

PURPOSE OF STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

The purpose of Strategic Directions is to provide a framework for all institutional, divisional and departmental planning.

CONTEXT

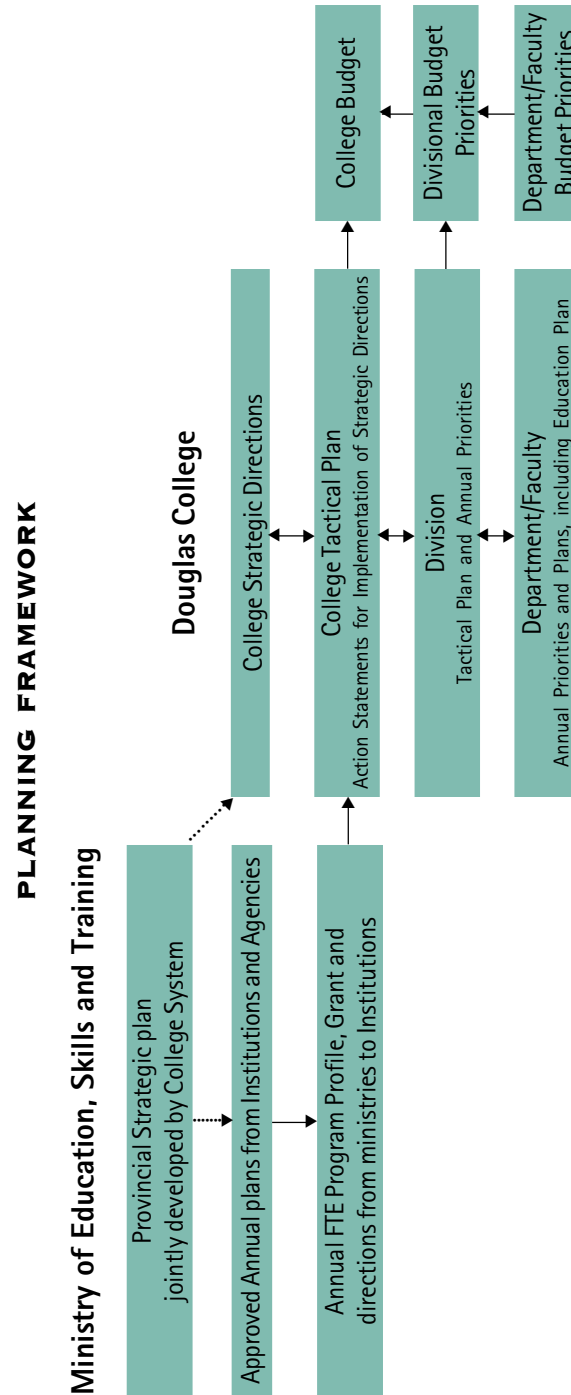
In order to ensure the College remains responsive to the needs of the communities it serves, Douglas College faculty first examined the social, economic and cultural environment of post-secondary education in BC. From this “environmental scan”, the Strategic Planning Steering Committee prepared a context analysis identifying the forces of change most relevant to Douglas College’s future. Over 200 individuals within the College then provided input on how the College might best respond to educational needs in light of the practical constraints all community colleges now face. This six-month process culminated in the adoption by the College Board of the strategic directions presented in this document.

The Strategic Directions are Douglas College’s response to an environment characterized by:

- Growing demand for education.
- Calls for educational reform.
- A focus on outcomes and accountability.
- Financial pressures.
- Intercultural and international impacts.
- Technological change.
- An evolving labor market.

NEXT STEPS

The Strategic Directions are the start of an “evergreen” plan; they will be updated as the needs of our communities, technology and other circumstances evolve. They provide a framework within which College units and bodies will conduct their own strategic, tactical and operational planning. All major decisions within the College take these strategic directions into account. The need for decisions that do not clearly advance strategic directions may indicate that it is time to update this document.



Douglas College

A Community of Life-long Learners

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

NOVEMBER 1997

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

DOUGLAS COLLEGE WILL:

① DEMONSTRABLY INCREASE LEARNERS' ACCESS TO, AND SUCCESS AT, DOUGLAS COLLEGE BY:

Providing enhanced orientation and support services for first-term College learners;

Providing "user-friendly" application, admission, financial aid, registration and course scheduling;

Providing improved assessment and advising for appropriate placement of students according to clear entry standards for each program;

Structuring College curriculum and instruction to enable students to become responsible, self-directed, life-long learners;

Providing maximum recognition of previous formal and informal learning;

Making greater use of effective technology in support of learning and administrative processes.

② CONTINUOUSLY ADAPT COURSES, PROGRAMS AND SERVICES TO MEET THE CHANGING NEEDS OF LEARNERS BY:

Ensuring that every credential has clearly defined learning outcomes, and that assessments and instructional methods are appropriate for those outcomes;

Encouraging innovative approaches for facilitating learning in both traditional and non-traditional settings;

Developing curricula to prepare learners to live in a diverse community and global society;

Ensuring that timely and responsive formative evaluation keeps all College activity relevant and current;

Supporting opportunities for integrated, cross disciplinary learning and the application of learning within, across, and beyond traditional program/discipline boundaries;

Facilitating learning through increased involvement of students and faculty members in program-related service to the community ("service-learning").

③ RECOGNIZE AND VALUE THE DIVERSITY OF LEARNERS AND THE WIDER COMMUNITIES BY:

Reflecting within its teaching/learning processes sensitivity to the needs of equity groups and learners from diverse backgrounds;

Coordinating activities and services which support learners from non-traditional or culturally diverse backgrounds;

Supplementing traditional instruction and services by encouraging, supporting and recognizing innovative delivery strategies;

Strengthening the assessment of diverse community and employer needs.

④ ACTIVELY CONTRIBUTE TO LEARNERS' MOBILITY WITHIN THE POST-SECONDARY SYSTEM BY:

Improving secondary school students' transition to college through formal arrangements for concurrent studies, dual credit courses and linked programs;

Encouraging wider use of block transfer arrangements;

Promoting the portability of credits earned through the flexible assessment of all prior formal and non-traditional learning;

Cooperating with community organizations and employers to assist Douglas College graduates in career entry;

Cooperating with professional associations and employer groups to enhance recognition and transfer of credits between College programs and workplace-based training.

⑤ BUILD COLLEGE-WIDE COMMITMENT TO CHANGE AND ACCOUNTABILITY BY:

Ensuring support for change through involvement and ongoing professional development of employees to support College strategic directions;

Facilitating development of departmental and faculty action plans which are consistent with College strategic directions, values and goals;

Where appropriate, revising governance and administrative structures, College policies, and collective agreements to provide greater flexibility and responsiveness to learners;

Implementing appropriate performance criteria and assessment practices throughout the College to provide evidence of accountability to stakeholders;

Structuring program and service evaluation, annual reporting and institutional research to assess progress in strategic directions and in meeting performance criteria.

⑥ ENSURE ONGOING INSTITUTIONAL VIABILITY BY:

Achieving more cost-effective operations through administrative, service and programming efficiencies and innovative approaches;

Expanding alternative, non-Ministry sources of funding, including cost-recoverable contract training, international education, continuing professional education programs and services, partnerships and fundraising;

Developing strategies and means for administrators, faculty and staff to become more active communicators of College merits to the community at-large;

Achieving College-wide enrolment targets set by the Ministry of Education, Skills and Training.

THE ROLE OF DOUGLAS COLLEGE

The role of Douglas College is to assist individuals to make life changes, enabling learners to move from where they are to where they would like to be in terms of employment, further education and participation in society as informed citizens. The College will ensure the continuing relevance of its programs and courses for meeting changing community needs within the post-secondary system in the Lower Mainland. Douglas College's contribution to this system will be recognizable because of the *focus on the learner* as the ultimate criterion in all administrative and programming decisions. This focus will be evident in:

- Excellent student support systems.
- Basic preparation and skill development (e.g. communications, numeracy, learning skills and computing skills).
- Career preparation, upgrading and retraining (especially within the growing service sectors).
- First and second year of university degree programs (including professional programs as well as liberal arts and sciences).
- Advanced certificates and diplomas.
- Contract and community response training.
- Learning applied to community priorities.
- Continuing education.

DOUGLAS COLLEGE MISSION AND VALUES

MISSION STATEMENT

We commit to enhancing the skills, knowledge and values of life-long learners in meeting their goals. We respond to diverse community needs in a rapidly changing society.

VALUES

DOUGLAS COLLEGE:

Believes that education is significant in improving social and economic circumstances, fostering independence and increasing potential for achievement in life.

Believes that education is a means by which individuals, educational groups and society as a whole can be enriched and grow toward optimum human potential.

Believes that educational opportunities must be accessible to all. Educational activities must take into account widely differing abilities, levels of knowledge and skills and learning styles.

Has a primary concern for, and responsibility to, its students, and is responsive to the educational, professional and developmental needs of the people in its communities through the relevant academic, intellectual and employment standards of our curriculum.

Encourages the values, knowledge, personal resources and skills necessary for individual, social and occupational success.

Provides equality of treatment to students and employees and encourages excellence in teaching, learning and working.

Encourages provincial and national educational leadership.

Models ethically and socially responsible behaviors.

Is accountable for, and responsive to, the consequences of its institutional and educational practices, as measured against appropriate standards.

PROVINCIAL GOALS FOR POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

Douglas College is able to achieve its strategic directions within the context of the provincial government's goals for post-secondary educational institutions. These goals address issues of access, relevance and quality, affordability and accountability. In order to achieve its goals, the Ministry of Education, Skills and Training envisions a post-secondary educational system which is:

FOCUSED ON THE LEARNER

Meeting the needs of a diverse group of learners, encouraging a respect for differences, fostering an understanding of the past and providing the ability to make informed choices for the future.

ORIENTED TO OUTCOMES

With close links to occupational and educational standards, ensuring that all graduates have the skills they need to compete in a continually changing society.

INTEGRATED

Sharing common resources with common credentials and avoiding duplication, in order to enable easy transition among institutions and all forms of non-traditional learning.

FLEXIBLE

Providing customized curriculum and learning opportunities anytime and anywhere, including the workplace, the community and the home.

INNOVATIVE

Incorporating information and learning technologies, developing new partnerships and ensuring that the system is affordable and accountable.