

Berkeley City College Statement of College Education Plans

Statement of Purpose

Berkeley City College's mission is to promote student success and to provide our diverse community with educational opportunities for transforming lives.

The Context of the Community Served

Berkeley City College is a comprehensive community college providing classes and programs leading to associate in arts degrees, associate in science degrees, and occupational certificates. BCC serves the six cities of Berkeley, Albany, Emeryville, Oakland, Piedmont, and Alameda. The college's vocational programs include Business, Interpreting Paraprofessional, American Sign Language, Office Technology, Computer Information Systems, Multimedia, Social Service Paraprofessional (also with Health Occupations Specialty), and Biotechnology. Students seeking transfer enroll in the college's PACE or one of its other liberal arts degree programs, all of which offer two-year transfer programs. BCC has several articulation agreements with local universities, and a unique relationship in which the college shares space with the University of California at Berkeley, which also provides mentors for BCC's students.

The year 06-07 marked the first year of Berkeley City College in its new 165,000 square foot facility at 2050 Center Street. A remarkable growth trend began almost immediately. The fall 2006 schedule began with only a 2% increase in sections over the spring 2006 schedule. Yet by the end of that year, the annual FTES had grown 17%. The growth trajectory confirmed that BCC had not been previously able to meet the base level of service required in the communities of Berkeley, Albany, and Emeryville. Enrollments have steadily increased since that time, only limited by the recent fiscal constraints of state funding. Annual headcount increased by 42% from 6,921 in 2006-07 to 9,808 in 2008-09. The annual FTES increased by 66% from 2,594 in 2006-07 to 4,299 in 2008-09.

BCC's students tend to qualify for support services in high proportion. Over 62% are between the ages of 16 and 34. The Caucasian enrollment at BCC has declined to 30%, while the college has experienced a slow but steady growth in the Asian and Hispanic populations and maintained the African American population at a quarter of the total enrollment. This shift in college programming student characteristics is significant: only fifteen years ago, most of BCC's students were Caucasian adults seeking lifelong educational enrichment.

Educational Approaches

There are significant changes in the local labor market. The cities of Oakland and Berkeley have major economic development initiatives to attract and develop the information technology industry sector and green technology. Berkeley and Emeryville

have spawned a large number of firms that provide Internet services or technologies. Oakland is developing a very large capacity to support firms in these areas as well. Biotechnology and Multimedia industries also have major firms in the area. Berkeley City College works closely with these firms. There is also an increasing need for people to work in the services sectors (including financial services and international business) and health services sectors of the economy. Health services and for-profit educational organizations are providing stable and increasing employment bases during this economic downturn. Finally, local universities—with state impetus-- have begun major efforts to recruit and train students who want to become teachers. Berkeley City College must provide additional technical training to respond to the demands of this local labor market. Much of the career- and transfer-preparation requires high-end computer laboratories (for multimedia, and information technology) and science labs (for sciences and biotechnology). Berkeley City College's science classes are filling rapidly, and the college is seeking ways to expand its programs to meet the demand. The college has expanded its Multimedia program to five strands, with new facilities for video production, recording, and animation. A new writing lab and several cohort instructional models, including in-class provision of support services, have been integrated into the Foundations program, designed to meet the developmental needs of students who need more preparation for college-level courses.

Student support services have been greatly enhanced. New facilities include an expanded library (designed to serve 7500 students) with small-group study rooms and a library computer center; a Learning Resource/Tutoring Center; a large Extended Opportunity Programs and Services study center; an adaptive technology laboratory; a Multimedia center with two large computer labs, an animation studio, a print lab, a shooting studio, a recording studio, and video makeup suites, among other facilities. The school also has a 250-seat auditorium in which it holds lectures, films, large classes, and community events; a modern spoken language lab; two specially equipped American Sign Language lab/classrooms; a writing center; a 100-seat tiered classroom; four rooms connected by movable walls for various room configurations, and four multiuse computer labs. Every classroom and lab is equipped with an Audio Visual Control Station, from which the instructor can access a variety of instructional media, including DVDs, CDs, the Internet, and computer-based applications. The new building also includes a beautiful student lounge on the top floor with a bookstore, student government offices and student activities space, as well as an atrium level where the college community can gather informally. This plaza also has facilities for a sit-down dinner for up to 130 people.

The college completed a fifteen-year Education Master Plan in 2000 with an update in 2001. The plan outlines the institution's commitment to new educational delivery methods (including Computer Aided Instruction, Web-based learning, and distance education). It also describes the new instructional programs mentioned above, as well as institutional commitment to integrating academic and vocational programs and upgrading all occupational certificates and liberal arts degrees to reflect the new demands of the workplace.

A Summary of Facilities Needed

The new facility expects to complete the final 16,000 square feet of undeveloped expansion space in its building by June 2011. The completed space will include additional science lab space, art studio space, and student support areas. However, with the unexpected growth of the college in the past three years, and the expected growth with easing of fiscal constraints in the next few years, the college will need some larger classrooms, spaces suited to special programs, and more faculty and administrative office space. In addition, parking, which the college is forced to lease in the impacted and shrinking downtown market, will be a crucial issue.

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