

# FUTURES REPORT

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**December 2004**

### External Subcommittees:

#### **Educational**

**Chair: Pam Nelson  
Nanci Burk  
Chuck Hulihan  
Mary Jane Onnen  
Lee Sola**

#### **Political/Economic**

**Chair: George Martinez  
Deborah Dee  
Dr. Pam Hall  
Susan High  
Randy Kimmens  
Dr. Bill Lamkin  
Christine Moore  
Connie Sherman**

#### **Societal**

**Chair: Mary Lou Massal  
Dianna Dwyer  
Herman Gonzalez  
April Orr**

#### **Technical**

**Chair: Jim Daugherty  
Dr. James Abraham  
Chris Coughlin  
Frank Gonzalez  
Julie Knapp  
Ui Luu  
Michelle Shivnani  
Steve Smith**

### Internal Subcommittees:

#### **College Committee**

**Chair: Charlotte Cohen  
Anne Dudley  
Betty Hufford**

#### **College Data**

**Chair: Matt Ashcraft  
Janet Carleton  
Alberto Sanchez**

#### **At Large Contributor**

**Michael Petrowsky**

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## **FUTURES 2004 OVERVIEW**

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This summary distills the research and discussion of six Futures subcommittees, each of which prepared a report with a bibliography. The subcommittees (Committees, Internal Data, Economics/Politics, Education, Societal Trends, and Technology) presented current trends, projections, and implications for GCC from their respective focus areas. The full texts of these reports are available at College Research Services. As indicated by references in the text, the 2004 Futures is indebted to last year's committee, which laid the groundwork for a systematic and ongoing evaluation of factors related to the continued viability of Glendale Community College.

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## **GROWTH AND ENROLLMENT**

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The center of economic activity for Maricopa County has shifted west. For example, athletics is a major economic driver. The West Valley is now the venue for the Arizona Cardinals, Phoenix Coyotes, and the Phoenix International Raceway; the Coyotes administrative offices are Glendale-based. In the next five years, 65 percent of all building permits in Maricopa County are projected to be issued for the West Valley.

With economic growth, Glendale's enrollment has likewise expanded. According to last year's Futures report, FTSE in fall 2003 rose 4.2 percent from the previous fall. Fiscal 2003-2004 shows an overall 3.3 percent gain despite a lack of classrooms during peak hours of 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Rising enrollment is accompanied by increased student diversity. The Hispanic population is growing at twice the rate of the general population. By 2020 half the population in the greater Phoenix area will be Hispanic. The trend at GCC is a 1 percent increase in Hispanic students per year with a 1 percent decrease in White students, all other groups remaining relatively constant.

Age diversity continues with seniors, Boomers, Gen X, and Gen Y continuing to enroll. Additionally, GCC continues to service more students under the age of 18 through special admissions, ACE+, and dual enrollment. Students born after 1976, sometimes called Millenennials, appear to have shorter attention

spans and must multi-task more than ever before. The Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) notes that 60 percent [of two-year students] work more than 20 hours per week, 34 percent spend 11 or more hours per week caring for dependents, and 20 percent spend six to 20 hours per week commuting to and from class.”

The expectations and objectives of enrolling students seem to be changing rapidly. The percentage of students indicating their intent to transfer to a university has decreased from 53 percent in fall 2000 to 31 percent in fall 2004. In contrast, 9 percent more students listed employment as their primary goal.

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### STUDENTS

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Several factors may impact the success of enrolling students. First, some are under prepared and lack the skills to do college level work. These students are identified by the ASSET placement test and urged to register in developmental English, Math, and Reading classes. In the last three years, the percentage of students in these classes rose from 13.8 percent to 17.9 percent. However, while these students are taking developmental classes, they are often also enrolled in college-level classes like psychology and economics, where their skill sets do not match content requirements. Often the outcomes disappoint students and faculty alike.

Second, while all college students experience stress, two-year college students seem to face more pressures from school, employment, family, health, financial aid, and transportation. Too often these pressures lead to alienation. Lack of focus, depression, serious psychological problems, even suicide can occur. Nationally, 80% of colleges report seeing more students with serious psychological problems than they did five years ago.

Third, there may be a detachment between the expectations and learning styles of today’s students and the expectations and delivery methods of some teachers. Many faculty and administrators are fifty and older and gained their education through the read/lecture mode; many have taught with transfer as the ultimate goal; some have little or no expertise at technology. Young students, on

the other hand, “learn best with teamwork, experiential activities, structure, and use of technology,” according to *Boomers & GenXers, Millennials, Understanding New Students*.

Academic support via the Math Solution, the Writing Center, the Electronic Writing Center, and the Center for Learning is already in place for students. But these efforts are poorly staffed, in some cases by volunteers. Likewise, GCC’s growing mentoring program builds relationships with students. Additionally, the Counseling Department offers workshops and one-to-one counseling, but efforts are minimized by the students’ busy work/school schedules that prohibit attendance.

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#### EMPLOYEES

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Over the next five years, as much as 50 percent of the present faculty will retire, presenting the opportunity to hire new faculty that more closely represent the ethnic diversity of the student body and are more technologically savvy. With such a rapid shift of personnel, however, loss of institutional memory becomes a distinct possibility.

Staff turnover is not cyclical but ongoing. Lack of training and overwhelming workloads do not encourage retention of competent employees. Based on current enrollment, the staff/student ratio in Career Services is one to 10,644. Obviously, additional support staff must be funded to respond to campus growth, and efforts must be made to train replacements with their knowledgeable predecessors, particularly in key positions.

According to “Minority Participation Rates,” in 2002 minorities composed 31.6 percent of the student body; 32.8 percent of the staff, and 23.9 percent of the faculty. The college must continue its many efforts toward diversity and creating a campus climate hospitable to all. Certainly enhanced faculty recruiting efforts, GCC’s weekly b-lingual news service, the Cultural Calendar, *La Voz de GCC* section of the campus paper, and the annual International Festival are steps in that direction.

Finally, heavy reliance on adjunct faculty continues. More efforts like the adjunct orientation are needed to support and integrate these faculty members. Increased emphasis should be placed on encouraging the development and use of “reusable learning objects”—Power Points, handouts, and activities designed by faculty and shared online. These “objects” could enhance the effectiveness of teachers, particularly when they are hired on short notice or with little experience. The New Student System will require ongoing training of adjuncts. To minimize turnover and training costs, GCC should encourage the District to establish some reward system to retain adjuncts—a tier pay system based on years of service, for example.

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#### EXTERNAL FACTORS

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GCC’s funding is dependent upon a variety of factors: tuition (with increases approved at the District level), FTSE growth (which in the near future may be limited by facilities), and state funds (which are currently at 12 percent, their lowest level ever). Nationally, changes in Pell grants may affect the college’s low income students. According to the Boston Globe, “about 85,000 of the 5.2 million students currently eligible to receive Pell grants will become ineligible. And 1.2 million other will get a smaller award.” In 2003-2004 about 5,500 of GCC’s students received Pell monies. Though the GCC revenue stream is uncertain, Maricopa lobbying efforts at the state level, growth of online programs, and corporate/community partnerships could keep funds flowing. Certainly the overwhelming 3 to 1 victory for Prop 401 indicates strong community support for the Maricopa system.

Also, the landscape of higher education for Arizona may be changing. Though GCC has faced competition before (Western Maricopa County hosts 13 institutions of higher education), the Arizona Board of Regents has proposed a system of regional universities. Arizona State University West would become a teaching rather than research institution, for example. What direction the change will actually take may not be known until the end of 2005, but it promises to impact GCC profoundly.

Regardless, GCC curriculum will be driven by workforce demands. Because nurses, teachers, and bioscientists will be in high demand, we must maintain or improve access and academic standards so transfer students will be well prepared for university work. On the other hand, more students may choose certificate programs as shorter routes to employment. According to the CCSSE, “nationwide, 27 percent of students say that completing a certificate program is their primary goal.”

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#### TECHNOLOGY AND INFRASTRUCTURE

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In the 1990s GCC was nationally, even internationally, recognized as being on the cutting edge of educational technology. Today, while technology is a staple in the educational process, system breakdowns and slow repair times frustrate students and teachers alike. Security is increasingly an issue. The College needs to protect student privacy, authenticate student work, and safeguard intellectual property, particularly in regards to online classes. Physically we need to secure video projectors, remotes, and computers. The trick is to balance enhanced security with ease of use.

Because the changing student population responds well to audio and visual cues, integration of desktop and media sources would be highly desirable. New classrooms should respond to technology by being “black boxes” that can easily be reconfigured for multiple uses. Particularly during the next five years before additional classroom space becomes available, GCC may wish to customize delivery with an organized online *program* of education. Attaining a 10Gbps bandwidth and Internet connection is essential. Expansion of the wireless network will lead to opportunities to create classrooms without walls, to redefine “classroom.”

The need for training and support will be more acute, especially as the campus grows and both staff and students change. Services like the Help Desk are useful but may need to be expanded. As more students expect 24/7 service, technology may be the most cost effective way to provide it.

Just as technology demands updated infrastructure, so do GCC's physical facilities. GCC is a 40-year old campus, showing its age. The bond will provide for new buildings and technology, but both must be serviced and maintained. Maximizing facilities through increased online offerings and afternoon scheduling may be necessary to meet demand. Perhaps the Fairleigh Dickinson model which requires fulltime students to take one online course a year would ease pressure on classrooms and provide graduates with workforce skills. Scheduling faculty MWF or T/R to share offices may be necessary (This would require RFP change or reinterpretation). Finally, we must continue to systematize maintenance and cleaning of all facilities.

In summary, research often begets research. More information, and the willingness to act on it, may help GCC remain viable. Why is enrollment scant in the afternoon? Would tri-mesters, quad-mesters, or short term classes work better for today's students? Is there more than higher tuition behind the decrease of students planning to enroll/transfer to a university? Does GCC need to change both the administration and infrastructure of its technology? All these areas are invariably and inextricably intertwined. As an advisory committee, the Futures Committee has made recommendations rather than mandates, so that the campus as a whole and those directly involved in planning and budgeting may be better informed.