



# STRATEGIC PLAN 2015-2020

# WELCOME



Friends and Colleagues:

We are, without a doubt, at the outset of a time of transformative change regarding how community colleges are viewed at the state and national level. As we settle into the 21st Century, leaders from President Barack Obama to local Assemblymen and Assemblywomen are discovering and appreciating the vital role community colleges play in providing high-quality education, contributing to economic stability and growth, and convening opportunities for cultural engagement and understanding.

The people of Orange County have long appreciated the role that the “community’s college” plays in empowering people and their communities. In 1950, long before the founding of most other community colleges, the people of Orange County embraced the community college concept to give their fellow citizens access to knowledge and a better way of life. Now, 65 years later, the collective nation has realized what colleges like SUNY Orange do and what our potential is, and, most excitingly, is now inviting us to do even more.

Having caught the community college “bug” very early in my career, I have happily watched this wave of appreciation grow slowly, and I am genuinely excited about the bright future ahead of us. It was under these contexts that I accepted the thrilling opportunity to become the president of SUNY Orange this past summer.

Throughout the interview process and during my first few weeks on the job, it was obvious to me that SUNY Orange is going places. The talented faculty, staff and administration are accomplished, energetic, engaged and eager serve today’s student. They are supported by the citizens and leaders of Orange County who realize what SUNY Orange has already accomplished and who also want us to do more. SUNY Orange is widely respected and is in an excellent position to move the College and the County forward during these times of great change locally. Things are happening on the state level as well. SUNY has very recently unveiled its SUNY Excels initiative, which identifies five priority areas—access, completion, success, inquiry and engagement. Chancellor Nancy Zimpher believes that by acting as a system and by adopting evidence-based best practices, SUNY and its 64 institutions can advance the state.

That’s why I cannot wait for us to begin achieving the priorities and objectives of the College’s new Strategic Plan 2015-2020. The entirety of this plan was researched and developed prior to my arrival, but it is clear that this plan recognizes SUNY Orange’s strengths and embraces those areas where we can improve. This plan mirrors portions of the SUNY Excels initiative quite nicely as well, even though our priorities had been established long before SUNY went public with its Excels concept. Our next step at SUNY Orange is to identify those action steps that will yield positive results between now and 2020.

This plan was developed holistically. Our Strategic Planning Steering Committee spoke to the community, listened to students in focus groups, and facilitated in-depth discussions with faculty and staff. We came to appreciate our strengths, recognize our weaknesses, identify opportunities and understand the challenges we face. No stone was left unturned. From that data, the four strategic priorities in this plan—awareness and access, student support and success, collaboration and communication, and efficient and effective operations—quickly became evident, as did the accompanying objectives.

It is important to thank the Board of Trustees for its vision, input and support of this plan. Kudos also to the 18 Steering Committee members who selflessly devoted countless hours to the research and analysis required to build this plan. And my predecessor, former President Dr. William Richards, must be commended for his vision and leadership over the past 12 years.

The hard work is done and I can assure you that, clearly, this is the right plan for the right college at the right time. Now we tackle the fun part and I look forward to sharing our successes over the coming months and years.

Dr. Kristine M. Young  
President, SUNY Orange

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## VISION

Orange County Community College will be an exemplary community college transforming lives through academic excellence, innovation and partnerships.

## MISSION

We are a community of learners dedicated to providing high-quality and accessible educational and enrichment opportunities that foster lifelong learning.

## VALUES

To fulfill the mission and vision of the College, we are committed to:

- Excellence
- Integrity
- Inclusivity
- Inquiry
- Creativity
- Collaboration
- Stewardship

## GOALS

1. To provide high quality academic courses and programs that prepare a diverse student population to achieve its educational, employment and enrichment goals.
2. To engage learners in an environment that develops their knowledge and skills in critical thinking, information and technology literacy, effective communication and enhances their awareness of civic responsibility and cultural diversity.
3. To establish public and private partnerships and provide programs and services that support and serve our county’s educational, economic, civic and cultural needs.
4. To promote student growth and development by providing comprehensive and innovative academic and support services.
5. To offer opportunities to learn with a dedicated and diverse faculty and staff who value excellence in teaching, service to students, creative collaboration and continuous improvement.
6. To build and maintain safe, accessible and sustainable facilities that support the learning environment.
7. To identify, secure and allocate resources that advance the strategic priorities of the College.

*The College’s goals were reviewed and revised in Fall 2011; they provide overall direction to the achievement of the College’s mission.*

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SUNY Orange derives its long-range institutional focus, sense of purpose, campus climate and regional identity by virtue of its stated vision, mission, values and goals. But in order to effectively achieve its strategic priorities and objectives, the College and its employees maintain a strong commitment to strategic planning.

The SUNY Orange Strategic Plan 2015-2020 marks the College's third strategic planning process, and signifies the most comprehensive and participatory College-wide approach to planning to date.

When SUNY Orange commissioned an external consultant to conduct its inaugural strategic planning process in 2004, its goal was clear: formulate a plan that would guide the College in the improvement of educational opportunities for all citizens of Orange County. Approved by the Board of Trustees in December 2004, the Strategic Plan 2005-2010 broadly defined those activities that the College would employ over a five-year period to improve educational quality and support efficient institutional growth.

In 2008, the Board of Trustees and College administrative leaders assessed SUNY Orange's progress in reaching the five priorities included in the original plan, and they determined that the College had already successfully achieved two of those priorities. A pair of new strategic priorities were inserted in their place, a few additional refinements were made and a new Strategic Plan 2009-2014 was adopted.

Over the past five years in particular, the financial and educational landscapes in which SUNY Orange operates

have changed drastically. Economic hardships have altered how students and their families approach their college education. Student enrollment has been adversely affected by many factors, including declining numbers of high school graduates and escalating tuition costs. Lower enrollment and stagnant funding from New York State have created placed additional financial burdens upon the College.

In order to bridge its financial gaps, SUNY Orange has begun to creatively seek alternative supplemental funding streams by developing relationships with community partners, boosting the endowment of the SUNY Orange Foundation and pursuing varied grant opportunities.

Additionally, the State University of New York (SUNY) has initiated a series of aggressive and innovative system-wide programs aimed at significantly boosting student retention and completion throughout the state. It is important that SUNY Orange find its rightful place among these SUNY initiatives while, at the same time, maintaining the strong local connections it has built during the past 65 years.

Over the next five years, it is expected that this plan will help SUNY Orange raise the visibility of the College and communicate the value of a SUNY Orange education, while at the same time supporting students in achieving their educational and career goals. And by building connections internally and externally, the College will be able to develop mutually beneficial partnerships throughout the community that will advance the College and help it adapt to changing economic realities.

## STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

Throughout the 2014-2015 academic year, SUNY Orange conducted an intensive strategic planning process that included the review and revision of the College's guiding statements (vision, mission and values) as well as the development of the five-year Strategic Plan 2015-2020. To facilitate the process, the College established an 18-member Steering Committee that included faculty and staff representation from all sectors of the College, as well as members from the College's Board of Trustees and the SUNY Orange Foundation Board of Directors.



# STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

## REVIEW AND REVISIONS TO VISION, MISSION AND VALUES

As the first step in the College's strategic planning process, the Steering Committee conducted a review and revision of the College's vision, mission and values statements. The group's focus centered upon simplifying language, ensuring currency, streamlining format and agreeing on purpose.

During Fall 2014, the Committee facilitated open forums to initiate discussions among members of the College community. Dialogue at College Assembly meetings (shared governance) and feedback from an online survey also shaped the committee's work. The new statements were unanimously approved by the College's Board of Trustees in November 2014.

## SWOT ANALYSIS

With detailed feedback from the review of the vision, mission and values, the Steering Committee embarked upon a comprehensive analysis of the perceived Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats/challenges (SWOT) facing SUNY Orange. The committee conducted sessions with a wide variety of employee and student stakeholders across both campuses, as well as the Board of Trustees. Additionally, the Steering Committee developed and administered a survey to current students, alumni, Orange County Chamber of Commerce members and high school partners to engage them in the process. Information gleaned from these sessions was documented and analyzed in order to identify potential areas of focus.



## IDENTIFYING AND ESTABLISHING STRATEGIC PRIORITIES & OBJECTIVES

With extensive data and discussion, the Steering Committee began the challenging task of identifying the areas of highest strategic priority. Several themes rose to prominence, indicating that many who participated in the process were in agreement regarding where the College should focus its efforts over the next five years.

After extensive drafting and editing of the priority areas and accompanying descriptive statements, the Steering Committee presented to the College Assembly in November 2014 the four proposed priority areas: awareness and access, student support and success, collaboration and communication, and efficient and effective operations. The Board of Trustees approved the priorities in January 2015.

The Steering Committee then developed the strategic objectives that would support the newly approved priorities. Again, much of the feedback from the College's many constituents, through continued discussions and the SWOT analysis, aligned along several prevailing concepts. Additionally, the committee reviewed extensive College-wide data—including material from the College Profile, recommendations from the Middle States Commission on Higher Education and newly developed measures from the College's Institutional Effectiveness Plan—to provide context to and validation of the 15 objectives identified as most integral to supporting the four strategic priorities.

As Spring 2015 unfolded, the committee drafted and revised the strategic objectives, supported by continued communication with the College community, before presenting the final objectives at the Board of Trustees' June 2015 retreat. In September 2015, the Board unanimously approved the objectives, giving life to SUNY Orange's Strategic Plan 2015-2020.

# PRIORITY #1

## AWARENESS & ACCESS

We will raise the visibility of the College and communicate the value of a SUNY Orange education through enhanced outreach efforts and educational opportunities

### OBJECTIVES

- 1.1** Increase online offerings as a means of expanding access, increasing enrollment and promoting academic success
- 1.2** Increase the number of faculty, staff and students to reflect the diversity of Orange County through focused recruitment initiatives
- 1.3** Expand the visibility of the College's excellent programs and services through strategic marketing efforts

A young woman with glasses and a dark blue t-shirt with 'SUNY ORANGE' printed on it, smiling. The t-shirt has 'SUNY' in a stylized font above 'ORANGE' in a larger, bold font. She is standing outdoors with a brick wall and greenery in the background.



# PRIORITY #2

## STUDENT SUPPORT & SUCCESS

We will support our students in achieving their educational and career goals

### OBJECTIVES

- 2.1** Prepare students for college success through academic planning and advising and comprehensive, ongoing support
- 2.2** Accelerate students' completion of developmental education and ensure college readiness by refining processes, services and course sequences
- 2.3** Increase student retention, completion, transfer and employment readiness
- 2.4** Engage in comprehensive review of program offerings, delivery formats and course scheduling to meet the needs of diverse populations

# PRIORITY #3

## COLLABORATION & COMMUNICATION

We will develop connections between internal and external constituents and advance mutually beneficial partnerships. We will promote a culture of trust, respect and collective responsibility.

### OBJECTIVES

- 3.1** Foster stronger connections among academic programs, business and industry to increase applied learning opportunities for students
- 3.2** Optimize enrollment through partnerships with area high schools, civic organizations and businesses
- 3.3** Improve management of information to increase transparency and centralize communication practices
- 3.4** Strengthen the sense of community to improve the institutional climate and promote collegiality, civility and mutual respect



# PRIORITY #4

## EFFICIENT & EFFECTIVE OPERATIONS

We will anticipate and adapt to changing economic realities while maintaining the infrastructure and resources necessary to foster innovation and develop and deliver high-quality programs and services

### OBJECTIVES

- 4.1** Maximize existing funding streams and explore alternative revenue opportunities to ensure financial stability
- 4.2** Develop, cultivate and support innovation throughout the organization for continuous improvement
- 4.3** Review and revise allocation methods to ensure appropriate investment in people, services, facilities and technologies
- 4.4** Foster a collective commitment to comprehensive planning, assessment and prioritization to ensure institutional effectiveness



# SUNY ORANGE



Orange County Community College (SUNY Orange) has earned its reputation as a pioneer and innovator in meeting the needs of its students and the area it primarily serves.

The College was the first two-year college in the nation to offer the associate degree nursing program and studies in electron microscopy; and in 1982, the College was the first community college to plan and co-sponsor a business institute with local chambers of commerce.

Accredited by Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, academic credits can be earned through full or part-time on-site study in the day, evening or weekend, as well as through online course work. The College offers more than 40 degree and certificate programs. As a member of the 64-school State University of New York, SUNY Orange affords its students the confidence that all, or most, of their credits will transfer to a four-year SUNY institution, meaning they can remain on track to complete their studies. The College has also established transfer agreements with many other colleges and universities to facilitate smooth transitions for our students.

Having just concluded its 65th year, SUNY Orange continues to grow in response to the needs of its students, offering campuses in both Middletown and Newburgh to help students achieve their academic goals. In six-plus decades, more than 450,000 people have enrolled in the College's wide range of credit and non-credit classes.

Each of the College's campuses holds its own unique charm. With its picturesque beauty, cozy confines and contemporary functionality, the SUNY Orange Middletown campus has become a comfortable and safe second home to students who seek academic challenge, friendship and lively activity.

The Newburgh campus is located in downtown Newburgh with breathtaking views of the Hudson River. Students who were once shoehorned into a former bank administration building now stroll a burgeoning campus that has recently doubled its capacity to serve students thanks to newly constructed Kaplan Hall and the renovated Tower Building. Both provide the latest amenities in their labs, classrooms and study spaces.

In addition to its credit courses and programs, the College provides a variety of non-credit courses, certificate programs and personal enrichment classes, as well as a number of grant-funded employment and training initiatives and a program in ESL, all under the direction of the Continuing and Professional Education Department (CAPE).





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