

## Strategic Focus

# Enhance Regional Development

### Purpose of the Strategic Focus

NC State has a successful track record in supporting regional development efforts in a variety of way from providing information and participating in recruiting new businesses to assuring businesses have access to the type of employee training essential to businesses success.

NC State is assuming the role of a “convener” to help the region focus on the necessary strategies for economic revival and forge collaborative approaches to community development. These aligned development strategic initiatives will allow the college to proactively and effectively address the new realities as we emerge from the Great Recession:

- The Workforce Development Department needs an improved focus through a planning document to deal with this changing landscape.
- Entrepreneurship will remain a particularly important source of job growth in the region, requiring extensive support and coordination amongst credit and workforce areas at the college.

### Intended Impact on Ends Policies

Enhancement of regional development is essential to all the Ends Policies. Training of employees to enhance the performance, stability and success of businesses and organizations as well as training of individuals directly impacts 1.6 Enrichment. The development of occupational knowledge, skills for entrepreneurial roles in a variety of businesses directly affects both 1.3 High Demand/Emerging Technologies and 1.2 Job Readiness. The training of entrepreneurs and the creation of new businesses directly impacts 1.6 Enrichment.

### Strategic Initiatives (MEANS) – Descriptions

#### ***Workforce Development Strategic Plan***

Workforce Development will develop and execute a new strategic plan which maintains expertise in manufacturing training and builds expertise in other important sectors of the economy.

#### ***Enhance Entrepreneurship***

Economic reality emphasizes the critical need for entrepreneurship to drive the future of regional development. Both education and training programs need to aggressively continue responding to this reality.

### Strategic Initiatives – Specific Objectives and Background, Planning and Policy Considerations

## **Training Strategic Plan**

Specific Objective – ***Significantly increase training volume and revenues by meeting regional workforce development needs.***

### **Background, Planning and Policy Considerations**

The economic challenges of the last few years have fundamentally changed the nature of training in the region. For the most of last decade, the college relied on large grant infusions for workforce development training targeted almost exclusively to manufacturing. In 2007, the college earned nearly \$900,000 in noncredit program revenue. Since 2007, Richland and its contiguous counties have lost 12,000 jobs with the most from manufacturing (7,500), construction (2,100) and trade, transportation and utilities (2,400).

Total 2009 program revenue was only \$500,000 and state funding for incumbent manufacturing training has largely ceased in 2010. Most grant funding is targeted to dislocated workers, though the new governor's administration has noted intent to shift more funds to incumbent worker training. As manufacturing slowly recovers, there will be a continuing demand for highly skilled workers who can embrace increased automation through such skills as CNC programming/operation and multi-craft industrial maintenance. Further, new potential clients such as Calisolar may need even further skill sets such as those required in a foundry.

Further, sectors the college has not traditionally targeted are experiencing growth. Since 2007 three regional sectors have added nearly 1,700 jobs including education and health services (1,200), finance (300) and agriculture/natural resource (200). Many jobs within these fields require professional certification for which the college could provide initial (eg, various IT industry credentials) or continuing education (eg, medical and professional license upkeep). To address these new economic realities, the college should expedite a strategic plan for training.

The strategic plan would be a tool to provide the Workforce Department increased guidance in dealing with rapidly changing economic realities. The plan would benefit employers, dislocated workers and the under-employed. Both the Interim and Incoming Dean of Business, Technology and Workforce should establish the planning process in conjunction with Workforce Development, determine who will direct the planning process and have a plan ready for implementation by July 2011. The planning process should involve key current stakeholders, as well as potential customers. It should be completed within three months of commission and be immediately executed upon completion.

The plan should ensure fast response to employer training needs. Further, fast response to employer needs should be viewed as an opportunity to incubate new programs that could later transition to academic for-credit programs.

### **Enhance Entrepreneurship**

Specific Objective – ***Significantly increase the number of students successfully completing academic entrepreneurship programs/training and starting businesses.***

## **Background, Planning and Policy Considerations**

Americans are increasingly seeking to own and operate their own businesses. Also, businesses are increasingly hiring contracted services instead of full-time employees. In older industrial areas where large firms have downsized (e.g. Flint and Rochester), entrepreneurship is a particularly important source of job growth. Having a strong entrepreneurial culture and support system will make it easier to retain talented residents who wish to stay in the area even after being laid off or graduating from college.

The recent SCORE entrepreneurship seminars held at NC State had tremendous attendance. NC State has launched student incubators at the Kehoe Center and Urban Center, and has just hired a former entrepreneur to launch an academic program in the business department. It is receiving support from both Braintree and SCORE. However, these efforts are very much in the embryonic stage, and there should be a unifying focus and delegation of responsibility for entrepreneurship efforts.

There should be a unified focus and plan for entrepreneurial training, education and development support across the college. There is a tremendous body of knowledge available. The realignment of the academic division, grouping business and technology faculty with workforce development staff, will support entrepreneurship efforts.

The federal Department of Labor has revised policy allowing training providers to fund entrepreneurship training with Workforce Investment Act funds. This opportunity should be further investigated.

## **Learning and Growth Strategic Objectives**

Human Capital Specific Objective – ***Prepare faculty and staff to carry out strategic initiatives***

Informational Capital Specific Objective – ***Assure data and information necessary to inform, monitor and evaluate strategic initiatives is available***

Organizational Capital Specific Objectives – ***Assure alignment of all units of the college with the strategic initiatives***

Community Capital Specific Objectives – ***Obtain active involvement from individuals, employers, and organizations to help carry out the strategic initiatives***

## **Background, Planning and Policy Considerations for Learning and Growth Strategic Objectives**

### **Human Capital**

Appropriate professional development should be considered to support the entrepreneurship initiative and the regional engagement components of the initiatives. In Workforce Development, it may also be of value to support the shift from a largely grants based marketing and sales approach to an approach based on customer payment for service.

### **Information Capital**

The support of IR and IT will be necessary to assure that the data and information necessary to plan, monitor and evaluate efforts to Enhance Regional Development is available. IR will need to lead a collaborative effort with Career Services and others involved with graduate and employer surveys to refine and improve the survey process in support of these initiatives.

### **Organizational Capital**

College leadership should encourage and support the collaboration of faculty and staff from throughout the college with Business, Technology and Workforce Division that will be necessary to carry out the initiatives.

### **Community Capital**

The College should continue to seek the support of employers, employer associations and community organizations for input on training and education needs. College leadership should find ways to encourage and facilitate getting this support.