Strategic Plan 2014

SWCID is the national and premier community college designed to serve deaf and hard of hearing students through the use of American Sign Language and English. SWCID maintains its status as a proud junior college, the best choice for the diverse population of qualified deaf and hard of hearing students in our nation and around the world. SWCID also provides a unique training ground for hearing students pursuing careers related to the field of professional interpreting and education of deaf and hard of hearing people. SWCID empowers students with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes vital to achieving personal growth and career goals, traits they can use in the local, national, and international communities where they ultimately decide to live. SWCID has become a leader among colleges for the deaf and hard of hearing in raising the quality of education, employability, social acuity and meaningful college-life experiences for all its students. Since 1980, SWCID has carried out these outcomes through:

- A bilingual and bicultural learning environment with full and direct communication through American Sign Language and English on the SWCID campus
- An undying dedication to excellence in academic and student affairs
- Expansion of SWCID’s outreach to a broader audience of deaf, hard of hearing, and hearing learners who can benefit from taking dual-credit and online courses
- Meaningful college-life experiences at SWCID which help to grow, develop, and improve the lives, knowledge, skills, and attitudes of all our deaf, hearing, and hard of hearing students. SWCID staff, faculty and students work together to help students achieve self-directed independence in any environment of living, learning, and working.

SWCID is committed to general education, career and technical education, student leadership, social development, and the success of all students as complete adult individuals.

It is vital to SWCID’s sustained survival and significance that enrollment increase. To this end, we propose to:

- Increase our enrollment to 300 students by offering more online courses, iTV courses, dual-credit courses, and Virtual College of Texas (VCT) courses in partnership with the Texas School for the Deaf, Regional Day School Programs for the Deaf, other high schools, and colleges and universities in the nation.
- Aggressively market to, and recruit, deaf and hard of hearing students including all who are qualified to enroll in developmental and/or college-level courses, thereby helping them achieve their goal of obtaining a certificate or Associate degree in a Career/Technical field and finding a job or transferring to a four year University.
- Provide mentoring/tutoring services to students who are under-prepared and support them in achieving a Career and Technical Education certificate and/or associate degree.
- Actively recruit hearing and deaf/hard of hearing students into our Paraprofessional in Deaf Education (PDE)/Deaf Studies and Interpreter Training programs for an enriching immersion experience with deaf students, faculty and staff at SWCID.
SWCID will refine its General Studies, Career and Technical Education programs, and support services as necessary to match the rising quality of our student population in accordance with our admission process criteria.

SWCID will continue to foster solid partnerships and outreach to all residential schools for the deaf, day schools for the deaf and mainstreamed programs for the deaf in public school districts and to encourage our students, faculty, and staff to be active participants in their local and national communities.

**SWCID is committed to excellence and to increasing deaf and hard of hearing student success in all learner-centered environments. To this end, we propose to:**

- Increase completion rates to a level at or above the State average.
- Continue increasing access to tutoring, mentoring and support services that lead to more deaf and hard of hearing students working toward two-year degree programs, graduating and/or transferring to four-year universities.
- Provide professional development opportunities for increasing faculty and staff knowledge of teaching methodologies and students’ generational learning styles thereby enabling them to more effectively work with deaf and hard of hearing students.
- Inform and enable faculty regarding new and/or innovative instructional methods equipping them to work more effectively with deaf and hard of hearing students through 2015.

SWCID will foster collaboration between the Campus Dean of Academic Affairs, the Campus Dean of Student Affairs, and the Campus Dean of Outreach and Career Services to help meet the demands of the rapidly changing job market. Emphasis will be placed on finding appropriate internships for students, and on a robust career/placement service focused on students and graduates’ career goals.

SWCID will foster a positive work environment with respect for the dignity and diversity of all deaf and hard of hearing students, faculty, staff, and administrators. This environment will encourage the sharing of ideas, open communication, feedback, and integrity.

**SWCID is committed to maintaining a high quality of managerial and fiscal accountability and to providing real value and proof of progress to all its stakeholders including students, parents, administrators, faculty, staff and legislators. We will strive:**

- To be accountable for strategic priorities in the targets of enrollment, retention, and graduation.
- To appropriately manage all funds provided by the Texas State government, financial aid, general revenues, and other funding sources in order to support value-learning outcomes for our students.
- To annually examine SWCID/Howard College resources including financial and human personnel and to reallocate these resources as needed to support intended priorities of enrollment, academic programs, student services, and outreach and career services. Based
on the results of cost and benefits analysis for all SWCID programs, priorities and
decision-making as part of the budget process will be evaluated annually to determine the
need for program continuation, expansion or closure.

Programs and Curriculum

1. Career & Technical Education Advisory Membership:
The make-up and involvement of our CTE advisory committees has been an area of
cost-concern for many years. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board has
established guidelines for all CTE programs in the state. These may be found in the
Guidelines for Instruction in Workforce Education (GIPWE) at the following web
address:
Within these guidelines is the mandate for all CTE advisory committees to:

- Meet a minimum of once each academic year.
- Have two elected offices: Chairperson and Recorder. The Chairperson calls and
  runs meetings while the Recorder keeps the minutes.
- Keep minutes of meetings on file and available to Coordinating Board personnel.
- Make any proposed changes in the curriculum of a CTE program accompanied by
  a copy of the minutes of the appropriate advisory committee meeting in which
  those changes were discussed and approved.
- Increase the number and diversity of committee members. More meetings are
  taking place, both face-to-face and via electronic media (email, VPs, Skype, etc).

2. Implement an Evaluation Process for Achieving Student Learning Outcomes by:

- Regularly evaluating student progress in all General Studies/Core and CTE
  classes.
- Administering Pre- and Post-tests in all classes the first and last day of every
  semester.
- Analyzing compiled/comparative pre- and post-test data on a 3 year cycle to
  identify areas for improvement.

3. Restructure the Assessment and Evaluation of SWCID Instruction by:

- Revising the evaluation instruments in use by the district for use with deaf
  students.
- Evaluating all classes taught by an instructor instead of only one.
- Performing random (unscheduled) class observations periodically for faculty who
  are on a three year observation cycle.
- Ensuring that assessments and evaluations of instructors are fair, impartial and
  non-punitive.
• Striving to provide a fresh, unbiased perspective on what is happening in the classroom.
• Attempting to identify areas that can be changed in order to enhance the learning environment. Sometimes these may be simple fixes involving room logistics; i.e., lighting, temperature, seating. At other times more serious deficiencies may be noted in organization, planning, delivery, or content.
• Working with the SWCID faculty to improve instructional quality in all our classes/programs.

4. Interactive TV and On-Line Courses. Initiatives include:
• Hiring an E-learning (Distance Learning) Coordinator to develop multiple on-line courses to be offered here at SWCID.
• Beginning regularly scheduled trainings for faculty on how to effectively use the Angel on-line delivery system.
• Paying stipends to faculty who complete specific in-depth training for teaching on-line classes.
• Paying faculty extra for the development and delivery of on-line classes.
• Developing a better method for advertising our on-line course offerings for prospective students outside of Big Spring.
• Marketing our on-line classes to students who are not currently attending SWCID thereby increasing our enrollment and generating new tuition/fee dollars for the college.

5. Begin ASL Courses with High Schools. Initiatives include:
• Increasing enrollment and revenue by offering ASL 1-4 at area High Schools.
• Beginning delivery of ASL classes to remote locations including Laredo and Odessa, Texas via distance learning, iTV, and/or Virtual College of Texas formats.
• Providing public high schools with more and better promotional materials which clearly explain our ITP and PDE/Deaf Studies programs.
• Sending ITP and PDE/Deaf Studies faculty on recruiting trips to meet with high school seniors.

6. Investigate Licensure/Certification for SWCID Students. Initiatives include:
• Investigating additional licenses or certifications for our students and/or programs.
• Adding a new class to our welding certificate program to help students prepare to pass the American Welding Society (AWS) Certification.
Encouraging former SWCID welding students to come back to SWCID and upgrade their skills and credentials by taking the AWS class and tests.

Revising the ITP curriculum to better prepare interpreting students for state and national certification tests.

Increasing certification pass rates for our ITP graduates back to levels at or above the state average.

Investigating the possibility of adding a certification or licensure component to other SWCID programs such as Dental Lab Technology, Automotive Technology and Computer Information Systems.

**Enrollment**

1. **Online application for prospective students. Initiatives include:**
   - Providing full access to a user friendly, on-line admissions application.
   - Ensuring the link to the SWCID on-line admissions application is available on the Howard College website.
   - Making the on-line application process more seamless to allow Enrollment Services to process applications quicker.
   - Developing an automatic reply system which will thank prospective students for their on-line applications.

2. **Financial Aid for prospective and returning students. Plans include:**
   - Adding a short video clip in ASL to the Howard College/SWCID website explaining the FAFSA process.
   - Adding a pamphlet about Financial Aid to the application packet.
   - Streamlining the Financial Aid application process between SWCID Enrollment Services and the HC Financial Aid Office.
   - Increasing the number of scholarships and amount of funding available to SWCID students, including athletes and international students.

3. **Increased retention of first year students to 90% and overall retention to 95%. Plans to accomplish this goal include:**
   - Providing immediate intervention if a student misses more than one week of class. This intervention could involve the instructor contacting the student, the student’s academic advisor, Dean of Academic Affairs and the Dean of Student Affairs.
   - Providing regular one-on-one sessions with Academic Advisor.
   - Providing Instructional Review Committee at the request of the student’s instructor.
   - Referring a student who requests partial or complete withdrawal to his or her Academic Advisor for advising and intervention.

4. **Tracking System- We plan to generate a new tracking system for student statistical information, including:**
• In-state
• Out of state
• International
• Hearing
• Deaf
• Number of completions per Major (graduates and completers of Marketable Skills awards)

5. **Improved communication with DARS/VR counselors and High School counselors.**

   **Plans include:**
   • Updating information every semester about tuition and fees, tool kits, room and board, textbooks, important dates, and registration dates on the HC/SWCID website.
   • Keeping DARS/VR and high school counselors informed about current application and enrollment forms and processes.
   • Facilitating communication between DARS/VR and the HC Bookstore regarding textbook purchases.

**Student Affairs**

1. **Student Life initiatives include:**
   • Improving the environment on campus by improving lighting in parking lots, adding more RO faucets for water and purchasing and installing new air conditioning units. Seek and apply for grant programs to secure funding for these items.
   • Offering intramural and extramural sports and student activities to support healthy lifestyle options and to improve student leadership and social development.
   • Offering educational and fun-learning workshops in the dorm lobby twice a month for developing and increasing self-confidence and leadership values.
   • Providing more student activities on weekends. Resident Assistance (RA) students, under the direction of the dorm supervisors will assume more responsibility for planning activities. Club officers, under the supervision of the club sponsors, will also plan activities.
   • Inviting high profile Deaf Role Models to speak at Deaf Awareness events, Graduations, and Award Ceremonies.
   • Improving community outreach/Public Relations by providing student assistance during state and national events hosted by SWCID.

**Outreach and Career Services**

1. **Technology**- Utilize current technology, including social networking websites, to reach potential students. **Plans include:**
• Increasing the number of “Cyber Recruiting” events and providing presentations via Distance Learning, Video Conferencing Equipment, or Video Phones.
• Establishing and maintaining a Facebook page. Links to the SWCID application for admission will be added to the Facebook page. http://www.facebook.com/dfullerswcid
• Adding the Facebook link to the college website and all printed materials.
• Developing policies and procedures for the appropriate use of social networking sites for the purposes of marketing and recruiting.

1. Scholarships- Scholarships and funding are extremely important to prospective students. Outreach department plans in this area include:
   • Being instrumental in establishing new scholarships
   • Becoming a vendor for Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) Services in all 50 states.
   • Finding potential funding sources for students interested in attending SWCID.
   • Securing CRP (Community Rehabilitation Program) contracts with all 50 states to provide Personal-Social Adjustment Training to students who are supported and referred by VR services for participation in the PASS (Promoting Academic Success for Students) Program.

2. Recruiting- Broaden the scope of our recruiting efforts and targeted population by:
   • Using faculty, staff and students for recruiting activities.
   • Recruiting athletes, hearing students for ITP and PDE/Deaf Studies, out of state students and mainstream students.
   • Recruiting for on-line courses, VCT, dual credit, special programs and continuing education classes.
   • Expanding community outreach, including SWCIDfest, Deaf Awareness Week and Open House.

3. Tracking- Tracking initiatives include:
   • Create and implement a system to provide analysis of recruiting, outreach efforts and outcomes utilizing the current software system.
   • Use data to measure success of marketing, recruiting, application, and enrollment.
   • Use data for budget planning for marketing materials, travel, and accommodation expenses.

4. Career Services is committed to:
   • Assisting with job placement with a minimum of 85% success rate for students in Career and Technical Education Programs.
   • Becoming a vendor for VR Job Development services to our students who are near completion of internship and graduation for job placement.
   • Providing two to three mini-workshops per semester to students on various issues related to career planning, job readiness and/or transferring to four year universities.
5. **Counseling Services plans include:**
   - Provide counseling services as an intervention measure for referred students who are considering withdrawal from school.
   - Provide training to faculty and staff on crisis intervention.
   - Provide support groups to students who are experiencing problems with drugs and alcohol, domestic violence, relationships or study skills/time management.

**Communications and Access**

1. **Signed Communication Proficiency Interview**
   - Establishing sign language communication evaluation protocol for all SWCID employees.
   - Requiring all SWCID employees to use visual sign language communication on campus.
   - Providing training for all SWCID staff to improve level of signed communication proficiencies within a structured time frame.

2. **Video Notification System (VNS)**
   - The production of materials released will have an emphasis on education, student life, athletics, clubs, organizations, extracurricular activities and community events. Initiatives include:
     - Broadening the use of the VNS to include the distribution of student produced news, information and entertainment.
     - Establishing a V-Media Club/Committee incorporating the support, sponsorship and guidance of faculty and staff.
     - Reinstating the use of the SWCID media studio.