

In 2010-2011 Joliet Junior College (IL) developed an environmental scan and used it to develop their strategic plan. The environmental scan researched and developed 90 separate trend statements (with rationale and implications for each trend) covering changes in competition, demographics, economics, education, labor force, politics, social values and lifestyles, and technology.

From this, six core or key trends were selected as most important to the college's service area and necessary to address in the college's strategic plan.

Core Trends

Competition #10: There is a heightened focus on ensuring that programs and certificates are closely linked to labor market needs.

Demographics #2: Between 2005 and 2015, the minority population in the JJC district is projected to grow by 58.2% from 173,382 to 274,350 and will represent 30.7% of the district's population.

Education #6: Evidence as to how prepared high school students are for college is mixed. Two trends are evident in this area; (1) There is evidence of an increasing gap between high school and college expectations for learning and curriculum; and (2) Many students defined as underprepared have attended community colleges and there is no evidence to suggest this will not continue.

Politics #8: State commitments to fund higher education in the near future will be much less reliable than in the past. The revenue picture is difficult to predict, particularly in Illinois. Still, community college funding structures are built upon historical assumptions about revenue generation and will likely need to be changed.

Social Values and Lifestyles #7: Social media and mobile technologies greatly influence how Americans (and others) connect, communicate, develop and seek information and resources in a global society.

Technology #10: The notion of anytime, anywhere access will continue to give rise to the need for more hybrid (online and traditional) course development in which both the institution and students benefit. Economic realities will continue to drive the need for specialization and reaching learners outside of the local geographic service area.

All trends influenced the development of the strategic plan that follows:

Strategic Plan 2011-2014

Vision: Joliet Junior College, the nation's first public community college, will be a leader in teaching and learning, and the first choice for post-secondary education.

Mission: Joliet Junior College enriches people's lives through affordable, accessible, and quality programs and services. The college provides transfer and career preparation, training and workforce development, and a lifetime of learning to the diverse community it serves.

Each strategic goal addresses one or more of the core trends.

Strategic Goals

1. Improve student success with an emphasis on enrollment, retention, graduation, transfer rates and effective teaching strategies and learning outcomes. (This goal addressed core trend, Education #6.)
2. Increase institutional sustainability, with an emphasis on obtaining necessary resources, state-of-the-art facilities, professional development and environmental stewardship. (This goal addressed core trend, Politics #8.)
3. Increase and improve partnerships with organizations that support the college's mission. (This goal addressed core trends Competition #10, Education #6 and Demographics #2).
4. Utilize technology strategically to advance teaching and learning, expand online and alternative delivery methods, and enable effective administrative and support services. (This goal addressed core trends, Social Values #7 and Technology #10.)
5. Improve the success of minority, underrepresented and underprepared student populations in addition to closing the gap between high school and college performance. (This goal addressed core trends, Demographics #2 and Education #6.)
6. Develop programs that anticipate and respond to labor market demand. (This goal addressed core trend, Competition #10.)