

2007–2010

Strategic Plan

Design for the Future

Higher education is facing a new landscape—one characterized by accelerating change, new demographic trends and aggressive competition among colleges and universities. This landscape is one that can best be mapped by new designs for courses and programs and innovative approaches to teaching and learning. In this Strategic Plan, Dakota County Technical College outlines its *Design for the Future*—a vision that positions the college on a dynamic, challenging landscape.

[make it happen]



DAKOTA COUNTY
TECHNICAL COLLEGE

S.W.O.T.

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats

As part of the 2007–2010 Strategic Planning process, stakeholders were asked to reflect on the major external factors (i.e., opportunities and threats) that could have a significant impact on the ability of the College to attain its new strategic goals. Other questions asked respondents to identify the leading internal factors (i.e., strengths and weaknesses) that could affect the college in its pursuit of new strategic objectives.

[strengths]

- A well-established reputation for providing quality technical education
- A low-cost provider of postsecondary education
- Recent renovations to the physical plant
- A campus-wide focus on student-centeredness
- Increasing numbers of students seeking transfer degrees and baccalaureate opportunities
- Increasing diversity among the student body

[weaknesses]

- Limited physical space for growth or expansion of academic programs
- Limited resources for marketing, recruitment and retention
- No residential facilities on campus
- Limited student life activities and programming
- Co-located with another educational agency
- Limited diversity among staff and faculty

[opportunities]

- Increased industry demand to replace retiring workforce and assist with labor shortages
- Expansion in housing and new commercial development in Rosemount area
- Increased student demand for alternative educational delivery methods (e.g., online)
- Growth in number of unemployed and displaced workers
- Heightened interest in STEM-related education (i.e., science, technology, engineering and math)
- Ongoing development of alternative energy sources
- Increasingly diverse population across the college's service region

[threats]

- Ongoing reductions in public funding for higher education
- Ongoing increases in student tuition
- Lack of public transportation to and from campus
- Lack of support services for immigrant population
- Increasing competition from for-profit colleges, both land-based and online
- Public perception as a vocational technical school, not a college
- Lack of public or subsidized housing near campus

Strategic Goals and P

Goal 1 - [diversity]

Dakota County Technical College will attract and support more students and employees from diverse backgrounds, by sustaining a welcoming and supportive environment for personal and professional growth.

Related MnSCU Goals:

- Raise Minnesota's participation and achievement in post-secondary education by meeting the needs of students with diverse backgrounds and educational goals. **[1.1]**
- Work with other organizations to prepare all young people to graduate from high school and enroll in college ready for success. **[1.3]**
- Reward and support institutions, administrators, faculty and staff for innovations that advance excellence and efficiency. **[4.2]**
- Hire and develop leaders who will initiate and support innovation throughout the system. **[4.4]**

Performance Measures:

- Improved retention rates for students.
 - Improved success rates for students.
 - Achievement of Affirmative Action hiring goals.
 - Increased participation in professional development and leadership training by faculty and staff.
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Goal 2 - [enrollment]

Dakota County Technical College will expand its role in meeting the educational and training needs of students and businesses at the local, regional and national levels through innovative models of instructional delivery.

Related MnSCU Goals:

- Demonstrate high quality in all educational programs. **[2.1]**
- Produce graduates who have strong, adaptable and flexible skills. **[2.2]**
- Provide multiple delivery options for educational programs and student services. **[2.3]**
- Participate in identifying and meeting regional and statewide economic development priorities. **[3.1]**

Performance Measures:

- Increased enrollment in online coursework.
 - Increased enrollment in customized training courses.
 - Increased enrollment by continuing education students aged 25–44.
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Goal 3 - [engagement]

Dakota County Technical College will increase for its students and employees to participate in service learning, sustainability, and civic engagement activities at the local, regional, national and global levels.

Related MnSCU Goals:

- Support regional vitality by contributing artistic, cultural and civic assets that attract employees and other residents seeking a high quality of life. **[3.2]**
- Develop each institution's capacity to be engaged in and add value to its region. **[3.3]**
- Promote accountability for results through a system of accessible reports to the public and other stakeholders. **[4.5]**

Performance Measures

Performance Measures:

- Increased participation by students and faculty in service learning or other civic engagement activities.
 - Increased campus sustainability efforts.
 - Increased number of students and faculty involved in educational exchange and traveling scholar programs.
 - Increased accountability reporting.
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Goal 4 - [teaching and learning]

Dakota County Technical College will enhance its educational and training options in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) disciplines, for both its traditional students and the incumbent workforce.

Related MnSCU Goals:

- Demonstrate high quality in all educational programs. **[2.1]**
- Participate in identifying and meeting regional and statewide economic development priorities. **[3.1]**

Performance Measures:

- Increased enrollment in one or more college level science, technology, engineering or mathematics coursework.
 - Increased program offerings in STEM-related fields.
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Goal 5 - [financial stewardship]

Dakota County Technical College will reduce its dependency on traditional revenue sources through innovative financial and fundraising strategies.

Related MnSCU Goals:

- Maintain an affordable cost of attendance for Minnesota residents. **[1.2]**
- Build organizational capacity for change to meet future challenges. **[4.1]**
- Identify and remove barriers to innovation and responsiveness. **[4.3]**

Performance Measures:

- Increased student access to and use of College Foundation scholarship funds.
 - Increased levels of alumni support.
 - Increased levels of faculty and staff participation in institutional grants program aimed at innovations in diversity, sustainability and retention.
 - Increased financial support from external funding sources.
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2006–2010 MnSCU Strategic Directions

Strategic Direction 1:

Increase access and opportunity.

Strategic Direction 2:

Promote and measure high-quality learning programs and services.

Strategic Direction 3:

Provide programs and services integral to state and regional economic needs.

Strategic Direction 4:

Innovate to meet current and future educational needs efficiently.

Accountability Plans	The Higher Learning Commission: Accreditation Criteria		
	The MnSCU Strategic Plan and President's Workplan		
Strategic Plan	The 2007–2010 Strategic Plan		
Master Plans	Master Enrollment Management Plan		
	Master Academic Plan		
	Master Technology Plan		
	Master Facilities Plan		
	Master Diversity Plan/Affirmative Action Plan		
Operational Plans	Academic Programs	Business & Entrepreneurship Institute	Marketing and Communications
	Admissions and Recruitment	Business Office	Customized Training
	Financial Aid	Registration and Records	College Foundation
	Career Services	Facilities and Maintenance	Auxiliary Services
	Academic Support Services	IT Services	Student Life

A Model for Institutional Planning

The diagram above identifies the various levels of planning efforts underway at Dakota County Technical College. Each of the four levels differs in purpose, scope, goal horizons, and stakeholder participation. The table below illustrates these differences:

Accountability Plans

- Created by accrediting bodies or governing agencies
- Focused on attainment of externally-assigned objectives or goals
- Goals or objectives reflected in all other levels of institutional planning
- Institutional leadership team is accountable for meeting goals
- Guide improvement efforts across five or more years

Master Plans

- Created by internal stakeholders from different campus departments or programs
- Focused on campus-wide initiatives and projects
- Goals linked to Strategic Plan
- Multiple departments and programs are accountable for meeting goals
- Guide improvement efforts across two to three years

Strategic Plan

- Created by broad representation from both internal and external stakeholders
- Focused on mission, vision, philosophy and broad strategic goals
- Goals linked to external Accountability Plans
- All departments and programs are accountable for meeting goals
- Guide improvement efforts across three to five years

Operational Plans

- Created by internal stakeholders at department or program level
- Focused on continuous improvement efforts in specific departments or programs
- Goals linked to external Master and Strategic Plans
- Individual departments or programs are accountable for meeting goals
- Guide improvement efforts across single academic year

Design for the Future: The 2007–2010 Strategic Plan

The Planning Process

In 2002, Dakota County Technical College unveiled its inaugural *Design for the Future* Strategic Plan through the commitment and significant efforts of an institutional Strategic Planning Committee. The 2007–2010 Strategic Plan for Dakota County Technical College builds upon this earlier effort and renews the college's commitment to progressive change through the introduction of a new mission statement, vision statement, and five new strategic goals to follow over the next three academic years.

In fall 2005, the college president appointed the first vice president of institutional planning, who set about conducting a complete audit of all current planning efforts at the college. Results of this investigation revealed a pressing need to consolidate and integrate planning efforts across the campus, through the use of a planning taxonomy made up of strategic, master, and operational planning efforts, all of which required coordination with external governance and accreditation planning efforts.

During the spring and summer of 2006, the college's administrative team conducted planning sessions to design an approach toward updating the current Strategic Plan. As an outcome of these discussions, a comprehensive survey was developed for dissemination to a broad audience of both internal and external campus constituencies: students, faculty, staff, administrators, advisory board members, and community, educational and legislative leaders. The survey instrument was later made available to these various stakeholder groups via the Internet. In all, over 200 individual responses were received, with dozens of contributed comments and recommendations. Results indicated widespread support for proposed changes to the college's mission statement, vision statement, and strategic goals. Respondents also assisted in identifying external threats and opportunities, as well as institutional strengths and weaknesses that would likely influence the college's ability to achieve these new strategic objectives.

The five goals identified in the 2007–2010 Strategic Plan represent bold ideas that will require the collective efforts and energy of the entire DCTC Community. Although the goals may change over time, the college's historical motto of "Education for Employment" remains as relevant today as it ever has in its 35-year history.

vision

Dakota County Technical College will be recognized as a leader in providing quality technical and general education needed for employment in an ever-changing work environment.

mission

The mission of Dakota County Technical College is to provide collegiate-level education for employment that will empower individuals to enhance their opportunities for career advancement and success in a global economy.

philosophy

Dakota County Technical College is a public two-year institution of higher education dedicated to the philosophy that there is dignity in all work and value in individual growth and learning. It is the philosophy of the college that all of its students should have access to quality education that prepares them for rewarding careers. The college values its role in contributing to economic development by providing a knowledgeable and skilled workforce. The college views itself as a full partner in the higher education community and recognizes its contribution to lifelong learning.



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