



**STRATEGIC PLAN
2003-2006**

**Annual Progress Report
Year 2 (2004-2005)**

Annual Progress in Institutional Strategic Planning Progress Report Year 2 (2004-2005)

For the second year, 2004-2005, the Strategic Planning Committee adopted 29 goals for implementation during the three-year planning period. Ten of the goals still required ongoing action and was carried over from the first year. Also, three new goals were adopted and will be implemented in the third year (2005-06). These goals are:

Goal 40: The Division of Education will successfully host the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) site visit.

Goal 41: The Division of Business Administration will be admitted to candidacy for the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB).

Goal 42: The Division of Social Work will make progress toward the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE).

At the end of the second year, 23 or about 80 percent of the goals were implemented. To avoid redundancy, the following reports the progress of the goals achieved and not included in the previous section regarding the College's accomplishments.

Goal 1: Pursue grant opportunities and other sources of funding as supplements to state funding. Three grant proposals were submitted during 2004-05, two of which were funded while the third is pending. An ICAPP grant proposal in partnership with Hamilton Medical Center was funded by the University System in the amount of \$57,026 to implement an accelerated LPN to RN curriculum. That program began in Summer 2005. DSC was also successful in receiving a \$450,000 grant from the University System for a Gates Early College grant in collaboration with Dalton High School. The Early College will begin during 2005-06 and will admit its first students fall semester 2006. In addition, the Social Work Division received a Title IV-E Child Welfare Training Grant of \$133,000 to fund 20 full-time students to help the College expand its four-year degree programs and meet the work force needs of the region. Indeed, the grant assisted 9 students in pursuing full-time study and graduating earlier than otherwise. The grant will be continued in the next year with some modifications in policies to encourage more full-time student participation. Meanwhile, DSC was invited to submit a new grant proposal to the Goizueta Foundation. During spring semester 2005, the proposal was refined to include three primary initiatives, and now awaits a final decision. Taken together, these grant initiatives and funding streams have enabled the College to improve its ability to respond to priority needs of the local area in ways that would not otherwise have been possible. The College's effort to secure external funding has proven more successful over the last 3 years than in recent memory and should continue to serve the needs of the service area in an expanded way.

Goal 2: Facilitate the recruitment, funding, hiring, and retention of the best possible faculty to sustain the instructional load driven by increasing enrollments.

In 2004-2005 the College succeeded in filling all but one of its full-time faculty vacancies, usually with its first choice from among the available candidates. The single exception was a division chair opening for which none of the candidates interviewed proved satisfactory. Its responsibilities continued to be fulfilled by an interim chair. Four new applications were completed for part-time positions in the Division of Natural Sciences and Mathematics. One new part-time faculty member was hired from this pool of applicants. This is a decrease of 11 applicants from last year for the part-time position. Four part-time faculty in the division did not return from last year. With the decrease in the applicant pool, there were not enough faculty to cover as many additional classes as might have been taught. One new part-time faculty member was hired to teach the classes offered in Mathematics in Gilmer County. A part-time faculty member was hired as a full-time faculty member, which also depleted the part-time pool of faculty. In other areas, the Nursing Division hired four part-time clinical instructors for the fall and spring semesters to meet the mandatory faculty/student clinical ratio of 1:10. The Humanities Division's part-time teaching pool did increase by the hiring of 13 part-time faculty members to teach English and humanities courses for the Division – an increase of 160% over the 2003-2004 academic year. Although no new part-time faculty were added in Social Sciences Division, a temporary full-time instructor was hired. The selection process used was the same process as used for tenure-track full-time faculty positions. This process necessitated extending the search to find an acceptable candidate. The Division of Technical Education employed twenty-six full-time instructors. These twenty-six instructors played a vital part in providing quality instruction to students.

Goal 3: Renew and refocus the communication efforts directed by the College toward area employers.

The Public Relations Office initiated a relationship with an educational marketing firm, Mindpower, Inc, of Atlanta, to begin the re-branding and renewed communication efforts toward a variety of audiences, including area employers, with the result being recommendations for ways in which the College's message can be enhanced and made more effective. The project was completed by the end of fiscal year 2004-2005 and included in these efforts were a number of publications, print, television and email ads, billboards, a revamped web site, postcard messaging and other collaterals. The initial efforts were directed at traditional-aged students and college prep students in area public high schools. As a result of Dalton State's retainer with Mindpower, a few other communication avenues will be created for the coming year, including specific targeted communications (in brochure, flyer and/or electronic forms) that are being developed for use with the non-traditional population. The firm has also proposed several creative solutions for reaching out to students who may already be employed in the workforce – creating greater awareness within the workplace and helping to help with increased enrollment. Also, a *Dalton State Magazine* has been created and will be distributed in October 2006 that will communicate information about the College's purpose, mission, programs, etc. and will be distributed to 8,000 alumni, area donors, and prominent members of the local business and education communities.

Goal 4: Implement the online BBA and BAS degrees.

During 2004-2005 DSC worked with Albany State University and Georgia Southwestern University through a consortial arrangement, with funding support from the University System, to offer the BAS degree in a completely online environment. Five of a projected six courses were offered. A total enrollment in these courses of 29 was far below the projected figure of 105. Most of the courses in the BAS may be used to fulfill requirements for the BBA as well, and one activity planned under the Title III Grant that began in 2003 was for DSC to offer an entirely online BBA program unilaterally. Coordination difficulties in the scheduling of courses for students in the consortial BAS program and DSC's BBA program led to a decision to offer the BBA in a hybrid rather than a fully online format. No such courses were offered in AY 2004-2005, but one was taught in the summer of 2005 and four are planned for the fall of 2005. Further implementation will continue through 2005-2006.

Goal 5: Position the College as a preferred choice over postsecondary institutions.

The Office of Public Relations initiated and coordinated actions that resulted in the hiring of an educational marketing firm for the purposes of positioning the College as the preferred choice over other postsecondary institutions. The primary charge for the chosen firm was to look for ways to enhance the College's message and to make it more effective. Mindpower, Inc., of Atlanta, the firm chosen to initiate the re-branding efforts of the College, completed a successful year of work for Dalton State, and created new, fresh and attractive collaterals, including a revamped web site, new publications, print and email advertisements, postcards, a new Continuing Education publication, folders, promotional and other items. While there were a number of highlights, of particular note are the revamped web site, which has improved navigation and an appealing look and feel, and the photography used in much of the publications designed by this firm. The high-quality and engaging photographs of Dalton State's current students and faculty provided an authentic and genuine feel to the web site and all printed materials. The Public Relations Office will continue to work with Mindpower during the coming fiscal year to complete projects relating to alumni, the Technical Division, and financial aid.

Goal 6: Investigate the possibility of a combined delivery model for targeted pilot courses, involving online as well as traditional components to provide more flexibility for students.

The modification of the online BBA to a hybrid format partially fulfilled this goal. For the fall semester, 2005, a total of fifteen courses in business, nursing, and technical areas were projected to be offered in online or hybrid form. At the end of the 2004-2005, five hybrid courses were actually offered. The choice of which courses to offer is shaped by a combination of stated need and faculty initiative. Existing online and hybrid courses will be sustained and new courses in these formats added, during 2005-2006. Division chairs and the Office of Academic Affairs would undertake a more focused and coherent approach to determining the need for hybrid courses and how they are to be accommodated within faculty workloads. At this time, the College's ventures into hybrid course technology remain somewhat tentative, compared to offerings available at similar institutions. All the same, DSC will stay current with educational technology and be able to adapt more efficiently to changing demands within its service area while also retaining the benefits of traditional student-faculty interaction. This is important because an expanded number of hybrid courses, offered in the context of specific degree programs, will enable the College to provide the benefits of both traditional and non-traditional forms of instruction more effectively within its service area.

Goal 7: Increase retention and graduation rates.

Advising, retention, and completion formed the centerpiece of the fall 2004 faculty retreat. Revised advising handbooks, testing cutoff “cheat sheets,” and handouts touting “10 Reasons to Complete Your Degree at DSC” were disseminated. Thereafter, under the ARC initiative, the VPAA and VPES conducted division-level training sessions. In addition, the College’s new Advising Center, funded by the Title III grant, began training Master Advisors through release time to work in the Center. The objective of the Master Advisor program is to train all second year faculty through service in the Advising Center. It is anticipated that, over the life of the five-year Title III grant, at least one-third the full-time faculty will be trained. Continuous improvement over time will be judged by the extent to which retention and graduation rates improve at DSC. Benchmark rates have been established by the College at the request of the University System, in which the retention objective will gradually move to 70 percent. As part of an ongoing retention effort launched several years ago, the results to date are mixed. Additional strategies will be developed in the next two years, the total impact of which should have the desired impact.

Goal 8: Fully Implement the RTP 45 hour rule.

Although diminishing, an unacceptable number of students continue to be in violation of the 45 hour rule. At this reporting, conformity with the 45 hour rule is improving, but still not complete. To this effect, the Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs, in coordination with the Division of Humanities and the DSC Testing Center, will work to insure that all students conform with the 45 hour rule and remind faculty advisors of its provisions and the consequences of its violation, both to students and to the College as an institution. Enforcement of the 45 hour rule requires regular attention from all concerned – students, advisors, division chairs, the Testing Center, the Office of Academic Affairs, and the Office of Enrollment Services. The Office of Academic Affairs receives reports each semester of students in violation of the 45 hour rule and contacts their advisors and division chairs accordingly. It also disseminates information about changes in the rule’s application that may emanate from USG sources. Monitoring of students and dissemination of information to faculty will continue. Special efforts will be made to familiarize new faculty with the rule. In the end, the elimination of 45 hour rule violations will bring the College into full compliance with USG policy in this area.

Goal 10: Implement revised/modified institutional effectiveness program.

In January 2005, a revised DSC Institutional Effectiveness Plan and Key Performance Indicators was produced and disseminated to academic division chairs, vice presidents and directors of administrative departments. To reduce the amount of work required by faculty and administrative offices, the revised IE plan provide flexibility and guidelines in assessing educational programs (individual courses and “terminal” programs) and administrative and educational support services. The review process helped the College determine whether the size and scope of the IE program is appropriate for the size and complexity of the institution. It addressed the overarching issue of the amount and usefulness of IE data collected and recommended ways on which certain aspects of the IE program can be pared down. Faculty and administrative personnel workload on assessment has been considerably reduced.

Goal 11: Develop more online courses, including utilization of USG online offerings as an alternative when appropriate.

During the 2004-05 year, two Nursing Division courses, Nursing 1104 (Nutrition) and Nursing 2203 (Nursing Issues) went partially online. The format of the courses was changed substantially to include online testing of end of course and program learning by Educational Resources Incorporated. Meanwhile, in the division, Nursing 1107 (Medical Terminology) continues to be offered online for both Fall and Spring semesters and has recorded increased enrollments since going online. The nontraditional scheduling options also offered by the division were a success and have opened a door to providing a few more nontraditional scheduling options in Fall 2005 and Spring 2006 to meet the diverse scheduling, transportation, and learning needs of students. Elsewhere, DSC continues to offer a growing array of online courses provided by its own faculty, including the Bachelor of Applied Science in Technology Management. There is also one faculty member who regularly teaches online in the eCore program. For the Fall of 2005 six online courses will be available in comparison with six in the in the Fall of 2004 and eight in the Spring of 2005. The Office of Academic Affairs continues to work with the Office of Computing and Information Services and various academic divisions to ascertain demand for online offerings. The Vice President for Academic Affairs also encourages more faculty to consider online offerings and explore the feasibility of more online degree programs, especially if they can be offered in the framework of an inter-institutional consortium. With respect to alternative programming, the Department of Physical Administration has been offering afternoon evening and Saturday courses for many years. Additional offerings were added during the 2004-05 year contingent upon demand and availability of instructors. For example, one Saturday class was offered and the number of evening classes increased to about 6 – 8 each semester. Apart from that, the College offered a number of half-semester courses (B and C Sessions) to accommodate more diverse student needs. Working in conjunction with the Humanities Division, these courses were coordinated in such a way as to allow students to complete a substantial portion of their Area A, B, and E requirements. And the Business Administration Division offered several 4:45 classes which had adequate enrollment. These nontraditional scheduling have been effective and have provided students with a greater opportunity of taking and completing classes at times other than what has been commonplace. The coordination of these times also added a benefit for students trying to complete their programs in the most efficient manner possible.

Goal 13: Investigate the development of cross-registration agreements with other institutions.

The availability of cross registration opportunities was investigated. For the most part, the only students that would be interested in these are likely to be RETP students. For the 2004-05 year, none of the students in the program expressed interest in taking advantage of cross-registration opportunities.

Goal 14: Complete a reassessment of the general education core to ensure that it reflects what students need to know.

Little or no comprehensive evaluation of learning in Core Curriculum courses taught at DSC has been conducted since the Core Curriculum assumed its present form in 1998. In fulfillment of this goal, the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs initiated a survey of learning objectives in Core Curriculum courses applicable to Areas A-E. A committee from the faculties of the Divisions of Humanities, Natural Sciences and Mathematics, and Social Sciences was formed to examine the learning objectives of Core Curriculum courses at DSC and compare them with objectives generally accepted in the USG. This review is still ongoing and any results or recommendations have yet to be made for any changes to be effected at this time.

Goal 15: Encourage learning communities, interdisciplinary studies, and other creative instructional activities.

Learning communities are envisioned as a student retention strategy to be conducted as an activity supported by the Title III grant. In 2004-2005 five learning communities were formed, all confined to Learning Support courses since students in these courses were deemed to be at highest risk for non-retention. Students were linked by classes in different disciplines so that the instruction in one class reinforces learning in the others. The desired outcome is that student performance in learning community classes will exceed that of students taking the same courses outside the learning community environment. Plans have been made to extend the concept in 2005-2006 to include general education courses in the Core Curriculum. Because this initiative is at its beginnings, no definite results can be reported as yet; however, as a major Title III and retention activity at DSC, it will remain a major program and will be constantly assessed as it holds promise for improving student retention. Indeed, the Office of Academic Affairs has discussed the need for a more careful monitoring of learning community registrations with the Office of Enrollment Services and the Advising Center.

Goal 17: Develop/implement a new Honors Program.

The Office of Academic Affairs appointed an ad hoc Honors Committee to investigate the feasibility of an Honors Program and make recommendations for its design, and identify candidates for the position of Director of the Honors Program. Resources available through the Title III grant enabled the College to undertake a more systematic effort, by studying successful programs at other institutions and dedicating faculty and physical resources to such a program at DSC. During the 2004-05 year, upon recommendations from the Committee, one faculty member was released from teaching responsibilities and provided with institutional support to design and implement an Honors Program modeled on the long-established and successful example in operation at Macon State College. With the position of Director filled, the incumbent met frequently and regularly with the Vice President for Academic Affairs to develop the program and admit students beginning with the Fall 2005 semester. In preparation, student and faculty selection procedures were developed, courses identified and requirements for honors credit was defined as well as means for assessing the program's accomplishments and its success as a retention instrument. For starters, three courses in communications, mathematics, and an honors seminar will constitute the initial offering. A plan calls for encouraging students with high academic capabilities to enroll in the Honors program upon which recognition of special achievement will be indicated on their transcripts and at the time of graduation. A full-scale honors program, offering a variety of courses from across the Core Curriculum would

demonstrate DSC's concern for the higher as well as the lower end of the spectrum of student achievement and hold significant promise for enhancing the College's public image and its student retention. In order to fulfill its stated purposes, the Honors Program will be continued after the expiration of the Title III grant from which it derived its initial impetus.

Goal 19: Increase the number of DSC students who continue from the sophomore to the junior year.

The chair and faculty of Division of Business Administration have been working to develop methods for increasing the number of students retained. Their efforts appear to bear some fruits as of the 109 sophomore business administration students who attended DSC in Fall 2002, 46.8% were retained as sophomore or junior business administration students in Fall 2003. Ten percent of those students were retained as non-business students. And of the 106 sophomore business administration students who attended DSC in Fall 2003, 53.8% were retained as sophomore or junior business administration students in Fall 2004. Four percent of those students were retained as non-business students.

Goal 21: Increase participation of faculty, staff, and students in economic development activities with the Northwest Georgia region.

Undertakings with the intention or potential for increasing participation by faculty, staff, and students in economic development activities were carried out principally through the ACE Center, the Center for Continuing Education, and the Division of Business Administration. The ACE Center held a Career Fair to bring students and prospective employers together and maintained intern and cooperative programs that placed students in local work situations related to their fields of study and were served by an advisory committee composed of College faculty and staff. The Center for Continuing Education participated in a variety of functions sponsored by the Dalton/Whitfield Chamber of Commerce and secured an ICAPP grant from the University System to support a partnership between DSC and Hamilton Medical Center designed to enable licensed practical nurses in upgrading their qualifications to those of registered nurses. The Director of the Center served on the board of the Downtown Dalton Authority and in the Target Tomorrow project. Faculty from the Division of Business Administration acted as consultants to several local corporations, completed their obligations under a federal grant which underwrote foreign travel by students and faculty interested in international trade, and sponsored conferences on campus to explore ways of fostering smoother commercial relations between the local Anglo and Hispanic communities. The Center for Applied Business Studies, begun in 2001, was terminated because its functions were considered redundant when aligned with those of Continuing Education, the Division of Business Administration, and the Division of Technical Education.

Goal 22: Advertise certification testing and other services available through the Center for Continuing Education, Center for Applied Business Studies, and the Division of Technical Education.

The Office of Academic Affairs facilitated discussions between the Center for Continuing Education, the Division of Business Administration, and the Division of Technical Education about provision of certification testing and other services. It also oversaw the termination of the Center for Applied Business Studies in the Summer of 2004 because its functions were considered redundant when aligned with those of other units. Clearer lines of communication were established between interested units, especially between the Center for Continuing Education and the Division of Business Administration. The College moved toward greater efficiency and an improved image in its relations with business and industry clients in its service

area. For example, the Center for Continuing Education created a Business Development Committee to develop strategies for marketing academic, technical and non-credit programs of the College to the business community, but work of the committee was stalled due to several factors, among them lack of a Technical Division Chair (a key leadership position in marketing the College to business and industry), the dissolution of the Center for Applied Business Studies, ongoing issues such as faculty pay for teaching in Continuing Education, development of the College's website and its potential as a marketing tool, and ongoing staffing concerns. All the same, the Center is assuming a leading role in the community relative to entrepreneur/small business development and has determined that it would better enhance its marketing efforts through greater visibility on the DSC/CE web site, the Continuing Education Compass publication, and flyers sent directly to the local schools who are teaching programs that encourage students to become certified through the testing process.

Goal 26: Seek state funding for a new classroom building.

The College's Minor Capital project for FY 06 was included in the Board of Regents budget request and subsequently was added to the General Assembly's FY 06 budget through the Senate Appropriations Committee. Though the project survived the Joint Appropriations Committee and was forwarded to the Governor's Office together with the rest of the state budget, the Governor ultimately vetoed the DSC project. But then the Board of Regents added DSC's proposed health sciences building, now styled the "Academic Building," to the Major Capital Rolling List at its June 2005 meeting. This facility is budgeted at \$22 million and will contain 100,000 square feet of space. It will serve as a facility for academic programs, including health sciences, as well as student support programs. It is anticipated that the building will come up for funding around 2010 or so, depending on how quickly the projects ahead of it are funded. Since this project, together with others, is part of the Physical Master Plan Update for DSC completed in April 2005, its ultimate success in securing funding will mark completion of one piece of the master plan and thus relate specifically to the continuous improvement benchmarks identified within the master plan.

Goal 27: Explore on and off-campus parking options

An additional 125 spaces was created on the athletic field with sidewalk constructed on North College Drive to connect parking lot with the main campus. The Trade Center has allowed use of a lot which students can access via shuttle service from Westcott. However, there is still some pressure to provide more parking spaces, especially in light of growing student enrollment and campus master planning efforts. Also, transportation issues such as carpooling, public transportation, fuel conservation will be addressed as part of the attainment of this goal in FY06.

Goal 28: Seek acquisition of additional land for campus expansion.

Early in the 2004-05 Sasaki Physical Master Plan Update process, the Wood Valley Apartment complex emerged as the best option for acquisition. Not only is the property located between the campus and the site of the new Continuing Education Building, its new owners were willing to discuss selling the property. Following protracted negotiations that began in March 2005, the acquisition was completed by the DSC Foundation in late September. Expansion of the campus is vital to the continued growth of the college. There are few building sites available on campus. There is currently no space for student housing and outdoor athletic space is limited. Non-contiguous land would allow for off campus expansion which would reduce congestion and ease

parking on campus. The acquisition meets one of the primary objectives in the Physical Master Plan Update for growing the long-term physical capacity of the campus. Ultimately, this land purchase will help change the face of the College and enable it to move to the next level of responsiveness.

Goal 32: Take action to hire faculty and staff that reflect the diversity of the local community.

As the demographics of DSC's service area have changed in recent years, the College's faculty and staff have become more diverse, especially in the inclusion of females and African-Americans. The rapidly growing Hispanic/Latino element in the local population remains under-represented among College employees. There is still much work to do in this area. The College will continue to seek and act upon opportunities for assertive recruiting among minorities, making a strong effort to attract Hispanic/Latino candidates. For example, during the 2004-05 year, the Office of Academic Affairs insured that advertisements for faculty openings were placed where they would receive the widest appropriate exposure, including media directed particularly at Hispanic/Latino audiences. A more accurate reflection of its service area's demographic diversity will make the College more attractive to students from minority groups as well as the majority ones.

Goal 34: Create incentives for the widespread adoption of new instructional technology.

While no system exists to provide concrete rewards or incentives for the adoption of new instructional technology by the DSC faculty, it is widely understood that remaining abreast of technological innovation and incorporating it into pedagogy where appropriate or promising is an important indication of a faculty member's teaching effectiveness or professional development and may be reflected in decisions about tenure, promotion, and salary increases. Each application of technology will be judged on its merits in discussions between faculty members and their supervisors, guided in part by criteria described in the *Faculty Annual Evaluation Process Manual of Procedure* adopted in 2003 and revised in the spring of 2005. The Office of Computing and Information Services conducted a number of training workshops for faculty and staff on various technological subjects. These activities will be sustained in 2005-2006.

Goal 36: Seek funding for implementation, providing adequate training for faculty and staff prior to full implementation.

Under the auspices of the Advising, Retention, and Completion (ARC) Initiative, faculty training sessions were organized by the Office of Academic Affairs in the Fall of 2004 and the Spring of 2005 to train faculty as Master Advisors through release time to work in the College's new Advising Center. Funded by the Title III grant, the objective of the Master Advisor program is to train all second year faculty through service in the Advising Center. It is anticipated that, over the life of the five-year Title III grant, at least one-third the full-time faculty will be trained.