A Report on the Goals of the
2014 – 2017 Strategic Plan

Office of Strategic Planning
May 4, 2018
Introduction

The Guttman College Council endorsed the *Strategic Plan 2014 – 2017* at its May 2014 meeting. The plan had four major goals (Goal 1, p. 13; Goal 2, p. 14; Goal 3, p. 15; and Goal 4, p.16) and 30 Strategic Action Plans (documented in Appendix IX, pp. 159 - 171).

The 2014 – 2017 plan identified “Guttman’s most important challenges... [to]:

- Manage the growth of students, faculty and staff from a small start-up to a fully realized community college with 3,000 to 5,000 students in a permanent home;
- Manage existing space, lease new space, and plan a permanent home for Guttman Community College;
- Continue to refine the educational model and roll out additional programs of study;
- Monitor student progress and engage in ongoing formative assessment across academic and administrative operations;
- Attain accreditation from the Middle States Commission on Higher Education;
- Build a true culture of collaboration and mutual respect; and
- Manage resources and raise outside funds crucial to developing the college and supporting its students.”

Enroute to attaining regional accreditation from the Middle States by vote of the Commission in June 2017, the College’s February 2017 Comprehensive Institutional Self-Study addressed these issues analytically, candidly and reflectively.

The constraints of physical space in the rental property at 50 West 40th Street account for the College falling just short of its enrollment projections for growth (p. 11, Table 1a). In fall 2017, 459 first time freshman began studies with a total headcount of 1,016. While we remain at this location (the lease has been extended to 2023), the maximum number of new students we can serve each year is 450, even with the use of classrooms at the CUNY School of Professional Studies at 31st Street. Nevertheless, we are committed to growth and are refining our model as we look forward to relocating to a permanent campus. In the meantime, we have creatively managed our 40th Street space use and have been responsive to community feedback regarding such use. We continue to seek the possibility of leasing additional space nearby, and in June 2017, we convened a building visioning working group with Central Office experts to begin the collaborative process of imagining and planning our permanent home long term.

Except for the first two, the College has successfully met the five other challenges in the bullet list above. These imperatives continue to be foundational to the growth and success of the College and are accordingly reflected in the next strategic plan 2018 – 2022 goals, sub goals and actions.
Goal One

The first goal of the Strategic Plan 2014 – 2017 captured the unique start up position of Guttman as the first new community college in CUNY in more than forty years and our mission to work more effectively through a new educational model with our largely minoritized young, urban students.

1. The Stella and Charles Guttman Community College will improve student learning, retention and graduation rates by implementing and refining a new educational model to serve our students.

The primary importance of getting the model right prioritized this goal first. To actualize the goal, 9 objectives were formulated, as follows.1

- 1.1 Continue to develop and refine a model of community college education that successfully integrates developmental and credit-bearing coursework;
- 1.2 Create and coordinate pre-college and immersion programs with the Guttman first year model;
- 1.3 Continue to develop effective academic support for all students;
- 1.4 Continue to develop advising and student support practices that are proactive, guided by inquiry and supported by research;
- 1.5 Continue to develop our peer mentor program to be a model for CUNY and nationally;
- 1.6 Continue to develop our use of ePortfolio and other innovative uses of academic technology in classroom instruction and institutional contexts;
- 1.7 Introduce additional programs of study as the college grows, compatible with our mission, student interests, and current societal and employment trends and provide students in these majors with clearly defined pathways to degree completion, further education and entry to careers;
- 1.8 Promote connections between college and the workplace by engaging partners from New York City business, non-profit organizations and governmental agencies; arranging experiential learning opportunities; and making use of the city as an extension of the classroom;
- 1.9 Use ongoing assessment to inform decisions about student learning and professional development and to improve institutional practice.

Check (√) “met” objective and check minus (√ -) “partially met” objective marks to the left convey our overall summative assessment of success in achieving or advancing an objective.

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While summative assessments are appropriate to the objectives,\(^2\) formative assessments are needed for our major goals, which continue in slightly altered form in the College’s next strategic plan. On one level, what we understand about our success depends on the lenses we apply to the subject. When measured overall by student persistence, two (31% for fall 2015 entering cohort) and three year (46% for fall 2014 cohort) graduation rates, the model is working remarkably well. When we disaggregate student outcomes data by race/ethnicity and gender, the results look less favorable and the need for further improvement is clear. Objectives “met” nevertheless represent ongoing works-in-progress. Objectives “partially met” might indicate a higher degree of difficulty despite diligent effort or a less than optimally formulated sub goal in the first place.

Goal Two

The second goal of the *Strategic Plan 2014 – 2017* prioritized the centrality of our commitment to keep students at the center of our thinking and decision-making (2.1)—a key to the mission of making the most of an extraordinarily rare opportunity to build a new public community college from the ground up to serve the people of the City of New York and beyond.

\[2. \text{ The Stella and Charles Guttman Community College will provide students with opportunities to achieve academically, grow socially, and contribute to the college and the community.}\]

As in the first goal, nine objectives were formulated to advance this goal:

- \(\checkmark\) 2.1 Maintain student learning as the primary driver for all decisions made throughout the institution;
- \(\checkmark\) 2.2 Increase our capacity to serve all our students, including those with special needs and difficult life circumstances;
- \(\checkmark\) 2.3 Support our commitment to high expectations for students' academic and personal growth;
- \(\checkmark\) 2.4 Equip students to use technology in their careers and throughout their lives;
- \(\checkmark -\) 2.5 Provide multiple opportunities for students to develop mentoring relationships with faculty and staff throughout the course of the year;

\(^2\) For a more detailed report on the objectives, see document on the shared drive N:\Strategic Planning\2017\2014 - 2017 Strategic Plan Report on Goals.
2.6 Continue to build on current extracurricular activities (clubs and activities that represent a diverse array of topics and interests), so students have more opportunities to become involved;

2.7 Engage students in planning and conducting professional development and assessment activities;

2.8 Spotlight student successes;

2.9 Include parents when appropriate as external stakeholders during admissions and following matriculation.

A number of goal 2 initiatives required collaborative planning and execution during a period of leadership turnover leading to objectives being only partially met. In some cases, other priorities supplanted fuller commitments. Space constraints limited the growth of opportunities to enlarge extracurricular activities (2.6). Nevertheless, important gains were achieved in 2.2 and other objectives, and Guttman remains committed to the touchstone of 2.1 that student learning and success is our primary driver.

Goal Three

The third goal of the Strategic Plan 2014 – 2017 concerned the College as a workplace environment for its employees.

3. The Stella and Charles Guttman Community College will be an exemplary environment in which to work, one that affords faculty, administration and staff ample opportunities to grow, to learn and to practice their profession at the highest standards.

3.1 Provide resources, including administrative and instructional technology, and sufficient staffing to both grow and sustain the college;

3.2 Continue to develop the structure and staff the college to meet the needs of an evolving organization;

3.3 Manage existing space, identify and lease new space, and with the Central Office and in consultation with the college community, plan a permanent home for Guttman Community College;

3.4 Raise outside funds and secure grants to supplement our existing resources;

3.5 Recruit and retain a diverse faculty and staff committed to the mission of the college and support and recognize their teaching, scholarship and professional accomplishments;
3.6 Develop a mentoring plan for new faculty onboarding;

3.7 Plan professional development activities over time on a schedule and calendar that allows for sustained attention to critical issues;

3.8 Create phased-in implementation and assessment plans across operating units to facilitate a proactive culture;

3.9 Create processes to preserve personal relationships possible at small scale as we grow larger and preserve the highly collaborative structure of our current instructional teams and assessment days.

Given the limits of our space, positing the goal of an “exemplary environment” is clearly aspirational, but one we nevertheless continue to aspire to. Considerable growth in faculty and staff as well as OAA leadership has occurred since 2014, leading to improved work processes. Surveys have revealed the need for additional work on campus climate and shared governance, work already begun and which will be continued in the next strategic plan. On the success side, Guttman has raised considerable outside funds and received a number of grants capped by its Title V HSI award of $1,883,422 in 2016. The CCE institution of SAGE unit planning (Systematic Approach for Guttman Effectiveness) was cited as exemplary by the Middle States evaluation team.

**Goal Four**

Guttman’s fourth major goal of its 2014 – 2017 strategic plan pertained to the College as an organization and its communication practices.

4. The Stella and Charles Guttman Community College will be a model learning organization by effectively communicating its mission and philosophy, being transparent in its operations, and sharing its knowledge widely with both internal and external stakeholders.

4.1 Incorporate the Guttman logo and rebrand into internal and external documents and marketing initiatives, including the GCC Website;

4.2 Create a knowledge-sharing system college-wide (including best practices in teaching; availability of resources for students, faculty, staff; instructional team decisions);

4.3 Clarify roles, purposes, and decision-making processes and outcomes.
Guttman’s Office of Communications successfully rebranded the website and is now undertaking an even more extensive upgrade. Recent initiatives like the *Guttman Gazette* are responsive to community-expressed needs for more information. The College has reclaimed and renovated the library website to be more functionally useful to faculty and students. And the new governance plan approved by the Board of Trustees in October 2017 to be effective February 1, 2018 should address 4.3 and lead to greater clarity of “roles, purposes, and decision-making processes.”

**Conclusion**

Of the 30 objectives in the *Strategic Plan 2014 – 2017*, 22 were met (73%) and 8 were partially met (27%).

In developing the College’s next Strategic Plan (2018 – 2022), the Strategic Planning Committee has met six times since September 2017, and the new Council Strategic Planning and Budget Committee has met twice, in addition to outreach efforts through a town hall on October 31st, consultation with stakeholders like the Student Government Association, presentations at All-College meetings, and presentation and discussion to the new Academic Senate. The Strategic Planning Committee carried forward the four major goals (folding goals 1 and 2 together) and added a goal on space. The sub goals and strategic actions of the next plan continue many of the emphases established in the first plan, with appropriate measures to take the college through the second half of its first decade. The work moving forward builds on the work accomplished.