



# Strategic Plan Progress Report

## 2007-2008

Dalton State College has completed the second year of its 2006-2010 Strategic Plan. During 2007-2008, the Strategic Planning Committee adopted 19 goals for implementation. Of those, 10 were met. The following summarizes progress reports of goals achieved during 2007-2008.

### Goal 2: Change the public perception of the college.

- The Public Relations Office and the Office of Institutional Research and Planning have commissioned a marketing research firm to do a survey of the community's perception of Dalton State College.
- The survey should be completed by the end of the 2008 calendar year, when it will be used as a baseline for future studies and help increase community satisfaction with the College.

### Goal 6: Explore the possibility of offering a B.A. degree in Liberal Arts.

- Proposals for a Liberal Arts baccalaureate degree formulated during the 2005-2006 academic year were narrowed down to a degree that concentrated on an interdisciplinary degree in international studies. A list of proposed courses was compiled.
- The project was eclipsed, however, by the perception of more pressing needs for baccalaureate degrees in other areas.
- While the design and submission of baccalaureate degrees in English and history for Board of Regents approval has diminished the urgency for creating a new interdisciplinary degree, the proposed degree continues to hold significant promise for broadening the College's range of upper-level offerings.

### Goal 10: Develop additional Bachelor's degrees.

- Three new baccalaureate degrees were implemented in biology and mathematics, each available with or without secondary education certification, and a new major in accounting was put into place for the Bachelor of Business Administration degree.

Preparations were also made to submit proposals for baccalaureate degrees in chemistry, criminal justice, English, and history.

- The library documented and weeded all library holdings in support of the new degree programs. Library end-of-the-year funds totaling \$25,000 were allocated for Biology and Mathematics B.S. degrees. Faculty suggestions were requested and received from the School of Sciences and Mathematics. 529 book titles were purchased, including 154 core titles from *Resources for College Libraries (ACRL)*. These titles directly support the new B.S. degrees in Biology and Mathematics. Also 64 CD and DVD titles requested by the faculty were purchased with these funds.

### Goal 11: Create more hybrid and online courses to provide optimum access to a variety of student populations.

- The offering of 62 online or hybrid courses in 2007-2008 surpassed the goal of 25 such courses for this period and included 10 more such courses than were offered in 2006-2007. The number of online or hybrid courses grew modestly and is expected to continue.

### Goal 13: Achieve and maintain specialized accreditation where appropriate.

- The Schools of Business Administration, Education, Nursing, Social Work, and Technology satisfactorily fulfilled the requirements of their respective accrediting agencies during the 2007-2008 academic year.

### Goal 14: Expand and diversify Continuing Education programming.

- An internal audit of courses/programs revealed that of 313 non-credit classes offered through the Center for Continuing Education, 71, or 23% were new classes, representing a significant expansion of programming. New program areas included DSC Destinations, travel/learning program, and expanded programming for business and industry, including the reformulated Supervisory Academy (23 graduates of inaugural class) and Business Writing Made Simple program (142 students). Fitness programming, including 4 Months to a 5K (89 participants) also represented a new area for program development.

**Goal 15:** Collaborate with community partners such as the Creative Arts Guild, Bradley Wellness Center, and the Recreation Department to plan and promote programs.

- Continuing Education developed a relationship with the Northwest Georgia Healthcare Partnership, the beneficiary of the Four Months to a 5K program that converted non-runners into 5K racers. The NGHP supported the program with publicity and promotion.
- Continuing Education has opened talks with the Carpet & Rug Institute, the carpet industry's trade organization, to see what opportunities for collaboration might exist there.

**Goal 21:** Identify courses for program(s) that will work with library staff to incorporate information literacy instruction into their program(s).

- The division chairs and the library director selected one course (ENGL 1102) in which faculty would work with librarians to incorporate literacy instruction into their classes. Pre-test/post-test and student satisfaction surveys were administered in the Spring 2008 sections of English 1102. The classes showed modest improvement in their understanding of various aspects of information literacy on post-test measures. However, faculty members from the 1102 classes believe that the students benefited more than the post-tests suggested and that their students demonstrated greater understanding of documentation and plagiarism in their finished papers. For English 1102 classes, the student satisfaction surveys showed marked improvement in levels of satisfaction and confidence from pre-test to post-test.
- The School of Technology delivered a workshop on use of the library for information literacy, making faculty aware of the library holdings and information literacy opportunities.

**Goal 24:** Increase the use of DSConnect in all non-Vista courses.

- The Financial Aid Office has increased its promotion of DSConnect as more than just campus email by providing students with information about how to view financial aid information on-line. This appears to have increased awareness of DSConnect to the point that students request more information about financial aid functionality.

- OCIS is presently unable to determine the number of DSConnect-enhanced classes for each semester. Academic Affairs will need to poll each of its academic divisions to determine this number before success in this goal can be determined.

### Goal 27: Implement automated processes and services to improve administrative effectiveness.

- OCIS personnel accepted requests from faculty, staff, and students for needed services and process automations. The following processes and services were implemented:
  - Assisted our Fiscal Affairs Office in the implementation of PeopleSoft version 8.
  - Enhanced the Banner Tranguide to display student ID photo and graduation information.
  - Enhanced online financial aid award letter per suggestions from Financial Aid office.
  - Set up Banner to use online XML College transcript.
- 93% of graduating students stated they were satisfied or very satisfied with the services provided by OCIS. This represents a 2% increase in student satisfaction.

### Goal 28: Conduct a comprehensive review of Core Curriculum course content and delivery methods, especially hybrid formats.

- Pending the USG's design and implementation of a system for comprehensive program review of the general education curriculum and a subsequently announced plan for revision of the Core Curriculum with similar objectives to the DSC goal, action on this goal was deferred until the 2008-2009 academic year.

**Goal 31:** Survey students' interest in non-academic and extra-curricular activities, such as performing and fine arts programs and athletics, and develop programmatic recommendations based on the results.

- The Campus Recreation and Student Life Offices created a survey regarding extra-curricular and non-academic activities. With the help of OCIS, the survey was administered on-line through the DSC portal. The survey results helped the Campus Recreation and Student Life Offices determine the best way to inform students of what is happening on campus, the best times to offer activities and the types of activities that student are interested in. The survey also indicated that students learn about the majority of programming through the campus stall-walls.

**Goal 38:** Explore the feasibility of converting the newly acquired Wood Valley Apartments into student housing.

- A housing demand analysis revealed that nearly 500 students were interested in housing on campus and at Wood Valley. The business plan was similarly favorable, indicating a positive cash-flow to the Foundation should the property be converted to student housing.
- President Schwenn, having received the housing demand analysis and the business plan, **directed the Foundation's chief administrative officer and the College's Vice President for Fiscal Affairs** to proceed with the necessary arrangements for the converting of Wood Valley to student housing in time for as many as 232 students (232 bedrooms at Wood Valley) to move in the units in fall semester 2009. This will require a formal proposal to the University System of Georgia Board of Regents for approval of the student housing initiative.

**Goal 40:** Implement tracking of students and regular evaluation of retention programs and services.

- No action was taken on this goal.

**Goal 41: Identify classes with high withdrawal and/or failure rates and develop intervention strategies for these.**

- From 2006-2007 to 2007-2008 there were slight improvements in the pass rates for ENGL 0098 and MATH 0098, but there were slight declines in the pass rates for ENGL 1101, READ 0098, MATH 0096, MATH 1111, and BIOL 1107.
- In addition to the strategies to cure "killer" classes devised in 2005-2006, the use of Supplemental Instruction, as supported by the final year of the Title III grant, also holds promise in this regard. Its application may be restricted, however, by the end of the Title III subsidies and the fiscal reductions necessitated by the economic recession of 2008.

**Goal 42: Assess academic advising in order to create a system that more effectively meets students' needs.**

- In addition to an expansion of the Academic Advising Center's role through the addition of all entering degree-seeking students to their advising responsibilities, the Faculty Evaluation Committee undertook design of an instrument for evaluating the performance of faculty advisors, a document which remains in draft form. A need for improvements in academic advising is indicated by a decrease from 73% in 2007 to 62% of graduating students surveyed who rated the quality of their academic advising as "good" or "excellent." It may also be plausibly surmised that an advising issue accounts in part for a decline in the College's retention rate of first-time, full-time, degree-seeking students from 67.9% for the Fall 2006-Fall 2007 period to 61.5% for Fall 2007-Fall 2008.