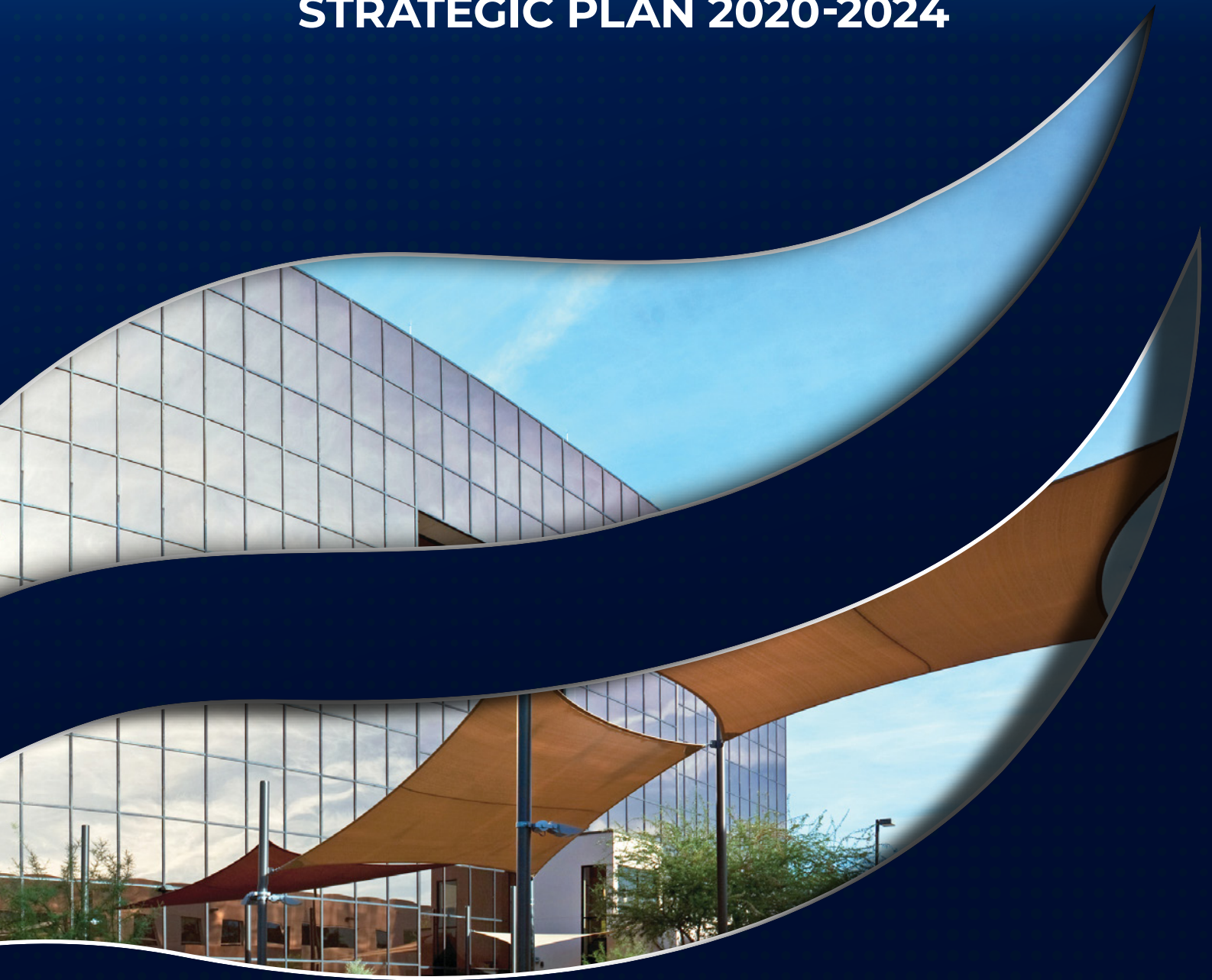# RIO SALADO COLLEGE
A **MARICOPA** COMMUNITY COLLEGE

STRATEGIC PLAN 2020-2024

Message from the President

For more than four decades, Rio Salado College has excelled as an innovative leader in higher education serving the unique needs of non-traditional students. From humble beginnings serving students in neighborhood schools, churches, and storefronts, Rio Salado has evolved into a national leader in online learning and the largest provider of customized education for diverse student populations in Arizona. As we begin a new era, we are proud of our legacy as a college without walls and exceedingly optimistic about the future.

To help guide us through the inevitable challenges and opportunities of a new era, I am pleased to present Rio Salado College's new strategic plan. The new plan is a culmination of a process begun in 2019 when we as an institution embarked on a collaborative journey of self-evaluation, reflection, and discovery to redefine who we are and to determine our college's future direction. The plan reflects the contributions of many who completed meticulous research, assessment, and analysis; participated in intensive work sessions; and facilitated thought-provoking discussions.

What began as a single committee working to build trust and value in our workplace evolved into a college-wide strategic priority of fostering a culture of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging through four practices of engagement: mindfulness, empathy, happiness, and resilience. The goal of this important effort is to build an inclusive college community where everyone - every race, culture, religion, gender identity or orientation - feels welcome, valued, and supported.

Through an equity and inclusion lens, the strategic priorities of (1) increasing student goal attainment and (2) offering new micro-credentials are enhanced and strengthened, improving our ability to respond to the challenges many students face by creating innovative solutions and developing support systems designed to serve the needs of a diverse student body.

To further enhance our planning efforts, we enlisted the help of our students, alumni, staff, faculty, partners, and community members, asking them to share their thoughts and insights. Their input resulted in the creation of Rio Salado's new mission, vision, values and strategic goals. The new strategic plan closely aligns with the strategic directions of the Maricopa Community Colleges, identifies our strategic goals for the next four years, and defines precise activities required to meet those goals. Rio's new mission, vision, and values statements along with the 4 Practices of Engagement serve as the foundation of the new strategic plan that will inspire and propel Rio forward. The plan is designed to be continuously evaluated, updated, and improved in response to new challenges and opportunities that arise over the course of the plan's lifetime.

I would like to sincerely thank the College Development Team who provided the critical leadership to ensure the strategic planning process was collaborative and inclusive resulting in a plan that accurately reflects who we are and clearly identifies our goals and aspirations for the next four years. Special thanks to all Team Leads and coaches and to the Institutional Research department. Lastly, I would like to thank the members of the President's Cabinet and President's Advisory Council for their strategic insights and feedback during this process.

Today, we are witness to rapid and fluctuating changes within the higher education landscape. In response to a global pandemic and current realities, we have and will continue to successfully pivot to create, innovate, adapt, and adopt. We arrive at this inflection point with new confidence knowing that through critical reflection and sound planning, Rio Salado College is prepared for the challenges and opportunities ahead. We arrive at this propitious moment galvanized by a higher purpose to "provide high-quality, flexible and accessible education to empower individuals, foster partnerships and strengthen communities," and we are confident in our collective ability to achieve our mission and realize our vision to empower learners everywhere through innovative education.

Sincerely,

Kate Smith, President
Rio Salado College

Table of Contents

I. Strategic Planning Process

In Fall 2019, the college Development Team began the process of formally concluding the work on the 2016-2019 strategic plan, with a goal of developing and launching a new strategic plan in Fall 2020. A small subset of the Development Team convened to draft a planning roadmap and timeline with action items and ownership. The roadmap was crafted into four phases that address four key questions.

Fall 2019	Spring 2020	Summer 2020	Fall 2020
Situational Analysis	**Development**	**Action Planning**	**Implementation**
Where is Rio now? · Close out prior strategic plan · Market Analysis · Stakeholder input · SWOT analysis	**Where do we want Rio to be?** · Mission, vision, values alignment · MCCCD strategic alignment · Strategic directions · Goals and objectives	**How is Rio going to get there?** · Action planning · Resource allocation	**How is Rio doing?** · Evaluation · Monitoring · Reporting

Phase 1. Situational Analysis: Fall 2019
Where is Rio Salado College now?

Steps involved:
- Close out prior strategic plan
- Market Analysis
- Stakeholder input
- SWOT analysis

Phase 2. Development: Spring 2020
Where do we want Rio Salado College to be?

Steps involved:
- Mission, Vision, Values alignment
- Maricopa Community College District strategic alignment
- Strategic directions
- Goals and objectives defined

Phase 3. Action Planning: Spring to Summer 2020
What are the goals, strategies, structures, and resources required?

Steps involved:
- Action planning
- Resource allocation

Phase 4. Implementation, Monitoring, and Reporting – Fall 2020 to Summer 2024
How well is the college achieving its strategic goals?

Steps involved:
- Progress monitoring dashboards

II. Situational Analysis – Fall 2019

Key Question: Where is Rio Salado College now?

Nine cross-functional teams from the 2016-2019 strategic plan pathways formally closed out their work and produced executive summaries of outcomes, successes, and opportunities for continuous improvement. These summaries were presented to the Development Team, Executive Team, and supervisors and clearly documented what was accomplished under the last strategic plan, as well as work to be continued in this strategic planning cycle. Rio's Institutional Research department completed a series of stakeholder surveys to develop a comprehensive SWOT analysis. This included input from the following stakeholder groups:

Existing students
(n=934)

Alumni
(n=419)

Employees and faculty
(n=150)

President's Advisory Council members
(n=12)

A competitive market analysis was conducted by external consultants, CampusWorks Consulting, which benchmarked Rio Salado College against 14 higher education institutions with growing online enrollment for two-year degrees across the country. Institutional Research synthesized both internal and external analysis to reflect the following:

S Strengths:
- Enrollment practices
- Convenience and flexibility
- Affordability
- Strong operating margins
- Individualized student support
- Applicability of learning
- Industry partnerships
- Commitment to improvement

W Weaknesses:
- Brand awareness and marketing
- Academic program development processes
- Consistent service levels
- Technology

O Opportunities:
- Enrollment partnerships
- Advertising and recruitment
- Enhancing classroom technology
- Student success initiatives

T Threats:
- Difficulty navigating systems
- Perceived level of quality
- Emerging online providers
- Statewide transfer consortia for visiting students

The District Workforce Development Office completed a Workforce Development Environmental Scan and Rio's Institutional Effectiveness created an analysis of the regulatory landscape. The findings were used to ensure alignment to industry and regulations.

Student Outcomes and Satisfaction

The Development Team reviewed the Priorities Survey for Online Learners™ (PSOL) Noel Levitz 2019 results, which identified additional opportunities for process and service improvements.

Table 1. PSOL Scores Institutional Summary: Importance and Satisfaction Compared Between 2016 and 2019

	2016			2019		
	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap	Importance	Satisfaction	Gap
Academic Services	6.16	5.40	0.17	6.43	5.97	0.46
Enrollment Services	6.29	5.51	0.78	6.52	6.06	.046
Institutional Perceptions	6.13	5.53	0.60	6.43	6.02	0.41
Institutional Services	6.15	5.51	0.64	6.36	6.04	0.32
Student Services	6.14	5.29	0.85	6.44	6.07	0.37

Rio Salado predominantly serves a non-credential seeking student population comprising roughly 75% of the population in a given academic year.

Table 2. Student Intent by Academic Year

Student Intent	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Credential-Seeking	23.3%	24.4%	23.8%	26.4%	25.6%
Non-Credential Seeking	76.7%	76.6%	76.2%	73.6%	74.4%

Institutional Research analyzed completion trends reflected on the College Scorecard, as well as nuances in institutional performance based on the Voluntary Framework for Accountability (VFA) Outcomes Report (2019). Student attrition rates for Fall 2015 cohort data was presented to the Development Team in May 2020.

Table 3. Completion Rates for 2015 Cohort of New-to-Rio, Credential-Seeking Students

Cohort 2015	Cohort Count	Completion Rate	
		N	%
Full-Time	**309**	**44**	**14.2%**
Dev Ed - Yes	101	11	10.9%
Dev Ed - No	208	33	2.3%
Part-Time	**2,094**	**48**	**2.3%**
Dev Ed - Yes	362	15	4.1%
Dev Ed - No	1,732	33	1.9%

Students taking Developmental Education (Dev Ed) courses

To better understand how the college was serving this non-traditional population, a student intent survey was developed in Fall 2019 to begin capturing specific student outcomes for non-credential seeking students. Students were asked to declare their academic intent, including how many courses they planned to take at Rio. The data enabled Rio Salado to use course-taking behavior to measure completion of non-credential seeking students.

Table 4. Non-Credential Seeking Student Completion*

| Academic Year	Student Count	Completed Goal	Completion Rate
2019-20	12,158	6,258	51.5%
2020-21	5,982	2,057	34.4%

*Data captured as of 4.16.21

Diversity in Student Populations Served

Rio Salado College has been a pioneer in distance education since 1978 and serves numerous diverse student populations, including online, in-person, high school, adult basic education, degree-seeking, and many other students who are attending courses at Rio to complete degrees elsewhere due to the flexibility and affordability of Rio's model.

However, traditional metrics of student completion, such as the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), do not measure the majority of Rio's student population adequately. Weekly start dates throughout the year do not align to traditional academic calendars or district/Department of Education timelines to calculate full-time student equivalents.

Student goal attainment is highly individualized at Rio Salado College and therefore must be measured in a nuanced way.

Students Rio Serves (AY20 Stats)

26% Credential seeking students

74% Non-credential seeking students

92% PT Students
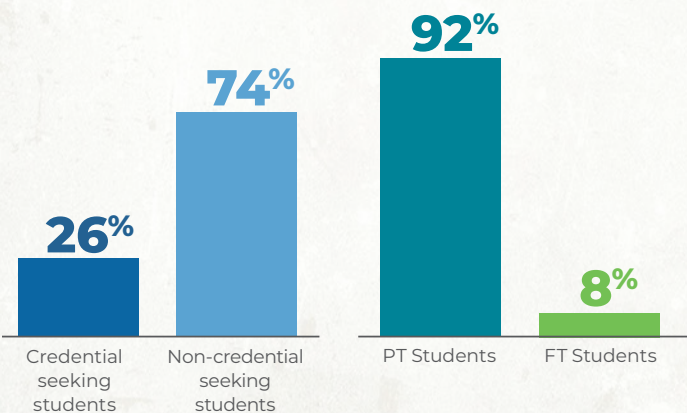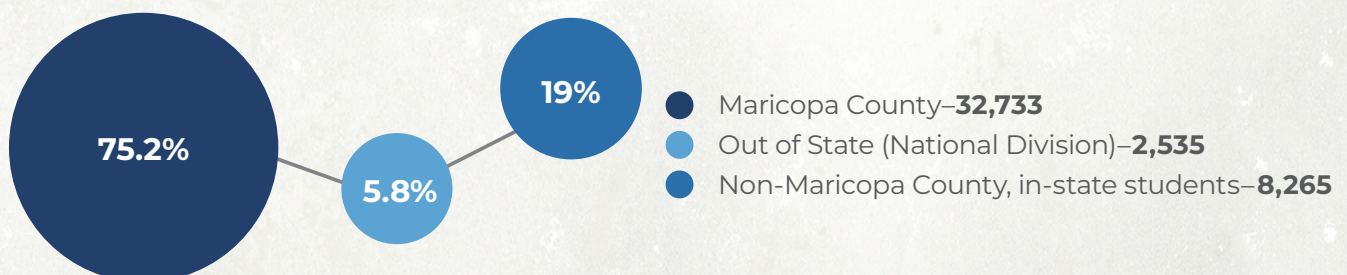
8% FT Students

30% Student award completion rate (3-Year completion rate, 2017-18 cohort)

23% New-to-college

44% Some college, no previous degree

Students by Geographic Location

75.2%

5.8%

19%

● Maricopa County—**32,733**
● Out of State (National Division)—**2,535**
● Non-Maricopa County, in-state students—**8,265**

III. Development - Spring 2020

Key Question: Where do we want Rio Salado College to be?

In Fall 2019 - Spring 2020, the Development Team critically reviewed the existing mission and vision of the college and recommended revisions to the Executive Team, in light of new feedback from the situational analysis.

The Executive Team held a series of retreats in October 2019 and February 2020 to draft values statements and in combination, these recommendations were advanced to the entire college community at an all-employee meeting in May 2020. The proposed revisions were shared with a college-wide survey to collect input from faculty and staff. In total, one hundred respondents provided feedback on the new mission, vision, and values, which acquired Governing Board approval in August 2020.

CULTURE

RIO SALADO COLLEGE
A **MARICOPA** COMMUNITY COLLEGE

VISION

EMPOWER LEARNERS EVERYWHERE
THROUGH INNOVATIVE EDUCATION

MISSION

We redefine the educational experience by
anticipating the needs of our students and future
workforce. We support learners where they are and
provide high-quality, flexible, and accessible education
to empower individual goal attainment, foster
partnerships, and strengthen communities.

VALUES

Rio Salado College honors everyone's unique qualities
with respect and dignity.

WE VALUE:

- Innovation and Learning
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- Integrity and Stewardship
- Sustainable Practices
- Collaboration and Service

WE PLACE **YOU** AT THE HEART OF WHAT WE DO.

MINDFULNESS • EMPATHY • HAPPINESS • RESILIENCE

www.riosalado.edu/culture

Strategic Alignment with Maricopa County Community College District

Rio Salado College is one of the 10 independently-accredited colleges within the Maricopa County Community College District (MCCCD). While each college has a unique and recognizable role within its own community, the 10 colleges also have a shared foundation in the vision and mission of the District.

MCCCD Vision

A Community of College - Colleges for the Community - working collectively and responsibly to meet the lifelong learning needs of our diverse students and communities.

MCCCD Mission

The Maricopa Community Colleges provide access to higher education for diverse students and communities.

We focus on learning through:

University Transfer Education, General Education, Developmental Education, Workforce Development, Student Development Services, Continuing Education, Community Education, Civic Responsibility, and Global Engagement.

Rio's Strategic Goals Alignment with MCCCD's 2020-2024 Strategic Priorities

MCCCD Strategic Priority	Rio's Strategic Alignment
Ensure high levels of student success, equity, and an excellent experience.	Goal 1: Increase student goal attainment 23% by 2024 with innovative and world-class experiences.
Build a great place to work through improving organizational and operational effectiveness.	Goal 3. Foster a culture of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging.
Cultivate a sustainable, competitive advantage by meeting the needs of business and industry.	Goal 2. Offer 23 new micro-credentials by 2024.

Impact of COVID-19

For many higher education institutions, COVID-19 accelerated the digitization of teaching and learning and the demand for short-form learning to enhance skills and increase employment. Community colleges around the country increased online offerings from 2019-2020 and still saw as much as a 30% decline in student enrollments.

While 60% of Rio Salado College students were already online students, the education of many in-person students was disrupted in 2020 due to COVID-19. The increase in digital education is expected to increase competition for online learners across the country and will require the college to evolve in technology, services, and offerings. COVID has also impacted the local and national economy, and therefore Rio Salado College is placing great emphasis on upskilling and reskilling our communities with short-form learning.

IV. Action Planning – Spring to Summer 2020

Key Question: What are the goals, strategies, structures, and resources required?

Draft college-wide goals were discussed in the Development Team and at a subsequent all-employee meeting in August 2020. The president charged each department of the college to select one college-wide goal to focus on and utilize the Franklin Covey™ 4DX framework to cascade the strategic goals to the departmental level for action planning.

In order to facilitate this level of decentralized planning, the college invested in dedicated roles to support the implementation of the strategic goals. The Quality Assurance Manager worked with the Employee Engagement & Resource Center to develop a comprehensive training program and infrastructure whereby each team at the college had a designated Team Lead and a dedicated Coach. Team Leads were responsible for facilitating the identification of a team-level goal on prescribed timelines. Coaches were trained to provide consultation and expertise in writing SMART goals as well as provide quality assurance with the goals and metrics identified. Individual teams planned their goals and strategies in division retreats, department meetings, and facilitated sessions throughout Fall 2020.

During this time, the annual budget cycle was underway, and team-level goals were presented to division vice presidents and the Executive Team at the college to ensure financial support in fiscal year 2021. Given the dynamic nature of this process, the timeline for team-level goals varies from one quarter to multiple years. Shorter-term goals will be revisited with division vice presidents to ensure resource allocation and alignment. Division vice presidents and Executive Team will ensure resources continue to be allocated in support of team goals. Team Leads will be responsible for presenting financial requests to vice presidents and Executive Team in support of their goals.

V. Strategic Goals and Investment Priorities

Goal 1. Increase student goal attainment 23% by 2024 with innovative and world-class experiences.

Investment Priorities:

- Invest in dedicated support services for supplemental students
- Invest in student success technologies and educational technology innovations
- Continue to implement Guided Pathways and integrated student support services
- Increase Open Educational Resources (OER)
- Implement Strategic Enrollment Management plan
- Launch and utilize Innovation Think Tank
- Modernize Learning Management System

Goal 2. Offer 23 new micro-credentials by 2024.

Investment Priorities:

- Innovate in collaboration with partner organizations
- Diversify the college's business-to-business offerings
- Continue to invest in national marketing and reputation management efforts
- Experiment with digital skills badging and short-form learning

Goal 3. Foster a culture of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB). This cultural change will be measured by a 10% increase in all four areas. Assessment instruments are in development by Institutional Research.

Investment Priorities:

- Invest in dedicated resources to provide DEIB leadership and support
- Increase recruitment, retention, and professional development opportunities
- Implement Strategic Enrollment Management plan
- Increase accessibility resources, processes, and services
- Invest in instructional support

VI. Implementation, Monitoring, and Reporting – Fall 2020 – Summer 2024

Key Question: How well is the college achieving its strategic goals?

The college implemented the action planning process by focusing teams on lead measures that were predictive and influenceable. The 4DX framework was used to cascade these three strategic goals to each department and team throughout the college. The implementation of 4DX allowed for each department at the college to identify just one of the three strategic goals and define a sub-goal.

40 active teams across the college submitted Wildly Important Goals (WIGs), lead measures and scoreboards

40

23 teams focused on Strategic Goal #1

23

2 teams focused on Strategic Goal #2

2

15 teams focused on Strategic Goal #3

15

Teams showcase their goals and scoreboards at various college wide forums. To date:

A 4DX website was developed

Nearly 40 college-wide trainings have been offered

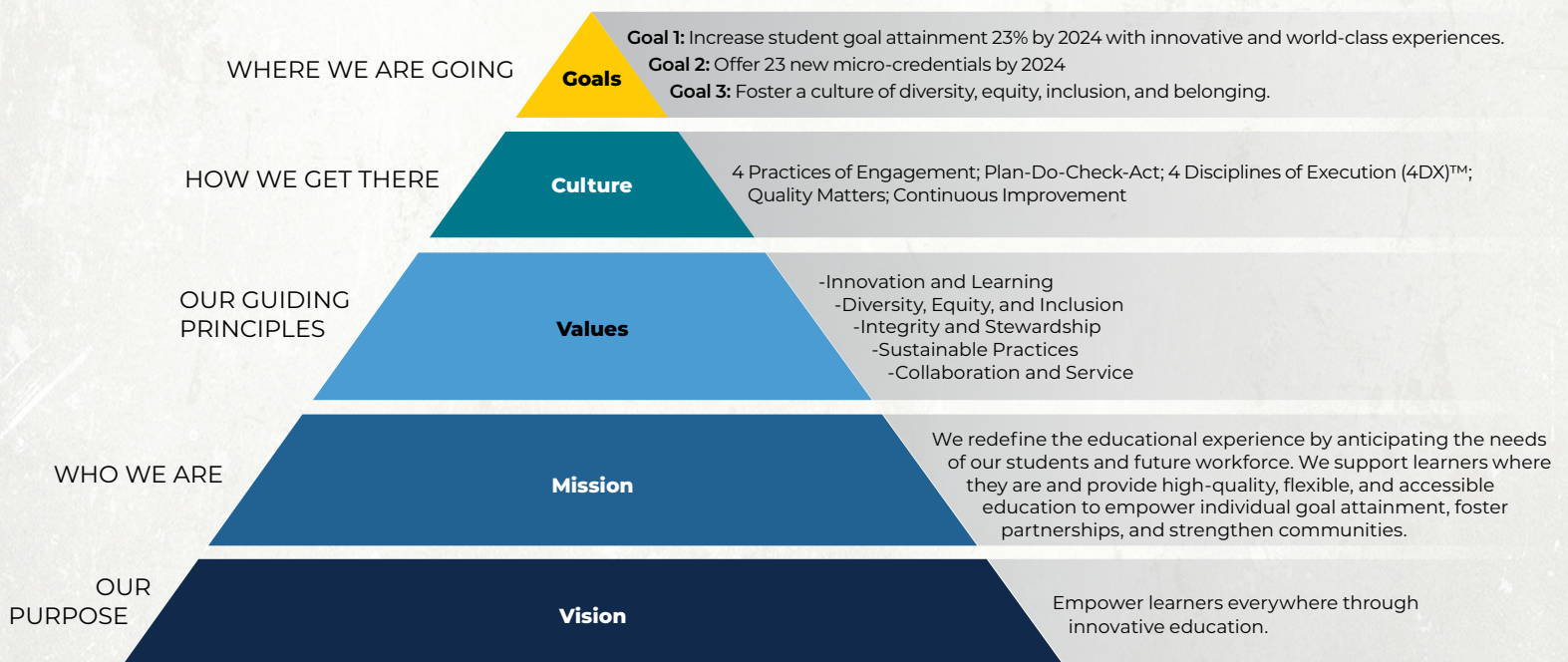**Weekly** open forums provide consultation

- Teams will monitor progress towards goals through departmental scoreboards.
- Team-level scoreboards will be monitored on a regular basis and tracked at an institutional level by the Development Team and President's Cabinet.
- The Quality Assurance Manager tracks institutional-level progress on team goals and successes.
- A new PowerBI dashboard has been developed by Institutional Research to set annual targets and monitor overall progress on the college's three strategic goals.
- A four-year cycle was selected to implement, monitor, and evaluate the strategic goals due to the dynamic nature of the context of Rio Salado College and the shifting landscape of higher education amid COVID-19.

VII. Strategic Framework

The Innovation Think Tank partnered with the Employee Engagement & Resource Center to align a conceptual framework for the college, which is grounded in continuous quality improvement models. The following illustration demonstrates mission alignment with institutional values and actions.

WHERE WE ARE GOING — Goals
Goal 1: Increase student goal attainment 23% by 2024 with innovative and world-class experiences.
Goal 2: Offer 23 new micro-credentials by 2024
Goal 3: Foster a culture of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging.

HOW WE GET THERE — Culture
4 Practices of Engagement; Plan-Do-Check-Act; 4 Disciplines of Execution (4DX)™; Quality Matters; Continuous Improvement

OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES — Values
- Innovation and Learning
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- Integrity and Stewardship
- Sustainable Practices
- Collaboration and Service

WHO WE ARE — Mission
We redefine the educational experience by anticipating the needs of our students and future workforce. We support learners where they are and provide high-quality, flexible, and accessible education to empower individual goal attainment, foster partnerships, and strengthen communities.

OUR PURPOSE — Vision
Empower learners everywhere through innovative education.

Key Contributors to the Strategic Plan Development

● Executive Team   ● President's Cabinet   ● Development Team   ● 4DX Leads

Dr. Melanie Abts
Faculty Chair,
Counseling and Personal Development

Dr. Janine Adkins
Faculty Chair,
History, Humanities, and Design

Rosalie Austin
Supervisor,
Curriculum Department

Maria Bellino
Associate Vice President,
Employee Services

Christina Bolyard
Manager,
Disability Resources and Services

Dr. Kirk Bowden
Faculty Chair,
Additions and Substance Use Disorders

Lily Beth Brazones
Insructional Services Manager,
College Bridge Programs

Jeff Calleja
Grants Manager,
Grants Department

Chantele Carr
Student Services Supervisor,
Coodinator of Military and Veteran Advisement

Rachelle Clarke
Dean,
Student Affairs

Julie Cober
Faculty Chair,
Communication

Dr. Tamara Cochran
Dean,
Instruction and Community Development

Dr. Aaron Coe
Program Manager,
Quality Asurance

E Cole
Director,
Outreach & Partnerships

Dr. Ramona Cox
Dean,
Student Affairs, Enrollment & Recruitment

Rich Cuprak
Faculty Chair,
Applied Technology and Engineering

Lucero Curiel
Student Services Manager,
Early College Programs

Dr. Lily Davidov
Faculty Chair,
Accounting, Small Business, and Insurance Studies

Rachel DeAlejandro
Program Analyst Senior,
Tutoring Department

Dr. Shelley Dennis
Faculty Chair,
Health Sciences and Sustainability

Calvin Devoll
Specialist Senior,
Student Services

Anthony Di Scala
Director,
Fiscal Services

Key Contributors to the Strategic Plan Development

● Executive Team   ● President's Cabinet   ● Development Team   ● 4DX Leads

Karen Docherty
Faculty Co-Chair,
Library Services

Nisha Dorsey
Program Manager,
Military & Veteran Success Centers - East

Janelle Elias
Interim Vice President,
Strategic Initiatives & National Division

Dr. Angela Felix
Faculty Chair,
Languages

Caroline Flannery
Specialist Senior,
Student Services

Sasha Flores
Supervisor,
National Division

Christin Franco
Training and Development Consultant,
Employee Engagement & Resource Center

Michelle Gates
Vice President,
Administration Services

Maria Gomez-Ruelas
Employee Senate Representative/
Student Services Specialist,
Financial Aid

Dr. Jennifer Gresko
Faculty Senate President Elect-Faculty Chair,
Education Preparation Programs

David Hall
Director,
Academic Affairs

Kylsia Hand
Program Manager,
Incarcerated Re-Entry Correspondence Program

Dr. Floyd Hardin
Executive Officer of Equity & College Relations

Mijolae Henley
Faculty Chair,
Reading, ESL, and Honors Program

Jon Hoban
Vice President,
Division of Public Service

Michael Hodgins
Program Director,
Administrative Services

Cordero Holmes
Student Senate Representative

Murray Inman
Manager,
Instructional Media and Technology

Heather Johnson
Adjunct Faculty Association Representative

Rick Kemp
Dean,
Instruction and Partnerships

Elizabeth Kerr
Director,
Instructional Services

Barbara Khalsa
Associate Dean,
Instruction and Community Development

Key Contributors to the Strategic Plan Development

● Executive Team   ● President's Cabinet   ● Development Team   ● 4DX Leads

Shawn Korman
Faculty Chair,
Physical Sciences

Angela Kwan
Faculty Chair,
Administration of Justice and Paralegal

Susan Lawrence
Director,
Partnerships

Zach Lewis
Associate Dean,
Institutional Research

Miranda Lopez
Director,
Instructional Services

Yoel Lopez
Supervisor,
Fiscal Services

Rene Manning
Director,
Education Preparation Undergraduate Programs

Tristan Marble
Faculty Chair,
Social Sciences

Michael Medlock
Associate Dean,
Instructional Design & Technology

Mitra Mehraban
Faculty Chair,
Counseling and Personal Development

Phil Meyer
Executive Director,
FPRAZ & Director Strategic Initiatives,
KJZZ/KBACH/SPOT 127

Kevyn Miller
Program Analyst,
Office of the President

Richard Oros
Facilities Director,
Maintenance & Operations

Tafari Osayande
Associate Dean,
Community Standards

David O'Shea
Vice President,
Technology and Infrastructure

Kate Packer
Program Director,
Adult ACE, Online GED, Workplace Education

Dr. Greg Pereira
Vice President,
Student Affairs

Gina Pinch
Faculty Chair,
Business Mgmt, Public Administration,
and Corporate/Government Programs

Diana Pinon
Student Services Director,
Testing and Assessment

Dr. Corey Pruitt
Interim Vice President,
Academic Affairs

Laurel Redman
Director,
Admissions, Records and Registration

Nanci Regher
Student Services Director,
Financial Aid

Key Contributors to the Strategic Plan Development

● Executive Team ● President's Cabinet ● Development Team ● 4DX Leads

●
Jason Reiche
Software Developer Senior,
Instructional Media and Technology

●
Andrea Romo
Instructional Services Coordinator Senior,
Instructional Support

●
John Sage
Associate Vice President,
Division of Public Service

● ●
Dr. Karol Schmidt
Dean,
Instructional Effectiveness & Innovation

●
Bob Semmier
Faculty Chair,
Biology

●
Dr. Jennifer Shantz
Faculty Chair,
English, Creative Writing, and New Media Studies

●
Dr. Sara Singleton
Director,
Institutional Integrity & Compliance

● ● ●
Kate Smith
President

●
Dr. Kerrie Specker
Faculty Chair,
Computer Technology

●
Silvia Stanford
Director,
College Contracts

● ●
Kelly Stewart
Associate Dean,
Instruction & Community Development

● ●
Sarah Stohr
Faculty Co-Chair,
Library Services

●
Jim Tierney
Director,
Project Management Office

● ●
Dr. Wanda Tucker
Faculty Chair,
Psychology, Philosophy, and Religious Studies

● ●
Heather Tyler
Associate Dean,
Instructional & Workforce Partnerships

●
Andrea Vasquez
Program Manager,
Community Development

● ●
Dr. Rick Vaughn
Faculty Chair,
STEM Initiatives

●
Casey Werhanowicz
Program Manager,
Incarcerated Re-Entry (IRE)

●
Heather Windster
Analyst Senior,
Student Services

●
Jessica Wong
Student Services Manager,
Dual Enrollment

RIO SALADO COLLEGE

RIO SALADO COLLEGE
STRATEGIC PLAN 2020-2024