

**Somerset Community College**  
**2008-2009 ANNUAL PLANNING RETREAT**  
**Historic Boone Tavern – Berea**  
**November 15-16, 2007**

**INTRODUCTION:**

Participants from all Academic and Administrative Planning Units – represented by Students, Staff, Faculty, and Administration of Somerset Community College – met at Boone Tavern in Berea, Kentucky, on November 15-16, 2007, for an Annual Planning Retreat. Dr. Barbara Jones, Coordinator of Planning, guided the participants through the organized planning process. [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#)

The College provides resources for an annual planning retreat at an off-site location to encourage full focus on the planning process away from day-to-day college responsibilities and distractions. The purpose is to look at critical planning areas, evaluate the planning actions and outcomes and then determine the status of our College. Somerset Community College uses an 18-month planning cycle with a 6-month overlap during which a new planning cycle is being developed. **The primary focus for the 2008-2009 Planning Retreat was SACS compliance, the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) and development of Planning Initiatives.**

Key elements of the planning process are:

- To provide an overview of the progress toward achieving strategic goals, individually by planning units, and by the College as a whole.
- To develop new annual goals for Somerset Community College.
- To navigate the student learning outcomes closer to goals of the College.
- To maintain SACS compliance.

SCC also welcomed guest participant, Lenny Unbehagan, Dean of Institutional Effectiveness, Nunez Community College in Chalmette, Louisiana.

**10-Minute Snapshots:**

Individual PowerPoint presentations are available online.

**Tracy Casada – Students and Enrollment [\[3\]](#)**

**Key Points Identified:**

- Exceeded Fall 2007 enrollment goal of 7001 by 15.5% (7299)
- Increased Fall 2007 FTE 3715 (Fall 2006 3421)
- Increased scholarships awarded for Fall 2007
- Increased enrollment of traditional students (age 25 and under)
- Improved retention
- Increased minority access
- KCTCS has set new targets: Fall, Spring, and Annual

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Areas for Emphasis Identified:

- Retention
- Minority Recruitment
- Needs and Learning Expectations of Traditional Students (age 25 and below)
- Enrollment target

**David Wiles – The Economy [4]**

Key Points Identified:

- Current unemployment rate at 6.4% (2006 5.8%)
- Inverse relationship exists between unemployment and increased enrollment
- Cost impact on students for gasoline, childcare, and transportation

Areas for Emphasis Identified:

- Innovating ways to attract students
- Train students for the jobs available
- Career counseling – Career Planning/Placement Office
- Evening/Weekend programs for working students

**Dr. Honeycutt – Instructional Programs [5]**

Key Points Identified:

- Previous year's focus: performance, technology, communication, and new pathways
- Future focus: student learning outcomes and curriculum offerings
- Provide instructional technology for instructors along with determining the return on investment (quid pro quo)
- College footprint is becoming larger
- Casey is considering a greater college presence

Areas for Emphasis Identified:

- Maintaining academic excellence in times of rapid growth
- Open access model
- Preparation of faculty and staff for demand for alternative course delivery
- Changing ages/generation of students and learning needs
- Cyberspace
- Enrollment realization (efficiency)
- Advising and online courses

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**Tim Zimmerman – FY08 Budget Overview [6]**

Key Points Identified:

- SCC maintains a (nearly) \$50 million budget
- College is financially sound
- Planning drives the budget

Areas for Emphasis Identified:

- Faculty and staff need to understand planning process (planning drives the budget, not vice versa)
- Retaining online participants (tuition dollars)
- CPE initiative to not increase tuitions at community colleges could cause problems
- Recruiting and maintaining qualified and excellent faculty

**Dr. Dexter Alexander – Transparency of Planning and Budgeting Process**

Key Points Identified:

- Navigation of new SCC website, Institutional Effectiveness link [7]
- Review of 2007-2008 Institutional Effectiveness unit planning calendar [10]

Areas for Emphasis Identified:

- Non-duplication of Resource Requests (particularly for computers and personnel)
- Budget hearings are open to all.
- Unit plans should be written and developed around the Planning Initiatives, even if there are no resource needs

**Leadership Development Exercise:**

Under the direction of Dr. Jo Marshall and Natalie Gibson, retreat participants joined in a development of leadership exercise to emphasize leadership style, individual strengths and creative thinking. The exercise also underscored the need for leaders to make every effort possible to include others in goal planning and in the execution of strategies.

**Be inclusive!**

## UNIT PLANNING

### 2006-2007 Annual College Planning Initiatives: Assessment [8]

Report by Amy Beaudoin

### 2008-2009 Planning Initiatives: Development of Initiatives

Using 2007-2008 Planning Initiatives [9] as a starting point, retreat participants collaborated in work teams to reevaluate, improve and expand measurable College initiatives for 2008-2009 in support of KCTCS strategic goals [11] and SCC strategic goals [12].

See: **2008-2009 SCC Planning Initiatives [13]**

### Discussion highlights during development of 2008-2009 Planning Initiatives:

- Recommend the *Technology Replacement Plan* include both computer and instructional technology along with proper training and evaluation of usage
- Recommend full-service computer labs at all SCC locations
- Recommend establishing an RSVP survey team to evaluate technological equipment needs, separate from annual planning resource request mechanism
- Recommend elimination of \$5 online registration fee
- Recommend a professional development tracking database be implemented
- Recommend formation of a Green Team to explore savings strategies
- Recommend moving toward web cam via interactive web rather than ITV allowing for greater student access and flexibility

### 2008-2009 Unit Plans: Strategies for Writing Unit Plans

Dr. Barbara Jones

Unit plans should be written and developed around the Planning Initiatives (PI), even if there are no resource needs. If the PI is part of unit's purpose or functioning, identify what part the unit will have in accomplishing the PI. Every planning unit should have at least one tie in to a planning initiative.

What do unit planners do now? **Be inclusive!** Planners should meet with their departments in mini planning sessions. Using the PIs as a starting point, determine collaboratively how each planning unit can contribute in order to achieve the established objectives. Use action verbs when writing plans, and pay attention to measurability. Not all resource requests must require funding, but may serve to document use of available resources. The resource request process is very open and transparent, but departments must ask for what they need. Now is the time for vision.

***Important deadline! 2008-2009 unit plans are due December 20.***

**SACS Compliance and the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP):**

Report by Dr. Barbara Jones:

SCC's SACS Comprehensive Compliance Report (CCR) will be 95% complete by the end of December 2007. January through March 2008 will be devoted to turning the CCR into an electronic document that will be submitted to SACS in Atlanta. SCC will be combined with the other community colleges in our cycle and will be scheduled for an On-Site Review. SCC will have a second chance to respond to any identified non-compliant issues and must prepare a focus report addressing the non-conformities. During September/October, the SACS team will be on campus for one day to review and ensure that SCC is totally compliant. Basically, there are three opportunities for compliance. The On-Site Review Team will look at the Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP). Somerset Community College has determined critical thinking to be the plan focus.

Report by Sharon Whitehead:

Sharon reported on her recent trip as a SACS Visiting Team Observer at Jones County Junior College in Mississippi and emphasized that every aspect of a college (lawn, gardens, buildings, activities, employees, etc.) must support student learning.

SCC's topic for our QEP is critical thinking. Information and input was solicited from community people, SCC advisory boards, employees, employers, and students. Critical thinking was clearly determined to be a critical issue for college students and people across the globe in order to enhance overall skills, to become better students, and to be better learners.

The QEP calls attention to critical thinking and how to teach it across divisions, classrooms, offices, etc. It requires honing the skills needed to become independent thinkers and learners. Reading and accessing information helps to solidify and develop one's own thoughts. The goal for faculty development is to help the faculty learn how to be critical thinking teachers and learn how to think critically about their subjects.

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**“I teach math and critical thinking.”**

**“I teach English and critical thinking.”**

**“Critical thinking teaches everyone to learn how to learn to be lifelong learners.”**

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Members of the QEP development team offered some insight about incorporating critical thinking into curriculums:

- CIS: Utilize hands-on web enhancements to ensure students know how to do what we say they are learning.
- SOCIAL SCIENCE: Develop critical thinking handouts – questions requiring evidence-based documentation. Students analyze what is being discussed, explore available supportive research, and engage in approaching topics from different perspectives.
- COUNSELING: Critical thinking stimulates a student’s perspective and self-exploration. Students must make career choices, and a change of mind is time and money. Career research, study of work environments and job shadowing are useful tools to aid students.
- EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION: Instructors are asked to look at what they are already doing and pull from that in order to enhance and emphasize critical thinking into the program.
- DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION: Emphasis on critical thinking is an opportunity for students at the front end to translate critical thinking into their entire education – to being a good student, a good parent, etc.
- ALLIED HEALTH: Critical thinking is common sense. Technical programs are unique in that critical thinking is incorporated into the entire curriculum -- assessing a situation, setting a goal for a desired outcome, determining the outcomes, and evaluating. Critical thinking forces one to look beyond the task.

**CONCLUSION:**

Dr. Jo Marshall and Dr. Tony Honeycutt closed by reiterating the significance of the annual planning retreat allowing leadership from across all SCC locations and departments the opportunity to engage in focused dialogue. The retreat marked the assessment of the 2006-2007 planning cycle, development of the 2008-2009 planning initiatives and preparation for the 2008-2009 unit plans.

2008-2009 unit plans are to be completed by December 20 and will be available online. Resource Requests are due February 1, which begins the budgeting stage. Planners were reminded of the significance of providing clear, concise evidence when submitting resource requests. The evidence is paramount when the Resource Request and Leadership Teams evaluate and prioritize the list to determine college funding decisions.

**REFERENCE LINKS:**

- [1] PARTICIPANTS – 2008-2009 Planning Retreat – Nov 2007
- [2] PLANNING UNITS - 2006-2007 Academic and Administrative Planning Units
- [3] PowerPoint: Students and Enrollment
- [4] PowerPoint: The Economy
- [5] PowerPoint: Instructional Programs
- [6] PowerPoint: FY08 Budget Overview
- [7] Institutional Effectiveness, SCC Website
- [8] 2006-2007 PLANNING INITIATIVES: ASSESSMENT
- [9] 2007-2008 PLANNING INITIATIVES
- [10] 2007-2008 Institutional Effectiveness Unit Planning Calendar
- [11] KCTCS Strategic Goals
- [12] SCC Strategic Goals
- [13] 2008-2009 PLANNING INITIATIVES