

ANNUAL REPORT

FY 2008

Sauk Valley Community College
District 506
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Dr. George J. Mihel, President

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At a Board retreat conducted early in 2006, the Sauk Valley Community College Board of Trustees established the College's strategic directions by identifying:

- A mission statement describing what the College does,
- A vision statement describing what the College should strive to become, and
- Four strategic goals to guide the College toward achieving its vision.

The College's Organizational Planning and Improvement Committee (OPIC) identified initiatives to clarify each of the strategic goals. OPIC provided college-wide input as the committee was comprised of employees representing all areas of the College, and included faculty, professional/technical and support staff, and administrators. The strategic initiatives were reviewed by the Board at its March 2006 meeting, and were utilized throughout the College as each department/area developed its respective annual operational plans.

The fiscal year 2008 (2007 – 2008 academic year) is the second year in which the College has pursued its current strategic directions. This annual report highlights the activities in which College employees have been engaged and the progress that has been made toward achieving the strategic directions.

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STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

Mission

Sauk Valley Community College is an institution of higher education that provides quality learning opportunities to meet the diverse needs of its students and community.

Vision

Sauk Valley Community College will be recognized as a benchmark institution of higher education that provides exceptional learning opportunities in response to the diverse needs of its students and community.

Strategic Goal #1: The College will provide learning opportunities of exceptional quality

Strategic Initiative 1.1: Use data and findings to improve and refine the quality of learning opportunities.

Strategic Initiative 1.2: Develop and expand programs.

Strategic Goal #2: The College will offer the highest value of educational services while being fiscally responsible.

Strategic Initiative 2.1: Financially manage the College so an operating surplus occurs on an annual basis.

Strategic Initiative 2.2: Increase student enrollment.

Strategic Initiative 2.3: Increase resource development.

Strategic Initiative 2.4: Position the College to pursue a referendum

Strategic Goal #3: The College will be responsive to the learning needs of our students and the economic development needs of the community

Strategic Initiative 3.1: Participate in area economic development.

Strategic Initiative 3.2: Develop a comprehensive community survey plan.

Strategic Initiative 3.3: Expand learning opportunities and support services.

Strategic Goal #4: The College, at all levels, will use data to make decisions and plans.

Strategic Initiative 4.1: Create a system to collect, store, analyze and share data.

Strategic Initiative 4.2: Use data for decision making.

PROGRESS TOWARD ACHIEVING THE STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

Strategic Goal #1: The College will provide learning opportunities of exceptional quality.

This strategic goal summarizes the purpose of the College's existence. Its two strategic initiatives stress the use of good information to improve current offerings and to develop new programs.

Strategic Initiative 1.1: Use data and findings to improve and refine the quality of learning opportunities.

In an effort to improve the quality of the College's learning opportunities, staff have increasingly been tracking and using data to analyze existing programs and systems, monitor improvements, and as a basis to recommend changes. All areas have reported using data for decision-making and planning during the past two years. Some of the uses of data pertinent to improving the quality of learning opportunities are highlighted below.

- *Fine Arts and Humanities* faculty conducted research and discovered that students who complete ENG103 do better in 200 level humanities than those who do not complete ENG103.
- *Radiology* investigated the impact of publisher created, online case study and learning activity course supplements for RAD194 and RAD195, and found that the average test scores in RAD195 increased. The online component will be extended and the impacts monitored in RAD294 and RAD295.
- Student participants evaluated the effectiveness and the usefulness of 95% of the programs sponsored by *Student Support Services*. The results were used to develop new events and programming as well as modify existing events.
- The *student needs coordinator* monitored student grades, and counseled those earning poor grades, which often resulted in changes in their academic plans and changes in the support services/accommodations used.
- The most common barrier to attending *IT* sponsored technical workshops was time, as reported in a survey conducted by the *Instructional Technology Department* investigating why more staff do not participate in the free professional development opportunities.
- Course completion data showed that tutors working with special needs students need training on the learning characteristics of students with special needs. Training will be conducted beginning in FY09.
- In an effort to ensure readiness for college-level composition classes, *Communications* is examining Compass composition testing score cutoffs to determine if current cutoffs are in line with ACT scores and researching the practices of other institutions for a basis for comparison.
- *Mathematics* is analyzing exit exam data for MAT080, MAT106, and MAT121, to identify trends and issues, from which they make a plan of action for improvements.
- *Health Careers* is determining the implementation needs for entrance testing for admission into the LPN and ADN programs.

Strategic Initiative 1.2: Develop and expand programs.

During the first two years of the current strategic plan, six new educational programs have been approved by the ICCB (four degrees and two certificates), and we are waiting for approval on three additional certificate programs which have been submitted to the ICCB for approval. Currently, we are investigating

several new programs and are at varying stages between collecting data related to the need and potential of those programs, and beginning to offer classes. Efforts have also been made to develop and expand the services that attract, retain, and help students successfully achieve their educational goals. Examples of College efforts follow.

- Three new programs were approved by the ICCB (Lean Manufacturing Certificate, Emergency Medical Services AAS, and the Hybrid Online Nursing AAS), and three additional certificate programs were sent to the ICCB on which the ICCB has not yet responded (Basic Wind Energy Technician, Advance Wind Energy, and Digital Media Arts).
- A consortium based, on-line nursing program was developed, and plans are to begin accepting student admissions in spring 2009.
- A Pharmacy Technician program will be offered through *Personal and Professional Development* in response to documented area job growth and wage data trends.
- *Technology* is realigning courses in the *Electronics* and *Electrical* programs that pertain to industrial electronics.
- All *CIS* application software courses have updated to Office 2007 with the XP operating system.
- Several *Criminal Justice* courses were revised, added, or eliminated to better align offerings with other colleges.
- The course, Cost Accounting ACC203, was reviewed and updated to assure course relevancy to AAS and transfer accounting students, after comparing with similar courses from Northern Illinois University, Ashford University, Illinois Valley Community College and Western Illinois University.
- HUM150 was developed as an Internet course and offered for the first time during the summer 2008. The course filled up within a week after registration opened.
- *Radiologic Technology* increased the number of laboratory experiments that utilize digital radiography equipment in RAD194 and RAD195 to 75% of all experiments.
- A high school outreach program was enacted by *Fine Arts and Humanities* which featured Sauk theatre majors returning to their former high schools to talk to students about SVCC's programs.
- Humanities scholars were identified and invited to campus in conjunction with Global Awareness. The fall speaker was well received and the audience, which included community members as well as students, was large enough to encourage this as a continuing practice.
- *Information Services* has been engaged in an initiative with the University of Illinois Cooperative Extension Office to use video conferencing technology to offer classes in Amboy. The project has progressed to where the facility will be completed, and the technology will be installed and tested during the summer 2008, with a goal to begin classes in the fall 2008.
- To meet a need identified at the Whiteside Area Career Center, a PSY103 online course will be created.
- *Student Support Services* formed a pre-professional club for students interested in medical and law schools, and staff from Rockford College presented a "pre-med" workshop for the participants.
- *Adult Education* implemented new English as a Second Language (ESL) curriculum, which was approved by the ICCB.
- *Project VITAL's* peer-tutoring program at the Dixon Correctional Center served 92 students and 39 tutors in FY08.
- *Public relations* and *financial assistance* partnered to increase advertisements and promotions of financial assistance by 57%.
- 47 minority students participated in one or more of six leadership events.

Strategic Goal #2: The College will offer the highest value of educational services while being fiscally responsible.

Strategic Goal #2 builds on the first strategic goal with an emphasis on providing the best quality programs possible with the funds that are available. The related initiatives pertain to fiscal management, increasing enrollment which is directly linked to increased revenues, developing our fiscal and human resources, and preparing for a future referendum.

Strategic Initiative 2.1: Financially manage the College so an operating surplus occurs on an annual basis.

Statewide, Illinois community colleges have not seen an increase in funding since FY02, while expenses have continued to rise. SVCC has responded by improving operating efficiencies and reducing expenses. In spite of these challenges, Sauk has generated a cash surplus during each of the first two years of this strategic plan, totaling approximately \$600,000 (Note: FY08 estimate of \$400,000 is prior to the completion of the annual audit). Some of the accomplishments of the past year include the following items.

- Despite expense challenges such as high energy costs, emergency generator and roof repairs, *Buildings and Grounds* met the overall budget amounts except for buying storage gas for the heating season.
- The *Theater* department constructed set pieces that will be reusable in future productions.
- *Nursing* determined that current lab fees cover the expenses of consumable lab supplies and faculty travel after conducting an income/expenditure analysis.
- *Health Careers* saved \$1,000 per year by revising its off-campus clinical schedule so faculty could consolidate site visits and reduce travel expenses.
- Changes to the insurance deductibles, percentage costs, co-pays, and prescription charges for employees were implemented after reviewing costs and comparing them with industry standards in the Sauk Valley.
- *Information Services* upgraded the database and moved Banner to another server, saving the College approximately \$25,000.
- The use of Banner has been expanded to include *Human Resource* functions, resulting in accurate personnel information in a central location.
- *Human Resources* and *Information Services* will develop a job applicant tracking system in FY09, after analyzing and determining that our current manual tracking process is more expensive than an electronic system.
- A new two-year agreement with *Consolidated Management* is expected to increase revenues to the College as the vending machine contract will be managed separately from the food service, and will be open to bid by Sauk.
- The Board of Trustees approved the sale of funding bonds in the amount of \$3,600,000, which will be used over the next three years to support and make technology purchases.
- Staff in *financial assistance* attended eight webinars in an effort to reduce the travel expense of participating in professional development.

Strategic Initiative 2.2: Increase student enrollment.

Student enrollment directly impacts the College budget through the tuition and fees paid by students, and through increased state apportionment. Apportionment is based upon the credit hours generated by

students successfully completing credit classes. Sauk has engaged in a twofold approach to increase enrollment. Efforts have been increased to recruit students, including students from populations who are not commonly served by higher education such as minorities, special needs, and first generation students. Second, greater attention has been given to retaining existing students by offering a broader selection of course options and strengthening support services.

- Apportioned credit hours increased in each of the past two years, by a total of 1,543 credits, or 3.2%.
- 904 students accessed Sauk services through the *high school relations office* during the Spring Semester 2008, accounting for 24% of the credit student headcount for the spring semester. The goal for FY09 is to increase to 25%.
- *Student Support Services* identified and recruited over 200 eligible participants with academic needs who are low-income, first generation, and/or students with disabilities. Over 70% are both low-income and first generation or students with disabilities and the rest are either low income or first generation college students.
- The number of students who accessed *Cross-Cultural Services* increased by 37%.
- Three new classes were developed and conducted as hybrid instructional classes (traditional/online format): PHY175 , PHY201, and PHY202
- The *cross-cultural coordinator* provided translation assistance to approximately 60 individuals seeking ESL/GED information or who were interested in starting their own business through *Small Business Development Center*.
- As many as 64% of nursing students attended one or more supportive programs intended to enhance the retention of nursing student.
- Staff from the *Learning Assistance Center* visited and made presentations about the *LAC* services to 84 classes.

Strategic Initiative 2.3: Increase resource development.

We view resource development to include both short- and long-term growth of our resources, especially our financial and human resources. This includes leveraging current resources such as using our own staff to provide professional development for other staff, growing partnerships with outside groups, investigating the possibility generating our own energy, and of course, seeking additional grant funding.

- Several departments are participating in a feasibility study related to generating electricity by wind energy on campus.
- *Fine Arts and Humanities* created a partnership with the Phidian Art Club, which resulted in an increased number of SVCC theater productions and greater attendance at those events, without an increase in budget.
- Four new qualified CNA instructors were recruited and hired, resulting in an expanded CNA schedule.
- In addition to renewing existing grants, various departments applied for and were awarded the following new grants:
 - Criminal Justice Non Traditional Occupations Grant, *High School Relations*. Grant award: \$3,500
 - Illinois Humanities Council Grant, *Fine Arts and Humanities*. Grant award: \$10,000
 - FMA Foundation Grant, *Instructional Services*. Grant award: \$5,000
 - Job Prep Grant, *Instructional Services*. Grant award: \$5,133
- *Instructional Technology* offered over 20 training sessions and numerous individual sessions free of charge for faculty and staff.
- *Adult Education* and *Project VITAL* partnered to air over 500 radio PSAs and send 800 information packets to area businesses, churches, agencies, and clubs to promote the two areas.

- *Financial Assistance* has increased the number of scholarships available to students through foundations, posted on the Sauk web site by 15%.

Strategic Initiative 2.4: Position the College to pursue a referendum.

In addition to meeting community needs by providing high quality programs and services at reasonable costs, College staff have increased Sauk’s visibility at community events and maintains high visibility in the news media. Some examples of activities follow.

- During the first two years of this strategic plan, *public relations* provided over 11,500 public contacts which included 530 news releases, 7,493 cable television spots, and over 3,500 30-second radio spots. *Public relations* also purchased 3,339 column inches of advertising space and created several promotional publications.
- Sauk functions such as plays, readings, and presentations were well attended by the general public, who gave very positive feedback.
- *Health Careers* had an article about the *Men in Nursing* event published in two state publications.
- *Physical and Life Science* faculty collectively attended more than 12 community events in Dixon, Sterling, Rock Falls, Oregon, Byron, and Nachusa.
- Ninety percent of all *Health Careers* employees volunteer for one or more community or professional organizations.
- The *Student Support Services* director is a member of the Whiteside County Transportation Committee, and is a part of the team writing an Illinois Department of Transportation Grant, which should include transportation to SVCC.
- Six student athletes were added to banners and three new team banners were exhibited.

Strategic Goal #3: The College will be responsive to the learning needs of our students and the economic development needs of the community.

As a community college, Sauk’s focus must continually be on local needs. This strategic goal emphasizes local needs and directs the College to be involved with area development, systematically collect information regarding emerging needs, and expanding programs and services in response to those needs.

Strategic Initiative 3.1: Participate in area economic development.

The economic development activities in the region are well organized and conducted by skilled economic development professionals outside of the College. Sauk supports their efforts directly by being a tool for employee training and development, and as a resource which can be promoted to attract business relocations to the Sauk Valley. The College also participates in economic development through the involvement in local events, and through the programs and services that are offered.

- The College expanded its membership in local chambers of commerce by joining the Oregon Chamber of Commerce, where the Sauk *director of buildings and grounds* serves on the Board of Directors. Sauk already maintains membership in all of the other district’s chambers of commerce, and several state organizations.
- Each *technology* faculty member presented a short program to the Workforce Council, which is comprised of representatives from the private sector and government. A Sauk counselor also regularly attends Workforce Council meetings.

- *Project VITAL* offered intensive English as a Second Language (ESL) tutoring to Finnish employees of Raflatac (a company from Finland) who will be working at the new facility in Dixon.

Strategic Initiative 3.2: Develop a comprehensive community survey plan.

Part of a successful community survey requires the segmentation of target groups with differing needs and experience with the College. Various Sauk departments and staff have established links with local employers, government agencies, and organizations, and routinely obtain information and share it within the College. Sauk also utilizes surveys conducted locally to contribute to a comprehensive view of the area, as demonstrated by the following:

- *Instructional services* participated with the Local Workforce Investment Board (LWIB) to conduct a Community Audit, and shared the results with Sauk committees and administrators.

Strategic Initiative 3.3: Expand learning opportunities and support services.

SVCC proceeded in several directions to expand the learning opportunities and support services available to students, using current resources. This was done by departments partnering within the institution as well as partnering with local organizations.

- *Instructional Technology* provided assistance to faculty, created and implemented tools to develop and evaluate on-line, hybrid, and web-enhanced courses, and provided training to faculty and staff on the use of software and various technologies.
- *Fine Arts and Humanities* and *Student Support Services* teamed up to offer educational fine arts events, for which the majority of students in attendance assessed the presentations as entertaining and worthwhile. Plans are to continue this successful practice.
- *AmeriCorps* provided over 60 volunteer activities in which students could participate.
- Peer tutors from *Student Support Services* provided 366 tutoring hours to 61 students primarily in math, science, and English.
- Students in *Student Support Services* accounted for 744 participants (duplicated headcount) in academic skills workshops and cultural activities.
- *Adult Education* fully implemented staff training, procedures, and publicity, which coordinate with Sauk's special needs office.
- 137 people attended one or more of the six programs offered by *PLACE*.
- Student tutors worked a total of 2,232 hours, and four faculty members contributed a total of 109 hours in the *Learning Assistance Center*.
- *Counseling* partnered with other departments to conduct five workshops on mental health topics.
- *PLACE* received 12 referrals through its social service agency network.
- *FUSE* conducted five programs collaboration with the University of Illinois Cooperative Extension, which resulted in 18 adults enrolled in ESL classes, two enrolled in the GED classes, and one has plans to enroll in the welding certificate program.
- *Health Careers* partnered with the Health Educators of the Rock River Valley to offer two continuing education programs offering CEU's to nurses.
- The *Small Business Development Center* expanded to include a third college partner, which is funded by a grant from the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity.
- *Mathematics* faculty coached students from Dixon High School and Sterling High School who participated in area math competitions.

Strategic Goal #4: The College, at all levels, will use data to make decisions and plans.

This strategic goal overlaps “*Strategic Initiative 1.1: Use data and findings to improve and refine the quality of learning opportunities*” as the collection and analysis of data has been expanded throughout the College.

Strategic Initiative 4.1: Create a system to collect, store, analyze, and share data.

A major challenge related to expanding the collection and analysis of data is related to communicating that the information is available and how it can be accessed. Some of the efforts that are specific to this initiative include the following.

- 100% of full-time faculty participated in assessment activities, and 100% of adjunct *nursing* faculty participated in assessment activities.
- Data tables on student, employment, programmatic, and population characteristics were created by combining information from multiple sources by *Institutional Research and Planning*, and the information was shared with several internal stakeholders.
- Executive summaries of reports to the ICCB have been prepared and posted on the SVCC web site for staff use by *Institutional Research and Planning*.
- *Project VITAL* continues to use VAST, the data base it created, since its grant funder has discontinued using its data recording system.

Strategic Initiative 4.2: Use data for decision making.

As the collection and use of data has expanded throughout the College, “What does the data say?” has become a common question asked whenever changes are being considered. Some of the uses of data are highlighted below.

- By tracking sessions with students, *Counseling* found that scheduled appointments increased by 10% while walk-in contacts decreased by about 6%, for an overall increase of nearly 2%, and they used this information to adjust scheduling to better accommodate students.
- After identifying the most common reasons why students with disabilities withdrew prior to completing their respective programs, the *student needs coordinator* developed and implemented strategies to improve their retention rates.
- *Life science* faculty used data collected from a survey of non-major *biology* students, to demonstrate interest in offering courses in environmental biology and human biology.
- *Student Support Services* saw over 93% of its program participants remaining in good academic standing, exceeding its goal of 70%.
- In an effort to better use and analyze data on a programmatic level, *Institutional Research and Planning* facilitated a process to revise the program review process, which will be implemented in FY09.