



Strategic Plan 2005-2010

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President's Message

Red River College has always been dedicated to excellence. The College started as a series of small training centres in 1938, evolving into a place for World War II veterans to acquire training for peacetime occupations, before becoming the Manitoba Technical Institute, and finally, Red River College.

Today, RRC is the largest college of its kind in Manitoba and is becoming recognized as a national model for excellence. As always, our students and their development as individuals and citizens are at the very heart of all of our activities. The College is committed to enriching the lives of learners for full participation in the changing world.

Our Strategic Plan 2005-2010 will guide the growth and development of RRC over the next five years. As our college strives to advance as a nationally recognized leader in applied learning and research, our strategic plan will provide focus and direction for our efforts. The plan is founded on understanding the internal and external environmental factors that will affect our ability to achieve our plans. It also incorporates the vision and mission of our Board of Governors and the principles they have identified to help pilot the College into the future. Building on our vision, mission, and core values, the plan integrates knowledge and ideas contributed by many members of our community.

The future for the College is full of promise but not without challenges. A future that will see the College continuing to help learners achieve their aspirations through expanded academic programming and research, improved facilities and services, growing partnerships, financial strength and ongoing service to Manitobans.

The vision and mission expressed in this plan provide the foundation for all of our strategies and activities. The values express our principles, beliefs and standards for decision-making and action. The goals and objectives report the future focus of the College. The areas of strategic focus identify the priorities.

In a companion document, Red River College Operational Plan 2005-2010, strategies and actions provide specific directions for all members of the College community. Every year we also measure our performance to test how well we are doing in working towards our vision of the future.

It is essential, as we move forward, to remind ourselves always that this strategic plan is a living document. It will be reviewed and revised routinely to confirm our progress and our direction as appropriate to the evolution of the college and our community.

With this plan as our guide, we now move ahead into our future with confidence and a strong sense of purpose.



*Jeff Zabudsky
President*

Context

Red River College has a rolling five-year Strategic Plan.

The Plan is reviewed and renewed annually to ensure continuing relevancy. It is the fundamental basis for decision-making and sets the framework for all efforts at all levels of the institution.

The College recognizes the accelerating nature of change and the need to adapt and respond quickly. The College has adopted a consultative and data based strategic planning process to guide it into the future. Our process strives to be inclusive, flexible and adaptive.

Each year we:

- Identify and respond to the key trends that will have the greatest impact on us over the next five years;
- Revisit the vision, mission, goals and objectives;
- Articulate College-wide strategies and actions to achieve the vision, mission, and commitment (in the College's Operational Plan); and
- Facilitate divisional and departmental operational plans, actions, evaluation and accountability, consistent with this plan.

Through this process we strive to encourage strategic thinking at all levels in the College and link the plan to the real world. While the document is a valuable tool for all of us, the planning process is even more valuable.

2004 Process

The review process for 2004 consisted of two major activities, an environmental scan and many internal consultations.

A PowerPoint version of the Scan is available at <http://www.rrc.mb.ca/researchplan/>. The Scan identified and analyzed internal and external trends affecting the College.

The internal review included:

- Enrolments trends and projections,
- Revenue and expenditure trends,
- Financial challenges,
- Student characteristics,
- Graduate outcomes,
- RRC image in the community,
- Facilities & equipment, including health & safety,
- Student Support,
- Climate and culture, and
- Technology and systems.

The external scan included:

- Demography,
- The economy,
- Labour market trends,
- Public policy,
- Social/community trends,
- Technology, and
- Education and training trends.

The Scan was used as the basis for a series of initial internal strategic planning sessions to verify the trends and to discuss the future. These included open consultation sessions for all members of the College community, where opportunities and challenges were identified along with options to capitalize on the opportunities and to address the challenges. These forum discussions were documented in a separate report.

Subsequent discussion sessions with the senior academic and administrative leaders of the College led to the identification of key priorities for the College as it advances its vision and mission. These are captured in the Key Areas of Focus.

Vision

Red River College is a premier learning centred college, recognized in Manitoba and beyond as a leading centre of innovation and excellence.

Mission

To build a prosperous and sustainable Manitoba through high quality applied education, partnerships and research focused on advancing the economic, cultural and social progress of people.

Goals

Learning Quality:

The College is committed to providing a high quality learning experience to facilitate student success.

Growth:

Red River College will increase enrolments and participation rates in the college system by creating new, responsive programs, improving current programs and introducing innovative delivery methods to reduce barriers and facilitate access to education and training for Manitobans and meet the challenges of a changing economy.

Dynamic and Respectful Learning Environment:

The College provides a safe, healthy workplace and a learning-centred environment that promotes peak performance and allows employees and students to participate and grow, respectful of each other and the diversity of the community and society.

Infrastructure Enhancement:

The College will provide a vibrant learning environment through the development and enhancement of its infrastructure including the facilities, equipment, systems and technology supporting the teaching and learning process.

Financial Strength:

The College will ensure the financial strength of the organization through government funding, fundraising and the development of business opportunities that advance the vision of the College.

Community:

The College will support and enhance the progress of Manitoba and its diverse, multi-cultural and Aboriginal heritage through public and community service arising from its learning focus and broad array of applied arts, science and technology programs.

Objectives

1. Deliver high quality programs and services that focus on the learner.
2. Increase student success.
3. Increase program offerings and ensure that programs and the mix of programming responds to the diverse and changing needs of Manitobans and the workplace.
4. Provide optimal accessibility to programs and services.
5. Recognize, strengthen and reward the capabilities and contributions of employees and support a respectful workplace.
6. Integrate information technology in the delivery, operation and management of all College programs and services.
7. Provide a safe and well-maintained environment for working and learning.
8. Continue the College's participation in global education.
9. Strengthen collaboration and partnerships.
10. Achieve financial strength and stability by employing college resources strategically and developing diversified revenue sources.
11. Enhance the image and commitment of the College among staff, students, alumni and the external community.
12. Enhance the learning-centred focus, innovative and technologically advancing aspects of the College.

A Statement of Values

Advancing our vision and mission can only be fully accomplished through a clear statement of values.

Learning.

We cherish learning and have clear and high standards for learning for all members of the college community.

Respect.

We believe in honouring the worth of others by demonstrating fairness, courtesy and compassion.

Inclusiveness.

We believe in fostering a diverse community and striving for greater inclusiveness.

Integrity.

We maintain at all times the highest level of honesty, communication, cooperation and credibility in relationships and fulfilling our commitments, including managing the resources entrusted to us.

Healthy environment.

We believe in promoting creativity, wellness and flexibility through a safe and sustainable learning environment.

Contribution to Community.

We serve the broader needs of the people of our community and strive to involve the community and contribute to the enhancement of the overall quality of life.

Board of Governors Guiding Principles:

The Red River College Board of Governors has confirmed a set of guiding principles for the College as it advances its vision and mission into the future:

- Achieve Financial Stability.
- Be a Centre of Excellence.
- Have linkages with high schools and universities.
- Have community learning centres.
- Offer advanced credentials.
- Be well-known and recognized.
- Be a post-secondary educational institution of choice.
- Be accessible to all.
- Be flexible in responding to changing needs.
- Be an employer of choice.
- Deliver comprehensive programming.

- Be a key partner in economic development.
- Offer multi-modal education.
- Be a leader in Aboriginal education.
- Be a leader in life-long learning.
- Be a leader in international education.

Red River College Board of Governors

William Regehr, Chair
Ann Robins, Vice Chair
Gail Bagnall
Ron Bailey
Ric Borlase
John Jack
Ryan Mariani (Student Member)
Al Morin
Walter Petik
Iona Starr
Leslie Walsh (Staff Member)
Beverley Watson
Jeff Zabudsky (Ex Officio)

Areas of Strategic Focus

This Strategic Plan addresses the wide range of programs and services in the College's portfolio. Within that range, **the College will focus on:**

Student and graduate success. Helping students achieve their educational goals is at the core of the mandate of RRC. The College will emphasize high quality and relevant academic programming, strong services and student support initiatives, and a safe environment to achieve high retention and graduation rates and high rates of employment, earnings, citizen engagement and continued education after graduating.

Excellence in teaching and learning. The College is in the knowledge business and delivers comprehensive applied learning programming including preparatory, ESL, certificate, diploma, advanced diploma and joint baccalaureate education, as well as applied research. In promoting excellence in teaching and learning, it is essential that instructors stay current with new knowledge, instructional methods, and technologies that affect the andragogical process. Effective teaching likewise requires faculty to know about students and the diverse cultures from which they originated and in which they live. The College will review its academic expansion strategy. It will study academic delivery mechanisms to improve access to regular programs, including reviewing registration processes, working towards more on-line courses, having multiple modes of delivery, more flexible scheduling, and more community based and workplace programming. This focus includes a strong quality assurance initiative for academic programming. The College will also focus on the establishment of centres of program excellence.

Accessibility to college education. RRC acts as a gateway for many people into post-secondary education. The College will continue to be an open access college and will focus on providing multiple modes of opportunities for learners to access applied learning. RRC will work to remove barriers, including financial, geographic, academic and historical, language, ability and cultural barriers, as well as information barriers, to entrance.

Increasing participation in college education. The College has a strong record of enrolment growth over the last five years with a 33% increase in regular certificate and diploma programs, a 30% increase in apprenticeships and 194% in distance education. Yet overall college participation rates are very low (second lowest in Canada) in Manitoba. RRC has lower enrolment rates from sequential students (from high school) than in other provinces. The College will develop strategies to increase participation from all potential students.

Advancing the need for more investments in college education in Manitoba. The Province of Manitoba has made significant investments in college education and now there are more programs, facilities and enrolments. However, there is still the need for more capacity. There are high aspirations for achieving post-secondary education in all segments of the population in Manitoba. Life-long learning is a requirement for continued participation in the workforce. The number of learners is growing and the diversity of learners is increasing. To work towards a 21st Century workforce where 70% of jobs will require post-secondary education more college spaces for learners will be needed. Future college learning will require strategic investments in the areas of staffing, operations, physical plant, capital, quality programming and applied research. RRC will advance the requirement

for a College Expansion Initiative 2 to continue the growth of college education to increase participation rates and advance economic growth in the province.

Valuing and supporting faculty and staff. The faculty and staff at RRC are the keys to overall success. The college will attract, retain and reward the best faculty and staff and become an employer of choice. Opportunities for organizational and professional development will be provided. RRC will maintain a healthy, respectful and safe environment, deliver leadership and management training, and prepare succession strategies.

Achieving financial sustainability. RRC continues to face considerable cost pressures. Over the last several years the College adopted a number of one-time methods to avoid major changes to programs and services. The shortfall between revenue and expenses continued and grew through the years. Now the College has reached a point with one-time solutions that will no longer work. RRC will work towards a long-term strategy for managing the financial future. This includes advocating the needs of the College to government, partnership development and a progressive tuition policy, which allows for a predictable and sustainable flow of revenue. Currently, Manitoba colleges have the lowest tuition in Canada. Manitoba college graduates have the lowest incidence of education debt and the lowest level of debt.

Advocating the College's tuition strategy to COPSE and the Province of Manitoba. RRC will advance the critical financial situation of the College and the value of the College to government decision makers to secure support for a long-term tuition strategy that will enhance financial sustainability.

Advancing Aboriginal education. Manitoba has the highest percentage of Aboriginal people of all provinces. The Aboriginal population has a median age 16 years younger than the non-Aboriginal population. Educational attainment is less than the non-Aboriginal population at this time, but First Nations high school students have high aspirations for achieving post-secondary education. Soon Aboriginal people will compose twenty-five percent of the workforce of Manitoba. The future prosperity of Manitoba will rely on a highly educated and skilled Aboriginal population. RRC has a long history in working with the Aboriginal community and in providing academic programs and culturally appropriate supports. The College will continue a focus on excellence in Aboriginal Education linked to the aspirations and leadership of the Aboriginal community and the needs of the labour market.

Building applied research and commercialization. RRC will contribute to the innovation agendas of both the Provincial and Federal governments. Very recently the College achieved Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC) eligibility and was awarded one of only six projects across Canada through NSERC's College and Community Innovation Pilot Program. RRC will leverage these recent successes, along with the Centre for Applied Research in Sustainable Infrastructure (CARSI) project and the newly established Applied Research and Commercialization office to increase innovation funding through such sources as the Canadian Foundation for Innovation (CFI), NSERC, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), the Canadian Institute for Health Research (CIHR) and others. RRC will pursue applied research in niche areas, including sustainable infrastructure, advanced manufacturing, bio-sciences, human care services, alternative energy and educational

technology. Initiatives will include professional development strategies for staff to increase applied research capacity and the embedding of applied research into educational programming.

Granting applied degrees. Students and employers in specific fields have advocated for applied degrees due to changes in technology and the requirement for a more highly skilled and innovative workforce. RRC will respond to this need by developing a strategy to grant applied degrees. Applied degrees are granted by community colleges and technical institutes and focus on advanced study and career preparation in areas where there is demonstrated market demand for occupational programming longer than a two year diploma, but which is qualitatively different from the types and objectives of learning in a university setting. This step will provide a full range of applied credentials for Manitobans, from apprenticeships to certificates, to diplomas, advanced diplomas, joint degrees and applied degrees.

Solidifying Partnerships and Development. Strategic partnerships are critical for the successful delivery of quality programming in quality facilities with quality equipment linked to community needs and learner outcomes. There will be an emphasis on fostering a wide diversity of strategic partnerships and links with all sectors including industry, community, all levels of government and labour to advance the goals of the College. This will also support and sustain fundraising capability.

Supporting the educational needs of immigrants. Population growth in Manitoba is being driven in large part through immigration, which means that economic growth is also be driven by immigration. There are several ways the college will support this including working with

the Province to design and deliver programs that will allow immigrants to use the skills they bring to Manitoba in employment. RRC will also ensure there is an environment at the college conducive to immigrant educational success.

Attracting International students. The College will develop and implement more aggressive International student recruitment activities. As the economy and education continues to globalize, International Education will play a key role in promoting the worldwide image of the College and in opening new markets for programming. By attracting more International Students the College will also achieve a more diversified community of students to improve learning for all students

Maintaining strong relations with the Province of Manitoba. The College's key goals are congruent and support the Provincial Government's directions in developing a skilled workforce and initiating an innovation strategy. RRC will work to maintain a strong relationship with COPSE and the Province. It will leverage provincial funding wherever possible and continue to advocate for increased funding, including more funding for support services.

Building partnerships with the Federal Government. The College will work cooperatively with the Federal Government to develop ways and means to support the applied learning and research activities of the College. RRC's major activities fit with the goals of the Federal Government to increase post-secondary participation rates and overcome the skills deficit, to advance innovation and commercialization, to increase Aboriginal education, and to support immigrant resettlement. The College will advocate for support for its initiatives in these key areas.

Enhancing the image and recognition of the College.

RRC will continue building an integrated marketing and recruitment strategy to increase awareness of the value of applied learning among parents, teachers, counsellors, decision makers and youth to increase participation of sequential students (so in the future RRC will be a post-secondary education destination-of-choice for high school students), Aboriginal students and other underrepresented groups, as well as to advance the overall image of the College.

Investing strategically in technology and systems. An integrated corporate systems solution is a priority initiative. This initiative will affect many parts of the College, including people who will be vital for its success. As an applied learning institution, RRC is reliant on technology renewal and integration to support its mission of education and to support corporate systems and maintain communications. Investments for information and communication technologies are critical for RRC success. This involves systems renewal and a strategy for e-learning, e-commerce and e-business initiatives. An overall strategy includes infrastructure, technical support, curriculum and faculty support, ever-greening strategies and cross campuses connections.

Strengthening links with high schools and universities.

RRC has a long history of articulations and joint programs with Manitoba high schools and post-secondary educational institutions. The College will focus on enhancing these links to support the laddering of educational opportunities for students.

Developing a Campus Master Plan. Over the last five years the square footage of the College has increased by 32%. At the same time enrolments increased at about the same pace. Construction continues at RRC with the

building of the applied research facility for sustainable infrastructure. The college will focus on developing a long-term multi-campus master plan to provide continuing directions for facility development and renewal. Elements will include a future focus, risk assessment, environmental sustainability and workplace safety and personal safety.

Reinforcing skilled trades training. There is a current critical shortage in the skills trades and it is anticipated that this will worsen in the future. RRC has core strength in apprentice trades. The College will continue its commitment to provide skills training and plan for and advocate for additional facilities and equipment. Attracting women and Aboriginal people into the trades will be an aspect of this. RRC will reinforce its links with industry and high schools to support this focus.

Strengthening the College's role in life-long learning. The knowledge economy will require continuous educational upgrading. RRC has a strong presence in continuing education, distance education and in regional education delivery to meet the needs of adult learners. The College will focus on strategies to reinforce its educational programming to meet the life-long learning needs of the future.

Supporting economic development. Colleges are partners in federal, provincial and city economic development initiatives. RRC's key strategic program sectors are aligned with those of the provincial government for economic development. RRC will continue to be responsive to the labour market needs of Manitoba and work with all levels of government, industry, business, labour and the community to foster an environment conducive to economic growth and prosperity.

Evaluation and Measurement

The **Operational Plan 2005-2010** provides explicit strategies and actions for each of the Strategic Plan's Objectives. The Operational Plan is the detailed document that describes how to achieve the Strategic Plan.

Every year progress on the strategies and action statements in the Operational Plan, for which President's Council is accountable, is reviewed and documented.

This allows the College to measure success and alter planned actions where external or internal events dictate.

A companion document, **Progress in Achieving the Vision 2004**, provides an overview of achievements in 2004. The report provides a qualitative and quantitative overview of the activities across the College in all departments to advance the vision and mission. It is one of several documents that help measure the performance of Red River College.

Major Trends

Some of the major forces that are and will continue to affect the College are:

- The Province of Manitoba's focus on post-secondary education and innovation as essential for continuing prosperity and economic growth and a sustainable future for the entire community of Manitobans. Applied learning and applied research and commercialization are essential elements of this prosperous future.
- The Government of Canada's public policy focus on 1) increasing post-secondary participation rates and overcoming the skills deficit, 2) advancing innovation and commercialization, 3) increasing Aboriginal education, and 4) supporting immigrant resettlement.
- Need to provide opportunities for a growing, young Aboriginal population with high aspirations for post-secondary education in the province.
- Anticipated need to attract and retain immigrants to the Province of Manitoba.
- Anticipated shortages in the skilled work force.
- Increasing need for post-secondary education and training for the knowledge economy.
- Increasing need for capacity growth in post-secondary education to accommodate accelerating demand.
- Growing aspirations for post-secondary education in all segments of the Canadian and Manitoba population.
- Need to increase the participation rates of young Manitobans (those from high schools) in College education to help develop a skilled workforce.
- Increasing need for life-long learning opportunities.
- Need to keep skilled and knowledgeable young people in Manitoba.
- Increasing role for colleges in innovation and commercialization.
- Increasing demand for more advanced technical learning credentials such as applied degrees.
- Increasing emphasis on accessible education.
- Increasing need for Information and Communication Technology (ICT) literacy.
- Increasing International presence of RRC and increasing international students at RRC.
- Accelerating demand for e-commerce college transactions from learners.
- Continuing movement towards program and service availability on a 24/7 basis.
- Increasing requirements for professional growth opportunities for faculty and staff.
- More accountability requirements from post-secondary education institutions for all constituencies.
- Increasing recognition of the value of partnerships among post-secondary education institutions and business, government, community agencies and labour.
- Increasing emphasis on seamless education through articulations across the education continuum to enhance the opportunities for learners.
- Increasing demand for and availability of e-learning opportunities for students.
- Greater student and staff mobility.
- Continuing cost pressures and revenue and funding challenges.
- Need for a progressive tuition policy.
- Increasing competition from a broad range of education providers.
- Strength in Manitoba's growing and diversified economy.



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