

Category 2 – Strategic Planning

2.1 Strategy Development

a. Strategy Development Process

2.1a(1) In November 2004, RCTC reconvened a Strategic Planning Task Force. This was the second iteration of the Strategic Planning Process. The first iteration began in March 2000 and was completed in 2001. Several refinements have been made to the process. First, the Strategic Planning Process (SPP) is now linked to the Integrated Planning Process (**Figure 2.1-1**). Second, the process by which participants were chosen to participate in strategic planning was refined. In 2000, the group was known as the Futures Task Force, and was comprised of 35 internal and external representatives. The new Strategic Planning Task Force included 20 representatives from faculty, staff, administration, key partners, students, and other stakeholders. Internal representation was composed of members of the President’s Advisory Council (PAC). The PAC includes collective bargaining representatives or their selected designees. The Student Senate also designated one Student Senator to sit on the planning group. External representation comes from the community and includes a representative from each of the University Center Rochester (UCR) partners, the UCR Advisory Council, the Greater Rochester Area University Center (GRAUC), the Rochester Public Schools, and the Rochester Area Chamber of Commerce. This reconstructed task force was designed to balance the inclusion of key internal and external stakeholders and to shorten the SPP cycle time.

A third refinement was the reduction in the number of steps/phases in the process. This change resulted in a five-month versus eighteen-month cycle time for the process. The 2000 cycle was intensive due to it being the first comprehensive plan since the merger of MN Riverland Technical College and Rochester Community College in 1996. In 2000, substantial time was spent on crafting signature statements including vision and mission statements with definitions for key terms. This year’s process also included the addition of two targeted electronic surveys. The first was to all staff and was called “The Magic of Three Survey.” It asked staff to provide three responses for each of the following questions:

- What does RCTC do well?
- What are the biggest challenges RCTC faces?
- What hinders our progress?
- What should the College focus on? and
- What is one big goal would you’d like the College to set?

The second survey was the “Survey of Stakeholders.” This included the creation of a target group of elected officials,

business and industry leaders, community leaders, program and department leaders, student senators and other key constituencies. This group was asked to prioritize strategic directions for the College that flowed into the SPP as part of the Landscape Analysis and Organizational Review Phases.

The SPP and IPP (Integrated Planning Process) have two foci: one strategic, the other operational (**Figure 2.1-1**). The outer portion of this figure highlights key phases of the strategic components of the process. The inner portion of the circle highlights the steps comprising the annual IPP process used to establish continuous improvement (work) plans and determine resource (budget) allocations. The SPP and IPP are a major component of the College’s Performance Improvement System (**Figure P.2-3**).



Figure 2.1-1 – Strategic Planning Process (SPP) and Integrated Planning Process (IPP)

In June of 2003, a college team attended an Academic Quality Improvement Process (AQIP) Strategy Forum and declared three projects as its “vital few.” The three projects were:

1. Use data and information to assess institutional effectiveness,
2. Assessment of student learning, and
3. Development of a comprehensive human resources plan.

These “vital few” projects have been embedded into college goals and core institutional strategies.

2.1a(2) The IPP occurs annually and guides the development of departmental-level continuous improvement/work plans. The SPP, on the other hand, will be replicated every three to five years and will guide long-term planning. The SPP includes five phases:

The *Landscape Analysis* phase includes a review of internal and external studies, known as “Design Documents”

(**Figure 2.1-2**). Design Documents aid the College in identifying educational, social, political, economic, and technological forces affecting the College. Design Documents help to unveil the changing and dynamic requirements of various student and stakeholder populations. Results are compiled into a special strategic edition of “Baldrige Banterings”. From these findings, strategic challenges are identified, synthesized, and rated for impact. The strategic challenges ranked as most important are identified in **Figure P.2-2**. The *Signature Review* phase focuses on refinements to current vision and mission statements and college values that define RCTC. These are known as the College’s Signature Statements (**Figure P.1-2**). The Strategic Planning Task Force recommended refinements to each of the Signature Statements. The new vision statement has a greater focus on RCTC being a universal gateway to world-class learning opportunities. This is a reflection of the College’s growth in online learning, the UCR partnership, and collaborations with the Mayo Clinic, Rochester Public Schools, and other partners. A minor change in the mission places more emphasis on serving a growing community. The term “learner-centered” was added as a core college value.

The *Organization Review and Program Analysis* phase reviews, summarizes, and prioritizes findings from previous accreditation and quality site visit feedback reports (**Figure 4.1-5**). An improvement in this planning cycle was the inclusion of data and information from the Survey of Stakeholders. Stakeholders were asked to respond to a series of questions that asked them to prioritize mission-centered strategies. This provided another input guiding the establishment of college goals and core institutional strategies. Stakeholders included elected officials, community leaders, business leaders, partners, college leaders, students, and program/department leaders. They were asked to weight the following strategic areas (and an additional seventeen specific strategies):

- Provide affordable education,
- Be a world-class provider of educational opportunities,
- Be accessible to diverse learning communities, and
- Strengthen community development and economic vitality.

The *Systems and Processes Assessment* phase is informed by Feedback Reports from external quality reviews by the Minnesota Council for Quality, The Higher Learning Commission (HLC), and the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award Program. Each has as part of its framework a focus on process management. The College has identified a Student Learning System (SLS) by which all learner-centered and support processes are organized (**Figure 5.1-1**). Feedback on strengths and opportunities deriving from self-assessment activities are integrated into improvement efforts of key systems and processes that create and add value for students and stakeholders. In the 1999-2000 academic year, a process documenting effort was begun that

continues today that’s purpose is for all work areas to identify and map key Level 2-3 processes that make up the College’s Student Learning System (**Figure 5.1-1**).

Identification of Strategic Directions and Key Performance Indicators phase guides and informs the College’s strategic focus. In addition to this application, RCTC has participated in six accrediting and self-assessment cycles in the past nine years including the 1996 Minnesota Quality Awards; the 1999 Minnesota Assessment Program (utilizing the Baldrige Express sponsored by the Minnesota Council for Quality); the 2000 Minnesota Quality Awards, the 2001 Higher Learning Commission reaccreditation visit (with a special emphasis using the Malcolm Baldrige Performance Excellence Criteria versus traditional accreditation criterion); and the 2004 and 2005 Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award Programs. Results of these past self-assessment and accreditation reviews have been compiled categorically into “Improvement and Response Matrices.” This process helped identify cross-cutting or themes that would serve to identify areas for strategic focus.

In the 2004 SPP, key performance indicators (KPIs) were refined, resulting in the establishment of the eight KPIs depicted in the Strategic Matrix (**Figure 2.1-3**). The number of indicators was reduced from nine in the 2000 SPP. Each KPI has related core measures (**Figure 2.2-2**) that comprise the indicator. College KPIs and core measures have been mapped to the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Accountability Framework. This provides the College with a means for reporting performance to the system office, and still provides for core measures that are similar and yet distinct.

b. Strategic Objectives

2.1b(1) The College has identified four goals and sixteen core institutional strategies that guide continuous improvement and address strategic challenges. The College’s goals, strategies, and key performance indicators are identified in the RCTC Strategic Matrix (**Figure 2.1-3**). Goals align with, and are reviewed annually in conjunction with system-level planning efforts. The College reduced its working goals from five in 2000, to four in 2004 in order to improve its organizational focus based on strategic challenges. Targets for many core measures comprising KPIs are depicted in **Figure 2.2-2**. Each cabinet member established complimentary goals aligned to college goals and then identified core strategies. These goals and strategies are reviewed annually as part of the IPP process.

2.1b(2) The College has identified several strategic challenges in the organizational profile that impact short- and long-term success (**Figure P.2-2**). The College goals directly align to these strategic challenges. The robustness of the Strategic Planning Process and Integrated Planning Process ensures that input comes from the College’s diverse stakeholders, students, and partners.

Design Documents	Data & Information Collected Supporting Planning
Student Populations Student Satisfaction Inventory (1998-2006) and Community College Survey of Student Engagement (2002, 2003, 2005), Priorities Survey for Online Learners (2006)	Identification of student requirements, expectations, and levels of satisfaction; definitions of quality (key attribute ratings); data on five national benchmarks
Faculty and Staff Campus Quality Survey (2000-2006)	Faculty and staff perceptions, requirements, and levels of satisfaction
Prospective Students Lost Inquiry Survey (2005)	Ratings of customer service quality and responsiveness to requests for information; Identification of requirements, expectations; ratings of satisfaction and key attributes
Business and Industry Client Surveys and Custom Training Participant Ratings	Requirements, expectations and perceptions of RCTC; workforce development needs
Non-enrolling Students Non-enrolling Admitted Students Survey (2005)	Non-enrolling customer requirements, expectations, satisfaction, ratings of key attributes, competition identification
Rochester Higher Education Development Committee External analysis of Rochester higher education needs	Governor appointed group to study the current landscape of higher education in the Rochester area to assess strengths and opportunities for expansion of the University MN
Accrediting Bodies and Other External Reviews 1996 and 2000 Minnesota Quality Award Feedback Report, 1997 HLC Focus Visit Report, 1999 Minnesota Assessment Program Feedback Report, 2001 HLC Feedback Report, and 2004 and 2005 MBNQA Feedback Reports	Review of college approaches, level of deployment and analysis of results; summary feedback of strengths and opportunities for improvement
Community Residents Knowledge and Awareness Study (1998-2005)	Top-of-mind awareness; ratings of familiarity with programs and services, perceptions of RCTC, and identification of market needs
UCR Partners, Key Stakeholders, and the Community Survey of Stakeholders (2004, 2005)	Stakeholder requirements, input on strategic directions, satisfaction and overall responsiveness, interactions with the College, and key attribute ratings

Figure 2.1-2 – Design Documents

RCTC Strategic Matrix

RCTC Values	Learner-Centered	Excellence	Innovation	Teamwork	Respect	Fun	
Signature Statements	MnSCU Direction	RCTC Goals		Core Institutional Strategies			Key Performance Indicators
Vision Rochester Community and Technical College will be a universal gateway to world class learning opportunities. Mission Statement Rochester Community and Technical College provides accessible, affordable quality learning opportunities to serve a diverse and growing community.	Innovate to meet current and future educational needs efficiently	Goal 1: Create a Culture of Accountability Through Assessment, Continuous Improvement and Internal and External Stakeholder Service.	1.1 Design a process encouraging decision-makers at all levels to make use of existing assessment tools, utilize data to formulate decisions, and communicate how decisions are made. 1.2 Integrate the practice of continuous quality improvement and ensure a "plan, do, check and act" cycle is incorporated into all College processes.	1.3 Align fiscal, human and capital resources to achieve goals and strategies.			Resource Generation Stakeholder Satisfaction Practiced Values
	Promote and measure high-quality learning programs and services	Goal 2: Enhance Learning Through Improved Instruction, Support Services, Technology, and Facilities.	2.1 Explore alternatives to standard credit based instruction. 2.2 Expand collaborations with K-12, other higher education providers, business and industry and other key stakeholder groups. 2.3 Evaluate staffing levels and ensure employees are deployed and focused on the institutional priorities of the College.	2.4 Align technology and facility improvements to academic plans. 2.5 Focus institutional attention on learner outcomes and experiences that support RCTC's mission.			Student Success Resource Accountability
	Increase Access And Opportunity	Goal 3: Advance Learning Excellence and Improve Organizational Focus	3.1 Develop a systematic process to scan the environment, analyze results, and focus on the future. 3.2 Allocate resources to reward and recognize learning-centered innovations, respect and teamwork. 3.3 Create a framework of college-wide integrated and aligned measures.	3.4 Expand and implement a comprehensive human resources plan that enhances selection, orientation, evaluation, and development processes and procedures. 3.5 Develop a comprehensive approach to enrollment management.			Individual & Institutional Development Process Alignment & Improvement
	Provide programs and services integral to state and regional economic needs	Goal 4: Engage Diverse Stakeholders and Strengthen Enduring Relationships	4.1 Review and realign the work of advisory groups to support inclusive thinking. 4.2 Identify partnerships and opportunities to leverage new resources that better serve students and stakeholders.	4.3 Deploy a plan to cultivate loyalty and use the influence of current students, alumni, and friends of RCTC.			Cultivate & Engage Stakeholders
Strategic Challenges	Demonstrate Accountability	Funding and Resource Allocation	Focus - What's Our Niche	Community Understanding of RCTC			

Figure 2.1-3 – Strategic Matrix

2.2 Strategy Deployment

a. Action Plan Development and Deployment

2.2a(1) The College's strategic plan, is deployed through the annual IPP, and was first introduced in 2002 and has undergone several refinements, including moving from a Microsoft Word template and folder-based approach to a web-based interface. The web-based interface allows identified department and program leaders to input continuous improvement plans and make staff, repair and replacement, capital, and travel budget requests through a common portal.

The IPP is a multi-step annual process that includes all college departments, programs, and entities in the organizational leadership/shared governance system. Each year the Leadership Council reviews and refines strategic goals to ensure their appropriateness and alignment with the MnSCU System strategic goals and annual work plan. Each division then establishes its goals and core strategies. This helps clarify and focus department-level continuous improvement plans. The College has worked to streamline the number of goals, so as to better focus the institution on what is most important and doable. Once established, goals are shared widely through the organizational leadership/shared governance system. Finally, the IPP requires that each program and department undergo a multi-step process to submit continuous improvement plans and make budget requests.

IPP Step One – Self-Assessment/Program and Curriculum Review

First, all non-academic departments must complete an annual self-assessment. Currently, eight standards of performance linked to the College's Design Criteria have been developed and guide the self-assessment processes. Non-academic departments evaluate themselves against three criteria and eight standards using a rubric-based approach that applies both qualitative and quantitative analyses of performance. Standards include:

1. Responsiveness to changing requirements
2. Supports teaching and learning
3. Collects and reviews performance data against leading best-in-class organizations and academic programs, service areas, or processes
4. Work systems
5. Human resources
6. Fiscal and supplemental resources
7. Plan and Do
8. Check and Act

This step informs Step Two – Continuous Improvement Planning. Completed self-assessments are placed in an IPP folder in a College shared network drive. This step was added in 2003, the second year of the Integrated Planning Process. All academic departments and programs

participate in program/curriculum review every three years to inform continuous improvement plans.

IPP Step Two – Continuous Improvement Planning

The second step of the IPP is the development of continuous improvement plans by all academic and non-academic departments and programs. Each academic and nonacademic department or program is required to submit an annual continuous improvement plan. In 2002 and 2003, continuous improvement plans were completed via a manual process whereby designated persons filled out Microsoft Word templates and saved them to a shared network drive. This year's process was improved via the launching of the Strategic Management Software. Program and department leaders access a web-based portal and electronically submit annual continuous improvement plans. The process requires the identification of strategies, action plans, and funding mechanisms. Each strategy submitted in the continuous improvement plan is aligned to key performance indicators, specific core measures, and linked to a college goal. The Strategic Management Software was developed in partnership with Brevard Community College of Florida. The software allows all staff at the College to view the continuous improvement plans for any program or department. Strategies in continuous improvement plans are viewable by college goal, department or program, key performance indicator, or key dates.

IPP Step Three – Cost Center Budgeting and Other Requests

Once self-assessments and continuous improvement plans are completed, budget spreadsheets are finalized. Persons submitting cost center budgets can fill out spreadsheets and submit them electronically through a shared network drive. The budgeting step also provides those completing the process with access to spreadsheets necessary for making capital equipment, repair and replacement, and field trip requests. Budget requests must be supported by continuous improvement plans further supported by self-assessments or other internal or external reviews. The final activity in the process is the Plan and Budget, Review and Decisions stage. This is the stage whereby final budgeting decisions and priorities are established by college leadership and communicated to department and program leaders.

IPP Step Four – Determination of Priorities/Alignment of Resources

Once all documentation is submitted, College leadership determines priorities and makes resource allocations using a defined and mapped process (not shown due to space limitations). The following decision criteria are used as a filter by which to assess, align, and determine resources to be allocated.

1. Consistent with RCTC and MnSCU Strategic Directions with special emphasis on Strategic

Direction #1 (Innovation) and #4 (Increased Access and Opportunity)

2. Addresses a need identified in stakeholder satisfaction surveys
3. Addresses legal, regulatory, or ethical compliance issues
4. Enhances the learning environment for students
5. Linked to IPP Self-assessments or Academic Program Review
6. Truly “world-class” – differentiates and elevates beyond MN borders

The following improvements were made to the IPP Process and Web Interface for FY07:

- Added missing or needed cost centers
- Identified and denoted areas of required focus for all academic and non-academic areas
- Ensured that a strategy submission can be completed and another added without leaving their department page
- Required that all strategies submitted include the submitter’s name
- For training purposes, reiterated that submitted strategies and actions should have a one year versus longer term focus
- In the actions dialogue box, included narrative asking for the inclusion of measures linked to the strategy and related actions
- Enhanced ability to view division strategies by clicking on a link that then displays all aligned department strategies to that division

2.2a(2) Each department is asked to complete a mid-year update and end-of-the-year summary report of strategies that were part of their Continuous Improvement Plans. Additionally, in late fall, the College reviews plans and budget allocations for any adjustments that need to be made given marketplace changes.

2.2a(3) Key short- and longer-term action plans are depicted in RCTC’s Strategy Matrix (**Figure 2.1-3**). One key change affecting programs and services is the impact and demand for online courses, programs, and services. In the past four years, online learning went from zero to nine percent of total college enrollment. The design and delivery of e-learning, e-services, and e-commerce is having a substantial impact on the nature of college operations. The political environment, marked by a continuing decrease in state appropriations and calls for greater accountability, has heightened the College’s strategic focus on assessment of institutional effectiveness, instructional effectiveness, and student learning. The College has developed a multi-dimensional approach to assessment that is detailed further in category four (**Figure 4.1-6**).

2.2a(4) RCTC has identified human resources planning as one of its “vital few” projects required for participation in AQIP. Nearly fifty percent of college personnel will reach

retirement age in the next ten years. Human capital is the most important asset of any organization, and RCTC recognizes this fact. So addressing present and future human resources needs is truly “vital.” The HR Office, in conjunction with the HR Committee, has developed a draft strategic HR Plan that outlines many long-term goals, strategies, and key performance indicators. This plan will be finalized in the fall of 2006 after securing broad constituent input. Space does not allow for further detail; however, Category 5 highlights many of the long-term goals and strategies. **Figure 2.2-1** outlines the 6 HR focused goals and the FY 2007 IPP goals.

Human Resources Plan Focused Goals (3-Year)	FY 2007 - Human Resources IPP Goals
Diversity	Develop and document a comprehensive Human Resources Plan.
Selection	Develop and implement Local Faculty Credentialing Process.
Development	Participate in task force to develop Faculty Awards for Excellence process.
Retention	Continued development of college Human Resources balanced scorecard development, and implementation of system-wide HR dashboard.
Succession	Update the RCTC Affirmative Action Plan.
Ongoing Human Resources Management (HRM)	Continued development of regional initiatives with Southeastern MnSCU Colleges.
	Coordinate activities to facilitate an Office of Civil Rights (OCR) review of the college by the Office of the Chancellor’s designated review team.
	Improve services to internal and external customers

Figure 2.2-1 – HR Plans Long- and short-term

2.2a(5) RCTC has identified eight KPIs with and core measures (**Figure 2.2-2**) for the College dashboard. Key performance indicators and core measures have been segmented to form dashboards for each Leadership Cabinet member. College KPIs are mapped to those identified in the Accountability Framework for the MnSCU System and the Office of the Chancellor. Indicators and measures have been aligned to the College’s strategic directions, and goals are mapped to key student and stakeholder populations. KPIs and core measures have been embedded into the IPP to ensure alignment with department and program continuous improvement plans and budget requests.

b. Performance Projection

2.2b The SPP is on a three-year time horizon and the IPP is annual or one-year. Targets have been set for many core measures linked to key performance indicators where appropriate. It is important to note that some measures do not lend themselves well to target-setting. For others, target-setting will continue in the planning cycle for fiscal year 2007. Many measures are new and/or are currently in development. Targets will be set once approaches to data collection and sources are fully identified. The data interface for RCTC’s Balanced Scorecard allows the

Leadership Cabinet and its members the ability to set targets for core measures composing each college KPI. Targets that have been set are outlined in **Figure 2.2-2** and are explored in greater detail in Category 7. Core measures for many targets derive from the Student Satisfaction Inventory and the Community College Survey of Student Engagement. These surveys will be administered on an alternating every-other-year cycle beginning in the 2005-06 academic year. As a result, targets for these measures will reflect this new administration cycle.

RCTC KPIs & Linked Goals	Core Measures	FY06 Target	FY07 Target	FY08 Target	Figure Ref.
Resource Generation	Enrollment	4485	4530	4621	7.3-4
Stakeholder Satisfaction	Unmet Student Needs	8	Off Cycle	7	7.2-17
	Ratings on Key Attributes	Multiple Targets/Attributes			7.5-8
	Community Satisfaction	56%	58%	60%	7.2-6
	Faculty and Staff satisfaction	80%	83%	83%	7.4-1
	Key Stakeholder Satisfaction	80%	80%	80%	7.2-6 txt
Practiced Values	Welcoming Campus Climate and Campus Climate Benchmark	5.0	Off Cycle	5.2	Available on-site
	Top Management and Leadership Support Benchmark	3.4	3.5	3.6	7.4-7
Student Success	Retention (Fall to Fall)	53%	54%	55%	7.1-5
	Student Goal Attainment	Multiple Targets/Attributes			7.1-2 7.1-3
	% of Allocated Funds Spent on Direct Instruction	51%	52%	53%	7.3-6
	% Distribution of Educational and General Expenditures by Functional Category	49%	48%	47%	Available on-site
	Employee Empowerment and Teamwork Benchmark	3.5	3.6	3.7	7.4-9
Individual & Institutional Development	Staff Development Day Ratings	85%	85%	85%	7.4-10
	EEO / Affirmative Action Compliance	In Compliance			5.1c(2)
Process Alignment & Improvement	Measurement and Analysis Benchmark	3.5	3.6	3.7	Available on-site
	Campus Support Services Benchmark	4.8	Off Cycle	4.9	Available on-site
Cultivate & Engage Stakeholders	Support for Learners Benchmark	Off Cycle	50	Off Cycle	7.5-5
	Service Excellence Benchmark	5.0	Off Cycle	5.2	7.2-12 7.2-13
	Student Centeredness Benchmark	5.15	Off Cycle	5.3	7.2-10
	Concern for the Individual Benchmark	5.0	Off Cycle	5.2	Available on-site
	Economic and Community Impact				7.5-14
	Customer Focus Benchmark	3.6	3.7	3.8	7.4-8

Figure 2.2-2 – Key Performance Indicators and Core Measure Performance