

Planning Assumptions for 2005-2010

Demographics

1. Both the population and the industry of Wayne County will continue to moderately grow. The 2003 population estimates from the NC Rural Economic Development Center indicate Wayne's population growth was 8.3% compared to the state average of 21.4% from 1990 – 2000.
2. The population is aging; the elderly are increasing faster than any other group. By 2010 NC will gain more than 290,000 people 45 years of age and older.
3. The population of Wayne County will continue to become more diverse. The number of people with multi-cultural backgrounds and different languages, particularly Hispanics and Asians, will continue to grow. Between 1990 and 2000, NC experienced a 400% growth in the Hispanic population, the largest growth in the country.
4. The number of Wayne County public school high school graduates will moderately increase from an estimated 1,006 to 1,075; from 2005 to 2010. The number of adults in WCC's prime age group (20-34) is projected to be somewhat stable for the next decade.
5. The typical WCC curriculum student is 29 years of age, white, female, working part-time and or unemployed, receiving financial aid and is or has enrolled in at least one developmental course.

Political / Legal

1. The emphasis on accountability and cost-effectiveness will continue to be strong.
2. Costs for buildings, upkeep, maintenance, equipment and salaries will continue to rise, while tax funding will be restricted. New and additional sources of revenue must be explored. Uncertainty with county funding can impact on the upkeep and capital improvements needed for the campus.
3. Regionalization and non-duplication of services and programs will continue to be a focus.
4. WCC will continue to see an increase in special populations.
5. There is an ongoing need to address medical needs in Wayne and surrounding counties.
6. We must continue to promote better working relations with community, higher education and public schools.

Technology

1. We must increase the amount of and the quality of available technology. It should be adequate for the customers being served and should be on the "cutting edge". The high cost of technology must be considered for upgrade, replacement or acquisition of resources.
2. Technology will continue to change the way instruction is delivered and received.
3. Technology will enable the delivery of instruction anywhere, anytime, anyplace, for any student. Consequently, we must increase online classes.
4. Business and industry expect community college graduates to be technologically competent and comfortable with technological change.
5. Like employees in business and industry, college employees will need to be constantly retrained to use technological developments for maximum productivity in both instruction and all other areas of the college.
6. Accommodating advanced network architecture and other technological changes will significantly affect current and new construction.
7. The workforce will need to be on the cutting edge of technology and systems to excel and be competitive.

Social

1. The rate of illiteracy will continue to increase in the target populations for WCC's programs; under prepared students will continue to enroll at WCC.
2. Funding for government and community social services in Wayne County will, at best, stay the same, and may decrease; demand for services will continue to increase.
3. Welfare reform and the Work First program will change the types of educational and support services that people need. Low-cost day care (child and elderly) will continue to be a critical need.
4. The realization that people are increasingly interdependent means that skills such as teamwork, communication, and problem-solving are important for all people to learn.

5. New ethnic populations have different needs: functional interaction with the community, formal education/training delivered appropriately, community acceptance of differing cultures and appreciation and celebration of all cultures in the community and state.
6. Workforce is changing: more displaced workers needing training, high school dropouts less likely to find unskilled work than in the past and the number of single-adult families continue to increase.
7. Quality of life and/or relationship to community: Civic and cultural leadership in community needs to be addressed along with collaboration among agencies on issues of emergency services, homeland security, healthcare and the promotion of volunteerism.

Competitive

1. Learning will be customized to different learning styles and needs of individuals. Education will be focused on basic intellectual and interpersonal skills in response to the information age and its associated technologies.
2. The educational and research infrastructure will be transformed through partnerships between community colleges, business and industry, and other alliances.
3. The demand for learning will continue to increase and alternative private and public sector suppliers will aggressively compete with community colleges for students and resources.
4. Just-in-time learning will intensify with shortened time for initial preparation, improved quality of workforce/learner connections, reduced cost of learning, the fusion of work and learning, and dramatically altered academic patterns.
5. The Wayne County workforce partnerships between business, industry and education will continue to grow and gain momentum, changing the way we develop and deliver curriculum and continuing education programs.
6. The college offers quality learning opportunities at low cost and affordable tuition compared to the high cost of a four-year education at a university or private institution.
7. The college has an excellent reputation in the community, has modern facilities, an excellent faculty and staff and offers a good variety of programs.

Economy

1. In light of an unstable economy nationally, the economy of Wayne County should continue to be healthy, with low unemployment and expanding economic activity. The shortage of qualified workers will continue.
2. Women and minorities will continue to gradually increase their percentage of the workforce.
3. Unskilled jobs will continue to be eliminated or relocated and will be replaced by increases in skilled or semi-skilled employees. Many people will be employed in multinational environments and in small businesses.
4. A substantial number of students will continue to work full or part time.
5. Seymour Johnson Air Force Base offers educational opportunities for its military airman and families.

Internal

1. There should be adequate equipment funding for faculty and staff.
2. Faculty and staff turnover as a result of retirements will impact on the quality of services and instruction.
3. Competitive salaries for faculty and staff must be aggressively pursued.
4. More professional development for faculty and staff to upgrade skills is needed.

Education and Training

1. Diverse/changing population-programs should reflect the needs of the population.
2. Need to address needs of aging population.
3. More continuing education and community services courses to address the needs of the population which may be outside of the typical curriculum programs.
4. Basic life skills programs to help with illiteracy and the homeless.
5. English as a second language – larger Hispanic population.
6. More on-line classes, increase distance learning opportunities.
7. More medical and health sciences programs to deal with aging population and shortages in these areas.

8. Need to help displaced workers reenter the job market quicker (e.g. tobacco, textile, agriculture).
9. Gear programs to the unemployed and underemployed.
10. More industry specific training.
11. More flexibility to update programs to meet changing industry needs.
12. Identify the basic skills needed for the workforce.
13. Focus more on the technical skills needed for the workplace.
14. Seek additional funding sources.
15. Additional funds needed for capital improvements.
16. More professional development for faculty and staff to upgrade skills.
17. More funding for Occupational Extension courses.
18. More public-private partnerships with public schools, universities and industry.
19. Students lack competency in basic skills (reading, writing, math, and critical thinking).
20. High cost of books for students continues to be a concern.
21. High number of under prepared recent high school graduates entering WCC.