DESERT COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

EDUCATIONAL MASTER PLAN

Palm Desert

February, 2003

Acknowledgments

This plan results from the collaboration of many, including students and staff at the College of the Desert and individuals and groups from communities in the Coachella Valley, the College's service area.

COLLEGE OF THE DESERT
EDUCATIONAL MASTER PLAN

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EDUCATIONAL MASTER PLAN

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This *Educational Master Plan* for College of the Desert (COD) is the result of a year-long effort by COD trustees, staff and students, and members of the Coachella Valley community, COD's service area. In work on the Plan, the usual *evaluation* and *scan* of strategic planning have suggested a number of planning *themes* and *scenarios* from which participants have developed relevant long-term *goals* and *strategies* for COD. And, to frame this work, statements of COD's *mission, values* and *vision* are up-dated.

The emphasis of this Plan is on learners – students, college staff, and members of the Valley community – what they need to develop their potential and the most effective ways to meet those needs. The goals and strategies of this Plan will be implemented and achieved only through the same kind of collaborative effort by learners that went into the Plan's formulation. Despite obvious future resource constraints, this collaborative or "collegial" spirit will enable COD to become truly "learning-centered," serving the educational needs of the Coachella Valley.

Planning Themes

Several important themes emerged during the development of this Plan:

- Robust *population growth* in the Coachella Valley is expected to continue over the next two decades with most of the increase taking place east of COD's Palm Desert campus.

- COD intends to become *a learning-centered institution* and – to that end – has started to develop learning-centered models to deliver instruction, define learning objectives, and explore new assessment techniques.

- COD is positioned to capitalize on the presence in the Valley of California State University San Bernardino (CSUSB) and University of California Riverside (UCR) by ensuring that students acquire quality *lower division competencies*, articulating curricula with CSUSB and UCR, and continuing to be an active partner with these institutions.

- The unique character of the *Valley's labor market* and continued population growth have resulted in substantial job growth even during the current slowing of the economy. This job growth is expected to continue and, indeed, employers report that skilled workers are not always available.

- While the educational challenges and opportunities in the Valley are significant, they can be met if *COD continuously plans* so as to learn and understand community needs and to respond through partnerships, collaboration and direct service.

- COD plays a vital role in the civic, cultural and economic development of the Valley, thereby improving the area's *quality of life*.

Planning Scenarios

Several plausible future scenarios aid COD planning by showing the range of future enrollment consequences that are likely to result as conditions external to the college change and the college's policies are modified. Under most reasonable scenarios, enrollment at COD will double over the next two decades, and it could more than double – thereby substantially improving the community's access to COD – if the college is able to implement many of the delivery strategies in this Plan. Under all scenarios, however, operating budget revenues will continue to be inadequate. Consequently, COD must embrace strategies that will enable it to:

- Operate more economically – without sacrificing, but, indeed, improving quality.
- Increase operating and capital budget resources beyond traditional levels.

Mission, Values and Vision

Because of COD's new learning-centered direction, the college's statements of mission, values and vision have been revised to emphasize that learning:

- Should be available to all Valley residents with the ability to benefit.
- Is a life-long endeavor.
- Requires an intellectually open and nurturing environment.
- Is delivered most effectively by an annual process of planning, assessment and measurable improvement.
- Involves college staff and community members, as well as students.
- Is the gateway to a better future.
- Is essential to continue the Valley's civic, cultural, and economic development.

Goals

The current planning process has identified three long-term goals that College of the Desert needs to achieve.

1. ***Effectively prepare students for further education, work, citizenship and community through learning-centered programs and services.***

2. ***Provide access to quality education for the diverse residents of a rapidly-growing Coachella Valley.***

3. ***Help promote a civil, prosperous, and stimulating quality of life in the Coachella Valley.***

These goals are broad and timeless; their achievement will be a long-term, on-going process for the college. And, while there are no measures for goal-achievement, each of the associated seven strategies for achieving the goals contain actions that are specific so as to serve as benchmarks against which progress toward the goals may be measured.

Strategies

Seven major strategies are proposed in this Plan to help COD achieve its goals. Under these strategies, a COD student would be part of a learning community – with dependable access to counseling, tutoring, learning resources, and other support – perhaps, for example, taking one course at the Palm Desert campus, one at the Eastern Valley center (near the student's home), and one or two courses online – not only increasing the time for learning (because of reduced time for commuting, waiting and other extraneous activities), but also improving the quality and effectiveness of that time.

Compared to today's student, future COD students in this vision have more ready access to learning and personal support, are able to make better use of their time, and also are more "pro-active" in designing and taking their unique programs.

1. ***Adopt policies and practices that enable College of the Desert to become a learning-centered college.***

A "learning-centered college" embraces concepts of quality improvement and a focus on students in which learning is collaborative, contextual, flexible, and employs the useful aspects of information technology. A number of steps will help change COD's culture to that of a learning college, featuring proactive students, learning communities (learner groups), competency-based curricula, improved assessment, and outcome measures as expressed in personal portfolios, experiential learning, and skills standards.

The responsibility for undertaking these steps is shared among students, staff and the community served by COD. This collaborative feature is key to the effort as is the notion of placing learning at the center of all values, planning and activities. At a learning college, decisions are based on asking:

- What should students be learning?
- How do we know students are learning?
- How can we improve student learning?

2. *Identify learning objectives and assess learning outcomes – at course, program and institutional levels – needed by individuals to engage in a rapidly-changing, global society.*

An effective *assessment strategy* completes those steps necessary to help College of the Desert become "learning-centered." The term assessment is used in several contexts and levels, including sections, courses, programs, and the institution. In the class and course, it refers to measuring individual learning outcomes and their use (in a formative way) to improve learning. In aggregate form, assessments can be useful in planning and accreditation. Indeed, COD's next institutional accreditation – the self-study of which is scheduled for 2004 with a site visit in 2005 – will require COD to describe how it is going about this strategy and what has been accomplished.

As COD plans and implements new and more rigorous assessment, gradual development of pilot projects by faculty will recognize the need for early successes and will avoid overloading staff. Among other steps, the effort will develop a structure of:

- Learning goals (broad learning results)
- Learning objectives (specific skills, knowledge and understanding)
- Assessment methods (more than one: tests, interviews, performances)
- Learning outcomes (measured achievement of learning objectives)

3. *Implement an annual Planning Process that determines college priorities and drives the college's "learning" and "delivery" plans.*

While this first planning cycle spanned more than one-year, future cycles should be shortened so as to drive the college's academic and service planning, followed by budget and facilities planning, in that order and within a one-year span. This annual planning process precedes, supports, and is integrated into programming, budgeting and staffing decisions. Key features of this process are:

- Action on selected *program reviews* so as to revise and update curriculum and services.

- Program reviews that include *assessment* of learning outcomes.
- Regular input from *students* through focus groups, forums, and COD's Web site.
- New *Year-end Reports*, in which all college units briefly evaluate their activities and results, and suggest changes.
- Annual *scanning* of relevant external conditions, modification of planning scenarios, and changes to key forecasts.
- Annual *updating* and revision (if needed) of COD's vision, goals, and strategies.

The scan and evaluation (including program reviews) conducted during this first planning cycle indicate the following program revisions are priority considerations for COD:

Expansion
- Agriculture: Horticulture and Turf Management
- Business: Hotel and Restaurant Management
- Business: Entrepreneurial and Small Business Skills
- Culinary Arts
- Early Childhood Education and Child Development
- English as a Second Language (ESL)
- Nursing and Long Term Health Care
- Public Services and Security
- Teacher Preparation

New Program Additions
- Casino Management
- Construction Trades (in specific areas)
- Hospice Care
- Paramedics (extending COD's existing EMT program)
- Retail Food Management
- Teacher Aids
- Women's and Ethnic Studies

While all these program areas are relatively "high demand" – for most there are existing labor scarcities in the Valley – limited short-term resources will require COD to prioritize their implementation. In some cases, extramural resources and partnerships will influence priorities.

4. ***Employ flexible delivery strategies, with an effective balance of physical and virtual methods, partnerships, and community collaboration.***

Conditions and trends confronting College of the Desert call for decisive action on questions about how the college can best serve the residents of the

Coachella Valley, specifically the delivery of learning: when, where, and how it should take place.

While a number of different overall delivery strategies are possible, this Plan advocates that COD's goals will be best achieved through a multi-part strategy to:

- Redesign, refurbish, and develop the existing 160-acre Palm Desert *campus* to accommodate two-thirds of COD's future educational activity, highlighted by a new master plan for the campus and a number of new structures.

- Acquire land for and develop a large, 80-100 acre, Eastern Valley *center*, with facilities for instruction, student services, performing arts, and recreational (casual and intramural) and community activities. By 2010, this center will serve an estimated one-fifth of COD's instruction and services.

- Conduct instruction and services at a variety of *sites* throughout the Valley – high schools, business work-sites, hospital/nursing facilities, public agencies, the Southeast Mega-education center, and the like – operating through collaborations and *partnerships*, some of which, particularly in the Western Valley, are based on contract training, community education, and other self-supporting arrangements. These sites and partnerships should account for around 10% of COD educational activity by 2010.

- Provide for a community/college conference center to include an auditorium of a minimum 500 seats. An endowment has been received for the operational support of this center.

- Develop the infrastructure for and operate a variety of *distance learning* experiences, emphasizing online instruction through a "hybrid" model in which students take programs and courses that are partly on-campus and partly off-campus. Including televised, inter-active video (IVC), and online instruction, this delivery component is planned to increase to 5% or more of the total instructional hours delivered by 2010.

The current condition and location of COD's physical facilities suggests that in order to carry out the delivery strategy proposed in this plan, more-than-the historic level of **capital funding** will be required. Given the demand for State Construction Act funds, COD is likely to receive State funding for just several of about two dozen capital projects that will be required to implement this plan. Consequently, there is a need to consider other resources, including grants, a private capital campaign, and/or a local bond measure for the necessary resources.

5. ***Expand the college's extramural resources to supplement traditional state (public) funding.***

While efforts to secure more state funding will continue, they are problematic. Consequently, this Plan anticipates:

- *A greater COD investment in the marketing and delivery capability of Economic Development, Community Education, and other entrepreneurial efforts*

so as to conduct more of the college's programs through contract training or through fee-based instruction (with financial aid for those unable to pay).

Other alternatives include:

- *Engaging in partnerships and alliances where resources are shared, thereby reducing COD revenue needs.*

- *Subsidizing the college's work from revenues other than the General Fund – grants, contracts, gifts, donations and bequests.*

When joining partnerships and alliances, COD should cultivate its "competitive advantage," largely by being flexible, quick to action, affordable, accessible, and accountable. In some cases, COD partners will work jointly with the college, committing resources; while in other cases, the partner may simply contribute resources.

The entrepreneurial and regular instructional arms of COD need to closely coordinate their efforts in the pursuit of partners, alliances, and, as community connections are formed, coordinate also with the *College of the Desert Foundation* and *COD Alumni Association* (Street Fair), organizations that together raise substantial sums for COD operations.

6. ***Foster a positive staff environment at COD.***

Education is concerned with the development of human potential and the quality of the human resources that are touched by the endeavor. Strategies described in this plan will be successful only to the degree that the students, faculty and staff of COD are supported and motivated through efforts to develop their full potential.

These efforts involve a number of considerations, among them: campus climate, individual wellness, collegiality, professional development, and recognition of the benefits of diversity. Provisions for staff retirement are changing as well. COD planning should value human resources properly as goals and strategies are identified and resources allocated. This Plan

contains a number of initiatives and activities to accomplish these objectives.

7. ***Gather, analyze and structure information that effectively supports the college's learning, marketing, advocacy, community-relations and overall communications.***

Increasingly, COD's major point of contact with its constituents (students, benefactors, supporters, interested individuals, firms and agencies) in the Valley is its Web site. Consequently,

- *COD's Web site will become increasingly "functional,"*

so that it enables the visitor to be counseled and advised, register, and – through links – take on-line courses, as well as simply view information about COD and its curriculum, services and activities. A fully-functional Web site enables COD to both deliver and market its services in a virtual, as well as physical, way.

Besides the Web site, COD's *marketing* will still take place using traditional communications media – newspapers, radio, television, telephone, direct mail, community meetings, and, importantly, personal contacts – through press releases, fact sheets, brochures, issue papers, talks and other such vehicles.

COD's marketing plan is designed to improve the college's image in the community and to better inform potential students and partners of available learning opportunities. Valid and concise information on COD's performance must be made available for marketing efforts in order to effectively present the college's message.

Evaluation

An evaluation of COD's overall performance was conducted for this planning cycle, using the statements of mission and vision from the college's 2000 Master Plan. This evaluation suggests that:

- When benchmarked against the number and preparation of its entering students, COD *transfers* more students than would be expected, though many transfer to four-year institutions outside California. Those transferring to California State University (CSU) do better (as measured by grades) in upper division than do students who start CSU as freshmen.

- COD does an excellent job of preparing and placing students in *employment* from certain of its programs (Nursing, Administration of Justice and others), but the overall volume of COD's workforce

preparation appears to be below the labor market needs of the Coachella Valley.

- Among students entering COD, one in every five are assessed into college-level English and less than one in every ten into college-level mathematics. The performance of COD students taking *basic skills* courses for credit – just one in every four advancing – is equivalent to that recorded at other California community colleges.

- While COD's *access*, based on enrollments from the Valley's adult populations, is up slightly from 2000 and comparable to the 1990 level, it is below the level recorded two decades ago and substantially below that of other California community colleges.

- While quantitative measures of *student services* are not available, certain observations by students are relevant. It appears that, among other concerns, students are generally unaware of the range of student services offered by COD, could use more counseling, and would prefer more clubs and activities. In addition, services seem too widely dispersed across the Palm Desert campus for most effective functioning.

- In general, COD is growing its programs to *respond to the changing educational needs of the Valley* communities. However, certain programs appear to be too small or growing insufficiently to meet the Valley's needs, and should be examined in the college's new planning and program review process.

- Collaboration and *partnering* with the new CSU San Bernardino campus in the Valley is a major opportunity for better articulation and functioning of COD's transfer program. An alliance with the three major local hospitals has enabled COD to make a needed expansion of its nursing program. Many other opportunities exist for COD partnerships and alliances with both public and private agents in and out-of the Coachella Valley.

Information and analyses for the evaluation in this planning cycle are drawn from a number of sources that contain mostly aggregate and sometimes qualitative data. In future planning cycles, the evaluation gradually should be based on measured learning outcomes – at the class-level, aggregated to programs, then to institution-wide aggregations.

Scan

This "scan" of the environment external to the college covers relevant (to COD planning) events, trends and likely futures – mostly, but not entirely, in the Coachella Valley – with the following categorical highlights:

- *Demographics*
  Robust Valley growth will continue, largely east of Palm Desert, and as the Valley becomes more diverse, the educational needs of residents become more complex.

- *Economics and Jobs*
  The Valley economy is unique and strong; despite a lagging recovery and labor scarcity, and the future appears positive. By contrast, the future of state and national economies appears less certain.

- *Culture and Environment*
  Valley culture is changing and with growth and gaming, issues about the local environment, transportation and quality of life emerge.

- *Public Policy*
  Statewide public policies have weakened California's infrastructure, with a "backlog" estimated by the Center for the Continuing Study of the California Economy (2002) to be over $100 billion in schools, transportation, water, and public facilities. Transportation, housing and fiscal management are major on-going problems, although a number of federal and local policy issues also are of concern to COD.

- *Educational Policies, Practices, and Trends*
  Concerns with student competencies, proper use of learning technologies, and institutional accountability grow and colleges confront new opportunities and challenges. As always, actions by CSU, K-12, and other institutions will impact COD's work.

INTRODUCTION

College of the Desert (COD) has been through a number of planning processes during the past decade. Following an extended four-year process, the COD trustee board adopted, in 2000, a Master Plan that contained a series of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for the college. The KPIs were comprehensive, covering desired processes and outcomes for all of the major functions at COD, but they (KPIs) lacked the priorities needed to facilitate operational planning.

A new chief executive officer was hired at COD in 2001, and knowing that the college's small staff must grow and change to meet the rapidly emerging educational needs of the Coachella Valley, COD's service area, she began planning a number of initiatives and modifications to COD's operations, all designed to improve the college and make it more *learning-centered*.

One of the initiatives was to prepare a new *Educational Master Plan* for the college. This work began in December 2001 with a Plan-To-Plan that outlined a year-long process, learning-centered strategic planning, that would produce a long-term outline of the college's new directions (Appendix A of this Plan). To oversee the project and secure needed community input, an *Educational Master Plan* Committee – composed of community members, and COD staff and students – was established (Appendix B). During 2002, numerous meetings have been held throughout the community to assess information on the college's performance and discuss ways of meeting the educational needs of the Valley (Appendices C and D).

The result of this collaborative work is College of the Desert's *Educational Master Plan: A Learning-Centered Strategy*. In this, the usual evaluation and scan of strategic planning suggests a number of planning themes and scenarios, from which project participants have developed relevant long-term goals and strategies for COD. And, to frame this work, statements of COD's mission, values and vision have been updated. The emphasis is on learners – students, college staff and community members – what they need to develop their potential and the most effective ways to meet those needs.

Many of the needs addressed in this *Plan* are revealed by a general review of the college's current situation. COD is one of 108 public community colleges in California. Located east of Los Angeles and the Inland Empire, this college serves the rapidly-growing Coachella Valley in Riverside County, home to over 300,000 people.

COD is a comprehensive, less-than-baccalaureate college, delivering university transfer, workforce programs, customized business training, and developmental and continuing education each year to more than 10,000 individuals and businesses. Student needs are highly diverse and, as a result,

COD programs range in rigor all the way from pre-collegiate developmental classes to English as a second language (ESL) to highly-skilled job retraining.

COD enrollments have fluctuated over the past three decades, peaking at 11,500 in 1991 and falling during the recession of the early 1990s because of fee increases and budget constraints. College enrollment growth resumed in 1996, but was interrupted again in 1999 when the State Legislature removed the Copper Mountain area from COD's district. During the recent two years, College enrollment has increased once more and is expected – under most reasonable scenarios – to double, from 10,000 to around 20,000 students over the coming two decades. However, the service area population has grown by nearly one-third during the past ten years alone, and, despite its enrollment growth and generally successful programs and services, COD's market penetration – the ratio of college enrollment to service area population – is at its lowest point in three decades. (See Evaluation and Appendix E.)

Serving an area that continues to grow in population and where the "baby-boom echo" has started to emerge from high school (and will continue through most of the coming decade), COD enrollment growth will be substantial (Scan and Appendix F). But, there are important questions:

how many new campuses or centers (sites) will be needed and where?
how much will (should) each of the sites grow – in relation to the main Palm Desert campus: among what kinds of students?
how should the curriculum evolve: what signature programs are needed? how much should be delivered through partnerships and by distance learning?
to what degree should the college seek to even market penetration (access) across its different service area communities and restore access to prior levels?
how should student support services and learning resources evolve to meet the changing needs of learners at COD?
how will COD handle possible energy and water problems?

Other issues of specific importance to COD include:

COD's role as an agent of economic and cultural change in the Coachella Valley
determining labor market needs of the Valley and other areas for which the college trains workers
closing the skills gap between area residents and emerging area jobs
supporting new learning-centered and "active" learning techniques
developing a diverse and well-trained staff
developing facility strategies for diverse area growth

These questions and issues are addressed by the strategies and goals of this *Plan*. The latter will be implemented and achieved only through the same kind

of collaborative effort – among students, COD staff, and community members – that went into the *Plan's* formulation. Despite obvious future resource constraints, this collaborative or "collegial" spirit will enable COD to become truly "learning centered," serving the educational needs of Coachella Valley residents.

PLANNING THEMES

Several important themes emerged during the development of this *Plan*; their character and implications are described here.

• Valley Population Growth, Shift and Diversity

Population growth in the Coachella Valley – the area served by COD – continues to be robust. During the past decade, most of the area's growth occurred among young and Hispanic groups. This pattern is expected to continue over the next two decades with most growth taking place to the east of the Palm Desert campus.

These trends present major challenges to COD in its effort to provide the right kind of quality post-secondary education to Valley residents in a way that will make equal access to quality learning a reality for them.

• A Learning College

COD intends to truly become a "learning-centered" institution, and – to that end – has started to develop learning-centered models to deliver instruction, defining learning objectives – the skills and knowledge required by students to engage in a rapidly-changing, global society – and describing assessment techniques, the ways that learning outcomes may be measured and analyzed for the formative class-level assistance of students, evaluation of programs, and analysis of COD's overall effectiveness.

These efforts are long term and will require COD's commitment to its human resources and their potential – to adequately support learners, faculty, their professional development, and undertake the classroom support and research that will validate the work and lead to improvements. This strategic plan helps by describing appropriate points-of-departure and proper directions for learning-centered efforts.

• Lower Division Competencies

Available evidence suggests that while a lower – than average – number of COD students enroll to take lower division general education classes in order to transfer on to a four-year institution, a higher-than expected number of these students do transfer, and that those transferring to the California State University (CSU) perform well in upper division work. An unusually-high proportion of COD students transfer to institutions outside California, however.

COD has a long history of partnering with CSU San Bernardino, hosting CSUSB's Coachella Valley Center at the COD Palm Desert campus. CSUSB

is beginning a permanent campus in Palm Desert that will provide comprehensive upper division and, eventually, graduate programs. Likewise, the University of California Riverside (UCR) is significantly expanding its presence in the Valley. COD can capitalize on these developments by ensuring that students secure quality lower division competencies, that curricula are effectively articulated with both CSUSB and with UCR, and that all three institutions become active partners, thereby affording significant new higher education opportunities to residents in the Valley.

- **A Changing Valley Labor Market**

The unique character of the Valley's labor market and continued population growth have resulted in substantial job growth even during the current slowing of the economy. This growth is expected to continue and, indeed, employers in certain Valley business sectors report that labor is scarce and many new hires lack necessary skills, knowledge and values for the work.

Apart from a few large and effective programs, COD workforce preparation programs appear to be too small and, in some cases, growing little in the face of increasing industry demand for labor. Efforts by COD to expand and improve such programs are constrained by a lack of public funding. Alternatives include greater use of contract and cost-recovery (where students are able to pay) techniques that, in many cases suggest working partnerships between COD and firms and other agencies in the Valley, thereby leveraging public funds.

- **Continuous, Community-Based Strategic Planning**

The challenges that confront COD in its efforts to serve Valley residents in ways that become evermore learning-centered appear daunting when considered together. Much can be done, however, if the college plans so as to learn and understand community needs and to respond through partnerships, collaboration and direct service. This suggests continuous and strategic efforts in which the most important educational needs of Valley residents are afforded priority as COD resources are planned and allocated. This strategic plan is the beginning of such efforts.

- **Quality of Life in the Valley**

More population and traffic in the Valley imply concerns about pollution, declining air and water quality, and, in general, the quality of life experienced by Valley residents. Events of September 11, 2001 and the past year impose an additional and very different set of concerns than existed before. COD has a role to play in the civic and cultural, as well as economic, development of the Valley, through its programs and the interaction between students, faculty,

staff and other members of the community. Planning should define this role and the strategies to fulfill it.

PLANNING SCENARIOS

One helpful context for COD planning is the use of several plausible scenarios, for which specific conditions may be assumed and from which enrollment and other forecasts can be made. Once basic scenarios are defined, iterations – involving most-likely external conditions and preferred internal policy directions – are constructed as the college refines its vision, goals and strategies during this first planning cycle and subsequently updates and modifies directions during future cycles.

Assumptions for Planning Scenarios

Four scenarios are suggested to begin COD planning, illustrating a broad range of external conditions and possible sets of major policy changes (Chart 1).

- *Scenario A*: general continuation of current policies by COD, together with a relatively moderate recovery from the current downturn by 2003, and continued long-term upward movement of the California economy.

- *Scenario B*: COD policies are like Scenario A, but the 2001-02 slowing of California's economy slips into a significant downturn in 2003, followed by a cycling of the state's economy that is longer in duration and smaller in depth than the typical cycles prior to the 1990s.

- *Scenario C*: like Scenario B, except that the student enrollment fee is increased by one-third in 2003 and 2004, much like the policies of the early 1990s. CSU student fees rise by one-fifth in 2003 and 2004, after which all fees rise by CPI.

- *Scenario D*: like Scenario A, except that COD expands its distance learning and adds a new Eastern Valley center and several improved sites across the Valley between 2005 and 2007, thereby also reducing student costs, particularly for transportation.

Specific features of these scenarios that are summarized in Chart 1 below need to be reviewed carefully and up-dated, as appropriate, for on-going COD planning. An enrollment forecasting model – developed for this *Plan* – accommodates changes in scenario assumptions so that resulting consequences for future COD enrollment, planning strategies, and long-range budgeting may be analyzed.

Scenarios A and B provide a look at differing economic conditions external to the college – A being more "optimistic" than B – while COD policies and delivery strategies remain generally unchanged. Scenario C, by contrast, provides a look at what might happen if the economy does not fully recover,

but instead turns down, and the Legislature reacts much like it did in the face of similar conditions in the early 1990s – to increase student fees dramatically. Finally, a decidedly different future is assumed in Scenario D, where economic conditions begin improving in 2003 – like Scenario A – but, where COD

Chart 1
College of the Desert Planning Scenarios

	A	B	C	D
ECONOMY	turns up In 2003, Cycles	Turns down, cycles	like B	like A
POPULATION	Up by between 2.3% and 3.7% yearly			
UNEMPLOYMENT (RATE)	Cycles around 5%-8%	Cycles between 4%-12%	like B	like A
COST OF LIVING (CPI)	Up by 3%	up by 4%	like B	like A
COLLEGE PRICES (S&LGPI)	Up by 3%	up by 4%	like B	like A
ENROLLMENT FEE (EF)	Stable to 2004, then up by CPI	like A	up 33% in 2003, 04 then up by CPI	like A
OTHER FEES	like EF	like A	like B	like A
STUDENT DIRECT COST	No change	like A	like B	down 5% 2005 07
OPERATING BUDGET	up by around 5% - 6%	up by around 4%	like B	like A
POLICY/PRACTICE	No change	like A	like B	like A
DELIVERY	No change	like A	like B	add DL, center
CSU STUDENT FEES	Like CCs	like A	up 20% in 2003, 2004	like A

expands its distance learning and establishes a large new center and improves other new sites in 2005 and 2007. (Scenario D is predicated on COD's ability to secure substantially more capital funding than it has in the past.)

Implications of Planning Scenarios.

As expected, the planning scenarios produce quite different results. (Estimated future COD enrollments in each scenario are summarized in

Charts 2 and 3, from results of the forecasting model described in Appendix F.)

The Valley's robust growth, relatively constant student costs – COD students are particularly sensitive to changes in the price of college-going – and relatively optimistic economic and budget assumptions in Scenario A result in COD's enrollment doubling, from just over 10,000 in 2002 to over 20,000 fall enrollments by 2019. In this scenario, the college's market penetration would increase from its current level of 41 fall enrollments per 1,000 Valley adults up to 45/1000 by 2010 and to 48/1000 by 2019, above the 1990 level of 40/1000, but below historic peaks of 62/1000 in 1981 and 78/1000 in 1975.

In Scenario B, economic cycles and their resulting implications for COD budgets and Valley unemployment push COD enrollments up rapidly in the short term only to level out toward the end of this decade and fluctuate dramatically during the following ten years. Resulting enrollments, peaking at over 16,000 fall headcount by 2013, would put COD's market penetration at 42/1000 – slightly higher than the current level, but below Scenario A.

The addition of student fees in Scenario C, as expected, results in a significant decline in COD enrollments, that is reversed to some degree at the beginning of the next decade as Valley unemployment rises and budget and fee policies stabilize. Market penetration at COD drops to 31/1000 in 2010, one of the lowest-ever levels at the college. Significant improvements – from the conditions that existed during the last large student fee increase (1992 and 1993) – in information about, and access to, available financial aid could modify this result.

Scenario D results in COD enrollments rising to 17,000 by 2010 and over 20,000 by 2015, with high and substantially improved levels of market penetration. This scenario probably represents the upper bound of COD's future operating possibilities.

The importance of avoiding inconsistent and large student fee changes, like the early 1990s and Scenario C, is obvious: as much as one-third of potential COD enrollment could be deterred by such actions by the end of this decade. And, based on projecting COD's budget history, the assumed COD budget conditions in Scenario A – up by around 5% to 6% annually – would result in about 1,000 more enrollment by 2010 than would the tighter budgets – up around 4% annually – assumed in Scenario B.

Chart 2

Year	COD Adults	% Chg.	Enroll.	A	B	C	D
COD Fall Enrollment: Actual 1980-2001;							
Forecast for Scenarios A. B, C and D 2002-19							
1980	119935		7009				
1981	125765	4.9%	7831				
1982	131972	4.9%	7798				
1983	138276	4.8%	6854				
1984	146016	5.6%	6505				
1985	154214	5.6%	5920				
1986	163691	6.1%	7175				
1987	174716	6.7%	8604				
1988	186986	7.0%	8654				
1989	200974	7.5%	9951				
1990	217272	8.1%	10912				
1991	225601	3.8%	11909				
1992	234320	3.9%	11564				
1993	240591	2.7%	10067				
1994	244528	1.6%	10027				
1995	253444	3.6%	10049				
1996	257876	1.7%	10171				
1997	261106	1.3%	10520				
1998	266771	2.2%	10940				
1999	224906	-15.7%	8617	(CM separate)			
2000	232338	3.3%	9118				
2001	241297	3.9%	9794				
2002	*250205*	*3.7%*		*10280*	*10294*	*10317*	*10280*
2003	*259342*	*3.7%*		*10738*	*10845*	*9630*	*10738*
2004	*268202*	*3.4%*		*11183*	*11705*	*8858*	*11183*
2005	*276551*	*3.1%*		*11531*	*12498*	*9545*	*12251*
2006	*285040*	*3.1%*		*12035*	*12391*	*9346*	*13264*
2007	*294164*	*3.2%*		*12584*	*12248*	*9106*	*14602*
2008	*303202*	*3.1%*		*13148*	*12343*	*9105*	*15228*
2009	*312732*	*3.1%*		*13788*	*12472*	*9132*	*15933*
2010	*322126*	*3.0%*		*14478*	*13455*	*10015*	*16688*
2011	*330947*	*2.7%*		*15430*	*14417*	*10882*	*17701*
2012	*339253*	*2.5%*		*16265*	*15281*	*11657*	*18592*
2013	*347239*	*2.4%*		*17016*	*16082*	*12373*	*19398*
2014	*355112*	*2.3%*		*17137*	*15617*	*11824*	*19573*
2015	*363518*	*2.4%*		*17586*	*15249*	*11366*	*20080*
2016	*371986*	*2.3%*		*18152*	*14925*	*10952*	*20704*
2017	*380621*	*2.3%*		*18803*	*14959*	*10893*	*21414*
2018	*389525*	*2.3%*		*19494*	*14988*	*10827*	*22166*
2019	*398601*	*2.3%*		*20404*	*15369*	*11112*	*23139*

Source: Appendix F.

Chart 3
….insert graph of Chart PS2 – Chart PS3 – here …

Another way of looking at the implications of these future scenarios is to summarize their macro-conditions and results, beginning with the "worst-case" Scenario C in Chart 4.

Chart 4

Highlights of Scenario	*Enrollment Forecast, 2010*	*Difference*	
		#	*%*
Scenario C A **replay of early 1990s** conditions and policies for the COD budget and student fees.	10,015	(base line)	
Scenario B Similar budget policies as C, but with **stable student fees**, rather than large increases.	13,455	3,450	34%
Scenario A **Better operating budget** than B and stable student fees, but without improved capital outlay funding.	14,478	1,023	8%
Scenario D Like Scenario A, but with substantial **improvement in capital outlay funding.**	16,688	2,210	15%

Apart from other differences, improved capital outlay funding, leading to improvements in COD delivery systems and facilities, would add around 2,200 students by 2010. In Scenario D, these delivery strategies, together with relatively optimistic operating budgets result in enrollments and access (market penetration) that bring COD to nearly the level of service it provided the Coachella Valley in the early 1980s:

Chart 5

			Fall Enrollment per 1,000 Adults				
	CACCs	*RCCD*	*COD*				
			Actual	*Sc A*	*Sc B*	*Sc C*	*Sc D*
1980	80	79	58				
1990	68	57	40				
1995	58	49	40				
2000	64	65	37				
2001	67		41				
2002	70		41				
2005				42	45	34	44
2010				45	42	31	52
2015				48	42	31	55

Source: App. F.

While access improves, long-term operating budget problems occur in Scenarios A and D because increasing Valley population will exert enrollment pressures (especially if student costs are reasonably stable) that, given price increases, could far out-pace traditional sources of operating budget revenues. The results in Scenarios A and D are that potential real (price-adjusted) outlays per full-time equivalent student (FTES) decline to between $2,900 and $3,300 by 2010 – levels that likely can't sustain a quality educational package: compensation would be too low to attract competent staff, class loads and sizes too large, and services of all kinds inadequate (Appendix F). (Over the past two decades, COD's operating budget has ranged between $3,500 and $4,500 per FTES in real [price-adjusted] terms, and currently is just under $4,000.) Only in the undesirable Scenario C, where enrollments are relatively stable – leading to dramatic declines in student access to COD – are operating budgets within the historic range.

These scenarios suggest that if COD is to achieve its goals of providing access to quality, learning-centered education for Valley residents, the college must embrace strategies that enable it to:

- Operate more economically – without sacrificing, but, indeed, improving quality.
- Increase operating and capital budget resources over traditional levels.

The specific strategies of this *Plan,* described below, are designed to position COD to pursue the enrollment targets (forecasts) of Scenario D.

MISSION, VALUES AND VISION

Because of COD's new learning-centered direction, the college's statements of mission, values and vision are revised to emphasize that learning.

Mission Statement

College of the Desert is an open door, public community college serving primarily the Coachella Valley. We provide students who have the ability to benefit with the opportunities and encouragement to learn the skills, knowledge and behaviors needed to succeed in their chosen endeavors. We seek to understand and support the educational, economic, ethical, cultural, and civic needs of the diverse population we serve.

We emphasize life-long learning and recognize that it applies as much to ourselves as to our students. We offer a wide range of college and pre-collegiate courses as well as certificates, degrees, and transfer programs. These academic services are designed to fulfill the goals of our students, meet the needs of local employers, and articulate well with four year institutions. We are committed to being the primary provider for fulfilling the vocational education and training needs of business and industry and promoting the economic development of the region. We select and support high quality faculty and staff to provide excellent academic programs as well as effective student and academic support services.

We are committed to an annual process of planning, assessment, and measurable improvement with the goal of providing the best educational opportunities possible for our students. We commit to an intellectually open and nurturing environment that welcomes and appreciates a diversity of ideas and people. We provide the encouragement, means and professional setting for our faculty and staff to achieve our mission of providing a premier choice for higher education.

Vision Statement

.
College of the Desert – an oasis of lifelong learning.

Values Statement

- Students and their educational achievement are our primary concern.
- Educational opportunity for everyone is fundamental.
- Learning is lifelong and requires active and responsible participation.
- Service and commitment to and in partnership with the larger community is valued.
- Community and collegiality are vital to the institution.

- Respect for the diversity of both people and ideas is a strength of the college and a responsibility of its members.
- Our expectations and standards are high for our students and for ourselves.
- The skills and knowledge of faculty, staff and students are valued in seeking continual improvement and accountability.
- Learning fosters growth and development in all aspects of life.
- Identifying the educational and workforce development needs of the business community is important for the college and the economy.

GOALS AND STRATEGIES

COLLEGE OF THE DESERT GOALS and STRATEGIES

GOALS

1. EFFECTIVELY PREPARE STUDENTS FOR FURTHER EDUCATION, WORK, CITIZENSHIP AND COMMUNITY THROUGH *LEARNING-CENTERED* PROGRAMS AND SERVICES.

2. PROVIDE *ACCESS* TO QUALITY EDUCATION FOR THE DIVERSE RESIDENTS OF A RAPIDLY-GROWING COACHELLA VALLEY.

3. HELP PROMOTE A CIVIL, PROSPEROUS, AND STIMULATING *QUALITY OF LIFE* IN THE COACHELLA VALLEY.

STRATEGIES

1. ADOPT POLICIES AND PRACTICES THAT ENABLE COLLEGE OF THE DESERT TO BECOME A *LEARNING-CENTERED* COLLEGE.

2. IDENTIFY LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND *ASSESS LEARNING OUTCOMES* – AT COURSE, PROGRAM AND INSTITUTIONAL LEVELS – NEEDED BY STUDENTS TO ENGAGE IN A RAPIDLY-CHANGING, GLOBAL SOCIETY.

3. IMPLEMENT AN ANNUAL *PLANNING* PROCESS THAT DETERMINES COLLEGE PRIORITIES AND DRIVES THE COLLEGE'S "LEARNING" AND "DELIVERY" PLANS.

4. EMPLOY FLEXIBLE *DELIVERY* STRATEGIES, WITH AN EFFECTIVE BALANCE OF PHYSICAL AND VIRTUAL METHODS, PARTNERSHIPS, AND COMMUNITY COLLABORATION.

5. EXPAND THE COLLEGE'S EXTRAMURAL *RESOURCES* TO SUPPLEMENT TRADITIONAL STATE (PUBLIC) FUNDING.

6. FOSTER A POSITIVE *STAFF* ENVIRONMENT AT COD.

7. GATHER, ANALYZE AND STRUCTURE *INFORMATION* THAT EFFECTIVELY SUPPORTS THE COLLEGE'S MARKETING, ADVOCACY, COMMUNITY-RELATIONS AND OVERALL COMMUNICATIONS.

Goals

This *Plan* identifies three long-term goals that College of the Desert needs to achieve. These goals are broad and timeless – their achievement will be a long-term, on-going process for the college. And, while there are no measures for goal-achievement, each of the associated seven strategies for achieving the goals contain actions that are specific so as to serve as benchmarks against which progress toward the goals can be measured.

1. **EFFECTIVELY PREPARE STUDENTS FOR FURTHER EDUCATION, WORK, CITIZENSHIP AND COMMUNITY THROUGH *LEARNING-CENTERED* PROGRAMS AND SERVICES.**

COD prepares individuals for a variety of life and career objectives. To do this more effectively, the college increasingly becomes learning-centered where the needs, capabilities, and learning styles of individuals are carefully assessed and nurtured and their learning goals are realized.

2. **PROVIDE *ACCESS* TO QUALITY EDUCATION FOR THE DIVERSE RESIDENTS OF A RAPIDLY-GROWING COACHELLA VALLEY.**

COD is committed to providing reasonable access to learning opportunities for all adults in the Coachella Valley, in spite of time and transportation difficulties and the uncertain goals and limited resources of many residents.

3. **HELP PROMOTE A CIVIL, PROSPEROUS, AND STIMULATING *QUALITY OF LIFE* IN THE COACHELLA VALLEY.**

Besides serving the learning needs of Coachella Valley individuals, thereby advancing the quality of life in the Valley, COD behaves as a good neighbor, taking responsibility for its impact on the community and becoming an active partner in community improvements, celebrations and overall development.

Strategies

Under strategies contained in this plan, a COD student would be part of a learning community – with dependable access to counseling, tutoring, learning, and other support resources – perhaps, for example, taking one course at the Palm Desert campus, one at the Eastern Valley center (near the student's home), and one or two courses online. With a portable notebook, hand-held device, or other flexible computer-access, this student is able to

study and work on classes at any number of locations: campus, center, Web-access center, work, child-care, and home – not only increasing the time for learning (because of reduced time for commuting, waiting and other extraneous activities), but also improving the quality and effectiveness of that time.

Compared to today's student, future COD students in this vision have more ready access to learning and personal support, are able to make better use of their time, and also are more "pro-active" in designing and taking their unique programs. COD policies would include, for *all* students:

- Development of and commitment to a personalized "learning contract."
- Participation in a "learning community."
- Access to "active learning" where lecture is combined with research, problem-solving, discussion and group or team-work.
- Access to training and facilities in information technology (IT). With labs, laptop, notebook, or handheld devices available, and access to the Internet, *every* student can demonstrate an IT-literacy competency, among their other outcomes.
- Adequate financial aid and access to support services.
- Multi-measure assessment of acquired competencies and their certification in a credible and useful way.

Each of the strategies in this Plan is directed toward achieving one or more COD goals, given the College's stated mission, values, and vision. Strategies are described below, with planned actions, their timing and those responsible.

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1. ADOPT POLICIES AND PRACTICES THAT ENABLE COLLEGE OF THE DESERT TO BECOME A *LEARNING-CENTERED* COLLEGE.

A "learning-centered college" embraces concepts of quality improvement and a focus on students in which learning is collaborative, contextual, flexible, and employs the useful aspects of information technology. A number of steps are suggested for changing COD's culture to that of a learning college, featuring proactive students, learning communities (learner groups), competency-based curricula, improved assessment, and outcome measures expressed in a variety of ways.

For a community college, being learning-centered typically means identifying and implementing:

- A *curriculum structure* that is need- and assessment-based in an effective, contextual sequence.

- *Learner support services and resources* that also are need-based and are designed for the unique and varying situations of the college's diverse students.

- *Delivery systems* that are supported by results of research on learning and that utilize the best of group and collaborative learning (often in "learning communities"), technology, and contextual, job- or task-based problem-solving, in a flexible balance of actual, simulated and virtual settings, on- and off-campus, in- and out-of-class.

- *Learner objectives* to assess learners' progress – to assist them – and to measure and articulate the college's performance for the advocacy and marketing of its products and services.

Actions and Responsibilities for becoming Learning-Centered.

The responsibility for undertaking these steps is shared among students, staff and the community served by COD. This collaborative feature is key to the effort as is the notion of placing learning at the center of all values, planning and activities.

At a learning college, decisions are based on asking:

- What should students be learning?
- How do we know students are learning?
- How can we improve student learning?

To become a learning college, COD is undertaking a number of steps to:

- Conduct institutional assessment and planning annually.
- Continue planning for program assessment.
- Expand existing learning communities.
- Develop a comprehensive faculty development plan.
- Implement a "First Year Success" program to provide learning skills training to virtually all students.

The steps that COD or any other college undertakes to become a "learning college" will be developed as uniquely its own, but involve

- A substantial commitment to improving learning.
- Investing in staff professional development.
- Using newly-designed learning spaces and active-learning classrooms.
- A long-term, on-going effort.

2. IDENTIFY LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND *ASSESS LEARNING OUTCOMES* – AT COURSE, PROGRAM AND INSTITUTIONAL LEVELS – NEEDED BY INDIVIDUALS TO ENGAGE IN A RAPIDLY-CHANGING, GLOBAL SOCIETY.

An effective *assessment strategy* is one of those steps necessary to make College of the Desert "learning-centered." The term assessment is used in several contexts and levels, including sections, courses, programs, and the institution. In the class and course, it refers to measuring individual learning outcomes and their use (in a formative way) to improve learning. In aggregate form, assessments can be useful in planning and accreditation. Indeed, COD's next institutional accreditation – the self-study for which is scheduled for 2004 with site visit in 2005 – will require COD to describe how it is going about this strategy and what has been accomplished.

As COD plans and implements new and more rigorous assessment, gradual development of pilot projects by faculty will recognize the need for early successes and will avoid overloading staff. Among other steps, the effort will develop a structure of:

- Learning goals (broad learning results)
- Learning objectives (specific skills, knowledge and understanding)
- Assessment methods (more than one: tests, interviews, performances, etc.)
- Learning outcomes (measurement of the achievement of learning objectives)

Among the key skills and knowledge that will make up COD learning objectives are:

- Communications: reading, writing, listening and speaking
- Problem-solving
- Reasoning, critical-thinking and logic
- Work and study attitudes
- Ethics
- Use of computer and telecommunications devices
- Specific programmatic skills

To further this effort, COD needs to address a number of key questions:

- What is the appropriate blend of "embedded" and independent assessment methods?
- Should the college provide model methods, have the faculty design their own methods, or both?
- At what level – class, course, program, institutional – should "value-added" (outcome less input) measurement take place?

- How is assessment effectively separated from faculty evaluation?
- How is assessment effectively incorporated into program review/evaluation?

Actions and Responsibilities for Learning Objectives and Outcomes

The identification of learning objectives and development of assessment methods to measure learning outcomes is primarily the responsibility of faculty, but they must be supported in this effort by other staff and by the resources of the college. Among specific actions COD is taking are to:

- Continue and expand staff orientation and development.
- Use the data produced by assessment for multi-level – course, program, and institutional – evaluation.
- Develop a learning assessment handbook.
- Observe similar efforts at assessment by staff at other community colleges.
- Convene an on-going team to oversee these efforts.

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3. IMPLEMENT AN ANNUAL *PLANNING* PROCESS THAT DETERMINES COLLEGE PRIORITIES AND DRIVES THE COLLEGE'S "LEARNING" AND "DELIVERY" PLANS.

The process for this strategic plan was set forth in a "Plan to Plan" document and conducted according to the steps outlined in Appendix A, relying heavily on the usual evaluation and scan, and substantial student, staff and community input.

While this first planning cycle spanned more than one-year, future cycles should be shortened so as to drive the college's academic and service planning, followed by budget and facilities planning, in that order and within a one-year span, as depicted in Chart 6.

This annual planning process precedes, supports, and is integrated into programming, budgeting and staffing decisions. Key features of this process are:

- Review and action on selected *programs* so as to update curriculum and services.
- Regular input from *students* through focus groups, forums, and COD's Web site.
- New *Year-end Reports*, in which all college units briefly evaluate their activities and results, and suggest changes.

- Annual *scanning* of relevant external conditions, modification of planning scenarios, and changes to key forecasts.
- Annual *updating* and revision (if needed) of COD's vision, goals, and strategies.

The scan and evaluation (including program reviews) conducted during this first planning cycle indicate the following program revisions are priority considerations for COD:
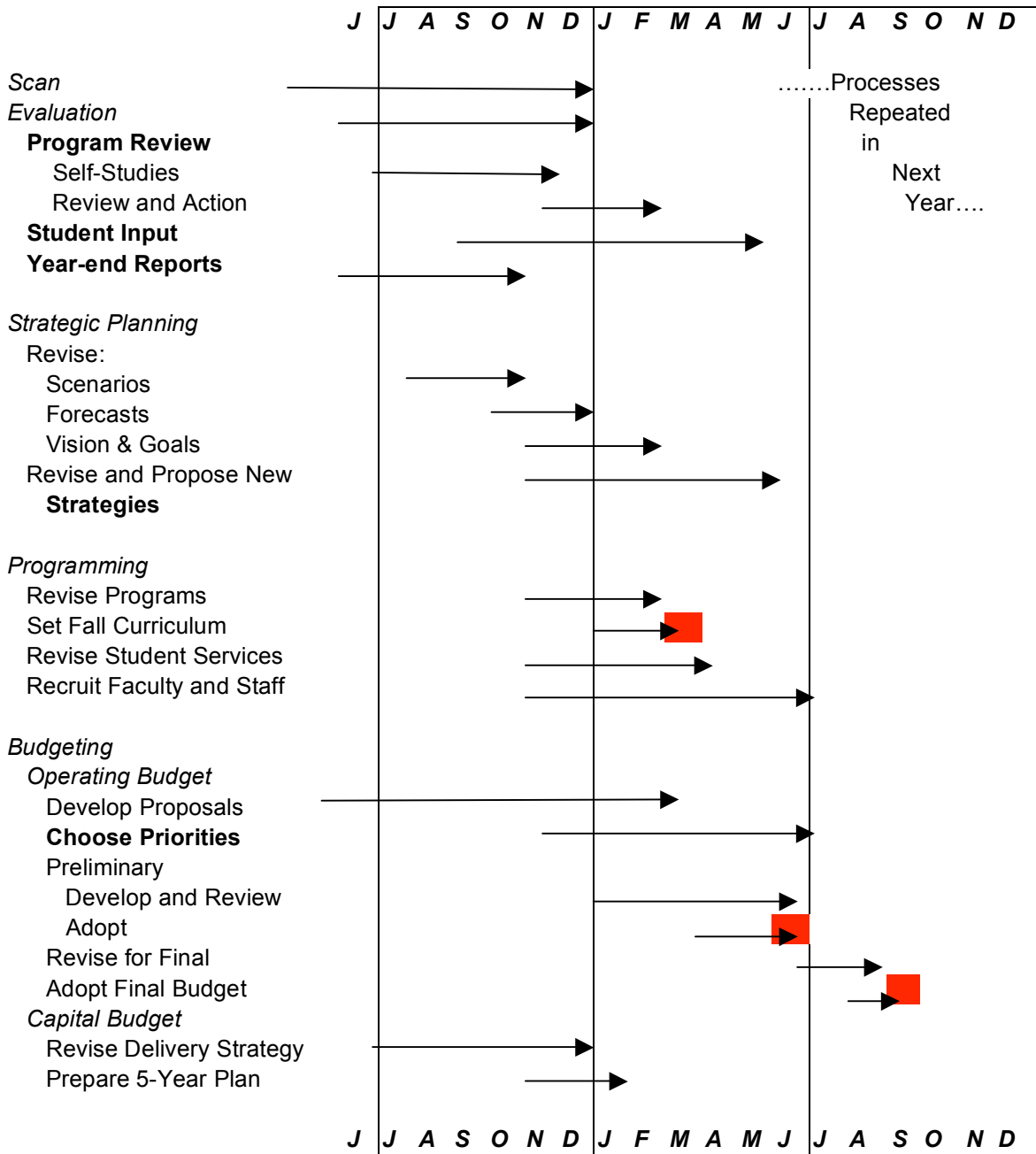
Expansion
- Agriculture: Horticulture and Turf Management
- Business: Hotel and Restaurant Management
- Business: Entrepreneurial and Small Business Skills
- Culinary Arts
- Early Childhood Education and Child Development
- English as a second language (ESL)
- Nursing and Long Term Health Care
- Public Services and Security
- Teacher Preparation

New Program Additions
- Casino Management
- Construction Trades (in specific areas)
- Hospice Care
- Paramedic (extending COD's existing EMT program)
- Retail Food Management
- Teacher Aids
- Women's and Ethnic Studies

While all these program areas are "high demand" – there are existing labor scarcities in the Valley – limited short-term resources will require COD to prioritize their implementation. In some cases, extramural resources will influence priorities. For instance, local hospitals have already partnered with COD to expand the Nursing program and, in the case of Paramedic training, firms using COD EMT graduates are possible partners, helping with the needed resources.

Chart 6
COD Annual Planning Process

J | J A S O N D | J F M A M J | J A S O N D

Scan →
Evaluation →
Program Review
  Self-Studies →
  Review and Action →
Student Input →
Year-end Reports →

.......Processes
Repeated
in
Next
Year….

Strategic Planning
Revise:
  Scenarios →
  Forecasts →
  Vision & Goals →
Revise and Propose New →
  Strategies

Programming
  Revise Programs →
  Set Fall Curriculum →
  Revise Student Services →
  Recruit Faculty and Staff →

Budgeting
  Operating Budget
  Develop Proposals →
  Choose Priorities →
  Preliminary
    Develop and Review →
    Adopt →
  Revise for Final →
  Adopt Final Budget →
Capital Budget
  Revise Delivery Strategy →
  Prepare 5-Year Plan →

J | J A S O N D | J F M A M J | J A S O N D

The college's existing "program review" is rated by staff as one of COD's major weaknesses (see assessment of key performance indicators, KPIs, in Appendix D), reflecting concern about the new process that was developed to implement a recent accrediting commission recommendation that COD "develop a program review process that can be put into place and systematized to evaluate all of the educational programs."

A "review" of the new program reviews suggests that the content is sound, but falls short in a number of areas, and it isn't clear that the process contains sufficient oversight and/or leads to definitive decisions for (re) designing curriculum and learning outcomes and the consequent budgeting of staffing, equipment and facilities (Appendix E). Among the more important objectives for COD's program review:

- Reviews should contain valid evidence about external needs and opportunities.
- Advisory input needs to be comprehensive and current.
- Program profile data should benchmark key evaluation.
- Program reviews need context for developing learning objectives and measuring learning outcomes.
- Actions following program review need to be objective, refined and explicit, validating the results.

A new annual COD program review process should involve the following steps:

- *Self-study* by program/division staff
- *Validation* of the self-study by the Vice President for Instruction, Academic Senate, Curriculum Committee, and/or other objective parties
- *Review and recommendation* by Planning and Budget Committee
- *Recommendation* by College Council as part of planning and budget process
- *Decision* by President
- *Implementation* within the academic and budget planning processes

COD's program review should be of programs deemed to be in need of the most urgent assessment; that is, where there either is unmet and growing need for the program and/or the existing program is either too small, not growing sufficiently or is not functioning effectively. Based on these criteria, the following programs should be evaluated or reviewed during the next planning cycle:
- Agriculture
- Public Services
- Culinary Arts
- Hotel and Restaurant, Golf and Casino Management
- Business (including Retail and Small Businesses)
- Computer Technology and Digital Design
- Basic Skills
- Nursing, EMT and Home Health Care

4. EMPLOY FLEXIBLE *DELIVERY* STRATEGIES, WITH AN EFFECTIVE BALANCE OF PHYSICAL AND VIRTUAL METHODS, PARTNERSHIPS, AND COMMUNITY COLLABORATION.

Conditions and trends confronting College of the Desert call for decisive action on a number of questions about how the college can best serve the residents of the Coachella Valley. Many of these questions deal with the delivery of learning: when, where, and how it should take place.

While a number of different overall delivery strategies are possible, this Plan advocates that COD's goals will be best achieved through a multi-part strategy to:

- Redesign, refurbish, and develop the existing 160-acre Palm Desert *campus* to accommodate about two-thirds of COD's future educational activity, highlighted by a new master plan for the campus and a number of new structures.

- Acquire land for and develop a large, 80-100 acre, Eastern Valley *center*, with facilities for instruction, student services, performing arts, and recreational (casual and intramural) and community activities. By 2010, this center will serve an estimated one-fifth of COD's instruction and services.

- Conduct instruction and services at a variety of *sites* throughout the Valley – high schools, work-sites, hospital/nursing facilities, public agencies, the Southeast Mega-education center, and the like – operating through collaborations and *partnerships*, some of which, particularly in the Western Valley, are based on contract training, community education, and other self-supporting arrangements. These sites and partnerships should account for around 10% of COD educational activity by 2010.

- Develop the infrastructure for and operate a variety of *distance learning* experiences, emphasizing online instruction through a "hybrid" model in which students take programs and courses that are partly on-campus and partly off-campus. Including televised, inter-active video (IVC), and online instruction, this delivery component is planned to increase to 5% or more of total instructional hours delivered by 2010.

A number of other, more traditional approaches, such as (1) a multi-college district, (2) multi-campus (each with full services) college or (3) alternatives with less emphasis on sites, partnerships, and distance learning, have been considered, but found not only lacking in results, but also requiring, in most cases, more resources than COD is likely to acquire in any plausible future scenario.

Actions and Responsibilities for Effective Delivery

While the college has been able to successfully upgrade electrical, wiring and energy conservation systems at the **main Palm Desert campus**, other component systems of the infrastructure – such as plumbing, water and gas – are substandard, areas of many buildings need renovation, especially in light of emerging new teaching and learning strategies, and still other facilities embody seismic and other safety problems. Delivery strategies to meet COD's overall goals must address these physical infrastructure issues as well as the obvious problems of accommodating the substantial expected Valley demographic growth in a way that distributes educational opportunities equally across the diverse groups and communities of the college's entire service area.

A new facilities master plan is in order for the main campus, and the following needs have been suggested as having priority:
- A comprehensive student center with spaces for all student services, learning and study, computer labs, food, meeting and recreation, and offices for the Alumni Association.
- Advanced technologies, including computer and other hi tech labs.
- Early childhood education and development.
- Wellness, physical education and athletics.
- Hospitality and meetings, including 500 seat auditorium for community/college events.
- Offices and learning spaces, with some large (150 - 350 seats) and many "smart" classrooms.
- Revised and improved parking.

.
Off-campus delivery brings learning and its support services closer to students, thereby reducing their transportation and other costs. This is especially important in view of increasingly difficult Coachella Valley transportation. Existing community facilities may be rented, lease-purchased, and in some cases secured without cost, thereby reducing capital outlays, especially in cases where changing demographics dictate (relatively) frequent changes in location. Outreach sites – see illustrative locations throughout the Valley in Map 1 – have long been a basic part of community college delivery and high schools, churches, and store-fronts are often used for classes and out-of-class support. Such sites can provide accessible space for learning communities, access to information technology, on-site contract training for clients, community education classes and events.

Highlighting COD's delivery off the main Palm Desert campus is a proposed *Eastern Valley Center*, designed for planned enrollments of

4,000	*by*	*2010*
6,000	*by*	*2015*
8,000	*by*	*2020*

….Map 1 here…..

To house this planned enrollment, and possible continued expansion to eventual campus status:

- *the Center's site should be sized at 80 to 100 acres*

The exact location (in Map 1) for the site is not entirely clear, depending as it does on uncertain future Valley development, but should be:

- Central to expected Eastern Valley growth
- Near main transportation access arteries.
- Free of inordinate environmental and site development problems.

The Center will provide for
- all the educational needs of some students and
- most of the needs for all of its students.

To achieve these objectives, the Center should contain

- Learning spaces, many of which are "smart," with current technologies
- Student support services
- Child care and development programs
- A venue (possibly outdoor) for community performances and celebrations
- Wellness and recreational facilities

It is hoped that COD can acquire the land by donation, with the donor becoming a partner (with COD) in possible future ventures – such as a community-based development or a research, development and educational "park" – that would occupy part of the site and could produce revenue streams to help with the college's overall fiscal condition.

Significant among delivery strategies in this plan is the expansion of ***distance learning*** (DL). This mode may include the use of any or all of television and video (broadcast or interactive), Internet, Intranet, CD-Rom, video- and audio-cassettes: instruction where
faculty and other staff typically are not physically present during most of the learning process and the timing and location of course work are quite flexible.

Like most other California community colleges, DL at COD is limited, accounting for less than 1% of all instructional hours, and policies for the Virtual Valley Center (VVC) – COD's online component – have been that it will serve only those who couldn't otherwise attend the college and that its growth is tightly controlled. Even so, VVC enrollment is growing more rapidly than other academic programs.

As DL expands, students should:

- take at least some (part) of their courses in the physical presence of faculty; i.e., the "hybrid" mode of both face-to-face and virtual instruction.
- have physical or virtual access to all student services, including counseling, tutoring, advising, a learning community, and the like.
- have access to the necessary hardware, software, and technical help.

DL can have the obvious result of reducing the private cost to students by reducing their costs for transportation, child care and other aspects of commuting to and from traditional classes on campus. This cost reduction will increase enrollment, but just how much isn't entirely clear since experience – at other community colleges – shows that
- some students simply trade DL for traditional classroom work
- other students continue classroom work and add DL course(s), increasing FTES
- still other individuals enroll in DL courses, for a net increase in enrollment

Generally, most students enrolled online also enroll in classroom work, and (perhaps not surprisingly) most online enrollments are from a college's traditional service area.

The "hybrid" approach prevents students from being isolated, to help avoid retention problems. The choice of DL courses to be offered must be concerned also with operating costs. Evidence from studies by Bates (2000) and Jewett (2002) suggests that, as a general rule, courses of more than 30 students are less expensive to develop and operate through DL, while courses with less than 30 are less expensive if done face-to-face. Even with needed upgrading of the DL infrastructure, studies by McIntyre (2001, 2002) show that DL can result in facility savings – lecture, lab and certain supporting spaces – on campus, as well as the savings to students and benefits to the community in the form of reduced time and costs for commuting.

Community and contract education are delivered in an entrepreneurial fashion – almost always intended to be self-supporting – and on demand. As such, they are associated with skills and job training for business or industry, along with certain kinds of community education that are not a part of the general curriculum and not typically supported by taxpayers. In one sense, it is the community colleges' version of "extension" in the typical four-year university; in another sense, it may be similar to instruction delivered by local proprietary institutions or organizations like the Apollo Group (University of Phoenix).

Also significant for delivery is the extended use of partnerships, alliances, and other kinds of community ***collaboration***. Likely COD "partners" share COD

goals and interests for the education and training of CV residents and are willing to commit resources to joint efforts.

Currently, COD actively collaborates with a limited number of partners, largely through its Economic Development (ED), including contract training, and Community Education (CE) functions. (See plan section on Evaluation below.) The potential number of partners and objectives of such arrangements is large, among them:

Partner	*Objectives*
California State University	Articulating lower and upper division training, in Nursing,
University of California	Teacher Preparation, Business, Agriculture, and certain other teaching and research programs.
Other Community Colleges	Alliances that broker and share courses and learning management systems (LMS).
Local agencies (like CVEP, the Enterprise Zone, PSEDC, CVAG, Riverside County, Area Cities, hospitals, long term care, HMOs, non-profits)	Coordinating planning, services and training for valley residents and businesses, sharing facilities at hospitals.
Area High Schools	Counseling, career orientation, co-enrollment and sharing facilities
SunLine	Coordination and improvement of transportation for COD students.
Valley Businesses	Training programs, perhaps through a Business and Technology Institute, that focus on

    1. basic business skills: communications, problem-solving, work attitudes, ethics, critical-thinking, and use of computers
    2. higher-level employee skills specific to Valley needs
    3. small business – entrepreneurial/managerial - skills
    4. support for child care and development

Other H.E. institutions present in the valley, like Chapman, Univ. of Phoenix, Palm Springs Virtual U	Brokering courses for COD students; sharing facilities…
Military	Joint training in lower division transfer and safety and security skills.
Firms (like IBM, Microsoft, Cisco, Oracle, Intel)	Joint training, sharing of resources and facilities, staff professional development, Information Technology Center.
Public agencies (like U.S. DE, NSF, DOL, CACOCC, CADE, CAEDD)	Project grants and contracts for various COD training and education activities.
Associations (like AACC, ACCT, League for Innovation, SCUP)	Grants and sponsorship for COD staff professional development, departmental research, and learning initiatives.

The current condition and location of COD's physical facilities suggests that in order to carry out the delivery strategy proposed in this plan, more-than-the historic level of *capital funding* will be required. Given the demand for State Construction Act funds, COD is likely to receive state funding for just several of around two dozen capital projects that will be required to implement this

plan. Consequently, there is a need to consider other resources, including grants, a private capital campaign, and/or a local bond measure for the necessary resources. And, prior to a campaign or bond measure, COD must formulate a detailed long-range – 15-year, not just 5-year – facilities plan that details the number, scope, and timing of capital outlay projects necessary to carry out the college's delivery strategy.

The content of any facilities funding measures should strike an appealing (to Valley constituents) balance of projects that address redesign, renovation and improvements of the existing Palm Desert campus, as well as the needs for improved centers, sites and distance learning infrastructure that provide access to COD in the context of robust Valley population growth and job formation.

5. EXPAND THE COLLEGE'S EXTRAMURAL *RESOURCES* TO SUPPLEMENT TRADITIONAL STATE (PUBLIC) FUNDING.

Results of the planning scenario analysis show that traditional funding sources – largely public revenues – will not be adequate for COD's future resource needs. Thus, the college's revenue alternatives must be expanded. For example, under planning Scenario D, traditional sources would provide about $31 million general revenue at COD by 2010, $2,900 per FTES in today's dollars. Bringing the college to just the lower level of its historic outlays ($3,500 per FTES) would require another $6.4 million.

Continued efforts to expand state public funding should emphasize more funding for existing programs of:
- Growth, funding all added students at their actual marginal cost
- "Equalization" for colleges like COD that are characterized by relatively low access in areas where college market penetration is difficult.

COD also should advocate for new state funding initiatives for
- Investment in new program startups that are highly capital-intensive
- Matching of COD contracts for training in high-demand job areas

Since state-level advocacy is difficult, this *Plan* anticipates

- *a greater COD investment in the marketing and delivery capability of Economic Development, Community Education, and other entrepreneurial efforts*

so as to conduct more of the college's programs through contract training or through fee-based instruction (with financial aid for those unable to pay).

Other alternatives include:

- *Engaging in partnerships and alliances where resources are shared, thereby reducing COD revenue needs*

- *Subsidizing the work from revenues other than the General Fund – grants, contracts, gifts, donations and bequests*

Partnerships or alliances, described under Plan delivery strategies, can be an effective way for COD to share or acquire additional resources. In most cases, these collaborations will be promoted and arranged through COD contract training. But, regular instructional departments participate as well. For example, COD's Nursing Department is partnering with local area hospitals to increase the nursing program, with needed new faculty being subsidized over a three-year period. Partnerships can be especially effective for high-demand specialty training in CV areas such as health, various business skills, hospitality, and construction trades.

COD's success in utilizing partnerships will depend upon its ability to:

- Proceed with vision about the Valley's future educational needs
- Take risks
- Forge amicable and fruitful relationships
- Deliver a quality product

When forming partnerships and alliances, COD should cultivate its "competitive advantage," largely by being flexible, quick to action, affordable, accessible, and accountable. In some cases, COD partners will work jointly with the college, committing resources; while in other cases, the partner may simply contribute resources. Many collaborations will involve more than one partner.

In developing its collaborative capability, COD can:

- Explore *best-practices*; many community colleges are conducting contract training and are engaged in partnerships and alliances
- Create a *business plan*, detailing responsibilities and estimating future revenues
- Build a *management team* that can successfully pursue partnerships
- Aggressively *pursue partners* across a variety of possible arrangements

The entrepreneurial and regular instructional arms of COD should closely coordinate their efforts in the pursuit of partners, alliances, and, as community connections are formed, coordinate also with the College of the Desert Foundation and COD Alumni Association (Street Fair). Nearly $1 million was raised by these two organizations in 2000-01 for COD operations – about 4%

of the college's Educational and General budget – and they must become increasingly important players in developing the college's future resource base.

Besides promoting a positive relationship between the Valley community and the college, the *COD Foundation* is a major source of extramural revenue. This is a private charity of the college, raising funds for COD priorities: sometimes for very specific purposes – campaigns like the "SAT Pursuit 2000 " – sometimes for more general, yet-to-be specified, priorities of the college.

Effective fund-raising should be based on COD priorities established in the annual planning process. These priorities or uses can form the basis for a systematic set of campaigns and other fund-raising efforts.

Another source of extramural revenue for the college is the *COD Alumni Association*. Approximately one-half million dollars are raised each year from a street fair and open air market held each weekend by the *Association* on the Palm Desert campus. Over the years the *COD Alumni Association* has donated to COD from Street Fair revenues over $5 million in grants, gifts and scholarships. This work can be improved with an expansion of the Association membership, permanent facilities for the organization on-campus within the proposed Student Center, and closer coordination with COD programming and budgeting priorities.

6. FOSTER A POSITIVE *STAFF* ENVIRONMENT AT COD.

Education is concerned with the development of human potential and the quality of the human resources that are touched by the endeavor. Strategies described in this plan will be successful only to the degree that the students, faculty and staff of COD are supported and motivated through efforts to develop their full potential. These efforts involve a number of considerations, among them: campus climate, individual wellness, collegiality, professional development, and recognition of the benefits of diversity.

Provisions for staff retirement are changing as well. COD planning should value human resources properly as goals and strategies are identified and resources allocated. The need for improvements in human resource management and support was highlighted in the staff's assessment of COD KPIs, where a number of "personnel" considerations like staff selection, staff training and staff support are judged to be among the primary weaknesses of the college (Appendix D).

Actions and Responsibilities for a positive staff environment.

COD currently has 634 employees:
> 115 full-time faculty
> 316 part-time faculty
>   39 managers and supervisors
> 164 classified employees

With expected retirements and likely enrollment growth, recruitment needs will be substantial (Chart 7). The college is facing a 60% turnover within the next five years and must recruit nearly 82 new full-time employees by 2007.

Chart 7

Projected COD Staff Replacements and Additions

	Faculty		Managers	Classified
	Full-Time	*Part-Time*		
2003-05	9	15	3	5
2006-10	38	48	22	68
2011-15	37	211	10	67

Source: COD HR (2002).

This robust hiring pattern confronts COD with a significant challenge to obtain qualified individuals who embrace the learning college concept. But, it also provides COD with an opportunity to address one of its most pressing needs – as noted in a recent accreditation – to introduce greater *diversity* into its faculty and staff.

Current employee surveys indicate there is a high level of diversity among the classified staff and the manager/supervisor staffing levels meet expectations for diversity. But, there is a concern with the diversity level of the full time faculty in that while more than half of COD students are Hispanic, just 12% of faculty are of similar ethnic origin. Increased diversity can be accomplished by a recruiting process – conducted increasingly out-of-state as well as within California – that ensures a diverse and qualified pool of candidates, followed by a separate, but fair and nondiscriminatory, selection process.

Staff training and professional development, viewed by many at the college also as a critical need (see Appendix D) will be addressed by a several-component strategy, including:
- 16-20 hours of training annually for all college staff on topics such as the learning college: its attributes, values and practices, safety, coping with change, leadership, teambuilding, learning styles, assessment, anti-discrimination and violence, technology, and topics specific to each organizational unit

- budget policy where the equivalent of 1 ½ % of the amount allocated for salary and benefits is devoted to staff training and professional development
- orientation of all new staff to COD's mission, values, and operations
- support for teams – faculty, managers, and classified staff – to train on learning college concepts like assessment, learning theory research, learning styles, instructional design and practice, and interest-based bargaining

College of the Desert is exploring the use of *interest-based bargaining* (IBB), which is a "win-win" non-adversarial process of collective bargaining. This approach could promote more collegiality, thereby helping enable COD staff and its extension, the college, to embrace the concepts embodied in a learning college.

COD is committed to effective *staff support*, meaning that not only do faculty and staff have adequate facilities and equipment to do their jobs, but also the help and encouragement of colleagues. COD is undertaking a mentor program in which all new employees, especially faculty, are assigned a mentor to help with their career development. For older employees, there will be support programs on "graceful retirement." For all employees, there will be emphasis on "whole career management."

Employee *wellness* is being addressed by the development of "activity" clubs such as hiking, biking, swimming and the like – all designed to improve health, build morale, and reduce college insurance costs. Future initiatives will include adding staff lounges, exercise and other wellness facilities and programs.

As part of shared governance and collegiality at COD, staff will rework or review their *job descriptions* in light of the move by COD to become a learning college. The content of this review involves mutual expectations: the employee's contribution to help develop the learning college, the college's commitment of support to the employee, and commitments on the part of both to involvement in the Valley community. Individual employee evaluation is to be based on these job descriptions and employee-initiated job objectives.

7. GATHER, ANALYZE AND STRUCTURE *INFORMATION* THAT EFFECTIVELY SUPPORTS THE COLLEGE'S LEARNING, MARKETING, ADVOCACY, COMMUNITY-RELATIONS AND OVERALL COMMUNICATIONS.

Increasingly, COD's major point of contact with its constituents (students, benefactors, supporters, interested individuals, firms and agencies) in the Valley is its Web site. Consequently,

- *COD's Web site will be made increasingly "functional,"*

so that it enables the visitor to be counseled and advised, register, and – through links – take online courses, as well as simply view information about COD and its curriculum, services and activities. A fully-functional Web site would enable COD to deliver and market its services in a virtual, as well as physical, way.

Besides the Web site, COD's *marketing* will still take place using traditional communications media – newspapers, radio, television, telephone, direct mail, community meetings, and, importantly, personal contacts – through press releases, fact sheets, brochures, issue papers, talks and other such vehicles.

COD's marketing plan is designed to improve the college's image in the community and to better inform potential students and partners of available learning opportunities. Valid and concise information on COD's performance must be made available for marketing efforts in order to convey the college's message effectively.

The work of COD adds substantial value to the Coachella Valley, California, and United States economies and cultures. This value comes in several forms: resource redistribution, collective benefits (accruing to non-students as well as to students), and private benefits, measured in part by the added earnings of former COD students. Despite the analytical complexities, COD can provide potential students and other stakeholders, respectively, an idea of their enhanced earning power – from a COD education – and of other, more general, consequences of COD operations.

The development of learning objectives and assessment of learning outcomes are primarily to help students learn. Beyond this, however, aggregations of these data can help measure program and institutional performance, if held to a few key and powerful metrics.

Effectiveness measures will help COD decision-makers determine if the college is doing the right things. Thus, each year during the planning process, COD identifies and assesses the:
- *educational needs and preferences of individuals in the Valley*
- *capabilities of other area providers*

so as to help COD planners decide what to do, what to defer to other providers (to do), and when and with whom it is appropriate to partner or to compete.

As it continuously determines what to do through the planning process, COD will market those plans, showing its constituents, among other things, how it

is unique and different from other providers (its competitors or partners) in the Coachella Valley, using several key metrics:

- *perceptions of COD's capabilities (image) by its constituents*
- *COD's market penetration across its service area*
  - *from different area high schools*
  - *among different groups of individuals in the community; by income, race and ethnicity, age, culture, citizenship, and the like*
- *retention: within courses and through objectives or programs*
- *student satisfaction with COD programs and services*
- *placement, pay, and persistence in jobs after COD training*
- *transfer rates and success at four-year institutions from COD programs*

These metrics also help COD evaluate how it can improve its production and delivery, through better organization, processes and use of technology.

Most COD students "leave" without completing a degree or certificate. Consequently, it is important that in calculating the "success rates" of its students, COD

- accurately identify their actions at COD and their intentions (notably, many COD students may simply want to acquire more basic or specific job skills)

- follow students on departure, whether into other PSE institutions, jobs, or other pursuits.

EVALUATION

Planning begins with a look at where COD is now: an evaluation of how well it is performing its stated mission and carrying out its vision. (This evaluation uses as its benchmark the previous – to this plan – statements of mission and vision. In this plan, these statements are changed and a statement of values added. These new statements and their related goals and strategies will be the benchmarks for future evaluations.)

The focus of this evaluation is on *learning* and *delivery*. Under learning, we assess the college's performance in helping students successfully acquire the lower division competencies necessary to *transfer* or to acquire and retain *quality employment*, along with the *basic skills* needed to pursue those competencies. Under delivery, we assess how well the college provides *access* and the *services* to support learning; how well the college knows and *responds to the needs of its community*; and the extent to which the college *partners and collaborates* with the valley communities.

These evaluation categories were cited in COD's 2000 Master Plan. In describing its "primary *mission*," that Plan notes that the college prepares students for access to upper division (*transfer*), helps students acquire *quality employment*, and provides students with needed *basic skills*

Supporting this mission, the college provides the *services* required to maintain learning, and is committed to excellence, as measured by student *success, access* to opportunities for students, staff and community, and *community involvement* in economic and cultural development, encouraging financial support for the college

The college's previous *vision* for the future contained a half-dozen elements. Three of these elements parallel a part of the mission statement – encouraging and supporting student success, providing all students access, and participating and collaborating with local communities. The other elements deal with knowing and offering experiences that meet the community's learning needs.

Learning

Transfer
Since we lack measures of the transfer competencies acquired by COD students, we resort, in this evaluation, to the use of indirect measures. The most valid of these would be the number of transfer-ready students that COD prepares. But, lacking benchmarks for this measure, the next best metric is the actual transfer rate: the number of COD students who transfer to a four-year institution from a cohort of students who entered COD with the intention

of transferring. Still another alternative is to examine aggregate time-series data, mindful of its limitations – especially factors outside COD's control. And, it is always helpful to review the performance of COD transfers in upper division at four-year institutions.

In general, evaluation of COD's transfer function is positive and promising. When benchmarked against the number and preparation of its entering students, COD transfers more students than would be expected, though many transfer to four-year institutions outside California. Those transferring to California State University (CSU) do well. However, it appears that COD staff feels that improvements are possible, especially with the imminent location of a CSU San Bernardino campus nearby and COD strategies (elsewhere in this Plan) to improve access in the eastern Valley.

Review of data on COD transfers in Appendix E reveals several important findings. Compared to the typical (or average) California Community College, COD:

- Enrolls slightly fewer students intending to transfer – 37% as opposed to 40% in other colleges statewide – but, more of these COD students plan to earn an associate degree as they transfer.

- Short-term transfer rates to the University of California (UC) and California State University (CSU) are lower, but when out-of-state transfers are included, COD's overall rates are about average.

- Is characterized by a surprisingly higher (by five times) transfer rate to community colleges outside California.

- Students transferring to CSU persist at marginally lower rates during their first year, but post higher grade point averages (GPAs) – than transfers from other community colleges – and higher GPAs than students who began their work at CSU as freshmen.

- Transfers to the local CSU (San Bernardino) have risen – from one-half to two-thirds of COD's annual total since 1993.

- Has done an exceptionally good job of transferring Hispanic students, though the rate may have slipped some recently.

COD's seemingly positive transfer performance is also supported by a Chancellor's Office (COCCC) estimating model that incorporates potential barriers to long-term transfer like large numbers of poorly prepared, older and low income students, and long distance to nearest CSU campus. A COCCC study of three - 1994, 1995 and 1996 - entering cohorts finds that COD transfer rates are consistently well above expectations. Other community

colleges in the region, by contrast, have been inconsistent, above and below model rate expectations.

Another metric, course completion (the proportion of students attaining a grade of C or higher or CR, also displayed in Appendix E), suggests that COD is slightly more successful in its transfer courses than the average California college. (Variations in grading practice do, however, dictate particular caution with this finding.)

Belying these very positive reviews of its transfer function, COD staff ranked the "articulation, transfer and advising focus for students" as only marginally above average in its success, though among the most important of the college's KPIs or functions. Articulation of courses and programs with K-12 and four-year institutions was thought to be somewhat more successful, and both – transfer and articulation – are viewed by staff as very significant opportunities for COD.

Quality Employment

Overall, the performance of COD programs to prepare students for employment is not entirely positive and the area is lacking in courses for advanced skills. Noting the weakness of existing vocational outcome measures – they do not directly measure the skills and knowledge acquired by students – COD does an excellent job of preparing students in certain programs (Nursing, Administration of Justice, and others), but its overall volume of activity is substantially below the labor market needs in the Coachella Valley and is even declining, in some cases.

COD's performance in preparing students for quality employment in the workforce can be measured in several ways: (1) the skills and competencies gained by learners, (2) how effectively learners progress through their work at COD, and (3) how congruent COD training is with the skills and knowledge needed for jobs in the Coachella Valley and other labor markets for which the college typically trains. The latter point is covered below in the section on "how well the college knows and responds to community needs."

The workforce preparation curriculum at COD has relatively fewer "advanced" vocational courses than does the typical California community college, and no apprentice program (Appendix E). Compared to students in other community colleges statewide, COD students:

- Post slightly lower course completion (grade C or better) rates in non-transfer vocational courses (though higher rates in transfer, as noted above).

- Are more successful in introductory vocational courses, but less successful in advanced courses.

The Vocational and Technical Education Act (VTEA) "Core Indicators of Performance" provide another perspective on COD's workforce preparation. The following observations may made from these data:

- COD students in "vocational" courses during 2000-01 are reported to have "succeeded" – earned a grade of C or better – at the same rate as the statewide average "success" rate of 78%.

- By contrast, COD students who take 12 or more vocational units in a program earn degrees and certificates or transfer, i.e., "complete" their programs, at rates far higher than is the case statewide.

- Students in the nursing professions and in Administration of Justice and Fire Science post the highest completion rates at COD, while those in air conditioning and automotive technologies and Computer and Information Science (CIS) post the lowest rates.

The low rate for CIS is consistent with the college's program review of CIS/CS that notes it is a very large (around 200 FTES annually) and rapidly growing program that awards relatively few degrees and certificates. Apparently, most of the students enroll for sets of skills and competencies that fall outside the normal pattern, but, nonetheless, should have some kind of certification, credentialing or acknowledgement associated with them to help "graduates" with job placement, advancement, and the like. As learning outcomes are developed for this area (and others as well), the skills embodied may be clustered into a number of relevant certifications of competencies.

VTEA "placement" data trace COD vocational program "completers and leavers" who are employed in the first year after college. Here:

- COD students outperform vocational students across the state, led by nursing graduates, 96% of whom are employed after completing or leaving their COD program; but also by the automotive and air conditioning technicians, all of whom were employed – even though less than one-half had taken degrees or certificates.

Following the cohort further over three quarters of possible employment,

- former COD "vocational" students are "retained" at a slightly lower rate (84%) than they were placed (87%), an overall outcome that is similar to that of other community colleges in California.

These regular vocational education programs typically are designed for "emerging" workers, most often high school graduates. COD staff notes (and the access analysis substantiates) the difficulty of recruiting and enrolling recent high school graduates into workforce preparation programs. More often, program enrollees have "stopped out" of education after high school and are returning to gain skills for a career change, promotion or advancement on an existing job, or to do a better job of running their own business (entrepreneurs). These kinds of students also are served by the Economic Development and Community Education functions at COD.

The college's *Contract Education or Training program* responds to the need by business for
- Computer skills
- Basic and intermediate workplace training
- "Soft skills": customer service, interpersonal, decision making, and problem solving
- Management skills: personnel, performance, coaching, motivating, mentoring, time, and project.
- Vocational English as a second language (VESL)
- Needs surveys, employee and organizational assessments

This training closely matches the skills that respondents to the CVEP survey of Valley businesses indicate are most needed (Appendix C). Contract training programs served nearly 400 individuals (possibly over 200 FTES) in the Fall 2000.

Community Education (CE) provides learning opportunities for adults in

- Professional development
- Business performance
- Other forms of enrichment

More than 150 CE classes were attended by 2,200 students (between 100 and 200 FTES) during 2000-01. Classes are given not-for-credit and oriented toward individuals, rather than businesses, though some of the many small businesses – the average size of Valley businesses is 17 employees – who can't afford contract training benefit from CE offerings as well.

Basic Skills.

Nine of every 10 new – those who are first time at any college – COD students are assessed for their English and mathematics skills at first enrollment. Of those assessed in the Fall 2002,

- 19% tested into college-level English
- 7% tested into college-level mathematics

(See Appendix E, Chart 3)

Much of the consequent pre-collegiate basic skills work at COD is taken for credit. And while COD offers relatively more non-credit work than many other colleges, most of this takes place in English as a Second Language (ESL). Community colleges vary in their choice of how they deliver basic skills; less than a dozen colleges across California offer about four-fifths of all non-credit work. The dramatic variation is seen among COD's neighbors:

Percent of FTES in Non-Credit Instruction

College of the Desert	14%
Riverside	1
Imperial	0
Mt. San Jacinto	3
San Bernardino	0
Mt. San Antonio	18

Turning to credit-based basic skills, one of the more useful measures in the Partnership for Excellence (PFE) program is the Basic Skills metric that, for a three-year period, measures the proportion of enrollment in these courses that was successful, then went on to complete a higher-level course in the same area.

Analysis of two recent cohorts from the PFE data (Appendix E, Chart 3) shows the following:

- One out of every four COD students taking pre-collegiate basic skills courses advances to complete a higher-level course in the same area within six semesters.

- COD basic skills students "progress" at a greater rate in English (27%) than do those in mathematics (24%), and these rates – for a 1998-99 cohort – are marginally better than demonstrated by a like cohort at COD three years earlier.

- COD basic skills students progress at rates that are nearly identical to the average for basic skills students at community colleges across California (for whom the three-year increase in progress rates also has been marginal).

The performance of COD's basic skills students – just one in four advancing – appears low, though no lower than that recorded at other California community colleges. To improve the rate, COD staff are experimenting with different teaching techniques, though time on task (studying) and class sizes (basic skills classes, especially those offered not-for-credit, are typically larger than college-level classes) are also significant factors.

Delivery

Access

COD's performance in providing access to post-secondary education for Valley residents can be evaluated by the use of a metric – COD enrollments from various cohorts of the Valley adult population – that measures the college's market penetration (MP) or college-going rate. These data reveal several important findings:

- While COD's current MP is up slightly from 2000 and comparable to the 1990 level, it is substantially below the level recorded two decades ago:

Fall Enrollment per 1,000 Adults

	CACCs	RCCD	COD
1980	80	79	58
1990	68	57	40
1995	58	49	40
2000	64	65	37
2001	67		41
2002	70		41

Source: Chart 5.

- Always below the statewide California community college average MP, COD has experienced an increase in this gap, from three-fourths of the statewide average in 1980 to three-fifths today.

- Among different racial and ethnic groups of the Valley, COD's market penetration is lowest among Native Americans and Non-Hispanic Whites, highest among Asians, Blacks and Pacific Islanders (Chart 8).

Chart 8

Market Penetration, Fall 2000

	College of the Desert			California CCs		
	Population	Enroll	E/1000P	Population	Enroll	E/1000P
Asian	6,778	422	62.3	3,697,513	239,148	64.7
Black	6,843	244	35.7	2,263,882	111,306	49.2
Hispanic	147,827	4,342	29.4	10,974,414	408,351	37.2
Native American	2,844	60	21.1	333,346	15,239	45.7
Pacific Islander	294	11	37.4	116,961	9,051	77.4
White+Other	154,007	3,725	24.2	16,485,532	801,203	48.6
Total	318,594	8,804	27.6	33,871,648	1,584,298	46.8

Source: COD IR; Census 2000.

- While COD market penetration is relatively better among Valley Hispanics than it is among the other large Valley population group (Non-Hispanic Whites), COD's MP with Hispanics is about one-fifth below that of other community colleges in California.

- As expected, COD reports its highest MP in central Palm Desert (surrounding the campus), but has a surprisingly low rate among residents of northeast Palm Desert (Chart 9).

- COD market penetration is higher to the east of the main Palm Desert campus – led by the areas of Indio, Bermuda Dunes, and Coachella – than it is to the west of the main campus, where East Palm Springs (an older population) and Rancho Mirage (primarily retirees) report very low college-going rates. In the Eastern Valley, low rates are reported for Mecca and Thermal – where individuals are distant from campus and lack transportation and resources – and for East Indio and Indian Wells, the latter possibly for different reasons.

Chart 9 here…..

- COD's market penetration dropped by 8% between 1993 and 2000 (Appendix E), with the largest declines in
  - La Quinta
  - Indian Wells
  - Desert Hot Springs
  - Rancho Mirage,

  partially counterbalanced by increases in
  - East Indio
  - Thousand Palms
  - Coachella
  - Thermal

COD's relatively low access (compared to other California community colleges) appears due largely to:

- The costs of traveling to the main Palm Desert campus
- Low income populations (mostly east of the main campus)
- Pockets of elderly, retired individuals (mostly west of the main campus)

Students reviewed during the development of this plan indicate that transportation difficulties and lack of financial aid pose significant barriers to the college's accessibility. Because of these varying problems, strategies to improve COD's access will need to be multi-part.

Services to Support Learning

More quantitative metrics and relevant benchmarks are needed for an effective evaluation of support services. Short of such measures, however, observations can be made from surveys of student and staff perceptions.

Student input (Appendix D) about support services and learning resources suggests that:

- Many students are not aware that transfer counseling is available.
- Students' ratings of the quality of transfer counseling are mixed – some are satisfied, others are not.
- Perceptions of the quality of general counseling also are mixed, but there is agreement that counseling sessions are typically too brief.
- Student services in general need to be centralized, rather than spread across campus, with recreation and study areas separated effectively.
- Students generally are not aware of all the services that COD offers.
- The library and its holdings are not as accessible as many students would like.
- On-campus Internet access needs to be expanded.

- There needs to be more marketing and communication of services. (It is suggested that a campus radio station would help the college environment substantially.)
- There could be more clubs and activities, and information about them communicated more effectively.
- Transportation to the Palm Desert campus, particularly from outer areas off Highway 111, is difficult.
- Parking lots need better lighting.
- Campus food services need improvement.

Results of the COD staff survey in Appendix D provide a different perspective:

- While less certain about student services and learning resources (SS/LR) than about academic affairs, COD staff generally rank the importance of each and the college's performance in each as equal.

- Within SS/LR, the provision of "adequate student financial aid and information" for students, along with "articulation, transfer, and advising," are seen as COD strengths and as most important, while "planning" and the "use of information" for decisions about SS/LR are seen as less important and among COD's weaker functions.

Knowledge of and Response to Community Educational Needs

In general, COD is growing its programs to meet population and job market increases in the Valley. Evidence reviewed above suggests that COD has responded effectively to the community's need for lower division preparation for transfer, though the college's accessibility – like that of other California community colleges – has declined in recent years. And, given the large number of transfers to CSUSB, there is substantial opportunity for further improvements in transfer as that college develops its Palm Desert campus and if COD improves its access to residents of the Eastern Valley.

By contrast, the college's overall level of workforce training appears to be insufficient to meet the Valley's needs for skilled labor. To begin discussion of this issue, it is possible to roughly compare estimates of Valley job openings to the kind and amount of COD training. The ratio of COD full-time equivalent (FTES) students to Valley job openings appears to be relatively low (Appendix E), a finding consistent with the recent CVEP business survey where "a lack of skilled labor" is cited as the biggest "liability" for Valley businesses (Appendix C). Moreover, there may be some imbalances between certain COD program activity and Valley labor market needs (see also Appendix E).

Based on job market demand, COD programs in

- Agriculture
- Business
- Engineering Technology
- Food, Hospitality and Casino Management
- Public Service and Security

appear to be too small, and in the case of Agriculture have sometimes been characterized by declining enrollments as well. Of these markets, business, hospitality and public service are served also by ED and CE, where learning is tied directly to the needs for skills and knowledge by individuals and by Valley businesses and agencies

Notably, Coachella Valley *agriculture* continues to grow – in contrast to other parts of the County and State – and, while Valley government employment has declined over the past decade, concern about *public safety and security* suggests opportunities for COD programming in these public services. The Valley presents little in the way of opportunities for those skilled in manufacturing technologies, but, apart from construction management, plumbing and air conditioning, COD apparently offers little training in the *skilled construction trades* that are needed to support this rapidly growing sector of the Valley economy.

Food, hospitality and casino management are large and rapidly growing Valley industries, and while COD offers golf and hotel management, along with culinary arts, these programs are relatively small and growing only modestly in relation to the rapidly expanding area job opportunities for such skills.

By contrast, COD has vigorous programs in nursing, home health aides, and other health science skills. A decline of activity in these programs has recently been reversed, but they need to grow further in view of the critical shortages of these personnel that exist in the industry. The college might also contribute to community needs through a hospice training program and expansion of the EMT training into a paramedic certification.

Partnering and Collaborating with the Local Community

As noted, collaboration with the new CSUSB campus appears to be the major opportunity facing COD for better articulation and functioning of the transfer function. Coordination between COD's Economic Development (ED) and Community Education (CE) functions and CSUSB's continuing education function also is needed, though, at this time, the most effective steps for making these learning opportunities accessible to residents of the Valley have yet to be formulated.

The major existing partnerships and collaborations that are managed through COD's ED CE functions include:

- *Caregiver training*, with Riverside County and the healthcare industry
- *Workplace Readiness*, with Martha's Village and Kitchen, Shelter from the Storm, and Ed>Net
- *Workplace learning*, for staff and businesses, with Ed>Net, businesses, and governmental agencies, including the VESL academy, an industry-driven regional collaborative from Ed>Net providing training in partnership with the Empowerment Zone
- *Advanced transportation technology training and development*, with a variety of California transportation agencies and societies, universities, public and private sectors, and Ed>Net
- *Energy Technology Training* Center, with SunLine and 10 other community colleges, supported by funding from NSF, WVU, FTC and State Chancellor's Office (Ed>Net)

Also of significance to community collaboration by COD is the work of its two major foundations: the College of the Desert Foundation and the COD Alumni Association (Street Fair). These two organizations together contributed nearly $1 million to the college's operation during the 2000-01 fiscal year – almost 4% of COD's total Educational and General Budget. In the KPI survey, COD staff rates "non-state fundraising" as one of COD's major strengths.

College of the Desert Foundation is a non-profit auxiliary organization of COD, formed in 1983 to raise funds for the college. Operating primarily in the Coachella Valley, the Foundation Board and staff foster a positive relationship between the public and the college, raise endowment funds, and coordinate the use of funds and donor recognition closely with COD staff.

At the end of the 2001 fiscal year, the COD Foundation, reported assets totaling $9 million, along with $3 million held in trusts to be available to COD when they terminate. Over 40 Valley individuals and families are members of the "3W (Where there's a Will, there's a Way) Club" which enables them to gift COD in the form of bequests and charitable trusts. During 2000-01, the Foundation Board contributed $480,000 to a variety of COD needs, including classroom refurbishing, fine arts, and the Science building. Foundation scholarship endowment funds, providing financial aid to students in a variety of programs and situations, now total nearly $1.4 million.

The Foundation has raised $6 million during the past two years, $4 million of which is for science, art and technology – the SAT Pursuit 2000 campaign – improvements including a stagecraft center, smart classrooms, and computer updates, among others. Donors to this project were largely area individuals and foundations, but also Riverside County and the cities of Palm Desert and Indian Wells.

Another example of effective collaboration between COD and its community is the work of the *COD Alumni Association* (Street Fair). Approximately one-half million dollars are raised each year from a large street fair and open air market held each weekend by the Association on the Palm Desert campus; nearly half of the proceeds are allocated to COD uses. Review of *Alumni Association* activities suggests that it could be better coordinated with college priorities and activities, and might benefit from expanded alumni membership.

SCAN

This "scan" of the environment external to the college covers relevant (to COD planning) events, trends and likely futures – mostly, but not entirely, in the Coachella Valley – for the following categories:
- Demographics
- Economics and Jobs
- Culture and Environment
- Public Policy
- Educational Policies, Practices, and Trends

Demographics

Robust Coachella Valley growth will continue, largely east of Palm Desert, and with the Valley becoming more diverse, educational needs of residents expand.

During the past decade, Coachella Valley growth has been greater than the rest of Riverside County and more than twice the rate of California in general (Chart 10).

Chart 10. Population Change

	CV	RivCo	CA
PAST			
1990-2000 Total	38%	32%	14%
<18	48%		
Hispanic	73%		
Non-Hispanic	13%		
18+	34%		
PRESENT			
2000-01 growth	3.8%	3.3%	1.8%
FUTURE			
2001-10 annual growth	3.4%	2.7%	1.5%
2000-20			
Total	64%	77%	31%
People of Color		141%	59%
Non-Hispanic White		33%	4%
15-24 years-old		83%	38%
25-34 years-old		96%	29%
Median Age (years)		-2	0

Valley Population Estimates	1990	2000	2001	2015
Total	230,871	318,125	330,102	463,000
Adults	172,991	232,338	240,974	338,000

Valley growth has been and will continue to be largely among Hispanics and among relatively younger cohorts. Geographically, growth has been concentrated in four cities: La Quinta, Cathedral City, Palm Desert and Indio. Future growth will be generally to the east of Palm Desert, in both cities and unincorporated areas – though cities likely will continue to annex territories.

Riverside County and the Coachella Valley continue to receive migrants from Orange and Los Angeles Counties, as well as from foreign countries. And because of the area's younger profile, the number of graduates from Valley high schools is projected to continue increasing beyond the end of this decade – well after the time when the number of high school graduates from most (older) areas in California will have stabilized. A majority of the new Valley high school graduates will be Hispanic.

Economics and Jobs

Economic cycles are important to COD planning largely because of:

- *Enrollment at COD*: as the Coachella Valley economy improves (declines) and individuals in the labor market work (need retraining), COD enrollment typically falls (rises), other things being equal.

- *Curriculum at COD*: development of the regional (Riverside County and Coachella Valley) economies dictates labor market needs, which in turn, suggest the most useful pattern of COD curriculum change.

- *Funding for COD*: as California's economy improves (declines), state general and local property taxes and COD's funding rises (falls) with consequent impact on the college's growth cap and its ability to deliver programs and services.

While key, economic cycles are difficult to forecast and few agents do so for more than one or two years into the future. Consequently, COD long-range planning may best proceed by identifying probable futures and building several plausible socioeconomic scenarios that, in some sense, define the range of what is likely at national, state, and regional levels.

A recent poll of forecasters by the *Economist* (January 2003) suggests that a modest worldwide recovery from last year's downturn will gain little momentum in 2003:

	annual price-adjusted rate of GDP change			
	2000	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
U.S.	5.1%	1.7%	2.4%	2.5%
Euro area	3.4	0.1	0.7	1.3
Canada	4.9	2.1	3.3	3.1
Japan	1.8	-1.6	-0.3	0.4
Mexico	7.0	-2.0	1.8	na

Optimistic analysts argue that the U.S. is in a period of long-term growth – albeit at rates less than those of the late 1990s – to be interrupted only by some event or "wild card," like a foreign financial crisis, stock market crash, oil crisis, energy crisis, war, or other shock to economic activity – like the September 2001 terrorist attacks on the east coast. For the long-term economy, the key appears to be how consumers and financial markets react, and are supported by central banks like the U.S. Federal Reserve.

California's economy is expected (by the State Legislative Analyst) to improve gradually as well, but at rates somewhat lower than experienced in the late 1990s:

Personal Income Growth*:*	*2002*	1.2%
	2003	4.0%
	2004	6.0%
	2005-	6.0-7.0%

Resulting revenue forecasts, together with expenditure projections, suggest large State General Fund operating deficits of $6 billion in 2002-03 and $21 billion (one-fourth of the total) in 2003-04, followed by deficits of between $12 and $15 billion through 2008. The state's share of Proposition 98 funding (COD's primary operating budget revenue source) is projected to grow by a modest 2.4% in 2003-04, and relatively slowly thereafter.

California's job growth has stabilized in 2002, but is slightly better than the U.S. as a whole. Recent job formation and unemployment in the Coachella Valley has fared better during the downturn and gradual recovery than the rest of California. Unemployment rates in the Valley (around 5.5%) during 2002 have been a full percentage point below those of the State, primarily because the downturn was fueled by the erosion of e-commerce – significant to northern California – and because the regional job market is quite different than the rest of California:

- Riverside County has less *information technology* and more *construction* and *manufacturing* than the state.

And, compared to the rest of Riverside County, the Coachella Valley (CV) has
- More tourism/hospitality/gaming and agriculture
- Less manufacturing and logistics (warehousing and distribution)

During the past decade, growth of CV jobs has been largest in hospitality, construction, trade, agriculture (as the rest of the County declined), education, and health services (see Appendix E).

Local respondents to a survey by the Coachella Valley Economic Partnership (CVEP, 2002) are very positive about the local business climate, nearly half indicating they will add jobs during the near term (Appendix C). Driving CV business are said to be the area's growth potential, reputation, quality of life, access to markets (overland, as CV air service appears problematic), and affordable land. Prominent among CV business liabilities is the *lack of skilled labor* locally.

Among the most rapidly growing jobs in the County and the Valley for which COD trains are:

Less-than-baccalaureate
- Nurses and other Health Care Practitioners
- Teachers Aids
- Welders and Cutters
- Electrical Engineering Technicians
- Sales Agents – real estate
- Legal Assistants and Technicians
- Mechanical Engineering Technicians

Transfer-Baccalaureate
- Teachers
- Managers and Executives
- Computer scientists and administrators
- Physicians and Surgeons
- Counselors and Social Workers

Other areas of robust job growth in the region for which COD may train include
- Public Safety and Security
- Business services (especially for Valley small businesses)

A major component of the Inland Empire industrial base is the "logistics," of receiving, warehousing and distributing goods to the greater Southern California region, currently centered to the west of COD's service area. The jobs and skills required for this operation go far beyond the truck drivers seen on area freeways. As always, information technology plays a prominent role in all of the relevant processes. Whether COD should train for this (somewhat

distant, outside-of-district) job market is a question to be addressed in relation to the college's mission and philosophy.

Job skills most important to CV business and felt to be most deficient among job applicants, according to the CVEP survey (2002), are:

- Attitude and work ethic
- Customer service (a combination of skills)
- Basic English

Also indicated as important skills for the workplace are teamwork, ethics, and problem-solving skills – all seemingly components of customer service.

These skills are consistent with findings of work by the National Council for Continuing Education and Training (2002) on a set of commonly-desired core competencies across multiple industries, which include: computer skills, math, reading, writing, customer service and communication skills.

The training programs ranked as most important for current employees in the CVEP survey are:
- Business
- Hotel management and hospitality
- Accounting and taxation
- Computer and information technology

While there are mixed opinions from employers about using the work site for employee training, the interest in use of distance learning, mostly in the evening, is substantial.

Culture and Environment

Coachella Valley culture is changing and with growth, technological change and gaming, issues about the local environment, transportation and quality of life emerge. Significant changes in values, lifestyles, family formation, and other factors affecting the quality of life – transportation, crime, air and water quality, child care and the like – can be expected as the Valley grows and as local and regional communities become ever more multi-cultural.

The implications of "virtual" entertainment, wearable or wireless handheld computers, and other such devices are unclear, but students will be entering COD far more conversant – than ever before – with information technologies and with a far greater need to understand not only the mechanics (and electronics), but also the moral and ethical ramifications of technological change.

Compared to the State and other parts of Riverside County, Coachella Valley (CV) has
- Fewer, but larger family households (Chart 11)
- More householders living alone
- Substantially more householders living alone and age 65+

Chart 11. Census 2000 Household Data

Percent of	*CV*	*Riv.Co.*	*CA*
Family Households	65%	74%	69%
Living Alone	28%	21%	24%
Living Alone, 65+	14%	9%	8%
Average	*CV*	*Riv.Co.*	*CA*
Average Size, Multi-Person Household	4.2	3.5	3.5

A number of other Valley conditions and trends are relevant for COD planning:

- Valley *energy* sources are split, with uneven pricing.

- Key, but modest actions – improved conservation, increased importation – should stabilize groundwater levels and assure an adequate quantity and quality of Valley *water* through 2035.

- Vehicle emissions account for two-thirds of all air pollutants and they adversely impact *air quality* as traffic increases in the Valley.

- *Transportation* studies show that commuting times in the Inland Empire and in the Coachella Valley – particularly along Highway 111 – are continuing to increase. Estimates show that travel times in the Inland Empire could nearly double over the next 25 years – peak hour freeway speeds declining from 27 mph to 16 mph – even if use of mass transit moves from 5% to 10% of overall ridership. Transportation accounts for nearly 30% of a student's cost of attending COD and, therefore, is of major importance to the college's accessibility (Appendix F).

Public Policy

Statewide public policies have weakened California's infrastructure, with a "backlog" estimated by the Center for the Continuing Study of the California Economy (2002) to be over $100 billion in schools, transportation, water, and public facilities. Transportation, housing and fiscal management are major on-going problems, although a number of federal and local policy issues also are of concern to COD as well:

- The Riverside County General Plan is undergoing revision and will outline growth policies for the unincorporated areas, many of which are in the Coachella Valley. Disposition of the many zoning requests that follow from this plan will determine much of the Valley's future growth and development.

- Delays in liberalization of federal *immigration* policy and changing enforcement of policies may impact Valley population and subsequent COD enrollment.

- *State operating budget support* for COD may not approach late 1990s levels – for some time – because of the revenue downturn and modest economic recovery noted above and because of the obligation of the State government for
  - Long-term energy contracts
  - Repayment of loans from pension funds

- The State's *"growth cap"* on funding for student enrollment at COD will likely continue and, if so, means that the College must share and secure operating resources from other sources:
  - Partnerships
  - Foundation activity
  - Contract and work-site training
  - Continuing and community education
  - Development of revenue-raising assets
  - Federal grants and contracts

- For capital outlay funding at COD, *Proposition 39 (2000)* provides a significant opportunity: an alternative method – with a smaller local voter approval margin and a greater variety of funding possibilities – to the long-existing "traditional bonds," repaid from local property levies. Many California community colleges have already utilized this tool to undertake a variety of delivery system investments not possible under prior policies.

- Passage of a statewide Higher Education capital outlay *bond measure* in Fall 2002, suggests that COD also may obtain funding for several capital outlay projects from the State. This involves a lengthy and laborious proposal and approval process.

Educational Policies, Practices, and Trends

As concerns about (1) student competencies, (2) proper use of learning technologies, (3) expanding competition, and (4) institutional accountability grow, community colleges confront new *challenges and opportunities*.

Much recent research and discussion about community college education focuses on:

- shifting from teaching to learning paradigms
- longer-term education (interspersed with work) as opposed to shorter-term job training
- imparting knowledge and meaning, rather than just data and information
- cooperative or collaborative, rather than competitive, approaches.

A proposed shift by COD to a *"learning college"* requires, among other things:

- Collaboration (within COD and with Valley communities)
- Adequate support for staff development and for applications of technology
- Appropriate facilities and equipment: technology infrastructure, active learning rooms, and other support
- Attention to assessment: identification and measurement of learning outcomes: needed skills and knowledge
- Formation of groups of learners, both in- and out-of-class

A number of specific external events and trends also are important for COD:

- The California Legislature recently completed work on a *new Master Plan for Education*, and legislation has been introduced for its implementation. Despite a number of reforms in recent years, K-12 expenditures per pupil rank 37th in the nation. While most significant reforms in the new Plan are for K-12, other features would alter the balance of state and local management of community colleges. Just how and when such measures would impact COD isn't yet clear.

- Development of *a new campus of CSUSB* is underway, located northeast of COD's main campus (see Map 1). Initially, CSUSB will offer upper division, non-degree, and, eventually, graduate instruction. UCR also is expanding its Valley presence with the Heckmann Center for Entrepreneurial Management, located adjacent to CSUSB and operating in partnership with it and with COD.

- The *prior preparation* of COD students is problematic. Because of population growth, service area high school graduate numbers are up, but (Riverside County) graduation rates are not. Rates of eligibility for CSU and UC among Riverside County high school graduates also are declining. Consequences of the new high school exit exam – to begin in 2004 – are uncertain.

- Disposition of the current controversy surrounding concurrent enrollment of K-12 students at community colleges will have implications for the way COD connects to its area high schools.

- *UC and CSU policies* on admissions and remediation will impact the number and kind of future COD enrollments.

- The activities of *other providers* (competitors or partners) are of major importance to COD. Among these providers are (1) other public community colleges and four-year institutions, (2) proprietary institutions, non-profits and agencies (University of Phoenix, Jones International, the U.S. Military, community-based organizations, and the like), and (3) business and industry (McDonalds, GM, Cisco, Oracle, Harcourt, and others).