

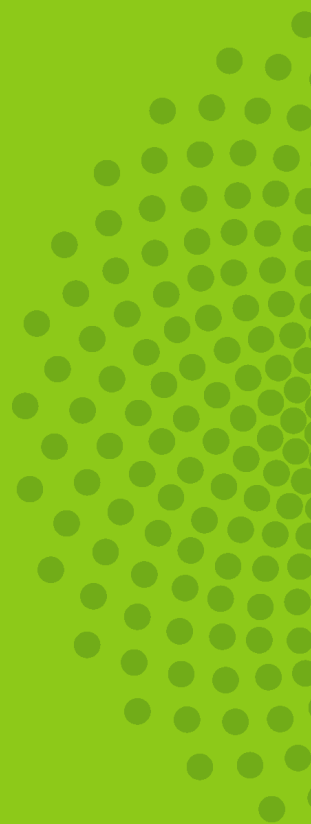
2008-2012

Strategic Plan



Change
Matters





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MESSAGE FROM BOARD CHAIR AND PRESIDENT



At the heart of Oakton's new strategic plan is the challenge of change. It's the challenge of a world that changes so fast, so daily, and so profoundly all around us. It's also the change that has been called for by this College community in and through the process of self-study.

During the 2006-2007 academic year, we embarked in a new direction—reflecting, listening, and speaking about what matters most to the life of the College. The result is this strategic plan—a blueprint that is brave, courageous, bold, and responsive to the many challenges of change that confront us as a learning community. Approved by the Board of Trustees in March 2007, the nine overarching goals, with their accompanying objectives, spell out the priorities we will share for the next five years.

Each of the strategic goals calls us, in its own way, to be more mindful and, informed by fresh perspective, either to do new things or to do old things in new ways. As the philosopher Alfred North Whitehead once noted, "The art of progress is to preserve order amid change and to preserve change amid order."

Clearly, the nine goals exemplify a coherence and a connectedness. Woven into the fabric of change, the threads that are warp and woof reflect what we have agreed matters most: sustaining excellence; respecting everyone and acting without bias; supporting learning, not only for our students, but also for ourselves; being responsible for the earth; fostering global citizenship; encouraging both innovation and accountability; and demonstrating sound stewardship of Oakton's rich resources.

In the months and years ahead, we look forward to making the changes needed for the College to advance its mission in a world where change seems sometimes to be the only constant. As the words of John F. Kennedy tell us, "Change is the law of life. And those who look only to the past or present are certain to miss the future."

Jeffrey H. Rosen
Chair, Board of Trustees

Margaret B. Lee
President

They say that time changes things, but you actually have to change them yourself.

—Andy Warhol



Change Matters

STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

Oakton began strategic planning in fall 2005 and accelerated the process in 2006 when the College decided to integrate its self study for continued accreditation from the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools with the development of a new strategic plan. The College adapted the HLC's Vital Focus process to engage employees, students, and external groups in broad conversations about the College.

Vital Focus offers a rich technique to engage all employees and student representatives in structured conversations about what matters most at Oakton, how the institution is performing, and what projects can best advance the College in meeting its goals. Oakton's Vital Focus initiative and the development of the 2008-2012 strategic plan evolved from three fundamental principles:

- Collaboration among faculty, staff, administrators, and students to develop the plan itself and determine the process for implementation;
- Widespread and frequent communication as the plan developed, with feedback from Oakton personnel, students, and community leaders used to revise and shape the final plan;
- A commitment that the plan would include measures to gauge progress in accomplishing the goals and objectives.

Specific activities comprising strategic planning included the following:

FALL 2005

- President Lee called for proposals suggesting new strategic initiatives and directions for the College, and convened town hall meetings to listen to employees' ideas.

SPRING 2006

- Oakton committed to the Vital Focus process and began making plans for rolling out the program. Vital Focus included a Constellation Survey (College-wide survey to gather employees' perceptions about Oakton and its future) and Conversation Day (off-campus, daylong workshop for all employees).

FALL 2006

- Employees completed the Constellation Survey.
- The College closed and all employees gathered off campus for Conversation Day on September 29.
- The 2012 Team convened to develop the strategic plan.
- The Quick Fix Team responded to Conversation Day ideas that could be implemented swiftly to improve the College.
- All employees received the ideas from Conversation Day and identified those with the highest priority.

SPRING 2007

- Oakton scheduled multiple meetings with faculty, staff, administrators, students, and board members to discuss the draft goals and objectives of the strategic plan.
- Advisory Committee members discussed the draft goals and objectives at the Recognition Dinner on January 31. Advisory Committees, whose members include business, industry, and community leaders, provide guidance to career and technical education and other programs at Oakton.
- Community leaders discussed the draft goals and objectives at a breakfast meeting on February 27.
- Based on feedback, the 2012 Team revised proposed strategic goals and objectives.
- In March, the Board of Trustees adopted *Change Matters: Strategic Plan 2008-2012*.
- The 2012 Team developed implementation tactics for *Change Matters*, incorporating feedback from faculty, staff, students, and administrators.

FALL 2007 - 2012

- Higher Learning Commission visits Oakton for continued accreditation, October 15-17, 2007.
- Implement *Change Matters*.

YEAR 2012

- Develop a new strategic plan. Affirmation or revision of Oakton's vision, mission and values will materialize as appropriate.





KEY CHARACTERISTICS AND TRENDS

External Environment

Oakton's external environment is shaped by trends and characteristics of residents, businesses, educational institutions, public agencies and governments, other organizations, and the economy. The external environment provides the setting within which the College develops and offers programs and services that respond to student, employer, and community needs. The external environment also affects resources available to the College.

To learn about the external environment, Oakton holds numerous conversations with local, state, and national leaders; convenes meetings with employers; reviews public and professional literature; and analyzes data and information about the area, the state, and the global economy. Based on the above studies, the College identifies these important characteristics of the external environment:

POPULATION

- The district's population is stable in terms of size (an estimated 465,000 individuals). Projections indicate that the population is not expected to change significantly.
- The district is becoming increasingly diverse with respect to ethnicity, race, nation of origin, culture, religion, educational background, English language competency, and household composition (for example, single-parent families and multiple generation households).
- The population is well-educated, upper middle class. For example, 49 percent of adults age 25 and above have a college degree, compared to 26 percent statewide and 24 percent nationally. The 1999 median household income in Oakton's district was \$68,940 compared to \$46,590 statewide and \$41,990 nationally. The median value of homes in the last quarter of 2005 was \$416,000, another indicator of the high socio-economic status of district residents.
- K-12 public school systems are strong. As many as 97 percent of high school graduates attend postsecondary education. The district also contains a number of private and parochial schools that offer all levels of education through high school. K-12 officials report an increasing number of students with special needs, including students with physical, emotional, and/or learning disabilities.
- The number of school-age children is stable. Schools do not anticipate significant growth.

BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY

- Employers indicate they need employees who have not only technical skills, but also the ability to communicate, work in teams, think critically, solve problems, and demonstrate responsibility.

- A new multi-company development focused on nanotechnology and biotechnology recently opened in the Village of Skokie. The Forest City developer and Oakton are exploring ways in which the College might provide training for technicians and office support staff.

THE AREA

- With the area's largely developed geographical base, minimum potential exists for added housing. In many communities, older housing is being demolished and replaced by new single family or multiple family residences.
- Local public governments, including five townships and 13 municipalities, as well as library and park districts, have traditions of high-quality service and relative autonomy.
- An increasing number and diversity of schools, organizations, and commercial vendors are offering education and training to residents and employees through distance education, in traditional classroom settings, and at the workplace. More than 50 postsecondary institutions lie within easy driving distance of Oakton.

FINANCIAL BASE

- The assessed value of taxable property in Oakton's district is more than \$21.2 billion. The Property Tax Extension Limitation Law (PTELL) limits the increase in property tax extensions to five percent, or the percent increase in the national Consumer Price Index (CPI) for the prior year, whichever is less. Adjustments are made for annexations, mergers, disconnections, new construction, and increases approved by taxpayer referendum.
- Oakton's district houses more than 25,000 businesses of all sizes. The labor market includes substantial numbers of employees in service, financial, health care, and related occupations at all levels. CCbenefits, a national labor market research company, estimates there are more than 400,000 full- and part-time jobs in Oakton's district. Unemployment remains low.
- Illinois is experiencing serious financial issues, and support for higher education remains problematic. Oakton's revenue from the state continues to decline. Given this scenario, it is unlikely the state's financial health will improve substantially over the next several years.
- State agencies, legislators, accreditation agencies, the federal government, and the public demand more accountability from schools at all levels, including colleges and universities.



KEY CHARACTERISTICS AND TRENDS

Internal Environment

In addition to examining trends and characteristics shaping the external environment, participants in Oakton's strategic planning process reviewed trends and characteristics describing the College's programs, services, personnel, facilities, and other resources.

STUDENTS

- Approximately 43,000 students enroll in Oakton's credit and noncredit courses each year, including courses approved by the Illinois Community College Board (ICCB) and personal interest courses that do not require state approval. Of the enrolled students, 15,400 take Oakton credit courses annually, with fall term enrollments of just under 10,000.
- More than 20 percent of Oakton students already have a bachelor's or higher college degree, while more than half the students who take placement tests require remedial coursework, especially in mathematics.
- Some 39 percent of Oakton students report that English is not their native language or the language spoken in the home. More than 50 different languages are spoken on campus.
- Educational goals are diverse. Forty-nine percent of students plan to transfer, 34 percent enroll for career-related reasons, and 17 percent enroll for personal enrichment or satisfaction.
- More than 18,000 enroll each year in offerings from Continuing Education for Health Care Professionals.
- Oakton students transfer to more than 640 different colleges and universities across the country. Four-year institutions in the Chicago area attract the largest number of transfers from Oakton.

PROGRAMS

- Oakton offers associate degrees in liberal arts, science, education, engineering, art and music, as well as in 30 different career fields. The College also offers more than 100 certificates in career fields.
- Each term Oakton offers some 1,500 credit classes and 1,000 noncredit classes (through the Alliance for Lifelong Learning).
- Nearly three-quarters of credit courses are at the Des Plaines campus; 22-23 percent are at the Skokie campus; and the remaining courses are online or through high schools or businesses. The Alliance for Lifelong Learning offers courses at more than 200 different sites.
- The Alliance for Lifelong Learning's continuing education consortium includes Oakton and four out of the five public high school districts: Evanston, Maine, Niles, and Northfield (Glenbrook).
- Oakton offers more than 90 different online courses that draw more than 700 enrollments each year.
- The College has entered into numerous partnerships with area high schools, colleges and universities, and businesses to expand the number and nature of educational programs and services available to students and employees. Nearly 300 high school students enrolled in dual credit courses in 2007, earning both Oakton and high school credit.



FACULTY AND STAFF

- Oakton employs 154 full-time faculty and some 600 part-time faculty to teach credit courses. The Alliance for Lifelong Learning employs more than 700 part-time faculty members to teach non-credit adult and continuing education courses.
- As of spring 2007, nearly 50 percent of full-time faculty joined Oakton within the last five years, while 25 percent of administrators have served in their current positions for four years or less.
- More than 800 people volunteer their time at Oakton each year. Groups include the Board of Trustees, the Oakton Educational Foundation Board of Directors, the Oakton Educational Foundation Development Council, Advisory Committees, Volunteers in Teaching Adults (VITA), and theater ushers.

FACILITIES AND TECHNOLOGY

- The College has high-quality, well-maintained facilities at both campuses. A 60,000-square-foot Art, Science and Technology Pavilion opened at the Skokie campus in 2005.
- Oakton installed a new student information system in 2006 and new financial and human resources systems in 2007. A five-year replacement cycle for computers ensures that students, faculty, and staff have access to current technology.

FINANCES

- The College continues its course of prudent fiscal management while aggressively pursuing alternative funding sources. The total budget for Fiscal Year 2007 was \$87.6 million.
- Oakton's revenue comes from these sources: local property taxes (48%); student tuition and fees (17%); state government (13%); sales, services, and auxiliary revenues (14%); federal government (6%); and other (2%).
- Homeowners in Oakton's district typically pay just 2.32 percent of their property tax bill to Oakton.
- The College has no debt.
- As of June 30, 2006, Oakton had reserves of \$41.8 million in unrestricted net assets. Of these assets, \$12 million resides in the auxiliary fund, leaving approximately \$29.8 million for special projects and other purposes.
- From FY 2008 through FY 2012, Oakton anticipates using approximately \$11.8 million from reserve funds for infrastructure repairs and upgrades at the Des Plaines campus, and another \$4 million for strategic initiatives that directly support *Change Matters* goals and objectives.
- The Oakton Educational Foundation has assets of more than \$10 million.



STRATEGIC GOALS AND OBJECTIVES 2008-2012

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

We will uphold the preeminence of academic excellence as the engine that drives College decision-making.

- Advance the culture of assessment as integral to improving teaching, learning, and student success.
- Increase student engagement and connections with faculty, particularly as measured by the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE).
- Improve the success and persistence of all students, especially underprepared students.

INNOVATIVE LEARNING FOR LOCAL AND GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP

We will evaluate and change our academic programs and learning opportunities to foster local and global citizenship and to meet clearly identified student and community needs.

- Create innovative interdisciplinary concentrations, especially within the baccalaureate areas, and create new career programs through collaborating with outside partners and employers.
- Increase opportunities to earn Oakton credit by invigorating credit for prior learning and service learning opportunities and expanding enrollments by 25 percent in dual credit courses by 2009-2010.
- Reinvent our use of time and space by revamping our class schedules and course offerings to be responsive to student needs and interests, optimize use of community resources, and foster high quality learning.
- Broaden connections with our external constituencies to ensure our programs and services are responsive to community needs.

WISE STUDENT SERVICES

We will involve all employee groups in developing, enhancing, and delivering services that Welcome, Inform, Support, and Engage our students.

- Plan and construct one-stop student services centers at the Des Plaines and Skokie campuses by fall 2010.
- Implement required orientation for new students, including an online option, by fall 2009.
- Redesign student advising to improve effectiveness and student satisfaction by fall 2009.

ANTI-BIAS COLLEGE

We will continue to transform our College's practices, curricula, and ways of engaging with one another in order to overcome racism and other forms of bias.

- Review and revise curricula to address issues of bias and cultural competence.
- Involve at least 80 percent of full- and part-time faculty, staff, administrators, and student leaders in anti-bias training by 2012.
- Expand outreach to underserved populations, and strengthen networking and support systems for Oakton students and employees.

GREEN COLLEGE

We will respect, conserve, and improve the environment through our academic offerings, learning opportunities, and ecologically sound practices.

- Develop baccalaureate concentrations, career programs, courses, and community activities related to environmental issues.



- Demonstrate stewardship of the environment by reducing energy consumption, increasing recycling efforts, and adopting environmentally sound practices in infrastructure improvements and purchasing decisions.
- Continue to transform and restore our grounds and natural habitat so they are a model for environmental responsibility and an educational resource for students and the community.

ONE COLLEGE: FOUR CAMPUSES

Des Plaines, Skokie, Electronic, Neighborhood

We will make high quality learning available at multiple locations and via multiple delivery systems.

- Increase course enrollments by 20 percent at the Skokie campus by 2010-2011.
- Update and enhance the plan for distance education and hybrid classes, and ensure student success is comparable to students in classroom-based courses.
- Reassign curricula to best location(s) to optimize use of space, enrollments, and high quality learning opportunities.
- Improve Oakton's Web site and other forms of technology for student, employee, and community use.

MODEL WORK ENVIRONMENT

We will develop a model work environment to attract and retain a diverse work force that is best able to serve students and the community.

- Initiate practices to increase collaborative decision making, improve communication, better engage part-time faculty, and encourage respect among employees.
- Institute programs to improve employee health and welfare, and facilitate work/life balance.
- Require and support professional development for all employees.

REINVENTED PHYSICAL SPACE AND INFRASTRUCTURE

We will reinvent and maintain the College's physical space and infrastructure in ways that build an environment conducive to learning and creating community.

- Reconfigure our classroom environments to better support teaching and learning and to improve comfort.
- Enhance study, meeting and lounge space to foster community and meet the needs of our students.
- Invest in infrastructure maintenance and improvements.

FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP

We will use our resources to advance our mission and goals while maintaining adequate reserves for the future.

- Implement innovations, practices and procedures to contain costs of tuition, textbooks, and instructional materials.
- Explore new external funding sources to supplement existing revenue.
- Commit funds each year to support strategic goals and objectives.

We are an institution of academic excellence that acts boldly, with courage, creativity, and agility, to shape our future in a changing global society.





IMPLEMENTATION

MAKING PROGRESS ON GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The 2012 Team identified key leaders and primary committees, departments, task forces, and others who will move forward with implementing activities/projects for each goal and objective. Wherever appropriate, existing committees, departments, task forces, and other groups also have been identified for this process.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Financial support for implementing *Change Matters* will come from several sources. First, many activities will be funded through the College's annual operating budget. Second, Strategic Initiatives—special projects that advance the attainment of strategic goals and objectives which require funding beyond the College's operating budget—will be approved as part of the College's regular budget cycle. Third, external grants and Oakton Educational Foundation support will be sought as appropriate.

MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRESS

Those identified as the leads for each goal and objective will compile information annually about progress, and the 2012 Team will prepare an annual report to the College and the Board of Trustees.

ROLE OF THE 2012 TEAM

The 2012 Team will continue to monitor and guide *Change Matters* through:

- Promoting *Change Matters* as a key document that directs the work of the College.
- Discussing, evaluating, and deciding on Strategic Initiatives.
- Preparing a report to the College community and to the Board of Trustees regarding progress in achieving the strategic goals and objectives. The report will be delivered each fall.
- Monitoring and identifying gaps, new projects, or new objectives to further advance *Change Matters*.

ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

Additional information about Oakton Community College is available on the Oakton Web site at www.oakton.edu and in a number of publications, including the *Oakton Community College Catalog*, *Comprehensive Annual Financial Report*, *Annual Budget*, *President's Report to the Community*, and brochures and newsletters. For more details, call the Office of College Advancement at 847.635.1671.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

In accordance with the Illinois Community College Act, Oakton provides, at minimum, the following educational programs and services:

- Baccalaureate and general education for students planning to transfer to four-year colleges and/or to earn an associate degree in liberal arts, science, engineering or fine arts.
- Occupational education to provide students with career training suitable for obtaining employment or enhancing occupational skills.
- General or developmental studies for students requiring additional preparation before they can begin college-level education.
- Continuing education for residents, employers, and employees of the community desiring classes without having to enroll in formal college-level courses.
- Public service activities to meet specialized needs of the community; such activities may include workshops, seminars and customized employee training programs offered on or off campus.
- Student services, such as counseling and advisement, testing and tutoring.





OUR VISION, MISSION AND VALUES

Oakton's vision, mission and values are based on long-standing and fundamental principles guiding the College's work and the relationships among all those who work and study at Oakton, as well as members of the community and professional colleagues throughout the nation. The vision, mission and values were formally ratified by the Board of Trustees on October 20, 1998. They were reaffirmed by the Board on October 15, 2002.

We are the Community's College

- We are dedicated, first, to excellence in teaching and learning.
- We challenge our students to experience the hard work and satisfaction of learning that leads to intellectual growth and we support them academically, emotionally, and socially.
- We encourage them to entertain and question ideas, think critically, solve problems, and engage with other cultures, with one another and with us.
- We expect our students to assume responsibility for their own learning, to exercise leadership and to apply ethical principles in their academic, work, and personal lives.
- We demand from ourselves and our students tolerance, fairness, responsibility, compassion, and integrity.

We are a Community of Learners

- We provide education and training for and throughout a lifetime.
- We seek to improve and expand the services we offer in support of the people in the communities we serve.
- We promote a caring community of staff and faculty members, students, administrators, and trustees who, in keeping with our values, work together to fulfill our mission.

We are a Changing Community

- We recognize that change is inevitable and that education must be for the future.
- We respond to change informed by our values and our responsibility to our students and our communities.
- We challenge our students to be capable global citizens, guided by knowledge and ethical principles, who will shape the future.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Jeffrey H. Rosen, Chair
Emory W. Williams, Vice Chair
Joan W. DiLeonardi, Secretary
George G. Alexopoulos
Ann E. Tennes
Jody Wadhwa
Steven Spera, Student Trustee

2012 TEAM: STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

Trudy Bers, *Executive Director, Research, Curriculum and Planning*
Paul Boisvert, *Professor of Mathematics and Vice President, Oakton Faculty Association*
Tom Bowen, *Associate Professor of Philosophy*
Kathleen Carot, *Associate Professor of Speech and Theater*
George Chirempes, *Vice President for Business and Finance*
Barbara Dayton, *Adjunct Faculty and President, Adjunct Faculty Association*
Jorell Espinosa, *President, Board of Student Affairs*
Hollace Graff, *Professor of Philosophy*
Tom Hamel (co-chair), *Vice President for Academic Affairs*
Margaret B. Lee, *President*
Bonnie Lucas, *Vice President for Information Technology*
Barbara Rizzo, *Vice President for Continuing Education, Training and Workforce Development*
Paul Sanburg, *Academic Advisor*
Laura Saret (co-chair), *Professor of Computer Technologies and Information Systems and President, Oakton Faculty Association*
Joianne Smith, *Vice President for Student Affairs*
Jillian Verstrate, *Senior Credentials Analyst and President, Classified Staff Association*
Bradley Wooten, *Dean, Division of Social Sciences and Business*

In summer 2007, the 2012 Team expanded to include Carl Costanza, *Executive Director, Campus Operations and Facilities*; Carlee Drummer, *Executive Director, College Advancement*; Arnie Oudenhoven, *Associate Vice President, Human Resources*; and additional representatives from the Adjunct Faculty Association and the Board of Student Affairs.



Des Plaines Campus
1600 East Golf Road, Des Plaines, Illinois 60016

Ray Hartstein Campus
7701 North Lincoln Avenue, Skokie, Illinois 60077

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