# Message from the President

In December of 2012, SUNY Sullivan began engaging hundreds of participants in the process of *Appreciative Inquiry*, a collaborative and positive practice that provided a platform for the voices of many of the college's constituencies. The input gathered has informed SUNY Sullivan's Strategic Planning and Institutional Assessment committee (SPIA), which recommended its resulting strategic planning framework with SUNY Sullivan's Board of Trustees at a retreat held with the college's executive management team on May 31st and June 1st, 2013.

With this integrated input, the Board drafted a version of a Strategic Plan that was further revised in collaboration with SPIA in June, culminating in the presentation of the plan to the Faculty Council during a special meeting on July 11th, 2013.

This 2013-2018 Strategic Plan, along with our new Mission Statement, spotlights a return to excellence in all that we do. Our aspirations in this regard range from practical to idealistic, and will steer our efforts over the course of the next five years. The plan outlines the SUNY Sullivan values that reflect the tone and climate of our institution: a safe, pleasant, and sustainable campus where great faculty and professional students interact; an emphasis on community, and, most importantly, the desire to honor and celebrate student achievement.

This is a general map for reaching our strategic success, intentionally designed with a level of generality that will avoid impinging upon necessary freedoms needed to effectively respond to the challenges of student success, community building, fiscal and campus sustainability. The specifics of our work will be implemented, documented, measured at various unit levels, and will feed and enliven the broader plan contained here.

College personnel at all levels will be held accountable for their roles in moving strategic directions forward, including honest, data-based, assessments of progress along the way. Faculty will strive to improve student success and completion in new ways. Administration will allow pedagogies of risk and assist with educational trials and errors. Student services staff and faculty will work to create a vibrant, engaging campus setting for both students and community. All will work to maintain program quality, develop and initiate programs in emerging economic clusters, and make difficult decisions on program relevance in a timely manner to ensure that students and the county benefit from the certificates and degrees earned at SUNY Sullivan. Budget planning and stewardship will also be of utmost importance in all regards, as we appreciate and look to sustain and build our resources toward the best possible future for SUNY Sullivan.

SUNY Sullivan provides higher education that leads to a variety of individual achievements, from applied degrees that lead quickly to satisfying careers, to certifications, and university transfers. We aspire to expand our outreach and provide personal enrichment opportunities through our Community Leaning department – education designed to inspire the minds, improve the health, and lift the spirits of residents who are not seeking credit or degree options.

Good learners are at the root of quality higher education, as are good educators who focus on the individual learner, their thinking processes, and cognition. Targeting educational excellence for each learner and every educator may be idealistic, but our commitment to such excellence shall endure, as will SUNY Sullivan's commitment to the communities we deeply care for and serve.

Sincerely,

Karin Hilgersom, Ph.D.
President, SUNY Sullivan

**SUNY Sullivan Strategic Plan**

**2013-2018**

**Mission**

SUNY Sullivan provides programs and resources that educate, inspire, and empower students and the broader community. Through excellence in teaching and learning, we prepare students for a diverse and interconnected world, and we support positive economic and social change within Sullivan County and beyond. We model sustainable actions and promote socially, environmentally, and economically responsible citizenship through an overarching culture of excellence.

**Vision**

SUNY Sullivan is a first choice college for the communities it serves. The College is highly valued as a major contributor to cultural and intellectual enrichment, to the workforce, and as a facilitator of economic and sustainable development of the county.

**We value:**

- **Overall Excellence** – Achievement, success, and empowerment
- **Access** – Expansive educational opportunity
- **Engagement** – Passion, action, and reflection
- **Transformation** – Creativity, critical inquiry, and service
- **Collaboration** – Community, transparency, and partnership
- **Resilience** – Assessment, accountability, and adaptability
- **Sustainability** – In education, operations, and administration
- **Holistic Wellness** – Safety, health, and well-being
- **Respect** – Integrity, diversity, and generosity
- **Responsibility** – Stewardship of all resources and types of capital

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**Strategic Directions:**

1) Improve student success and completion.

2) Foster a vibrant, student-centered campus.

3) Serve as a valued resource (civic, educational, and economic) for the communities in Sullivan County.

4) Offer a variety of relevant programs that meet the needs of our students, community, state, and the world.

5) Ensure financial solvency.

6) Maintain and grow resources in sustainable ways.

**Objectives of the Strategic Directions:**

Each of the Strategic Directions was delineated through the use of Objectives.  Further, Objectives will be aligned with strategic priorities at the department/unit level. These priorities will become operational and actionable elements of the SUNY Sullivan 2013-2018 Strategic Plan.

1) **Improve student success and completion.**

> Objective 1.1—Provide students with rigorous standards via teaching and learning excellence.

> Objective 1.2—Support the continuous improvement of teaching pedagogy and content expertise.

> Objective 1.3—Incorporate sustainability as a programmatic and curricular theme.

> Objective 1.4—Provide high-quality student support through tutoring, advising/mentoring, and information services via the library and technology services.

> Objective 1.5—Improve student retention and progress toward certificate/degree completion and transfer.

2) **Foster a vibrant, student-centered campus.**

> Objective 2.1—Provide transformative academic experiences beyond the classroom (service learning, learning communities, college/community lectures and events).

> Objective 2.2—Teach the value of diversity and diverse perspectives.

> Objective 2.3—Provide positive personal enrichment experiences.

> Objective 2.4—Cultivate an interactive, safe, beautiful, and sustainable campus environment for commuter and resident students.

3) **Serve as a valued resource (civic, educational, and economic) for the communities in Sullivan County.**

> Objective 3.1—Expand partnerships leading to service learning and internship opportunities for students.

> Objective 3.2—Bring partners together to assist in the facilitation of economic development.

> Objective 3.3—Expand community learning offerings that enrich individuals from the community.

> Objective 3.4—Make faculty and staff expertise and research capacity available as a resource to address community needs/issues.

4) **Offer a variety of relevant programs that meet the needs of our students, community, state, and the world.**

> Objective 4.1—Maintain and create programs that will align with community and market demand and with our institutional values.

> Objective 4.2 – Redesign curriculum to offer competency-based and/or accelerated options for students.

> Objective 4.3—Identify and pilot alternative and innovative educational delivery systems.

> Objective 4.4 – Expand access to higher education by using off-campus locations.

**5) Ensure financial solvency.**

Objective 5.1—Optimize enrollment through a research-supported, data-driven, coordinated enrollment management plan.

Objective 5.2—Build consistent revenue streams including grants and fundraising.

Objective 5.3—Improve the effectiveness and efficiency of college operations.

Objective 5.4—Use institutional program/unit assessment results to inform planning and budgeting.

Objective 5.5—Grow the fund balance/reserve.

**6) Maintain and grow resources in sustainable ways.**

Objective 6.1 — Expand upon Human Resources (HR) practices that will assist in the recruitment, retention, and professional growth of employees.

Objective 6.2 --- Implement and advertise the SUNY Sullivan Sustainability Plan, which includes strategies relating to education, operations, and administration.

Objective 6.3 — Implement a detailed facilities management plan including both preventative and on-going maintenance.

Objective 6.4 — Accelerate rotation and replacement schedule for information and communications technologies.

**Definition of terms**

**Mission** – The mission statement answers the basic question of why the organization exists and describes the needs the organization was created to fulfill. Without the guidance of a mission statement, programmatic priorities are difficult to establish. The mission statement provides direction when the organization must adapt to new demands. Attention to mission helps the institution adhere to its primary purpose and serves as a touchstone for decision making during times of conflict.

**Vision**—A vision statement describes what an organization wants to become and how the future will look if the organization achieves its Mission.

**Values**—Values represent principles that serve as the foundation for our mission and goals.

**Baseline**—A baseline establishes the current or historical performance on a metric.

**Benchmark**—A benchmark offers a comparison to an appropriate cohort group or national standard on a metric.

**Target**—A target is SUNY Sullivan's goal including a timeline related to the metric.

**Strategic Direction**—Strategic direction is an overarching statement that implies both action and direction and which connect to the mission and values of SUNY Sullivan.

**Objective**—A specific action statement that works toward achieving a goal that can be measured.

**Indicator**—An indicator defines the item that will be measured and will ideally show progress toward achieving a goal or objective.

**Priority**—A priority is a specific strategy that will promote the success of an objective and thus the strategic direction within which that objective lies. Priorities are often strategies set at the level of a department or unit, may require additional resources to implement, and will contain measurable outcomes and results.

**Appendix: Strategic Planning Process**

This strategic plan document is the product of one step of a four-phase strategic planning process. As depicted in the accompanying graphic, the four steps of the strategic planning process are:

**Phase 1: Strategic Thinking**

During the strategic thinking phase, the Strategic Planning and Institutional Assessment (SPIA) team:

- Conducted an environmental scan. The purpose of the scan was to identify political, economic, social/technological, and demographic trends affecting SUNY Sullivan in the next 3-5 years. This research included a survey soliciting input from faculty and staff.
- Reviewed the college's mission, vision, and values – This review was undertaken in collaboration with both the Teaching, Learning, Mission and Goals Committee of the Faculty Council and the Board of Trustees.
- Utilized an Appreciative Inquiry process to identify the capacity, needs, and directions of the college moving forward as a contributing member of the greater community. The process included faculty, staff. Student and community forums.

The results of Phase 1 (the Strategic Thinking) were shared with the board and campus community before moving on to Phase 2.

**Phase 2: Direction and Goal Development**

SPIA worked with the Executive Council, Cabinet, Academic Council and faculty council to draft strategic goals/priorities to begin Phase 2 of the strategic planning process. This draft was used by the board of trustees in a strategic planning retreat. The board made revisions to the goals and objectives, and asked SPIA to develop metrics for the revised goals and objectives. SPIA developed a metrics matrix aligned to the objectives, and the narrative and metrics matrix went through an iterative process of revisions involving SPIA, the board, and the faculty and staff before the final narrative and metrics matrix was approved by the board. That approved document is this strategic plan.

**Phase 3: Implementation and Integration**

Phase 3, Implementation and Integration, focuses on integrating the annual operational plan and budget with the strategic plan. As noted in the strategic planning process graphic, there are five steps to developing an operational plan that is aligned to the strategic plan. These are:

1. Institutional, administrative and academic assessment – The first step in developing an annual operational plan is a review of the institutional, administrative and academic assessments for the prior year (see Phase 4, Monitoring and Evaluation, for more information on the assessment process). The assessment review informs the revision of the strategic plan as necessary, and the identification of focus areas for the coming year.
2. Identify focus areas for the year – The assessment review is a primary source of information used in identifying the focus areas for the operational budget for the coming year. This step recognizes that the College has limited resources, and not all actions can be undertaken at once or with the same sense of urgency and importance.
3. Budget priorities – The strategic plan and the focus areas inform the development of the budget priorities for the year. The budget priorities are used to develop the budget templates for the year which are the basic tool used by divisions and departments to develop their proposed operating budget for the year.
4. Division and department level goals and action plans – The divisions and departments review the objectives in the strategic plan, the focus areas for the year, and the budget priorities with to propose unit level projects and actions that support the strategic objective, contribute to the focus area and align with the budget

priorities. The department and division proposals include metrics for assessment, target dates for actions, and assigned responsibility. The resources required to complete these proposed projects and actions are the basis for the operating budget for the year submitted by each division and department.

5. Resource allocation – The division and department proposed budgets are reviewed and discussed by the cabinet and executive committee. The result of these reviews is a consolidated College budget that is submitted to the board, county and state for approval.

The appendix includes the timeline for the development of the operational plan integrated with the annual budget.

**Phase 4: Monitor and Evaluate**

Phase 4, Monitor and Evaluate, provides a process for assessing, adjusting and refining the College's strategy as it progresses. The process involves multiple entities (board, executive committee, cabinet, SPIA, departments and divisions), focused on three sets of metrics (operational, strategic, and institutional), and operating in three time frames (monthly, semi-annual/semester, and annual).

*Metrics*

Three sets of metrics are used in Phase 4. These are:

- Operational Metrics – The operational metrics are those used to monitor the implementation and progress of the operational/annual plan. They are embedded in the department and division action plans. They are reviewed by departments and divisions on an ongoing basis, and by SPIA and the executive council on a monthly basis.
- Strategic Metrics – The strategic metrics are those used to monitor progress toward achievement of strategic objectives while assessing the continued validity of those strategies and objectives. They are contained in the metrics matrix that is a part of the strategic plan. They are reviewed by SPIA, the executive council, the cabinet and the board on a semi-annual and/or semester basis. These strategic reviews are a key part of a campus dialogue on progress in implementing the strategic plan. The end-of-year review informs the development of the next year's operational plan.
- Institutional Metrics – The institutional metrics are a limited set of metrics that provide a dashboard for institutional performance. SUNY Sullivan is participating as a beta site in the implementation of the Voluntary Framework of Accountability (VFA), a national project of the American Association of Community Colleges designed to develop a set of appropriate measures to determine how well community colleges are serving students. The VFA metrics, supplemented by two or three financial measures, will be reviewed by the board, executive committee and SPIA on an annual basis. An overview of the VFA metrics is included in the appendix.

*Roles and Responsibilities*

As noted above, numerous entities play a part in Phase 4 of the strategic planning process. The primary players and their roles and responsibilities are as follows:

- Board of Trustees – The board sets the strategic direction for the College, delegates to the president responsibility for implementation, and formally monitors progress on the strategic plan on a semi-annual/semester basis. It also reviews institutional performance on an annual basis. Its annual reviews inform any modifications to the strategic plan. The board plays a key role in communicating to the community about the strategic plan.
- Executive Committee (EC) – The EC plays a critical role in articulating the strategic directions and objectives. It defines the annual focus areas and sets budget priorities. EC also consolidates the department and division's budget requests into an annual operational plan and budget. It monitors the implementation of the operational plan and makes adjustments in resource allocations and assignments as necessary to

maintain progress. The EC is responsible for revising the operational and strategic plan as necessary in response to the semi-annual/semester and annual reviews. It also reports to the bard on institutional performance.

- Strategic Planning and Institutional Assessment Team (SPIA) – SPIA has primary responsibility for facilitating the strategic planning process, drafting strategic plan documents, monitoring the three levels of assessment (operational, strategic and institutional), and documenting and communicating the progress of the strategic plan. It may recommend and undertake special projects to enhance the assessment process and ensure the successful implementation of the strategic plan. EC works closely with the curriculum committee on the assessment of student learning and identifies issues in implementation and recommends changes in the operational and strategic plans to the EC.
- Department and Divisions – Departments and division are responsible for developing and implementing operational plans that contribute to the successful achievement of the strategic objectives, identified focus areas and budget priorities. They develop staff objectives based on the department and division objectives, and monitor progress in implementing department and division objectives on a monthly basis.

**Communication**

Engaging and keeping the campus community informed of progress is a critical part of the strategic planning process. There are feedback loops for communicating to the campus community at multiple points throughout the process (see the strategic planning process graphic). Moving forward, there are three points at which campus communication is particularly important: (1) during the development of the annual operating plan, (2) during the semi-annual/semester review, and (3) during the end-of-year assessment.

**SUNY Sullivan Budget Planning Calendar (2013-2014)**

**September/October**—Departments and budget units analyze program costs and recommend changes based upon Year 1 of SUNY Sullivan Strategic Plan and in addition to anticipated changes in expenses and revenues. Departments/units are expected to develop strategies that will yield results and that connect to the strategic plan for the current academic year and for academic year 2014-2015.

**November**—Department Chairs and budget unit managers discuss requests with their respective executive team manager. Such requests can include new positions, changes to existing positions, technology, and facilities improvement requests.

Due date for specific request to executive team, **December 9**—Budget managers forward any new budget requests (2014-2015) to appropriate executive committee member (see worksheet attachments).

**January**—All position requests and changes to existing positions will be reviewed by executive team and with President's Cabinet by January 29. New budget items will be approved (contingent upon Board and County approval) and appropriate **unit leads notified by February 7.**

**February**—All equipment, software/hardware, and facilities request will be discussed with executive committee. Some requests may be considered for purchase and/or facilities enhancements with current year funding. Items tentatively approved for the following budget year will be prioritized and reviewed with President's Cabinet. **Unit leads will be notified of tentative approvals by February 26** and will be given authorization to obtain necessary quotes and/or bids for approved purchases.

**March**—Executive committee will prepare the line item budget for 2014-2015. Budget will be presented for initial review at the March meeting of the Board of Trustees. Budget will also be shared with President's Cabinet and Faculty Council as requested.

**April/May**—Budget is finalized for forwarding to the County and to the SUNY System. President and selected board members meet with County Legislators to share and discuss the Strategic Plan and clear linkages to the 2014-2015 budget.

Note: This budget planning calendar should be used for most additions and changes to unit budgets. However, occasionally there is a need to fund items and temporary positions outside of the standard budget calendar. The executive team is open to such occasional requests that occur outside of the calendar and that have a special justification for doing so.

**Developmental Education Progress Measures**
- % of students referred who attempted their first math, English, or reading developmental education course
- % of students referred who completed highest level math, English, or reading developmental education course
- % of students referred who completed any college level course in math, English, or reading
- % of students referred who completed all developmental education

**Two-Year Progress Measures**
- % of credit hours successfully completed by cohort in the first term
- % of students who reached credit thresholds by end of year two (24 credits for part-time; 42 for full-time)
- % of students who were retained from fall (term one) to their next academic term or completed a formal award;
- % of students who reached year two outcomes as follows:
  - Completed certificate or degree
  - Transferred to a 2-year or 4-year institution
  - Still enrolled at initial institution
- % of credit hours successfully completed by cohort at end of year two

**Six-Year Outcomes Measures** (These outcomes are non-duplicative, mutually exclusive)
- % of students who earned an associate's degree— without transfer
- % of students who earned an associate's degree— with transfer
- % of students who earned an award of less than associate's degree (certificate)—with transfer
- % of students who earned an award of less than associate's degree (certificate)—without transfer
- % of students who transferred to another post-secondary institution, with no degree or certificate
- % of students who were still enrolled during the sixth academic year
- % of students who left institution without an award and without transfer having earned 30 or more semester credit hours (or equivalent)
- % of students who left institution without an award and without transfer having earned less than 30 semester credit hours (or equivalent)

**Career and Technical Education Measures**
- Number of awards in CTE Licensure exam passing rate
- % of CTE students that complete a program (both credit and non-credit) or earned 90 contact hours and are employed with a livable wage
- Median wage growth of CTE students

**Non-Credit Workforce Courses**
- Non-credit workforce course enrollments
- Number of state/industry— recognized credentials
- % of non-credit CTE students that transition from non-credit to credit courses

**Adult Basic Education / GED**
- % of students that completed ABE / GED
- % of ABE/GED students that enrolled in additional education
- % of ABE/GED students that gained employment

# STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

Board & President

Share planning purposes and processes with Board & college constituencies

Strategic Planning Committee

## Strategic Thinking

Institutional Review: Vision, Mission, Institutional Goals and Objectives, Values

← →

SOAR
(Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, Results)
- Team training
- Campus forum
- Student forum
- Community forum

← →

Environmental Scan
(External and Internal)

## Direction and Goal Development

Board review, comments and feedback from campus constituencies

Develop Strategic Goals & Objectives/Set strategic directions and initiatives

Board review, comments and feedback from campus constituencies

Define/Identify institutional performance measures/indicators/benchmarks

Compile first draft of strategic plan

Board review, comments and feedback from campus constituencies

Finalize Strategic Plan

Board approval, share with campus constituencies

## Implementation and Integration

**Operational Plan
(Annual Cycle)**

Institutional, Administrative & Academic Assessment

Identify focus areas for year

Budget priorities

Division and department level goals and action plans

Resource Allocation

End-of-Year Review

Board, County and State Approval of budget

Communicate plan to campus constituencies

Mid-Year

## Monitor and Evaluate

Monitor Implementation and Progress
Revise plans as necessary

Document Annual Results

Communicate with campus constituencies