



**STRATEGIC PLAN  
2003-2006**

**Annual Progress Report  
Year 3 (2005-2006)**

## Annual Progress in Institutional Strategic Planning Progress Report Year 3 (2005-2006)

Dalton State completed the third and final year of its 2003-2006 *Strategic Plan*. During 2005-06, the Strategic Planning Committee adopted 25 goals for implementation. Twenty-one of the goals required ongoing action and were carried over from the second year, while four new goals were adopted and implemented in the third year. At the end of the year, 16 (64 percent) of the goals had been implemented. The following summarizes progress reports of goals achieved during 2005-06.

### Goal 1: Pursue grant opportunities and other sources of funding as supplements to state funding.

The Social Work Division wrote and secured two grants in the amount of \$270,000. The first grant, Title IV-E Child Welfare Training, made it possible for students to pursue full-time study in social work. The second grant, the Veteran Worker Grant, assisted in the development of curriculum materials for teaching veteran workers at DFCS about social work with Latino clients. Two units of the curriculum will be published and circulated state-wide and nationally with DSC featuring prominently on the cover. It will bring recognition to DSC as an institution with expertise and a high degree of scholarship. The IV-E grant will be continued in the next year with some modifications in policies to encourage more full-time student participation. The Veteran Worker Grant will be reapplied for to allow for additional publication of social work approaches for work with Latino clients. In addition, the College was invited to apply for a second three-year grant from the Goizueta Foundation, the first having been awarded in 2002. Following a careful and involved process to determine the specific programmatic objectives to be supported, good news came in November 2005 with a letter informing the institution that a new grant in the amount of \$1,678,864 had been approved. These funds will be utilized to continue the Goizueta Summer Academy, enhance the Goizueta Foundation Scholarship Endowment, and fund the Goizueta Foundation Chair in Teacher Education.

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

In 2005-2006, the College succeeded in filling all of its full-time faculty vacancies, usually with its first choice from among the available candidates. In all, there were 22 full-time faculty hires. An appropriate number of part-time faculty were also recruited to help with the College's increased instructional load. The Business Administration division hired three well-qualified part-time instructors. To accommodate the significant number of students in the new education program, the Division of Education hired the services of 14 instructors and supervisors. The Division of Natural Sciences and Mathematics completed six new applications for part-time positions: one part-time physical education instructor and four part-time mathematics instructors were hired. The Nursing Division hired three part-time clinical instructors. The division of Social Sciences hired eight part-time faculty to teach 15 classes. During fall 2005, the Humanities Division used 14 part-time faculty members, who taught 22 sections. During Spring Semester 2006, the Division of Humanities offered 20 sections of English/humanities classes taught by part-time faculty members. The Technical Division employed 37 adjunct instructors/clinical coordinators. As enrollment increases, it would appear that additional part-time faculty will be needed to ensure an adequate number of classes are available. Although there is a heavy reliance on part-time faculty, this goal

and its results assure the College's engagement of the highest caliber faculty consistent with its mission and resources. Faculty members employed through these procedures are most likely to understand the institution's mission and accommodate themselves to its culture.

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

The Public Relations Office continued with re-branding and renewed communication efforts toward a variety of audiences, including area employers – resulting in ways in which the College's message can be enhanced and made more effective. Included in these efforts were a number of publications; print, television and email ads; billboards; revamped web site; and postcard messaging. Also, a campaign to increase communication to the various businesses and industries resulted in a targeted marketing campaign to two of the area's largest employers, the carpet manufacturers Shaw and Mohawk. This campaign, which included materials printed in both English and Spanish, was initiated through the Public Relations Office with the assistance of the President of the College and the Chair of the Technical Division. Also, two electronic pieces were developed for use by Enrollment Services and the Technical Division to target businesses and industries in an effort to recruit students. A 24-page publication, the *Dalton State Magazine*, was launched in October 2005 with the goal of reaching potential and current donors, alumni, and other constituents, thus increasing the College's communication capabilities. The goal definitely enhanced the College's communication with the business community.

Goal 4: Implement the online BBA and BAS degrees.

As part of the College's Title III grant initiatives, the Division of Business Administration continued its online and hybrid efforts and by the end of the academic year 2005-06 mounted about half of the upper-division courses. The intent of the goal is that with these hybrid offerings, the division can attract larger numbers of students to the program.

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

No action taken.

Goal 7: Increase graduation and retention rates.

The Advisement, Retention, and Completion (ARC) Initiative, begun in 2003 as a local undertaking, was reconfigured as DSC's response to the University System's Retention, Progression, and Graduation (RPG) Initiative mandated in August 2005 by the Board of Regents. As part of this effort, the College completed a *Retention and Graduation Rates Improvement Plan* which was filed with the University System in November 2005. The plan indicated that DSC's retention rates will increase by at least 1.5% per year and that timely graduation rates will increase by at least 1% per year. To aid the process, a faculty member was appointed as the College's Coordinator for RPG and given two course releases in order to pursue a comprehensive study, drawing upon the work of a campus-wide RPG Committee, to improve DSC's retention and graduation rates by identifying and correcting impediments to student retention and timely graduation and by suggesting enhancements to the teaching and learning process. In the spring and summer of 2006, a large body of data was collected by five subcommittees of the campus-wide RPG Committee, which investigated the areas of financial aid, academic advising, student success, First Year Experience/College 1101, and best practices in RPG. By the beginning of the fall semester 2006, 57 specific recommendations for improving retention and graduation rates had been formulated and were under consideration.

Goal 8: Fully implement the RTP 45 hour rule

This goal enforces the Regents' rule that all degree-seeking students must have satisfied the RTP requirement by the completion of 45 credit hours. During the 2005-2006 year, conformity with the 45 hour rule improved significantly at DSC. 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. Compared with earlier years, a significantly diminished number of students made appeals to the RTP Appeals Committee because of violations of the 45 hour rule. In 2003-2004 there were 29 such appeals; in 2004-2005 there were 30, and in 2005-2006 there were 15. To ensure continuing success, the Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs, in coordination with the Division of Humanities and the DSC Testing Center, will work to ensure that all students conform to the 45 hour rule and will remind faculty advisors of its provisions and the consequences of its violation, both to students and to the College as an institution. Subsequently, monitoring of students and dissemination of information to faculty will continue, and special efforts will be made to familiarize new faculty with the rule.

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

This goal is to formulate or identify desirable learning objectives in Areas A-E of the Core Curriculum and compare them with existing learning objectives in each of these areas, with recommendations for changes where necessary. Existing and proposed learning objectives were to be defined in each of Areas A-E and associated with specific courses, which would then be assessed for their effectiveness in realizing the desired learning objectives. During 2005-2006, little systematic work was carried out to achieve this goal in a coordinated fashion across the breadth of the Core Curriculum, although the three academic divisions which provide the great majority of general education courses – Humanities, Natural Sciences and Mathematics, and Social Sciences – sustained their own reviews under the aegis of the College's Institutional Effectiveness Plan. To achieve this goal eventually, the Vice President for Academic Affairs would consult the chairs of the Divisions of Humanities, Natural Sciences and Mathematics, and Social Sciences to devise a strategy for a comprehensive reassessment of the College's general education curriculum. This assessment would be carried out in relation to a pending reassessment of the Core Curriculum by University System agencies and also in relation to the requirements for clear definition of general education learning objectives needed by the College's teacher education program as it is affected by the rubrics of the Regents' Principles for Teacher Education and recent adoption of the Georgia Performance Standards within the K-12 curriculum.

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

The learning communities concept was created to link classes in different disciplines, register students for the full block of such classes, and conduct their instruction so that learning in one class reinforces learning in the others. The objective is that student performance in learning community classes will exceed that of students taking the same courses outside the learning community environment. The learning communities program at DSC was envisioned as a student retention strategy to be conducted as an activity supported by the Title III grant. In 2005-2006, 10 learning communities were formed, some of which linked related general

education courses. A total of 71 students and 9 instructors participated in these communities. The overall retention rate of these students was 53.5%. Of these, the most successful was one which linked introductory psychology with the survey of cinema as literature. Six communities failed to attract sufficient students and were dissolved during registration periods in order to make more seats available to students outside the communities. Even so, learning communities will remain a major Title III activity as they hold significant promise as a strategy for improving student learning and therefore student retention at DSC. The learning communities program would thus be carefully scheduled and the performance of students in them closely monitored by the Advising Center and the Office of Academic Affairs. The long-term plan is to continue the learning community concept beyond Learning Support courses to include general education courses in the Core Curriculum.

Goal 16: Increase student participation in study abroad programs.

Student participation in study abroad programs increased slightly in summer 2006 to 19 students compared with the previous summer's total of 15. A concerted effort was made to increase student awareness about study abroad opportunities. An important part of that effort involved creation of the DSC Study Abroad website which contains information useful to students either thinking about or planning on participating in these programs. This site has links to the USG study abroad web sites, making it a very convenient way to access pertinent information. Banners running on the DSC website and flyers posted on bulletin boards around campus led students to the study abroad site. Other recruitment efforts involved study abroad promotional events in the campus Student Center, including the staffing of an information kiosk and a study abroad luncheon, numerous classroom visits, and information provided at New Student Orientation. Several emails were sent to all DSC students to make them aware of study abroad opportunities. It is recognized that an important means of increasing participation in study abroad programs is to provide financial assistance to students. To that end, the DSC Foundation awarded Study Abroad Scholarships to three students this year (\$1000 per student).

Goal 17: Develop/implement a new Honors Program

To encourage retention of students with high academic capabilities, the College launched a program for qualified students to enroll in enriched offerings of Core Curriculum courses for which recognition of special achievement will be indicated on their transcripts and at the time of graduation. A fully organized Honors Program was developed and put in place by the fall semester of 2005. Student and faculty selection procedures were developed, courses were identified, and requirements for honors credit were defined. At the end of the 2005-2006 academic year, 11 students were in the Honors Program, which had begun the year with six enrollees. At the end of the year, students in the program rated it in the "excellent" range (4.14 on a 5.0 scale), as did the participating faculty (4.25 on a 5.0 scale). With the low enrollment, participation in the Honors Program was disappointing, notwithstanding vigorous efforts at recruitment and extensive work by instructors to devise Honors sections of specific general education courses. With the exception of the new Honors Seminar on Critical Thinking, three of four specifically designed Honors sections to be offered were cancelled, and students in the program instead designated particular courses in their schedules to be taken for Honors credit, working with the instructors to devise suitable assignments. Means remain to be devised for assessing the program's accomplishments and its success as a retention instrument. The Honors Program will be continued, and a concerted effort will be made by the College administration to make the faculty more aware of the Honors Program

and the opportunities it offers in order to encourage faculty members to direct promising students toward it. Indeed, a full-scale honors program, offering a variety of courses from across the Core Curriculum, will demonstrate DSC's concern for the higher as well as the lower end of the spectrum of student achievement and holds significant promise for enhancing the College's public image and its student retention efforts.

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

In fall 2005, total junior and senior enrollment in DSC's baccalaureate programs was 6% above the fall 2004 figure. Most of this growth was in the B.B.A. in Management program, which increased by 28.6%. The number for the B.S. in Industrial Operations Management rose by 3.8%. Patterns in other baccalaureate programs in this period were disappointing; the B.S. in Management Information Systems saw a decline of 4.5% and the B.A.S. in Technology Management figure dropped by 15.2 %, while the B.S. in Marketing Systems and B.S.W. figures remained unchanged from 2004 levels. Native DSC students who move from sophomore to junior status are likely to provide the bulk of enrollment in the College's baccalaureate programs as opposed to students transferring to DSC from elsewhere at the beginning of their junior years. Strenuous efforts will be made to retain these students for the full length of their programs. DSC students who continue at the College from the sophomore to the junior year are crucial to the well-being of DSC's baccalaureate programs.

Goal 20: Increase the number of incoming transfer students into the junior year.

No action taken.

Goal 23: The College and local employers will utilize four-year degree program advisory councils to determine opportunities for applied research that are mutually beneficial.

The intent of the College's advisory councils is to provide feedback for the business degree programs and serve as a networking resource for DSC's graduates. During spring 2004, the Division of Business Administration established an advisory council, which meets once or twice a year. During 2005-2006, the Business Advisory Council met once and played a significant role in the division's accreditation efforts. The advisory council has proved beneficial to students and faculty because the council members provide the College with information regarding current needs in their industries.

Goal 24: Seek external grants to support international study and faculty enrichment.

No action taken.

Goal 27: Explore on and off-campus parking and transportation options.

The Vice President for Fiscal Affairs worked with the Trade Center, Public Safety, and Plant Operations to add additional parking on campus and off-campus. Parking spaces were created on the campus athletic field, the library lot, the Trade Center via shuttle service, and the new Continuing Education building. In all, 425 parking spaces were added on campus. All the same, there is still some pressure to provide more parking spaces, especially in light of growing student enrollment. In fall 2006, most students will have a four-day schedule which should reduce the demand for parking. At the same time, the College is conducting feasibility studies to build a parking deck on campus.

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

During 2005-06, the Board of Regents approved a building project of 20,000 ft. for a new Technical Division building on approximately 3 acres at the Whitfield County Career Academy. The Foundation also purchased the Wood Valley Apartments, contiguous to the campus, and received an additional gift of approximately 20 acres just south of the campus. These are positive developments as they make it possible for the College to expand beyond its current boundaries.

Goal 29: Develop and publicize a student honor code as well as a statement of ethical standards for the College community.

In the light of existing policies and the relatively low level of student infractions, formulation of an honor code and supporting statement of ethical conduct has not been regarded as a high priority at DSC. Consequently, the Office of Academic Affairs did not address this goal. In fact, there is no consensus about the feasibility of an honor code in the DSC environment, and the existing Student Code of Conduct is deemed by many to be a sufficient statement of ethical norms. All the same, it is recommended that a committee of students, faculty, and administrators investigate the honor codes at institutions comparable to DSC and consider whether the current Student Code of Conduct provides adequate ethical guidance.

Goal 31: Organize and implement a series of environmental awareness activities for faculty, staff, and students.

No action taken.

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

No action taken.

Goal 37: Enhance utilization of job search strategies for new and former graduates.

The ACE Center was assigned the task of developing a series of workshops emphasizing topics such as resume writing, networking, interviewing, and business etiquette, and to provide a modified version of the workshops online. Additionally, resource packets were to be made available, and the Center was to collaborate with the Office of Institutional Advancement to send a mailing to graduates within the last 2-4 years. The brochure was to describe career services available to Dalton State College graduates. During the 2005-06 year, the directors of the ACE Center and Institutional Advancement determined that it would not be feasible to begin such a program for graduates at this time.

Goal 38: Student Services will collaborate with Academic Affairs to provide additional career-related opportunities for students.

The ACE Center was charged with developing a needs assessment survey during the fall semester to be distributed to each academic division about career-related opportunities that would be helpful to their majors. After the results were tabulated, a plan of action was to be discussed with each division with implementation during spring semester 2006 and fall semester 2006. The needs assessment survey was not developed and distributed because after meeting with several divisions, the ACE Center staff received limited feedback.

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

The Division of Education will host its initial NCATE site visit in March 2007. In preparation, the 2005-06 academic year was devoted to meeting candidacy requirements. The division submitted the Conceptual Framework and Preconditions to National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and received approval of both the Framework and Preconditions in February 2006. The approval will allow the Division to seek full accreditation from NCATE and the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (PSC). Full accreditation will allow Dalton State College to recommend to the Georgia Professional Standards Commission the teacher candidates successfully completing the Dalton State College teacher education program and successfully passing the state licensure exam.

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

The Division Business Administration submitted its first annual report to the AACSB Initial Accreditation Committee (IAC) in October 2005, and the report was accepted. The acceptance of the plan allows the division to be considered for AACSB accreditation in fall 2009. This is part of the preaccreditation process, and there will be annual campus visits by the College's AACSB mentor and the submission of annual reports to the AACSB Initial Accreditation Committee until the review team visits the campus to determine eligibility.

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

The Division of Social Work hosted a successful site visit for first year candidacy in October 2005, and preparation continued for another site visit by CSWE in October 2006. The program continues on track for a full accreditation site visit in 2007.