

DRAFT November 20, 2006

RECOMMENDATIONS, SUGGESTED STRATEGIES AND SUCCESS FACTORS

Cañada College Strategic Plan

Voorhees Group LLC recommends that the Cañada College consider the goals, strategies, and success factors presented below. These draft statements are intended to invite discussion while providing a focus for moving forward in the current strategic planning process.

As the Cañada community reviews these statements, it will be important to separate strategy from operational planning. The College currently benefits from operational planning that includes day-to-day planning. There are many activities that a good college will pursue in the name of operational excellence, but which may not be strategic in nature. A strategic activity is intended to provide a “tipping point” that can trigger change. Accordingly, a strategic plan provides direction for operational planning while focusing on larger issues occurring over a longer period of time.

Success factors provide Cañada College a mechanism to know whether quantitative or observable progress is being made toward its goals. They are the measurable part of strategic planning that helps the campus communicate the extent to which progress is being made and whether strategies are effective. They tell stakeholders whether strategies need to be refined, modified, or eliminated during an annual review. Success factors will need to be modified as the College adopts new strategies or modifies existing strategies. These steps will create a culture of inquiry that support a learner-centered agenda.

Goal One: *All administrative and curricular decisions made at the College are learner-centered and based on actionable data.*

a. Rationale

Cañada has a deep history of caring service to students. However, its penetration rate for key age groups and market segments should be deeper to provide access could be deeper. While there is understanding of the students presently served by the College, there is less knowledge about those citizens of Cañada County who are not currently served.

Like all organizations, the College’s overall performance can be enhanced in ways that ensure tighter alignment between its operations and the needs of current and prospective learners. Such a course requires establishing and nurturing a culture of inquiry that permeates the College and establishes the critical importance of using data to evaluate progress.

In its pursuit of excellent service to students and because of the present strategic planning process, Cañada College has begun to develop longitudinal data about the experience of its new students. These data are key to improving programs and ensuring that its instructional programs are learner-centered. When coupled with recent strategic planning data developed for this study, the College will have a rich tool to track its progress over time. These efforts should continue to be supported and expanded including: the implementation of a comprehensive performance measurement system containing a set of integrated indicators and outcomes that will track the program- and institutional-level outcomes required for strategic decision-making as well as WASC accreditation standards.

b. Suggested Strategies (to be developed/refined by operational planning):

1. Continuously analyze changes in student demographics, preferences, and attitudes as well as social, economic, technological, and demographic changes in southern San Mateo County and the Bay Area. Make appropriate, immediate shifts in the curriculum, student services programming, and programming, and course schedules.
2. Identify cohorts of students and track their progress through the institution and afterward. Use student progression data and transfer data in the program review processes.
3. Develop an on-line fact book that describes trends in student demographics and success rates.
4. Partner with other nonprofit agencies to harvest key data about potential student needs and trends.
5. Actively seek niche programming. Market directly to those segments that could benefit by participation. General publicity is helpful, but targeted marketing is critical.
6. Provide increased data and training on how to use that data for program managers including deans, directors, and their assistants.
7. Use data to make informed decisions about deployment of key resources, especially in the personnel areas.
8. Continue to develop an electronic degree audit system.

c. Success Factors (Visible measures of goal attainment. To be developed: specific activities, responsible parties, and target dates)

1. Availability of an on-line fact book.
2. Publish periodic updates for College stakeholders providing evidence of changes in college operations that result in increased student success.
3. All institutional publications reflect a consistent message that the College has a learner-centered focus in all of its operations. Further, these publications contain student outcome data that depict post-Cañada experiences of students including transfer destinations and placement rates in employment.
4. All staff and full-time faculty have participated in a learner-centered awareness activity by the end of the 2007 calendar year.
5. Institutional planning and decision making, curricula development and delivery, and outcomes assessment/evaluation will include the analysis of student productivity, demographic trends of enrolled students and the service area, and existing and emerging needs for educational and training services in southern San Mateo County.
6. Annual publication of a matrix that relates each of the College's programs to the market needs that they are meeting.
7. Student surveys indicate that 90 percent of current students are satisfied with enrollment and scheduling processes and are satisfied with the instruction that they are or have received.

Goal Two: Consider new programs for which there is no current competition. Strengthen programs with an identified market niche.

a. Rationale.

This strategic plan has identified those programs that represent competitive advantages for Cañada College and those new programs that might be implemented that also appear to have a competitive advantage. These information sources should be used to align programs in view of market realities. Accent to external stakeholders what these changes mean for the County's changing workforce. Recent development of the animation program is an excellent example of responding to niche markets and, because of its technical nature and industry support, may lead to other opportunities. Another example is the emerging home care giver certificate.

b. Suggested Strategies (to be developed/refined by operational planning):

1. Develop an academic plan that includes a schedule of prioritized new programs for development based on competitor analyses and upon feedback from industry contacts and supplementary market research.
2. Strengthen existing programs that already possess a competitive advantage.
3. Continually scan local labor markets, transfer trends to 4-year colleges and universities, labor market research, and business/industry contacts to contribute to organizational intelligence about program potential.
4. Routinely publish a matrix that displays current programs, their headcount enrollment, and the market segment they serve.
5. Consider the creation of interdisciplinary programs that result in expanded learning opportunities for students. These could be matched to market needs and provide integration of skills.
6. Create identified program linkages between the College's lower-division courses and programs and new offerings at the University Center.
7. Research potential collaborations with the Opportunity Industry Center West that may result in career ladder opportunities for low-skilled, low-literacy adults.

c. Success Factors (Visible measures of goal attainment. To be developed: specific activities, responsible parties, and target dates)

1. Two new or modified programs available for enrollment in the 2007-2008 academic year.

Goal Three: *Respond directly to the current and projected racial, ethnic, and income patterns in southern San Mateo County and the Bay Area.*

a. Rationale.

The Bay Area is ahead of the racial and ethnic diversity that will sweep the United States over coming decades. Southern San Mateo County is also changing rapidly. Hispanics and Asian populations are younger than Whites. At a time when median household income continues to rise in San Mateo County, there are pockets of poverty within the Cañada College service area. These are opportunities for the College as are the rising numbers of affluent and older households in the vicinity. The College's penetration rates among categories of persons of Color vary but they can be improved substantially. Since the College is—for some key constituents--geographically isolated

much consideration should be placed on taking classes to the community.

b. Suggested Strategies (to be developed/refined by operational planning):

1. Increase student recruiting, especially in the key underserved markets identified in this plan. The College currently has no recruiter; it could make good use of more personnel in this area.
2. Target 18 to 24 year-olds of Color to increase their participation and subsequent success rates.
3. Target older adults (aged 25 and over) to increase their participation rates by matching College courses and programs that match their interest, availability, and preferred learning modes.
4. Consider the establishment of a childcare center based on a business model that is self-sustaining. Use this center as a vehicle to provide educational opportunities for students in the Early Childhood Education program.
5. Where justified by demand, offer classes and programs at off-campus sites. Middle schools and high schools in cooperating school districts may provide space at no cost to the College.
6. Celebrate the College's demographics in public forums, including accelerated marketing. Seek to educate stakeholders about Cañada's role as a nexus in promoting diversity.
7. Link with Community Based Organizations to share curricula, especially competencies for English as a Second Language courses, and to provide seamless transitions for learners from these programs to enter Cañada.
8. Intensify efforts to locate, recruit, and retain a diverse faculty and professional staff not simply by advertising, but by networking with professional and trade associations, and by "growing our own" future professionals by actively supporting promising students of Color to pursue further education that leads to future professional employment at Cañada.

c. Success Factors (Visible measures of goal attainment. To be developed in operational planning: specific activities, responsible parties, and target dates)

1. An increase in market share of students of Color.
2. An increase in the market share of older adults.

3. An increase in the proportion of faculty and staff drawn from non-white ethnic groups represented in southern San Mateo County.

Goal Four: *Review current programs for underprepared students.*

a. Rationale.

An increasing number of students entering Cañada will require one or more remedial courses to succeed in subsequent college-level work. These students will require extra help in math, English, and/or reading. The success of these learners--many of whom are minority, first-generation, and/or low-income students--will determine the long-term viability of the College's transfer and career and technical programs. It is likely that the College will be doing more in this area, rather than less. Downward and level trends in developmental enrollment areas are counterintuitive to what is now known about the preparation of high schools students and literacy levels in society in general. Moving current and future students through required remedial sequences in an expeditious manner while maintaining quality outcomes is a critical task.

b. Suggested Strategies (to be developed/refined by operational planning):

1. Review enrollments in developmental education in closer detail to determine the reasons for enrollment declines. It would be helpful for future strategy to know whether declines are based on greater competition from other providers, changes in placement scores, the effect of secondary school reform, or other issues.
2. Share the progress of developmental students with the secondary schools that they attended immediately before their enrollment at Cañada College.
3. Nurture a culture of inquiry in which data and best practices that drive success in the remedial program are easily available. Routinely study, and act upon, the factors that promote success of remedial completers in transfer courses.
3. Articulate the competencies required at each stage of the remedial curriculum. More clearly identify any gaps between the Remedial curriculum and the "regular" curriculum.
4. Similarly, identify the gaps between successful performance on K-12's California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE) and those competencies measured by the COMPASS test used by Cañada to place students in appropriate math, English, and reading classes. Make parents and K-12 more aware of these

gaps to stem false expectations about college and to identify strategies that can help high school juniors, seniors, and/or dropouts prepare more adequately for college entry.

5. Host parent meetings to discuss college success, especially reaching out to parents of middle school students, in particular among low-income and minority serving schools.

c. Success Factors (Visible measures of goal attainment. To be developed via operational planning: specific activities, responsible parties, and target dates)

1. Publish and act upon student progression data through remedial curricula and onward through college-level classes.

2. A written report that illustrates the gap between Remedial competencies, the CAHSEE , and Cañada's college-level curriculum. Periodic updates to that report.

Goal Five: *Increase entrepreneurial actions across the College by seeking new revenue sources.*

a. Rationale.

While state assistance and fees provide predictable support for Cañada College to meet current operations, revenue from these sources provides little flexibility to meet new challenges. The goals proposed by this plan as well as other realities that Cañada will face will require additional resources. Recruitment and retention of increasing numbers of low-income and minority students while meeting the needs of current students, for example, cannot be accomplished without recognition of additional cost. Enhancements and alterations to curricula also are not inexpensive. To meet these challenges, Cañada will need to develop current opportunities and seek new pathways to increased revenue. The College presently is seeking to hire a development director, a promising start to creating the necessary base to take on new initiatives.

b. Suggested Strategies (to be developed/refined by operational planning):

1. Increase the number of grant proposals to external agencies, especially to the National Science Foundation and private foundations to supplement its successful proposals to Title IV federal TRIO programs and Title V programs.

2. Become more aggressive in providing short-term, focused training opportunities for employers in Cañada County. Such activities may not generate

large sums but can extend the College's existing networks in ways that help it identify other opportunities

c. Success Factors (Visible measures of goal attainment. To be developed via operational planning: specific activities, responsible parties, and target dates)

1. Successful submission of funding proposals for Title IV grants and contracts
2. An ongoing environmental scanning process is in place to identify funded opportunities in San Mateo for which the College could compete.
3. Revenue from entrepreneurial activities such as contracting with certain industries for specific training and education programs increases by 10 percent each year.

Goal Six: *Continue to strengthen relationships with the local school districts.*

a. Rationale.

Cañada College and the public secondary and elementary districts have developed a strong working relationship. A proportion of the Sequoia Union High School District graduates enter Cañada immediately after graduation. At the same time, the secondary school dropout rate in SUHSD is significant. All public schools will grapple with new "high stakes" testing standards. Both parties should address these issues through combined efforts. Joint efforts to penetrate more deeply middle and high schools that serve minority and low-income students and their families will also pay dividends in coming years.

b. Suggested Strategies (to be developed/refined by operational planning):

1. An expanded early/middle college effort would increase both the high school graduation and higher education participation rates of low-income and minority high school youth. Such work should seek to systematically educate students as young as 6th grade and their parents about college opportunities and necessary preparation.
2. Conduct regular faculty-to-faculty and administrator-to-administrator meetings to align curriculum, develop common assessments, and to develop programming to increase the awareness of students about their career and further education opportunities available at Cañada College.
3. Pursue ongoing contact with secondary schools to share information about

competencies required for student success at Cañada.

c. Success Factors (Visible measures of goal attainment. To be developed via operational planning: specific activities, responsible parties, and target dates)

1. Presentations are made each year by College faculty and staff to students in all the middle schools in the San Mateo County
2. Faculty from Cañada and teachers from the local high schools meet regularly to discuss curriculum alignment issues, particularly in math and English disciplines.

Goal Seven: *Reexamine the format and delivery options for all courses.*

a. Rationale.

The objectives that learners seek vary widely and to satisfy those objectives they choose learning models that match their interests, available time, and resources. An increasing truism in American higher education is that talent knows no boundaries. Learners, including adults who commute to work in ever more congested conditions, are increasingly cautious about how they allocate their time. Development of alternative formats (compressed, 5 week, 8 week, Saturday) for courses as well as accelerated alternative, on-line delivery strategies (Internet, hybrid, technology-enabled) will help Cañada meet learner needs and can ease the land-based scheduling burden while helping to alleviate crowded campuses. Pending acquisition by the San Mateo Community College District of a course management system will permit this flexibility.

The total curriculum should be less reliant on “seat time.” Expressed as units of learning, competencies become the method by which courses are “bundled” and “unbundled,” allowing flexibility in delivery that is presently constrained by the standard academic term and lack of classroom seats at peak times.

b. Suggested Strategies (to be developed/refined by operational planning):

1. Express existing courses in competencies and share these competencies with current and prospective learners as well as employers. Use the language of competencies to drive college-wide discussions of learner needs.
2. Pursuit of competency-based learning models does not mean re-inventing the wheel. Cañada should consider relying on the Secretary’s Commission on National Standards (SCANS) repository as well as it should consider participating in learning object repositories. Synergies can be reached with recent work at the College in expressing general education competencies and the other recommendations in this plan to revisit remedial competencies.

3. Engage faculty in professional development aimed at using learning platforms and embedding technology in courses. Identify learning competencies, the unbundling of course content tied to these competencies, and the reuse of this unbundled content (learning objects) in other courses, both credit and non-credit.

4. Survey potential and existing students and faculty about scheduling options and delivery options. Interviews conducted during the strategic planning process indicates that students support an increased menu of afternoon and weekend offerings, two time periods during which the College has substantial capacity. Students also expressed considerable interest in expanded on-line learning alternatives. These findings should be supported by other evidence.

c. Success Factors (Visible measures of goal attainment. To be developed: specific activities, responsible parties, and target dates)

1. Ten (10) percent increase in the number of classes offered on-line each year to 2015.

2. Ten (10) percent increase in classes offered Saturdays and Monday through Friday in the 12 p.m. to 5 p.m. time block each year to 2015.