

**MINUTES OF THE  
GASTON COLLEGE  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES PLANNING RETREAT  
Gaston Country Club  
February 15, 2013**

**Members Present:** Mr. Stephen Campbell, Chair  
Sheriff Alan Cloninger  
Ms. Rhonda McLean  
Ms. Ann Neal  
Mr. Jim Ragan, Vice Chair  
Mr. Ray Ratchford  
Ms. Pat Rudisill  
Mr. James Smith, Secretary  
Mr. Bill Sudyk  
Dr. Jim Watson

Dr. Patricia A. Skinner, President

**Members Absent:** Mr. Ron Hovis  
Mr. Tom Keigher  
Mr. Duane McCallister  
Mr. Randy Vinson  
Ms. Brittani Manning

**Others Present:** Ms. Julia Allen, Dr. Don Ammons, Mr. Todd Baney,  
Dr. Dewey Dellinger, Ms. Mary Ellen Dillon, Ms. Sylvia Dixon,  
Dr. Linda Greer, Ms. Cathis Hall, Dr. David Hartleb, Mr. Travis  
Hogue, Dr. Joe Keith, Ms. Cynthia McCrory, Ms. Audrey Sherrill,  
Ms. Nancy Showers, and Mr. Carl Stewart, College Attorney.

**I. Call to Order/Welcome and Reading of the Ethics Statement**

Board Chair Stephen Campbell called the Retreat to order at 8:30 a.m.

Mr. Campbell reminded Trustees of the ethical requirements for those who serve as public servants and requested they identify any conflicts of interest present. None were identified.

Mr. Campbell also reminded Trustees to file their Statement of Economic Interest (SEI) forms with the State Ethics Commission by April 15, 2013.

## **II. Introductions**

Dr. Skinner introduced Dr. David Hartleb, Ms. Cherry Deal, and Dr. Don Ammons, who presented updates on how the College is progressing with its ongoing initiatives and programs on student success. Ms. Nancy Showers, Achieving the Dream (AtD) Data Team Coach is also visiting the College with Dr. Hartleb and will be joining the Retreat later in the morning.

## **III. Student Success Updates:**

### a. Achieving the Dream Overview

Dr. David Hartleb, Gaston College's Achieving the Dream (AtD) Leadership Coach, gave an overview of the AtD initiative. He commented that the one goal of any AtD initiative is to assist students in obtaining a certificate, diploma, or degree. He praised Gaston College for its commitment to student success, outstanding staff, and a supportive Board. Dr. Hartleb along with Ms. Nancy Showers, AtD Data Coach, assisted and participated in the College's first Student Success Summit in October 2012.

### b. Developmental Math and English Redesign

Ms. Cherry Deal, Chair, Developmental Education/Instructor-Developmental Math, presented information on the Developmental Education initiative at Gaston College. The initiative is funded by the Lumina Foundation and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Ms. Deal's presentation covered the history, goals, benefits, curriculum, and different developmental math modules. Ms. Deal reported that student comments about the program have been very positive.

### c. Multiple Measures

Dr. Ammons, VP for Academic Affairs, presented information on the Multiple Measures Placement Policy, an initiative within *SuccessNC*, the NC Community Colleges' strategic planning effort that establishes a hierarchy of measures that colleges will use to determine students' readiness for college-level courses. The program is designed to work with a student's deficiencies to prepare the student to be successful in curriculum classes.

Both presentations by Ms. Cherry and Dr. Ammons are recorded with the Minutes of the Board Retreat.

After the presentations, Dr. Skinner announced that each community college in NC will be holding special events on their campuses March 6, 2013, to recognize Dr. Dallas Herring as part of the System's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration. Dr. Herring was instrumental in the creation of the community college system and believed that all North Carolinians should have an opportunity to have an education. All 58 community colleges received a portrait of Dr. Herring, and each college will hold a special event to unveil his portrait. Gaston College is in the process of planning its event and invitations will be mailed to trustees as soon as details are finalized.

Dr. Skinner shared information with the Board that she received at the recent DREAM2013 conference. Dr. Skinner, along with Drs. Don Ammons, Dewey Dellinger, Rex Clay, Everett Thomas, and Ms. Audrey Sherrill, attended the February 5-8, 2013, conference.

Dr. Skinner also shared information on Gaston College's goal accomplishments/unit plans for FY 2011-12, which are compiled by the College's Office of Institutional Effectiveness. The reports are published each year as part of the College's institutional effectiveness plan for SACS.

#### **IV. Progress Report on the President's Priorities for 2012-13**

The Board reviewed the President's Progress Report on priorities established for FY 2012-13, and were approved by the Board at the meeting of March 26, 2012.

##### **1. Continue the development, analysis, and possible expansion of programs and initiatives related to student success, persistence, and retention.**

###### **Early College High School (ECHS)**

The Gaston Early College High School Liaison has been in constant communication with College faculty who teach early college students. She requests updates regularly so she will be aware of any attendance issues students may be having, and she confirms whether students are performing well on assignments and tests. Staff from the Learning Center has met with students, teachers, and administrators to define services offered and has held an orientation for ECHS.

###### **Katherine Harper Testing Center**

The creation of the Katherine Harper Testing Center, which provides one central location for curriculum and continuing education testing and information, facilitates a seamless transition from Basic Skills to curriculum programs thus leading to improved customer service and retention.

###### **Contextualized Family Literacy**

The funding of a Contextualized Family Literacy grant in the amount of \$10,926 provides for a transitioning class to improve the literacy of Basic Skills students and their children while focusing on career exploration and emphasizing the importance of continuing education beyond a high school credential.

###### **Emergency Medical Science**

The funding of the Emergency Medical Science Accreditation Alignment Project in the amount of \$120,000 will allow the College to serve as the leader in the redesign of the EMS curriculum statewide to provide standardization among all community college EMS programs and to improve quality, transferability, and integration with other types of medical training.

### **Persistence and Retention Department**

The Persistence and Retention Department continues to manage and expand the *Student Academic Assistance Program (SAAP)*, funded by the Gaston College Foundation. This year, over \$18,000 was awarded to assist students with tuition, books, and academic supplies. Seventy-seven percent of students who received SAAP assistance re-enrolled the following semester, and 92% of students who received SAAP assistance earned a GPA of 2.0 or higher.

The early alert program, called the *Student Persistence and Success Plan (SPSP)*, continues to provide interventions to students experiencing difficulties with attendance, academic performance, classroom behavior, or other class related issues. The referrals have grown from a few hundred to over 900 referrals for the fall 2012 semester. Success rate (graduation plus re-enrollment) of students who received SPSP interventions is 48%. There was no base-line to compare the performance of students with these types of difficulties prior to the early alert system. However, this is a good retention rate when one considers that these are very highly at-risk students. It is expected that this success rate will continue to increase. For the 2012-2013 priorities for students placed on Academic Alert or Academic Probation, students must complete an *Academic Improvement Plan* with Counseling or Title III staff in order to register for future terms.

### **Student Services Division**

The Student Government Association (SGA), through the Office of Student Activities, collaborated with the Office of Persistence and Retention and others to provide resources for Veteran Students and students that may be dealing with or have dealt with Domestic Violence.

The SGA, through the Office of Student Activities, hosted three evening programs to connect with students on the Dallas, Lincoln, and Kimbrell campuses.

The Minority Male Mentoring program, called Men of Excellence, currently serves 18 participants for the fall 2012 semester. Students have been assigned peer tutors, participate in monthly meetings which incorporate presentations and workshops on selected topics, attend college fairs, and visit four-year institutions.

Student Services developed the Student Consumer Information webpage.

Student disciplinary procedures and policies were improved and revised. The Counseling Center and Life Skills developed a workshop titled, "How to be a Successful Student," as a sanction option for students who receive reprimands for classroom behavior.

Document Imaging was implemented in Admissions, Records and Registration, the Business Office, and Human Resources.

The registration period for fall and spring semesters was extended.

## **2. Develop a plan for celebrating Gaston College's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

Gaston College was declared a community college on February 8, 1963, and held its first classes on September 23, 1964. The College's first commencement exercises were held on May 31, 1965. Considering these dates, the College will celebrate its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary during academic year 2014–2015. A comprehensive 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary planning committee is being organized. Planning efforts will be divided into two main areas: an externally focused planning team including community members, board volunteers, and alumni; and an internally focused planning team including faculty, staff, and students. The comprehensive committee will bring about coordination for all activities. Ideas to implement as a part of the College's celebration include, but are not limited to:

1. Feature an alumni for each year of the College's existence
2. Coordinate with existing College initiatives such as Textures & Tones
3. Incorporate a special fundraising appeal
4. Time Capsule

## **3. Develop a strategic planning process for 2014 – 2019**

The executive management team has decided that an external planning facilitator is needed to coordinate a strategic planning effort. The goal of the process is to coordinate *Achieving the Dream* and *Completion by Design* efforts into the planning initiative. Proposals from external facilitators, each taking a different approach to the planning process, have been solicited and are being evaluated. Plans regarding how to proceed will be shared with the Board of Trustees at a future meeting.

## **4. Prepare for the renovation of the Pharr Trade and Industrial Building into a Center for Advanced Manufacturing**

Based on input from economic developers and local industry leaders, the project was expanded to include the renovation of the Pharr Trade and Industrial Center and the construction of a new, state-of-the-art, Center for Advanced Manufacturing to be housed on Gaston College property within the Gastonia Technology Park. The Pharr Trade and Industrial Center (PTI) is not large enough to accommodate and support both new and existing programs. The new Center for Advanced Manufacturing (CAM) would provide a highly trained workforce and be competitive in attracting new industry to our area.

The PTI renovations and expansion will be constructed in two phases, with Phase I beginning in the spring/summer of 2013. Funding for the new Center for Advanced manufacturing is uncertain at this time. County bond funding of approximately \$3.3 million (the balance of funds remaining from the bond) have been approved for use in either construction of CAM or PTI renovation. Golden LEAF has guaranteed funding of \$500K for this project. An EDA grant application was submitted in September 2012. The College received notification on January 22, 2013, that it has been selected to receive an

investment award of \$1.5 million for this project, pending submission of additional documentation required of all award recipients and confirmation of the EDA's fiscal year 2013 budget by Congress. The funds awarded can be used for either building, as the application requested funding for the project as a whole. Private donations will be pursued to provide the balance of necessary funding for these projects. Initial project and program design has been completed and site visits to similar facilities in the region have been conducted.

## **5. Successfully implement the Early College High School at the Dallas Campus**

Gaston Early College High School opened on the Dallas Campus of Gaston College on August 20, 2012. Due to delays in construction, students were temporarily housed in the Myers Center Auditorium, the new Katherine Harper Testing Center, and several college classrooms until building renovation was completed. High school students and staff enthusiastically moved into the Lena Sue Beam Early College Partnership building on November 1 and 2, 2012. The Gaston Early College High School students, faculty, staff, and Gaston County Schools' administrators are very pleased to be in the Lena Sue Beam Building and are very appreciative of their new space. An Open House was held Sunday, December 2, 2012, from 3:00 - 5:00 p.m.

## **6. Evaluate and improve cross-divisional financial aid processes**

Academic Affairs has been continually involved in improving cross-divisional financial aid processes, especially the 10% attendance report and submitting of final grades.

The AAS in Cosmetology was added and new processes put in place to address the "clock-hour program" issue with Financial Aid in 2012.

Communications between the Financial Aid Office and the Business Office have improved significantly, and several new procedures have been implemented between departments:

1. Reconciliation between the general ledger, Financial Aid Transmittal Process and G5 (the U.S. Department of Education's Grants Management System), with the difference at U.S. Department of Education Common Origination and Disbursement, is sent to the Financial Aid Office periodically by the Business Office.
2. The overall Financial Aid Transmittal Process has been revised to include an established procedure for communication between Financial Aid and the Business Office related to Financial Aid Pre-Transmittal Register/Financial Aid Transmittal Posting Register. This procedure provides a consistent posting schedule and helps assure the Financial Aid Office reviews the Financial Aid Transmittal Report before the Business Office runs the Financial Aid Transmittal Process to post.
3. A new process has been established that allows students to pay prior term balances with current term financial aid awards.

4. A standardized process has been established to return un-cashed financial aid checks.

A cross-functional and cross-divisional task force has worked to address and improve various processes that impact the awarding of financial aid to students. Some of these processes include:

1. Streamline process of student major changes and the utilization of Informer Reports and save-lists to ensure students' catalog-years and majors are up-to-date.
2. Review the submission of grades by faculty process to ensure that there are few, if any, missing or late grades, and review tracking of Web attendance.
3. Review the Datatel system Academic Program Requirements (APRS) screen to ensure academic programs are updated in a timely manner.
4. Revised the process by which curriculum changes are communicated to Student Services, specifically the Financial Aid Office to ensure proper notification.
5. Re-established the CIS Core team.

Automated and changed many financial aid processes to provide a better service to students and improve efficiencies. For example:

1. Staff previously printed Institutional Student Information Reports (ISIRs) which are Financial Aid applications, for all students with Gaston College IDs. Individual ISIRs range from 9 – 13 pages, and students frequently have multiple ISIRs based on corrections or changes. The result was thousands of wasted pages which required assembly, filing, and storage space. Complete ISIR records are available through Datatel and can be printed if needed. The interim Financial Aid Director estimated that fewer than 5% of total ISIRs needed to be printed. The new practice is to print ISIRS only as needed.
2. Previously, the Financial Aid Office established deadlines months earlier than required by Federal regulation and would not accept documents for future semesters prior to registration for each semester. The new practice is to accept documents at any time prior to the Federal deadline.
3. Previously, students submitting documents in August were told they would need to make payment arrangements with the Business Office and then wait four to six weeks for their financial aid to be awarded. The new practice allows students who have submitted all required documents to have their awards completed as quickly as 24 hours, and, in most cases, in less than one week.
4. State grant awards are included in the financial aid award letters prior to the student's enrollment.
5. As permitted by Federal regulations, beginning with the summer 2012 evaluation of Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP), developmental courses are not included in the 150% timeframe, giving many students additional aid eligibility to complete their programs of study.
6. Some of the automated/streamlined processes include Pell Reconciliation, Auto Packaging of Pell & State Awards, and ISIR Import.
7. Participated in the Verification Pilot Project sponsored by the system office in partnership with College Foundation, Inc. (CFI) and Financial Aid Services (FAS). Several benefits were experienced as the result of this pilot:

- a) Students selected for verification by the federal government were processed expeditiously.
- b) Intake paper-work was reduced as well as time spent on filing.
- c) Staff embarked on new initiatives such as conducting outbound phone call campaigns to help students complete their financial aid application process.
- d) Overall, staff was very busy doing more meaningful things such as spending more time with students, providing better customer service, and giving more personal attention to students. These are the types of interactions that build a bond with students; this will hopefully translate into student success and program completion.

## **7. Continue to provide leadership in securing additional funding for the College through the Foundation**

The Foundation Office was reorganized to focus primarily on fundraising and grants. The marketing function was moved to report to Dr. Linda Greer. A new Foundation Director, Ms. Julia Allen, was hired in July 2012.

Ms. Allen is familiarizing herself with Gaston and Lincoln counties through participation in Leadership Lincoln, the Gaston Regional Chamber's advocacy committee, and she has joined Gastonia East Rotary Club.

Community presentations have been made to raise awareness of the Center for Advanced Manufacturing effort. A regular schedule of personal visits and donor calls has been set for capital priorities as well as ongoing cultivation and stewardship of current annual and endowment donors. A project campaign plan to raise the remaining funds needed for the Center for Advanced Manufacturing is underway. The president's office, as well as key faculty and staff across campus, will be included in key donor calls and cultivation efforts.

Several targeted donor appreciation events for campus-wide projects have been successfully executed this year. The foundation's annual donor appreciation evening featuring the Charlotte Jazz Orchestra will take place on April 18 in coordination with Gaston College's Textures and Tones celebration.

Grant proposals are being developed for submission to the National Endowment for the Arts as well as the National Science Foundation in addition to those submitted annually to regional foundations for various scholarship needs.

## **V. President's Proposed Priorities for 2013-14**

The President's priorities are proposed with input from the vice presidents, associate/assistant vice presidents, and directors who report directly to the President.

### **1. Continue emphasis on student success.**

*The College will continue its work with AtD and a newer initiative, Completion by Design that will increase completion rates for students while holding down costs and maintaining access and quality. The administration will continue to look at other state-wide initiatives that become available.*

**2. Continue preparations for Gaston College's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration to be held in 2014-15.**

*Information is being gathered and plans are being discussed. Internal and external committees will be formed.*

**3. Complete the strategic planning process and plan for implementation for the 2014-2019 Strategic Plan.**

*At the November 12, 2012, Executive Council Leadership Retreat, several options were discussed pertaining to consultants who might assist the College with the 2014-2019 Strategic Plan. The selection of the consultant will depend on how the new plan will be developed. When the process is defined, Board members will be informed.*

Mr. Ragan stated that the Board has a special obligation to be active in Strategic Planning as this is one of the College's most important planning processes. He would like to see an effort made to capture more information at the macro level.

**4. Continue planning and fund-raising for the renovation of the Pharr Trade and Industrial Center and construction of the new Center for Advanced Manufacturing (CAM).**

*The College has received the following resources committed to the Pharr and CAM projects:*

<i>Golden LEAF Grant</i>	<i>\$500M will be focused on Pharr renovation</i>
<i>EDA Grant</i>	<i>\$1.5M can be assigned where needed – major focus is CAM</i>
<i>County Bonds</i>	<i>\$3.3M (approximately)</i>

<i>Cost of Pharr Renovation and CAM</i>	<i>\$6.5M</i>
<i>Pharr renovation</i>	<i>\$2.5M for both phases of Pharr</i>

*The College will need to raise approximately \$1.2M - \$1.5M.*

**5. Evaluate and revise the Strategic Enrollment Management Plan for continued improvement.**

*Enrollment has gone down across the state in the past two years due to the change in the economy. The College will be concentrating on a more detailed marketing plan and revising the Strategic Management Plan.*

The President's Proposed Priorities for 2013-14 will be presented to the Board of Trustees for approval at the March 18, 2013, meeting.

## **VI. Radio Station Progress Report**

At the request of Chair Campbell, Ms. Cathis Hall, Manager, WSGE Radio, presented a progress report on the Radio Station's five-year plan. The five-year plan was established February 10, 2010. Ms. Hall presented the Board with a copy of the original WSGE five-year plan, a progress report as of January 2013, operating expenses from 2010 through 2012, WSGE fundraising projections for the years 2013-2016, and WSGE's Five-Year Budget Projections vs. Actual reports. Ms. Hall also distributed a Program Guide and WSGE Coverage Area map as part of her handouts to the Board.

In order for the station to become totally self-sustaining and continue to receive grant funding, emphasis must be placed on increasing nonfederal financial support. Ms. Hall named five areas where the station must concentrate its efforts:

- Programming
- Branding and Marketing
- Staffing
- Fundraising
- Technical Facilities

The station will need to attract an audience between 50%-60% of its operating budget, and obtain an additional 30% more from businesses and corporations in order to meet the timetable established for the station to become self-sufficient.

Mr. Campbell called attention to an error in the total amounts of operating expenses for 2010, 2011, and 2012 on the handout titled "Gaston College-WSGE-FM Operating Expenses". Ms. Hall will e-mail the Board a revised copy of the handout.

Mr. Campbell asked that the Board continue to monitor the progress of the radio station and that Ms. Hall make a report to the Board on a regular basis.

The information and handouts discussed by Ms. Hall are recorded with the Board Retreat Minutes.

## **VII. Board Self-Evaluation**

Chair Campbell informed the Board that there was 100% participation on the electronic Board Self-Evaluation Survey. All agreed that the survey process was much simpler than the written, paper version that has been used in the past. The Board reviewed the responses to the questions, which were categorized as "agree", "disagree", and "don't know", and agreed that overall the responses were positive. There was a discussion on the percentage of questions that were answered as "don't know". These questions seemed to be based on the knowledge of what other Board members felt or did, and were therefore difficult to answer. These types of questions will be addressed at the next revision of the self-evaluation form. Chair Campbell thanked the Board Self-evaluation Form Committee for their time and input in revising the form.

In another discussion concerning campus safety, Sheriff Cloninger voiced his concern that the College should improve its police presence on campus with law enforcement officers and a police car. Sherriff Cloninger believes that the presence of a police officer, in a police car, will help deter any criminal element on campus.

### **VIII. Adjournment**

**There being no further business to come before the Board, Chair Campbell adjourned the Retreat at 12:00 noon.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**James C. Smith, Secretary**

**Stephen D. Campbell, Chair**

**Sylvia Dixon, Recording Secretary**

**(College Seal)**