



## Strategic Plan

Maryland Association of Community Colleges  
for the year ending June 30, 2011

### Introduction

Each year the Maryland Council of Community College Presidents (MCCCCP) drafts a Strategic Plan for the Maryland Association of Community Colleges (MACC). The Plan is then submitted to the MACC Board of Directors for review and approval.

The fiscal 2010 Plan, for the first time, included a goal relating to advocacy. In the past, advocacy was always viewed as an inherent part of MACC activities and a means to an end. The advocacy goal was successful in leading to more coordinated efforts among the sixteen colleges to develop a unified message and get that message out to important constituencies.

The 2010 Plan also included a goal labeled “completion.” This goal was included in recognition of a national movement to increase the percentage of Americans with postsecondary credentials and the importance of community colleges in achieving this objective. In the ensuing year, completion has become an even more important issue nationally and in Maryland. Thus, the presidents adopted three completion goals in the 2011 Strategic Plan, in order to give the appropriate attention and focus to the range of issues under the broad label “completion.” Advocacy and Funding remain as carryover goals from the 2010 Plan.

MCCCCP recognizes that it is important for the presidents to be personally involved in achieving these goals, although significant progress will clearly require substantial involvement by college faculty and staff from a number of areas. Accordingly, the presidents established committees to lead each of the five goals. Each committee is listed beneath the goal, and consists of two or more presidents, one of whom is the chair, whose name appears first in bold.

MACC will make substantial progress on the goals in this Strategic Plan during the coming year. The challenges we face to serve the residents of Maryland during these times of dramatic increases in enrollment coupled with significant reductions in state and local funding, demand our utmost commitment and resolve.

Annapolis, Maryland

*Dr. James H. Johnson, Jr., MACC President*

*Dr. Carol W. Eaton, MCCCCP Chair, MACC Vice President*

## **GOAL I. Completion: College Readiness and Access**

*(Altieri, Dukes, Golladay, Viniar)*

Develop and begin to implement a multi-year strategy to enhance college readiness and access by working with the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) and local schools in all Maryland counties to increase the number of high school graduates ready for college. Enhance the effectiveness of remedial / development programs for college entry students who have such needs. Work with a variety of community groups to assist non-high school graduates to pursue adult education programs offered by community colleges and other entities to reduce the number of persons without a high school level of education. Increase the number of Marylanders prepared to succeed in the knowledge-based workforce through a wide variety of post-secondary training and education programs.

### **Objectives/Activities**

1. As MSDE begins to implement “Race to the Top” goals, which broadly include more rigorous college readiness standards, MACC’s chief academic officers will be charged to participate in state-wide work to establish middle school and high school curriculum improvement strategies. This will produce greater curriculum alignment between high schools and community colleges, with particular emphasis on the new federal graduation standards. The academic officers will also be charged to share remedial/developmental education best practices, among other initiatives, to increase retention and success for this important segment of entry students.
2. MACC’s chief student affairs officers will be charged to further promote and strengthen access of high school students to early college programs and adult education learners to college transition programs.
3. MACC will review and adopt, where appropriate, the recommendations from the Governor’s 2009-2010 P-20 Leadership Council’s College Success Task Force, including this group’s definition of what constitutes college and career readiness.
4. MACC institutions will be represented at college success meetings of secondary and post-secondary educators where best practices and strategies will be shared to produce greater college readiness for a larger percentage of Maryland’s high school completers, including readiness for STEM majors. This objective is related to the College Success Task Force recommendations and Maryland’s “Race to the Top” commitments.

### **Outcomes**

1. Agreements and plans are developed that will result in more and better prepared students progressing into college training and education programs without the need for remedial or development courses.
2. Retention and success levels for community college remedial / developmental students will increase.

3. Based on student readiness and greater public awareness of early college credit programs, there will be an increase in the number of Maryland high school students who take community college courses while still in high school.
4. An increase in the number of adult education completers who have transitioned to community college training and education programs can be documented.
5. Most of the College Success Task Force's recommendations have begun to be implemented, with an emphasis on strategies focused on college readiness and access.

## **GOAL II. Completion: Transfer/Career Readiness**

*(Kurtinitis, MacLennan)*

Develop strategies that will both define transfer/career readiness “completion” in broad enough terms to encompass the community college mission as well as to develop and enhance degree/certificate completion and promote workforce readiness.

### **Objectives/Activities**

#### Transfer:

1. Strengthen the Maryland Transfer Compact and market it as a fundamental cornerstone of associate degree completion.
2. Expand 2+2 program statewide competency-based articulation agreements with USM, and possibly other four year institutions, by at least one (e.g., cyber security) and possibly two completed agreements by year’s end.
3. Operationalize collaborative reverse transfer mechanisms with USM.
4. Work with the USM Chancellor to develop financial incentives to promote associate degree completion prior to transfer (e.g., expand the Transfer Scholarship Program and target its funds solely to associate degree completers).
5. Develop adequate transfer advising resources for students and advisors (e.g., a “Transfer Portal” incorporating an accurate and well maintained ARTSYS).
6. Develop and market a Dual Admissions Program with USM and possibly other four year institutions.
7. Develop a marketing campaign to promote a “Complete to Compete” agenda at the state level with drill down effect on the marketing strategies of individual colleges.

#### Career Readiness:

1. Actively participate in the Skills 2 Compete initiative to enhance certificate/degree completion rates 20% by 2012, without compromising academic integrity or the community college mission.
2. Promote a broad completion agenda across our credit and non-credit universe to increase the number of certificate possibilities available.
3. Explore implementing an IBEST pilot at one or several of the state’s community colleges, with intent to replicate at other colleges, as appropriate.
4. Work with state agencies, local Workforce Investment Boards, apprenticeship programs, and other stakeholders to align efforts to prepare more Marylanders for middle-skill jobs.

## **Outcomes**

### Transfer:

1. USM and MACC colleges strengthen the Maryland Transfer Compact to ensure that potential Compact transfer students advance to university admission with junior level status; both sectors actively promote the Transfer Compact in marketing materials.
2. One (or perhaps two) additional 2+2 competency-based degree transfer agreement(s) are completed by Summer 2011.

### Career Readiness:

1. All community colleges have improved their Skills2Compete certificate/degree completion by 3 to 5 percent by 2012.
2. At least one IBEST project has been successfully implemented by Summer 2011 (or at least planned to be implemented for Fall 2011).

### **GOAL III. Completion: Graduation Rates**

*(Hoy, Durr)*

Over the next decade, achieve significant increases in the number and percentage of students who persist and obtain postsecondary credentials, including degrees and certificates, without compromising academic standards or the mission of the institutions.

#### **Objectives/Activities**

1. Define which methodology should be employed for calculating graduation rates (1<sup>st</sup> time/full-time; students earning at least 18 credit hours; student identified degree intent, etc.).
2. Identify which policies hinder graduation.
3. Reduce degree attainment gaps related to race, income and gender.
4. Colleges will develop degree targets and plans for achieving those targets.
5. Presidents will host a **Symposium on the College Completion Agenda**.
6. Task chief academic and student affairs officers with researching best practices and developing strategies to reduce time to degree, including faster pathways to degrees.
7. Task institutional research directors with collecting and compiling information from each community college to help identify available services and practices in support of college completion.
8. Each college, to the extent possible within existing resources, will develop a process to identify students with a large number of earned credits, contact them and encourage them to return and finish their programs or transfer credits back from transfer institutions to earn a degree or certificate.
9. Work with USM institutions:
  - to develop a process to automatically transfer credits back from transfer institutions and award degrees to those who meet requirements.
  - to create two-year completion incentives, such as increased scholarships for two-year graduates.
  - Work to amend the current COMAR regulation that guarantees transfer with 56 credits or an associate degree, by removing the option of 56 credit hours.

#### **Outcomes** (to be completed by June 22, 2011)

1. Each community college will set specific degree benchmarks.
2. Presidents will agree on the metrics and methodology for calculating graduation rates.

3. A College Completion Symposium will be conducted by December 2010.
4. A survey will be developed and administered to identify best practices in support of college completion and reducing gaps in graduation rates.
5. A report will be prepared identifying existing services and practices in Maryland that support college completion.
6. A report will be prepared on best practices and strategies to employ to improve college completion.
7. Criteria will be defined to assist each community college in conducting audits of their non-returning students with large numbers of credits.
8. The COMAR regulation permitting transfer at 56 credits is amended to bestow Maryland Transfer Compact admission only to those who complete an associate degree.

## **GOAL IV. Funding**

*(Pannill, Gottfried, Hoy)*

Develop and implement an advocacy strategy for the highest possible levels of funding of community college operating budget formulas (Cade and BCCC) and capital budgets.

### **Objectives/Activities**

1. Maintain the operating funding mechanisms especially the most important features of the Cade and BCCC funding formulas such as indexing to selected USM institutions, and reaching 29% of per FTE funding of selected USM institutions, and BCCC to 68.5% as soon as feasibly possible.
2. The executive and legislative branches will fund FY 2012 at the minimum of the 2010 level (at least \$200M).
3. All the priority projects on the Community College Capital Improvement Program will obtain enough funding to move forward without losing momentum or local funds. Seek a funding level of at least \$80M.
4. Shift the stance of the state regarding participating in the costs of parking garages and decks.
5. Nurture and provide oversight of the start-up of the MACC Workforce Director position to maximize its positive impact on revenues for colleges.
6. Develop more alternative revenues from grants and contracts. Target \$2.5 million in grants and contracts garnered for Maryland community colleges through MACC.
7. Minimize or avoid the possible transfer of state paid fringe benefits to local governments or the colleges directly.
8. Foster even more cooperation among community colleges to raise alternative revenues/contain costs, including possibly a work group of presidents.
9. Have an extended dialogue and reach consensus with MACC Presidents and the MACC Board regarding funding strategies and priorities.
10. Prepare a Legislative Agenda for operating and capital funding and circulate to the presidents and trustees to work with local and state delegations.
11. Meet with key state officials prior to the 2011 legislative session and during the session.
12. Meet with local delegations prior to the 2011 legislative session.

### **Outcomes**

1. Operating budget funded at \$200M or above.
2. Capital budget funded at a minimum of \$80M.
3. Grants and contracts garnered through MACC total \$2.5M or more.

## **GOAL V. Advocacy**

*(Hetherington, Pappalardo, Pollard, Smith, Williams)*

Generate public discussion and support for Maryland's community colleges, creating a positive climate for them by working collaboratively and proactively with the local, state, and federal government as well as key publics.

### **Objectives/Activities**

1. Secure support from the federal and state government to meet the goal of increased college completion (i.e., degrees, certificates and noncredit workforce credentials).
2. Promote community colleges as a premier alternative to four-year institutions for students starting the pursuit of a bachelor's degree.
3. Develop an ongoing and broadly-based education, communication, and advocacy program targeted to local, state, and federal government leaders as well as the media.
4. Assist MACC staff in defining and communicating the issues of importance to community colleges.
5. Foster the public appreciation of community colleges' contributions to the economic and social welfare of the community and the nation.
6. Communicate community colleges' academic excellence and affordability as well as the opportunities they provide students and businesses.
7. Promote in collaboration with the other state partners, the Governor's Skills2Compete initiative and the role of community colleges.
8. Promote initiatives to enhance college completion through "Complete College: Call to Action" symposium.
9. Provide guidance to college representatives in MCCCPRO as they develop "Student Stories of Success" for which a theme will be developed based on the MACC legislative agenda.
10. Establish relationships with legislative "champions" (i.e., members of the Maryland General Assembly) to seek funding for the state's community colleges and secure an active role for them in the development of relevant policies.
11. Create talking points to lead discussions with elected officials and other key individuals concerning statewide initiatives and the increasingly vital role of community colleges during tough economic times.
12. Establish a core of advocates, including parents of students, business people, and heads of local chambers of commerce among others, who will speak effectively and passionately on behalf of community colleges.
13. Grow and maintain partnerships to secure funding from sources in addition to traditional state and local operating funds (i.e., the American Graduation Initiative, BRAC funds, federal earmarks, foundations, and other grants or private sources).
14. Implement a statewide advocacy strategy to promote the community college message.
15. Task marketing and PR officers with developing promotional literature to encourage students who obtain employment before completing their degrees to continue pursuing a degree based on the benefits of a degree later on in their careers.

## Outcomes

1. A white paper resulting from the discussions at the “Complete College” symposium will be distributed to key elected officials and publics.
2. “Student Stories of Success” will be completed and distributed, including quotes from chambers of commerce and business and workforce supporters.
3. Advocacy plan developed and circulated to presidents.
4. Key legislators have visited college campuses and actively and publicly advocate for community colleges
5. Talking points developed and distributed to college presidents and board members
6. Establishment of learned core of advocates working in alignment with the statewide strategic advocacy plan
7. Grants or other funds have been secured to support partnerships among the state’s community colleges
8. MACCPRO develops a “Complete to Compete” marketing brochure to promote associate degree completion statewide; individual college marketing efforts echo the completion theme.