needs and interests of the community so it can provide offerings that meet student needs. An environmental scan helps the College better understand the current environment and create an inventory of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT). The College then seeks to maintain and build upon strengths, optimize opportunities, remedy weaknesses, and counter threats. The SWOT analysis includes an internal and external component. The internal component assesses the College's strengths and weaknesses. Internally, current performance should be evaluated in the areas of finances, human resources, enrollment trends, facilities, operating methods, and results or outcomes. It is critical that the entire campus community provide input. Externally, forces in the broader community are examined for demographic, political, economic, social, and technological trends. Needs of the community are identified as well as opportunities and challenges related to resources and funding agencies. Actual and potential collaborators and competitors need to be considered. The College seeks to understand how stakeholders view the institution. The College continually solicits input from the stakeholders in the region, such as businesses; local, state and government agencies; K-12 schools districts; and other institutions of higher education. It is important to identify local employer and industry needs and growing occupations.

*Facilities survey.* The vice president of administrative services is tasked with conducting a SWOT analysis and creating and implementing a campus facilities survey. The survey is delivered electronically to all campus employees and students to make sure space and resources are best utilized to meet the needs of our campus community. Data is collected, analyzed, and posted as part of the needs assessment data used in strategic planning.

Timeline: August

Responsibility: vice president of administrative services

*Review and revision of planning process.* Based on research in best practices for strategic planning, the Planning Committee annually reviews and updates the planning process for maximum efficiency and effectiveness.

Timeline: August  
Responsibility: Planning Committee

*Community and campus focus groups.* The Office of Research and Institutional Effectiveness (RIE), with input from the Planning Committee, organizes and conducts focus group meetings biennially. Individuals and businesses within the community and campus representatives are invited to participate to help the college understand the wants and needs of the community. A focus group gathers qualitative data from a small number of participants. It is an efficient and effective way to ask open-ended questions and get meaningful responses from a diverse group of stakeholders. It involves participants listening to the opinions of others in a group setting before thoughts and opinions are set. The safe and relaxed atmosphere allows participants to think about other viewpoints in relation to their own. In listening and conversing with each other participants can identify misinformation and engage in dialog that provides alternate perspectives. The purpose is not for the group to reach a consensus but rather form independent viewpoints.

Timeline: September, even years, or otherwise as directed  
Responsibility: Office of Research and Institutional Effectiveness

*Campus climate survey.* The campus climate survey provides employees and students of the college an opportunity to identify functional areas for improvement or concern that the strategic plan should address. Through the climate study faculty, staff and students are given the opportunity to measure satisfaction of campus environment. Listening sessions can be an effective way to follow up on these concerns. The RIE creates or decides on the instrument, distributes the survey, and posts results for analysis as part of the needs assessment used in strategic planning.

Timeline: September, odd years, or otherwise as directed  
Responsibility: Office of Research and Institutional Effectiveness

*Technology SWOT.* Information Technology (IT) is assessed with regard to its potential for helping achieve the strategic goals of the College and takes into consideration current and projected academic and administrative technology needs. The IT SWOT is an essential tool for efficient and effective development, implementation, and support of technology systems to enhance instructional delivery, student learning, and college support systems.

Timeline: October  
Responsibility: IT Workgroup

*Distance education (DE) SWOT.* The DE SWOT enables the College to take proactive steps to analyze, anticipate, and manage the evolution of distance education to provide high quality educational opportunities for students. The goal is to maintain superior standards for quality of instruction, academic rigor, educational effectiveness and a supporting infrastructure for distance learning.

Timeline: October  
Responsibility: Distance Education Committee

*Demographic, economic, etc. data.* Local, regional, and national data is collected to aid in identifying trends relevant to strategic planning.

Timeline: October

Responsibility: Office of Research and Institutional Effectiveness

*Posting of needs evaluation data.* Needs evaluation data is posted electronically in a central location for the Planning Committee and Senior Staff to analyze in forming planning assumptions and strategic directions for the College.

Timeline: December

Responsibility: Office of Research and Institutional Effectiveness

## **Unit Plans and Evaluation**

Unit plans are the annual plans and workflow for each unit of campus for a fiscal year. A campus "unit" represents a single organizational structure of the institution with a narrow purpose or scope. A unit may represent an academic program area (e.g. Mechanical Engineering Technology), academic department (e.g. Mathematics), administrative area (e.g. Campus Police), student services department (e.g. Financial Aid), or other appropriate units on campus as clearly delineated in the organizational structure of campus. The responsibility for development of unit plans falls to the appropriate person or persons responsible for each unit and their immediate supervisor. Supervisors should coordinate development of unit plans in consultation with the vice president in their supervisory chain.

*Unit Plan Due Dates.* Unit plans for the next fiscal year should be completed by July 15 of each year. This allows adequate time for the RIE to compile the plans into an executive format for presentation as the annual plan to the Board of Trustees at the August meeting for tentative approval. Final approval for the annual plan is sought during the October meeting of the Board. Unit plans for the current year should be closed out and summarized by June 30 of each year. A summary of major activities and achievements is also presented to the Board during the August meeting.

*Unit Plan Documentation and Measurements.* Continuous quality improvement, i.e. "assessment", requires that unit plans be developed to provide documentable evidence of completion. As such, action verbs that facilitate measurement should be used throughout unit plans. These measurable action verbs may appear in goals and/or tasks of the unit plan. Goals may be written in broad terms provided that the tasks that support those goals facilitate measurement and/or documentation of completion. Unit plans should identify action verbs appropriate to the unit workflow in consultation with their supervisor and/or the appropriate vice president.

Examples of measurable action verbs that facilitate measurement or documentation appear below:

- Organize
- Complete
- Train
- Report
- Support
- Fabricate

- Conduct
- Respond
- Locate
- Analyze
- Calculate
- Diagnose
- Repair
- Construct
- Employ
- Inspect
- Inventory
- Estimate
- Collect

## **Program Review**

Program review is the self-assessment process used by academic programs to examine program effectiveness and provide a basis for budget and resource requests. The process provides feedback to the academic unit primarily responsible for the program, the appropriate academic and institutional administrators, and external stakeholders. Within the program review, academic programs must identify program level student learning outcomes and program goals. Program level student learning outcomes should guide the course level learning outcomes and be written such that mastery can be measured over the course of the program. These outcomes should encompass what the student should know, think, or do across all courses within the program. Program goals are general statements of what the program intends to accomplish and should be measurable and obtainable. Program review incorporates both internal and external stakeholders in identifying areas of strengths and opportunities for improvement within a program as they relate to the program goals and student learning outcomes. The program review cycle coincides with the strategic planning cycle. Individual academic programs undergo program review once every three years. For a more detailed description of the program review process, refer to the Program Review Handbook.

## **Professional Development**

Professional Development is the continuous process of acquiring new knowledge and skills that relate to one's profession, job responsibilities, or work environment. It plays a key role in maintaining trained, informed and motivated employees. Professional development provides opportunities for personal enrichment, renewal, growth, change and on-going improvement for all individuals employed within the College in ways that fulfill the mission, vision and goals of the institution. Professional development opportunities should be widely accessible to all employees, responsive to learning centered principles, and tied closely with the College's governance system, including the strategic plan. BCCC is committed to the continuing professional development of all employees to ensure the success of our students and excellence in the teaching and learning experience. To foster excellence at a learning-centered College, professional development must be based on strategic plans; be able to respond to the needs of staff, faculty and administrators; and flexible to include innovative programs and presentations. The College adheres to the guidelines and procedures set forth by the Professional Development Committee whose purpose is to lead and support the professional development of faculty and staff by planning, coordinating, implementing, and evaluating the professional development activities of BCCC.

## **Budgeting**

Budgeting is a crucial part of the planning process. The planning process should align the funds needed to carry out the goals defined by the strategic directions. Budgeting covers certain periods of time and it's important for the planning process stakeholders to consider those fragments of time and properly allocate funds needed to carry out the assigned goals. It is important to consider the various types of funding that BCCC receives.

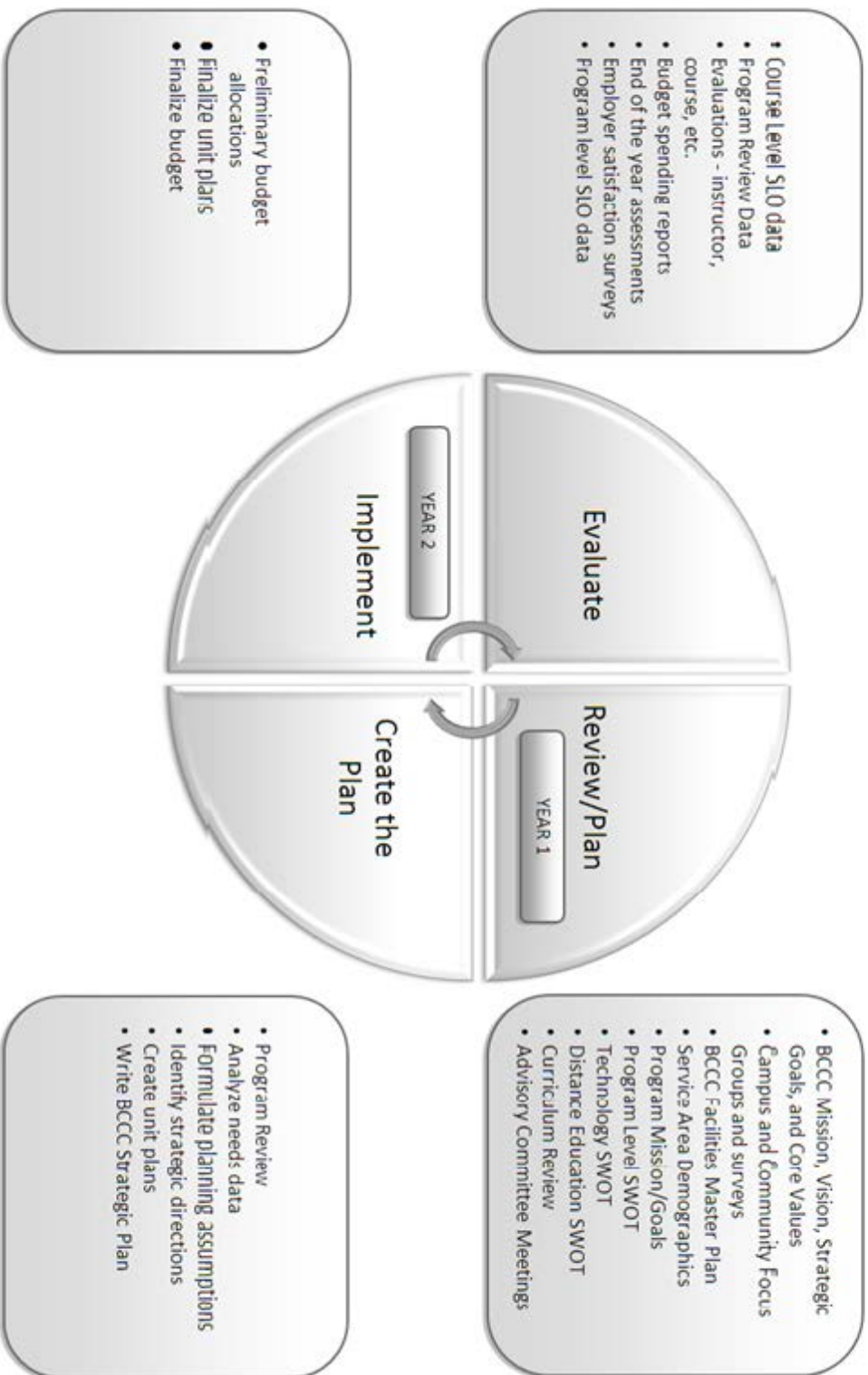
*State funds.* State funds are used to fund curriculum and institutional support departments on campus. Curriculum, Continuing Education, Student Support Services, and Administrative Support departments are supported by state funds. The state budget is allocated from the NC General Assembly and then distributed to BCCC by the NC Community College System. The budgeting process for state funds typically starts the beginning of June. Department budgets are sent out to department heads and the vice presidents on campus during that time. The state budget is then presented to the College's Board of Trustees for approval after final allocation by the state and Community College System.

*County funds.* County funds are approved by the Beaufort County Commissioners and are used for the maintenance and upkeep of the College. Buildings, infrastructure, and capital projects are funded with county appropriations. The county budgeting process typically begins in February and is presented to the College's Board of Trustees in early March. Once approved, the budget is presented to the Beaufort County Commissioners.

*Institutional funds.* Institutional or "special" funds come from a variety of sources. Grant funds, including some Federal grants, are categorized as institutional funds. The institutional budget is presented to the College's Board of Trustees in early May. Any funds that are not allocated by state or county are institutional funds.

Appendix A.

## Beaufort County Community College Two Year Strategic Planning Cycle



Appendix B.

Planning Year										Implementation Year					
Timeline	Vision, Mission and Goals			Needs Evaluation			Strategic Plan			Implementation			Evaluation		
	Task	Responsibility	SACS	Task	Responsibility	SACS	Task	Responsibility	SACS	Task	Responsibility	SACS	Task	Responsibility	SACS
July	Mission, Vision, Strategic Long-range Goals, Core Values Workshop (odd years)	RIE Office	2.4 3.1.1	Plan Community and Campus Focus Group meetings (even years)	RIE Office/Planning Committee	2.11.2 3.11.3			2.5	Preliminary Budget Allocated based on projected unit needs	Senior Staff	2.11.1 3.10.3	Campus-wide evaluation of Planning Process (odd years)	RIE/Planning Committee	2.5
August				Facilities Survey	VP of Administrative Services	2.11.2 3.11.3				Distribute/Communicate Strategic Plan	RIE/Senior Staff	3.1.1	Collect/Analyze Course-level SLO data (from summer)	RIE/Academic Units	3.3.1 4.1
				Review/Revise Facilities Master Plan	Director of Campus Operations	2.11.2 3.11.3									
				Review/Revise Planning Process (odd years)	Planning Committee	2.5									
	Review/Revise Mission, Vision, Goals, Core Values	Mission Review Committee	2.4 3.1.1	Conduct Community and Campus Focus Group meetings (even years)	RIE Office/Planning Committee	2.5				Unit Plans Reviewed/ finalized (includes identified individuals responsible for carrying out the plan)	All Units	3.3.1			
September				Campus Climate Survey/Campus Interviews (odd years)	RIE Office	2.5				Post Unit Plans Electronically	All Units	2.11.1 3.10.3			
										Budget Finalized based on Final Unit Plans	Senior Staff	2.11.1 3.10.3			
										Post Budget Allocations	Business Office	2.11.1 3.10.3			
	Approve Mission, Vision, Goals, Core Values	Board of Trustees	3.1.1 3.2.2										Instructor Evaluation by Student	Personnel Evaluation Committee/RIE	3.7.2
	Distribute and publish Mission, Vision, Goals, Core Values	RIE Office	2.4 3.1.1	Technology/SWOT/ Review and Update Plan	IT Workgroup	3.4.1.2 3.11.3	Strategic Plan approved Pending budget	Faculty/Senate, Staff Association, Senior Staff, Board of Trustees					Employer Satisfaction Survey	RIE Office	4.1
October	Campus-wide meeting to communicate Mission, Vision, Goals, Core Values and educate campus on planning process	Senior Staff	2.4 3.1.1	Distance Education SWOT/Review and Update Plan	Distance Education Committee	4.8 3.11.3	Post Strategic Plan Electronically	RIE Office					Student Satisfaction Survey	RIE Office	4.1
	Review/revise Academic and Non-Academic Program Mission and Goals based on institutional mission (includes updated SDOs for Academic Units)	All units	2.7.2 3.1.1 3.3.1	Obtain demographic economic, etc. data	RIE office										
November				Curriculum Review	Academic Units	2.7.2 2.7.3 3.4.10 3.4.11 4.2				Professional Development on Strategic Planning (odd years)	RIE Office				



Planning Year										Implementation Year						
Timeline	Vision, Mission and Goals			Needs Evaluation			Strategic Plan			Implementation			Evaluation			
	Task	Responsibility	SACS	Task	Responsibility	SACS	Task	Responsibility	SACS	Task	Responsibility	SACS	Task	Responsibility	SACS	
December				Post needs evaluation data electronically	RIE Office											
January							Analyze needs evaluation data	Planning Committee/Senior Staff/RIE	2.5				Collect/Analyze Course-level SDO data (from fall)	IE/Academic Units	3.3.1 4.1	
							Formulate planning assumptions	Planning Committee/Senior Staff	2.5							
February																
							Identify Strategic Directions	Planning Committee/Senior Staff	2.5							
March																
							Electronic Survey for College Community comments on proposed Strategic Directions	RIE Office	2.5				Employee Performance Evaluations	Personnel/Evaluation Committee/IE	3.2.8 3.7.2 3.2.10	
April																
							Formulate Preliminary/Academic and non-Academic Unit Plans (Includes budget requests) based on Needs Evaluation/Strategic Directions	All Units and Subunits	3.10.3							
May																
							Write Strategic Plan to include updated Mission, Vision, Core Values, Long Range Goals, Data Summary and Analysis, Strategic Directions and Strategies	Planning Committee/RIE/Senior Staff	2.5				Collect Academic and Non-Academic Unit data and generate report	All Units	3.3.1 4.1	
June																
							Electronic Survey for College Community comments on proposed Strategic Plan	RIE Office	2.5				Collect budget data (how money was spent) and generate report	Business Office	2.11.1 3.10.3	
June																
													Collect/Analyze Course-level SDO data (from Spring)	IE/Academic Units	3.3.1 4.1	