

UNIT PLANS Results 2024-2025

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Unit
Administrative Services

Sub-unit
Athletics

Strategic Initiative

Explore alternative funding sources and investment strategies (Strategic Initiative 5.1)

Reason for Initiative

To ensure the College's athletic programs thrive and give exceptional opportunities to student-athletes by promoting funding opportunities for facilities, equipment, and scholarships to enhance the overall educational and athletic experience.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Athletic Director
- Associate Athletic Director
- Head Coaches

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #5: Finance and Operations
 - Strategic Goal #5: Gaston College is committed to optimizing fiduciary and operational strategies to ensure long-term success and stability.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

Implement the eTeam Sponsor fundraising program via all athletic teams and establish associated goals and objectives.

Success Criteria

Implemented fundraising program and achievement of established goals and objectives.

Assessment Results

The e-team fundraising campaign surpassed expectations with over \$60,000 raised across all athletic programs. This strong performance highlights the effectiveness of the current strategy while also revealing opportunities for further enhancement.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

- Refine Campaign Messaging: Reviewing and enhancing the messaging to better communicate the impact of donor contributions may help drive deeper engagement and higher pledge amounts.

- Launch Earlier in the Semester: Shifting the campaign launch to earlier in the fall semester could allow more time for outreach and follow-up, increasing overall participation and revenue.
- Evaluate Communication Platforms: Exploring alternative communication and pledging platforms that are more cost-effective may reduce overhead expenses and allow a greater portion of funds to directly benefit the athletic program.

Unit
Administrative Services

Sub-unit
Athletics

Strategic Initiative

Increase the number of internal and external participants, including alumni, in fundraising events. (Strategic Initiative 3.3)

Reason for Initiative

To foster a sense of community and provide a supportive environment to promote teamwork, discipline, and individual skill development and growth among various age groups to nurture the next generation of athletes, and to further financial support to the College's athletic programs.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Athletic Director
- Associate Athletic Director
- Head Coaches

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #3: Partnerships and Community Engagement
 - Strategic Goal #3: Gaston College will establish strong partnerships, actively engage with the community, and create meaningful opportunities for students, alumni, and the public to contribute to the college's mission and success.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

Schedule and implement athletic camps for baseball, softball, basketball, and beach volleyball with associated fundraising goals and objectives.

Success Criteria

Scheduled and held athletic camps and achievement of established fundraising goals and objectives.

Assessment Results

During the 2024–2025 academic year, both the baseball and softball programs aimed to host two youth camps each, with the goal of increasing community engagement and generating additional revenue.

For softball, two camps were successfully held on August 14th and November 11th. These events attracted a moderate number of participants and generated a combined total income of \$2,000.

Although the baseball program scheduled camps for August 11th and November 10th, neither session drew any registered participants. Despite the lack of turnout, the program still reported a total income of \$2,500. This discrepancy may reflect early sponsor contributions or other pre-arranged funding sources.

A basketball camp was planned for summer 2025, but it was ultimately cancelled due to unforeseen health-related issues involving a member of the coaching staff. There is interest in rescheduling this event for a later date, pending staff availability and adequate preparation time.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

The results from this year's camp initiatives show mixed outcomes. While the softball program demonstrated early success and participant interest, the baseball program faced challenges with turnout despite financial intake. Moving forward, efforts should be focused on enhancing visibility, adjusting program offerings to better meet community needs, and ensuring logistical readiness for all scheduled camps. A strategic review of promotional tactics, scheduling, and registration may improve overall performance and maximize participation in future sessions.

Unit
Administrative Services

Sub-unit
Campus Police and Security

Strategic Initiative

- Provide professional development to enhance personal and professional growth and success. (Strategic Initiative 4.3)
- Evaluate safety and security infrastructure and continue to support initiatives to provide a safe and secure working and learning environment. (Strategic Initiative 6.1)

Reason for Initiative

To enhance communications, coordination, and confidence among team members during an emergency, help people become familiar with procedures and practice roles, and assess resources and identify areas of focus.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Chief of Police
- Captain of Police

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #4: Organizational Development
 - Strategic Goal #4: Gaston College is committed to continuous improvement through organizational and employee development.
- Strategic Priority #6: Operational Infrastructure
 - Strategic Goal #6: Gaston College is committed to investing in a secure and conducive environment for learning, ensuring the safety and well-being of its students, faculty, and staff while investing in its operational infrastructure to enhance the working and learning environment.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

Collaborate with Organizational Development, Safety, & Advancement to develop and implement a 2024-25 plan for emergency response drills, tabletop exercises, and safety professional development.

Success Criteria

Documented completion of drills, tabletop exercises, and training.

Assessment Results

Collaborated with Organizational Development and Safety on the following drills, tabletop exercises, and safety professional development:

- October 28, 2024 – Evacuation Drill – Lincoln Campus

- November 20, 2024 – Evacuation Drill – Kimbrell Campus
- December 11, 2024 – Shelter in Place Drill – Myers Center – Dallas Campus
- January 7, 2025 – Emergency Preparedness Tabletop Exercise – Lincoln Campus
- February 12, 2025 – Professional Development Presentation – Housekeeping and Maintenance
- February 26, 2025 – Shelter in Place Drill – Kimbrell Campus
- March 28, 2025 – Hostile Intruder Training – Lincoln Campus
- April 16, 2025 – Emergency Preparedness Tabletop Training – Nursing Faculty

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

- Provide a summary overview of available training at the fall 2025 convocation.
- Refine presentations based on feedback to optimize effectiveness.
- Require personal emergency response training for all faculty and staff.
- Evaluate various groups or departments for participation in future drills and tabletop exercises.

Unit
Administrative Services

Sub-unit
Campus Police and Security

Strategic Initiative

Evaluate safety and security infrastructure and continue to support initiatives to provide a safe and secure working and learning environment. (Strategic Initiative 6.1)

Reason for Initiative

To enhance building and external security infrastructure associated with emergency preparedness and response.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Chief of Police
- Captain of Police

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #6: Operational Infrastructure
 - Strategic Goal #6: Gaston College is committed to investing in a secure and conducive environment for learning, ensuring the safety and well-being of its students, faculty, and staff while investing in its operational infrastructure to enhance the working and learning environment.

Action Items to Meet Initiative:

Evaluate various existing systems and potential resource needs related to emergency communications, surveillance, doors and locks, and internal communication devices (e.g., cell phones) for security-related use.

Success Criteria:

Enhanced and/or implemented applicable resources.

Assessment Results

- Acquired a new Computer Aided Dispatch System (CAD) to enhance safety and communications to assist with dispatching and the reporting of campus incidents.
- Collaborated with Organizational Development and Safety to test and implement a new mass emergency notification software with additional features such as a desktop and mobile panic button.
- As per the established implementation schedule for the campus re-keying project, completed all buildings, doors, and related tasks for each campus.
- Action items related to surveillance are ongoing.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

- Use documented information in CAD to identify areas of focus to enhance safety and security.
- As part of the transition to the new mass emergency communication system, review and refine messaging and procedures to optimize response.
- Build on the campus re-keying project by evaluating doors and related infrastructure for potential upgrades and improvements.
- Continue to evaluate potential enhancements to surveillance and implement improvements as possible.

Unit
Administrative Services

Sub-unit
Human Resources

Strategic Initiative

Enhance college-wide communication. (Strategic Initiative 4.4)

Reason for Initiative

To optimize key policies and procedures for compliance and effectiveness.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Director-Human Resources
- Chief of Staff

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #4: Organizational Development
 - Strategic Goal #4: Gaston College is committed to continuous improvement through organizational and employee development.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

Review and revise key policies and procedures and propose revisions for review by internal groups (e.g., President Cabinet, Executive Council, and/or Policy Review Committee) and obtain legal review as needed. Present vetted policies and procedures to the Administrative Services Committee and Board of Trustees.

Success Criteria

Approved revised policies and procedures

Assessment Results

Completed reviews of several existing or implemented new policies including the Vehicle Use Policy, Anti-Hazing Policy, and Paid Parental Leave Policy to support institutional priorities and compliance.

Currently engaged in the review of key policies and procedures to identify and recommend updates that align with and advance the strategic goals of the college.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

Ongoing review and revision of key policies and procedures in collaboration with key stakeholders and the Policy Review Committee.

Unit
Administrative Services

Sub-unit
Human Resources

Strategic Initiative

Provide professional development to enhance personal and professional growth and success.
(Strategic Initiative 4.3)

Reason for Initiative

To help new employees acclimate to their new role and feel supported as they integrate into the College.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Director-Human Resources
- Coordinator-Benefits and Employment

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #4: Organizational Development
 - Strategic Goal #4: Gaston College is committed to continuous improvement through organizational and employee development.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

Review the new hire orientation and onboarding process for improvement with emphasis on in-person and online training for key policies, procedures and College information.

Success Criteria

Enhanced new hire orientation and onboarding process.

Assessment Results

Implemented monthly in-person group orientation sessions and individualized onboarding meetings for full-time new hires, providing key written and verbal information. This approach was designed to enhance understanding of college processes.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

Continue enhancing the New Hire Orientation and onboarding experience through a blended approach of in-person and online training to improve communication of college policies, required training, and organizational information. Ongoing benchmarking of onboarding practices to identify and integrate best practices into the current process.

Unit
Administrative Services

Sub-unit
Human Resources

Strategic Initiative

- Enhance talent acquisition processes with an emphasis on keeping the college competitive and attracting talent from diverse backgrounds that is more reflective of the student population. (Strategic Initiative 4.1)
- Evaluate opportunities, resources, and programs to support work-life balance. (Strategic Initiative 4.5)

Reason for Initiative

To support health and wellness as part of the mission of care, and to attract talent and keep existing employees by making the College more appealing and competitive, and enhancing satisfaction.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Director-Human Resources
- Coordinator-Benefits and Employment

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #4: Organizational Development
 - Strategic Goal #4: Gaston College is committed to continuous improvement through organizational and employee development.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

Meet with the College's flex benefits broker to review current plans for potential enhancement, explore benefit trends, and determine practicable changes.

Success Criteria

Enhanced flex benefits plan.

Assessment Results

Collaborated with the College's flex benefits broker to evaluate current benefit trends and assess existing plans for potential enhancements. Expanded the benefits portfolio by adding Nationwide pet insurance and an optional dental insurance supplement to better support employee needs.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

Continue partnering with the flex benefits broker to review and enhance benefit offerings, with a focus on promoting employee health, wellness, and overall satisfaction.

Unit
Administrative Services

Sub-unit

Organizational Development, Safety, and Advancement

Strategic Initiative

- Enrich the learning and working environment by providing a welcoming and inclusive college Community. (Strategic Initiative 4.2)
- Provide professional development to enhance personal and professional growth and success. (Strategic Initiative 4.3)

Reason for Initiative

To increase awareness and responsibilities of, and promoting, an environment free of sexual harassment and violence, enhance response protocols, and maintain compliance.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Vice President, Organizational Development, Safety, and Advancement
- Director - Organizational Development and Safety

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #4: Organizational Development
 - Strategic Goal #4: Gaston College is committed to continuous improvement through organizational and employee development.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

Collaborate with Human Resources and Campus Police and Security to enhance new hire orientation and onboarding with an emphasis on Title IX and VAWA in-person and online training for new full-time and part-time regular employees and provide initial and refresher training for individual Title IX roles, Mandatory Reporters (MR), and Campus Security Authorities (CSA).

Success Criteria

Documented completion of training.

Assessment Results

Representatives from Organizational Development, Safety & Advancement (ODSA) and Human Resources (HR) met during the Summer 2024 and Fall 2024 to outline plans to expand the College's New Hire Orientation to include HR policy and procedure review pertinent to newly hired faculty and staff employees, Title IX and Clery Act training, and general workplace safety training. The newly vamped New Hire Orientation was officially launched on February 7, 2025, by training the first group of new employees with the updated process. It was determined to hold sessions monthly, so a total of **five (5)** New Hire Orientation sessions were provided under

the new process from February 2025 to June 2025, reaching **seventeen (17)** newly hired full-time faculty and staff employees and **one (1)** part-time employee. 100% of eligible full-time new hires participated in the training program. Additionally, for new employees in positions that require additional compliance training, online training accounts were created through the Vector Solutions learning management system, with the relevant annual coursework assigned to each employee due for completion by June 2025.

ODSA representatives, who also serve on the College's Title IX Team, met monthly during the 2024-25 academic year with the Title IX Team to discuss and identify action plans for federal Title IX legislative updates, compliance requirements, policy alignment, and to provide training on Title IX roles and responsibilities. Title IX mandated reporting responsibilities and training plans for Campus Security Authorities were also discussed in these meetings. It was determined that the College would continue using the current online training platform offered through the National Association of Clery Compliance Officers and Professionals (NACCOP) for VAWA training during the 2024-25 academic year while the team would continue to research other long-term training solutions.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

ODSA and HR staff will hold an annual debrief meeting in August 2025 to review New Hire Orientation processes and examine the overall success of the training program. Goals related to this new onboarding process will be established at that meeting for the upcoming academic year to ensure we continue to meet the onboarding needs of newly hired employees. The College's Title IX Team will continue to explore general and role-specific training opportunities for the upcoming year. ODSA will review training options for Campus Security Authorities (CSA) with selection and implementation planned for Fall 2025.

Unit
Administrative Services

Sub-unit

Organizational Development, Safety, and Advancement

Strategic Initiative

Provide professional development to enhance personal and professional growth and success. (Strategic Initiative 4.3)

Reason for Initiative

Equip supervisors and leaders with relevant knowledge and skills to enhance their abilities to lead, guide, and direct others to improve team and organizational performance.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Vice President, Organizational Development, Safety, and Advancement
- Director - Organizational Development and Safety

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #4: Organizational Development
 - Strategic Goal #4: Gaston College is committed to continuous improvement through organizational and employee development.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

Collaborate with key stakeholders to create a robust supervisory development program and identify individuals and/or groups to receive the training using varied training delivery methods (e.g., in-person and online).

Success Criteria

Creation of the supervisory training program and documented completion of training.

Assessment Results

During the 2024-25 academic year, the Organizational Development, Safety & Advancement (ODSA) Department assisted in the formation of a Supervisor/Leadership Development Planning Team to make determinations for the design of a Supervisor/Leadership Development program for all new and existing faculty and staff supervisors. From monthly team meetings, it was determined to prioritize supervisor development and postpone the design of the leadership development program. This decision resulted from the high number of new faculty and staff supervisors employed by the College, which is a growing trend based on the College's Human Resources data. Several team meetings were dedicated to the development of a "Supervisor Needs Analysis Survey," which was reviewed and approved by the President's Cabinet and sent to **one hundred nine (109)** identified faculty and staff employees with supervisory responsibilities as anticipated respondents. The survey window spanned from June

9, 2025, to June 23, 2025. Results of the supervisor needs analysis survey will be analyzed during the Summer 2025 and used to develop content based on what respondents communicated in the survey. The aim is to launch the supervisor development training series in modules, with the first module likely to begin during the Spring 2026 semester, using varied instructional modalities.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

ODSA will continue to facilitate the establishment of a supervisor development program. The Supervisor/Leadership Development Planning Team will meet in July 2025 to review the results of the Supervisor Needs Analysis Survey and discuss content development based on the results. Additional meetings will be held during the Summer and Fall of 2025 to finalize the first modules in the training series.

Unit
Administrative Services

Sub-unit

Organizational Development, Safety, and Advancement

Strategic Initiative

Provide professional development to enhance personal and professional growth and success. (Strategic Initiative 4.3)

Reason for Initiative

Equip supervisors and leaders with relevant knowledge and skills to enhance their abilities to lead, guide, and direct others to improve team and organizational performance.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Vice President, Organizational Development, Safety, and Advancement
- Director - Organizational Development and Safety

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #4: Organizational Development
 - Strategic Goal #4: Gaston College is committed to continuous improvement through organizational and employee development.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

Collaborate with key stakeholders to develop a leadership development program “roadmap” to be implemented in the 2025-26 academic year.

Success Criteria

Development of a leadership training program “roadmap.”

Assessment Results

During the 2024-25 academic year, the College formed a Supervisor/Leadership Development Planning Team to make determinations for the design of a Supervisor/Leadership Development program for all new and existing faculty and staff supervisors. From monthly team meetings, it was determined to prioritize the supervisor development program and wait on the design of leadership development. This decision resulted from the high number of new faculty and staff supervisors employed by the College, which is a growing trend based on the College’s Human Resources data, and the more immediate need for “nuts and bolts” training.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

While the current priority is the creation of a supervisor development program, the leadership development program will be prioritized by the Supervisor/Leadership Development Team once content for the supervisor development training is developed and initial training modules are

launched. Based on the tentative timeline to launch some of the supervisor development program modules in Spring 2026, preliminary work on the leadership development program is expected to begin in late Spring or Summer 2026.

Unit
Administrative Services

Sub-unit

Organizational Development, Safety, and Advancement

Strategic Initiative

Provide professional development to enhance personal and professional growth and success. (Strategic Initiative 4.3)

Reason for Initiative

To provide employees with the knowledge, skills, and abilities to understand and effectively perform key duties and responsibilities in a safe and efficient manner for individual performance and organizational success.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Director - Organizational Development and Safety
- Environmental, Health, and Safety Coordinator

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #4: Organizational Development
 - Strategic Goal #4: Gaston College is committed to continuous improvement through organizational and employee development.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

Develop an annual compliance training matrix based on position, duties, and responsibilities and provide the training using varied delivery methods (e.g., in-person and online).

Success Criteria

Development of the compliance training matrix and documented completion of training.

Assessment Results

The development of a comprehensive annual compliance training matrix was not accomplished during the 2024-25 academic year, but important steps were taken in working towards that goal, which have proven to satisfy desired objectives:

- Organizational Development, Safety & Advancement (ODSA) collaborated with departmental supervisors in areas such as maintenance, grounds, housekeeping, industrial and science laboratories to generate lists of employees in those areas and their compliance course requirements.
- Annual online compliance course assignments were created for individual employees through the Vector Solutions learning management system with a June 2025 completion requirement.

- Based on a review of potential required compliance courses for all faculty and staff by the President's Cabinet, ODSA managed the completion of **seven (7) required** compliance courses and nine **(9) recommended** compliance courses for all College employees.

100% of full-time employees completed the seven required compliance courses as summarized in the chart below:

Required Courses	Completion Percentage
Cybersecurity Overview	100%
Protection Against Malware	100%
Browser Security Basics	100%
Email & Messaging Safety	100%
Password Security Basics	100%
Slips, Trips, and Falls	100%
FERPA: Confidentiality of Records	100%

The chart below shows the percentage of Full-time Employee completers for the recommended compliance courses.

Recommended Course (not required)	Completion Percentage
Active Assailant Preparedness	19%
Active Shooter: RUN HIDE FIGHT	23%
Customer Service Overview	17%
General Ethics in the Workplace	14%
Workplace Violence: Awareness & Prevention	11%
Drug Free Workplace	10%
Discrimination Awareness in the Workplace	13%
Title IX and Sexual Harassment Prevention for Employees	10%
Clery Act Overview	11%

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

ODSA will continue to build on the compliance training steps taken during the 2024-25 academic year and reevaluate if a comprehensive annual compliance training matrix is necessary. Since ODSA established important groundwork for general compliance training required of all employees and developed a process for assigning position-specific compliance training, building out a compliance matrix may be tabled for now. ODSA will continue to assess compliance training steps accomplished in subsequent annual training cycles.

Unit
Administrative Services

Sub-unit

Organizational Development, Safety, and Advancement

Strategic Initiative

Evaluate opportunities, resources, and programs to support work-life balance. (Strategic Initiative 4.5)

Reason for Initiative

To promote the overall well-being of employees for both individual performance and organizational success.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Vice President, Organizational Development, Safety, and Advancement
- Director - Organizational Development and Safety

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #4: Organizational Development
 - Strategic Goal #4: Gaston College is committed to continuous improvement through organizational and employee development.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

Collaborate with key stakeholders to research, develop, and offer evidence-based programs and initiatives to foster employee mental health and wellness.

Success Criteria

Development and offering of wellness programs and initiatives.

Assessment Results

Organizational Development, Safety & Advancement (ODSA) coordinated a keynote speaker for the College's annual Professional Development (PD) Day focused on mental health and wellness for employees. The event was held on February 12, 2025, where local licensed mental health and wellness therapist, Juliet Kuehnle, owner/operator of Sun Counseling and Wellness in Charlotte, NC, provided a keynote presentation and breakout sessions for employees. Topics included:

- Who You Calling Crazy? Keynote (105 participants)
- Communication and Interpersonal Relationships (33 participants)
- Mindfulness and Stress Reduction (34 participants)
- Values Clarification (19 participants)

For the annual Professional Development Day, ODSA collaborated with the College's Employee Assistance Program (EAP) who provided additional mental health and wellness training for employees. Topics included:

- Building Better Mental Health (32 participants)
- Making Stress Work for You (38 participants)

Also, for the annual Professional Development Day, ODSA collaborated with a staff employee who is also a licensed yoga instructor who provided a Yoga Nidra class for employees titled "Yoga for Stress Relief."

Based on feedback from employees following the Professional Development Day event, Juliet Kuehnle provided two additional in-person mental health and wellness training courses and two online mental health and wellness training courses for faculty and staff. Sessions were offered in April/May 2025. Topics included:

- Balance in a Digital World (10 participants)
- Navigating Change and Uncertainty (12 participants)
- Critic-to-Coach: Flip Your Inner Dialogue (13 participants)
- Building a Brighter Mindset: Cultivating Joy and Gratitude (11 participants)

ODSA staff was part of a cross-divisional team from Administrative Services and Student Services that collaborated to develop a utilization plan for the College's allocation of Hurricane Helene Mental Health Funding (\$58,431), which was earmarked to expand mental health support for students and employees. Funds were utilized for the following activities:

- PD Day Staff Keynote on Mental Health & Wellness

BREAKOUT SESSIONS:

- Communication & Interpersonal Relationships
- Mindfulness & Stress Reduction
- Values Clarification

- PD Day Mygroup EAP Mental Health & Wellness Presentations
 - Building Better Mental Health
 - Making Stress Work for You
- Headspace App (2 years)
- Mental Health & Wellness Training for Student & Employees
- UNC Behavioral Health Convening
- Lightning Events Activities for Annual Health Fair
- Stress Reliever Items
- EAP Expansion to include PT Employees (3 years)
- Mental & Emotional Well-Being Brochures for Students
- Journaling Notebook for Students and Employees

The Vice President for ODSA joined the College's Health and Wellness Committee in February 2025 and attended the UNC Behavioral Health Convening in May 2025.

A total of 307 employees (duplicated count) attended at least one of the mental health and wellness sessions listed above, and 202 of those employees elected to attend one or more of the optional sessions outside of the PD Day Keynote.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

Due to the positive response to these sessions, the ODSA Department will continue collaborating with key stakeholders across campus to implement programming that fosters and supports mental health and wellness for employees. Additional professional development sessions and training related to employee mental health and wellness will be explored for implementation in the 2025-26 academic year.

Unit
Administrative Services

Sub-unit
WSGE

Strategic Initiative

Identify and scale best practices to promote student engagement, enrich learning opportunities, and increase credential completions. (Strategic Initiative 2.5)

Reason for Initiative

To improve student success by enhancing confidence and competence through practical, work-based learning in a real-world environment.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- WSGE Station Manager
- WSGE Staff

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #2: Student Access and Success
 - Strategic Goal #2: Gaston College will enhance student access, success, and inclusivity in high-quality educational programs, ultimately empowering students to achieve their educational goals.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

Partner with the Audio and Video Production Technology and Sports Media Technology departments to provide students with real-life work experience at WSGE 91.7 FM, the College's public radio station.

Success Criteria

The number of students who successfully participate.

Assessment Results

In July 2024, leaders from WSGE and the Broadcast Department met to explore opportunities for increased student involvement at the station. The outcome of this collaboration was an engagement plan, which included the following initiatives:

- Internship Opportunities - WSGE was approved by the department as a qualified organization to fulfill course-related internship requirements. Students now have the option to complete semester-long or year-long internships. During the 2024–2025 academic year, one student successfully completed a Spring Semester internship, and another began a Summer Semester internship with plans to complete it in August 2025.

- Production Assistance for “From the Horn” - Students contributed to the production of From the Horn, a weekly Gaston Athletics program airing on Mondays. WSGE staff collaborated with a student team responsible for writing and producing the show. This year, three students participated in this initiative.
- Public Affairs Contributions - WSGE staff gave a presentation to the Journalism class, inviting students to submit stories for Consider This, the station’s weekly public affairs program. Approximately 12 students attended the session, with seven students submitting stories for consideration.
- Promo Creation and Submission - In collaboration with faculty, WSGE staff supported students in developing promotional content for station programming and initiatives. Eight students submitted promos for airplay consideration.
- On-Air Announcer Opportunities - Plans were made to launch an application process for students interested in becoming on-air announcers. However, this initiative was postponed due to a redesigning WSGE’s volunteer program during the academic year.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

Building on the success of the FY25 student engagement initiatives, WSGE has begun planning for the 2025–2026 academic year with an expanded focus on student involvement. Efforts include enhancing existing programs, increasing collaboration with faculty, and developing new opportunities to support experiential learning in broadcasting, journalism, and media production. The station will also revisit the on-air announcer initiative as part of its redesigned volunteer program to further broaden student participation.

Unit
Administrative Services

Sub-unit
WSGE

Strategic Initiative

Increase the number of internal and external participants, including alumni, in fundraising events. (Strategic Initiative 3.3)

Reason for Initiative

To recognize the ongoing individual and community support and achievements of WSGE 91.7 FM radio station.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- WSGE Station Manager
- WSGE Staff

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #3: Partnerships and Community Engagement
 - Strategic Goal #3: Gaston College will establish strong partnerships, actively engage with the community, and create meaningful opportunities for students, alumni, and the public to contribute to the college's mission and success.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

Plan and hold an event for WSGE to recognize employees, volunteers, patrons and the community; celebrate individual and station achievements such as induction into the Beach Music Hall of Fame; and invite continued financial and other support for the station.

Success Criteria

The number of participants who attended the event and the financial and other support generated.

Assessment Results

On November 3, 2024, WSGE hosted This Magic Moment—a special reception celebrating the power of music and the unforgettable moments it creates. The event marked a significant milestone for the station, commemorating its induction into the Carolina Beach Music Association (CBMA) Hall of Fame and honoring longtime volunteer John “Johnny B” Barkley for his remarkable 30 years of service. As part of the celebration, WSGE proudly announced the establishment of a scholarship in Johnny B’s name, which will support a deserving student.

The event drew approximately 100 guests, including many of WSGE’s most dedicated donors, loyal listeners, volunteers, and members of the College’s faculty and staff. The evening served

not only as a celebration of musical legacy and community impact but also as an important opportunity to strengthen relationships with key supporters and increase awareness of the station.

Feedback from attendees was overwhelmingly positive, with many expressing a desire for the event to become an annual tradition.

From a financial perspective, the event generated promising results for a first-year effort, laying a strong foundation for future fundraising events and donor engagement strategies.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

The event's success underscored the station's unique role in the community and demonstrated its potential to grow both philanthropic support and outreach. The event also provided valuable insights for the planning of future events, donor engagement strategies, messaging, and programming themes.

Unit
Administrative Services

Sub-unit
WSGE

Strategic Initiative

Strengthen our financial performance, controlling costs, and exploring new and innovative ways to invest in our strategic priorities, while maintaining a commitment to the highest ethical standards. (Strategic Initiative 5.2)

Reason for Initiative

To retain current listeners by maximizing engagement and satisfaction and attracting new listeners.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- WSGE Station Manager
- WSGE Staff

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #5: Finance and Operations
 - Strategic Goal #5: Gaston College is committed to optimizing fiduciary and operational strategies to ensure long-term success and stability.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

Evaluate current on-air programming and associated costs relative to audience engagement, and research and implement practical alternatives to align with listener preferences and trends.

Success Criteria

Identified and implemented viable alternative programming and relevant audience ratings.

Assessment Results

Throughout the fiscal year, WSGE conducted an ongoing evaluation of its programming and delivery methods to ensure they effectively serve both the listening community and station staff. Listener feedback is consistently gathered through our website and ongoing informal conversations with our audience. As part of this year's efforts, WSGE also conducted a formal listening survey to better understand audience preferences and gauge satisfaction with current content.

Survey results and ongoing feedback indicate a high level of overall satisfaction with WSGE's programming. As in previous years, listener preferences tend to vary by genre, with many expressing strong opinions about their favorite format, whether it be Triple A, Blues, Beach Music, or other specialty shows. Notably, beach music continues to generate the highest

engagement, both in terms of listener support during Membership Drives and streaming activity on Saturdays. The survey also provided valuable demographic insights. A significant portion of respondents were over the age of 60, with the majority indicating a preference for Beach Music and Rock Rhythm & Blues. Approximately half of respondents also cited NPR's Morning Edition as a key part of their daily listening routine.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

These results will guide WSGE in making informed decisions about its programming strategy. The station will review its daily playlist structure and NPR content scheduling to ensure alignment with audience preferences while maintaining its commitment to diverse, high-quality programming. Additionally, insights from the survey will inform future outreach and engagement efforts, helping WSGE grow its listener base while remaining responsive to its loyal audience.

Unit
Academic Affairs

Sub-unit
Not Applicable

Strategic Initiative

Identify and scale best practices to promote student engagement, enrich learning opportunities, and increase credential completions (Strategic Initiative 2.5)

Reason for Initiative

Work with program faculty, program administration, and distance education staff to ensure online courses meet relevant standards for quality. The number of distance education (online) courses at the College continues to grow in response to external factors (such as the COVID-19 pandemic) and student demand. Additionally, recent guidance from the US Department of Education dictates that all online classes should include regular and substantive interaction (RSI) between faculty and students. To ensure Gaston College's online courses, meet RSI expectations and incorporate best practices in distance education, faculty and staff in Academic Affairs will work to make improvements to existing online courses, as needed.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Vice President for Academic Affairs
- Academic Deans
- Dean of Special Projects

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #2 Student Access and Success
 - Strategic Goal #2: Gaston College is committed to enhancing student access, success, and inclusivity in high-quality educational programs, ultimately empowering students to achieve their educational goals.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

- Increase regular, substantive interaction (RSI) in courses containing an online component
- Improve course design in courses containing an online component

Success Criteria

- RSI standards met for fully online courses
- Quality standards met for online, hybrid, web-blended and HyFlex courses, as applicable
- Increase in course success rates
- Decrease in course withdrawal rates

Assessment Results

In Fall 2023, the Distance Education Committee and the Division of Academic Affairs initiated the planning process to transition from Blackboard Original (learning management system) to Blackboard Ultra (upgraded learning management platform), aiming for completion by the fall of 2025. A self-paced course, "Ultra Teaching Essentials," was created for all faculty to complete before converting their courses to the new platform. This course led to the development of a new GC Blackboard template and a new template for Quality Matters certified courses. In January 2024, a college-wide kickoff event introduced faculty and staff to Blackboard Ultra, providing all faculty (both full-time and adjunct) access to the training course and a sandbox (practice) course to begin creating instructional materials to prepare for the transition. As of June 2025, 123 faculty members had completed the Ultra Teaching Essentials training. In Fall 2024, 209 of 780 courses were taught using the Ultra platform and in Spring 2025, 355 of 712 courses were taught using the Ultra platform. An additional 275 of 296 courses were taught in the new platform during the summer of 2025. As of June 2025, approximately 623 master courses have been and/or are being converted to Ultra and are being redesigned by faculty with the assistance of the College's instructional designers. The transition to Ultra allows instructional designers to help faculty apply the College's online standards, making courses more engaging for students, meeting RSI requirements, and enhancing learning and achievement of course objectives. Additionally, each academic division works with their departmental and divisional leadership to audit courses for online standards set by the College and to ensure that RSI best practices are met.

Gaston College faculty, with the support of our Instructional Design team, continue to work on Quality Matters (QM) certification for their courses. Quality Matters is the global organization leading quality assurance in online and innovative digital teaching and learning environments. Their mission is to promote and improve the quality of online education and student learning nationally and internationally through:

- Development of current, research-supported, and practice-based quality standards and appropriate evaluation tools and procedures.
- Recognition of expertise in online education quality assurance and evaluation.
- Fostering a culture of continuous improvement by integrating QM Standards and processes into organizational plans to improve the quality of online education.
- Providing professional development in the use of rubrics, tools, and practices to improve the quality of online education.
- Peer review and certification of quality in online education.

As of June 2025, the College has 27 Quality Matters certified courses spread across the College's three academic divisions.

Professional development was provided to faculty from the Association of College and University Educators (ACUE) during the 2024-2025 academic year. Five ACUE short-courses were offered to assist faculty teaching both online and seated classes, including: Inclusive Teaching for Equitable Learning; Creating an Inclusive and Supportive Learning Environment;

Promoting Active Learning; Inspiring Inquiry and Preparing Lifelong Learners; and Designing Learner-Centered and Equitable Courses. As of Summer 2025, 94 faculty have completed at least one ACUE training course (213 course completions) and 29 faculty have completed the certificate in Effective Teaching Practice (completion of four courses).

In 2012-2013, the College began widespread efforts to increase course success rates and reduce withdrawal rates from courses. At that time, the percentage of students earning a C or higher in their courses was 73% and the College had a withdrawal rate of 13%. For the 2024-2025 academic year, the course success rate has increased to 81% and the withdrawal rate has dropped to 10.1%.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

The Division of Academic Affairs continues to examine student success rates such as course success (all modalities), withdrawal rates, persistence, and credential completion to ensure continuous improvement and to identify issues. As an example, each summer, the Dean's Council examines students' grades in face-to-face, hybrid, and online courses from the fall and spring semesters to look for areas of improvement. Action plans for each division are created based on the information found in these reviews. The Division will also continue to support faculty through professional development (such as ACUE and Quality Matters training). Instructional designers in the Division will continue to work with faculty on submission of courses for Quality Matters certification.

Unit
Academic Affairs

Sub-unit
Not Applicable

Strategic Initiative

Explore alternative funding sources and investment strategies. (Strategic Initiative 5.1)

Reason for Initiative

Seek and administer grant funds to support academic programs, academic support services, and student success efforts to ensure that academic programs and associated support services are provided adequate resources; to support success of students in academic programs.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Vice President for Academic Affairs
- Academic Deans
- Dean of Special Projects

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #5: Finance and Operations
 - Strategic Goal #5: Gaston College is committed to optimizing fiduciary and operational strategies to ensure long-term success and stability.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

Grant applications and reports

Success Criteria

Submission of grant applications and grant reports to appropriate agencies

Assessment Results

During the 2024-2025 academic year, the Division of Academic Affairs administered numerous grants funds from the National Science Foundation (SPARC4 and SPARC5 grants); NC Community College System (REACH project and High-Cost Program Expansion Grants); Carolina Cyber Network (Cybersecurity program); and NC A&T (Steps4Growth).

The SPARC program has served 196 students, known as SPARC Scholars, since 2014. Seventy-eight percent of students have completed an Associate in Science and Associate in Engineering degree and 11% were still attending GC in 2024-2025. The average GPA of our scholars is 3.5 as compared to an average of 2.81 for other Associate in Science and Associate in Engineering students at the College. Our scholars have transferred to four-year colleges at a rate of 70%. As a comparison, data released in 2022 by the National Student Clearinghouse found that the fall-to-fall retention rate at community colleges is 59% (National Student Clearinghouse Research

Center, 2022). Additionally, the National Center for Educational Statistics reports that the 2018 cohort of community college students nationwide showed a 36.4% graduation rate within three years of entering college (National Center for Education Statistics, nd). Before the pandemic, we saw over 80% of our scholars transfer to four-year institutions. Several of our scholars have been recognized with national and regional scholarships. Three SPARC scholars were awarded the Jack Kent Cooke transfer scholarship, including one in Spring 2025, and one scholar was awarded the highly prestigious Goldwater Award for research. Four scholars were awarded Goodnight Scholarships at N.C. State University. As of May 2025, 47 scholars have completed bachelor's degrees in a STEM field. Seven others have completed bachelor's degrees in non-STEM fields such as accounting, nursing, and business administration. Seven scholars are currently enrolled in graduate school or have completed a graduate degree.

During the 2024-2025 academic year, the Division submitted two additional grant applications to the National Science Foundation to support the SPARC program (SPARC6 and SPARC7). The \$5 million SPARC6 grant is a collaboration with Cleveland Community College, Rowan Cabarrus Community College, South Piedmont Community College, and the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. This grant would support Associate in Science (AS) students who plan to pursue biology or computer science degrees at UNC-Charlotte after completing their AS degree at one of the four community colleges. The \$1.7 million SPARC7 grant would support Associate in Engineering students at Gaston College. Funding decisions on these two grants are expected in Fall 2025.

Gaston College was selected to participate in a national initiative known as REACH Deeper in April 2023. Gaston College is one of only two colleges in North Carolina and 12 colleges in the nation to join the REACH Deeper Cohort, which is designed to support community colleges interested in "deeper" institutional and cross-state learning to transform policies, processes, and practices that benefit adult learners of color. Our selection was based on our demonstrated commitment to student success through high-value credential pathways that support adult learners and a strong recommendation from the NCCCS REACH team. Colleges in the REACH Deeper Cohort identify a problem of practice, then develop and begin implementation on a plan to advance racial equity for adult learners of color in short-term credential to degree pathways. Gaston College received a \$27,500 grant to support our team to develop professional development opportunities for faculty and staff. These professional development opportunities (three online courses) were designed to allow faculty and staff the opportunity to reflect on their current practices and learn best practices to create a sense of belonging on campus that supports students during their time at the College. However, due to current Federal regulations (released in Spring 2025), these professional development courses are not able to be offered on campus at this time.

In November 2023, the NC Community College System (NCCCS) awarded the Division \$430,860 in High-Cost Workforce Start-Up Funds to support the start-up of the College's Surgical Technology program. An additional \$69,140 was awarded to the Division in Spring 2025. These funds are being used to support faculty salaries, as well as equipment and supplies for the new Surgical Technology laboratory space. In February 2024, the Division was awarded \$400,000 in

North Carolina Community College System Program Expansion Grant funds to support faculty salaries and additional equipment for Emergency Medical Sciences. In September 2024, the Division received \$750,000 in NCCCS High-Cost Workforce Start-Up Funds to support the establishment of a Medical Sonography program. These funds are being used to support faculty salaries, supplies, simulators, and scanning machines. In April 2025, the Division was awarded \$15,000 from NC AHEC for compensation and training for new clinical adjuncts to support the new practical nursing high school cohort which was developed in partnership with Lincoln County Schools and Atrium Lincoln.

The Division continues to be involved with the Carolina Cyber Network grant. The goal of the grant is to increase the number of students enrolled in the Networking and Cyber Defense curriculum program, as well as associated continuing education opportunities. The number of curriculum students has increased as follows:

Term	Count
Fall 2017	24
Fall 2018	34
Fall 2019	34
Fall 2020	30
Fall 2021	34
Fall 2022	57
Fall 2023	78
Fall 2024	88

Additionally, Cisco Networking Academy has been integrated into our curriculum and Continuing Education course offerings. Curriculum students will receive course completion credentials in Cisco Networking Academy that allow them to sit for the following exams:

- CCNA Introduction to Networks (NET 125 – Intro to Networks)
- CCNA Switching, Routing, and Wireless Essentials (NET 126 – Switching and Routing)
- CCNA Enterprise Networking, Security, and Automation (NET 225 – Enterprise Networking)

In addition, content in curriculum courses has been aligned to industry-recognized certifications including MOS, A+, Net+, and Security+.

The Division is also partnered with NC A&T University on the Steps4Growth grant. The purpose of this grant is to deliver training in four sectors of the clean energy economy: Energy Efficiency, Electric Vehicles, Renewable Energy, and Green Building Construction. Graduates of the program may enter the workforce in one of many clean energy jobs or continue their schooling at North Carolina A&T, or one of the state's community colleges, including Gaston College. Our Division has been involved through two primary curriculum programs: Automotive Systems Technology and Electrical Systems Technology.

The Division continues to administer over \$300,000 in annual funding from the Federal Perkins grant. These funds are used each year to support a variety of initiatives that support the College's career and technical education programs. Examples include funding for equipment and supplies, faculty professional development, and success coaches to work directly with career and technical education students on retention issues.

In Fall 2024, the Division worked with Atrium Health Lincoln and Lincoln County Schools to submit a proposal to the Golden Leaf Foundation to support the establishment of a health academy for high school students on Gaston College's Lincoln Campus. The Division also worked internally to submit a proposal to Golden Leaf to support the welding program. In November 2024, the Division was awarded \$1,034,060 from Golden Leaf to establish practical nursing and emergency medical science health academy programs. The Division also received an additional \$125,000 in Golden Leaf funds to expand the welding program at the Dallas Campus.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

All administered grant funds have shown tangible results that promote student success and program enhancement. The Division will continue to seek and administer grant funds in the 2025-2026 academic year.

Unit
Academic Affairs

Sub-unit
Not Applicable

Strategic Initiative

- Expand course offerings and flexible scheduling options to accommodate diverse student needs, including dual enrollment students, working adults, and non-traditional learners. (Strategic Initiative 2.3)
- Implement initiatives to close achievement gaps among different student demographics. (Strategic Initiative 2.7)

Reason for Initiative

Address equity challenges to provide all students with the support they need to participate in educational opportunities and complete a credential.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Vice President for Academic Affairs
- Academic Deans
- Dean of Special Projects

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #2: Student Access and Success
 - Strategic Goal #2: Gaston College will enhance student access, success, and inclusivity in high-quality educational programs, ultimately empowering students to achieve their educational goals.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

- Increase the number of hyflex and hybrid course offerings
- Increase the number of course offerings on the Lincoln campus
- Implement professional development to help faculty recognize and meet the needs of diverse learners
- Implementing best practices in curriculum courses to address challenges within sub-populations of students (ethnicity, age, pell-status, gender, etc.)

Success Criteria

- Equity gap reduction in student metrics
 - gateway course completion
 - fall-to-fall persistence
 - fall-to-spring persistence
 - credit accumulation
 - credential and/or pathway completion

- At least five professional development sessions offered

Assessment Results

For the 2024-2025 academic year, the number of Hyflex increased to 84 courses as compared to 13 courses the previous academic year. Hyflex courses were initiated from both the Dallas and Lincoln campuses. Examples of Hyflex courses include ACA 122, College Transfer Success; ART 111, Art Appreciation; BIO 111, General Biology I; BIO 112, General Biology II; EDU 119, Intro to Early Childhood Education; ENG 111, Writing and Inquiry; HIS 131, American History I; MAT 272, Calculus II; MAT 273, Calculus III; PSY 150, General Psychology; PHY 251, General Physics I; and PHY 252, General Physics II; and SOC 210, Intro to Sociology. The Emergency Medical Science program began offering hybrid classes due to industry demand and expanded offerings to include preceptor and officer courses.

Each year, the Division examines the percentage of students who earn a C or better in their courses during the academic year. For the 2024-2025 year, the percentage of students earning a C or better was consistent with the previous academic year at 81%. The withdrawal rate decreased to 10.1% as compared to the previous academic year (11%). For students beginning their academic career at Gaston College in Fall 2023, 47% returned for Fall 2024. For students beginning their academic career at Gaston College in Fall 2024, 72% returned for Spring 2025.

During the 2024-2025 academic year, the following credentials were earned by students.

Credential	Number of Credential Awarded
Certificate	1,176
Diploma	179
Degree	867

The Division also looks at the NC Community College System Performance Measures to evaluate the success of our efforts. Of the seven measures, six relate to the Academic Affairs Division, as follows:

- Student success rate in college-level English courses
- Student success rate in college-level math courses
- First-year progression
- Curriculum completion
- Performance of transfer students during the first year at a four-year institution after transfer from a community college
- Licensure pass rates

In 2023, Gaston College had only one of the seven performance measures scored higher than the average band or higher. In 2024, three measures were above the average band. For 2025, all six measures are in the average band or higher. Three of the measures showed improvement from 2024 to 2025 including student success rate in college-level math courses; first-year progression; and licensure pass rates.

As of March 2025, the Career and College Readiness (Basic Skills) Department moved to the Academic Affairs Division. As a result, on future Unit Plans, the Division will also track Basic Skills Progress (the seventh performance measure).

Each year, faculty can complete professional development through two major College-sponsored events, the SPARC Professional Development Day and the Gaston College Professional Development Day. The SPARC Professional Development Day was held on November 22, 2024, and the following sessions were offered for faculty:

- The Alien Ecosystem Project
- Collaboration Station
- Intersection of Exponential and Financial
- Equations, Equivalents and Examples: How Mathematical Equations are Explained and then seen through the Lenses of Biology and Art
- Ubuntu! The Influence of Culture on South African Biodiversity
- Cybersecurity Across Disciplines: Building Resilience for a Digital Future
- Developing Guided Notes to Increase Student Success
- yEvo: A directed evolution CURE for undergraduate biology labs
- Meet A New Class Companion: The Free AI Teaching Assistant
- Physics-Based Calc 1: A Natural World Approach
- The Write Way: Where Writing and STEM Clash
- Motivation in STEM: Leveraging Psychology to Foster Student Engagement
- Neuroscience-Informed Trauma-Informed Pedagogy
- The Impact that Civil Engineering has on the Local Area and Entire World

The Gaston College Professional Development Day was held on February 12, 2025, and the following sessions were offered for faculty:

- Artificial Intelligence in Higher Education
- Mental Health & Wellness
- Values Clarification
- Building Better Mental Health
- Making Stress Work for You
- Chair Massage & Stress Reduction
- Wilderness Survival Basics
- The Freedom Riders

There were also online professional development modules that all Gaston College faculty were required to complete during the 2024-2025 academic year. These included:

- Cybersecurity Overview
- Protection Against Malware
- Browser Security Basics
- Email & Messaging Safety
- Password Security Basics

- Slips, Trips and Falls
- FERPA: Confidentiality of Records

The Division of Arts and Sciences developed an Artificial Intelligence Microcredential for faculty to earn to help them develop their skills and understanding of AI in higher education. This 10-part PD was offered from August 2024 – May 2025. Twelve faculty completed the microcredential.

Additionally, a number of professional development sessions have been offered to assist faculty in improving student success rates though the NC Student Success Center's Teaching and Learning Hubs. These sessions are open and free to all NC community college faculty and staff. Examples of these sessions include during the 2024-2025 academic year include:

- Effective Feedback Strategies - Enhancing Student Writing Across Disciplines
- Smart Teaching - The Magic of AI in Your Classroom
- Being Human in Tech-Dominated Spaces
- Utilizing Formative and Summative Assessment Data to Maximize Student Success
- Universal Design for Learning and the Myth of the Average Student
- Unlocking Potential - Supporting First-Generation Students Through a Growth Mindset
- Observation Practices That Lead to Growth and Excellence
- Practical Teaching Strategies for CTE Instructors
- Enhancing Student Success Through Course Performance Analysis
- The First Five Minutes and Building Student Trust
- Strategies for Improving Student Engagement Success

The College has partnered with the Association of College and University Educators (ACUE) to provide faculty and staff with professional development opportunities aimed at improving student outcomes through enhanced teaching effectiveness and fostering a culture of belonging. The program delivers modular, research-based online courses that emphasize active learning, assessment for learning, inclusive and equitable teaching, and effective course and class design. Through this partnership, the College has made significant strides in improving student success by promoting inclusive, evidence-based teaching practices that foster meaningful engagement and improved learning outcomes for diverse student populations. Faculty have also been equipped with proven strategies to enhance student motivation, engagement, and academic performance—all of which contribute to improved student retention and overall success.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

The Division will continue to participate in faculty and staff professional development focused on improving student success. Data analysis of NCCCS performance measures and internal data, and action plans resulting from this data analysis, is on-going and aimed at continuous improvement of outcomes for GC students. The Division has also recently formed performance measures teams to help improve student success rates at the College.

Unit
Academic Affairs

Sub-unit
Not Applicable

Strategic Initiative

Develop and regularly update academic and workforce development programs to respond to the needs of the local job market and other State initiatives (Example: MyFutureNC, pre-apprenticeships) (Strategic Initiative 2.2)

Reason for Initiative

Continue to make changes to existing programs of study and implement new programs of study as applicable to meet College and service area needs. Programs of study are reviewed annually to determine any modifications necessary due to changes in industry, recommendations from advisory committees and transfer partners, financial viability, or other factors (i.e., curriculum changes, program termination, change in format of program, etc.). Additionally, new programs of study are added at the College as community and industry needs in the College's service area dictate.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Vice President for Academic Affairs
- Academic Deans
- Dean of Special Projects

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #2: Student Access and Success
 - Strategic Goal #2: Gaston College will enhance student access, success, and inclusivity in high-quality educational programs, ultimately empowering students to achieve their educational goals.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

Programmatic changes and/or implementation of new programs

Success Criteria

At least one programmatic change will be completed.

Assessment Results

Each program is served by an advisory committee. These committee ensure that the College's programs remain up to date with current industry practice so employment needs in the service areas are met. Additionally, these committees may also provide suggestions for curriculum changes based on current industry practice.

Curriculum changes were submitted in Fall 2024 for the following programs of study: Accounting and Finance, Applied Engineering Technology, Associate in Arts, Associate in Arts in Teacher Preparation, Associate in Science, Associate in Science in Teacher Preparation, Audio and Video Production Technology – Audio/Video Production certificate and Audio Production certificate, Cosmetology, Fire Protection Technology, Information Technology, Medical Assisting, Nurse Aide – Therapeutic and Diagnostic Services, Surgical Technology, and Veterinary Medical Technology. These changes were approved and will be implemented for Fall 2024.

Human Services Technology underwent major revision at the NCCCS-level and these changes were implemented locally in 2024-2025. This degree program also had a name change to Social and Human Services.

The Division requested that the Pharmacy Technology be terminated due to continued low enrollment issues. The Division also requested the termination of the Office Administration program. These requests were approved by the Curriculum Committee as well as by GC's Board of Trustees. Pharmacy Technology courses may be offered as needed in the future in the College's Continuing Education department. Office Administration students are being redirected to the Business Administration program.

The College requested the addition of WEB-288 Global Perspectives in Media to the North Carolina Community College System (NCCCS) Combined Course Library (CCL) in Fall 2024. This was approved by NCCCS in Spring 2025. Another request was made in Fall 2024 to reactivate BIO 285, Research and Measurement, within the CCL. This request was approved by NCCCS in Spring 2025. Both courses will be added locally to programs of study at Gaston College during the next academic year.

The Division has been in an Instructional Service Agreement with Catawba Valley Community College to offer instruction in Respiratory Therapy. During the 2024-2025 academic year, the Division worked to gain the necessary state approval, as well as Institutional and programmatic accreditor approvals, to transition this program fully to Gaston College. This transition was approved and became effective May 1, 2025.

The Division proposed a new program of study, Medical Sonography, for implementation in 2025-2026 at the Lincoln Campus which was approved by the Curriculum Committee and the College's Board of Trustees in Fall 2024. During the 2024-2025 academic year, the Division worked to gain state and Institutional accreditor approval, acquire grant funding for the program, and secure equipment, supplies, instructional materials, and personnel.

The cosmetology program also expanded in 2024-2025 by opening a second instructional site at Hunter Huss High School for juniors and seniors. The Medical Assisting program will expand its course offerings in Fall 2025 to the Lincoln Campus. During the 2024-2025 academic year, minor renovations were completed to allow for this expansion. The Division also worked to secure additional equipment, supplies, faculty, and clinical sites for the program.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

The College will continue to make changes to existing curriculum and add new program options as necessary to meet the demands of local business and industry. The College will also track the success of students in each program annually.

Unit
Academic Affairs

Sub-unit
Not Applicable

Strategic Initiative

- Strengthen existing and develop new strategic partnerships with local businesses, industries, public safety agencies, and community organizations to foster mutually beneficial relationships that support workforce training, internships, and job placement opportunities for students. (Strategic Initiative 3.1)
- Strengthen partnerships with four-year colleges and universities and K-12 schools to support student success and career readiness. (Strategic Initiative 3.2)

Reason for Initiative

To increase the number of collaborations and partnerships within the community.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Vice President for Academic Affairs
- Academic Deans
- Dean of Special Projects
- Faculty

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #3: Partnerships and Community Engagement
 - Strategic Goal #3: Gaston College will establish strong partnerships, actively engage with the community, and create meaningful opportunities for students, alumni, and the public to contribute to the college's mission and success.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

Establishment of new partnership(s).

Success Criteria

At least one new partnership will be created.

Assessment Results

Gaston College (GC) and North Carolina Wesleyan University (NCWU) signed a partnership agreement in February 2025 to enhance and expand the educational opportunities of Associate in Arts (AA), Associate in Science (AS), Associate of Arts in Teacher Preparation (AATP), Associate of Science in Teacher Preparation (AATP), Associate of Engineering (AE), Associate in Fine Arts (AFA), Associate in Applied Science (AAS), and Associate of Nursing (ADN) graduates by offering Gaston College graduates access to the benefits of the Wesleyan Works program. Students who graduate and transfer under this agreement may select any of NCWU's

traditional programs of study or may transfer to NCWU's Adult and Professional Studies programs utilizing the advantages of the Wesleyan Works program. Wesleyan Works guarantees admission to NCWU for GC's AA, AS, AATP, ASTP, AE, AFA, AAS, and ADN graduates. Students who participate in Wesleyan Works will have access to academic advising and financial aid counseling through NCWU, as well as access to attend events on NCWU's main campus in Rocky Mount, NC. The target population for this program is adult students who intend to attend NCWU's evening or online programs.

During the 2024-2025 academic year, several new apprenticeship and work-based learning partners were added, including:

- Abernethy Laurels
- CTS Health
- Hart Automotive
- Husky Rack and Wire
- IFAB
- Southern Belle Marketing
- Stanley Total Living Center
- Law Offices of Michelle Geathers McPhatter
- Lighthouse Children's Advocacy Center
- Willis Psychiatric
- CBM
- Hydac
- Lincoln Rehabilitation Center
- Momentum Car Care
- Recore Electric

Due to the move of the Respiratory Therapy program to a stand-alone program at GC for May 1, 2025 (not an Instructional Service Agreement with Catawba Valley Community College as in the past), new clinical affiliations had to be established with the following healthcare sites:

- Iredell Memorial Hospital
- Frye Regional Medical Center
- Catawba Valley Health System
- Rutherford Regional Health System
- UNC Health Caldwell
- Valley Nursing and Rehabilitation Center

Additionally, new partnerships sites were established with the following clinical sites for the Surgical Technology program and Medical Assisting programs to support an increased number of students:

- Gaston Eye Associates
- Carolina Spine and Pain
- Luvis Family Medicine
- Piedmont Healthcare (offices in Lake Norman, Mooresville)
- Tryon Medical Partners – Gaston

- Viewmont Surgery Center

The Division continues to work in partnership with Lincoln County Schools and Atrium Health Lincoln to offer a practical nursing pathway for high school students on the Lincoln Campus of the College. Eleventh grade students completed nursing pre-requisites (BIO 168, BIO 169, PSY 150, and ENG 111) during Fall 2024 and Spring 2025. On Monday, June 2, 2025, the first cohort of students officially signed their acceptance letters during a special ceremony at Atrium Health Lincoln. Nursing courses will be offered for 12th grade students in Fall 2025, Spring 2026, and Summer 2026. Thus, these students will graduate high school in June 2026 and complete the practical nursing program at GC in July 2026. In Spring 2025, the Division was awarded \$15,000 from NC Area Health Education Centers (AHEC) for the College's Clinical Instructor Partnership. Specifically, these grants funds will be used for compensation and training for clinical adjuncts in this practical nursing pathway. Additionally, the Division created a new partnership with Lincoln and Gaston County Schools to offer a math competition for high school students.

Academic Affairs faculty and staff in Lincoln County have partnered with Lincoln County Schools to promote teacher education for Career and College Promise (high school) students. Specifically, the Division is offering two seated hybrid classes each year (as well as additional online classes) as a part of the Associate in Arts in Teacher Preparation and Associate in Science in Teacher Preparation.

Faculty, staff, and students in academic programs continue to perform services for the community to allow students to practice their skills in a real-world setting. These programs include cosmetology, esthetics, and manicuring clinics open to the public. During the 2024-2025 academic year, 3,104 (cosmetology – 1956; 171 manicuring; and 977 esthetics) public clients were served.

The following memorandum of agreements for transfer admission guarantee programs were updated during the 2024-2025 academic year, including:

- East Carolina University Pirate Promise
- Gardner-Webb University Bulldog Bound (reviewed annually)
- University of North Carolina at Wilmington Pathways Program (reviewed annually)

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

The Division will continue to work with business and industry, local school districts, and NC community colleges and universities to maintain existing partnerships and build new partnerships to support workforce needs in the service area.

Unit
Academic Affairs

Sub-unit
Not Applicable

Strategic Initiative

Promote research and scholarly activities among students to showcase student skills and achievements. (Strategic Initiative 2.6)

Reason for Initiative

Faculty, staff, and students in academic programs will perform services for the community to allow students to practice skills in real-world setting.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Vice President for Academic Affairs
- Academic Deans
- Faculty

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #2 Student Access and Success
 - Strategic Goal #2: Gaston College is committed to enhancing student access, success, and inclusivity in high-quality educational programs, ultimately empowering students to achieve their educational goals.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

Services and activities provided for the community.

Success Criteria

At least three services and/or activities will be available for community members annually.

Assessment Results

Math Club students in the Academic Affairs Division competed in the NCMATYC Student Math Competition on November 2, 2024. The Math Club had five students compete in this event. In December 2024 and May 2025, the Division hosted the Gaston College Research and Creativity Symposium. At this event, Gaston College students present the results of their undergraduate research projects. Twenty-four students shared their research at these two events. Additionally, two Gaston College students presented their research at the 2024 National Science Foundation S-STEM Conference in Chicago, IL in November 2024 and, in February 2025, three Gaston College students presented their research at the American Chemical Society Undergraduate Research Symposium.

At the North Carolina state SkillsUSA competition in April 2025, the Division took 14 students to participate in Audio/Radio Production, Television/Video Production, Medical Assisting, Medical Terminology, and Emergency Medical Sciences. Results at the state competition were:

- 1st Medical Assisting: Kierra Clark
- 2nd Medical Assisting: Eli Johnson
- 2nd Video News Production: Aaron Park, Ashleigh Parra, Asaad Tumbling, Morgan Wise
- 2nd Video Production: Hunter Blackburn and Ty Cobb
- 3rd Medical Terminology: Donna Burnett
- 4th Medical Terminology: Giovanni Herrera
- 4th Video Production: Zoey Dees and Erika Shelton
- 5th Audio Production: Colby Love and Ian Moore

The Division had one Gaston College student compete at the national SkillsUSA in Atlanta, Georgia in June 2025. SkillsUSA provides our students with a great opportunity to showcase talent, knowledge, and skills while competing against thousands of students nationwide. SkillsUSA is recognized as a leader in workforce development while empowering students to be career-ready leaders and responsible community members.

Sixty Gaston College students from ten career and technical education programs were inducted into the National Technical Honor Society in Spring 2025. Approximately 286 students have been inducted since the local chapter started in 2021.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

The College will continue to support students' research and scholarly activities that promote student learning and application of skills and showcase student work.

Unit
Academic Affairs

Sub-unit
Not Applicable

Strategic Initiative

Develop a comprehensive marketing and outreach strategy to effectively promote the College's programs and services to potential students, employers, and community partners in Gaston and Lincoln Counties. (Strategic Initiative 1.4)

Reason for Initiative

Promote, showcase, and increase awareness of the programs in the Academic Affairs Division, internally and externally to remain the college of choice for the service area and to foster positive public relations.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Vice President for Academic Affairs
- Academic Deans
- Dean of Special Projects
- Faculty

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #1: Student Recruitment and Enrollment
 - Strategic Goal #1: Gaston College will enhance its marketing efforts, improve recruitment strategies, and support students through the enrollment process, ultimately attracting and enrolling a diverse and engaged student body.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

Academic Affairs faculty and staff will participate in the following activities

- Open House
- Career Fairs
- sciVisit
- Division specific marketing events

Success Criteria

At least three activities will be completed annually.

Assessment Results

Faculty and program administration in the Division participated in over 60 events during the 2024-2025 academic year to promote programs, including:

- Manufacturing Week presentation at Lincoln High School

- Presentations and college fairs at Grier Middle School, West Lincoln High School, Ashbrook High School, Lincoln Charter, Gaston County Commissioner's School of Excellence, Lincoln School of Technology, Hunter Huss High School, East Gaston High School, East Gaston Health Academy, East Lincoln High School, and Lincolnton High School
- Fall 2024 and Spring 2025 GC Open House Events and Senior Night
- Lincoln County Schools 10th Grader visit (over 900 students and teachers)
- Gaston College Health Fair
- Commissioners School
- 22 information sessions for selective admissions healthcare programs and 21 tours of wellness programs (cosmetology, esthetics, and manicuring)
- Leadership Gaston
- Cosmetic Arts Career Fair
- Caromont Career Club
- RN to BSN Day
- Medical Assistant Career Fair
- Med Center Air visit
- Apple Festival, Lincoln County
- Gaston College Student Success Expo
- Gaston College Educator's Breakfast
- Gaston County Early College High School TAG Co-Admission events
- SGA Week of Welcome
- Gaston College Spring Fest
- Gaston County Commissioners School
- Gaston College Upward Bound presentation

Two GC signature events were also sponsored by the Division including:

- Rhino Roadmap to CTE Careers - February 25, 2025 - Over 250 participants and 25 local industry representatives attended this event.
- sciVisit -April 11, 2025 – Over 600 high school students from seven area high schools attended this science, technology, engineering, and mathematics-focused event and participated in activities such as brain and eye dissections, blood typing, and engineering activities. This event is a part of the annual North Carolina Science Festival.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

The Division will continue to participate in marketing events to highlight programs of study and attract perspective students to high-demand jobs in our service area. This allows us to help meet the workforce needs of area employers.

Unit
Academic Affairs

Sub-unit
Not Applicable

Strategic Initiative

- Expand opportunities for international and cross-cultural experiences for students and faculty to promote global perspectives and intercultural competence. (Strategic Initiative 2.4)
- Promote research and scholarly activities among students to showcase student skills and achievements. (Strategic Initiative 2.6)

Reason for Initiative

Provide opportunities for engagement of students and faculty both inside and outside the classroom to promote student success and the professional growth of faculty and students.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Vice President for Academic Affairs
- Academic Deans
- Dean of Special Projects
- Faculty

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #2: Student Access and Success
 - Strategic Goal #2: Gaston College will enhance student access, success, and inclusivity in high-quality educational programs, ultimately empowering students to achieve their educational goals.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

- Participate in Skills USA events
- Participate in math competitions
- Participate in undergraduate research events
- Participate in Global Education Week
- Offer study abroad opportunities

Success Criteria

At least five activities will be completed annually.

Assessment Results

Math Club students in the Academic Affairs Division competed in the NCMATYC Student Math Competition on November 2, 2024. The Math Club had five students compete in this event.

In December 2024 and May 2025, the Division hosted the Gaston College Research and Creativity Symposium. At this event, Gaston College students present the results of their undergraduate research projects. Twenty-four students shared their research at these two events. Additionally, two Gaston College students presented their research at the 2024 National Science Foundation S-STEM Conference in Chicago, IL in November 2024 and, in February 2025, three Gaston College students presented their research at the American Chemical Society Undergraduate Research Symposium.

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The Division had one Gaston College student compete at the national SkillsUSA in Atlanta, Georgia in June 2025. SkillsUSA provides our students with a great opportunity to showcase talent, knowledge, and skills while competing against thousands of students nationwide. SkillsUSA is recognized as a leader in workforce development while empowering students to be career-ready leaders and responsible community members.

Three study aboard opportunities were offered for students during the 2024-2025 academic year including Costa Rica (December 2024), Greece (May 2025), Paris (April 2025). During global education week in November 2024, eleven events were held including:

- Amsterdam's Historic Heart: A Walking Tour from Anne Frank's House
- Rome by Night: From Caesar to Michelangelo
- Groundwater Extraction Modeling: An Example from Kenya
- Land of Milk, Honey and AI: Israel is Ground Zero for AI's Revolution
- The Berlin Wall – How it Was Built and How it Fell Apart
- Dublin: A Brief History
- Working for a Global Company

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

The Division will continue to offer international and cross-cultural experiences for students and faculty to promote global perspectives and intercultural competence, and events to promote research and scholarly activities among students to showcase student skills and achievements. These events promote student learning, achievement, application of skills, and critical thinking.

Unit
Academic Affairs

Sub-unit
Not Applicable

Strategic Initiative

Implement strategies for continuous improvement on each of the North Carolina Community College System Performance Measures for Student Success. (Strategic Initiative 2.1)

Reason for Initiative

Meet North Carolina Community College System Performance Measures related to curriculum instruction (Gateway Math and English Completion, First Year Progression, Transfer Performance, Licensure and Certifications, Credential Completion)

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Vice President for Academic Affairs
- Academic Deans
- Faculty

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #2: Student Access and Success
 - Strategic Goal #2: Gaston College will enhance student access, success, and inclusivity in high-quality educational programs, ultimately empowering students to achieve their educational goals.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

- Create teams to address each performance measure
- Implement strategies for improvement generated by performance measure teams

Success Criteria

All North Carolina Community College System Performance Measures related to curriculum instruction will be in the average band or higher.

Assessment Results

The Division tracks the NC Community College System Performance Measures to evaluate the success of our efforts. For the 2025 report, Gaston College showed improvements in three measures including:

- Basic Skills Progression (a part of Academic Affairs beginning March 1, 2025)
- Student success rate in college-level English courses
- Student success rate in college-level Math courses

All measures that relate to Academic Affairs are in the average band or higher with three above the average band.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

The Division will continue to examine results of annual NCCCS performance measures and work to engage faculty and program administration in efforts to improve these performance measures such as teams dedicated to improving each measure. The Division also will continue to collaborate with the Division of Student Affairs on services to students that impact these measures (specifically, learning resources, student retention efforts/success coaches, and advising).

Unit
Educational Partnerships and Enrollment Management

Sub-unit
Enrollment Management and Admissions

Strategic Initiative

Implement the College's Strategic Enrollment Plan designed to increase student enrollment and FTE. (Strategic Initiatives 1.1, 5.3)

Reason for Initiative

To increase the number of applicants who successfully complete the enrollment process and enroll in classes.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Director of Enrollment Management and Admissions
- Vice President of Educational Partnerships
- Director of Marketing
- Dean of Lincoln County Partnerships
- Student Recruiters

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #1: Student Recruitment and Enrollment
 - Strategic Goal #1: Gaston College is committed to enhancing its marketing efforts, improving recruitment strategies, and supporting students through the enrollment process, ultimately attracting and enrolling a diverse and engaged student body.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

- Improve outreach to prospective students identified at various on and off campus events.
- Continued targeted outreach to notify and remind students of the next step in the enrollment process.
- Continuous learning and utilization of Watermark CRM Lite
- Strengthen and develop cross campus partnerships with Apprenticeship 321 and Economic and Workforce Development divisions
- Increase Gaston College's presence in high schools in Gaston and Lincoln Counties

Success Criteria

- Increase of 1% in enrollment yield (applicant to enrolled)
- Increase in number of prospective students completing enrollment requirements and scheduling advising appointments

- Increase in number of visits in local public and charter schools (Gaston and Lincoln)
- Increase the number of local high school graduates who enroll at Gaston College following high school graduation
- Increase in GED/HSE completers enrolling in curriculum programs
- Increase in number of collaborative events with Apprenticeship 321

Assessment Results

- Increase of 1% in enrollment yield (applicant to enrolled)
 - The enrollment yield for 2023/2024 - 59.5% and the enrollment yield for 2024/2025 - 57.91% which is a decrease of 1.6%.
 - The number of applicants increased by 8.5% from the previous year.
- Increase in number of prospective students completing enrollment requirements and scheduling advising appointments
 - The number of prospective students completing the enrollment process increased by 10%. (2023/2024 - 3092 completers and 2024/2025 - 3410 completers)
- Increase in number of visits to local public and charter schools (Gaston and Lincoln)
 - Admissions office school visits included:
 - Gaston County - 7 visits including one middle school
 - Lincoln County – 6 visits
 - This number dropped due to the Student Recruiter role vacancy.
 - The College Now team made 168 visits to high schools during this school year.
 - Upward Bound made 165 visits to BCHS and HHHS and EOC completed 22 high school visits last year.
 - In total the Ed. Partnerships and Enrollment Management division conducted 368 high school visits last year.
- Increase the number of local high school graduates who enroll at Gaston College following high school graduation
 - In Fall 2024, 14.1% of local high school graduates enrolled at Gaston College following high school graduation. This was a down from Fall 2023, when 16.9% of local high school graduates enrolled at Gaston College.
- Increase in GED/HSE completers enrolling in curriculum programs
 - Due to the student recruiter vacancy, this assessment was not monitored or tracked. The position was filled effective July 15, 2025. One of the objectives for this position is to track GED/HSE completers to recruit them for enrollment in a curriculum program to establish a baseline measurement.
- Increase in number of collaborative events with Apprenticeship 321
 - The Admissions Office partnered with the Apprenticeship 321 department on three (3) different occasions.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

College Now FTE increased, and we will continue to maintain and increase our efforts through high school visits and other opportunities to collaborate with our high school partners.

2024-2025 Unit Plans
Management

Educational Partnerships and Enrollment

Previous tracking of enrollment of recent high school graduates has looked exclusively at curriculum enrollment. With the move of numerous programs to continuing education, we plan to expand success definition to include high school graduates who enroll in sustainable income-earning continuing education programs.

Overall college FTE has grown again for the 2024-2025 school year. We will continue to monitor programming and add enrollment gaining initiatives for the 2025-2026 school year.

Unit
Educational Partnerships and Enrollment Management

Sub-unit
Admissions, College Now, and Marketing

Strategic Initiative

Increase College-Now program enrollment and the number of graduating seniors in Gaston and Lincoln counties that enroll at Gaston College after high school graduation. (Strategic Initiative 1.2)

Reason for Initiative

Increase headcount and FTE

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Dean of College Now
- Early College Liaisons
- Vice President of Educational Partnerships
- Director of Marketing
- Student Recruiters
- Director of Admissions

Relation to Strategic Plan (Select the Strategic Priority(ies)/Goal(s))

- Strategic Priority #1: Student Recruitment and Enrollment
 - Strategic Goal #1: Gaston College is committed to enhancing its marketing efforts, improving recruitment strategies, and supporting students through the enrollment process, ultimately attracting and enrolling a diverse and engaged student body.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

- Improve efficiencies with transition process for high school CCP seniors to adult learners
- Explore growth opportunities in program offerings at high school locations
 - Automotive – Bessemer City High School
 - Cosmetology – Hunter Huss High School
 - Firefighter Technology – Lincoln County School of Technology
- Explore more events focusing on high school graduating seniors on and off campus.

Success Criteria

- Increase College Now enrollment
- Increase programs at high schools in Gaston and Lincoln counties
- Increase participation of high school seniors

- Increase enrollment of graduating seniors in Gaston and Lincoln counties enrolling at Gaston College after high school graduation

Assessment Results

	21-22	22-23	23-24		24-25		25-26	
			Goal	Actual	Goal	Actual	Goal	Actual
College Now	2215	2500	2600	2828	2700	3182	2800	

Gaston and Lincoln County High School Graduates Attending Gaston College Fall Term After High School Graduation

Gaston and Lincoln Counties	21-22	22-23	23-24		24-25		25-26	
			Goal	Actual	Goal	Actual	Goal	Actual
Number of Graduates	3240	3129		3140		3357		
Number Enrolled at Gaston College Fall Term After High School Graduation	418	339	434	530	564	475		
Percent Enrolled at Gaston College Fall Term After High School Graduation	12.90%	10.80%	13.8%	16.9%	16.8%	14.1%	19.8%	

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

The College Now Department successfully surpassed the enrollment goals for the 2024-2025 academic year. The goal was 2,700 students, the department enrolled 3,182 students, exceeding the goal by 482 students. The increased enrollment reflects effective outreach by the College Now team in the high schools and the partnerships with our local high schools. Gaston College partnered with GCS at Hunter Huss High School to add a Cosmetology Pathway. The Automotive Pathway at Bessemer City High School did not come to fruition due to unforeseen circumstances (the facility not being adequate for the program); therefore, we will not be able to further explore this opportunity. There are plans to expand pathway opportunities at Gaston Day Fall 2025. Gaston College partnered with LCS at Lincoln County School of Technology to add a Firefighter Technology Pathway. In addition, Fall 2024 Gaston College partnered with LCS and Atrium Health Lincoln and implemented Lincoln County Schools Health Academy for high school juniors and seniors. Fall 2025, we will have plans to expand with Gaston Day.

Success Criteria: The percentage of graduating seniors in Gaston and Lincoln counties who enroll at Gaston College after high school graduation will increase from 11% (Fall 2022 – 339 out of 3129 graduates) to 20%, an increase of 9 percentage points, by the end of the 2025-2026 academic year.

2024-2025 Unit Plans
Management

Educational Partnerships and Enrollment

The College Now department made progress toward our goal of increasing the percentage of graduating high school seniors from Gaston and Lincoln counties who enroll in Gaston College after graduation to reach 20% by the end of the 2025-2026 academic year. In 2024-2025, we increased our goal to 16.8% of graduating high school graduates attending Gaston College Fall Term after High School graduation. However, the percentage of graduating seniors enrolling at Gaston College was 14.1%; 475 students enrolled, short of 554 goals. The drop in enrollment demonstrates a need to evaluate factors. Factors such as first-time college students enrolled in summer classes under CCP; the need to increase presence at high school signing events and other high school recruiting events; changes in workforce. Moving forward, the plan is reviewing ways to engage and provide outreach to undecided high school graduates to meet our 2025-2026 goal.

Unit
Educational Partnerships and Enrollment Management

Sub-unit
Upward Bound

Strategic Initiative

Implement proactive and targeted outreach activities to engage prospective special populations who have shown interest in attending Gaston but have not yet enrolled. (Strategic Initiative 1.5)

Reason for Initiative

Increase Gaston College exposure to under-represented youth at Bessemer City High School and Hunter Huss High School.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Director of Upward Bound
- Vice President of Educational Partnerships

Relation to Strategic Plan (Select the Strategic Priority(ies)/Goal(s))

- Strategic Priority #1: Student Recruitment and Enrollment
 - Strategic Goal #1: Gaston College is committed to enhancing its marketing efforts, improving recruitment strategies, and supporting students through the enrollment process, ultimately attracting and enrolling a diverse and engaged student body.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

- Academic Preparation for College
- Educational and Career Planning
- Personal and Cultural Enrichment Activities
- College and Financial Aid Assistance
- Summer Academy Program

Success Criteria

Objective 1: Academic Performance – Grade Point Average

- Goal: 65% of participants served during the project year will have a cumulative GPA of 2.5 or better on a four-point scale at the end of the school year.

Objective 2: Secondary School Retention and Graduation

- Goal: 90% of project participants served during the project year will continue in school for the next academic year, at the next grade level, or will have graduated from secondary school with a regular secondary school diploma.

Assessment Results

Objective 1 Academic Performance – Grade Point Average

- **Goal:** 65% of participants served during the project year will have a cumulative GPA of 2.5 or better on a four-point scale at the end of the school year.
- **Outcome:** 97% of participants served during the project year had a cumulative GPA of 2.5 or better on a four-point scale at the end of the 2024-2025 school year.
 - 61 out of 63 students had a 2.5 or better GPA
 - 2 students had a GPA below 2.5

Objective 2: Secondary School Retention and Graduation

- **Goal:** 90% of project participants served during the project year will continue in school for the next academic year, at the next grade level, or will have graduated from secondary school with a regular secondary school diploma.
- **Outcome:** 100% of project participants served during the project year continued in school for the next academic year, at the next grade level, or graduated from high school with a regular school diploma.
 - 15 out of 15 students who were classified as Seniors graduated in 2025

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

Objective 1 – Academic Performance – Grade Point Average

Students' grades are the primary tools used during the academic year to determine the degree of success in achieving this objective. During each grading period, student outcomes in classes are assessed for academic performance. Additionally, by monitoring student grades, as well as meeting with students weekly and monthly, determinations are made for the need for extra support such as tutoring, test preparation, one-on-one advisement, time management strategies etc.

Subsequently, during academic and summer programs, Upward Bound provides varied services to assist students in excelling academically. Such services include monitoring student grades, classwork, attendance, transcripts, standardized test scores, and more via Power School and report cards. Focus on these areas permits Upward Bound Advisors and staff to effectively provide and recommend assistance where students demonstrated that extra help or supports are needed.

Additionally, such focus on students' academic performance, Individual Academic Plan, and SMART Goals allows UB staff to efficiently advocate for students and provide necessary assistance, as well as work collaboratively with School Administrators/Teachers/Counselors/College Now Coaches/Community Organizations/Parents-Guardians and more. Such strategies employed support the program in defining needed interventions or services for students, in addition to determining the degree of student achievement of this objective.

Objective 2 – Secondary School Retention and Graduation

To ensure achievement of this objective, secondary school retention and graduation are monitored throughout the academic year, and outcomes are determined by student's advancement to the next grade level, and graduation from high school. Per se, UB staff consistently monitor and reviews student outcomes to ensure that students are on track for promotion to the next grade level, as well as ultimately graduating from high school.

Upward Bound Academic Advisors utilize the strategy of Intrusive Advising, which enables staff to stay on top of student's academic performance to guarantee that students take appropriate classes; attempt rigorous classes when appropriate; persist to the next grade level; and ultimately graduate from high school by the student's intended graduation date. By constantly tracking students' academic performance and course work during the school year, project staff are on top of areas of concern and thus able to offer help to overcome any deficient areas that could result in students not persisting to the next grade or failing to graduate.

Unit
Educational Partnerships and Enrollment Management

Sub-unit

TRiO – Educational Opportunity Center

Strategic Initiative

Implement proactive and targeted outreach activities to engage prospective special populations who have shown interest in attending Gaston but have not yet enrolled. (Strategic Initiative 1.5)

Reason for Initiative

Increase access to educational advancement for Gaston and Lincoln County residents.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Director of TRiO EOC
- Vice President of Educational Partnerships

Relation to Strategic Plan (Select the Strategic Priority(ies)/Goal(s))

- Strategic Priority #1: Student Recruitment and Enrollment
 - o Strategic Goal #1: Gaston College is committed to enhancing its marketing efforts, improving recruitment strategies, and supporting students through the enrollment process, ultimately attracting and enrolling a diverse and engaged student body.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

- Guidance on secondary school re-entry or entry to an Adult High School program or High School Equivalency program.
- Help completing applications for college admissions, testing, and financial aid
- Career counseling and workshops.
- Education and counseling services designed to improve the financial and economic literacy of students
- Tutoring

Success Criteria

- Objective 1: 45% of participants served during the project year, who do not have a secondary school diploma or its equivalent, will receive a secondary school diploma or its equivalent during the project year.
- Objective 2: 75% of participants served the project year who are not already enrolled in a postsecondary education program and who: 1) are high school seniors; 2) are high school graduates; or 3) have obtained a high school equivalency certificate, will apply for financial aid during the project year.
- Objective 3: 65% of participants served during the project year who are not already enrolled in a postsecondary education program and who: 1) are high school seniors; 2)

are high school graduates; or 3) have obtained a high school equivalency certificate, will apply for college admission during the project year.

- Objective 4: 65% of participants who graduate from secondary school and are not already enrolled in a postsecondary education program will enroll in a postsecondary education program immediately following participation in an EOC program or will have received notification, by the fall semester, of acceptance but deferred enrollment until the next academic semester (e.g. spring semester).

Assessment Results

TRIO Educational Opportunity Center (EOC) is funded to serve 850 participants. TRIO EOC had an enrollment of 661 participants during the 2024-25 academic year, representing 78% of the funded number. One hundred forty-seven of these participants were continuing participants from 2023-24, which means the project enrolled 514 new participants. Four hundred and five (405) students (47.65%) are both low-income and first-generation. This is below the objective of 66.67% or two-thirds of the number funded to serve. To ensure we are collecting the most accurate information relative to this data, plans are underway to revise two sections of the application. The first section involves the first-generation question.

The current question reads:

Did the parent(s)/guardian(s) you lived with while attending high school have a 4-year degree?

The revised question will read:

Did the parent(s)/guardian(s) you lived with while attending high school have a 4-year college degree?

The second section of the application to be revised is the low-income question. The revision will involve aligning the annual household income amounts to the Federal TRIO Programs' current-year low-income levels.

There are four additional objectives elucidated in the Success Criteria section above. The assessment results of these objectives are outlined below:

- Objective 1 – Target 45%; Current – 15.17%
- Objective 2 – Target 75%; Current – 39.00%
- Objective 3 – Target 65%; Current – 39.00%
- Objective 4 – Target 65%; Current – 71.43%

The data is the result of continued evaluation of participants' status relative to high school completion, submitted applications for financial aid, submitted applications to post-secondary institutions and enrollment into post-secondary institutions, respectively. It is possible that these percentages will increase slightly as we continue to evaluate participants' status up to and inclusive of the submission of the Annual Performance Report (APR) to the Department of Education. The deadline for submission of the APR has not been announced.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

Each of these results will assist the TRIO EOC project with continuous improvements. Revising the first-generation and low-income questions on the application should add clarity for potential participants. We surmise that many high school students mistake “4-year degree” to be synonymous with “high school diploma.” This clarification along with a revision of the income levels will better equip potential participants to provide the most accurate information relating to these statuses.

Another area to consider for continuous improvement is the participants who do not have a secondary school credential at the time of service. It is projected that 45% of these participants will enroll in secondary education and receive a secondary school credential during the project year. This objective requires more contact with these participants and potentially with the HSE(GED) and AHS team at Gaston College.

Unit
Educational Partnerships and Enrollment Management

Sub-unit
Lincoln County Partnerships

Strategic Initiative

Implement the College's Strategic Enrollment Plan designed to increase student enrollment and FTE. (Strategic Initiative 1.1)

Reason for Initiative

To increase student enrollment on the Lincoln Campus.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Dean of Lincoln County Partnerships
- Director of Enrollment Management and Admissions
- Director of Marketing
- Dean of College Now
- Vice President of Educational Partnerships
- Vice President of Economic and Workforce Development
- Vice President of Academic Affairs

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #1: Student Recruitment and Enrollment
 - Strategic Goal #1: Gaston College is committed to enhancing its marketing efforts, improving recruitment strategies, and supporting students through the enrollment process, ultimately attracting and enrolling a diverse and engaged student body.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

- Expand collaborations with local businesses and industry
- Strengthen and develop cross campus partnerships with Apprenticeship 321 and Economic and Workforce Development divisions
- Increase Gaston College's presences in high schools in Lincoln Counties

Success Criteria

- Increase course offerings on the Lincoln Campus
- Increase number of enrollments on the Lincoln Campus
- Increase amount of FTE generated by offerings on the Lincoln Campus

Assessment Results

- Increase course offerings on the Lincoln Campus

- Thanks to a collaborative push across all academic departments, the Lincoln Campus made significant progress in expanding its curriculum, offering 10 courses in Summer 2024, 32 in Fall 2024, and 35 in Spring 2025. New additions span a range of disciplines, including Welding, Pre-Health Pathway courses, Physics, Cybertechnology, Cosmetology, and Esthetics.
- Many of these courses offered at the Lincoln Campus were essential to supporting new programs, including the launch of the first Health Academy cohort, the collaboration between Teacher Cadets and our AA-TP dual-enrolled students, and meeting the growing demand from Lincoln County Schools for expanded welding class offerings.
- Increase number of enrollments on the Lincoln Campus
 - Recruitment efforts were a top priority to promote the new offerings at the Lincoln Campus, with approximately 78 visits made by College Now staff and the Lincoln Campus Dean to various Lincoln County events and schools.
 - Health Academy enrollment saw a significant increase, rising 250% from 8 students in Cohort 1 (2024) to 28 students in Cohort 2 (Fall 2025), driven by enhanced recruitment efforts and greater awareness of the new program.
 - Lincoln County LINKS students were once again housed on the Lincoln Campus, marking the return of this valuable program. Approximately eight students participated this year, with enrollment expected to grow in the upcoming year.
 - During the 2024–2025 academic year, 43 different Continuing Education courses were taken by Lincoln County students following high school graduation. These included programs such as Nurse Aide, EMT, and Fire, with many of the classes held on the Lincoln Campus.
- Increase amount of FTE generated by offerings on the Lincoln Campus
 - FTE saw a 74% increase, rising from 233.71 in 2023–2024 to 406.99 in 2024–2025, driven by strong recruiting efforts, a collaborative push across all academic departments, and renewed partnerships throughout Lincoln County.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

The 2025–2026 academic year is set to bring even more growth, with additional course offerings and the launch of new programs.

The Lincoln Campus will expand its academic offerings with the introduction of Medical Sonography and Medical Assisting programs in Fall 2025, followed by the planned launch of Paramedic training in Spring 2026. Renovations are complete for the Health Academy Practical Nursing program. Looking ahead, a key goal is to continue increasing the number of course offerings to align with these new programs and explore the development of apprenticeship opportunities within them. Partnerships have been strengthened through increased campus use in collaboration with LEDA, Apprenticeship 321, NCWorks, and the Lincoln Chamber. Lincoln

Campus provided space for participation in events such as the Rotary Club's "Race to Educate," "Rhino Rush," and the "Forklift Rodeo. The LINKS program is planning to expand in 2025-2026 with the addition of summer course offerings and a new Food Prep course.

Recruitment for the Lincoln County Health Academy and Teacher Cadet programs reached all area high schools, sparking high levels of student interest. Program highlights included field trips to Atrium Health – Lincoln and MedCenter Air, and a tour of Belmont Abbey College that introduced Teacher Cadets to transfer opportunities. Lincoln Campus showcased its offerings at key community events including the Apple Festival, West Lincoln Career Extravaganza, the LCS Career Fair, and high school curriculum nights in collaboration with College Now.

With new program offerings launching at the Lincoln Campus, there will be a need for a strong focus on increasing community awareness. Efforts will include exploring new marketing strategies to effectively promote these opportunities and reach a broader audience.

Future goals will also include providing even more immersive field trip experiences for Health Academy students to explore a wider range of healthcare careers, as well as an additional college tour opportunity for Teacher Cadets to further expand their awareness of postsecondary pathways and our transfer partners.

2024-2025 Unit Plans
Partnerships Student Learning Outcomes

Educational

SO#	Expected Student Outcome Description	Relation to Strategic Plan		Assessment Means	Success Criteria	Assessment Analysis			Impact of Changes from Previous Cycle	Actions to be Implemented
		Strategic Direction	Strategy			Results	Strengths	Areas for Improvement		
1	Early College juniors, seniors, and super-seniors will meet with the College Liaison to create a two-year plan.	1	8	Analysis of Early College students with two-year plans in Self-Service	88% of juniors, seniors, and super-seniors will have developed a two-year plan	51% of juniors, seniors and super-seniors had a developed two-year plan in the 24-25 school year.	Students are becoming more comfortable using Self-Service.	Need to replace vacant Liaison position. Position became vacant in January 2025	Plan to share sample course plans with 9 th and 13 th year students at orientation sessions. So course planning and degree requirements are a focus throughout program and not just in ACA or as a junior.	Replace position and focus on sharing program requirements in all grade levels.
2	CCP students will be successful with grades of C or higher in college courses.	1	1	Analysis of course success rates for CCP students.	87% of completed CCP course work with produce grades of C or better.	92.8% of CCP Students were successful with a grade of C or higher in their college courses FA24 and SP25.	Students were prepared for college level courses and/or had access to resources to support them.	Communication with at-risk students	The success rate exceeded the goal	Identify at-risk students

2024-2025 Unit Plans

Educational

Partnerships Student Learning Outcomes

SO#	Expected Student Outcome Description	Relation to Strategic Plan		Assessment Means	Success Criteria	Assessment Analysis			Impact of Changes from Previous Cycle	Actions to be Implemented
		Strategic Direction	Strategy			Results	Strengths	Areas for Improvement		
3	Career and College Promise students will feel better prepared for their future goals.	1	1	Analysis of the results from a College Now Student Survey	85% of students who complete at least 1 CCP class will feel that Gaston College is helping them achieve their goals.	91.27% of College Now students who completed at least 1 CCP class reported that Gaston College helped them achieve their educational goals.	Increase of students feeling prepared for their future goals	Review information shared in Watermark or goal-setting activities can help identify needs early	The success rate exceeded the goal	CCP advisors follow up on Watermark alerts and notes by referring students to appropriate resources (career counseling, pre-apprenticeship, etc.)
4	Students served by the Admissions Office will demonstrate a high level of satisfaction with the Admissions Office.	1, 1	1	Analysis of the results of the Spring 2024 Student Satisfaction Survey	80% of students will be satisfied with their experience with the Admissions Office.	90.49% of traditional students who completed the survey were satisfied with their experience with the Admissions Office.	The percentage of students reporting they were satisfied with the Admissions Office increased by 1.61% over the Spring 2023 survey.	Maintain progress in improving applicant enrollment procedures.	Successfully exceeded the goal.	Implement group Think Tank sessions for better ideas. Request work-study to help with CRM to get enrollment emails to students quicker.

Unit
Institutional Effectiveness

Sub-unit
Not Applicable

Strategic Initiative

Enhance college-wide communication. (Strategic Initiative 4.4)

Reason for Initiative

To provide internal college stakeholders with real-time data communication to aid in data-informed decision making.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Associate Vice-President for Institutional Effectiveness
- Institutional Effectiveness Coordinator

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #4: Organizational Development
 - Strategic Goal #4: Gaston College is committed to continuous improvement through organizational and employee development.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

The Office of Institutional Effectiveness will continue to meet the needs of the campus community by providing overview and summary data on a regular basis and by fulfilling specific data requests.

Success Criteria:

- All data requests are completed in a timely manner
- All required data submissions for SACSCOC, IPEDS, and NCCCS are submitted in a timely manner
- Annual strategic operational planning will be completed (program review, unit plans, strategic plan, etc.)

Assessment Results

- A Fall 2024 data snapshot was shared with the campus community.
- Over 100 data requests were submitted and fulfilled during the Fall 2024, Spring 2025, and Summer 2025 semesters.
- The Office of Institutional Effectiveness published the Gaston College Fact Book for the 2024-2025 academic year July 2025 and shared a Quick Facts document with the campus community. Both documents were also included on the college website.

- Grade and faculty load distribution data for Summer 2024, Fall 2024, and Spring 2025 were shared at a dean's retreat in June 2025, and will be shared with the campus community in Fall 2025.
- All required data submissions for SACSCOC, IPEDS, and NCCCS were submitted early or on time
- A Gaston College Institutional Strategic Planning document was created to summarize the annual planning process at the College. This includes information on unit plans, program review, enrollment management plan and employee performance evaluation processes.
- Program review was completed by the Arts and Sciences and Health and Human Services Divisions.
- March 7, 2025 – select programs from the Arts and Sciences and Health and Human Services Divisions presented information related to their programs to the Academic Program Performance Team

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

The Office of Institutional Effectiveness will continue to meet the needs of the campus community by providing overview and summary data on a regular basis and by fulfilling specific data requests.

Unit
Student Services

Sub-unit
Learning Resources

Strategic Initiative

Increase the availability and usage of student support services, such as, mental health services, learning resources (Writing Center, tutoring, etc.), Mo's Pantry, and the student emergency fund. (Strategic Initiative 2.9)

Reason for Initiative

Launch Learning Resources Passport Program to increase student awareness of the services offered by all Learning Resources departments (Writing Center, Learning Center, Rhinovation Station, and Libraries). The program is designed to introduce services through up to ten defined activities of the students' choosing to encourage students to utilize Learning Resources available to them.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Dean, Learning Resources

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #2: Student Access and Success
 - Strategic Goal #2: Gaston College will enhance student access, success, and inclusivity in high-quality educational programs, ultimately empowering students to achieve their educational goals.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

Marketed to campus through email, video board, social media the mission and purpose of the Learning Resources Passport Program and informed staff on their roles in helping document student engagement and activity.

Success Criteria

There will be ten participants in the Passport Program with three completions.

Assessment Results

The Passport Program was launched in August 2024 and completed in December 2024. There were 8 participants and one completion.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

The Passport Program will be reworked for the Writing Center to retool and relaunch for Fall 2025. There will be a continued evaluation as to why there was low participation and increased marketing.

Unit
Student Services

Sub-unit
Learning Resources

Strategic Initiative

Implement initiatives to close achievement gaps among different student demographics.
(Strategic Initiative 2.7)

Reason for Initiative

Develop and open a sensory room designed to allow students with various neurodivergent issues to utilize a space on campus that can help them lower anxiety.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Dean, Learning Resources
- Digital Services Librarian

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #2: Student Access and Success
 - Strategic Goal #2: Gaston College will enhance student access, success, and inclusivity in high-quality educational programs, ultimately empowering students to achieve their educational goals.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

Working with campus and student input, disperse \$100,000 grant obtained through LSTA funding in FY 2023-2024. Funds will be spent to create a sensory room and three additional quiet study spaces for student use.

Success Criteria

Complete purchasing with funds and install equipment within FY 2024-2025.

Assessment Results

Grant purchases were completed in July 2025.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

Statistics and usage surveys will be conducted as students use the spaces to continue to provide needed sensory services.

Unit
Student Services

Sub-unit
Learning Resources

Strategic Initiative

Implement initiatives to close achievement gaps among different student demographics.
(Strategic Initiative 2.7)

Reason for Initiative

Many students are allowed accommodation testing which is provided through the Learning Center. Also, students needing to make-up their testing in classes may also use this proctoring service.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Coordinator of Learning Center and MASC
- Learning Resources Specialist
- Dean, Learning Resources

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #2: Student Access and Success
 - Strategic Goal #2: Gaston College is committed to enhancing student access, success, and inclusivity in high-quality educational programs, ultimately empowering students to achieve their educational goals.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

Learning Center staff will continue to work with faculty and Gaston College Accessibility /Disability Services to market and make available these proctoring services.

Success Criteria

There will be an increase of 3% of students utilizing the accommodation testing and makeup proctoring in the Learning Center from FY 2024-2025 (200).

Assessment Results

We had 400 students served with accommodation testing and makeup proctoring. This resulted in a 106% increase in service.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

Efforts will continue to be made to market these resources to our faculty and students.

Unit
Student Services

Sub-unit
Learning Resources

Strategic Initiative

Evaluate safety and security infrastructure and continue to support initiatives to provide a safe and secure working and learning environment. (Strategic Initiative 6.1)

Reason for Initiative

Student safety is a priority, and two study rooms have been identified as having low visibility and need to be monitored through closed circuit video monitoring. The desired monitoring system will be approved in collaboration with Campus Police and Technology Services.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Dean, Learning Resources
- Information Access Librarian

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #6: Operational Infrastructure
 - Strategic Goal #6: Gaston College is committed to investing in its operational infrastructure to enhance the working and learning environment.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

The Dean of Learning Resources and Information Access Librarian will consult with two departments on campus to determine the appropriate resources and guidelines of use for the install of two security cameras in the two study rooms in Morris Library.

Success Criteria

There will be two cameras installed and ready for use in FY 2024-2025.

Assessment Results

This project was placed on hold due to lack of funding.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

Learning Resources will continue to investigate ways to improve security for all students, faculty, and staff.

Unit
Student Services

Sub-unit
Learning Resources

Strategic Initiative

Promote research and scholarly activities among students to showcase student skills and achievements. (Strategic Initiative 2.6)

Reason for Initiative

Review entire print collection stacks for proper alignment to engage in better student usage and availability of resources. The entire library print book collection will be evaluated on its proper location and distribution of materials to allow students to easily find materials they are researching.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Circulation Manager

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #2: Student Access and Success
 - Strategic Goal #2: Gaston College is committed to enhancing student access, success, and inclusivity in high-quality educational programs, ultimately empowering students to achieve their educational goals.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

Circulation Manager will evaluate each distributed section of material to determine proper spacing and location. Signage will also be updated to create easier access.

Success Criteria

Print collections on both floors will be entirely evaluated for their correct positioning in regard to finding aids for student use.

Assessment Results

The physical spacing and location signs have been evaluated and completed for the 2nd floor of the library collection.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

This project will continue for the following 2025-26 year in order to complete the 1st floor assessment and space moves. The Circulation Manager responsible for this area retired in Jan. 2025 and there has not been a replacement hired for this open position which will extend the review of the print collection.

Unit
Student Services

Sub-unit
Learning Resources

Strategic Initiative

Implement initiatives to close achievement gaps among different student demographics.
(Strategic Initiative 2.7)

Reason for Initiative

There is a large student body where that includes first-generation students and many with English as their second language. The Spanish Language Coach will create a bridge between the student and their understanding of assignments and review materials. The coach will also assess whether or not the student truly needs ESL course review or additional support through these bridge services.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Dean, Learning Resources
- Spanish Language Coach

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #2: Student Access and Success
 - Strategic Goal #2: Gaston College is committed to enhancing student access, success, and inclusivity in high-quality educational programs, ultimately empowering students to achieve their educational goals.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

Using available data provided from Institutional Effectiveness, the Spanish Language Coach will utilize Watermark to follow identified students who will be referred through Watermark alerts and other communication.

Success Criteria

Satisfaction survey will be given to students following each semester.

Assessment Results

There was no survey conducted. The Spanish Language Coach has resigned.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

There are no current plans for this service. We are actively trying to recruit a new Spanish Language Coach.

Unit
Student Services

Sub-unit
Learning Resources

Strategic Initiative

Implement initiatives to close achievement gaps among different student demographics.
(Strategic Initiative 2.7)

Reason for Initiative

To keep athletes in good academic standing and eligibility and to further their education success, the Learning Center constantly monitors their academic achievement. Reports are generated weekly and distributed to athletic coaches regularly to monitor student progress.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Dean, Learning Resources
- Learning Center Specialist
- Student Success Coaches

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #2: Student Access and Success
 - Strategic Goal #2: Gaston College is committed to enhancing student access, success, and inclusivity in high-quality educational programs, ultimately empowering students to achieve their educational goals.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

Using alerts from Watermark and other data points there is a weekly generated report on every athlete distributed to every coach. As well, there is an additional scan and Early Alert report generated for students failing to meet adequate academic standards. Student Success Coaches provided from collaboration with the Athletic Department are responsible for addressing academic concerns and closing Watermark Alerts generated.

Success Criteria

Academic achievement of athletes will not drop below average academic performance of student body. Watermark alerts generated for athletes will be addressed within 24 hours.

Assessment Results

Athlete Watermark alerts were addressed immediately through the efforts of our Student Academic Coaches at a 100% alert close rate.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

Continue to evaluate ways in which Student Academic Coaches can build student success and continue to closely monitor, and close Watermark alerts as needed.

Unit
Student Services

Sub-unit
Registration and Records

Strategic Initiative

Implement the College's Strategic Enrollment Plan designed to increase student enrollment and FTE. (Strategic Initiatives 1.1, 5.3)

Reason for Initiative

To increase student enrollment and FTE.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Director for Registration and Records
- Assistant Director for Registration and Records

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #1: Student Recruitment and Enrollment
 - Strategic Goal #1: Gaston College will enhance its marketing efforts, improve recruitment strategies, and support students through the enrollment process, ultimately attracting and enrolling a diverse and engaged student body.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

- Records staff will continue targeted outreach to notify and send reminders of registration dates, registration reminders, and payment deadlines.
- Outreach to students who have not attended in the last two years to encourage re-enrollment to complete program requirements.
- Outreach to students who met with advisors and planned courses but have not registered.
- Send daily lists of No Shows to Advisors and switch registrations to late start sections.

Success Criteria

Increase in headcount of 1%

Assessment Results

Fall 2024 Headcount (from NCCCS Dashboards) was 7% above Fall 2023 (5987 to 6457).

Over the year, 6000+ students were texted payment reminders via Watermark the day prior and the day of cancellation for nonpayment. In spring 2025, cancellations for nonpayment were processed at each 10% date to capture students who registered throughout the semester.

Students were texted registration reminders the day before their assigned registration date and the day before new student registration began.

Advisors were sent lists of 358 students reported as No Shows to see if they could be switched to late start sections.

Records staff emailed 115 students who had met with their advisor and planned courses but had not registered.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

Records staff will continue these outreach efforts.

Unit
Student Services

Sub-unit
Registration and Records

Strategic Initiative

Identify and scale best practices to promote student engagement, enrich learning opportunities, and increase credential completions. (Strategic Initiative 2.5)

Reason for Initiative

To increase the number of associate degrees awarded.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Director for Registration and Records
- Assistant Director for Registration and Records
- Records Staff

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #2: Student Access and Success
 - Strategic Goal #2: Gaston College is committed to enhancing student access, success, and inclusivity in high-quality educational programs, ultimately empowering students to achieve their educational goals.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

- Records staff will continue to run and analyze reports to automatically award associate degrees, diplomas, and certificates as requirements are completed.
- Award credit for prior learning for licenses and certifications and continuing education credits to reduce time to completion.
- Records staff will continue to review Reverse Transfer files from UNC institutions and post associate degrees.

Success Criteria

NCCCS performance measure for curriculum completion rate will be at the met or exceeded excellence level.

Assessment Results

Records staff used the colleague-delivered process to locate completers and awards degrees and diplomas for which students did not apply. 72 degrees and diplomas were awarded.

Credit for prior learning was awarded to 39 students. Credits included Nursing courses for students who are North Carolina RNs, EMS credits, Fire Protection and Emergency Management continuing education coursework, and BLET credit.

The 2024-2025 Reverse Transfer files were received late this year due to a technology issue at the UNC System. The file has been received and is under review to see how many degrees can be awarded.

The College exceeded the average completion rate for the curriculum completion measure.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

Records staff will continue to award credit for prior learning as approved, analyze which degrees, diplomas, and certificates have been completed and award as appropriate, and analyze reverse transfer files.

Unit
Student Services

Sub-unit
Financial Aid

Strategic Initiative

Increase the number of Foundation scholarships and the number of students receiving Foundation scholarships. (Strategic Initiative 1.3 and 2.10)

Reason for Initiative

To increase the number of students receiving financial assistance through scholarship assistance.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

Director of Financial Aid and Veterans Affairs

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #1: Student Recruitment and Enrollment
 - Strategic Goal #1: Gaston College will enhance its marketing efforts, improve recruitment strategies, and support students through the enrollment process, ultimately attracting and enrolling a diverse and engaged student body.
- Strategic Priority #2: Student Access and Success
 - Strategic Goal #2: Gaston College will enhance student access, success, and inclusivity in high-quality educational programs, ultimately empowering students to achieve their educational goals.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

- Partner with high schools in the service area to discuss FAFSA completion and scholarship opportunities.
- Outreach to students relating to FAFSA and scholarship application completion.
- Participate in activities within the service area to promote access to scholarships and financial aid.
- Collaborate with the Marketing area to increase awareness of scholarship opportunities.

Success Criteria

- List of outreach opportunities.
- List of workshops held.
- Comparison of the number of students applying for scholarships this year against the previous cycle.
- Comparison of the number of FAFSA completers in our service area compared to the previous cycle.

- Comparison of the amount of federal and state grant disbursed this year against the previous cycle.

Assessment Results

- Participated in the Student Success Expo during the fall semester
- Paying for College Workshops presented in the ACA classes
- Participated in the SGA Fall Fest and Spring Fest events
- Dallas and Lincoln Campus Welcome Events
- FAFSA Presentations and/or FAFSA completion events were held at the following schools in the service area North Lincoln, North Gaston, Gaston Day, Bessemer City, East Lincoln, Gaston Christian, Lincolnton, Mountain Island Charter, West Lincoln, Hunter Huss, and Forestview High school during the fall/spring semester.
- Participated in the TRiO First-Gen event
- Provided FAFSA completion/presentations at the Open House event
- Participated in the Senior Night Event
- Participated in the Roadmap to CTE Careers Event during the spring term
- Provided Paying for College workshops during the 9th grade visit during the fall term

The number of federal/state aid recipients in 2023-2024 was 2,269. The number of federal/state recipients in 2024-2025 is 2,281. There was a slight increase in the number of recipients during the reporting cycle due to an increase in enrollment and an additional state grant was awarded due to Hurricane Helene funds.

During this past assessment cycle, the Financial Aid Office continued in collaboration with the Continuing Education Department to find scholarship recipients for the Continuing Education (CE) students. Through our collaboration with the Continuing Education Department, the Financial Aid Office was able to award the entire allotment of North Carolina Short-Term Workforce Development funds to 13 students and the Golden Leaf Scholarship to 15 CE students. This was a 12% increase over the previous year.

The number of high school seniors who were FAFSA completers in our service area (Gaston and Lincoln Counties) who applied during the first three months of the FAFSA application cycle in 2023-2024 was 2,104 and in 2024-2025 it was 1118. This was significantly less than the previous year. There were issues with the FAFSA application, and the website was taken down on several occasions to fix problems resulting in the application opening in January versus the October 1 date the prior year. In 2023-24, we received 5607 FAFSA applications and in 2024-25, we received 5,270 FAFSA applications which was a 6% decrease. The issues with the new FAFSA roll out have been resolved, and the FAFSA application opened in November for the 2025-26 application cycle. This will hopefully increase the number of FAFSA completers.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

The Financial Aid Office will continue increasing outreach in the high schools and within the service area of the College. The plans are for the FAFSA to become available in October, which

will allow us to schedule more time in area high schools. We will continue working with the CE department to support the students with scholarships and grants.

Unit
Student Services

Sub-unit

Academic Advising and Testing Services

Strategic Initiative

Continue implementation of the College Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), Path to Potential (P2P)– A Case Management Advising Model. (Strategic Initiative 2.8)

Reason for Initiative

Meet the requirements of the QEP and accreditation standards.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Director of Advising and Testing

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #2: Student Access and Success
 - Strategic Goal #2: Gaston College is committed to enhancing student access, success, and inclusivity in high-quality educational programs, ultimately empowering students to achieve their educational goals.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

- Continue Advisory Board meetings
- Plan and implement the appropriate training for the advisors
- Meet the QEP year three student success outcomes, student learning outcomes, and student satisfaction outcomes

Success Criteria

- The Advisory Board will meet twice with participation from all the invited members; this will be documented through the meeting minutes.
- Divisional training and the advisor retreat will be planned. Attendance for these training courses will be documented in NeoGov for reporting purposes.
- The QEP outcomes will be measured and assessed based on the guidelines listed in the QEP.

Assessment Results

- The advisory board met on December 10, 2024, and May 6, 2025.
- Due to organizational changes, the Director of Advising and Testing also served as the VP for Student Services. Therefore, it was more difficult to schedule the typical retreat that the advising team would have conducted. The advising team held a meeting on March 3, 2025, to cover changes in developmental education and graduation requirements. They participated in a divisional team building exercise on March 14, 2025.

Outcome	Metric/Outcome Measure	Y4 Target	Y4 Outcome
Increased student persistence: Students will successfully persist from year one to year two	Persistence Rate: Percentage of first-time fall credential-seeking students who graduate prior to or enroll at Gaston College during the subsequent fall term.	55.6%	TBD Fall 2025
Academic plan completion: Students will develop a clear academic plan aligned with their program of study.	Percentage of new students who develop a 1-year (abbreviated) academic plan in the first semester.	61.5%	92%
Responsibility for academic success: students will demonstrate responsibility for their academic success.	Percentage of new students who complete the Welcome Survey and New student Advising; Percentage of students who engage with an advisor.	82.5%	9.4% Completed Welcome Survey 100% Met with Academic Advisor
Student satisfaction with advising services: students will express satisfaction with advising services.	Percentage of students satisfied or very satisfied with advising services.	86%	92%

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

During the Spring 2025 Advisory Board meeting, it was determined that the Welcome Survey was not being utilized as intended. Due to the lack of participation and the conversation with advisors highlighting the services needed, it was decided to discontinue the Welcome Survey. Advisors will continue to be provided with training opportunities throughout the year to improve their skills.

Unit
Student Services

Sub-unit

Learning Resources and Student Development and Support Services

Strategic Initiative

Increase the availability and usage of student support services; such as, mental health services, learning resources (Writing Center, tutoring, etc.), Mo's Pantry, and the student emergency fund. (Strategic Initiative 2.9)

Reason for Initiative

To increase student awareness and usage of counseling services, mental health services, learning resources, Mo's Pantry, and emergency fund resources.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Dean of Learning Resources
- Dean of Student Development and Support Services

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #2: Student Access and Success
 - Strategic Goal #2: Gaston College is committed to enhancing student access, success, and inclusivity in high-quality educational programs, ultimately empowering students to achieve their educational goals.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

- Organize various events and workshops focusing on academic success, mental health, and basic needs resources.
- Collaborate with faculty and staff to share information about student support services and available student resources.
- Marketing initiatives for learning resources, wellness services, Mo's Pantry, and emergency funds.
- Set up pop-up locations across campus where students can access information and resources.

Success Criteria

- Usage increase of 1.5% of students utilizing the following support services:
 - Learning Center
 - Writing Center
 - Thinking Storm (# of lessons)
 - MASC
 - Student Outreach Services (SOS) Usage

- Counseling Services Outreach/Usage
- MO's Pantry (# of Bags Distributed)
- Emergency Fund (# Served and Funds Dedicated)
- Number of events, workshops, and pop-up locations focused on academic success, mental health, and basic needs resources.
- Positive feedback from student satisfaction survey showing increased awareness of available campus and community resources.

Assessment Results

Usage of Support Services

Department	23-24	24-25	% Change
Learning Center	396	506	27.78%
Writing Center	2,975	3010	1.18%
Thinking Storm (# of lessons)	159	89	-44.03%
MASC	240	129	-46.25%
Student Outreach Services (SOS) Usage	54	66	22.22%
Counseling Services Outreach/Usage	163	295	80.98%
Mo's Pantry (# Bags Distributed)	454	583	28.41%
Emergency Fund (# Served)	85	59	-30.59%
Emergency Fund (\$ Dedicated)	\$66,824	\$44,604	-33.24%

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

Usage of support services will continue to be monitored.

Unit
Student Services

Sub-unit
Student Development and Support Services

Strategic Initiative

Implement initiatives to close achievement gaps among different student demographics. (Strategic Initiative 2.7)

Reason for Initiative

To help ensure that the TRiO Student Support Services (SSS) federal grant program and the Longleaf Underserved Student Outreach & Advising Project meet goals and objectives.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Dean of Student Development and Support Services
- Project Director, TRiO SSS
- Special Populations Success Coach

Relation to Strategic

- Strategic Priority #2: Student Access and Success
 - Strategic Goal #2: Gaston College is committed to enhancing student access, success, and inclusivity in high-quality educational programs, ultimately empowering students to achieve their educational goals.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

- TRiO Student Support Services
- Outreach to TRiO students to assist with course selection and registration process.
- Assist TRiO students with completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).
- Provide each TRiO student with at least two advising appointments.
- Monthly workshops on topics including academics, personal wellness, financial literacy, mental health, and cultural development.
- Encourage TRiO students to utilize the Learning Center and Writing Center.
- Assist TRiO students in developing an academic plan toward degree completion or transferring to a four-year university/college while remaining in good academic standing.
- Longleaf Underserved Student Outreach & Advising Project
- Outreach to at-risk students conducted by the Special Populations Success Coach.
- Outreach to special population students conducted by the Special Populations Success Coach.
- Implement campus outreach events for students where the Special Population Coach presents or shares information.

- The number of community student recruitment events where the Special Populations Coach provides information.
- Career development sessions with special population students to discuss career goals.

Success Criteria

TRiO Student Support Services

- Objective: Persistence from 2024 Fall to 2025 Fall or graduates Goal: 71%
- Objective: Student in good Academic Standing Goal: 75%
- Objective: Students who graduated with Associate's Degree or Certificate from the 2020-21 cohort Goal: 35%
- Objective: Percent of the 2021-22 cohort who graduated and transferred to 4-year university Goal: 20%

Longleaf Underserved Student Outreach & Advising Project

- The number of at-risk students contacted by the Special Populations Success Coach.
- The number of special population students contacted by the Special Populations Success Coach.
- The number of campus outreach events for students where the Special Population Coach presents or shares information.
- The number of community student recruitment events where the Special Populations Coach provides information.
- The number of special population students utilizing on-campus and off-campus resources that aid student success.
- The number of special population students who determine career goals.

Assessment Results

TRiO Student Support Services

- Objective: Persistence from 2024 Fall to 2025 Fall or graduates
 - o Goal: 71% Actual: 97%
- Objective: Student in good Academic Standing
 - o Goal: 75% Actual: 94%
- Objective: Students who graduated with Associate's Degree or Certificate from the 2020-21 cohort
 - o Goal: 35% Actual: 86%
- Objective: Percent of the 2021-22 cohort who graduated and transferred to 4-year university
 - o Goal: 20% Actual 20%

Longleaf Underserved Student Outreach & Advising Project

- The number of at-risk students contacted by the Special Populations Success Coach.
 - o 114 at-risk students contacted
- The number of special population students contacted by the Special Populations Success Coach.

- o 432 special populations students contacted
- The number of campus outreach events for students where the Special Population Coach presents or shares information.
 - o 30+ events: Including Special Populations Orientation, Fall/Spring Fest, Adult Basic Education Orientation, Senior Night, Rhino Rush, MOE Meetings, SGA Casual Meetings, First Gen Day Event, Student Success Expo, Gaming Club Interest Meetings, among others.
- The number of community student recruitment events where the Special Populations Coach provides information.
 - o 10 events: CFNC College App Week events at BCHS/HHHS/NGHS, Lingerfelt Elementary presentation, Healthy Kids Day, Erwin Center Presentation, Dream Center Presentation, Upward Bound Presentation, Highland Festival, 101 BM4H Turkey Giveaway
- The number of special population students utilizing on-campus and off-campus resources that aid student success.
 - o 34 students
- The number of special population students who determine career goals.
 - o 3 students

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

The TRiO Student Support Services (TRiO SSS) Program continues to exceed the Department of Education's approved benchmarks. Through on-going programming initiatives, TRiO SSS delivers exceptional services to students who are first-generation, low-income, and/or have a documented disability. TRiO SSS will continue to maintain and enhance academic support services, outreach, and advising to ensure ongoing persistence and student success.

The Special Populations Coach continues to do a great job in implementing creative strategies to connect with underserved students. We have noticed the importance of utilizing various modes of communication and consistent follow-up to engage with students. Many students continue to show a need to learn more about campus resources and support services. The inaugural in-person and virtual special population student orientations were a success; we received great feedback. This initiative ended in June 2025.

Unit
Student Services

Sub-unit
Student Development and Support Services

Strategic Initiative

Increase awareness of and participation in virtual and in-person student life activities and programming initiatives. (Strategic Initiative 2.11)

Reason for Initiative

To engage students in student life events, clubs and organizations, educational programming, and athletic events to build community and a sense of belonging.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Dean of Student Development and Support Services
- Coordinator of Student Life and Special Projects

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #2: Student Access and Success
 - Strategic Goal #2: Gaston College is committed to enhancing student access, success, and inclusivity in high-quality educational programs, ultimately empowering students to achieve their educational goals.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

- Publish and distribute SGA/Student Life Calendar of Events each semester.
- Email weekly upcoming events to students.
- Continue collaborative programming and student engagement with campus departments, organizations, and services.
- Solicit student feedback to understand what types of events students enjoy and what could be improved.
- Utilize various marketing channels, including social media, cable screen/email campaigns, and posters/flyers to advertise and promote events.
- Enhance virtual engagement platforms for online activities and events and ensure they are user-friendly and accessible to all students.
- Increase athletic event engagement.

Success Criteria

- The number of students participating in SGA/Student Life campus events.
- The number of students participating in SGA/Student Life virtual events
- The number of students who provide feedback regarding SGA/Student Life activities.
- The number of SGA/Student Life collaborative programming initiatives.

- The number and games/matches attended.
- Increase of overall participation in SGA/Student Life events by 3.5%.

Assessment Results

The Student Life/SGA Calendars of Events for the 2024-2025 academic year were shared at the beginning of each month via email to students, faculty and staff. Event calendars and information were also added to the SGA's display board in the Myers Center Breezeway as additional advertisement.

Weekly emails were sent from the Student Life email account to all students with details and fliers for upcoming events. Event calendars and fliers were also added to the Student Life's Linktree account for additional sharing opportunities with students, faculty and staff.

In the 2024-2025 academic year, the SGA collaborated with eleven (11) different departments, resources and services at Gaston College: Work-Based Learning & Placement; Career & Technical Education Division; Gaston College Counseling & Accessibility Services; Gaston College Success Coaches; Global Education/Scholars of Global Distinction; TRiO SSS; Veterans Affairs Services; Gaston College Clubs & Organizations; Gaston College Cosmetology Department; Gaston College Emerging Technologies Lab - "The Rhinovation Station"; and Gaston College Health & Fitness Sciences Program / Health Fair Planning Committee.

The SGA solicited student feedback on campus events via face-to-face conversations during SGA events on campus.

The SGA utilized the SGA's Instagram and Facebook social media platforms, the SGA's display board in the Myers Center Breezeway of the Dallas Campus, the TV monitors around the Dallas Campus, the open bulletin board spaces in Dallas Campus classroom buildings, student email accounts and the Student Life Linktree account to advertise upcoming student events regularly during the 2024-2025 academic year.

For the Gaston College online student community, all ten (10) of the 2024-2025 SGA meetings were hosted both in person and virtually to provide open access for students to attend. Every virtual meeting sponsored by the SGA during the 2024-2025 academic year was hosted through Microsoft Teams for additional access of students.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

Student Life/SGA will continue to market events using the various modalities throughout the academic year to increase student engagement. We have learned that, in addition to the various virtual methods in use, printed materials are still a valuable marketing tool to engage students. We will increase the number of event fliers posted on each campus to help market student events and opportunities. We will strive to schedule a content calendar and consistently post social media materials for students' knowledge. Student Life/SGA plans to host more student leadership training opportunities for student clubs and organizations members as well as club/organization advisor training to help enhance leadership

understanding and engagement. We aim to seek more student feedback on events and event advertisements to improve our outreach to students about ways to engage with their campus. We plan to use in-person events to help gain feedback from students about event details and to make open-ended virtual surveys for students to submit input off campus. We also aim to introduce new virtual events throughout the year to attempt to engage our virtual campus.

Student Services Student Learning Outcomes

SO#	Expected Student Outcome Description	Relation to Strategic Plan		Assessment Means	Success Criteria	Assessment Analysis			Impact of Changes from Previous Cycle	Actions to be Implemented
		Strategic Priority/Goal	Strategic Initiative			Results	Strengths	Areas for Improvement		
1	Students will be able to demonstrate knowledge of the online graduation application in Self-Service	2, 2	5	Analysis of online graduation applications submitted in Self-Service	90% of students will use the online graduation application.					
2	Students will demonstrate knowledge of how to apply for financial assistance by completing the FAFSA application.	1, 1	3	Analysis of ISIRs received each year and analysis of scholarship applications.	70% of enrolled students complete a FAFSA application.	59% of enrolled students applied for financial aid. During the application cycle, the Financial Aid Office received 5,270 FAFSA applications. This was down 337 applications from the previous cycle. 779 scholarship	Less students were selected for verification and were able to get through the process more quickly.	Continue stressing the importance of FAFSA completion and promoting the other financial aid opportunities.	Some factors were beyond our control such as the delay in the launch of the 2024-25 FAFSA application and all the issues students had making corrections.	Continuing to get more students to apply for scholarships and complete the FAFSA during the completion events.

SO#	Expected Student Outcome Description	Relation to Strategic Plan		Assessment Means	Success Criteria	Assessment Analysis			Impact of Changes from Previous Cycle	Actions to be Implemented
		Strategic Priority/Goal	Strategic Initiative			Results	Strengths	Areas for Improvement		
						applications were received during the 2024-25 school year compared to 789 received the previous year.			and accessing the application.	
3	Students will demonstrate a high level of satisfaction with academic advising provided by Advising staff.	2, 2	8	Analysis of the results from the Spring 2024 Student Satisfaction Survey.	86% of students will be satisfied with academic advising provided by Advising staff.	AS: 89% CTE: 86% HHS 91% SPARC: 88% TRiO: 98% Athletics: 95%	The advisors with smaller caseloads or students in selective admission programs see higher satisfaction rates.	Work to be more proactive when programs of study change sequencing or classes.	Athletics advising satisfaction increased due to more knowledge about processes.	Continue to review our processes and work to increase communication.

2024-2025 Unit Plans

Student Services Student Learning Outcomes

SO#	Expected Student Outcome Description	Relation to Strategic Plan		Assessment Means	Success Criteria	Assessment Analysis			Impact of Changes from Previous Cycle	Actions to be Implemented
		Strategic Priority/Goal	Strategic Initiative			Results	Strengths	Areas for Improvement		
4	Students will demonstrate a high level of satisfaction with services provided by Learning Resources staff.	2, 2	9	Analysis of the results from the Student Satisfaction Survey.	85% of students will be satisfied with services provided by Learning Resources staff.					
5	The student body will have a level of awareness of the Counseling Services and available resources.	2, 2	9	Analysis of the results from the Spring 2024 Student Satisfaction Survey	88% of students will be aware of available counseling services (personal counseling, career counseling, Accessibility Services, Student Outreach Services)	While 88% of students are aware of Counseling Services and 82% of students are aware of Accessibility/Disability Services, the average level of awareness was 85%	Counseling Services (including Accessibility Services) continue to increase programming initiatives and partnerships. The staff also participate in various campus information	Helping students identify and recognize the services and events being offered by Counseling and Accessibility Services.	The level of awareness increased by 1.8% from the previous academic year.	Counseling Services will meet annually to discuss services and programming initiatives to determine ways to improve awareness.

SO#	Expected Student Outcome Description	Relation to Strategic Plan		Assessment Means	Success Criteria	Assessment Analysis			Impact of Changes from Previous Cycle	Actions to be Implemented
		Strategic Priority/Goal	Strategic Initiative			Results	Strengths	Areas for Improvement		
							and resource fairs.			
6	The student body will have a level of awareness of available campus and community resources.	2, 2	9	Analysis of the results from the Spring 2024 Student Satisfaction Survey	88% of students will be aware of available campus and community resources.	88% of students are aware of the following campus resources resource areas: Accessibility Services, Business Office, Counseling Services, Computer Labs, Financial Aid, Learning Center, Libraries, Records and Registration, Rhino Shop/Bookstore, Student Life, Technology Services, Veterans Affairs, Work-Based Learning/Placement Services, Writing Center,	There was at least an 85% awareness of the following campus resources: Business Office, Counseling Services, Computer Labs, Financial Aid, Learning Center, Libraries, Records and Registration, Rhino Shop/Bookstore, Student Life, Technology Services, Veterans Affairs, Work-Based Learning/Placement.	The following campus resources received below an 81% awareness: Accessibility Services, Veterans Affairs, and Work-Based Learning/Placement.	The level of satisfaction increased by 1.82% from the previous academic year.	Success Coaches will continue to explore various ways to share more information about the campus resources. Student Services is planning to distribute a newsletter to students about various campus and community resources.

SO#	Expected Student Outcome Description	Relation to Strategic Plan		Assessment Means	Success Criteria	Assessment Analysis			Impact of Changes from Previous Cycle	Actions to be Implemented
		Strategic Priority/Goal	Strategic Initiative			Results	Strengths	Areas for Improvement		
						and Advising Centers.	Technology Services, Writing Center, and Advising Centers.			
7	Students who receive services through TRiO Student Support Services or Emergency Assistance funding will be more likely to re-enroll or graduate as of the next fall.	2, 2	9	Analysis of student retention or graduation for students involved with those programs.	90% of students who receive these services will re-enroll or graduate.	Data will be available in October 2025.				
8	Students assisted in the Financial Aid	1, 1	1	Analysis of the results from the Student	85% of students assisted in the Financial Aid Office will be	91% of students surveyed expressed satisfaction with	More students were assisted at	Continuing to provide more FAFSA completion	The additional person in our office that	Utilize the assistance provided by the NCSEAA

SO#	Expected Student Outcome Description	Relation to Strategic Plan		Assessment Means	Success Criteria	Assessment Analysis			Impact of Changes from Previous Cycle	Actions to be Implemented
		Strategic Priority/Goal	Strategic Initiative			Results	Strengths	Areas for Improvement		
	Office will demonstrate a high level of satisfaction with the overall service provided by the Financial Aid Office staff.			Satisfaction Survey.	satisfied with the service.	the Financial Aid Office.	the Financial Aid Office due to the launch of the new FAFSA application and the issues they had when submitting the application.	events to get more students/parents through the process of submitting the FAFSA.	was provided by the North Carolina State Assistance Authority (NCESEAA) during the summer assisted with	to assist students with completing the FAFSA which will allow the Specialists time to process applications in a timely fashion.
9	Student leaders will demonstrate an understanding of the skills necessary to lead teams, including but not limited to meeting management, motivation,	2, 2	5	Analysis of the SGA Officer and Senator Self-Assessment Form.	80% of SGA students will understand the skills necessary to be effective leaders.	90% of SGA understood the skills necessary in being effective leaders.	Student leaders had the opportunity to participate in various workshops and leadership training. Additionally, five students were	N/A	The level of understanding increased by 0.8% from the previous academic year.	Continue to provide on-going leadership development training and monthly check-in meetings.

SO#	Expected Student Outcome Description	Relation to Strategic Plan		Assessment Means	Success Criteria	Assessment Analysis			Impact of Changes from Previous Cycle	Actions to be Implemented
		Strategic Priority/Goal	Strategic Initiative			Results	Strengths	Areas for Improvement		
	diversity/inclusivity, budgeting, program planning, and effective communication skills.					involved the N4CSGA.				
10	Students will demonstrate a high level of satisfaction with Student Life.	2, 2	5	Analysis of the results from the Spring 2024 Student Satisfaction Survey	87% of students will be satisfied with the activities and programs offered by Student Life.	92% of students surveyed were satisfied with the activities and programs offered by Student Life.	The events calendar was emailed campus-wide for each semester. Weekly upcoming events were emailed to students.	Ongoing feedback from students will determine the needs for program initiatives.	The level of satisfaction increased by 2% from the previous academic year.	Continue to be purposeful and strategic with activities and events to engage more students

Unit
Development Office

Sub-unit

Strategic Initiative

- Explore alternative funding sources and investment strategies (Strategic Initiative 5.1)
- Identify requested College equipment and program initiatives to be funded through direct contributions or in-kind gifts to the Gaston College Foundation (Strategic Initiative 5.5)
- Continue to invest in information technology to enhance systems and services (Strategic Initiative 6.3)

Reason for Initiative

Expand and enhance programs and services.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Chief Development Officer
- Executive Director-Gaston College Foundation

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #5: Finance and Operations
 - Strategic Goal #5: Gaston College is committed to optimizing fiduciary and operational strategies to ensure long-term success and stability.
- Strategic Priority #6: Operational Infrastructure
 - Strategic Goal #6: Gaston College is committed to investing in a secure and conducive environment for learning, ensuring the safety and well-being of its students, faculty, and staff while investing in its operational infrastructure to enhance the working and learning environment.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

- Identify at least \$50,000 in requested College equipment to be funded through direct contributions or in-kind gifts.
- Identify potential donors including individuals, foundations, corporations, and local businesses.
- Develop a Case Statement for Support including personalized outreach

Success Criteria

- At least \$50,000 in requested College equipment will be funded through direct contributions or in-kind gifts.

Assessment Results

In-Kind Contributions- \$446,348.53 from Eastman and Duke Energy for Equipment.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

We will continue to build relationships with TTC clients and national partners who can donate in-kind gifts or monetary donations to support the Kimbrell Fiber Innovation Center.

Development Office

Unit**Sub-unit****Strategic Initiative**

- Explore alternative funding sources and investment strategies (Strategic Initiative 5.1)
- Increase the availability of resources for Mo's Pantry and the student emergency fund by securing more support from individuals and organizations (Strategic Initiative 5.7)

Reason for Initiative

Expand and enhance programs and services.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Chief Development Officer
- Executive Director-Gaston College Foundation
- Coordinator-Sponsorships and Special Projects

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #2: Student Access and Success
 - Strategic Goal #2: Gaston College will enhance student access, success, and inclusivity in high-quality educational programs, ultimately empowering students to achieve their educational goals.
- Strategic Priority #5: Finance and Operations
 - Strategic Goal #5: Gaston College is committed to optimizing fiduciary and operational strategies to ensure long-term success and stability.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

- Increase the availability of resources for the student emergency fund by securing more than \$70,000 in support from individuals and organizations.
- Increase the availability of resources for the Mo's Pantry by securing more than \$30,000 in support from individuals and organizations.
- Identify potential donors including individuals, foundations, corporations, and local businesses.

Success Criteria

- A total of \$100,000 will be secured to support Mo's Pantry and the student emergency fund.

Assessment Results

- Mo's Pantry Revenue- \$13,557.53
- Student Emergency Fund Revenue - \$20,400.68

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

- Continue to stock resources for Mo's Pantry and build support to assist with the pantry's planned move/expansion.
- Continue to provide support for students via student emergency fund to help cover extraneous and emergency needs they have as our student enrollment increases.

Unit
Development Office

Sub-unit

Strategic Initiative

Increase the number of donors to the Gaston College Foundation (Strategic Initiatives 3.6, 5.6, 5.8, 5.9, 5.11)

Reason for Initiative

Create a sustainable pipeline of individual giving to the Foundation

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Chief Development Officer
- Coordinator-Sponsorships and Special Projects

Relation to Strategic Plan:

- Strategic Priority #3: Partnerships and Community Engagement
 - Strategic Goal #3: Gaston College will establish strong partnerships, actively engage with the community, and create meaningful opportunities for students, alumni, and the public to contribute to the college's mission and success.
- Strategic Priority #5: Finance and Operations
 - Strategic Goal #5: Gaston College is committed to optimizing fiduciary and operational strategies to ensure long-term success and stability.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

- Increase the total number of donors to Gaston College to at least 1,800.

Success Criteria

- The total number of donors will increase to 1,800.

Assessment Results

- FY2025- 1,610 donors

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

We will look to reach 1800 in FY26. Our 1,610 donors represent an increase of almost 10% over FY24. If we continue steady growth and the Chief Development Officer has a full year of fundraising, another 10% would put us at about 1800 for FY26.

Development Office

Unit**Sub-unit****Strategic Initiative**

Increase the number of Foundation scholarships and the number of students receiving Foundation scholarships (Strategic Initiatives 1.3, 2.10)

Reason for Initiative

Increase enrollment and student success through financial aid opportunities

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Scholarships and Donor Relations Specialist

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #1: Student Recruitment and Enrollment
 - Strategic Goal #1: Gaston College will enhance its marketing efforts, improve recruitment strategies, and support students through the enrollment process, ultimately attracting and enrolling a diverse and engaged student body.
- Strategic Priority #2: Student Access and Success
 - Strategic Goal #2: Gaston College will enhance student access, success, and inclusivity in high-quality educational programs, ultimately empowering students to achieve their educational goals.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

- Identify potential donors
- Personalize donor outreach
- Engage alumni
- Improve stewardship and impact reporting for scholarship donors

Success Criteria

- The number of new annual scholarships supported by the Foundation will increase from 10 (2022-2023) to 13 (2024-2025)
- The number of students receiving Foundation supported scholarships will increase from 416(2022-2023) to 461(2024-2025)

Assessment Results

- FY25 – 2 Annual Scholarships
- FY25 – 270 students receiving foundation supported scholarships

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

- We will look to create 5 new annual scholarships for the foundation in FY26.
- We will look to increase this number of students receiving foundation scholarship to 300 for FY26

Development Office

Unit**Sub-unit****Strategic Initiative**

- Explore alternative funding sources and investment strategies (Strategic Initiative 5.1)
- Steward new businesses to support the Gaston College Foundation through sponsorships and/or program donations (Strategic Initiative 5.6)

Reason for Initiative

Increase engagement and financial support

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Chief Development Officer
- Executive Director-Gaston College Foundation
- Coordinator-Sponsorships and Special Projects

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #5: Finance and Operations
 - Strategic Goal #5: Gaston College is committed to optimizing fiduciary and operational strategies to ensure long-term success and stability.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

- Increase the number of new businesses to support the Foundation through sponsorships and program donations
- Identify and research potential sponsors
- Craft sponsorship proposals
- Schedule meetings and calls to emphasize engagement and participation including logo placement and other recognition

Success Criteria

- At least \$100,000 will be secured through sponsorships.

Assessment Results

- \$105,000 between event sponsors & SIMS park sponsors

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

- We will look to continue creating a pipeline that will allow us to put 50-70% of our sponsors on a guaranteed multi-year contract to ensure sustainability.

Development Office

Unit**Sub-unit****Strategic Initiative**

- Explore alternative funding sources and investment strategies. (Strategic Initiative 5.1)
- Increase the number of new endowed funds to support scholarships and other College initiatives. (Strategic Initiative 5.9)

Reason for Initiative

Ensure long-term support for scholarships and college programs

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Chief Development Officer
- Executive Director-Gaston College Foundation

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #5: Finance and Operations
 - Strategic Goal #5: Gaston College is committed to optimizing fiduciary and operational strategies to ensure long-term success and stability.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

- Increase the number of new endowed funds.
- Identify and Segment Potential Donors
- Promote planned giving and bequests

Success Criteria

- At least five new endowed funds will be established to support scholarships and other College initiatives.

Assessment Results

Seven new endowments were formed

- Donny Hicks Scholarship Fund (Endowed)
- Austin Harvell Memorial Scholarship (Endowed)
- Katelyn Self Scholarship (Endowed)
- Evelyn Beatty Scholarship Fund (Endowed)
- WSGE Endowment Fund
- William R. Butler Fund (Endowed)
- Archie & Katherine Hufstedler Education Scholarship (Endowed)

Other New Funds

- Plastics Advanced Research, Inc. (PART) Scholarship (Annual)

- Uster/Raul Thomas Scholarship (Annual)

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

- We will look to create 3-5 new endowments in FY26

Unit
Development Office

Sub-unit

Strategic Initiative

Create an annual giving program to generate unrestricted support to Gaston College (Strategic Initiative 5.11)

Reason for Initiative

Provide unrestricted supplemental funding for College programs and service

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Chief Development Officer
- Executive Director-Gaston College Foundation

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #5: Finance and Operations
 - Strategic Goal #5: Gaston College is committed to optimizing fiduciary and operational strategies to ensure long-term success and stability.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

- Create and send digital campaign materials at least twice per fiscal year
- Create and send paper-based mailing materials to segmented/targeted constituents.
- Develop marketing materials with a focused message and case for support
- Create giving levels and donor acknowledgments

Success Criteria

An annual giving program will be implemented raising at least \$75,000.

Assessment Results:

- \$109,005.86 with the exclusion of SIMS Park & Golf revenues.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement:

- We will look to raise \$125,000 in FY26 to continue supporting the growth of our annual athletics fundraising to help with post-season expenses.

Unit
Economic and Workforce Development

Sub-unit
Apprenticeship 321

Strategic Initiative

- Implement the College's Strategic Enrollment Plan designed to increase student enrollment and FTE. (Strategic Initiatives 1.1, 5.3)
- Increase social media followers and engagement. (Strategic Initiative 1.7)

Reason for Initiative

Grow the Apprenticeship 321 program to include more pathways, more apprentices, more pre-apprentices, and more apprenticeship employers to increase the number of enrollments and FTE. Use social media to engage the community and market the Apprenticeship 321 program.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Director of Apprenticeships and Work-Based Learning
- Success Coach

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #1: Student Recruitment and Enrollment
 - Strategic Goal #1: Gaston College will enhance its marketing efforts, improve recruitment strategies, and support students through the enrollment process, ultimately attracting and enrolling a diverse and engaged student body.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

Ongoing, effective interactions and communications with current apprenticeship employers, new employers, local school districts, and community partners.

Success Criteria

Increase the number of new Apprenticeship employers, Apprentices and Pre-apprentices. Enhance and strengthen our existing Apprenticeship employers.

Assessment Results

We had 43 completers in the Pre-Apprenticeship program during the 2023–2024 academic year. This year, that number increased to 98 completers, representing 128% growth. Additionally, we expanded our network by adding three new employer partners.

In our Apprenticeship program, we had 32 completers and currently have 81 active apprentices, for a total of 113 apprentices—up from 80 last year—reflecting a 41% increase.

Our online engagement also continues to grow. Facebook views increased by 64.7% over the past 90 days, and we had 20 viewers via LinkedIn during the same period.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

To support continuous improvement, we will continue to actively market the Apprenticeship program to both new and existing employer partners. Strengthening relationships with employers will help expand opportunities for participants and sustain program growth. Additionally, we will work closely with Lincoln and Gaston Schools to increase Pre-Apprenticeship enrollment by enhancing outreach and engagement efforts.

We also recognize the importance of digital visibility. Maintaining a consistent weekly posting schedule on Facebook and LinkedIn will help increase views, drive interaction, and raise awareness of our programs among students, employers, and the broader community.

Unit
Economic and Workforce Development

Sub-unit
Apprenticeship 321

Strategic Initiative

Strengthen existing and develop new strategic partnerships with local businesses, industries, public safety agencies, and community organizations to foster mutually beneficial relations that support workforce training, internships, and job placement opportunities for students.
(Strategic Initiative 3.1)

Reason for Initiative

Increase the number of registered apprentices.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Director of Apprenticeships and Work-Based Learning
- Success Coach

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #3: Partnerships and Community Engagement
 - Strategic Goal #3: Gaston College will establish strong partnerships, actively engage with the community, and create meaningful opportunities for students, alumni, and the public to contribute to the college's mission and success.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

Provide opportunities to connect the Apprenticeship employers with our Pre-apprentices to include company tours, mock interviews, and networking events.

Success Criteria

Increase the number of Pre-apprentices that are offered Registered Apprenticeship opportunities.

Assessment Results

We increased the number of Pre-Apprentices by 128%, largely due to the addition of Medical Pathways to our Pre-Apprenticeship program standards. To better support both Advanced Manufacturing and Medical Pathways, we doubled the number of monthly meetings to ensure each pathway received targeted programming.

As part of our employer engagement efforts, we conducted seven employer tours and introduced Mock Interviews specifically for graduating seniors. Seven Pre-Apprentices participated in the interviews, and five employers were involved. As a result, five students received job offers before graduating high school.

Additionally, two students participated in job shadowing opportunities with American & Efird, further strengthening real-world exposure and industry connection.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

We need to continue strengthening partnerships with local businesses to create additional Apprenticeship and Internship opportunities for our Pre-Apprentices. Expanding these relationships will help align student experiences with workforce needs and provide more pathways for hands-on learning and post-graduation employment.

Unit
Economic and Workforce Development

Sub-unit
Basic Law Enforcement Training (BLET)

Strategic Initiative

- Identify and scale best practices to promote student engagement, enrich learning opportunities, and increase credential completions. (Strategic Initiative 2.5)
- Continue to invest in information technology to enhance systems and services. (Strategic Initiative 6.3)

Reason for Initiative

To ensure the BLET program is performing at a high level and properly preparing the students for careers in law enforcement. Cadets should be familiar with using computers as most law enforcement agencies use computers for training. By being able to provide laptop computers for the BLET students this will save them on average over \$800.00 in textbooks.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Director of Criminal Justice and Law Enforcement Programs

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #2: Student Access and Success
 - Strategic Goal #2: Gaston College will enhance student access, success, and inclusivity in high-quality educational programs, ultimately empowering students to achieve their educational goals.
- Strategic Priority #6: Operational Infrastructure
 - Strategic Goal #6: Gaston College is committed to investing in a secure and conducive environment for learning, ensuring the safety and well-being of its students, faculty, and staff while investing in its operational infrastructure to enhance the working and learning environment.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

- Work with Internet and Technology Department in making sure that laptop computers can run on a continuous and reliable basis, with no break in service.
- Work with Purchasing on securing enough computers for the BLET classes.
- Develop a policy for the use of computers by the students.
- Implement computers into the BLET program.

Success Criteria

This will be met if laptop computers are in operation within this evaluation period.

Assessment Results

Due to budgetary issues no laptop computers were purchased, so therefore this goal was not obtained entirely. We have incorporated the use of the Computer Lab in the Skinner Vet Tech Building. This does limit the program to doing testing in the early mornings.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

This goal may be extended through the next year, but with the budget still being very strict, it is unlikely that any success would be made.

Unit
Economic and Workforce Development

Sub-unit
Criminal Justice Academy (CJA)

Strategic Initiative

- Develop and regularly update academic and workforce development programs to respond to the needs of the local job market and other State initiatives. (Strategic Initiative 2.2)
- Expand course offerings and flexible scheduling options to accommodate diverse student needs, including dual enrollment students, working adults, and non-traditional learners. (Strategic Initiative 2.3)
- Strengthen existing and develop new strategic partnerships with local businesses, industries, public safety agencies, and community organizations to foster mutually beneficial relationships that support workforce training, internships, and job placement opportunities for students. (Strategic Initiative 3.1)

Reason for Initiative

To continue to grow the CJA (In-service) training programs that are offered at Gaston College. This will also be in response to the needs of the law enforcement agencies in our two-county service area.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Assistant Director of CJA

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #2: Student Access and Success
 - Strategic Goal #2: Gaston College will enhance student access, success, and inclusivity in high-quality educational programs, ultimately empowering students to achieve their educational goals.
- Strategic Priority #3: Partnerships and Community Engagement
 - Strategic Goal #3: Gaston College will establish strong partnerships, actively engage with the community, and create meaningful opportunities for students, alumni, and the public to contribute to the college's mission and success.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

- Continue to meet with the local law enforcement agencies within our two-county service area, to obtain input on the training needs.
- Increase the number of CJA classes conducted by 5% that were completed in the 2023-2024 evaluation period.

Success Criteria

If the number of classes offered in the CJA program is 5% or more than the 2023-2024 evaluation period.

Assessment Results

This goal was not accomplished during this reporting period if we base the measurement of the number of classes that were offered. Last year we offered 327 classes with a total 2,381 hours and 65.71 FTE's. For this reporting period we only offered 239 classes, but had 2, 573 hours and 81.39 FTE's. So, in number of classes offered we were down, however in the total number of hours we were up and in the number of FTE's generated we were up. The FTE's generated this year in the CJA program were above 5% increase mark, in fact we exceeded 20% increase. The number of classes offered was the measurement standard for this objective and that was not reached. However, looking at how to measure the improvement of the program is not how many classes offered but the FTE's generated.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

The reasons for more classes not being offered in this reporting period is largely due to pay for instructors. Some of the in-service training schools that have been conducted in the past, the instructors have been paid according to their educational level which could be between \$31.00 and \$36.00 an hour. But if the instructor is paid overtime by their department, some instructors are making in excess of \$50.00 per hour and it goes toward their retirement. This could potentially be a large problem in the future.

The State office of Community Colleges has recently released a new policy on payment of instructors. This would allow the Community Colleges to enter into an agreement with the instructor's department in which the department would pay for the instructor to teach, and we would negotiate how much the college would reimburse the department for the instructor's time. This has been recently released and there is not a template for a contract, but it would be up to the Chiefs of those departments to enter into an agreement. How the contract or agreement is to be written up is being worked on.

Unit
Economic and Workforce Development

Sub-unit
Criminal Justice Academy (CJA)

Strategic Initiative

- Develop and regularly update academic and workforce development programs to respond to the needs of the local job market and other State initiatives. (Strategic Initiative 2.2)
- Expand course offerings and flexible scheduling options to accommodate diverse student needs, including dual enrollment students, working adults, and non-traditional learners. (Strategic Initiative 2.3)

Reason for Initiative

Telecommunicator training in North Carolina is under the training auspices of the NC Sheriffs Association Training and Standards Commission. This commission is changing the process of training telecommunicators in North Carolina. Prior to the change a department or telecommunication center could hire a person with no experience and provide some on-the-job training and then send the person to telecommunicator certification. Under the changes the person must have the certification prior to working in a telecommunication capacity.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Assistant Director of CJA

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #2: Student Access and Success
 - Strategic Goal #2: Gaston College will enhance student access, success, and inclusivity in high-quality educational programs, ultimately empowering students to achieve their educational goals.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

Coordinate with the local communications centers for police, fire, and emergency medical services in conducting the Basic Telecommunicator course.

Success Criteria

If a Basic Telecommunicator School is taught at Gaston College during the assessment period.

Assessment Results

The goal was again not realized during this reporting period. The largest issue is finding space and instructors to teach in the Telecommunicator school. Currently, this school is taught to new hires at the Gaston County Police Telecommunication facility in Gastonia.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

To realize this goal, it would be inherent for the college to hire at least a part-time person to coordinate this school.

Unit
Economic and Workforce Development

Sub-unit
Customized Training

Strategic Initiative

- Develop and regularly update academic and workforce development programs to respond to the needs of the local job market and other State initiatives. (Strategic Initiative 2.2)
- Expand course offerings and flexible scheduling options to accommodate diverse student needs, including dual enrollment students, working adults, and non-traditional learners. (Strategic Initiative 2.3)
- Strengthen existing and develop new strategic partnerships with local businesses, industries, public safety agencies, and community organizations to foster mutually beneficial relationships that support workforce training, internships, and job placement opportunities for students. (Strategic Initiative 3.1)

Reason for Initiative

Enhance access, availability, and delivery of high-quality short-term educational programs that are reflective of participants, workplace, and community-based needs in small and large businesses. Due to the increase in unemployment rates, along with the skills gap within the workforce and new industries moving to Gaston and Lincoln County, community and business partners have expressed a need for short-term training to upskill current and future employees.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Customized Training Team

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #2 Student Access and Success
 - Strategic Goal #2 Gaston College will enhance student access, success, and inclusivity in high-quality educational programs, ultimately empowering students to achieve their educational goals.
- Strategic Priority #3 Partnerships and Community Engagement
 - Strategic Goal #3 Gaston College will establish strong partnerships, actively engage with the community, and create meaningful opportunities for students, alumni, and the public to contribute to the college's mission and success.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

The Customized Training Department will continue to expand current offerings to support Gaston and Lincoln County Partners.

Success Criteria

Data tracking and reporting measures show a 10% increase in course/training offerings over 2023-2024.

Assessment Results

Offered 39 additional training sessions above the 476 held in 2023–2024 for a total of 515 offerings. This is an 8% increase.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

The Customized Training program will continue to assess industry needs and offer training opportunities accordingly. Much of this is driven by the number of state-supported training projects that companies in our two-county service area qualify for.

Unit
Economic and Workforce Development

Sub-unit
Fire and Rescue Training

Strategic Initiative

- Implement the College's Strategic Enrollment Plan designed to increase student enrollment and FTE. (Strategic Initiative 1.1)
- Develop more high tier course offerings that lead to industry recognized credentials that meet NC's MyFutureNC goals and local industry demand. (Strategic Initiative 5.4)

Reason for Initiative

Start a firefighter academy that will be a 12-week program, 513 hours, with 16 students. Students will leave the class to be fully certified firefighters.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Director, RESTC

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #1 Student Recruitment and Enrollment
 - Strategic Goal #1 Gaston College will enhance its marketing efforts, improve recruitment strategies, and support students through the enrollment process, ultimately attracting and enrolling a diverse and engaged student body.
- Strategic Priority #5 Finance and Operations
 - Strategic Goal #5 Gaston College is committed to optimizing fiduciary and operational strategies to ensure long-term success and stability.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

Increase offering in tier 2 and tier 3 fire and rescue certification and in-services classes.

Success Criteria

Fire and Rescue FTE's increase by 2.5 percent yearly for the next three years.

Assessment Results

This Initiative was accomplished. Overall FTE for the program increased from 128 in 2023 – 2024 to 161 in 2024 – 2025. An increase of 33 FTE or 26%.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

Additional course offerings are being identified to continue this growth into the next program year.

Unit
Economic and Workforce Development

Sub-unit
RESTC

Strategic Initiative

- Identify requested College equipment to be funded through direct contributions or in-kind gifts through the Gaston College Foundation. (Strategic Initiative 5.5)
- Continue to invest in information technology to enhance systems and services. (Strategic Initiative 6.3)

Reason for Initiative

Purchase new Breathing Air Compressor. This machine is critical for RESTC operations. Current compressors are experiencing increased maintenance costs, and the manufacturer has ceased manufacturing compressors, providing support and parts will decrease.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Director, Fire Rescue Training- RESTC

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #5 Finance and Operations
 - Strategic Goal #5 Gaston College is committed to optimizing fiduciary and operational strategies to ensure long-term success and stability.
- Strategic Priority #6 Operational Infrastructure
 - Strategic Goal #6 Gaston College is committed to investing in a secure and conducive environment for learning, ensuring the safety and well-being of its students, faculty, and staff while investing in its operational infrastructure to enhance the working and learning environment.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

Secure funding for Compressor

Success Criteria

Compressor purchased and placed in service.

Assessment Results

This Initiative was accomplished. We had our new unit, which was designed to meet the needs of the training center, delivered and installed on July 8, 2025. We now have the capacity needed to meet the training centers demanding needs.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

The need for equipment repairs and replacement will be continually monitored. Scheduling and funding for the purchases will be coordinated with the college administration.

Unit
Economic and Workforce Development

Sub-unit
RESTC

Strategic Initiative

Evaluate safety and security infrastructure and continue to support initiatives to provide a safe and secure working and learning environment. (Strategic Initiative 6.1)

Reason for Initiative

Continue maintenance and evaluation of RESTC Burn Structures and Props to ensure functionality and safety of the RESTC Facilities.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Director, Fire Rescue Training- RESTC

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #6 Operational Infrastructure
 - Strategic Goal #6 Gaston College is committed to investing in a secure and conducive environment for learning, ensuring the safety and well-being of its students, faculty, and staff while investing in its operational infrastructure to enhance the working and learning environment.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

Complete repairs found in the inspection in conjunction with Facilities Director and College administration.

Success Criteria

Inspections and recommended repairs completed.

Assessment Results

Due to funds and scheduling, this initiative has not been met.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

The need for renovations to the existing training facility remains and will continue to be priority for the program. The college administration is aware, and funding will be pursued.

Unit
Economic and Workforce Development

Sub-unit
RESTC

Strategic Initiative

Evaluate safety and security infrastructure and continue to support initiatives to provide a safe and secure working and learning environment. (Strategic Initiative 6.1)

Reason for Initiative

Replace the 32-year-old commercial burn prop with a similar size and constructed facility. This will support initiatives to provide a safe and secure working and learning environment. The original building needs replacement before it reaches the end of its usability. This is a unique facility that draws firefighters from all over the United States for training.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Director, Fire Rescue Training- RESTC

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #6 Operational Infrastructure
 - Strategic Goal #6 Gaston College is committed to investing in a secure and conducive environment for learning, ensuring the safety and well-being of its students, faculty, and staff while investing in its operational infrastructure to enhance the working and learning environment.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

Working in conjunction with Facilities Director and College administration to secure funding and hiring an engineering firm to design a new building for construction.

Success Criteria

A new facility completed.

Assessment Results

Due to funds and scheduling, this initiative has not been met.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

The need for a new training facility remains and will continue to be priority for the program. The college administration is aware and funding will be pursued.

Unit
Economic and Workforce Development

Sub-unit
RESTC

Strategic Initiative

- Identify requested College equipment to be funded through direct contributions or in-kind gifts through the Gaston College Foundation. (Strategic Initiative 5.5)
- Evaluate safety and security infrastructure and continue to support initiatives to provide a safe and secure working and learning environment. (Strategic Initiative 6.1)

Reason for Initiative

Replace at least 8 sets of instructor's personal protective gear. The gear needs to be replaced on a regular basis to ensure it is properly protecting our instructors. Our instructors are in this protective equipment most days they work.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Director, Fire Rescue Training- RESTC

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #5 Finance and Operations
 - Strategic Goal #5 Gaston College is committed to optimizing fiduciary and operational strategies to ensure long-term success and stability.
- Strategic Priority #6 Operational Infrastructure
 - Strategic Goal #6 Gaston College is committed to investing in a secure and conducive environment for learning, ensuring the safety and well-being of its students, faculty, and staff while investing in its operational infrastructure to enhance the working and learning environment.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

Secure funding to replace gear.

Success Criteria

Gear purchased and placed into service.

Assessment Results

The purchase of some of the necessary gear is being planned for the 2025–2026 program year as funds become available.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

The need for Equipment Repairs and Replacement will be continually monitored. Scheduling and funding for the purchases will be coordinated with the college administration.

Unit
Economic and Workforce Development

Sub-unit
RESTC

Strategic Initiative

- Identify requested College equipment to be funded through direct contributions or in-kind gifts through the Gaston College Foundation. (Strategic Initiative 5.5)
- Continue to invest in information technology to enhance systems and services. (Strategic Initiative 6.3)

Reason for Initiative

Purchase used firetruck which is critical for RESTC operations. Current firetrucks were donated to the college when they reached end-of-life with local fire departments. These trucks are experiencing increased maintenance costs with limited use and were manufactured in 1992 and 1995.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Director, Fire Rescue Training- RESTC

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #5 Finance and Operations
 - Strategic Goal #5 Gaston College is committed to optimizing fiduciary and operational strategies to ensure long-term success and stability.
- Strategic Priority #6 Operational Infrastructure
 - Strategic Goal #6 Gaston College is committed to investing in a secure and conducive environment for learning, ensuring the safety and well-being of its students, faculty, and staff while investing in its operational infrastructure to enhance the working and learning environment.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

Secure funding for firetruck

Success Criteria

Firetruck purchased and placed in service.

Assessment Results

Due to funds, this initiative has not been met. However, we are currently in discussions with the Gastonia Fire Department about their possible donation of a 2004 Pierce fire engine. It will help offset the immediate need for the purchase of a newer piece of equipment.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

The need for Equipment Repairs and Replacement will be continually monitored. Scheduling and funding for the purchases will be coordinated with the college administration.

Unit
Economic and Workforce Development

Sub-unit
RESTC

Strategic Initiative

- Identify requested College equipment to be funded through direct contributions or in-kind gifts through the Gaston College Foundation. (Strategic Initiative 5.5)
- Continue to invest in information technology to enhance systems and services. (Strategic Initiative 6.3)

Reason for Initiative

Purchase four 165-pound Rescue Randy mannequins which are critical for RESTC operations. Rescue Randy mannequins are used for rescue training drills and need to be replaced annually.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Director, Fire Rescue Training- RESTC

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #5 Finance and Operations
 - Strategic Goal #5 Gaston College is committed to optimizing fiduciary and operational strategies to ensure long-term success and stability.
- Strategic Priority #6 Operational Infrastructure
 - Strategic Goal #6 Gaston College is committed to investing in a secure and conducive environment for learning, ensuring the safety and well-being of its students, faculty, and staff while investing in its operational infrastructure to enhance the working and learning environment.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

Secure funding for Rescue Randy's.

Success Criteria

Rescue Randy purchased and placed in service.

Assessment Results

This Initiative was accomplished. We were able to purchase two Rescue Randy's last budget year

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

Due to the constant use in training, we are in constant need of purchasing more props. The need for equipment repairs and replacement will be continually monitored. Scheduling and funding for the purchases will be coordinated with the college administration.

Unit
Economic and Workforce Development

Sub-unit
Small Business Center

Strategic Initiative

Strengthen existing and develop new strategic partnerships with local businesses, industries, public safety agencies, and community organizations to foster mutually beneficial relationships that support workforce training, internships, and job placement opportunities for students. (Strategic Initiative 3.1)

Reason for Initiative

Identify and establish strategic partnerships with local businesses, industries and community organizations in Gaston and Lincoln Counties to create mutually beneficial relationships.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Small Business Center Director

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #3: Partnerships and Community Engagement
 - Strategic Goal #3: Gaston College will establish strong partnerships, actively engage with the community, and create meaningful opportunities for students, alumni, and the public to contribute to the college's mission and success.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

Create partnerships with the following specialized areas of counseling: legal, accounting, banking, marketing.

Success Criteria

Create two partnerships with each area listed.

Assessment Results

The SBC was successful in creating two partnerships within each of the following areas:

- Legal: Knox, Brotherton, Knox & Godfrey and Law Office of Michele Geathers McPhatter
- Accounting: OLU CPA and Mark Stephens CPA
- Banking: Cassie Hansley at Fifth Third and Krystle Mall at SouthState Bank
- Marketing: Clarence Fisher Sales Coaching and Wakerobin Marketing

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement:

The SBC has found these partnerships to be of great value to our clients and will continue to increase the number of partnerships in these areas.

Unit
Economic Workforce Development

Sub-unit
Work-Based Learning and Placement

Strategic Initiative

- Increase awareness of and participation in virtual and in-person student life activities and programming initiatives. (Strategic Initiative 2.11)
- Strengthen existing and develop new strategic partnerships with local businesses, industries, public safety agencies, and community organizations to foster mutually beneficial relationships that support workforce training, internships, and job placement opportunities for students. (Strategic Initiative 3.1)

Reason for Initiative

Increase the number of Work-Based Learning students by providing more opportunities through on-campus and employer partnerships.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Coordinator of Work-Based Learning and Placement
- Specialist Work-Based Learning and Placement

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #2 Student Access and Success
 - Strategic Goal #2 Gaston College will enhance student access, success, and inclusivity in high-quality educational programs, ultimately empowering students to achieve their educational goals.
- Strategic Priority #3 Partnerships and Community Engagement
 - Strategic Goal #3 Gaston College will establish strong partnerships, actively engage with the community, and create meaningful opportunities for students, alumni, and the public to contribute to the college's mission and success.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

On-going, effective interactions and communications by Work-Based Learning and Placement staff to educate students, faculty, staff, and local employers on Work-Based Learning benefits while participating in activities around campus.

Success Criteria

- Increase the number of on-campus activities to make students aware of Work-Based Learning by 5%.
- Increase the number of Partner Employers by 5%.

Assessment Results

The number of activities varies from semester to semester depending on activities offered across campus. Our hosting of business partners increased by 8 % from the previous year.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

WBL will continue to work with instructors to offer information sessions throughout each semester to promote WBL and participate in on-campus activities to encourage enrollment. WBL will continue to build new partnerships with local area businesses while maintaining relationships with current business partners.

Unit
Economic Workforce Development

Sub-unit
Workforce Development

Strategic Initiative

- Develop and regularly update academic and workforce development programs to respond to the needs of the local job market and other State initiatives. (Strategic Initiative 2.2)
- Strengthen existing and develop new strategic partnerships with local businesses, industries, public safety agencies, and community organizations to foster mutually beneficial relationships that support workforce training, internships, and job placement opportunities for students. (Strategic Initiative 3.1)
- Develop more high tier course offerings that lead to industry recognized credentials that meet NC's MyFutureNC goals and local industry demand. (Strategic Initiative 5.4)
- Increase the number of offerings at our Lincoln Campus, to meet the needs of Lincoln County workforce development. (Strategic Initiative 2.3)
- Evaluate space allocation to optimize operational effectiveness. (Strategic Initiative 6.2)

Reason for Initiative

In collaboration with college administration, regional employers, and partners, explore potential to acquire dedicated space, with emphasis at our Lincoln Campus, allowing the addition of new regional, national or industry recognized certifications and professional development courses/programs to increase FTE. Continue working towards the establishment of new and existing short- and long-term health care programs and apprenticeships that contribute to overall FTE. To respond to the continuing workforce needs of regional employers and students in our service area while providing an opportunity to increase enrollment.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Workforce Development Staff

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #2 Student Access and Success
 - Strategic Goal #2 Gaston College will enhance student access, success, and inclusivity in high-quality educational programs, ultimately empowering students to achieve their educational goals.
- Strategic Priority #3 Partnerships and Community Engagement
 - Strategic Goal #3 Gaston College will establish strong partnerships, actively engage with the community, and create meaningful opportunities for students, alumni, and the public to contribute to the college's mission and success.
- Strategic Priority #5 Finance and Operations

- Strategic Goal #5 Gaston College is committed to optimizing fiduciary and operational strategies to ensure long-term success and stability.
- Strategic Priority #6 Operational Infrastructure
 - Strategic Goal #6 Gaston College is committed to investing in a secure and conducive environment for learning, ensuring the safety and well-being of its students, faculty, and staff while investing in its operational infrastructure to enhance the working and learning environment.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

The Economic and Workforce Development division will develop and offer Tier 1 and Tier 2 course offerings to meet industry demand, with an emphasis on more offerings in Lincoln County at our Lincoln Campus.

Success Criteria

Contribute to 10% annual growth in Economic and Workforce Development division.

Assessment Results

FTE increased from 98.99 in FY 23-24 to 139.55 in FY 24-25. An increase of 41%.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

New course offerings are being pursued to continue this growth of FTE into the next program year.

Unit
Economic Workforce Development

Sub-unit
Workforce Development - Human Resources Development (HRD)

Strategic Initiative

- Develop and regularly update academic and workforce development programs to respond to the needs of the local job market and other State initiatives (Example: MyFutureNC, pre-apprenticeships) (Strategic Initiative 2.2)
- Strengthen existing and develop new strategic partnerships with local businesses, industries, public safety agencies, and community organizations to foster mutually beneficial relationships that support workforce training, internships, and job placement opportunities for students. (Strategic Initiative 3.1)
- Increase the number of offerings at our Lincoln Campus, to meet the needs of Lincoln County workforce development. (Strategic Initiative 2.3)

Reason for Initiative

Increase enrollments in Human Resource Development programs, with emphasis at our Lincoln Campus, through expanded outreach to regional community partners, business leaders and correctional facilities to remain engaged with Workforce Development partnerships in responding to the workforce preparation needs of the region's unemployed, under-employed and captive population.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Workforce Development Staff

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #2 Student Access and Success
 - Strategic Goal #2 Gaston College will enhance student access, success, and inclusivity in high-quality educational programs, ultimately empowering students to achieve their educational goals.
- Strategic Priority #3 Partnerships and Community Engagement
 - Strategic Goal #3 Gaston College will establish strong partnerships, actively engage with the community, and create meaningful opportunities for students, alumni, and the public to contribute to the college's mission and success.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

The Human Resources Development department will maintain and expand current offerings in Employability Skills, Labs, Career Planning/Assessment, Career Readiness/Pathways, Technology Awareness, Motivation and Retention, Financial Literacy and Correctional Career

Exploration. The HRD department will increase our efforts to collaborate with Lincoln County partners to provide more offerings to meet their workforce needs.

Success Criteria

The FTE earned in Workforce CE & Basic Skills programs will increase by 10%.

Assessment Results

FTE in the HRD decreased from 38.50 in FY 23-24 to 34.95 in FY 24-25. This decrease is due to instructor vacancies in HRD courses.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

New HRD instructors are being recruited. Also, Tier 1b Workforce Development courses are being added in the next program year and are expected to offset the decrease of 3.55 FTE in the HRD area.

Unit
Economic Workforce Development

Sub-unit

College and Career Readiness (CCR) and Basic Skills

Strategic Initiative

- Implement strategies for continuous improvement on each of the North Carolina Community College System Performance Measures for Student Success. (Strategic Initiative 2.1)
- Strengthen existing and develop new strategic partnerships with local businesses, industries, public safety agencies, and community organizations to foster mutually beneficial relationships that support workforce training, internships, and job placement opportunities for students. (Strategic Initiative 3.1)

Reason for Initiative

Increase student success in obtaining a credential leading to a postsecondary enrollment, obtaining a better job or employment in the local workforce.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- College and Career Readiness (CCR)

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #2 Student Access and Success
 - Strategic Goal #2 Gaston College will enhance student access, success, and inclusivity in high-quality educational programs, ultimately empowering students to achieve their educational goals.
- Strategic Priority #3 Partnerships and Community Engagement
 - Strategic Goal #3 Gaston College will establish strong partnerships, actively engage with the community, and create meaningful opportunities for students, alumni, and the public to contribute to the college's mission and success.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

- Recruit additional instructors to allow for adding more ABE/HSE/ESL courses at the Dallas Campus, Lincoln Campus, Gaston & Lincoln Correctional Facilities, Gaston County Jail, and in Industry.
- In partnership with local business and industry, and college departments, design and implement Integrated Education & Training (IET) pathways to allow ABE/HSE/ESL students to co-enroll literacy and Occupational/CTE courses to earn certifications.

Success Criteria

- Increased FTE by 10% leading to more funding to improve, enhance and increase CCR offerings to diverse populations.

- Additional instructors and courses offerings.
- Additional IET's created and showing enrollment.
- Improved program and student performance as measured by the NCCCS and by successful program completion, IET completion, and or transfer to additional college course offerings or programs.

Assessment Results

1. FTE decreased by 8 FTE or 4.7%. Likely the result of the increased emphasis the program put on performance measures rather than only enrollment. See item 5 below.
2. One additional instructor was added during the program year.
3. Three additional courses were held during the program year.
4. No additional IET's were created during the program year due to the shortage of staff to work on IET's and the time and effort spent on improving performance measures and in preparation for the Title II grant submission.
5. Program performance improved as measured by Measurable Skills Gains (MSG's) are as follows;
 - 2022 – 2023 = 36%
 - 2023 – 2024 = 52%
 - 2024 – 2025 = 55.6% (Taken from Table 4/Advansys/Power BI/Period 12 as of 7/8/2025)
6. No IET completions were noted for the program year.
7. The number of post-secondary transfers increased from 12 in 2023-24 to 19 in 2024-25.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

1. FTE growth will continue to be pursued but will also continue to be balanced with meeting Performance Measures.
2. The need for additional instructors will be continually monitored.
3. Additional course offerings will be considered based on demand, instructor availability, and staff capacity.
4. As CCR staffing capacity allows, IET creation and recruitment into IET's will be pursued.
5. Improving Performance Measures will remain a top priority for the program.
6. IET completion will be emphasized as enrollment in IET's takes place.
7. With the move of the CCR program to Academic Affairs, the opportunity exists for an increase in the number of CCR students transitioning into post-secondary courses.

Unit
Economic Workforce Development

Sub-unit

College and Career Readiness (CCR) and Basic Skills

Strategic Initiative

Implement strategies for continuous improvement on each of the North Carolina Community College System Performance Measures for Student Success. (Strategic Initiative 2.1)

Reason for Initiative

Increase student success in obtaining a credential leading to a postsecondary enrollment, obtaining a better job or new employment in the workforce.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- College and Career Readiness (CCR)

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #2 Student Access and Success
 - Strategic Goal #2 Gaston College will enhance student access, success, and inclusivity in high-quality educational programs, ultimately empowering students to achieve their educational goals.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

- Increase post testing rate and enforce posttest rules to ensure student compliance and performance.
- Identify problem areas using Table 4 and Excel program performance spreadsheet.
- Develop and submit competitive proposals for the Title II RFP's in Adult Literacy, Correctional Literacy, and Integrated English Literacy and Civics Education (IELCE) that will be released in early 2025.
- Establish a dedicated computer lab in the CAS building to accommodate the need for increased performance testing and for meeting the digital literacy requirements of the Title II grant.

Success Criteria

- Improved program performance measures that meet or exceed the state performance measures at the end of the program year. Increased Measurable Skill Gain (MSG) rate that meets or exceeds state performance measures.
- Awarding of a renewed Title II Adult Literacy & Corrections grant and a new IELCE grant.
- Establishment of an operational computer lab for the CCR program in the CAS building.

Assessment Results

Program performance improved as measured by Measurable Skills Gains (MSG's) are as follows;

- 2022 – 2023 = 36%
- 2023 – 2024 = 52%
- 2024 – 2025 = 55.6% (Taken from Table 4/Advansys/Power BI/Period 12 as of 7/8/2025)
- These last 2 percentages are above the state averages and state goal.

The CCR program did earn the Title II Adult Literacy and Corrections grants with an expected increase of approximately 57% in funding due to the increase in program performance. The IELCE grant was not pursued due to the lack of staff capacity to take on a new program. Computer lab space in CAS was not secured in the program year.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

Improving Performance Measures will remain a top priority for the program.

Optimizing the grant funds will be emphasized as well as consideration of the impact if the Federal funds are not available in future years.

Computer access for CCR students is still being assessed with the consideration of funding, space, and location.

Unit
Economic Workforce Development

Sub-unit
College and Career Readiness (CCR)
Basic Skills

Strategic Initiative

Launch outreach campaigns to raise awareness about the importance of basic skills education for adults and encourage individuals to pursue learning opportunities. (Strategic Initiative 1.6)

Reason for Initiative

The College and Career Readiness / Basics Skills program (Adult Basic Education – ABE, Adult High School – AHS, High School Equivalency – HSE, and English as a Second Language – ESL) provide opportunities for educational growth, career advancement, and economic mobility to those lacking these essential skills. The success of those completing these programs and moving into careers that earn a family sustaining wage also contributes to the economic development and vitality of our service area.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

College and Career Readiness (CCR)

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #1 Student Recruitment and Enrollment
 - Strategic Goal #1 Gaston College will enhance its marketing efforts, improve recruitment strategies, and support students through the enrollment process, ultimately attracting and enrolling a diverse and engaged student body.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

- Develop new marketing strategies and delivery methods to include print and social media.
- Make presentations about the CCR program to business/industry, and partner agencies.
- Promote the programs at community events.
- Include graduates of the programs in marketing efforts to reach others in their demographics.

Success Criteria

- Increased enrollment in the CCR/Basic Skills Programs.
- Increase in the number of students referred to the program from our partnering agencies.
- Increase in the number of local businesses and industries referring employees to our programs.

Assessment Results

The CCR program was promoted at some community events and with partner agencies, but due to the lack of staff capacity this recruitment action item could not be fully implemented. Also, the other marketing action items could not be implemented due to the lack of staff capacity and funding. All available staff resources in 2024 - 2025 were committed to Program Performance efforts, preparation and participation in the NCCCS Performance Review in October, and Title II grant preparation and submission in March.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

Implementation of these student recruitment action items will continue to be pursued as staff capacity and funding allows.

Unit
Economic & Workforce Development

Sub-unit

College & Career Readiness (CCR) / Life Skills – Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP)

Strategic Initiative

Strengthen existing and develop new strategic partnerships with local businesses, industries, public safety agencies, and community organizations to foster mutually beneficial relationships that support workforce training, internships, and job placement opportunities for students.
(Strategic Initiative 3.1)

Reason for Initiative

Build a larger foundation of host sites in both Lincoln and Gaston Counties to place Senior Citizen Employees to meet the program goals of the SCSEP Program

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Gaston College SCSEP Project Director

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #3 Partnerships and Community Engagement
 - Strategic Goal #3 Gaston College will establish strong partnerships, actively engage with the community, and create meaningful opportunities for students, alumni, and the public to contribute to the college's mission and success.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

Establishing new contacts within companies in both Gaston & Lincoln Counties and encouraging them to agree to serve as Host Agencies.

Success Criteria

Having host agency agreements with, and senior employees placed in, 2 new hosting agencies in both Gaston & Lincoln Counties by June 30, 2025

Assessment Results

20 new host agencies were added in Gaston County in the program year.
No new Lincoln County host agencies were added.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

Efforts will continue to add host agencies in Lincoln County.

Unit
Finance, Operations, and Facilities

Sub-unit
Finance

Strategic Initiative

- Enhance talent acquisition processes with an emphasis on keeping the college competitive and attracting talent from diverse backgrounds that is more reflective of the student population. (Strategic Initiative 4.1)
- Strengthen our financial performance, controlling costs, and exploring new and innovative ways to invest in our strategic priorities, while maintaining a commitment to the highest ethical standards. (Strategic Initiative 5.2)

Reason for Initiative

Provide staffing and means to facilitate proactive management of financial resources while also ensuring compliance to all standards, guidelines, and procedures to include increased reporting, stronger internal controls, and timely completion of financial statements and audits.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Vice-President of Finance
- Chief Operating Officer

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #4: Organizational Development
 - Strategic Goal #4: Gaston College is committed to continuous improvement through organizational and employee development.
- Strategic Priority #5: Finance and Operations
 - Strategic Goal #5: Gaston College is committed to optimizing fiduciary and operational strategies to ensure long-term success and stability.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

Recruit and hire a Controller

Success Criteria

Controller employed by January 2025

Assessment Results

A Controller was hired in January 2025.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

The Controller position was filled in January 2025.

Unit
Finance, Operations, and Facilities

Sub-unit
Finance

Strategic Initiative

Strengthen our financial performance, controlling costs, and exploring new and innovative ways to invest in our strategic priorities, while maintaining a commitment to the highest ethical standards. (Strategic Initiative 5.2)

Reason for Initiative

Provide ongoing awareness and proactive management of financial resources while also ensuring compliance to all standards, guidelines, and procedures.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Vice-President of Finance
- Chief Operating Officer

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #5: Finance and Operations
 - Strategic Goal #5: Gaston College is committed to optimizing fiduciary and operational strategies to ensure long-term success and stability.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

- Change the way purchasers think about budgets. Move spending towards a budget proactive process instead of a budget reactive process.
- Stress the importance of budget and spending planning.
- Strengthen the budgeting process by involving divisions and departments in all areas of the budget process - budget development, budget communication, and the monitoring of budgets.
- Enhance budget awareness with improved communication of budget needs and budget limitations. Provide training to departments budget monitoring.
- Strengthen budget monitoring and reporting.

Success Criteria

- Appropriate utilization of funds.
- Spending within budgets.
- Departments operating within allocated budgets without requiring additional allocations.

Assessment Results

- While the Fiscal 2026 State budget has not yet been passed by the General Assembly, Gaston College's budget planning began in April 2025. The planning included a focused effort to prepare for fiscal 2026's positional and equipment budgets.
- The Chief Financial Officer and related team members have met with and offered one-on-one discussions with budget managers.
- New budget reports were developed and shared with the President. These reports will be periodically shared with the President's Cabinet and the Board.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

The Finance department will continue to monitor budgets throughout the fiscal year.

Unit
Finance, Operations, and Facilities

Sub-unit
Purchasing

Strategic Initiative

- Enhance talent acquisition processes with an emphasis on keeping the college competitive and attracting talent from diverse backgrounds that is more reflective of the student population. (Strategic Initiative 4.1)
- Strengthen our financial performance, controlling costs, and exploring new and innovative ways to invest in our strategic priorities, while maintaining a commitment to the highest ethical standards. (Strategic Initiative 5.2)

Reason for Initiative

Fill vacancy in Purchasing Manager Position

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Vice-President of Finance
- Chief Operating Officer

Relation to Strategic Plan:

- Strategic Priority #4: Organizational Development
 - Strategic Goal #4: Gaston College is committed to continuous improvement through organizational and employee development.
- Strategic Priority #5: Finance and Operations
 - Strategic Goal #5: Gaston College is committed to optimizing fiduciary and operational strategies to ensure long-term success and stability.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

Recruit and hire Purchasing Manager

Success Criteria

Purchase Manager employed by January 2025

Assessment Results

A Purchase Manager was not hired by January 2025. The College retained a recruiting firm to assist with finding a candidate for this position. Resumes will be reviewed on July 27th, 2025, with a hiring decision to be made by mid to late August.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

The position will remain open until it is filled.

Unit
Finance, Operations, and Facilities

Sub-unit
Purchasing

Strategic Initiative

Strengthen our financial performance, controlling costs, and exploring new and innovative ways to invest in our strategic priorities, while maintaining a commitment to the highest ethical standards. (Strategic Initiative 5.2)

Reason for Initiative

Optimize fiduciary and operational strategies to provide a secure and financially sound process for employee purchases while ensuring compliance with State and Federal procurement guidelines.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Vice-President of Finance
- Purchasing Manager

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #5: Finance and Operations
 - Strategic Goal #5: Gaston College is committed to optimizing fiduciary and operational strategies to ensure long-term success and stability.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

- Enhance method to monitor all purchases of the College.
- Improve documentation for all purchasing exceptions.
- Provide procurement training to all divisions and departments to ensure compliance with all state and federal procurement guidelines.

Success Criteria

- Compliant purchases
- Number of trainings to improve understanding of purchasing guidelines.

Assessment Results

This initiative remains in progress as of August 1, 2025, and will be integrated into the new procurement manager's duties.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

This initiative will be integrated into the new procurement manager's duties upon hire.

Unit
Finance, Operations, and Facilities

Sub-unit
Bookstore

Strategic Initiative

Strengthen our financial performance, controlling costs, and exploring new and innovative ways to invest in our strategic priorities, while maintaining a commitment to the highest ethical standards. (Strategic Initiative 5.2)

Reason for Initiative

Optimize fiduciary and operational strategies to ensure long-term continued success and stability of the College Bookstore.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Vice-President of Finance
- Director of Bookstore

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #5: Finance and Operations
 - Strategic Goal #5: Gaston College is committed to optimizing fiduciary and operational strategies to ensure long-term success and stability.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

- Research and compare bookstores owned and operated by community colleges for revenue streams, offerings, staffing, costs and net results.
- Review revenue streams for new opportunities.
- Review costs of the bookstore, including gross margins, looking for cost saving opportunities. Review inventory levels as means of cost savings
- Review vending sales for new opportunities

Success Criteria

- Improved bottom-line
- Increased revenues
- Cost savings

Assessment Results

To be completed by August 1, 2025

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

To be completed by August 1, 2025

Unit
Finance, Operations, and Facilities

Sub-unit (if applicable)
Technology Services

Strategic Initiative

- Promote IT security awareness and training to minimize security threats and incidents (Strategic Initiative 4.3)
- Implement and adhere to security policies and standards and security best practices (Strategic Initiative 6.1)
- Maintain readily available documentation to ensure business continuity in the event of an unplanned disruption. (Strategic Initiative 6.1)
- Continually monitor and enhance the security of the College's information assets. (Strategic Initiative 6.3)
- Use effective change management processes to minimize risks through review and approval of documented changes to hardware and software. (Strategic Initiative 6.3)
- Foster partnerships with security professionals (Strategic Initiative 6.1)

Reason for Initiative

Strengthen cybersecurity awareness, monitor and protect network data to ensure safe online access to assist in preventing cyber attacks

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Chief Information Security Officer
- Chief Information Officer

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #4: Organizational Development
 - Strategic Goal #4: Gaston College is committed to continuous improvement through organizational and employee development.
- Strategic Priority #6: Operational Infrastructure
 - Strategic Goal #6: Gaston College is committed to investing in its operational infrastructure to enhance the working and learning environment.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

Provide informational posts, emails, and education on the uses of network and tools such as email, teams, etc. Continue to assist users and employees understand the role they play in helping to combat information security breaches such as phishing scams, website spoofing, ransomware, malware, and other forms of hacking.

- Continue to update and maintain a Disaster Recovery and Business Continuity Plan for Technology Services

- Invest in and utilize tools that will train end-users, in addition to monitoring and protecting the network and infrastructure
- Value and encourage engagement, open communication and dialogue with security professionals

Success Criteria

- Engage students and faculty awareness of potential pitfalls
- Updated Disaster Recovery and Business Continuity Plan
- Enhanced tools and monitoring of network and infrastructure
- More engagement with security professionals

Assessment Results

- Conducted regular phishing simulations using KnowBe4 to assess employee awareness and response to social engineering threats
- Launched cybersecurity awareness campaigns through email and Blackboard to educate faculty, staff, and students on current threats and best practices
- Implemented Data Loss Prevention (DLP) policies in Microsoft 365 to monitor and protect sensitive information
- Completed Cyber Hygiene Assessment with the North Carolina National Guard to identify vulnerabilities and recommend improvements
- Participated in ongoing meetings and trainings with the NCCCS Information Security Office and the Council of Information Advisors (COIA) to align with system-wide security initiatives and share best practices

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

- Partner with Arctic Wolf to enhance endpoint protection and cloud security monitoring through 24/7 managed detection and response services
- Utilize KnowBe4 to continuously improve end-user cybersecurity awareness and conduct targeted training based on simulation results
- Quarterly meetings with security professionals, including vendors and NCCCS System Office, to review emerging threats, share best practices, and identify areas for improvement in our security posture

Unit
Finance, Operations, and Facilities

Sub-unit (if applicable)
Technology Services

Strategic Initiative

- Communicate regularly regarding IT news, information, updates and changes to ensure a well-informed campus community. (Strategic Initiative 4.4)
- Provide guidance and recommendations on the selection and use of systems and services to support the technology needs of the campus community. (Strategic Initiative 6.3)
- Evaluate and adjust organizational structure and processes as needed to optimize the alignment of IT resources and College needs (Strategic Initiative 6.1)
- Provide superior customer service for faculty, staff and students in the use of campus technologies (Strategic Initiative 4.2)
- Foster partnerships with IT professionals (Strategic Initiative 6.1)

Reason for Initiative

Promote an Information Technology culture committed to excellence, innovation and customer service

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Chief Information Officer

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #4: Organizational Development
 - Strategic Goal #4: Gaston College is committed to continuous improvement through organizational and employee development.
- Strategic Priority #6: Operational Infrastructure
 - Strategic Goal #6: Gaston College is committed to investing in its operational infrastructure to enhance the working and learning environment.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

- Provide informational posts, emails, and pertaining to the uses of tools and resources to enhance the working and learning environment
- Identify and implement improvements that maximize improvements that enhance the end-user experience
- Continue to make improvements to existing services and potentially develop new services that meet campus demand for IT infrastructure and support services.
- Value and encourage engagement, open communication and dialogue with faculty, staff and students

Success Criteria:

- Engage students and faculty awareness of available tools and resources
- Implement and enhance identified improvements
- Monitor and make improvements to any existing services to meet the need and demands of support services
- More engagement with Information Technology professionals

Assessment Results:

- Awareness communications are sent to faculty/staff/students to engage and provide awareness of useful tools and resources. Also, training and webinars are highly encouraged and provided.
- Meetings with end-users (faculty/staff) and survey results from students are used to monitor and make improvements to any identified services required or needed to meet the demands of support services.
- Helpdesk tickets are monitored to identify redundant requests and issues resulting in a variety of needed/required improvements.
- Quarterly meetings, attendance at conferences and engagement with security and technology professionals assist in maintaining a secure and more up to date infrastructure and environment.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement:

- Awareness communications will continue as a means for providing awareness to useful information, resources and tools.
- Attendance at campus wide and divisional meetings and more involvement in day to day operation will be used to monitor needs for improvement and ways to improve support services.
- Helpdesk will continue to be used to identify needs and ways to improve administrative and academic uses of technology.
- Quarterly meetings, attendance at conferences and engagement if information technology professionals will continue to assist in maintaining a secure and more up to date infrastructure.

Unit

Finance, Operations, and Facilities

Sub-unit (if applicable)

Facilities

Strategic Initiative

- Develop a capital campaign to supplement the health sciences building expansion. (Strategic Initiative 5.10)
- Evaluate space allocation to optimize operational effectiveness. (Strategic Initiative 6.2)
- Evaluate landscape master plan and establish implementation priorities. (Strategic Initiative 6.4)
- Launch the development of the health sciences building. (Strategic Initiative 6.5)

Reason for Initiative

To provide quality learning and administrative environments through operational infrastructure and effective project management.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Director of Facilities and Plant Operations

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #5: Finance and Operations
- Strategic Goal #5: Gaston College is committed to optimizing fiduciary and operational strategies to ensure long-term success and stability.
- Strategic Priority #6: Operational Infrastructure
- Strategic Goal #6: Gaston College is committed to investing in a secure and conducive environment for learning, ensuring the safety and well-being of its students, faculty, and staff while investing in its operational infrastructure to enhance the working and learning environment.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

- Manage and facilitate 40,000 sq. ft Fiber Innovation Center on the Kimbrell Campus in Belmont with anticipated completion in March 2025.
- Manage and facilitate the De-Escalation Training Center that is to be constructed adjacent to the Firearms Training Facility on Bob and Pat Boyd Drive. This will include repaving Bob and Pat Boyd Drive. Completion date January 2026.
- Assist in managing and facilitating the construction of a 40'x50' Burn Prop structure at the RESTC on the Dallas Campus.
- Manage and facilitate Cybersecurity Lab Renovations at the Dallas, Lincoln, and Kimbrell Campuses to be completed in Fall 2023.
- Assist in the development for the proposed Health Sciences Building for the Dallas Campus. It is the concept phase now.

- Assist in the development of a new building proposed on the Lincoln Campus.
- Begin implementing the Landscape Improvement Plan for the Dallas, Kimbrell, and Lincoln Campuses.
- Begin implementing improvements to our signage and wayfinding guides on the Dallas Campus.

Success Criteria

Maintain projects within budget, deliver within project schedule, and quality.

Assessment Results

- Kimbrell Fiber Innovation Center Building opened in March 2024 and is operational; equipment is being installed now.
- De-Escalation Training Center is in the design phase and being reviewed by State Construction Office and Gaston County.
- Burn Prop Structure was completed and is in use.
- Cyber Security labs were completed on all three campuses.
- The Health and Wellness Center is in the planning stage. Morris-Berg is the Architect, and we are preparing to post for a CM@Risk.
- The Lincoln Campus Building is in the concept phase.
- New signage has been installed on the Dallas and Kimbrell Campus. The Lincoln Campus signage is being produced for installation.
- Landscape Master Plan is being introduced in stages at all three campus locations.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

- Due to budget constraints, the request for additional funding for the repairs and updates needed was unfortunately not achieved as requested.
- Will research alternate funding sources to accomplish needed repairs.

Unit
President's Office

Sub-unit
Marketing and Communications

Strategic Initiative

Implement the College's Marketing and Communication Plan - Increase website traffic (Strategic Initiative 1.7)

Reason for Initiative

Enhance the College's brand and reputation with a more visually appealing website that is accessible and easy to navigate.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Executive Director—Marketing and Communications
- Website Marketing Specialist
- Purchasing/Procurement

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #1: Student Recruitment and Enrollment
 - Strategic Goal #1: Gaston College will enhance its marketing efforts, improve recruitment strategies, and support students through the enrollment process, ultimately attracting and enrolling a diverse and engaged student body.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

- Update the current Gaston College website.
- Develop and post an RFP to update the College's website design and content management system. Work with vendor(s) selected to launch a more functional and appealing website that attracts and converts more visitors.
- Post at least three well-written and targeted website articles per month, highlighting faculty, students, athletics, curriculum, campus news, and more.
- Utilize paid media opportunities focused on driving traffic to the new Gaston College website.
- Boost social media content that encourages viewers to click through to the Gaston College website (campus news updates, program offerings, etc.).

Success Criteria

Launch the new website by Fall 2025.

Assessment Results

The main objective related to this initiative, redesigning the College website, continues to be delayed due to a shortage of resources both in our department and in purchasing to support the RFP process. We have begun to work on the purchasing process again with the help of the CFO and in anticipation of hiring a new procurement director soon. We hope to get a design RFP posted in the next couple of months, however adding a position for a website specialist will be critical to moving this forward. Action items related to pushing traffic to the website were held for this year since the existing website is not ideal for this. The marketing department did consistently post an average of three stories a month.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

Evaluate additional resources and options to keep this project moving forward.

Unit
President's Office

Sub-unit
Marketing and Communications

Strategic Initiative

Strengthen existing and develop new strategic partnerships with local businesses, industries, public safety agencies, and community organizations to foster mutually beneficial relationships that support workforce training, internships, and job placement opportunities for students. (Strategic Initiative 1.7)

Reason for Initiative

Increase brand awareness by increasing community involvement and engagement.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Marketing and Communications Department

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #3: Partnerships and Community Engagement
 - Strategic Goal #3: Gaston College will establish strong partnerships, actively engage with the community, and create meaningful opportunities for students, alumni, and the public to contribute to the college's mission and success.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

- Assist the Foundation with the promotion and marketing of community events and fundraisers.
- Develop at least one new community-focused event held at one of the campuses that helps bring students, alumni, community members and local businesses to campus.
- Work with other areas in the College (SGA, Foundation, etc.) to develop civic opportunities that students, faculty and staff can get involved in.
- Develop a program to bring the mascot into local elementary schools or to events where we can engage with more K-12 students.

Success Criteria

- Develop and successfully manage/participate in three new events or civic opportunities over 12 months.
- Complete at least four school visits in 12 months.

Assessment Results

We created several new opportunities for students and employees to give back to our community this year. Throughout September, we held a Mo's Pantry Collection Competition, collecting specific items each week that the pantry could use for our students. Due to Hurricane

Helene, efforts in November mainly focused on supporting that area. We collected new sleeping bags in partnership with the United Way of Gaston County and worked with the Gaston County PD to organize and sort supplies headed to Western NC for relief. We also partnered with other community colleges and adopted Haywood Community College to assist their students following the Hurricane. With the help of the Gaston College Foundation, we sent over \$1,000 to help support their emergency fund, and our employees helped seven Haywood students impacted by the hurricane through their Holiday Heroes program.

In December, we held a four-day Stuff-A-Bus collection for Toys for Tots. This was the first time this event was held, and we collected over 200 toys.

We made one visit to Carr Elementary in November with student-athletes who helped serve a Thanksgiving meal to students and their families.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

We maxed out our resources to organize our efforts during the Fall semester. Due to other demands in the spring semester, we have less availability, and all efforts this year were focused on the FIC opening in late April. If we have additional staff in the future, we'll look to ramp this back up.

Unit
President's Office

Sub-unit
Marketing and Communications

Strategic Initiative

Implement the College's Marketing and Communication Plan - Increase positive media coverage (Strategic Initiative 1.7)

Reason for Initiative

To help increase awareness of the College locally and across the state.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Executive Director—Marketing and Communications

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #1: Student Recruitment and Enrollment
 - Strategic Goal #1: Gaston College will enhance its marketing efforts, improve recruitment strategies, and support students through the enrollment process, ultimately attracting and enrolling a diverse and engaged student body.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

- Work with PR partner to develop and share at least two earned media pitches per month.
- Utilize the owned media content calendar to plan for and pitch those stories before the owned media published on the Gaston College website.
- Create on-campus reporting opportunities by hosting community or programming events that highlight a unique story angle that would be relevant to local reporters.
- Develop and post a new RFP for a PR partner since the current contract with our vendor expires in June 2025.

Success Criteria

Increase positive media coverage by 15% over 12 months

Assessment Results

Tracking from our PR partner NPS, shows positive media mentions increased by 28% when compared to the previous year. This coverage includes mentions from online news, TV, Radio, and newspapers. While we had fewer overall media events in 2024-2025, coverage from the FIC opening, and a clip from softball's districts that we were able to get picked up by ESPN Sportscenter Top 10, helped us exceed the 15% goal.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

In two years, we've increased our positive media coverage by 83%. With no major events on the horizon for the coming year, it's unlikely that we'll continue to increase this level. We'll look to maintain close to the same level of media coverage for the coming year as we continue to work with our PR partner to position Gaston College as a leading source for various news outlets.

Unit
President's Office

Sub-unit
Textile Technology Center

Strategic Initiative

Strengthen existing and develop new strategic partnerships with local businesses, industries, public safety agencies, and community organizations to foster mutually beneficial relationships that support workforce training, internships, and job placement opportunities for students. (Strategic Initiative 3.1)

Reason for Initiative

The new identity of the Kimbrell Campus is rooted in the textile industry which includes research, testing services and education at all levels. With the new Fiber Innovation Center, new textile technology degree program and expanded workforce classes this goal aligns perfectly with the future direction of this center and campus. Key partnerships with Gaston and Lincoln County businesses, textile industry, universities, organizations and K-12 engagement can help develop a pipeline of support and students for the Kimbrell Campus.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Executive Director-Textile Technology and Fiber Innovation Centers
- Director-Textile Technology Center (TTC)
- Vice President of Fiber Innovation and Facilities Development

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #3 Partnerships and Community Engagement
 - Strategic Goal #3: Gaston College is committed to establishing strong partnerships, actively engaging with the community, and creating meaningful opportunities for students, alumni, and the public to contribute to the college's mission and success.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

- TTC Staff to attend at least 2 new trade association meetings outside of current membership to help expand client base
- Work with universities and community organizations to host summer camps and recruitment events
- Increase engagement with community manufacturing associations

Success Criteria

- Partner with industry organizations or develop a new industry seminar/training to engage local industry, community and bring in business.
- Successful collaboration with EWD and NC State to host textile bootcamps and summer camp

- Expand university partnerships through translation of research to product development projects at TTC/FIC and increase university partnerships on the AAS Textile Technology Degree Program

Assessment Results

The Textile Technology Center (TTC) made measurable progress toward Strategic Initiative 3.1 by deepening engagement with industry, education, and community stakeholders in alignment with the evolving identity of the Kimbrell Campus. The following outcomes reflect efforts made toward expanding strategic partnerships and creating meaningful opportunities that support workforce training, internships, and job placement:

- **Trade Association and Tradeshow Participation:**
TTC staff attended four new industry events outside of existing memberships, including the Textile Apparel Group Conference, IDEA Tradeshow, AATCC Circularity Conference, and the AFFOA Advanced Functional Fabrics Summit. These events expanded the center's network, provided insight into emerging trends, and opened doors to new client relationships and collaboration opportunities.
- **Community and University Engagement:**
In partnership with Gaston College's Economic and Workforce Development division and NSF NC Textile Innovation Engine, the TTC successfully co-hosted a sustainability and textile-focused advanced manufacturing summer camp which highlighted the Fiber Innovation Center, local textile manufacturers and university partners at UNC-Charlotte. These programs engaged local high school students, university partners, and industry speakers which support early recruitment and skill-building.
- **Industry and Academic Collaboration:**
Although the TTC did not host a planned regional textile summit this year, the Center advanced university collaborations through applied research and product development projects including University of Massachusetts Lowell and the Fashion Institute of Technology. Several initiatives involved material testing, prototyping, and technical consulting with institutions such as NC State, supporting the growth and relevance of the AAS Textile Technology degree program.
- **Workforce and Pipeline Development:**
Expanded outreach to K-12 schools and community organizations helped raise awareness of career opportunities in textiles and reinforced the Kimbrell Campus as a regional hub for industry-relevant education. Initial recruitment events were held virtually and in-person. TTC and CTE faculty participated in CTE Tuesday virtual recruitment, the NC Textile Innovation Engine teacher training, and collaborative recruiting with NC State at Lincoln County Schools.

Education and Training Enrollment

Curriculum Courses on Kimbrell Campus 2024-2025

2024FA	11
TEX-110-D6A	7
TEX-121-K7A	3
TEX-122-K7A	1
2025SP	9
TEX-119-D6A	2
TEX-210-K7A	4
TEX-211-K7A	3
Grand Total	20

On-Site Continuing Education and Customized Training 2024-2025

62 students in on-site classes (this does not include customized training courses held at manufacturing sites and online training)

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

The outcomes of this initiative provided valuable insight into both the progress made and areas needing continued focus. The following actions will be taken to strengthen efforts and drive continuous improvement:

Enhance Trade Association & Tradeshow Strategy

Observation: Participation in new industry events yielded strong networking and collaboration opportunities.

Action Steps:

- Create a formal calendar of annual events and assign lead staff for follow-up with new contacts.
- Develop a post-event evaluation template to capture leads, trends, and lessons learned.
- Establish goals for new industry partnerships from each event (e.g., at least one new client or collaborative project per event).

Expand and Diversify Community & University Engagement

Observation: The summer camp and partnerships were successful but could have improved participation and partnerships.

Action Steps:

- Utilize grant funding to host co-branded summer camp with NC State University to recruit students into 2+2 pathway at Gaston College. Also continue to participate in the Apprenticeship 321 Advanced Manufacturing Summer Camp. (review student surveys from previous camps, follow-up engagement).
- Build a formal partnership plan with a new university collaborators that outlines roles, shared resources, and future research partnerships and recruitment strategy
- Formalize Textile Academy non-profit community partnership

Grow Enrollment in Seated Continuing Education Training Classes Held at Kimbrell Campus

Observation:

While the Textile Technology Center continues to deliver high-quality continuing education, enrollment in onsite classes were stagnant this past year. Growth in this area is critical to strengthening the workforce pipeline and maintaining alignment with industry needs as well as increasing visibility of the new Fiber Innovation Center.

Action Plan:

1. Targeted Marketing & Outreach
 - a. Develop marketing campaigns tailored to working adults, displaced workers, and career changers through textile media outlets.
 - b. Leverage partnerships with local employers, workforce boards, and community organizations to promote offerings.
 - c. Increase email blasts and other methods of communication with former training attendees and companies
2. Program Alignment & Flexibility
 - a. Conduct regular industry surveys and advisory board input to ensure course offerings reflect current skill demands.
 - b. Explore hybrid delivery models to ease access for those with transportation or time constraints, while still emphasizing the benefits of hands-on, onsite learning.

Unit
President's Office

Sub-unit
Textile Technology Center

Strategic Initiative

- Enrich the learning and working environment by providing a welcoming and inclusive college community. (Strategic Initiative 4.2)
- Provide professional development to enhance personal and professional growth and success. (Strategic Initiative 4.3)
- Enhance college-wide communication. (Strategic Initiative 4.4)

Reason for Initiative

The Kimbrell Campus, including the Textile Technology Center (TTC) and new Fiber Innovation Center, will add several new positions. With retirements, resignations, and the development of recent programs the profile of the TTC employee group has changed drastically. As leaders, we must ensure that existing and new employees receive appropriate technical training, leadership development and a positive work environment. Happy employees are the key to a successful organization.

Person(s)/Area(s) Responsible

- Executive Director-Textile Technology and Fiber Innovation Centers
- Director-Textile Technology Center
- Vice President of Fiber Innovation and Facilities Development

Relation to Strategic Plan

- Strategic Priority #4 Organizational Development
 - Strategic Goal #4: Gaston College is committed to continuous improvement through organizational and employee development.

Action Items to Meet Initiative

- Develop a set protocol of onboarding info as it relates to TTC in collaboration with TTC leadership and Kimbrell Campus administrative.
- Schedule more campus wide meetings consistently with all lab areas. Work with campus administration to schedule meeting every other month.
- Provide technical training and cross-training with textile trade associations, standard organizations, and equipment vendors.

Success Criteria

- Hold at least 5 campus wide meetings for the fiscal year 2024-2025
- Offer at least two technical seminars/conferences (webinars or in-person) for Process and Testing Lab personnel during the fiscal year

- Work with Kimbrell Campus admin to create a formal document with basic onboarding steps for new TTC/FIC Employees

Assessment Results

The Textile Technology Center (TTC) made measurable progress toward advancing Strategic Priority #4 by implementing new communication strategies, onboarding procedures, and professional development opportunities tailored to a changing employee base. These efforts reflect a commitment to continuous improvement, inclusive culture, and organizational development.

Key Outcomes:

1. Campus-Wide Communication and Engagement

- Four campus-wide meetings were held during the 2024–2025 fiscal year, providing updates, addressing concerns, and promoting cross-departmental collaboration.
- Area staff meetings also increased in frequency depending upon the needs, priorities and areas of concern
- Electronic updates were created to help keep staff in the loop when in-person staff meetings were not available

2. Onboarding and Internal Development

- A draft onboarding notebook was developed by the Kimbrell Campus administration team. It outlines key contacts, protocol for accounts payables, receivables and more.

3. Technical Training and Professional Development

- Staff participated in several development opportunities:
 - AATCC virtual training on textile testing standards
 - Virtual laboratory safety training

Next Steps for Improvement:

- Improve internal documentation and procedures for lab and process personnel
- Technical and vendor-specific training needed for staff in the new fiscal year
- Evaluate the effectiveness of training through post-session surveys and informal feedback.
- Continue to improve meeting consistency and explore anonymous feedback tools to surface concerns or ideas from staff.

Use of Results for Continuous Improvement

Expand Technical Training and Professional Development

Observation: Exceeded goal of two technical training events; positive outcomes noted. However, not all staff members take advantage of training opportunities

Improvement Actions:

- Develop an annual professional development day, including mandatory and elective training tracks.
- Collaborate with educators, consultants, and vendors to create an open technical training at least 2 per fiscal year.

Strengthen Campus-Wide Communication

Observation: Four out of five targeted meetings were held; staff feedback was positive. There are still improvements needed in sharing college-wide updates to TTC staff, discussing areas of improvement internal procedures and consistency in meeting regularly.

Improvement Actions:

- Establish a standing calendar for bi-monthly meetings for the entire fiscal year and assign a rotating facilitator to promote shared ownership amongst TTC leadership.
- Implement short, anonymous post-meeting surveys to capture feedback and improve relevance of future agendas.
- Continue to utilize e-newsletter updates summarizing key updates, milestones, and recognitions when in-person meetings are not possible

Matrix of Strategic Plan Initiatives and Unit Plan Goals

Strategic Initiative Number	Strategic Initiatives	Administrative Services	Academic Affairs	Ed Partnerships and Enrollment Management	Institutional Effectiveness	Student Services	Development Office	Economic and Workforce Development	Finance, Operations, and Facilities	Marketing	Textile Technology Center
1.1	Implement the College's Strategic Enrollment Plan designed to increase student enrollment and FTE.			X		X		X			
1.2	Increase College-Now program enrollment and the number of graduating seniors in Gaston and Lincoln counties that enroll at Gaston College after high school graduation.			X							
1.3	Increase the number of Foundation scholarships and the number of students receiving Foundation scholarships.					X	X				
1.4	Develop a comprehensive marketing and outreach strategy to effectively promote the College's programs and services to potential students, employers, and community partners in Gaston and Lincoln Counties.		X								
1.5	Implement proactive and targeted outreach activities to engage prospective special populations who have			X							

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	shown interest in attending Gaston College but have not yet enrolled.										
1.6	Launch outreach campaigns to raise awareness about the importance of basic skills education for adults and encourage individuals to pursue learning opportunities.								X		
1.7	Implement the College's Marketing and Communication Plan								X		X
2.1	Implement strategies for continuous improvement on each of the North Carolina Community College System Performance Measures for Student Success.		X						X		
2.2	Develop and regularly update academic and workforce development programs to respond to the needs of the local job market and other State initiatives (Example: MyFutureNC, pre-apprenticeships)		X						X		
2.3	Expand course offerings and flexible scheduling options to accommodate diverse student needs, including dual enrollment students,		X						X		

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	working adults, and non-traditional learners (Example: Basic Skills).										
2.4	Expand opportunities for international and cross-cultural experiences for students and faculty		X								
2.5	Identify and scale best practices to promote student engagement, enrich learning opportunities, and increase credential completions.	X	X			X		X			
2.6	Promote research and scholarly activities among students to showcase student skills and achievements.		X			X					
2.7	Implement initiatives to close achievement gaps among different student demographics.		X			X					
2.8	Continue implementation of the College Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), Path to Potential (P2P) – A Case Management Advising Model.					X					
2.9	Increase the availability and usage of student support services; such as, mental health services,					X					

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	learning resources (Writing Center, tutoring, etc.), Mo's Pantry, and the student emergency fund.										
2.10	Increase the number of Foundation scholarships and the number of students receiving Foundation scholarships.						X	X			
2.11	Increase awareness of and participation in virtual and in-person student life activities and programming initiatives.					X			X		
3.1	Strengthen existing and develop new strategic partnerships with local businesses, industries, public safety agencies, and community organizations to foster mutually beneficial relationships that support workforce training, internships, and job placement opportunities for students.										
3.2	Strengthen partnerships with four-year colleges and universities and K-12 schools to support student success and career readiness.		X					X			X

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3.3	Increase the number of internal and external participants, including alumni, in fundraising events.	X					X				
4.1	Enhance talent acquisition processes with an emphasis on keeping the college competitive and attracting talent from diverse backgrounds that is more reflective of the student population.	X							X		
4.2	Enrich the learning and working environment by providing a welcoming and inclusive college community.	X							X		X
4.3	Provide professional development to enhance personal and professional growth and success.	X							X		X
4.4	Enhance college-wide communication.	X			X				X		X
4.5	Evaluate opportunities, resources, and programs to support work-life balance.	X									
5.1	Explore alternative funding sources and investment strategies.	X	X				X				

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5.2	Strengthen our financial performance, controlling costs, and exploring new and innovative ways to invest in our strategic priorities, while maintaining a commitment to the highest ethical standards.	X							X		
5.3	Implement the College's Strategic Enrollment Plan designed to increase student enrollment and FTE.			X		X		X			
5.4	Develop more high tier course offerings that lead to industry recognized credentials that meet NC's MyFutureNC goals and local industry demand.							X			
5.5	Identify requested College equipment to be funded through direct contributions or in-kind gifts through the Gaston College Foundation.						X	X			
5.6	Steward new businesses to support the Gaston College Foundation through sponsorships and/or program donations.						X				

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5.7	Increase the availability of resources for Mo's Pantry and the student emergency fund by securing more support from individuals and organizations.						X				
5.8	Increase the number of internal and external participants in fundraising events.						X				
5.9	Increase the number of new endowed funds to support scholarships and other College initiatives.						X				
5.10	Develop a capital campaign to supplement the health sciences building expansion.								X		
5.11	Create an annual giving program to generate unrestricted support to Gaston College.						X				
6.1	Evaluate safety and security infrastructure and continue to support initiatives to provide a safe and secure working and learning environment.	X				X		X	X		
6.2	Evaluate space allocation to optimize operational effectiveness.							X	X		
6.3	Continue to invest in information technology to enhance systems and services.						X	X	X		

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6.4	Evaluate landscape master plan and establish implementation priorities.								X		
6.5	Launch the development of the health sciences building.								X		