



## **STUDENT SUCCESS PLAN**

**2006 – 2009**

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The Student Success Plan for 2006-2009 represents an endeavour by all constituents of the Centennial College community including: administrators, teachers, support staff, and students, working collectively to improve the academic success of Centennial College students. The College has always recognized student success and academic achievement as top priorities within its educational mission, and thus fully supports the results-based initiatives of the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport.

As preparation for the development of this plan, a survey was designed to identify the issues and practices that have the greatest impact on student success. In January 2007, this survey was completed by approximately 75% of the student body. College teachers were consulted during the process of designing this plan, and are fully committed to its implementation. The Board of Directors also reviewed the plan on February 19<sup>th</sup>, 2007 and formally approved it at their meeting on February 19<sup>th</sup>, 2007.

## **2. ACADEMIC SUCCESS PLAN 2000 – 2003**

### **EFFECTIVENESS OF MEASURES PROPOSED**

The measures proposed in the 2000-2003 plan include:

#### ***Teacher-student tutorials***

#### ***Small group tutorials***

#### ***Teacher availability in the learning centre***

Teachers are required to spend an allotted number of hours in the Learning Centre each week, providing one on one, or small group tutorials for their students. This intensifies toward the end of the semester, and prior to assignments and exams.

#### ***Peer tutoring***

Peer tutoring did not happen because we determined that it was inappropriate for our student population, and because of a lack of interest by students.

#### ***Mentoring of Students by Faculty/Staff***

The formal mentoring program was re-introduced in the fall of 2004 and has become one of the major services that we provide.

#### ***Non-credit workshops: academic and life skills***

This program was introduced during the 2000-2003 period, and continues to this day. These workshops are mandatory for all Cohort B students.

#### ***Study skills course for credit***

This was first offered in the fall of 2001 with great success, and continues to be offered to Cohort A students in their first semester of study.

#### ***A revised Code of Conduct***

The Code of Conduct is reviewed on an annual basis to take into account the concerns of students and faculty.

#### ***An improved data collection system***

Though various data collection systems have been tried since the 2000-2003 plan, the College will be implementing a new system for the fall of 2007.

#### ***Results of student survey***

In a survey conducted during the writing of the 2000-2003 plan, students identified a number of suggestions to improve their success rates. These included: increase availability of tutorials, improve library facilities, remain open later than 5pm, provide more detailed course outlines, continue to offer the workshops on life skills, provide more optional courses, assign more homework, avoid congestion of assignment due dates or test dates.

Those that were deemed realizable by the College include:

- Pre-admission reading assessment
- Clear criteria for assignment
- Clear marking criteria
- Incorporate more in-class work
- Promote literacy across curriculum
- Improve library services through arrangement with Concordia University

We believe that we have been mostly successful in recognition of these proposals. Those that were not brought into effect, were not brought in because they were either tried, and found not to be successful, or determined not to be significant.

### **3. CENTENNIAL COLLEGE IN 2006**

Centennial College is a private, subsidized CEGEP within the Quebec CEGEP system, located in the western section of Montreal, and is under the umbrella of Centennial Academy.

#### **▪ *Programs***

Since 1997, the College has offered a two-year pre-university program in the Social Sciences with an optional Commerce profile, but as of this year, has applied for, and received authorization from the ministry for a Creative Arts program (500.A1).

#### **▪ *Administrative Staff***

The Student Success Plan for 2006-2009 has been designed at a time when Centennial College is undergoing administrative restructuring. Since the departure of the College Director in September 2005, Centennial College has only had an interim College Director. The College is seeking a new Academic Dean to fulfill this role, who is dedicated to the implementation and supervision of the 2006-2009 Student Success Plan. The filling of this position is crucial to maintaining the institutional stability required for student success. A Student Success Coordinator was hired in Fall 2004 to coordinate student services and a Registrar was hired in Fall 2005. The other member of the administrative team is the Coordinator of Admissions.

#### **▪ *Teaching Staff***

There are currently thirteen teachers at Centennial College: five are full-time and eight are part-time. Most of these teachers have successfully completed post-graduate studies to the Master's level in their particular field. The size of Centennial College allows some to teach courses in disciplines other than their field of specialization, which fosters curriculum integration.

- **Students**

The total student population ranges from 90 to 120 with the majority comprising students who have transferred to Centennial from other colleges. The College attracts a wide variety of students from all areas of Montreal, as well as a small percentage of foreign students. Most would be considered in the middle or upper socio-economic group as illustrated by their ability to pay the tuition fees of a private college.

Traditionally, Centennial College has created learning opportunities for every student who has passed Secondary V and is eligible to apply to CEGEP. The College provides access to post-secondary education without entrance testing and students represent a broad range of ability levels. While some Secondary V graduates come to Centennial with excellent marks, many weak students choose the College hoping to benefit from small classes and individual attention. While many students with strong academic backgrounds thrive within the structured personal atmosphere, others come with serious difficulties including:

**Students** who have completed high school with marginal results and limited skills;

**Students** who have failed elsewhere because of lack of interest and/or motivation;

**Students** who have failed elsewhere due to academic weakness, learning difficulties and/or learning disabilities;

**Students** who are studying in their second-language, some for the first time.

Other factors that affect student success include:

**Adjustment** to the demands of college work and the building of essential skills;

**Resistance** to a course of study imposed on them by parents and/or parental pressure to pursue pre-university studies exclusively

**Failure** to understand the concept of a cultural education;

**Some** students, by their own admission, are entrepreneurial in nature, and see higher education as simply a means to an end

#### **4. KEY INDICATORS OF STUDENT SUCCESS**

A measure of success is the number of courses taken and passed per session. This is impressive in the context of our students who come from varied academic backgrounds. The following table shows the results of the past two years:

<b>CENTENNIAL COLLEGE COURSE PASS RATES</b>			
<b>SESSION</b>	<b># OF COURSES TAKEN</b>	<b># OF COURSES PASSED</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE PASSED</b>
Winter 2005	604	508	84.1%
Autumn 2005	791	646	81.7%
Winter 2006	668	543	81.3%
Autumn 2006	547	478	87.4%

Table 1: Course Pass Rates

#### **5. ACADEMIC SUCCESS PLAN for 2006-2009**

##### **OBJECTIVES OF STUDENT SUCCESS PLAN**

The Centennial College Student Success Plan aims to:

- Define student success that is specific to Centennial College
- Recognize the key obstacles to student success
- Identify the top five priorities and the actions required under the plan
- Indicate the follow-up procedures and key indicators of success

##### **DEFINITION OF SUCCESS**

The mission of Centennial College is to give each student the support needed to reach his or her full potential in an environment that promotes independence, respect, self-esteem and the desire to succeed. We provide an environment designed to maximize the opportunity for each student to achieve academic and personal success.

The previous success plan defined success at Centennial College:

The student is actively pursuing the completion of a program of studies at Centennial with a pass rate at or above the minimum established by the College for that particular semester. For example, a full-time student registered in 5 courses in the Fall of 2002 for which the minimum College pass rate was set at 75%, would be considered successful if 4 or 5 courses were passed.

For the purpose of the Student Success Plan 2006-2009, a student will be declared successful if he or she can be characterized by at least one of the following conditions:

- The student is actively pursuing the completion of a program of studies at Centennial College with a pass rate of 100% in courses completed.
- The student graduates from Centennial College with a Diplôme d'Etudes Collégiales (D.E.C.).
- The student is accepted into a pre-university or career program at another CEGEP.
- The student is accepted into a vocational, professional or upgrading program at another institution.
- The student is accepted into a university program.

## **OBSTACLES TO STUDENT SUCCESS**

### **Student-Related Obstacles**

- Weak academic skills
- Emotional conditions
- Lack of self-esteem and confidence in academic ability, lack of motivation and self-management and lifestyle concerns.
- Unrealistic direction and/or lack of clear direction about future plans and life goals
- Parental pressures and expectations and/or parents in absentia
- Perceived lack of relevance of the general education component of program

### **Program-Related Obstacles**

#### **Social Science**

- Singular program option – For many students the Social Science program is not an appropriate fit resulting in loss of focus and motivation and ability to reach their potential.
- Testing and evaluation methods

## **Institutional-Related Obstacles**

### **Data Collection and Management**

- Collection, storing, retrieving, disseminating, and using information about students and student success

### **Course and Calendar Issues**

- Class scheduling in a small college
- Lack of variety in terms of courses offered and teachers teaching courses due to size of college

### **Faculty**

- Methods for some courses are not conducive for all types of learners
- Differing expectations of courses and/or program

### **Administration**

- Administrative structure
- Lack of structured, ongoing review of programs

### **Facility**

- Existing facility do not support non-academic needs

## **STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVEMENT**

### **Student-Related Obstacles**

- Large percentage of Cohort B students bring a wide range of learning styles and differing needs
- Lack of self-esteem and confidence in academic ability, lack of motivation and negative attitude, self-management and lifestyle concerns, unrealistic direction and/or lack of clear direction about future plans and life goals

[The obstacles in these categories will be addressed through the admissions process and the mentoring program and individual success plans, and life skills workshops. Recognizing academic achievement through scholarships, honour roll, and awards will positively reinforce motivation.]

- Perceived lack of relevance of the general education component of their program

[This was addressed in the College's Social Science Program Review and is the subject of committee work taking place this year, 2006-2007.]

### **Program-Related Obstacles**

- Singular program option – For many students the Social Science program is not an appropriate fit resulting in loss of focus and motivation and ability to reach their potential

[The implementation of a Creative Arts Program will offer students a choice.]

[Due to limited course selection within a given semester, teachers will be encouraged to vary course content and teaching styles from semester to semester and to employ evaluation methods that are appropriate to their course. For example, in an application course, assignments and evaluation will be application based. The content and objectives of courses should be analyzed. Teachers will be encouraged to research best practices at other institutions. The student survey (Annex A) suggests that failed courses were not necessarily difficult, but more related to course delivery, uninteresting subject matter and distractions in class.]

### **Institution-Related Obstacles**

#### **Data Collection and Management**

- Collection, storing, retrieving, disseminating, and using information about students and student success

[The College is in the early stages of implementing a data base system (Omnivox) commonly used in other institutions which will enable students to monitor their own progress in courses and their attendance. The new system will allow for the collection of pertinent data to monitor student success and track students when they leave the College.]

#### **Course and Calendar Issues**

- Scheduling

[Centennial offers a customized scheduling service; continued attention will be given to academic advising.]

#### **Faculty**

- Teaching methods for some courses are not optimal

[Professional development and mentoring of new teachers and the implementation of program committees can help in addressing these issues. There is a need to

incorporate differentiated teaching strategies to meet the needs of a wide range of learners.]

### **Administration**

- Administrative structure in the organization

[The hiring of a permanent Academic Dean will provide the structure necessary for student success and teaching excellence.]

- Lack of a structured communication network

[A formal reporting structure from the College to the Board will allow for improvement in this area.]

### **Facility**

- Existing facilities are inadequate for college level students and teachers

[Major changes are unrealistic at this point but long-term plans include relocation. In the meantime, where possible, existing space will be maximized.]

## PRIORITIES AND ACTION PLAN

Action	Responsible	Indicator
<p><b>Priority One: Establish an administrative structure and leadership incorporating more than one program</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hire a full time Academic Dean</li> <li>• Develop a strategic Plan to guide College growth and development.</li> </ul>	<p>Director General &amp; Senior Administration team</p> <p>Board of Directors</p>	<p>Position filled</p> <p>Strategic Plan</p>
Action	Responsible	Indicator
<p><b>Priority Two: Assist students with academic difficulties</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and Implement the Creative Arts program</li> <li>• Continue and improve individual success plans, direct academic support and mentoring</li> <li>• Further develop the mandate of the Special Needs Committee</li> <li>• Professional development for faculty for the teaching of students with learning disabilities</li> <li>• Assess student profile during Admission Process and set appropriate conditions including the need for further psycho-educational testing</li> </ul>	<p>Creative Arts Committee</p> <p>Student Success Coordinator &amp; Academic Dean</p> <p>Student Success Coordinator</p> <p>Academic Dean</p> <p>Admissions Team</p>	<p>Establishment of program and sufficient enrolment</p> <p>Pass rates, retention rates, exit profiles</p> <p>Committee Reports and statistics</p> <p>ISM goal setting process committing faculty to action and data collection documenting growth and development</p> <p>Completed student files</p>
Action	Responsible	Indicator
<p><b>Priority Three: Increase the number of students with 100% pass rate</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognize academic achievement through scholarships, honour roll and awards</li> </ul>	<p>Director General Academic Dean</p>	<p>Number of students receiving awards and honours</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guide suitable students to the Creative Arts Program</li> <li>• Vary teaching methods and content</li> <li>• Address lifestyle concerns with students</li> <li>• Address scheduling concerns to benefit students</li> <li>• Implement data base system to promote student monitoring of progress</li> <li>• Analyze courses with high failure rates</li> <li>• Provide for flexible course offerings</li> </ul>	<p>Admissions Team</p> <p>Academic Dean</p> <p>Counsellor</p> <p>Registrar</p> <p>Registrar</p> <p>Academic Dean</p> <p>Academic Dean</p>	<p>Enrolment numbers and success rates</p> <p>Faculty action plans and data collection Student Survey</p> <p>Student Success results Attendance records</p> <p>Number of course changes and withdrawal; statistics on student use</p> <p>Improved institutional statistics and information leading to improved decision making and planning</p> <p>Bi-annual Action Plans (Success Plans) to improve results</p> <p>Flexible program delivery options</p>
<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Indicator</b>
<p><b>Priority Four: Facilitate learning and teaching excellence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Train and mentor teachers</li> <li>• Implement program committees</li> <li>• Implement professional development program adopted by Board</li> <li>• Recognize teaching excellence through professional growth celebration</li> <li>• Continued development and training in the effective uses of new technology</li> </ul>	<p>Academic Dean</p> <p>Coordinator of Software Systems support</p>	<p>Course evaluations by Academic Dean &amp; students</p> <p>Teacher portfolios Student surveys</p>
<b>Action</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Indicator</b>
<p><b>Priority Five: Improve data and research</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement, promote and provide training for Omnivox</li> </ul>	<p>Coordinator of Software Systems and Registrar</p>	<p>System in use</p>

## 6. CONCLUSION

The exercise of developing the 2006-2009 Student Success Plan has allowed a sub-committee of faculty and administrators to seriously address the issues facing Centennial College students. The process of evaluating these issues has given direction to the success plan, as have the innovations that have been successfully implemented over the past two or three years. The plan has the support of the College staff and has been submitted to the Director General and is forwarded to the Commission d' Evaluation. We believe that by following the action plan, and measuring the outcomes, the success of Centennial College outcomes will improve.

