

COMPLETE COLLEGE GEORGIA

Dalton State College Campus Plan

Introduction

Dalton State College is pleased to participate in the Complete College Georgia initiative, as the initiative encompasses and expands some of the self-assessments we were either already doing or were developing plans to do in the near future. Complete College Georgia has given us a more structured format within which to work as well as provided us with a vehicle to engage the overall campus community across divisions through a variety of venues. Our plan broadens the opportunities for personnel in academic affairs and student services to collaborate more fully in achieving shared institutional goals. The plan supports our institutional mission by encouraging the development of “broad access to quality education”; “partnerships between the College and Northwest Georgia businesses and industries, governments, and schools”; “high levels of student achievement”; and especially “continuous improvement . . . through the use of inclusive, participatory planning and meaningful assessment.”

Part I: Goals and Data Analysis

Following the system-wide Complete College Georgia summit in Athens in March, our five-member team became the CCG Steering Committee at Dalton State. This Committee is comprised of the Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA), the Vice President for Enrollment and Student Services (VPESS), the Director for Institutional Research, the Assistant VPES, and a professor of psychology. The Steering Committee set up a regular weekly meeting time to both work on plan development and review data and relevant literature. The vice presidents discussed the CCG initiative with their respective leadership teams, and the VPAA made a presentation about the initiative at the end-of-year faculty meeting. Steering Committee members further discussed the initiative at various meetings and with other individuals on campus. On June 6, 2012, all personnel at the Director level and above—across divisions, including the President—attended an all-day retreat focused on team building, data sharing, and framework development for our CCG plan. The ideas from the retreat were captured in a matrix and will be shared with the campus community for feedback. The community is also being kept informed through newspaper articles, presentations at civic groups, and the Archway Collaborative.

We initially noted we needed to strengthen our data collection, management, and analytic capabilities. Since the March summit, we have developed a system to centralize most of the data we need to capture, but we still do not have the tools to do analytics—particularly predictive analyses. We discussed our data system needs with the Chancellor and his staff at our spring budget hearing, and we were awarded a line item in our FY13 budget to fund a data analytics software package and hire a research analyst. We have now hired the analyst and purchased the software package, iDashboards. We’re also considering an analytics package produced by Desire2Learn when our campus converts to the D2L learning support system in spring 2013. Consequently, we should see improvement in our data efforts for the new school year.

Our data collection and analysis process is a multi-departmental effort. Our Office of Computing and Information Services mines student Banner data and creates a database easily accessible by our data analyst in the Department of Institutional Research and Planning (IRP). The data analyst then performs statistical analysis on the data and produces detailed interpretive reports. These reports are then submitted to the administration and discussed. Once all relevant data analysis scripts have been written, the production of data-based reports will be fast and easy. Reports will be released, updated, and disseminated to the entire campus community each semester. Along with these reports, our new iDashboards software will allow for real-time monitoring of our goals and student populations, thereby enhancing overall campus responsibility for student success.

By analyzing data, we have identified several groups that appear to need extra attention because of low performance, slow progress, or attrition. These groups include part-time students (who have a lower-than-average GPA of 2.53 and course completion rate of 77%), African-American students (2.06 GPA and 70% course completion rate), two-year transfer associate degree students (2.35 GPA), first generation students, learning support students, and adult learners (a lower-than-average course completion rate of 78%). Low income is also a barrier for our students, and it is pervasive across the student body. In fall 2011, for example, 85% of Dalton State’s students received some type of financial aid—60% of it need-based. We do not currently have reliable data on military students, but we have begun collecting this information from new fall 2012 students. We also need to gather data on the number of course repeats and withdrawals as well as determine why students drop classes. In addition, we need data from our academic resource offices and our academic labs along with data on the effectiveness of various interventions, such as the First Year Experience program. The IRP, in cooperation with relevant other departments, is developing methods of collecting this data. For example, Math/Science Lab attendance may be monitored by instituting a student ID policy in which a student is required to swipe his or her ID card before he or she enters the lab. This will allow the College to track how many times particular students use the lab and ascertain whether or not lab use correlates with successful course completion.

One of our strengths in terms of developing and implementing this plan is the collaboration between academic affairs and enrollment and student services. We are a very student-centered campus, with many faculty and staff willing to go far beyond what is required in order to help students succeed. For example, during the 2011-2012 school year we had 65 faculty members volunteer to participate in a campus-wide course redesign initiative. This initiative focused on a learning-centered approach, and it required attending a number of meetings, reading relevant material, working through a workbook and online tutorial, and committing to redesign at least one course for fall 2012. They received no additional compensation for that effort, but they were motivated by their desire to improve student achievement of learning outcomes. Similarly, our Financial Aid staff frequently work longer hours than their peers and try all possible means to help students secure needed funds. Our library is a tremendous asset, both for human and mixed media resources. Our professional degree programs fare well, such as Nursing and Education, possibly because of higher program-specific admission requirements, use of cohorts, and highly structured curricula. Our ASN 2-Year Nursing students, for instance, have a high average GPA of 3.08. Our four-year degree students perform, persist, and graduate at higher rates than our two-year and certificate program students. Our white and Hispanic/Latino students perform similarly well, and both groups perform better than our African American students. Our full-time students have higher rates of success than our part-timers. We are also seeing positive results from our early intervention programs. Our staff conduct college readiness programs in local high schools, we offer a Near Peer program with our County schools that involves college students serving as tutors and mentors for high school students, we host a Summer Bridge program every year for low achieving high school graduates who want to go to college to give them a chance to hone their basic skills so as to be eligible for admission, and we host a Summer Academy each year for high school students who want additional academic help. For example, in fall 2011 the need for remedial college courses fell by 43% among those students completing the Near Peer program. These students also showed average score gains of 33% in algebra, 23% in writing, and 12% in reading.

Despite these successful activities, we have identified some areas for improvement. We need to continue to strengthen our cross-divisional collaboration as personnel changes occur and job responsibilities shift. In addition to our data issues and the particular groups of students who are not performing, persisting, or completing well (discussed above), we have agreed that we must do a better job overall with communication on campus at all levels. We need to strengthen our partnerships with the local P-12 systems and GA Northwestern Technical College so as to establish a seamless educational system in this region. The College will support economic development plans and projected job needs for the NW Georgia region in the following industries: chemistry, communications, health and human services, entrepreneurship, and informational technology. We are working with both the P-12 systems and GA Northwestern Technical College to identify relevant career pathways and articulation agreements to build workforce capacity in those areas in particular. We are in the midst of redesigning our advising and First Year Experience programs, both of which have moved from student services to academic affairs in summer 2012. In addition, we are revising our Early Alert program so that we might more effectively identify students who need help earlier on in the semester. We need to improve our use of technology in the classroom, and in particular we need to develop more hybrid and online courses and programs to provide alternative delivery methods. Dalton State College is collaborating with other USG institutions to improve access and success for Latino students. Perhaps one of our greatest challenges and areas for improvement is the resistance to change on the part of some faculty and staff. We need a large scale culture change on our campus that focuses on service excellence and everyone—including the students themselves—taking responsibility for student success.

We have identified some of our data and programmatic gaps, but we require other things as well to help us implement this plan. One is a centralized calendar that can capture all manner of campus events, from those that are cultural and social in nature which help to build campus community to those directly connected to the classroom. We need to offer a wider variety of course delivery formats (i.e., evening/weekend classes, fully online classes, split sessions, modular self-paced). Limited resources create challenges in meeting these goals, and additional funds would assist with implementation of these objectives.

Complete College Georgia Goals for Dalton State

1. Dalton State will partner with local P-12 systems to ensure students graduate high school and enter college with the knowledge and skills necessary to complete college-level work.
2. Dalton State will serve as the point of access to higher education and provide targeted academic support services for underserved populations in Northwest Georgia.
3. Dalton State will identify alternative delivery methods, policy changes, and services needed to shorten the traditional time needed to earn a degree.
4. Dalton State will examine and pilot alternative instructional delivery methods that lead to increased student engagement.
5. Dalton State will review the current learning support course format and make modifications that will lead to increased student mastery of learning support requirements.
6. Dalton State will transform our campus culture to reflect our sense of community and institutional pride.

Part II: Strategies and Objectives

In a collaborative effort between the administration, staff, and faculty, the College has developed the following strategies and objectives for improving the College's service to its service area:

1. **Partnerships with P-12** – The Dalton/Whitfield County area has one of the lowest academic attainment rates of the state, with only about 15% of adult community residents holding a 4-year degree, compared to approximately 27% statewide. While 53% of service area high school graduates go to college, only 33% choose to attend Dalton State. Further, approximately 60% of students entering Dalton State College for the first time require at least one area of learning support; a large number of these students are coming directly from our local school systems yet do not have the requisite knowledge and skills to successfully complete college level work. Our data show that students requiring learning support are less likely to be retained and/or complete a certificate or degree program. In addition, there is currently minimal connection, communication and/or collaboration between faculty, staff, and administrators at Dalton State and the local P-12 systems in our 10-county service area.

Strategy: Dalton State College will enhance the articulation of common goals, needs, and interests with the P-12 academic community in our 10-county service area with the intended outcomes of more students choosing to attend DSC after they graduate from high school, better alignment of curricula between the core curriculum at DSC and the common core being implemented in the local P-12 high schools, and development of academic skills in P-12 students to ensure their readiness for college level work, thus requiring fewer high school graduates to need learning support on entering college.

- **Objective 1:** Expand the communication and collaboration between Dalton State faculty and staff and the faculty and staff in the P-12 systems that serve as feeders to DSC. This will involve outreach to faculty, staff and administrators in the P-12 systems, and targeted efforts to share information and support each other's goals.
- **Objective 2:** Collaborate with the P-12 systems to improve college enrollment, readiness, and success of high school graduates. We will begin by increasing involvement with the Dalton City and Whitfield County systems. We will also expand involvement in those school systems where we have already established relationships because of other projects in the past, such as Murray County, Calhoun City, and Catoosa County.

2. **Improving Access and Completion for Students Traditionally Underserved** – Since its inception, Dalton State has had an access mission, with the goal of improving the academic attainment of residents in the NW Georgia community. Although in fall 2011 Dalton State implemented admission requirements as approved by the Board of Regents, it is still primarily an access institution. However, recent data analyses indicate that while some students who enroll at DSC do well, others struggle to meet academic expectations, remain consistently enrolled, and/or complete their selected program of study. The student populations we have identified as have particular need of additional assistance are part-time, African-American, older (25+) adult, first generation, and learning support students. As shown previously, these student groups carry a lower GPA or course completion rate than the average Dalton State student. We do not currently have data on military students, but they are included in our Adult Learning Consortium efforts. We also know that income is an issue for a majority of our students, since 85% of our students received some type of financial aid in fall 2011, 60% of which was primarily need-based.

Strategy: Our goal is to better understand the particular needs of these identified populations and develop intervention/support services that will increase their likelihood of success. Our intended outcomes include better aligning our intervention/support services to meet high-risk students' needs and increase their performance, retention and graduation.

- **Objective 1:** We will more thoroughly assess the needs of the identified student populations who appear to need additional targeted intervention/support services, determining any areas that need special assistance.
- **Objective 2:** We will identify barriers to success, such as policies and/or procedures that may need revision. Examples include restricting the number of times a student can repeat the same course and limiting the number of times a student can withdraw from a course without penalty.
- **Objective 3:** DSC will engage in targeted marketing efforts to reach traditionally unserved student populations, encouraging them to enroll and informing them of the programs and services available to assist them in being successful students. Some success has been noted through our involvement with the Adult Learning Consortium and subsequent "Quick Admit" days.
- **Objective 4:** Initiate new services and expand/enhance existing ones to better assist high risk students in being successful.

3. **Shorten Time to Degree** – Many students at Dalton State accumulate far more hours than needed to meet the requirements of a certificate or degree program without ever graduating. For example, 17% of all current students have more credits than necessary—9% of students in Bachelor programs, 21% for Associate programs, 30% for Certificate programs, and 33% of Mini-Certificate programs. Others extend their time at DSC far beyond the generally accepted limit for completion of a certificate or degree, whether 2-year or 4-year. For instance, 22% of all current students have taken more than 150% of the expected completion time for their program—14% of students in Bachelor programs, 20% for Associate programs, 56% for Certificate programs, and 64% of Mini-Certificate programs. We will address this situation through better advising, alternative scheduling and course formatting, and policy changes.

Strategy: Students will take only the required number of hours to complete the credential they are seeking (certificate, 2-year degree, 4-year degree), and they will complete their program within 150% of the time required for full-time.

- **Objective 1:** DSC faculty and staff will provide better advising services to ensure consistency, continuity, and the development and implementation of completion plans.
- **Objective 2:** The DSC administration will expand on current efforts related to alternative course credit allocation, alternative scheduling, and alternative delivery formats to better accommodate working adults.
- **Objective 3:** The DSC administration will consider policy revisions that will encourage students to complete their programs in a timely manner.

4. **Restructure Instructional Delivery** – Research suggests that increased student engagement leads to improved student achievement of learning outcomes. For most courses, this suggests a move from traditional methods to evidence-based pedagogy in a more active classroom environment. Increased integration of new technological tools into the learning process can also enhance student engagement both inside and outside of the classroom. Last year, DSC initiated a course redesign project that involved 65 faculty volunteer participants across campus. They studied course redesign from a learning-centered perspective, engaged in small group discussions, and actively redesigned at least one course to teach differently this fall. We will continue building on this effort and introduce other efforts to improve instructional delivery.

Strategy: DSC will increase expectations for faculty involvement in professional development activities so as to improve and enhance instructional delivery. The College will also provide faculty development opportunities to equip faculty with new ideas, perspectives, and tools to engage in more effective instructional delivery methods. The intent of both strategies is to increase student engagement and thereby improve student achievement of learning outcomes. A part of this redesign also requires students to assume more responsibility for their own learning.

- **Objective 1:** Implement an annual individualized instructional assessment for faculty to identify areas for improvement and develop a plan for addressing those areas.
- **Objective 2:** Decrease D/F/W rates in all courses such that they do not exceed 30% of students enrolled in the course, and include the measurement of these rates in the faculty evaluation process.
- **Objective 3:** Increase faculty development opportunities and expectations for involvement with an emphasis on implementation of evidence-based pedagogy and effective instructional practices to improve student success and course completion.
- **Objective 4:** Expand hybrid and online course offerings, including quality control measures and training for faculty preparing to teach them for the first time.
- **Objective 5:** Improve first year students' retention and success rates through a redesign of the First Year Experience course and overall program. This will include the establishment of a First Year Learning Initiative and criteria for credentialing FYLI courses based on best practices.

5. **Transforming Remediation** – Approximately 60% of new students at DSC require at least one area of learning support. While some students successfully complete their learning support requirement on the first attempt (66.9% in Reading, 61.7% in Math, and 52.6% in English), many others do not. The need to enroll in learning support classes, particularly more than once, delays the student's ability to begin college-level classes and thus prolongs time to degree. Furthermore, failure to exit learning support on the first attempt results in cumulative delays for students, as they are not able to continue on into regular classes in those areas (English and Math) until they exit learning support. In addition, many other courses and programs have successful completion of all learning support requirements as a pre-requisite for enrollment.

Strategy: DSC will offer alternatives to traditional learning support courses designed to assist students in gaining the requisite knowledge and skills in a format that increases the likelihood they will successfully exit learning support on the first attempt and/or otherwise reduces the amount of time required for them to complete their learning support courses.

- **Objective 1:** Improve student outcomes and ensure that the content of the learning support 0090 classes is such that students are prepared to successfully complete the required English and math courses in their respective certificate programs.
 - **Objective 2:** Improve student outcomes in ENGL 0098, Reading 0098, and Math 0098 through implementation of alternative instructional design such that students exit on their first attempt and are prepared to successfully complete English 1101 and their selected course to satisfy the math requirement for Area A in the Core.
6. **Changing Campus Culture** – Although it is not one of the sections suggested by the USG for the CCG plan, the need to change the culture on our campus in order to maximize the success of our CCG efforts was a focus of discussion among our leadership group (all in positions of Director and above across all three divisions). Despite the fact that Dalton State was approved to offer 4-year degree programs over a decade ago, the addition of 4-year programs has been slow, and the campus is still in transition in terms of its culture and identity. There is a resulting shift toward valuing scholarship among the faculty, which must be balanced with service to the institution and a continued focus on student success and completion. Changes in performance expectations, programmatic changes, increased assessment requirements, and a variety of new initiatives combined with continuous budget cuts and no pay increases in 4 years have resulted in low morale and a cynical attitude among many faculty and staff. We believe that in order for CCG or any major initiative to be effective, we need to transform our campus culture to instill a stronger sense of community and a shared pride in the institution and its mission.

Strategy: A concerted and intentional effort will be made across all divisions to transform the culture of the college such that all will feel a strong connection and commitment to Dalton State College and feel supportive of its mission, daily operations, and special events. Furthermore, all will be dedicated to the ultimate goal of student success and assume personal responsibility for making that a priority.

- **Objective 1:** Conduct a campus climate assessment to help identify areas for improvement.
- **Objective 2:** Engage in “branding,” and identify what makes DSC unique.
- **Objective 3:** Establish campus traditions.
- **Objective 4:** Explore the feasibility of providing/improving campus level support services.

Part III: Planning and Implementation

While at the moment we have not yet established benchmarks and timelines for every objective metric due to a lack of data, as part of our CCG implementation we will be analyzing new data and creating appropriate benchmarks and timelines to measure the success of all objectives.

1. Partnerships with P-12

Strategy: Dalton State College will enhance the articulation of common goals, needs and interests with the P-12 academic community in our region with the intended outcomes of more students choosing to attend DSC after they graduate from high school, better alignment of curricula between the core curriculum at DSC and the common core being implemented in the local P-12 high schools, and development of academic skills in students to ensure their readiness for college level work, thus requiring fewer high school graduates to require learning support on entering college.

Objective 1: Expand the communication and collaboration between Dalton State faculty and staff and the faculty and staff in the P-12 systems that serve as feeders to DSC. Some ways we can work more productively together include:

- Serving on each other’s advisory boards as appropriate;
- Joining in each other’s staff development activities as appropriate;
- Providing speakers for each other’s activities and events;
- Participating in mutual conferencing and staff development efforts;
- Establishing consortia around specific areas of common interest;
- Visiting each other’s classrooms to observe and provide feedback;
- Creating DSC faculty awareness of high school culture and instructional practices;
- Working together to align curricula, especially in gateway core courses; and
- Collaborating with the P-12 systems to help them meet state mandates in regard to instruction and teacher preparation.
- Participating in the Archway Literacy Collaborative with local schools.

Metric: Increase the involvement of DSC faculty and staff in activities with the local school systems and vice versa. That will be documented by the various units and/or people involved. Initial efforts will focus on school systems where we have existing relationships, such as Dalton City, Whitfield County, Calhoun City, and Catoosa County.

Objective 2: Collaborate with the P-12 systems to improve college enrollment, readiness, and success of high school graduates. DSC is involved in several programs to achieve these goals, and these will be continued and expanded/enhanced as resources allow:

- Summer Bridge Program – serves students at risk academically and provides targeted instruction during the summer to bring them to the level of performance in basic academic skills required for admission into DSC;
- Near Peer Program – pairs DSC upper division students with high school seniors to provide peer mentoring, tutoring and support services to encourage high school student to attend college and be successful;
- Summer Academy Program – serves high school students who need additional assistance in basic academic skills;
- Dual enrollment – allows more advanced high school students to get a “head start” on college by pairing high school courses with classes in the college core curriculum and allowing students to complete the course at DSC and get credit for both levels. Students may also take Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate courses in high school, if available, and if they test out of them at a high enough level, they can get college credit;
- Have DSC staff attend middle and high school events to provide information on college and particularly DSC.
- Recruit high school students specifically for STEM majors, including the RETP program. STEM graduates are highly sought by local industries.

Metrics:

- Increase the percentage of high school students graduating from our local feeder school systems who choose to attend DSC from 33 % of graduates in fall 2011 to 35 % in fall 2013.
- Improve the alignment of the high school math and English curricula with that of ENGL 1101 and MATH 1111. That will be assessed by our Math and English faculty.
- Decrease the percentage of high school graduates entering DSC who need at least one area of learning support by 5% from fall 2011 to fall 2013.
- Increase the number of students participating in dual enrollment from 74 in fall 2011 to 84 in fall 2013.
- Increase the number of high school students entering as STEM majors and RETP participants by 5% from fall 2011 to fall 2013.

2. Improving Access and Completion for Students Traditionally Underserved

Strategy: Our goal is to better understand the particular needs of these identified populations and develop intervention/support services that will increase their likelihood of success. Our intended outcomes include better aligning our intervention/support services to meet high risk students’ needs and increase their performance, retention and graduation. Already identified high-risk populations at DSC are part-time, older (25+) adult, African-American, learning support, and low income students.

Objective 1: We will more thoroughly assess the needs of the identified student populations who appear to need additional targeted intervention/support services, determining any areas that need special assistance. This will be done through a more comprehensive analysis of existing data and/or analysis of data collected from selected groups for this purpose. Examples of sources include:

- focus groups;
- surveys;
- USG data analysis;
- NSSE results;
- Results from the ALFI survey of adult learners;
- the FAFSA;
- interviews with students who withdraw;
- results from participation in ETS assessment of non-cognitive factors that affect persistence and completion;
- data from the national student clearinghouse; and
- other data collected internally.

Metric: As a result of participation in the CCG initiative, we have begun to identify and collect data on sub-groups within our student population. Since we have not done that before in a systematic way, there is no centralized source of baseline data. Thus, the CCG initiative will allow us to establish baseline data from which we can measure our progress going forward.

Objective 2: Review relevant policies and procedures that might serve as barriers to student success and change these if needed. Examples might include:

- Policy on number of course repeats allowed
- Policy on number of withdrawals from courses without penalty
- Number of times students are allowed to change majors without penalty

Metric: Document any changes in relevant policies/procedures, along with the impact. For example, if students are limited in the number of times they are allowed to repeat courses or change majors, measure the impact in terms of reduced credit hours for a degree.

Objective 3: DSC will engage in targeted marketing efforts to reach traditionally unserved student populations. An example is our marketing to adult students for “Quick Admit” days, marketing to local businesses and industries for adult students, and marketing to local National Guard Armories for military personnel.

Metrics:

- Increase the number of “Quick Admit” days from 2 to 4 during 2012-2013.
- Develop brochures for distribution to local businesses and industries for them to give their employees and to National Guard Armories in the NW Georgia region to give to military personnel.
- Participate in at least 2 job fairs or other large public events to distribute material about DSC.

Objective 4: Based on data from Objective 1, initiate new services and expand/enhance existing ones to better assist high risk students in being successful. This may include:

- Increase our efforts to provide assistance in completing the FAFSA
- Offer more scholarships for minority students
- Explore with our Foundation the possible establishment of an emergency loan program to assist students with educational expenses
- Establish a military resource center
- Offer alternative course scheduling options such as weekends, evenings, split sessions
- Provide more online student support services such as tutoring, advising, counseling
- Embed academic support services within courses and/or within schools
- Revise our early alert system to enable us to offer support services to at-risk students earlier in the semester
- Provide online orientation and course preview information
- Establish targeted learning communities and targeted sections of the First Year Experience course for additional support services
- Assist students who are not accepted into their preferred major redirect their interests into another suitable program, for example from nursing to an allied health occupation
- Explore cohort options for liberal arts degrees

Metrics:

- Increase retention of all students, but especially those in identified high risk groups—part-time, older (25+) adult, African-American, learning support, and low income students—by 3% from fall 2011 to fall 2013.
- Increase the number of students receiving academic and student support services from 2011-12 to 2013-14 by 5%, while maintaining high student satisfaction with these services (measured via satisfaction surveys).
- Increase average GPAs of students in identified high-risk groups by half a point from fall 2011 to fall 2013.
- Increase graduation rates of all students, but especially those in identified high-risk groups, by 5% from spring 2012 to spring 2014.

3. Shorten Time to Degree

Strategy: Students will take only the required number of hours to complete the credential they are seeking (certificate, 2-year degree, or 4-year degree), and students will complete their program within 150% of the time required if they were to go full-time.

Objective 1: DSC faculty and staff will provide better advising services to ensure consistency and continuity. In so doing, we will:

- Ensure that all faculty and staff advisors are trained in and use DegreeWorks;
- Provide all students with a clearly defined program of study for their declared major;
- Ensure that there is at least a 2-year course schedule posted to assist students in planning their academic program.

Metrics:

- Document that all faculty and staff advisors are trained in and use DegreeWorks by the end of spring 2013.
- Document that all students are provided with a clearly defined program of study for their major by the end of spring 2013.
- Document that there is a 2-year course schedule posted by the end of spring 2013.

Objective 2: DSC administration will consider alternative course credit allocation, alternative scheduling, and alternative delivery formats to better accommodate working adults. These may include:

- Increase accelerated/alternative delivery and or credit options for course completion, including more hybrid/online courses, prior learning assessment, department challenge exams, CLEP testing, and AP and IB credits
- Offering more split session courses
- Offering tiered registration to help ensure upper division students get needed courses to keep them on track for graduation
- Offering an opportunity for students in Learning Support Reading to exit early
- Offering more Maymester classes
- Offer a select number of accelerated programs
- Offer evening and weekend courses
- Increase the number of hybrid and online courses

Metrics:

- Document changes in course offerings, alternative credit allocation, and alternative scheduling (current baseline data not available – for example, we will need to obtain data for things such as number of students awarded credit through alternative options for 2011-2012 – and other interventions are just now being discussed as possibilities).
- Increase the number of hybrid classes by 10% from 2011-2012 to 2013-2014.
- Increase the number of online classes by 10% from 2011-2012 to 2013-2014.

Objective 3: DSC administration will consider policy revisions that will encourage students to complete their programs in a timely manner. These may include:

- Limiting the number of withdrawals allowed per student
- Limiting the number of times a student can repeat a given class
- Expanding summer class offerings
- Developing an incentive for students to take more hours each semester
- Limiting the number of times a student can change majors
- Instituting the cohort model in traditional liberal arts programs
- Instituting an earlier drop date without penalty

Metrics:

- Document changes in relevant policies and procedures.
- Decrease the number of students repeating classes, withdrawing from classes, and changing majors. Baseline data on these items are not currently available, but we will obtain them and set targets.

- Decrease the number of students who exceed the requisite number of credit hours for a designated certificate, the 60 credit hour limit for 2-year degrees, and the 120 credit hour limit for 4-year degrees by 5% from spring 2012 to spring 2014.
- Increase the graduation rate at the 3-year mark for 2-year degrees and the 6-year mark for 4-year degrees by 3% from spring 2012 to spring 2014.
- Increase summer school enrollment by 5% from 2012 to 2013.
- Increase the average number of hours taken by students each semester by 10% from 2012-2013 to 2013-2014.

4. Restructure Instructional Delivery

Strategy: DSC will increase expectations for faculty involvement in professional development activities so as to improve and enhance instructional delivery. The College will also provide faculty development opportunities to equip faculty with new ideas, perspectives, and tools to engage in more effective instructional delivery methods. The intent of both strategies is to increase student engagement and thereby improve student achievement of learning outcomes. A part of this redesign also requires students to assume more responsibility for their own learning.

Objective 1: Implement an annual individualized instructional assessment for faculty to identify areas for improvement, and develop a plan for addressing those areas. This will result in a continuous improvement effort for each faculty member and improved student outcomes in their courses.

Metric: Revise the annual faculty review process for faculty to document individualized instructional assessments and continuous improvement plans.

Objective 2: Decrease D/F/W rates in all courses such that they do not exceed 30% of students enrolled in the course, and include the measurement of these rates in the faculty evaluation process.

Metric: Decrease the percentage of courses with > 30% D/F/W rates by 10% from fall 2011 to 2013.

Objective 3: Increase faculty development opportunities and expectations for involvement with an emphasis on implementation of evidence-based pedagogy and effective instructional practices to improve student success and course completion.

Metrics:

- Document the number of faculty development opportunities provided, the number of faculty participating, and the implementation of strategies to improve student success and course completion. The target will be for at least 25% of full-time faculty to implement a change in their instructional practices during the academic year 2012-2013, 33% during 2013-2014, and 50% during 2014-2015.
- Analyze data and report on student learning outcomes comparing traditional courses with those same courses where faculty have redesigned instruction. Current baseline data are not available, but an assessment of student learning outcomes is being conducted during fall 2012 for a select number of classes where the instructor is implementing a different method of instruction from the way the class was taught in fall 2011.

Objective 4: Expand hybrid and online course offerings, including quality control measures and training for faculty preparing to teach them for the first time.

Metrics:

- Increase the number of hybrid courses by 10% from 2011-2012 to 2013-2014 and assess their effectiveness in comparison to traditional courses via completion rates.
- Increase the number of online courses by 10% from 2011-2012 to 2013-2014 and assess their effectiveness in comparison to traditional courses via completion rates.

Objective 5: Improve first year students' retention and success rates through a redesign of the First Year Experience course and overall program. This will include the establishment of a First Year Learning Initiative and criteria for credentialing FYLI courses based on best practices.

Metric: Increase fall-to-spring retention of first year students by 3% from fall 2010 to fall 2013, and increase fall-to-fall retention by 3% from fall 2010 to fall 2013.

5. Transforming Remediation

Strategy: DSC will offer alternatives to traditional learning support courses that are designed to assist students in gaining the requisite knowledge and skills in a format that increases the likelihood they will successfully exit learning support on the first attempt and/or otherwise reduces the amount of time required for them to complete their learning support requirements.

Objective 1: Improve student outcomes and ensure that the content of the learning support 0090 classes is such that students are prepared to successfully complete the required English and math courses in their respective certificate programs.

Metric: Increase the number of students who successfully exit learning support English and Math 0090 on the first attempt by 3% from 2011-2012 to 2012-2013.

Objective 2: Improve student outcomes in ENGL 0098, Reading 0098, and Math 0098 through implementation of alternative instructional design such that students exit on their first attempt and are prepared to successfully complete English 1101 and their selected course to satisfy the math requirement for Area A in the Core Curriculum. Alternative methods that will be implemented in fall 2012 include:

- Pairing each section of ENGL 0098 with a section of the First Year Experience course (this is our QEP);
- Revising the content of READ 0098;
- Making READ 0098 a co-curricular option that students will take along with their regular class and if they pass their regular class with a “C” or better, accept that as a “pass” for the learning support class as well;
- Offering computer assisted sections of MATH 0098;
- Offering MATH 0098 as a co-curricular option with the student’s choice of college level math in Area A of the Core; and
- Establishing a new MATH course, 0099, that would be a 6 hour course combining the content of 0097 and 0098 in 1 semester.

Metrics:

- Increase the number of students who successfully exit learning support English and Math 0090 on the first attempt by 3% from 2011-2012 to 2012-2013.
- Analyze success of alternative approaches to learning support compared with traditional classroom methods. No baseline data are available yet because the changes are just being implemented in fall 2012.

6. Changing Campus Culture

Strategy: A concerted and intentional effort will be made across all divisions to transform the culture of the college such that all will feel a strong connection and commitment to Dalton State College and feel supportive of its mission, daily operations, and special events. Furthermore, all will be dedicated to the ultimate goal of student success and assume personal responsibility for making that a priority.

Objective 1: Conduct a campus climate assessment to help identify areas for improvement then develop a plan based on results.

Metrics:

- Analyze difference in campus climate assessment conducted in fall 2012 to results of follow-up assessment to be conducted in spring 2014.
- Analyze results from DSC’s participation in the American Democracy Project’s Civic Health Initiative, scheduled to begin during fall 2012, and develop plan of action based on identified areas to be strengthened.

Objective 2: Engage in “branding,” and identify what makes DSC unique.

Metric: Document efforts to establish a “brand” for DSC. There is a Marketing Committee currently working on this with the assistance of a consultant.

Objective 3: Establish campus traditions, including annual events, events associated with athletics, and family oriented events.

Metric: Document establishment of activities and events targeted to become recurring such that they can become traditions of the campus.

Objective 4: Explore the feasibility of providing/improving campus level support services. This might include but not be limited to the following:

- Transportation shuttles for residential students
- Childcare
- Renovation and enlargement of the Pope Student Center
- Renovation of the gym and other recreational space
- Increased residential life opportunities
- Improved food services

Metric: Document improvements in campus level support services for faculty, staff and students.

Part IV: Ongoing Feedback/Evaluation

As we identified in our initial work on the Complete College Georgia plan, our campus has a significant amount of work to do to develop the necessary data systems and analytical processes to meet both the data requirements of CCG and our service area needs. As discussed in Part I, our FY13 budget allocation included funds for a data analytics software package and an analyst position. We have hired the analyst, and he is developing a centralized data collection system which will enable us to monitor and analyze the required data for measuring our progress on our proposed CCG plan. This data system will allow us to create a collection mechanism to capture missing data, such as tracking military and first generation students, and analyze our data using appropriate statistical methods. When we convert to the D2L system in 2013, we plan to add an analytics module to heighten faculty responsibility for student success. We have purchased an analytics software package, iDashboards, which will allow us to capture the data in a format that can be easily shared with the college community as well as the public. Our CCG Plan will be embedded in our *2012-2015 Strategic Plan*, which is currently being developed. The CCG Steering Committee, whose members also serve on the Strategic Planning Committee, will continue to meet regularly to review the data and monitor progress on meeting our goals. Offices and subcommittees—comprised of both faculty, staff, and student members—will be specifically designated to assess and monitor each implementation strategy. In addition, an Annual Report to the Board of Regents will describe our progress at meeting CCG goals. Results on our progress will also be presented both to the college community at regular meetings and to students and other constituents in focus groups. During these sessions we will discuss successes and areas where we may need to revise our plans. These meetings will provide opportunities for regular feedback from the campus community to the Steering Committee. In addition, reports on our progress will be made in various newsletters, the local newspaper, reports to the campus community at our general meetings held at the end of each semester, speaking engagements in the community, and our annual reports.