



HONORING OUR PAST.

FOCUSING ON OUR FUTURE.

2020-2024 STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

The strategic framework is an internal working document of COTC designed to assist the college in fulfilling its mission and meeting the needs of students, employers and the communities it serves. The plan was created with input from the entire campus community and external stakeholders.

The goal of the strategic planning process was to produce a framework of priorities that are collectively derived to guide the work of the college over the next five years and to inform choices for resource allocation.

This framework is the product of many months of work by COTC faculty, staff, students and trustees. It is at once the culmination of these efforts and the starting point for work that lies ahead for the entire college community. It represents many hours of discussion, moments of passionate debate, and the decision making that is possible only in a community of open, engaged and thoughtful people of good faith who have deep devotion to the institution they share.

Throughout the institutional planning process, we have been mindful of our founding mission; our present strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges in higher education; and our ambitions for the future. The most important work of the college is ensuring all persons in our service area can access higher education, supporting the success of our students and addressing the workforce needs of employers within our service area. Today, and in the future imagined by this plan, we seek to ensure the economic well-being of our communities as well as meaningful careers for those who live here.

The Process: The development of the COTC strategic framework utilized the resources and expertise of a wide range of stakeholders and constituents to help determine the college's forward direction. The framework was developed with careful consideration and input from faculty, staff, administrators, students, business and education representatives, alumni, community partners and other stakeholders.

Foundational to the planning process was the comprehensive environmental assessment of internal and external issues, trends and factors likely to impact the college. The review of a wide variety of data sources, the strategic scan helped us understand our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. The review resulted in the identification of the areas of focus that must be addressed in order to advance toward the vision.

The process spanned more than 12 months, beginning with the identification of institutional priorities as part of the presidential search process in 2018 as a series of conversations with students, faculty, staff and board members. It extended through October 2019, when faculty, staff and trustees had the opportunity to consider and endorse the plan. The work of planning has been carried out by the Board of Trustees, the president, and the Strategic Planning Council and support team. At intervals throughout the process, members of the COTC community have been invited to engage with the emerging ideas and recommendations, and offer suggestions for strategies and tactics to address the identified priorities. They were also invited to participate in the work conducted by Carnegie Dartlet that helped to identify our institutional values and formulate our institutional vision.



DEFINING CHARACTERISTICS

Primary institutional characteristics describe who we are and help to differentiate COTC from other institutions in the University System of Ohio. These characteristics are used to define our positioning.

Workforce focused. Since its founding in 1971 as a “technical college,” Central Ohio Technical College’s primary purpose was and continues to be to provide students with technical skills and professional training designed to meet the immediate employment needs of new and existing businesses in the area. COTC’s technical programs appeal to students seeking applied and hands-on learning. As an Ohio technical college, COTC also offers the associate of arts and the associate of science degrees, both of which are programs that many Ohioans seek in the two-year system. These baccalaureate-oriented associate degree programs are intended to enable students to transfer to a four-year institution for the completion of a baccalaureate degree or to provide a planned program of general education equivalent to what is provided by four-year institutions at the freshman and sophomore levels.

Student centered. COTC is an open-access institution committed to providing education for all those who seek it, while also embracing each person’s individual diversity and needs. For all students to successfully achieve their educational and career goals, the college provides access to learning and support services. COTC meets students where they are in their educational journey and empowers them to move forward into greater opportunity. COTC is a learner-centered environment with high-quality instruction, resources, services and challenging opportunities designed to support the continuing growth, development and success of our students.

Community driven. COTC is committed to developing a strong workforce and promoting the economic vitality of Coshocton, Knox and Licking counties. By aligning with local industry, COTC can respond to real-time job market needs and ensure sustainable employment for its students. Our community support and debt-free position are distinguishing strength characteristics.

Uniquely partnered. The college shares its Newark campus with The Ohio State University at Newark. In addition to their co-location, the institutions share services. While the governance, mission, curriculum and faculty of each institution remain autonomous, many of the administrative and student support offices are shared. Through this unique partnership, both institutions realize cost savings and efficiencies by sharing facilities, administrative services and employees.

Taken together, these differentiating characteristics lead to our positioning statements that define the mission and vision of the college.

VALUES

Our VALUES reflect the shared beliefs and principles that guide our work. Our values are internally held principles from which our culture stems, and they guide the attitude and intention with which we approach our work.

Helpful and inclusive, driven by compassion and the desire to care about others.

Resilient and tenacious, driven by overcoming challenges through grit and determination.

Forward-thinking and innovative, driven by a commitment to positive change.

MISSION: To meet the technical education and training needs of students and employers in the area.

VISION: COTC will help our students build successful futures by engaging with our industries, communities and employers to uncover opportunities that will address workforce needs, positively influence communities and impact lives for decades to come.

KEY PRIORITIES

The document that follows establishes a framework to guide COTC for the next five years. It details areas where we know we need to build strength and where significant work is underway. It also commits us to a set of concrete actions, beginning immediately, that will influence resource allocation. Finally, it points to important, longer-term structural issues requiring further examination in order to make progress.

COTC has identified **four key priorities** that will shape the college's work for the next five years. As we implement this plan, we will increase COTC's positive impact on the students, businesses and communities we serve.



1 STUDENT SUCCESS

Help students achieve academic and career goals by improving learning and student support.

Goals and Measures: We will help our students achieve their academic goals by supporting academic success in the classroom and through student-centered programs. Although we have made some progress in improving our graduation rate, the rate is still significantly lower than our Ohio technical college peers. Academic goals will be measured by retention rates, three-year graduation rate for First Time in College (FTIC) students, and the number of degrees and certificates awarded each year. **By 2024, our fall-to-fall retention rate will be over 60% for full-time students and 40% for part-time students, and our three-year graduation rate will be 25% or greater. The total number of degrees awarded each year will be 500 or greater. One hundred one-year certificates and 75 short-term certificates will be awarded each year.**

Faculty and staff diversity plays a critical role in providing an educational environment that promotes the retention and success of students of color. **By 2023, the percentage of racial diversity of our faculty and staff will mirror the racial**

and ethnic diversity of the population of our three-county service area (8.4%). In striving to improve student outcomes, COTC will further cultivate faculty committed to teaching excellence by supporting professional development for all faculty. **By 2021, 70% of our full-time faculty will have utilized our professional development funding aimed to improve instructional/teaching effectiveness.**

Strategies:

- Support academic success in the classroom and through student-centered programs as outlined in the College Completion Plan;
- Achieve greater diversity in the faculty and staff by strengthening recruiting strategies to ensure a broader range of applicants;
- Continue supporting faculty development in teaching effectiveness; and
- Further efforts to ensure that online courses are compliant and accessible to all learners.

2 INSTITUTIONAL GROWTH

Increase institutional growth and stability through efficient program, enrollment and fiscal management.

Goals and measures: COTC will provide viable academic programming in technical areas and workforce training, both of which are aligned with industry demands to produce graduates to address local workforce needs. **By 2024, COTC expects to offer four new technical programs.** The college's Workforce Development Innovation Center (WDIC) has been operating at a loss for a number of years. **By 2022, through the allocation of dedicated staff, revitalization of programming and new partnership development, the WDIC will be self-sustaining. Additionally, the college will establish contracts with 15 new businesses each year to offer customized workforce training and technical assistance.**

Enrollment growth is critical to COTC's viability. Over the past five years, the college's adult student base (age 25 and older) has declined sharply. COTC's College Credit Plus (CCP) student population has increased significantly; however, these students are not continuing their education with COTC. The college will explore and develop new career pathways with high school partners. **By 2023, 10% of COTC CCP high school students will matriculate directly from high school graduation into COTC technical programs. The college will rebuild COTC's adult student base to 30% of the student population. By 2024, our student body will be at least 4,200.** In striving to become representative of our direct and global community, racial and ethnically diverse students will comprise 15% or greater of COTC's student body.

We also need to continue growing our campuses and building facilities that are conducive to learning. **By 2024, the college will update its facilities master plan.** New and renovated facilities that add academic and support spaces will be completed. **By 2021, we will have the new John and Mary Alford Center for Science and Technology in operation and will conclude the first phase of the Pataskala campus renovation.** With declining enrollments at our extended campuses, we need to think differently about those campuses. **By the end of 2020, we will have completed an economic evaluation and needs assessment of all four of COTC's campus service regions and developed plans for each of the extended campuses.** Our goal is to deliver three programs in their entirety at each of COTC's extended campuses by 2021.



INSTITUTIONAL GROWTH (cont.)

Community support has and continues to be a cornerstone to the college's viability. **During the next five years, we will raise \$4 million for student scholarships, program support and capital projects, and an additional \$2 million to support the enhancement of the Pataskala campus renovation.** As through efficient program, enrollment and fiscal management a state institution, it is important that we continue to be responsible fiscal stewards. Our commitment to financial sustainability reinforces the need to make difficult choices and, accordingly, focus on containing costs. Over the next five years, **we will maintain a fiscal health composite score of greater than or equal to 4.0 each year.**

Strategies:

Program management

- Evaluate academic program offerings to ensure relevancy, effectiveness and viability.
- Implement new certificate and technical degree programs in response to local needs.
- Explore and implement apprenticeship education.

- Expand business and industry training for area businesses to build a competitive workforce and enhance the economic vitality of the communities served.
- Manage the operations of the WDIC such that adequate revenues enable the center to operate in a self-sustaining fashion.
- Conduct an economic evaluation and needs assessment in all four of COTC's campus service regions, including a comprehensive study into the cost and effectiveness of each of the college's extended campuses.

Facilities management

- Update the facilities master plan, Framework 2.0.
- Expand COTC's presence and services by completing the John and Mary Alford Center for Science and Technology.
- Renovate the Pataskala campus.

Enrollment management

- Rebuild COTC's adult student base (age 25 and older).
- Rework CCP strategy to develop new career pathways.
- Evaluate online programs and course offerings.
- Promote diversity to provide meaningful educational experience in our communities.
- Strengthen partnerships with all secondary education partners within our service region to enhance offerings and expand opportunities.

Fiscal management

- Ensure financial stability through effective fiscal stewardship and
- Grow COTC's endowment and the Newark Campus Development Fund's (NCDF) holdings and capacity to award student scholarships, support programs and fund capital projects.
- Generate private support for the renovation of the Pataskala campus.
- Explore areas of potential efficiency to free up resources.



3 COLLABORATIVE CULTURE

Promote a culture of collaboration and build a college community that values diversity and mutual respect.

Goals and measures:

Our employees are the greatest asset we have to ensure the successful execution of our mission and vision. As such, we must build a community of employees who feel valued and recognized. We will continue increasing efforts to promote a positive culture and an environment in which excellence is encouraged. We will empower employees to have a voice and establish an environment that encourages sharing. Our goal is to improve effective internal communications and collaboration and develop a spirit of teamwork. We will use the Ruffalo Noel-Levitz Employee Satisfaction Survey to measure employee satisfaction. **We will strive to raise the overall satisfaction level of all employee groups to 3.85 or greater. The college will also use this**

survey to measure employees' satisfaction with communication between the faculty and the administration, and the spirit of teamwork and cooperation at the institution. We will strive to be 3.0 on both measures. We will strive to be 4.0 on those items that measure diversity and mutual respect and will achieve the national benchmark rate for the item used as a measure of building a community that feels valued and recognized. We will continue assessing structural strengths and challenges to design and support a successful organizational structure that maximizes collaboration, integration and effectiveness.

Strategies:

- Foster improved relationships and cooperation within the internal COTC community.
- Improve internal communication strategies via an array of engagement platforms (i.e. videos, blogs, meetings).
- Value employees through recognition and engagement programming that promotes satisfaction.
- Further develop a robust and effective executive leadership team.
- Fully implement the executive team approach of an extended campus consortium with all members of the team working from an extended campus location a minimum of one day per month.
- Restructure organizationally to enfold enrollment management with academic affairs and student support.



4 OPERATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Aim for the most efficient use of resources and optimal alignment of processes to improve institutional effectiveness, deliver consistently high quality and provide exceptional services.

Goals and measures:

The college is accountable to its constituents for the effective and efficient use of college resources to provide quality education and services for learners. Institutional effectiveness requires purposeful allocation of resources, strategic investments, and continual assessment and improvement in programs and services. COTC will advance institutional effectiveness and organizational efficiency through planning, assessment and evidenced-based decision making across the college in support of the mission and goals. We will implement judicious resource allocation strategies based on institutional priorities in alignment with current and emerging fiscal realities.

With the commitment to serve students through excellence in education, COTC strives to improve instructional effectiveness and provide consistent quality. COTC will use licensure pass rates as a measure of instructional effectiveness, **and we will strive for our graduates' first time pass rates from programs with licensure, certification and/or registry requirements to achieve or surpass the national threshold pass rate established by each licensing agency.** Accreditation is the gold standard indicator of institutional and programmatic quality and of our commitment of continuous improvement. **COTC will maintain good standing with current accreditors and will achieve programmatic accreditation for the Practical Nursing program by 2021.**

As we approach our 50th anniversary, it is important that we continue advocacy efforts to support growth and spur enhancement of the college's overall reputation. Many offices

contribute to our advocacy efforts and help strengthen our reputation, build the college's brand, and secure funding to support our students and programs. Utilizing the results of the recently conducted reputation strategy project, **the marketing and public relations office will redefine the college's marketing strategy during 2020** to build reputation and recognition, align marketing messages, and improve competitiveness. The president's office will continue to work with legislators to raise awareness of COTC and Ohio State Newark's collaborative partnership and the corresponding efficiencies it garners. Additionally, the office of advancement will provide services across the entire college and will continue outreach efforts throughout the community. **Together, we will build relationships to promote advocacy, enhance state financial support, ensure positive public perceptions and support fundraising.**

Strategies:

- Facilitate rigorous, quality instruction which supports successful student learning.
- Raise awareness of COTC/Ohio State Newark's collaborative partnership and the corresponding efficiencies it garners.
- Further maximize collaboration between the college and Ohio State Newark to increase effective resource allocation.
- Continue to pursue compliance with applicable standards of accreditation agencies.
- Build relationships to promote advocacy, enhance state financial support, ensure positive public perceptions and support fundraising.
- Implement new marketing strategies.

This framework is flexible and dynamic, evolving over time and continually informed by appropriate governance processes. Responsibility for progress on specific issues or action items falls under the purview of different members of the senior staff, standing committees that are part of existing governance structures or future ad hoc committees appointed as needs arise.

These individuals and committees will develop detailed plans and timetables for sequencing the plan's activities. The framework will be reviewed on an annual basis and adjustments made as necessary to reflect changing priorities based upon environmental scanning and institutional self-evaluation. The review process will include an annual report of accomplishments, their measurements and impacts on institutional effectiveness.