

Ongoing Planning for Sheridan College,

2001-2006 and Beyond

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Introduction

Since change is ongoing, this is a “work in progress” available for review and comment to all Sheridan College and Gillette Campus students, employees, Foundation and Advisory Board members, Trustees and area citizens. Please address comments to the President's Office. It will be updated as needed.

This ongoing strategic planning process builds upon the following plans developed in the last decade: 2000 Wyoming Community College System Strategic Plan; UW 2000 Statewide Educational Needs Assessment; Department of Employment Outlook 2000: Detailed Occupation Projections and Labor Supply; 1999 Gillette Campus Master Plan; CLARUS studies of 1998-99 for Sheridan College, including the Community Scan Report, High School Scan Report, Student Scan Report, Non-Returning Student Report, and Enrollment Audit Results; the Sheridan College Self-Study of 1997 and Report of the NCA Team; 1996 Sheridan College Report of the Master Plan Process; 1995 Sheridan College Development Plan; 1995 Proposal for Financial Assistance; MGT of America 1991 Strategic Educational Plan for Sheridan College, Educational Needs Assessment for Sheridan College; Gillette Campus Long-Range Educational and Facilities Master Plan; Update to the Campus Master Plan, 2002, Whitney Educational & Vocational Needs Assessment Study, 2002.

Our Vision

“The Northern Wyoming Community College District serves the lifelong learning needs of the people and organizations of Northeast Wyoming”.

The College works to serve people of all ages through education and training. Beyond serving the individual, the College recognizes that the businesses, industries and other organizations of the region require employee and organizational learning. The College strives to anticipate and meet those needs as the primary provider of education and training, or it serves as a facilitator of those services, using other providers.

This vision provides the College with a long-term framework for planning and action, even if many of our planning assumptions change. While technology, programs, and methods will undoubtedly change, the need for continued, life-long learning will certainly continue. The Sheridan College vision and mission will well serve the people of the district and state for many years to come.

Our Mission

“The mission of the District is to create student success through educational leadership.”

The College places the success of the student at the center of its operation. The student and the College define and measure student success in many ways. The College also recognizes that it is the one educational entity that entirely encompasses Sheridan County, as well as neighboring Johnson and Campbell Counties. This provides an opportunity to engage and partner with all of the school districts, creating a synergy that might not otherwise occur. This benefits students and the taxpayer.

Through its focus on student success and by serving as a nexus for all educational entities in the region, the College provides educational leadership.

Our Services

To achieve the mission, the College provides the following:

General education to furnish the student with a common core of knowledge appropriate to an Associate Degree holder;

Programs of study at the freshman and sophomore levels to prepare students to successfully transfer to the baccalaureate program of their choice;

Technical education and training to prepare students to enter and re-enter the job market, emphasizing employment opportunities in the College service area;

Continuing education to assist people in upgrading job skills for career advancement and in gaining personal enrichment;

Assistance to students in successfully meeting their educational goals through an appropriate variety of student support programs;

Help in the economic, cultural, and educational development of service area communities through its programs, the sharing of its human and physical resources, and through cooperative efforts with appropriate individuals and organizations.

This list of services defines a comprehensive community college, built on the foundation of transfer education, vocational education, and community development. Each service is necessary for the College to achieve its vision and mission, and to support the three fundamental functions.

Legislatively adopted mission (Enrolled Act 121, 1991):

The mission of Wyoming's community colleges is to provide access to postsecondary educational opportunities by offering broad comprehensive programs in academic as well as vocational-technical subjects. Wyoming's community colleges are low tuition, open access institutions focusing on academic transfer programs, career and occupational programs, developmental and basic skills instruction, adult and continuing education, economic development training, public and community services programming, and student support services.

Sheridan College of the Future

Planning assumptions:

The College vision will continue to focus on lifelong learning for the people and organizations of the region.

There will be no statutory changes regarding the operation of community colleges. The College will continue to be owned and operated by the citizens of Sheridan County, with supplemental State funding for operations and maintenance. A State entity will coordinate the community colleges, while an elected Board of Trustees will provide governance. Ex officio Trustees will represent the Advisory Boards from Johnson and Campbell Counties.

Partnerships with area public and private schools will continue to develop, as will programs with those who are home schooled. Training partnerships will increase with area business/industry.

Program areas of emphasis will continue to be university transfer; health care (dental hygiene, massage therapy, nursing); law enforcement; agriculture (horticulture, production agriculture, food/meats science, biotechnology); metals fabrication (machine tool, welding); transportation (diesel, automotive); information technology (networking; software applications); and intercollegiate athletics/forensics.

With the completion of the Sheridan and Gillette Campus Plans, total headcount enrollment will initially reach 1750 at Sheridan College (1289*); 1500 at the Gillette Campus/Campbell County (1102*); and 200 (160*) at the Buffalo Center/Johnson County. This will include full-time enrollments of 890 at Sheridan College (642*); 300 at the Gillette Campus/Campbell County (254*); and 25 at the Buffalo Center/Johnson County (9*).

FTE targets are: Sheridan 1440 (1038*); Gillette/Campbell County 765 (608*); Buffalo/Johnson County 100 (64*).

The College will continue to enroll (headcount) at least 5% of the population of Sheridan and Campbell Counties (5.1* and 5.0*), and 4% (4.2*) of the Johnson County population.

The Sheridan College Campus Master Plan will be regularly updated and completely implemented.

The Gillette Campus facility will be completed and Sheridan College will continue to serve Johnson and Campbell Counties. (*Indicates most recent fall enrollment).

The overall operating cost for the College will follow the Higher Education Price Index (HEPI) and continue to increase by at least 5% annually.

State block grant funding will increase at 3% to 5% annually.

Salaries and benefits will annually consume less than 75% of the unrestricted operating budget.

Annual instructional equipment needs for update and replacement will continue to increase, (approximately \$300,000 for Sheridan College and \$250,000 at the Gillette Campus annually).

The assessed valuation of Sheridan County will continue to increase and the current 1 mil and .5 mil levies will continue.

The Campbell County BOCHES will continue to levy .5 mil, with most of the revenue going to the support of Gillette Campus programs and facilities.

The Johnson County BOCHES will consider levying .5 mil to help support the Johnson County operation.

Sheridan County/Northeast Wyoming will continue to grow at its current rate and with similar demographics. The number of high school graduates will continue to decline and the average age of the citizens will continue to increase or stabilize.

The variety of job opportunities will continue to be limited, driven by the energy economy, government, tourism, health care, and by small businesses.

Housing will continue to be relatively limited and expensive for students and employees.

The level of support from area foundations will continue at current or increased levels (Scott, Perkins, Griffith, Bryan, Whitney, Watt, Welch, Wolf Creek, Wallick Family, Napier, Tucker, Thorne Rider, Thickman, Little, Community Vitality, Surrena, Zullig, First Interstate, Wyoming Community, Nickerson, MDU Resources, McGraw, Love, etc.) as will assistance from the Sheridan College Foundation and Campbell County Higher Education Foundation.

Technology will continue to offer new and different ways for students to learn and for the College to serve. The College will adopt appropriate technology as resources allow.

Sheridan College Operation

Role: Sheridan College will continue to refine its role as a comprehensive community college, providing university transfer, vocational education, and community development, along with the appropriate associate degrees and certificates. The College will continue to develop as an educational center for lifelong learning, providing additional certificates (professional and institutional) and associate degrees. It will work with other entities to provide a wide array of educational opportunities for all area residents, using a variety of delivery systems. Additional baccalaureate and master's degrees from other providers will be available through Sheridan College, augmenting the number presently offered.

Customer: The primary customer will continue to be the full-time student, most of whom are ages 18-25. While the College will endeavor to serve all postsecondary students in the service area, it is the full-time student that provides the critical mass that allows the College to function as a comprehensive college. The portion of the population that makes the critical mass of full-time students will continue to decline in Wyoming, so the competition for them will become even more intense. Fortunately, Sheridan is a desirable place and the recruitment of these students from outside the area is possible. A good array of instructional programs is in place and is constantly being reviewed and developed. Likewise, the new Gillette Campus facility will attract additional traditional and non-traditional students from Campbell County.

Along with desirable programs, the completion of the campus master plan and the enhancement of student life is the key to enrollment growth of full-time students. The Sheridan College campus envisioned in the 1996 Master Plan will adequately serve 2,000 students and 300+ resident students (currently Casper has 502 student beds; Northwest 650, Western 345, Sheridan 250, Eastern 159, Central 135, and LCCC 88). Part-time students, who tend to be age 25 and older, will continue to make up the largest part of the headcount enrollment. Flexibility in college services, programs, and courses will continue to be the basis for growth in this population. Alternative learning experiences will increase, including open entry/open exit opportunities and on-line courses, as will various professional certifications, and non-credit courses. Financial aid for these students will be developed.

Programs: The College will continue to offer a broad array of programs and courses throughout its service area, and beyond. Programming will continue to reflect the needs of the people and organizations of the region, with more flexible and rapid response to education and training needs. Educational programs will also continue to be developed and refined to provide students with rewarding career opportunities outside the service area. In the vocational programs, more direct linkages with the industry will occur, even to the extent that the company or industry provides the curriculum and certification. This is currently true in the construction and electrician apprenticeship programs, and in several of the computer networking and software

programs. The College will revise and renew its Business/Industry office and increase its contracted training. The offering of a technical baccalaureate degree will be considered. The transfer program will enter into more articulation agreements with colleges and universities across the nation and around the world. To create a niche in this competitive market, the College will incorporate more student travel, exchange and internships to enrich the transfer program.

There will be more flexibility in the delivery of courses and programs. Demonstrated student competence will continue to replace seat time, so the time a student is enrolled in a particular course or program will be directly related to his/her progress. Technology and flexible scheduling will also allow individuals or groups to progress at their own speed. Faculty will guide student learning, rather than be the center of it. Learning opportunities will occur throughout the day, week, and year, depending on student demand. Students will enter and exit learning activities more frequently. Certification will become a more prevalent outcome.

Likewise, there will continue to be cross enrollment among college students, so that many Sheridan College students will be enrolled concurrently at one or more other colleges. Learning may be provided at Sheridan College or electronically from other colleges at a variety of sites. Nearly any degree and certificate will be available to Sheridan College students.

Qualified high school students will continue to enroll for college courses and programs throughout the day, week, and year. This may occur at their high school, electronically at home or other site, or at the College. They may enroll as regular college students or in the concurrent programs with various high schools. Most of the concurrent enrollment will be delivered in the high schools, allowing high school students to remain with their peers for high school courses, activities, and personal growth and maturation. However, both the declining numbers of qualified students and the “prestige” of AP courses may diminish concurrent enrollment numbers.

The transfer program will support a large concurrent enrollment offering at the area high schools, with continued articulation and interaction between faculties. The emphasis will be on course variety and quality assurance, with the guarantee of full transfer to any college in the nation. Any high school student who is prepared for college work will be able to utilize this service. The development of a HS + 1 program will lead to a one year Associate degree for those who fully participate in the concurrent enrollment program.

There will be growth in the enrollment of high school students in vocational programs as career pathways are further defined. All Sheridan College vocational programs will also include concurrent enrollment linkages. Some of this education will be provided at the College, particularly when specialized equipment and faculty are required.

Student Development: The College believes that education includes personal growth

and development. This is most pronounced for the recent high school graduate, who typically experiences life away from home for the first sustained period. The College will continue to provide an environment and programming where this student can become a responsible, independent member of the community. Various extracurricular activities will continue to be created for this purpose, particularly as the number of students in this category grows with expanded student housing. Expanded recreational and student leadership facilities provided in the Commons and recreation addition to the Bruce Hoffman Golden Dome will support these efforts.

Learning assistance and remediation will continue to be developed and enhanced. Most entering students will require some level of remediation, which if successful, will increase student retention and success. Technology will play a greater role in the development of basic skills. Likewise, student career planning and placement will expand, as will educational advising, so that each student has clearly identified educational and career goals and a plan to achieve them.

Employees: Faculty and staff will increasingly be employed on a variety of flexible arrangements. Faculty may work for other colleges at the same time and they may determine their professional schedules, based on their ability to produce successful students. Likewise, payment will become more flexible.

Community Development and Involvement: Through the Center for a Vital Community, the community will become more engaged in the discussion and resolution of community issues and more relevant and accurate information will under gird the process. The quality of leadership, at all levels, will improve. College trustees, employees and students will continue to become more involved in educational, social, cultural, economic and recreational relationships with community organizations. The significance of the resulting impact on the community will become more evident and better documented.

Strategic Issues

Enrollment Situation

Declining number of traditional, full-time transfer students (SC).
Declining number of non-traditional students (outreach).
Significant number of concurrent enrollment high school students.
High employment /low unemployment provide alternatives to college
Declining number of high school graduates (MT / WY)
Only about 50% of area HS grads go directly to postsecondary education
Increasing competition for all students
Most high school graduates require some developmental coursework

Goal

Develop critical mass so the College can be operated more effectively and efficiently, and offer an appropriate array of courses, programs, and services.
Upon completion of the Sheridan and Gillette Campus Master Plans, targets: 1750 headcount for Sheridan College (300+ residents), 1500 headcount for Gillette Campus, 200 headcount for Buffalo Center.
Provide additional business/industry training.
Increase the % of high school graduates who go directly to college.
Increase the success rate and transition into college for students needing developmental assistance.

Strategy

Increase enrollment
 Market to all potential students (FT/PT)
 Directly engage all potential students in recruitment
 Expand advertising quantity and quality
 Engage students earlier to encourage postsecondary attendance
 Recruit regionally
 Manage class scheduling/delivery to focus on convenient student options
 Continue to increase scholarship/aid opportunities
 Improve retention through better advising/scheduling
 Update current programs, develop new ones, eliminate when warranted
 Continue to evaluate all courses, programs and positions
 Increase the participation of Campbell County HS graduates
 Provide 300+ beds at Sheridan College and related Commons, and complete Campus Plan for Sheridan College.
 Develop new college facilities in Gillette for diesel and welding
 Revive Business/Industry Center, including staffing

Faculty/Staff Situation

- Key faculty/staff positions nearing retirement
- Competitive market for skilled people
- Our salaries at the regional average/behind national average
- Good paying alternative jobs
- Limited job options for spouses
- Limited /costly housing
- Wyoming not attractive to many potential employees from outside the region

Goal

Employ and retain a group of excellent faculty and staff

Strategy

- Continue to improve entry salaries/benefits and maintain at or above regional average
- Develop endowments for specific disciplines to enhance salary/benefits
- Review the concept of salary schedule/revise compensation system
- Consider employment incentives in hiring
- Grow our own faculty/staff
 - Target funds/released time and other incentives to achieve college goals
 - Work directly with graduate programs to identify/recruit

Efficiency Situation

- Average class size (primary measure of efficiency) 15/16 students
 - National average closer to 25
- More space per student than national average
 - Exceed classroom/lab space standards
- Greater variety of courses/programs per student than national average
- High percentage of dedicated space limits multi-use
 - 72 % of unrestricted operating budget to salary/benefits (FY 03)

Goal

Increase average class size to 22 in lecture classes and 15 in lab courses.
Utilize existing facilities 80% in a 12-hour day, 4 days/week; increase summer and weekend use.

Strategy

- Utilize most important and costly resource (personnel) more efficiently
- Increase class size where appropriate
- Better utilize FT faculty to create full loads
- Review program/service mix to attain effective use of resources
- Refurbish current facilities for better learning/services

Revenue Situation

Comparator formula controls 4 mil state allocation
Sheridan College currently near its comparator revenue/student; farthest behind of the Wyoming colleges (8/02)
Benefit only if behind comparator median revenue/student
Funds come from block grant
Student fees/1 mil levy/BOCES independent of formula
1 mil and BOCES growing with local valuation
Used for major maintenance/equipment/technology (Sheridan College)
BOCES used for Campus operation (Gillette Campus)
Student fees flow with enrollment
Beginning to develop endowment funds in SC Foundation for operation
Manage foundation gifts with long-term horizon

Goal

Provide revenue 25% higher than comparator median/student FTE

Strategy

Increase enrollment/operating efficiency
Consider increasing student fees
Consider vote to increase local levy from 1 to 5 mils (\$200,000/mil)
Develop endowments
Continue to engage local foundations/donors

Facilities and Equipment Situation

Gillette welding and diesel facilities are inadequate
175 new residence hall beds/90 old beds being used
Commons needs upgrades/remodel/expansion
Traffic and parking need development, including pedestrian mall
Applied Technology Center (Tech Center) needs major upgrades/remodel
Mohns Center needs repair/upgrades
Whitney Building needs upgrades/remodel
Griffith Building needs renovation
Need to upgrade/expand fitness lab in Dome and add recreation space
Need more maintenance/storage space
New Gillette classroom facility in progress
Constant need to upgrade instructional and operational equipment
Current instructional equipment needs are \$750,000-\$1 million.

Goal

Build new diesel and welding facilities at the new campus
Completion of the Sheridan College Master Plan will provide the College with complete and exceptional college facilities to maximize student learning; attract and retain students; and develop outstanding faculty and staff.
Provide students and faculty with excellent instructional equipment.

Strategy

- Implement Sheridan College Campus Master Plan, including...
 - Add new beds to total 300+, adding about 80+ FT students
 - Upgrade Commons to serve more resident and commuting students
 - Key to student involvement with SC/retention
 - Remodel/upgrade Applied Tech Center to expand labs/enrollment
 - Expand recreation space/facility
 - Remodel/upgrade Whitney Bldg. for better learning environment
- Complete the Gillette facility and plan for new technology facilities
- Griffith Memorial Bldg. renovation underway
- Renew Whitney Benefits commitment to Master Plan completion
- Develop endowments for long-term operation and maintenance of specific facilities
- Continue to allocate growing 1 mil to major maintenance (SC)
- Develop private funding for instructional equipment through the Foundation
 - Develop an endowment to provide income for equipment
- Investigate alternative funding sources, including general obligation bonds, capital facilities tax, revenue bonds, a voted 5 mil levy and other private sources

Sheridan College Goals 2001-2002

1. We will continue to focus on and improve our responsiveness to those we serve.
 - a. Further develop the district concept by promoting the best ways to deliver services across Sheridan, Johnson and Campbell Counties.
 - b. Continue to develop and enhance partnerships and relationships with the communities in our service area:
 - i. The school districts in the three counties served,
 - ii. Its advisory committees,
 - iii. Economic development groups,
 - iv. Other institutions of higher education,
 - v. Within the NWCCD community.
2. We will recognize and develop leadership in our operations and individuals.
3. We will continue to innovate when appropriate
 - a. Continue to explore and make use of appropriate technologies by identifying, evaluation, and implementing technologies that have the greatest potential to the District.
4. We will demonstrate quality in all we do.
 - a. The employees, in cooperation with the Board, will develop a plan to raise community awareness and support.
 - b. Review the compensation package for all employees.
5. We will continue to develop student learner-focuses educational opportunities.
6. We will retain local control while cooperating with the Wyoming Community College Commission.
7. The Board will meet at least annually to review and update these goals, and evaluate its performance and the College President's performance.

