

Envision the Future for York County Community College

Introduction

At York County Community College, our students' success is central to our institution. Through our wide-ranging program offerings, we ensure the varied needs of our students are met. Additionally, YCCC maintains a strong outreach effort to ensure that the community's diverse learning needs are recognized, and met.

The intent of document is to outline our vision for the next 5-8 years of the college's development. As YCCC continues to position itself to thrive in an ever evolving and increasingly complex environment, this "working document" will help guide the next phase of growth for YCCC and the Maine Community College System.

Vision

York County Community College prides itself as an educational leader for student-centered academic excellence that is accessible, innovative, and responsive to the diverse needs of our students, the community and the State of Maine (June 2004).

Mission

The mission of York County Community College is to foster lifelong learning opportunities by offering quality career and academic programs and to serve as a highly valued resource for training and economic development in York County and the State of Maine (Revised June 2004).

Core Values (June 2004)

- Educational Excellence: Deliver quality programs and instruction.
- Student Success: Reduce barriers to learning and nurture lifelong academic and personal success.
- Our Employees: Cultivate an environment that contributes to mutual respect, open communication, and fairness.
- Community Partnering: Collaborate with business, education, government, and community-based organizations to create solutions to shared community challenges.
- Diversity: Celebrate the uniqueness of individuals throughout the community.
- Service: Provide a caring, supportive and collaborative environment.

Strategic Environmental Analysis

York County Community College (YCCC) serves the southern most county bordered by New Hampshire to the south and west, the Atlantic Ocean to the East, and Cumberland and Oxford counties to the North. The area is comprised of 991 square miles of which 280 miles are water.¹ York County is characterized by moderate poverty, high educational attainment, low unemployment, and an uneven distribution of wealth.

According to the US Census Bureau, York County had an estimated total population of 202,315, which represents 15.3% of the state's total population. York County's population has grown an estimated 8.3% since 2000 as compared to an overall state growth of 3.7% in that same time. The gender balance in York County is fairly even with 51.2% female and 48.8% male. This is also true for the entire state.² The median family income in York County is \$51,096 as compared to the State of Maine, which is \$45,179. Maine's tax burden is one of the highest in the US. Maine ranks 7th in highest overall per capita tax burden as a percent to personal income with 33.1%, first in state ranks.³

York County's racial and ethnic diversity is minimal with 97.5% of the population white. Hispanic or Latino and Asian are the next highest at 0.8% each. Families make up 68.2% of households in York County with an average family size of 2.96 per family.⁴

Growth in York County's workforce segment (defined as the 18 to 64-age cohort) outpaces that of Maine generally (64.6% as compared to 57.6%).⁵ However, like Maine, York County sees declines ahead in this segment as a percentage of the total population. By 2020, this segment will decline to 60.5% of the total population and the "graying" in York County (over the age of 65) will continue to increase to 21% of the population.⁶

Manufacturing (20%), retail trade (15%), health care and social assistance (14%), accommodation, and food services (13%) represent the largest percentage of employment in York County by industry.⁷ York County has one of Maine's lowest unemployment rates (4.1% in 2005, falling to 3.2% in 2006). The civilian employment in York County has increased by 12% since 1990.⁸

The York County homeownership rate is 72.6% with 99,741 housing units. The projected housing units in York County are expected to increase 9% through 2015.⁹ Affordable housing in York County remains a major issue for families. The York County median value of owner-occupied housing is \$122,600 while the State's average is \$98,700.¹⁰

¹ U.S. Census Bureau: State and County Quick Facts, June 8, 2006

² Ibid

³ Bureau of Economic Analysis, Department of Commerce, and Tax Foundation calculations, www.taxfoundation.org.

⁴ U.S. Census Bureau: State and County Quick Facts, June 8, 2006.

⁵ U.S. Census, 2000

⁶ Ibid

⁷ Maine Department of Labor, Labor Market Information Services

⁸ Thomas, Dr. Michael K., *Inventory of Postsecondary Needs & Opportunities in York County & Sanford, Maine*. July 2006

⁹ Ibid

¹⁰ Ibid

In York County, of 127,591 people 25 years and older, 67% have some college. Specifically, 20% (26,076) have some college, but no degree; 8% (10,508) have an associate degree; 16% (19,851) have a bachelor's degree; and 23% (29,346) have a bachelor's degree or higher. Of the 127,591 people 25 years and older in York County, 86.5% are a high school graduate.¹¹

The delivery structure for higher education is changing, especially at two-year colleges, with the use of new technology embedded in computer use, distance learning classrooms, and Internet programs. Nationally, business and industry are seeking a better-qualified and educated workforce with solid basic skills and specific technical skills.

There will be more "part-time" students seeking courses and training at non-traditional times. The numbers of traditional "full-time" students will continue to decline. Financial aid will become an increasing problem for non-traditional students.

YCCC will also experience similar issues to those facing higher education on a national level. Changing expectations, accountability, new delivery structures and increasing competition for students and funding are driving institutions to adapt in order to survive. Support from federal and state funding sources will become more problematic and, at best, will stabilize as a percentage of annual college operating budgets. YCCC will have to search vigorously for alternative sources of revenue.

The legislature and political leaders hold the community college system in high regard. Maine's community colleges have demonstrated that they are responsive to calls for accountability and productivity. In November 2006, an independent advisory group of Maine leaders representing business, economic development, and organized labor recommended a \$20.3 million investment to increase the state's capacity to meet growing demand for skilled workers. This investment will enable 4,000 additional students to enroll in the state's community colleges and bring credit enrollment to around 17,000 from the current 11,000. Within ten years, this group calls for achieving the national average in community college enrollment to 30,000 credit students for a state of Maine size.¹²

¹¹ U.S. Census Bureau, 2004 American Community Survey

¹² *Report of the Governor's Community College Advisory Council*, Maine Community College System, November 2006.

SWOT Analysis

The SWOT analysis was originally completed in March 2004 during the college's most recent strategic plan update. The process included six focus groups and an online survey. The focus groups were made up of faculty, students, alumni, staff, adjunct faculty, and the business community. A total of 412 inputs of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats were compiled from six stakeholder focus groups and online surveys. The YCCC College Council reviewed the original data in October 2006 and the four areas were updated.

The data was reviewed for commonality between responses and then categorized into terminology that may encompass several similar responses in an effort to obtain a manageable and understandable list. The data presented below is not prioritized based on how it is listed.

<u>Substantial Strengths</u> Articulation agreements Closeness and Culture Community Relationships Dedicated faculty and staff Facility Library Location Low Cost / Tuition Quality of instructors Small class size	<u>Best opportunities</u> Career placement / internships Childcare services Dual Enrollment Expansion of academic programs Expansion of business and industry services Expansion of distance education Identify areas of academic excellence Non-traditional students – populations not served Serving the needs of remedial education Weekend College
<u>Critical Weaknesses</u> Academic Advising Awareness and visibility Funding Internal communications Lack of full-time faculty and staff Unclear vision	<u>Major Threats</u> Competition – traditional and non traditional County economic forces Financial uncertainty Limited services to students Perceived value in the community Public perception of the college

Section 2

What will your college look like in 5 to 8 years, and what do you need to do achieve that vision?

Enrollment

York County Community College will focus on recruitment and student retention of students by employing innovative approaches to recruit specific target populations.

- **Enrollment** – Based on the fall 2006 enrollment number and the expected population growth in York County, YCCC believes an enrollment figure of 1,200 by fall 2008 is reasonable. By 2012, enrollment should be 1,500.
- **Workforce Training and Continuing Education** – Increase the population to headcount from an average of 1,300 per year to 2,000 per year by 2012.
- **Retention** – Create a comprehensive retention plan to identify and address barriers to student success.
- **Aspirations & Access**– Expand on the success of the current program and increase the number of dual enrolled high school students to a target of 15-20% of total headcount.
- **Partnerships** – Inventory current partnerships and evaluate the current partnerships. Identify gaps in outreach efforts and strategize how to create new partnerships that will fill those gaps (education sector, corporate sector, community outreach sector, untouched student populations). Expand on similar partnerships as with Southern Maine Community College to offer degree programs.
- **Service Area** – Identify strategies to expand college services that are not being served to capacity and contiguous border area.

Educational Offerings and Delivery

YCCC's vision is to provide quality educational opportunities through exemplary curricula, innovation, partnerships, technology, research and assessment.

- **Instructional Programs** – Enhance current degree programs and add six new occupational related programs by 2012.
- **Distance Education** – Expand distance education opportunities to help the college accomplish its central mission of increasing access to higher education for all Mainers.
- **Full-time Faculty** – Increase the proportion of credit hours being taught by full-time faculty from the current 35% to 50% by 2012.
- **Support Teaching & Learning** – Integrate adjunct faculty fully into the fabric of the college.
- **Partnerships** – Maximize our relationships with area schools, and public and private four-year institutions to address forthcoming occupational trends.
- **Library** – Expand the library and other information resources to meet the expected growth in enrollment and new academic programs.
- **Expanded Services** – Identify YCCC's place in the community and reach out to other sectors of our population.
- **Internships** – Provide access to internships in all degree programs for appropriately prepared students that compliment their educational experience.
- **Campus Distinctiveness** – Create a brand that will make YCCC a community partner of choice for training, education, and lifelong learning that enhances our skilled workforce and an individual's educational goals.

Student Services

York County Community College is committed to offering superior Student Services. These services promote a better learning environment and enrich the educational and career opportunities for all students.

- **Campus Security** – Provide YCCC community members an environment that is safe and secure and part of the culture for the campus.
- **Student Support Services** – Enhance services that help students achieve their individual academic goals by eliminating the various barriers to student success: disabilities, academic preparation, social and economic challenges, assistance with career and transfer decisions, and developing collegiate level academic skills
- **Diversity** – Seek to create a campus environment that is both welcoming and safe for individuals from varied backgrounds and with varied characteristics.
- **Career Placement** – Expand services to meet the needs of students, alumni and local employers.
- **Financial Aid** – Increase the capacity of the college to offer institutional aid that compliments existing forms of Financial Aid.
- **Student Activities** – Create an environment at the college that supports the holistic development of students to not only be academically successful but prepares them to be engaged and contributing citizens of their communities.
- **Integrated Student Management System** – Develop an MIS system that is integrated into the fabric of the college and facilitates a high quality-teaching environment, supports student learning, provides more universal access, and provides the college with a data driven decision-making capacity.
- **Expanded Services** – Explore creative uses of schedules and facilities to increase access to higher education for our service area to include but not limited to Weekend College, late night classes, and early-riser classes (pre- 8 am workday classes).

Finances

YCCC will need to increase its annual funding from various sources to support its goals.

- **State Appropriation** – Increase annual appropriations to reflect growth.
- **Grants** – Increase annual revenues from grants.
- **Federal Support** – Maximize the opportunities that are available and undertake strategies to increase federal funds.
- **YCCC Foundation** – Increase the YCCC Foundation holdings to financially sustain more student scholarships, capital needs, and program development.
- **Expansion Plan** – Secure funding for facilities and campus expansion through state bond and private funding in line with the Facilities Master Plan.
- **Major Gifts Campaign** – Complete the current major gifts campaign conducted by the YCCC Foundation.
- **Outreach Activities** – Expand continuing education and business services to generate additional revenue.
- **Entrepreneurial Activities** – Establish structures that encourage new activities that generate revenue to benefit the college and its programs.

Economic Development

YCCC recognizes its role as a vital partner to the successful economic development of southern Maine. YCCC will support programs that enhance workforce development and will continue to identify and collaborate with organizations that foster business vitality and job growth.

- **Program Development** – Develop programs that will demonstrate the college's intent on offering curriculum with high standards of academic quality, justified in terms of community need, feasible in terms of fiscal and resource availability, and suitable to the college's mission and strategic plan.
- **Center for Entrepreneurship** – Create a center that will become a hub of local corporate development and recruitment, small business development, and area tourism and convention development.
- **Small Business Resource Center** – Collaborate with the Small Business Administration (SBA) and other organizations to create a center that will foster the long-term success of area small businesses.
- **Partnerships** - Provide business counseling, training services, networking opportunities and resource linkages.
- **Workforce Development** - Elevate the current educational level of York County's workforce by actively recruiting new and more training constituents through our Department of Continuing Education and Business Services
- **Community Based Organizations** – Identify and secure partnerships with key community agencies and community-based organizations, which are dedicated to enhancing the local workforce and economic development.

Facilities

Anticipating continued growth in programs, enrollments, and facilities, YCCC completed a Campus Master Plan in December 2005.¹³ The master plan addressed such issues as parking, facilities growth, recreation areas, site access and visibility, and future student housing.

- **Concept** – Buildings are planned on a common footprint module to allow flexibility in adapting to changing program requirements. The plan also makes it possible to phase development in smaller increments as funding allows.
- **Buildings** – A total of six new buildings are proposed in Campus Master Plan. They include:
 - Academic Expansion/Entrepreneurial Center
 - Arts and Recreation Center
 - Student Center
 - Residence Buildings
 - Academic Expansion
- **Campus Surroundings** - Other proposed improvements include
 - Parking lot upgrades to soften the existing large unbroken parking area
 - Basketball or tennis courts and an athletic field
 - New pathways reinforced with lighting, plantings, and site amenities.
- **Access Road to Route 1** – We seek to increase our visibility to the public. Original plans of the college called for the development of a road that would connect Chapel Road and Route 1. The proposed road would divert traffic from Route 109 and ease congestion at the Route 1/109 intersection.
 - Access from Route 1 would greatly increase the college's visibility in the community and the region.
 - Discussion on this issue began with the Town of Wells officials in September 2006.

¹³ York County Community College Campus Master Plan, December 16, 2005.

Technology

Recognizing the critical voids in our current technological infrastructure, the college adopted its Information Technology Strategic Plan in July 2006.¹⁴ The plan introduces solutions that will enhance access to data, services and training, ensure business continuity, and improve customer service experience.

- **Access** – Enhance the offerings of broad and stable access to software applications, tools and services to compete in a diverse marketplace.
- **Standardization** – Develop a process to standardize applications to increase the efficiency of training and technical support.
- **Security** – Increase the sophistication of the networks, services, and protect students and employees' data from compromise.
- **Online Strategy** – Consolidate online activities into a single point of entry for users. This will enable users to connect to their email, online courses, documents, and a wide variety of support materials.
- **Visibility** – Improve the college's marketing presence and visibility on the Internet and usability of the website for students, faculty and staff.

¹⁴ *Information Technology Strategic Plan*, York County Community College, July 1, 2006 – June 30, 2010.