Merced Community College District

Strategic Plan

2010-2013

Students are our focus and we are known by their success.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

- A Message From the President .................................................. Page 1
- Strategic Planning Overview and Background .......................... Page 2
- Strategic Plan Foundation Elements ....................................... Page 3
- Strategic Directions – The Plan at a Glance .............................. Page 4

## STRATEGIC GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- **GOAL 1:**
  Assure Student Access and Success ........................................ Page 5
- **GOAL 2:**
  Improve Communication Throughout the District .................... Page 6
- **GOAL 3:**
  Enhance Technology and Systems Integration .......................... Page 7
- **GOAL 4:**
  Partner with the Community .................................................. Page 8
- **GOAL 5:**
  Promote a Sustainable, Supportive and Safe Learning Environment .................................................. Page 9
A Message From the President

A supportive learning environment with a primary focus on student success, a proactive approach to problem-solving, the development of collaborative partnerships, and a philosophy that recognizes strength in diversity—these are the core values embraced by Merced College.

We strive to develop and instill these values in the delivery of our educational mission, all to the benefit of our local communities and the residents we serve. As we face unprecedented growth, changing demographics, and an uncertain funding environment, Merced College must be ready to ensure that it stays true to these values as it implements strategies to meet the demands of the near future.

This past year, the Merced Community College District has been engaged in an important strategic planning process. This process included numerous opportunities to hear from all of our constituent groups, including those we serve in our local communities and members of our own college family. The result is the development of a strategic plan that reflects our values, and one that can serve as a guide and direction for the next several years.

Inclusive and patient in the development of this plan, the District Task Force charged with drafting its final version intends that the wishes and thoughts of all constituencies are reflected in such a way that the plan will align goals, objectives, and strategies with our institutional mission, vision, and core values.

As we move forward, Merced College will continue to face some interesting challenges, most of which are due to our growth and changes in student population. However, the rich diversity of that population, coupled with a supportive atmosphere and a learning and teaching environment that provides the advantages of the latest technology, are essential to the future of our College.

As we create strategies and tactics to improve student success, and by forming partnerships within our local communities, we will make every effort to reach out to our alumni, expand our business and community relationships, and invite them to be part of the Merced College experience.

We can all take great pride in Merced College, which has now provided excellence in education to our local communities for 50 years. We can boast of the achievements of our students and our graduates and the contributions they have made to making this a better community for us all. We can also approach our next 50 years with the confidence and enthusiasm that are the hallmarks of a forward-thinking institution.

I invite you to read the Merced Community College District’s Strategic Plan. Your feedback, comments, and concerns are welcome, and I encourage you to contact us at (209) 384-6100.

Thank you for allowing us to serve you for the past 50 years. I am confident that with your participation in the life of your community college, we can plan for our future together.

- Benjamin T. Duran, Ed.D.
During spring 2010, the Merced Community College District began investigating the development of its strategic plan. The collaborative planning process involved all constituencies of the District and began with introductory meetings with the Educational Master Planning Committee and the President’s Cabinet. These meetings introduced the planning facilitator, methodology, and project timeline.

A listening tour was conducted, reaching out to the entire campus community. Interactive charrette-style meetings were held over a two-month period. Nine independent forums were conducted with the following groups: the Board of Trustees, the College’s Management Team, the Merced community-at-large, the Los Baños Campus community, classified staff, faculty, and students. Outreach was further accomplished through the College’s website, campus video monitors, posters, one-page flyers, campus banners, and posters, as well as email notification to all college departments. An electronic survey was also conducted for those who could not attend a charrette session, and an interactive Facebook page captured additional ideas and input.

The resulting information analyzed the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats the College currently faces. The information also identified the most important issues to discuss during the planning sessions.

A 14-member task force nominated by charrette participants, the college President, and other campus leaders created the draft strategic plan. The task force was composed of a balance of community members, students, administrators, classified staff, instructors, managers, Board of Trustees, and the President. The task force met for three months to discuss the results of the listening tour and to develop the overarching goals, objectives, and strategic directions for the College. It also met several times to revisit and refresh the College’s mission, vision and values statements.
VISION

Merced College will provide students with a transformative educational experience by embracing innovative techniques and practices to empower a diverse college community.

MISSION

In a rapidly changing and increasingly global society faced with great challenges, Merced College faculty, staff, and leadership are committed to continuously improving methods of providing an accessible, affordable, and relevant education that improves the quality of life for all students and their communities.

Recognizing that education is never a mistake, Merced College serves as a gateway to the future by welcoming all students from our richly diverse region. We prepare our students for the next stage of their lives by providing the following:

- A supportive environment
- Committed and caring faculty, staff, and leadership
- Mutually beneficial community partnerships
- State-of-the-art facilities
- The latest technology

CORE VALUES

Student Success
We focus on student access and success.

Supportive Atmosphere
We support an atmosphere of trust where communication and teamwork cultivate a rich environment for teaching and learning.

Proactive
We utilize agility, innovation, and responsible risk-taking to create our preferred future.

Partnering
We actively partner with the community to respond to cultural, educational, economic development, and technological needs.

Diversity
We embrace diversity as a strength of our community and celebrate it in our institution.
The following overarching strategic goals and objectives were developed through the Strategic Planning Workshops. Five goals have been established, each of which plays an integral part in fulfilling the mission and creating the future vision for Merced College.

- **GOAL ONE**
  ASSURE STUDENT ACCESS AND SUCCESS

- **GOAL TWO**
  IMPROVE COMMUNICATION THROUGHOUT THE DISTRICT

- **GOAL THREE**
  ENHANCE TECHNOLOGY AND SYSTEMS INTEGRATION

- **GOAL FOUR**
  PARTNER WITH THE COMMUNITY

- **GOAL FIVE**
  PROMOTE A SUSTAINABLE, SUPPORTIVE, AND SAFE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT
ASSURE STUDENT ACCESS AND SUCCESS

DESCRIPTION

Merced College’s mandate is to prepare students for academic, professional, and personal success. In order to achieve this, the college must provide a stimulating learning environment that offers various approaches to education. The college creates and sustains an approach to student success that relies upon assessment, evidence-based planning, and continuous improvement across all academic programs, student services, and administrative functions.

The following objectives focus on assuring access and success:

OBJECTIVE 1.1
Provide students with support systems, programs, and development opportunities that maximize success.

OBJECTIVE 1.2
Develop and improve student success strategies which are data-driven and research based.

OBJECTIVE 1.3
Increase equitable access for a diverse population of learners with varied interests and goals.
IMPROVE COMMUNICATION THROUGHOUT THE DISTRICT

DESCRIPTION
Communication throughout the Merced Community College District embraces a variety of modes that operate top-down, bottom-up, and laterally. Information and dialog must engage students, staff, administrators, campus leaders, and all those potentially served by the college. Enhancing and extending the positive exchange of ideas in the upcoming planning timeframe is of primary importance.

The following objectives focus on improving communication throughout the district:

- OBJECTIVE 2.1
  Establish operational systems based on collaboration, teamwork, and open communication.

- OBJECTIVE 2.2
  Strengthen intergroup understanding via regular communication, professional development, dialogue, and exchange.

- OBJECTIVE 2.3
  Increase student success by building mutually beneficial partnerships with all groups that educate and support students.

- OBJECTIVE 2.4
  Enhance public relations outreach and develop and implement a branding initiative.
ENHANCE TECHNOLOGY AND SYSTEMS INTEGRATION

DESCRIPTION

The use of technology to support and deliver education is one of the most important goals for the college during this planning period. To support student learning, instructional effectiveness, and staff development, an ongoing program of maintenance, innovation, and education will be undertaken.

The following objectives focus on enhancing technology and systems integration:

OBJECTIVE 3.1
Prepare a Technology Plan that includes hardware/software, policies and training.

OBJECTIVE 3.2
Provide on-going training and education on use of the systems.

OBJECTIVE 3.3
Improve access to information via website delivery, cloud computing, and social media opportunities.

OBJECTIVE 3.4
Evaluate the appropriate use of technology in the delivery of instruction and student services.
PARTNER WITH THE COMMUNITY

DESCRIPTIO

Establishing sustainable partnerships within and throughout local communities is an essential part of the college’s ability to fulfill its mission. This includes all groups on campus, as well as interaction and outreach to groups throughout the Merced area and beyond.

The following objectives focus on establishing sustainable partnerships:

OBJECTIVE 4.1
Develop alternative funding sources through partnerships with businesses, community groups, and foundations, as well as federal and state agencies.

OBJECTIVE 4.2
Improve our articulation with University Systems and P-12 education.

OBJECTIVE 4.3
Enhance alumni relations and involvement.

OBJECTIVE 4.4
Pursue mutually beneficial relationships with the community-at-large.
PROMOTE A SUSTAINABLE, SUPPORTIVE AND SAFE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

DESCRIPTION
Mindful use, care, and sustainability of our physical environment, and conservation of resources will benefit student success and improve the workplace, and campus, climate, and culture.

The following objectives focus on promoting a sustainable, supportive, and safe learning environment:

OBJECTIVE 5.1
Promote environmental stewardship and recycling.

OBJECTIVE 5.2
Develop a campus environment that fosters a productive and motivated team.

OBJECTIVE 5.3
Implement safety initiatives, including safe travel, safe campus, and emergency preparedness.

OBJECTIVE 5.4
Improve campus life for students.
On behalf of Merced College’s Board of Trustees, I want thank the many people who participated in the Strategic Planning process. Because so many have given so much of themselves, the process has been an enormous success.

The Board of Trustees embarked upon this process in 2010. The Strategic Plan has identified the specific initiatives that the college will undertake as it builds toward the future.

Implementing all these initiatives will not be easy. Yet it is clear that the faculty, staff, students, alumni, parents, friends, and community partners care deeply for this college and are committed to working together toward success.

While so many have contributed to the Strategic Planning effort, the Board specifically would like to thank the Task Force Members for their hard work in putting the thoughts of the college community in words.

Sincerely,

Les McCabe
President, Board of Trustees

The former Lesher Library (bottom), now the Lesher Student Services Center, was completed in 1972 and was renovated in 2008. The new Allied Health Center (top) opened in 2009.

The Merced Community College District has served the educational needs of the local community since 1962. As the District celebrates its 50th Anniversary in 2012, we are reaffirming our core mission, which is to serve our students with care, compassion, and with a commitment to their success. Each student who comes to Merced College and each alumni who leaves us can be assured of our dedication to his/her future happiness. With its proven history of excellence in education, Merced College is commemorating the past and preparing to meet the challenges ahead. We look forward to our next 50 years together.

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