FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

For Fiscal Years 2013 Through 2017
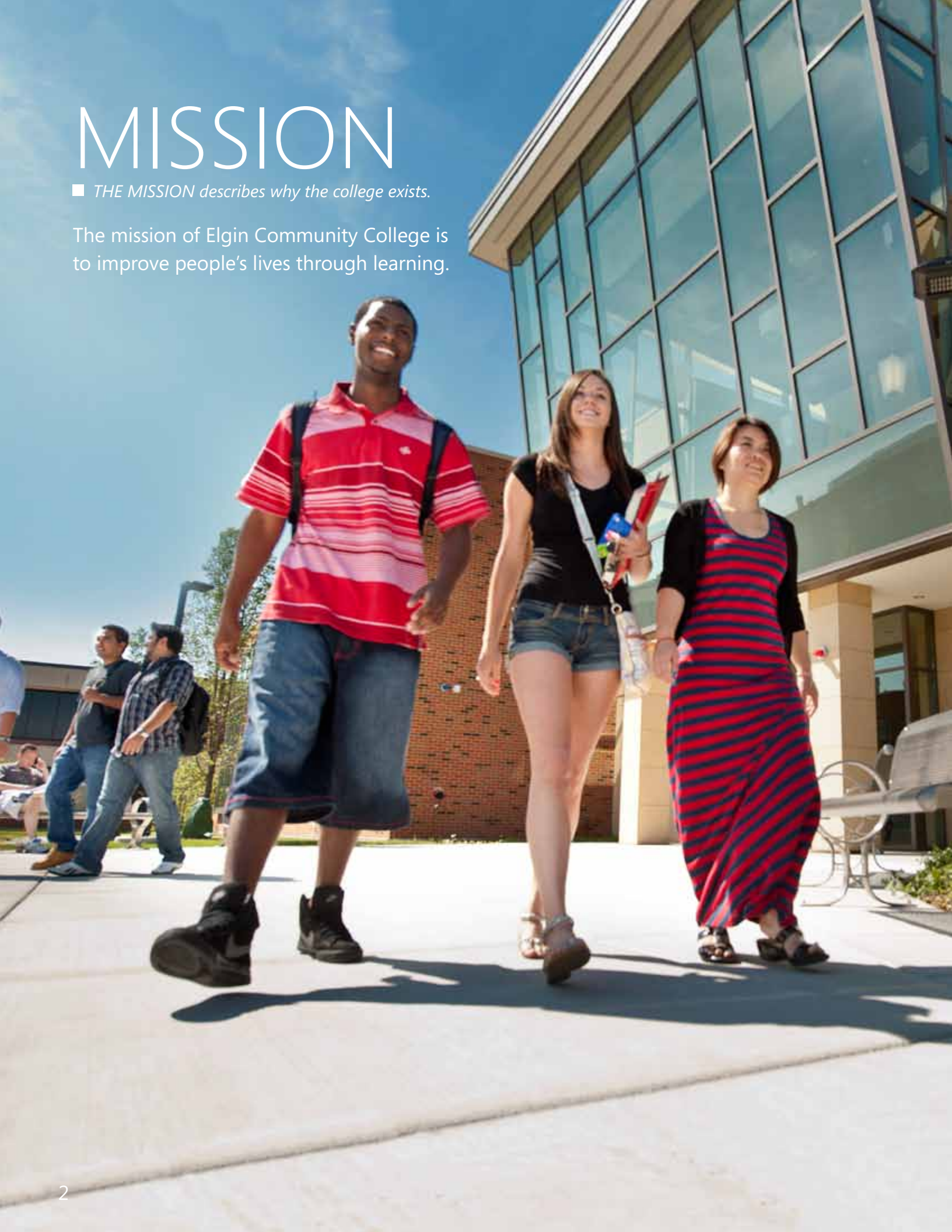
Board Approval: August 14, 2012

Elgin
Community
College

Bright Choice. Bright Future.

MISSION

■ *THE MISSION describes why the college exists.*

The mission of Elgin Community College is to improve people's lives through learning.

VISION

■ *THE VISION describes our future and where we are headed as a college.*

We pursue our mission by focusing all our efforts on making Elgin Community College one of the best centers of learning in the United States. In recognition of our role as a comprehensive community college, we will strive to create high-quality learning opportunities that respond to the needs of the residents of our district.

SHARED VALUES

■ *SHARED VALUES reflect the core principles and beliefs that guide our work.*

Excellence

All college functions and services must strive for the highest level of excellence to successfully achieve our mission. Learning activities must be of the highest quality to help students achieve their goals.

Freedom of Inquiry

We believe a learning community is most engaging and viable when a spirit of free inquiry exists, allowing everyone the freedom to explore new and diverse ideas and to express their interests and attitudes.

Equity

We believe that everyone must have an equal opportunity to grow through learning and pledge to provide all who take part in our learning activities with the opportunities and supports needed for success.

Ethical Practices

As we strive to develop our learning community, we will maintain at all times the highest level of honesty, communication, cooperation, and credibility in all relationships.

Accountability

As a public institution, we believe we must assume responsibility for all our decisions and actions, and we must also be open and honest in all our affairs and always ensure that we are making the best use of our resources.

Respect for Diversity

All constituencies are important to achieving our vision. Therefore, we must respect the unique and diverse perspectives each person offers and embrace those differences as the means for developing the strongest learning community possible. We promote individual growth and a positive sense of self-worth for all members of the college community.

Community Engagement

As an active and involved part of our community, we must play an integral role in developing, advancing, and serving the local community.

STRATEGIC GOALS, STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES, AND EXAMPLE ACTIVITIES

- *STRATEGIC GOALS are broad intentions that we expect to accomplish during the life of the plan.*

- *STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES are reportable actions that we expect to accomplish for each strategic goal.*

- *EXAMPLE ACTIVITIES are tasks (within each objective) that cross-functional committees and departments carry out; activities change frequently throughout the life of the plan.*

GOAL 1:
Foster a Learning-Centered Environment

OBJECTIVE 1.1:   **Expand the use of supplemental instruction models**

Example Activities:
- Expand and develop learning labs
- Expand the use of peer-to-peer instruction
- Increase student-to-instructor time
- Strengthen the use of tutoring

OBJECTIVE 1.2:   **Teach students the skills needed to assume responsibility for their own learning**

Example Activities:
- Teach students how to self-monitor progress
- Teach students to self-assess their learning
- Teach students skills in self-advocacy

OBJECTIVE 1.3:   **Expand the use of active learning pedagogies**

Example Activities:
- Promote higher-order thinking skills, analysis, and synthesis
- Apply learning to real-world problems
- Create supportive intellectual and emotional environments
- Expand interdisciplinary and co-curricular connections, including service learning and internships

OBJECTIVE 1.4:   **Ensure alignment among Elgin Community College, high schools, and senior institutions**

Example Activities:
- Through the Alliance for College Readiness, encourage the development, approval, and delivery of courses that are aligned across the high school-to-college transition
- Strengthen partnerships with four-year colleges and universities to facilitate transitions and transfer

OBJECTIVE 1.5:   **Build a comprehensive approach to student advising**

Example Activities:
- Engage multiple units of the college in advising students
- Identify students' educational and career goals at entry and reassess regularly

GOAL 2:
Promote Student Goal Completion

OBJECTIVE 2.1: **Accelerate student progression through coursework**

Example Activities:
- Expand accelerated or short-term courses
- Strengthen integrated career preparatory, academic preparatory, bridge, and workforce transitions programs
- Expand modular and differentiated learning
- Expand early college credit options (e.g., dual credit, dual enrollment, tech prep)

OBJECTIVE 2.2: **Develop coherent and intentional student pathways toward completion**

Example Activities:
- Require prescribed plans at entry
- Create plans with broader horizons (e.g., block schedules, two-year plans)
- Leverage the use of hybrid and online courses
- Leverage the use of learning communities

OBJECTIVE 2.3: **Improve success milestones among students with the greatest achievement gaps**

Example Activities:
- Continuously define and refine guidelines/criteria for milestones and gap measures
- Link achievement gap data to existing support structures to target and strengthen improvement efforts

OBJECTIVE 2.4: **Improve placement processes to assist and support various student populations**

Example Activities:
- Incorporate assessment of English language skills into current practices
- Leverage assessment practices that require multiple measures
- Require students to review prior to testing

GOAL 3:
Promote a Climate of Collaboration, Equity, and Inclusion Among All College Constituencies

OBJECTIVE 3.1: **Expand cultural competency awareness and skills across campus**

Example Activities:
- Increase participation in cultural competency awareness workshops
- Broaden the scope of professional development efforts to include primary and secondary dimensions of diversity
- Develop a meaningful and inclusive non-discrimination clause for the college

OBJECTIVE 3.2: **Implement diverse cross-functional teams to broadly promote equity and enhance decision-making**

Example Activities:
- Engage more faculty and staff in teams that address equity and student success
- Incorporate cultural competency skills more directly into our everyday work

OBJECTIVE 3.3: **Increase partnerships and programs that encourage interactions with people from diverse backgrounds and cultures**

Example Activities:
- Expand programming that promotes the success of diverse groups and individuals
- Increase international student enrollment
- Expand partnerships in emerging economies to prepare students, local citizens, and businesses for a global economy (e.g., focus on BRICS nations: Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa)

GOAL 4:
Promote Greater Transparency, Efficiency, and Accountability in College Processes and Systems

OBJECTIVE 4.1: **Proactively solicit feedback from students, employees, and communities in the evaluation and improvement of processes**

Example Activities:
- Expand or create implementation teams to track, document, and record process-mapping efforts
- Discuss and review strengths and challenges with current systems (e.g., Ellucian Colleague, Applicant Tracking System, CurricUNET)
- Examine acceptable levels of risk in policies (e.g., safety and security, independent contractors, teleworking)

OBJECTIVE 4.2: **Make optimal use of student success data to inform future programs and services**

Example Activities:
- Regularly study and discuss outcomes related to student performance
- Study and discuss data related to perceptions and attitudes (e.g., surveys, focus groups)
- Formalize review criteria and expectations

OBJECTIVE 4.3: **Develop operational processes that are responsive to the strategic priorities identified in this plan**

Example Activities:
- Align department and committee operating plans to institutional priorities
- Align department and committee budgets to institutional priorities
- Align employee performance to institutional priorities
- Develop a decision-making process for capital requests

GOAL 5:
Strengthen Educational and Workforce Partnerships to Create a More Responsive and Sustainable Community

OBJECTIVE 5.1: **Formalize expectations for advisory boards and other sources that inform future curricula, programs, and services**

Example Activities:
- Create and adapt curricula through program review and analysis
- Ascertain soft skills needed by employers and demonstrated by graduates
- Track the continued career success of students in the workforce and the continued academic success of students in higher education

OBJECTIVE 5.2: **Leverage community partnerships and legislative advocacy efforts in ways that support learning and student success**

Example Activities:
- Expand the use of Elgin Community College ambassadors
- Meet with opinion leaders and elected officials
- Participate in meetings with local chambers of commerce
- Improve outreach efforts in targeted communities

OBJECTIVE 5.3: **Effectively communicate results, successes, benefits, and offerings to community stakeholders**

Example Activities:
- Strengthen and promote technologies for communication (e.g., website, portal)
- Increase the number of community members who participate in student success efforts

GOAL 6:
Enhance Elgin Community College as an Employer of Choice

OBJECTIVE 6.1: **Proactively recruit diverse individuals to work at Elgin Community College**

Example Activities:
- Enrich and develop community relationships for new avenues of recruitment
- Refine search and recruitment processes

OBJECTIVE 6.2: **Improve the efficiency of hiring, onboarding, and offboarding employees**

Example Activities:
- Streamline hiring procedures to minimize delays
- Develop benchmarks for onboarding and offboarding employees

OBJECTIVE 6.3: **Establish career pathways for employees**

Example Activities:
- Explore the use of job shadowing, job swapping, mentoring, etc.
- Strengthen the use of staff and administration "ladders" and succession planning

OBJECTIVE 6.4: **Implement professional development opportunities for all faculty, staff, and administrators based on industry best practices**

Example Activities:
- Expand professional development in developmental education for faculty
- Expand professional development in strategic and operational planning for all employees

OBJECTIVE 6.5: **Enhance work-life balance**

Example Activities:
- Work toward a more equitable application of employee work schedules
- Optimize the use of benefits (e.g., smoking cessation programs, health and wellness)
- Better advocate for the physical and mental health of employees

Strategic Planning Committee, 2011-2012

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Our Process

Elgin Community College used a dynamic and inclusive process to create this plan. Starting in October 2011 and continuing through June 2012, the Strategic Planning Committee met nine times to develop the goals and objectives contained here. It reviewed a total of 48 separate reports, documents, and data files—some internal to the college and others mandated by external agencies. By December 2011, the committee had compiled a comprehensive list of 92 separate themes. The list was then refined four times between December 2011 and March 2012 to yield six goals. A separate writing taskforce of Strategic Planning Committee members drafted language for the goals and objectives in March 2012. The taskforce and the entire committee met three additional times between April and June 2012 to finalize this document.

Numerous constituencies provided feedback. In all, three all-college meetings were held to discuss and critique various drafts, as well as two Committee of the Whole meetings and a Board of Trustees retreat in June 2012. Numerous meetings of constituent groups throughout the 2012 spring semester reviewed drafts. Feedback was provided by individuals representing: the Faculty Senate; the President's Cabinet; the Administrative Team; the Teaching, Learning, and Student Development division; the Budget and Finance division; the Student Club Council; and several individual programs and departments. Feedback was also provided by external consultants including: The Higher Learning Commission, Achieving the Dream, Inc., and Bea Young Associates.

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