

Strategic Plan 2006-2010
St. Mary's College of Maryland
(Subject to final approval by the SPC)

In the spring of 2003, President O'Brien charged the newly appointed provost to begin the work of designing the next College strategic plan. The membership of the former Executive Committee for Strategic and Financial Planning (ECSFP) was reconfigured in consultation with the administration, faculty, and students to include a broad cross-section of stakeholders. The Strategic Planning Committee (SPC) has met continuously since that time and guided an institutional discussion of mission and strategic priorities. A new mission statement has since been endorsed by the faculty and students, strategic priorities have been defined, and tactics to achieve these priorities have been developed. There will continue to be modifications; such is the nature of an evolving institution and the necessity for continuing review and assessment. As one well-known strategic planner has commented, "While the plan itself is indeed important, what is more important is that we all begin to think strategically." We believe we are making progress towards this goal.

During the 2005-2006 academic year, members of the SPC refined the tactics of the 2005 – 2009 Strategic Plan by creating action plans for each that are reasonable, fundable, assessable, and time-bound. In addition, the SPC added and removed initiatives to create a plan with the greatest relevance to the College community. With this work complete, the College has the second installment of a rolling five-year plan that can be prudently modified to meet the current and future needs of the institution.

As a result of this work, the Strategic Planning Committee maintained four strategic priorities, each of which had two to three critical tactics identified to provide direction to the members of the campus community. Identified priorities were to enhance and sustain academic excellence, increase and efficiently allocate resources, improve cohesiveness throughout the College, and provide a diverse student population an excellent education. As the Strategic Plan necessarily reflects the mission statement of the College, the mission follows on the next page.

Each priority had two or more identified tactics that required visibility and attention from the entire campus community. Dozens more tactics identified were delegated to smaller groups. Other tactics with discrete goals were taken under advisement and will be addressed at the appropriate time.

Mission Statement

(Approved by the Board of Trustees on May 13, 2005)

(Approved by the Faculty on February 24, 2004)

(Approved by the Student Government Association on October 20, 2003)

St. Mary's College of Maryland, designated the state's honors college, is an independent public institution in the liberal arts tradition. We promote scholarship and creativity by challenging our students to achieve academic excellence through classroom activities, experiential learning, and close relationships with faculty. Our faculty and staff foster intellectual, social, and ethical development within a community dedicated to diversity and access. We provide students with opportunities to understand and serve local, national, and global communities and to accomplish social change.

Founded on the site of Maryland's first capital, the College stands as a living legacy to the ideals of freedom and inclusiveness. Our beautiful residential campus on the banks of the St. Mary's River inspires our work, our play, and our commitment to the environment.

We value:

- Creative and intellectual exploration
- Diversity in all its forms
- Social responsibility and civic-mindedness
- Global engagement
- Environmental stewardship
- A spirit of community revolving around our students

St. Mary's College of Maryland pursues the following goals:

- Maintaining a high standard of academic excellence
- Strengthening student/faculty interaction through small classes and close collaborations
- Enhancing access, affordability, and diversity
- Providing an integrative curriculum and fostering intellectual autonomy
- Expanding global engagement opportunities for our students and faculty
- Promoting and maintaining a community built on respect
- Offering a variety of educational, cultural, and recreational experiences for the campus and local communities

Through discussion, the Strategic Planning Committee identified four strategic priorities and ten critical tactics. The president of the College has affirmed that these priorities and tactics are in line with the future she envisions for the College.

Enhance and sustain academic excellence

- Increase instructional funding in critical areas
- Internationalize the St. Mary's experience

Provide a diverse student population an excellent education

- Improve economic diversity of the student population
- Develop an Affirmative Action plan and designate a full-time AA/EEO Officer
- Diversify student body and provide enhanced support services

Increase and efficiently allocate resources

- Increase student-derived revenues
- Develop and implement a facilities master plan in coordination with the College's Strategic Plan.

Improve cohesiveness throughout the College

- Improve communication and programming between residential life, student affairs, and academic life
- Encourage the planning of inclusive campus-wide events
- Enhance respect for environment and facilities

Enhance and sustain academic excellence

At the core of the College's identity is its commitment to providing academic excellence in the education of an undergraduate student population. As our mission states, we achieve this excellence through strong interactions between faculty, staff and students, small classes, experiential learning, and close student-faculty collaborations. Hence, of highest priority for our strategic planning are all issues related to curriculum, governance, technology, and mentoring that enhance teaching and learning activities. Accordingly, strategic planning must prioritize the allocation of funds in areas most critical to the College's core mission.

As resources continue to be a concern, we need to protect St. Mary's distinct quality, guaranteed through a dedicated and qualified faculty, talented students, small classes, and assessment strategies by which we can measure our curricular goals and objectives. Attention must be given to attracting and retaining excellent faculty, and supporting faculty in their teaching and research. At the same time, the College must be able to communicate effectively its educational mission and academic reputation to prospective students and the public in general.

- **Increase instructional funding in critical areas.**

Flat operating budgets for several years have created challenges in many departments. Replacement and acquisition of necessary equipment are among the most critical needs. Further, the College should commit to an increase in full-time faculty to correspond with previous growth.

Objectives with Assessment Metrics

1. By 2009, second-year retention will be stabilized at a minimum of 90%.
2. By 2009, the College will increase the overall 6-year graduation rate to 76%.
3. By 2009, 70% of all graduating seniors will complete a St. Mary's Project (SMP).
4. Between 2006 and 2009, a minimum of 30% of one-year-out alumni and 50% of the five- and ten-year-out alumni will be attending or will have attended graduate or professional school.
5. Between 2006 and 2009, a minimum of 98% of one-, five-, and ten-year-out alumni will report satisfaction with preparation for graduate studies.
6. By 2009, at least 18% of graduates of St. Mary's College of Maryland will become teachers.
7. By 2009, advisee load by faculty will be reduced.

Critical Input Milestones

1. The College will add nine full-time tenure-track faculty members between FY08 and FY10. Concurrently, the adjunct faculty budget will decrease by \$250,000 by FY09.
Beginning: 8/07 Completion: 8/09
2. Instructional funding, including departmental budgets, will increase by \$200,000 by FY09.
Beginning: 8/05 Completion: Annual
3. The department chairs will provide annual assessment of operating needs of their areas and tie their requests to the overall mission of the College.
Beginning: 1/05 Completion: Annual
4. The Provost will provide an annually report to the SPC.
Beginning: 2/05 Completion: Annual
5. Instructional funding will be provided tied to the annual report of the Provost.
Beginning: 8/07 Completion: Annual

• **Internationalize the St. Mary's experience**

The College recognizes the contributions of a global perspective on the development of our students, faculty, and staff. As a result, opportunities will be made for teaching and instruction abroad, as will opportunities for international students to study at the College. The International Council has identified a number of initiatives to aid in developing the international programs at the College.

Objectives with Assessment Metrics

1. By 2009, 65% of St. Mary's graduates will have participated in an educational experience outside the United States.
2. By 2009, 60% of all full-time tenure-track faculty members will have had an academic experience outside the United States within the past five years.

Critical Input Milestones

1. The College will develop three new exchange / affiliate programs by FY09 and three new study tours annually.
Beginning: 8/06 Completion: 6/08
2. A course replacement fund will be developed to accommodate the increase in credit-bearing study tours.
Beginning: 8/06 Completion: 7/09
3. The number of SMPs of an international nature undertaken by students should increase at a rate consistent with increases in international experiences.
Beginning: 8/05 Completion: 7/09
4. The International Education office will provide an annual report on behalf of the International Council to the Strategic Planning Committee.
Beginning: 10/06 Completion: Annual

• **Ensure optimal use of classroom and lab instructional technologies.**

The College recognizes the importance of providing adequate resources and support for teaching and learning. The College will provide training, troubleshooting and access to learning enhancement tools for both faculty and students.

Objectives with Assessment Metrics:

1. Decrease Help Desk calls for software application by 40 % through training and assistance by September 2010.
2. Increased satisfaction with Course Management System (CMS) in surveys of faculty and students.

Critical Inputs and Timelines:

1. Identify target areas for technical training and increase the number of online tutorials and instructional workshops for faculty, staff and students.
Beginning: Fall 05 Completion: Annual
2. The college will select and implement a Course Management System (CMS)
Beginning: 5/06 Completion: 5/07

Provide a diverse student population an excellent education

St. Mary's College of Maryland acknowledges and values the potential of all people within our learning environment. Students, faculty, and staff in the St. Mary's College community differ by culture, ethnicity, physical ability, gender, sexual orientation, religious practice, socio-economic status, politics, and geography. We take advantage of our diversity to achieve a common vision that promotes learning excellence and fosters leadership in the service of society. While we celebrate diversity in all its forms, we recognize a need to make still greater efforts to become more inclusive and representative of all social sectors. As a result, we will focus our concern on providing greater opportunities for members of underprivileged social groups. By including and valuing new voices, we enrich the dialogue among students, faculty and staff within the College community.

The ideal of diversity has a natural home in a liberal arts institution. The best of the liberal arts tradition examines perspectives derived from many cultures, ethnicities, lifestyles, and interests. The goal of improving diversity within the College community is a mandate of our status as a public institution. It is therefore incumbent on us to reach out to all members of our society and provide opportunities for education and advancement. St. Mary's College of Maryland must seek ways to become more inclusive, even if this requires us to change in significant ways. We must ensure an active process to enhance diversity by continued assessment of our accomplishment and formulation of new goals.

- **The College will improve economic diversity.**

It is a major goal of the College to broaden the economic diversity of the student body. All students admitted to St. Mary's should have the opportunity to afford higher education, and specific efforts must be made to ensure that the population of the State of Maryland is adequately represented on campus, regardless of family income. This focus on access is consistent with the State of Maryland 2004 Plan on Postsecondary Education.

Family economic status is determined by the federal Expected Family Contribution (EFC) measure. For FY05, 15% of St. Mary's students were able to contribute less than \$5,000 toward the annual cost of a St. Mary's education, and 25% were able to contribute less than \$10,000. About 60% of St. Mary's students demonstrated no financial need based on their EFC.

The outstanding need of the St. Mary's student body (unmet need after family, federal, state, institutional and private grants or scholarships) can be measured by several indices. For FY05, the outstanding need relative to the cost of tuition and fees was approximately \$770,000. Measured relative to direct costs (tuition, fees, room, and board) the unmet need was \$3.53 million, and against comprehensive costs (which include books and living expenses) it was \$5.41 million.

St. Mary's provides both need-based and academic merit aid to students. Need-based grants are awarded to students with significant outstanding need. Merit-based scholarships are awarded need-blind. College expenditures for scholarships have remained constant on a per-student basis since 2001, while spending for need-based aid has increased several fold. In FY05, 47% of all institutional aid went to students with EFCs under \$10,000, and 60% to those with EFCs under \$20,000.

Objectives with Assessment Metrics

1. The College will meet the outstanding need of in-state students relative to the cost of in-state tuition and fees with need-based grants by FY06.

2. The College will provide additional need-based aid to in-state students with EFCs less than \$10,000 to help meet the cost of room and board charges.
3. The College will maintain the current value of merit scholarship offers to new students by increasing awards in years in which tuition and fees increase.
4. The College will use private support to promote economic diversity and provide additional need-based aid to both in-state and out-of-state students.

Critical Input Milestones

1. Each year through 2009, the College will increase the financial aid budget by the same overall percentage as tuition and fees increase.
Beginning: 8/05 Completion: 6/08
2. The College will conduct an analysis of the feasibility and outcomes from an additional \$250,000 in funding each year to need-based financial aid.
Beginning: 8/05 Completion: 4/06
3. The College will evaluate its ability to raise \$10 million for need-based aid during the next comprehensive campaign.
Beginning: 6/06 Completion: 6/07
4. Admissions will monitor the distribution of EFCs and report on the economic diversity of the student body.
Beginning: 10/06 Completion: 1/09

- **Develop an Affirmative Action plan and designate a full-time AA/EEO Officer.**

Diversity of faculty and staff inherently impacts the diversity of students, both in attraction and retention. At the same time, there may be highly qualified candidates for positions who may not be attracted to the College, either because positions are not promoted through the proper channels or candidates possess reservations about working in our rural community. The College resolves to provide a diverse community, in both visible and invisible diversity.

Objectives with Assessment Metrics:

1. The College will appoint an Affirmative Action Officer with the goal of appropriate representation of diverse populations.
2. The College, under the direction of the Affirmative Action Officer, will develop an Affirmative Action Plan.

Critical Input Milestones

1. The College will develop a full-time Affirmative Action Officer.
Beginning: 1/07 Completion: Ongoing
2. Recommendations of the Affirmative Action Plan will be reviewed by the Strategic Planning Committee and the College community.
Beginning: 12/07 Completion: 5/08

- **Diversify student body and provide enhanced support services.**

The College is committed to serving a heterogeneous student population and cherishes all forms of diversity. Any student entering the College may require support services, especially among those students feeling isolated or overwhelmed on campus. As a result, the College aspires to provide a range of advanced services available to all students. The Multicultural Advisory Committee is identifying strategies to identify and retain a diverse student population of all income ranges.

Objectives with Assessment Metrics

1. Increase to 20% the percentage of first-year students drawn from minority groups by 2009, with particular focus on Latino/a students.
2. Increase to 18% the percentage of all students drawn from minority groups by FY09.
3. Increase first-year to second-year retention to 90% by FY09.
4. Between 2006 and 2009, the 6-year graduation rate for all minorities will be maintained.

Critical Input Milestones

1. Task the offices of Admissions, Institutional Research, and other members of the campus community to investigate parity in academic preparation among diverse student sub-groups.
Beginning: 5/05 Completion: 1/07
2. Increase the number of paid tutors and summer programs that will help to transition students into the academic life of the College.
Beginning: 1/05 Completion: 5/05
3. Create a transition program for incoming students that may have trouble acclimating to the college experience.
Beginning: 7/06 Completion: 1/09
4. Create an assessment system to measure the impact of enrichment programs and to evaluate initiatives.
Beginning: 8/05 Completion: 1/09
5. An annual report will be presented to the Strategic Planning Committee by the Multicultural Advisory Committee.
Beginning: 9/06 Completion: Annual

- **Use technological resources to retain a diverse group of students.**

To meet the expectations and needs of our diverse student body from recruitment through graduation we will need to make more efficient use of technology in academics and student life

Objectives with Assessment Metrics:

1. Use a revised College website to support growth in out-of-state enrollment via to twenty-five percent (25%) for the incoming class by 2009.
2. The College's website and the availability of assistive technologies will demonstrate ADA compliance.

Critical Inputs and Timelines:

1. Redesign the College website to meet needs of academic programs, administrative offices as well as all students.
Beginning: May 2006 Completion: April 2007
2. Implement ADA-compliant technologies such as website features and assistive technology.
Beginning: July 2006 Completion: December 2006
3. Identify, evaluate and benchmark needs to ensure that all students have equal and fair access to technology necessary for academic success and participation in campus life.
Beginning: July 2006 Completion: December 2006

Increase and efficiently allocate resources

St. Mary's College of Maryland must meet the challenge of meeting long-term human, capital, equipment, technology, and financial resource needs to sustain the College's mission of affordable academic excellence.

Full-time student enrollment grew 15% between the fiscal years 1998 through 2004. However our unique State funding in the form of a block grant has led to an overall annual per-student decline in State funding since 1992. As such, we can no longer depend on current funding levels, especially when experts in the economics of higher education are forecasting that state support will continue to decline, regardless of the overall condition of the economy. Prioritizing College resources, developing new revenue streams, and efficiently allocating current resources must be inherent in the College's planning process: a strategic process of continual assessment and revision, consistent with budgetary planning and available resources.

- **Increase student-derived revenues.**

Increasing tuition-based revenues will permit the College to undertake new initiatives without sole reliance on additional funding from other sources. The College will continue to charge a competitive rate for tuition while

reserving adequate funding for need-based financial assistance. Out-of-state enrollment is a key contributor to tuition revenues and promotes diversity within the student body of the College.

Objectives with Assessment Metrics

1. By 2009, 25% of the incoming class will be from out of state.
2. Residence hall occupancy rates will be maintained at or above 97% of the existing or increased capacity on campus.
3. College services will be competitively priced considering higher education trends and the desired balance of the student body as projected in the Strategic Plan.

Critical Input Milestones

1. Annually review the efficacy of the out-of-state admissions enrollment initiative intended to increase out-of-state enrollments to 25% of the student body by FY09.
Beginning: 8/05 Completion: 7/09
2. The Enrollment Management Planning Group will ensure that resources required are accurately predicted and meet institutional goals.
Beginning: 8/05 Completion: 7/09
3. Plan for and construct new residence facilities to compensate for any facilities taken offline over the duration of the Strategic Plan.
Beginning: 8/05 Completion: 7/09
4. Maintain the Residence Hall renewal plan and provide adequate funding to ensure that student-desired quality in housing is met.
Beginning: 8/05 Completion: 7/09

• Develop and implement a Campus Master Plan in coordination with the College's Strategic Plan.

The College recognizes that facilities and grounds are a critical resource for academic, extra-curricular, and co-curricular programs of St. Mary's College of Maryland. These assets are an integral part of the identity of the College and provide benefits both instructional and aesthetic. Our facilities and grounds also enhance campus life and serve as prime recruitment and retention factors for all members of the campus community. As a result, the College must maintain a Campus Master Plan that is consistent with its mission and coordinated with the Strategic Plan of the College.

Objectives with Assessment Metrics

1. Complete a revision of the Campus Master Plan to develop capital development strategies in support of the Strategic Plan, address long-range facilities' needs, and support joint land use objectives of the affiliation with Historic St. Mary's City (HSMC) by fall 2007.
2. Goodpaster Hall and the new Student Services buildings will be constructed and opened by August 2007 and August 2008, respectively.
3. Complete the site plan for the replacement of Anne Arundel and the HSMC Heritage Museum by October 2005.
4. Complete the facility program and site plan for the Music and Auditorium Facility by October 2006.
5. Develop a campus plan to improve overall landscaping and site beautification by June 2006.
6. Increase deferred maintenance funding by \$800,000 through 2009.
7. Complete a plan (short-term and long-term) for faculty offices by July 2007.

Critical Input Milestones

1. The Office of Facilities, with input from other constituencies, will undertake a comprehensive revision of the Campus Master Plan that includes capital, plant, and operating budget projections.
Beginning: 1/07 Completion: 6/07
2. Ensure the provision of both non-capital equipment and operating budgets for the new Academic Building, new Student Services Building, and Boathouse.
Beginning: 12/04 Completion: 1/08

3. Increase funding for deferred maintenance and operating maintenance. Funded items include increase of deferred maintenance allocation for residence halls from \$264,000 in FY06 to more than \$675,000 by FY09.
Beginning: 7/05 Completion: 6/08
4. The Office of Facilities will provide to the Strategic Planning Committee a report detailing the use of staff for event and maintenance-related tasks.
Beginning: 12/06 Completion: 6/09
5. Task Physical Plant to coordinate planning for the operation of new academic facilities.
Beginning: 7/05 Completion: 6/08

- **Meet our Information Technology needs and allocate resources wisely.**

The College recognizes the need to review and evaluate the IT strategic plan yearly to keep pace with changing IT needs and tie it to the College's budgetary process.

Objectives with Assessment Metrics:

1. (Need measurables)

Critical Inputs and Timelines:

1. Campus Technology Support Services will involve the appropriate groups to revise the Information Technology Strategic Plan.
Beginning: 5/06 Completion: 4/07
2. The Director of Campus Technology Support Services will report on proposed allocations to the Strategic Planning Committee.
Beginning: 5/06 Completion: 4/07

- **Ensure the availability of technology resources.**

The College recognizes the importance of providing and supporting a seamless and transparent network (voice and data) infrastructure.

Objectives with Assessment Metrics:

(How are these measured)?

1. Develop a robust and reliable Campus network infrastructure that keeps pace with increased demand.
2. Measure and maintain current and future levels of technology use.

Critical Inputs and Timelines:

1. Produce a plan and funding proposal to address staffing needs.
Beginning: 9/06 Completion: 12/06.
2. Produce a plan to ensure that the physical technology infrastructure of the College is sufficient to meet future growth needs.
Beginning: 9/06 Completion: 12/06

Improve cohesiveness throughout the College

At St. Mary's College, we believe that a cohesive community should share a sense of mission and a commitment to strive toward common goals. Individuals within such a community should embrace the mission, and at the same time appreciate and respect each others' differences. The recent growth of the College has increased stress and reduced the opportunities for communication across campus. At the same time, financial constraints have limited our ability to adequately recognize everyone's contributions. This lack of cohesion is unhealthy and inefficient. Valuing the dignity of everyone's work and improving the sense of respect and mutual responsibility among the students, faculty, staff, administration, and board of trustees will create the open, cohesive community we desire. As a result, we will see improved morale, decreased property damage, increased productivity, and higher retention of both students and employees.

- **Improve communication and programming between residential life, student affairs, and academic life.**

The College is primarily a residential community for the majority of our students. As a result, it is imperative that all aspects of student life, academic and non-academic, show high levels of communication and coordination. This will continue to build the sense of community and reduce frustration among our students.

Objectives with Assessment Metrics

1. Effectively utilize the results of the National Survey of Student Engagement to audit success of residence life, student affairs, and academic life.

Critical Input Milestones

1. Task a representative group to consider an internal electronic communications strategy.
Beginning: 9/06 Completion: 5/07
2. Task SGA to investigate sponsoring co-curricular academic activities.
Beginning: 8/05 Completion: 5/09

- **Encourage the planning of inclusive campus-wide events.**

As a small community, the College will increase the number of campus-wide extra-curricular events and the inclusion of the whole community at these events. The College will develop and implement waterfront programming which draws students, faculty and staff to that area of campus, benefiting from our geographical location and assets currently available.

Objectives with Assessment Metrics

1. Community satisfaction surveys and results from NSSE will improve.
2. Attendance at planned events will increase.

Critical Input Milestones

1. Task the Events Committee and SGA student director of Campus Programming to implement Friday Afternoon Social program by January 2007.
Beginning: 8/06 Completion: 1/07
2. Task Waterfront staff to add three new non-credit waterfront activities during the 2006-2007 academic year.
Beginning: 2/06 Completion: 8/06
3. Task the Events Committee and SGA student director of Campus Programming to coordinate program schedules, reduce programming conflicts, and increase attendance at campus events.
Beginning: 2/05 Completion: 1/07

- **Enhance respect for environment and facilities.**

For the members of the campus community, the College is a place that inspires commitment to learning, work, and play. For the surrounding community, the College has a responsibility to serve as a good neighbor. Sustaining the environment and facilities increases the quality of life of our students and shapes the perceptions of potential students, employees, and our neighbors.

Objectives with Assessment Metrics

1. End-of-year residence hall damages will decrease to \$42.50 per student by FY09.
2. Recycling rates for solid waste will increase from 18% to 25% by 2008.
3. The College will reduce consumption of heating oil per square foot of occupied space by 15% by July 2008.
4. The College will reduce consumption of electricity per square foot of occupied space by 15% by July 2008.

Critical Input Milestones

1. Task the members of Residential Life and students to develop a plan to enhance respect for student residences and the campus grounds.
Beginning: 1/05 Completion: 8/05

2. The reconstituted "Campus Sustainability Committee" will be charged to develop methods for students, faculty, and staff to responsibly manage resources.
Beginning: 9/06 Completion: 12/07
 3. Increase environmental awareness and compliance, including assessing the need to hire a risk management professional by August 2007.
Beginning: 8/06 Completion: 8/07
 4. Create a residence hall damage and furniture management system.
Beginning: 3/05 Completion: 8/06
 5. Track damage caused by vandalism with the intent of decreasing total costs to the College.
Beginning: 8/05 Completion: 8/06
- **Use IT to improve communication between faculty, staff, students, alumni, and the greater community.**
The College recognizes that technology can improve communication and the flow of information.

Objectives with Assessment Metrics:

(measurable? – would it be participation?)

1. Use Information Technology to increase access to College events, classes, and other online resources.

Critical Inputs and Timelines:

1. Web Advisory Committee plans coordinated access to online resources.
Beginning: 4/06 Completion: 10/06.
2. Develop teleconferencing capability in New Student Services Building.
Beginning: 9/06 Completion: 4/09

- **Is there supposed to be another goal statement here?**

Objectives with Assessment Metrics:

(how do we measure these)?

1. Maintain current awareness of new technology for faculty, staff and students
2. Develop information sharing tools for faculty, students, and staff.
3. Streamline access to common technology utilities to meet the needs of students, faculty, and staff.

Critical Inputs and Timelines

1. Learning Systems Specialist Group and Landers Scholars will each plan and offer two or more workshops each semester.
2. The Library develop a local digital repository with support from USMAI/ FY06
3. Learning Systems Group will train college community on projects available for classroom use.
4. The Webmaster will train college community on web capabilities.
5. Use website redesign to decrease the number of logins to access utilities and information..