I. ANALYSIS AND IDENTIFICATION OF STRATEGIC PROGRAM ISSUES

1) Summary of Analysis

Over the last three years, the Career Center including both Job Services and Career Development programs has moved from being minimally staffed and in a very basic service mode to making significant improvements, relative to student services and quality of experiences. The unit has new leadership and staffing which truly bring a high level of career focus into the planning and implementation of services. The physical space has undergone renovation to make the most of the tight confines available. Students from the ages of 16–24 are developmentally discovering who they are and who they will become. This age group is typical in a community college setting. This stage of development is deep and has great lasting effects on people. Guiding students through their processes must be done with respect, integrity, confidentiality, and within a conducive environment.

Implementation of the current unit plan includes developing a career center that functions much like a university model and not common in community colleges. These efforts are in a fledgling stage and will need further planning. Integral to the current process is developing theory-based services and programs, including a major finder tool, specific to Los Rios majors, and organizing career resources in a theory-based fashion that is student user-friendly, based on the John Holland interest areas known as RIASEC. A Holland-based self assessment (the Self Directed Search, SDS) is newly available to help students identify interest areas. The concept will help direct students through the career development process. The entire future planning of Career Center services and development of student learning outcomes are framed within the five major areas of the career development process: self-awareness, occupational research, decision making/goal setting, exposure to the world of work, and job search. This process is the framework for all future activities and services.

Data collection and analysis has been extremely limited, though some useful data have been collected over the past year. Early indications show significant growth in all services measured, and the trend appears to be continuing on a growth pattern.

2) Strategic Programming/Unit Issues

Over the next three years, the Career Center will focus on continual development into a theory-based program using the career development process as its framework to deliver high quality career services for students. Familiarizing the campus community with the concept and introducing the Career Center services back into the student population will be paramount. This will be done in a collaborative manner, sharing knowledge and resources. Establishing partnerships to achieve this goal currently appears to be a concern that requires energy and attention. Confidence is high that it can be accomplished.

Measuring outcomes in career-type services tends to be a challenge in most career centers due to the difficulty in follow up with students after receiving services. Job seekers tend to not report back once the goal of getting a job is attained. Research will need to be conducted to adapt best practices for use at Sacramento City College.

Facility space is currently maximized and our ability to create an atmosphere conducive to quality career development is limited. The Counseling Division and Student Services needs to reorganize spatially to better serve students. This issue is best addressed globally with those who can effect change at the massive scale needed.
II. DATA COLLECTION, ANALYSIS & SUMMARY

1) Provision and Delivery of Program Services

a) Program Mission/Purpose & Service Provision: The mission of the Career Center (including career develop and job services) is, “Explore, discover, and gain exposure to the world of work. Choose your path…” The purpose of the Career Center is to apply the career development process to all services provided. The career development process includes self-exploration, occupational research, decision making & goal setting, experiential exploration, and job search. People cycle through this process many times during their work lives and the order of the process is fluid. This changes based on the needs of the individual. Not every element is required each time a person experiences the process. The mission statement ends purposely open with “Choose your path…” because it is a reminder to all that there are always choices in our work lives. In an educational setting, it is important for students to learn this. Key program services include the following: Career Development, Self Exploration/Self Assessment, Occupational Research, Decision Making/Goal Setting Information & Referral to Career Counseling, Employment Support, and Marketing and outreach to high schools and community.

b) Past Performance & Accomplishments: The Career Center is currently implementing its first comprehensive unit plan, beginning July 1, 2008. Program goals prior to this time are unknown due to a long period of no staffing in the unit. Previous staff are no longer available, or too much time has passed. Record keeping was manual, and information was sporadic and limited. Limited data exists to identify past program plan goals or to what level any goals may or may not have been fulfilled. The unit is currently making a fresh start.

c) Data Analysis and Summary: Consistent and accurate historical data is not available prior to July 1, 2007. Trends are difficult to discern at this point. It is clear that the current focus of student need regarding Career Center use is on job search activities. The sense of need is captured by staff when students visit. There is a concern regarding student preparedness for the world of work, as well as the low prioritization of career research and exploration. Both issues are a common topic of discussion during staff meetings and future planning sessions.

Data comparisons between the first three months of 2007 and 2008 (July, August, & September) show a 72% increase in student visits. By far, the greatest usage of services is job search related activities representing nearly 81% of all measured services. There is significant growth in all measured services over the short span of time that data has been collected. There are no records collected to illustrate the student participant demographics. As the data is limited, it is difficult to determine trends or changes based on data. Anecdotally, it is clear that obtaining employment while attending Sacramento City College is of paramount interest to students. With the current economic climate affecting everything from local to world-wide markets, combined with rapidly increasing enrollment, it is anticipated that the job search activities of the Career Center will be in growing demand. Current effectiveness of programs is minimal. Basic services are available, and students do get assistance with the job search and career development needs. The implementation of the initial unit plan in July 2008 has begun to address developing the services from basic to more comprehensive. Each year will bring progress.

The program is currently collecting and analyzing key performance data related to student participation in the following activities: self-assessment, occupational research, job search, cover letter, resume, applications, interview, internship, student employment intents, on-campus recruitment and other related areas.

Student learning outcome development and measurement (included in the recently implemented Unit Plan) will provide additional performance indicators. The unit needs to develop better data regarding career development activity.
2) Advisory Board Recommendations (DSPS, EOPS, & Transfer Center)

Not applicable to the Career Job program.
3) Student Learning Outcomes

The underlying purpose of student learning outcomes is to improve teaching and learning, the heart of the community college. Accreditation standards require evidence that the institution “demonstrates a conscious effort to produce and support student learning, measures that learning, assesses how well learning is occurring, and makes changes to improve student learning.”

**Program/Unit-Level Learning Outcomes:** As a result of interacting with this program/completing this program, students will be able to (1) apply the occupational research process, (2) complete an on-campus job application, (3) demonstrate knowledge of job search process, and (4) complete an effective résumé.

**Program-to-Division Learning Outcomes:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Career Center SLOs</th>
<th>Aligned with Student Services SLO</th>
<th>Aligned with General Education SLO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Student will be able to apply the occupational research process.</td>
<td>#8 – Engage in academic and vocational planning, choose and implement a plan for an academic major and career choices, and evaluate progress toward accomplishing these goals.</td>
<td>Life Skills and Personal Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Student will be able to complete an on-campus job application.</td>
<td>#1 – Identify and effectively engage and use program, services, computer technology, and resources for college entry, successful progression through college, and transition from college to the community.</td>
<td>Information Competency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Student will be able to demonstrate knowledge of job search process.</td>
<td>#2 – Demonstrate the skills necessary to use a variety of information tools to locate and retrieve information in various formats for a variety of academic, financial, personal, professional, or vocational purposes.</td>
<td>Information Competency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Student will be able to complete an effective résumé.</td>
<td>#1 – Identify and effectively engage and use program, services, computer technology, and resources for college entry, successful progression through college, and transition from college to the community.</td>
<td>Information Competency</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Measures are to be developed in the current year Unit Plan. In the upcoming year, the Career Center will focus on the student learning outcome #2 above: *student will be able to complete an on-campus job application.* The assessment instrument will be the completed job applications used for on-campus employment positions. The application will be standardized, and a collection/evaluation process will be developed in partnership with multiple campus-wide stakeholders including work experience and financial aid federal work study.
4) Curriculum

Curriculum is currently not being offered by this unit. However, plans to develop workshops are in process. Continuing education and professional development of all staff is strongly encouraged. There are no Title 5 regulations applicable to Career Center programs. Annual program planning will address curriculum development in collaborative processes, utilizing the collective knowledge of all stakeholders.
5) Program Resource Utilization

**Staffing Trends:** The Career Center was without staff for a significant period of time. Unable to produce an annual career fair, it operated intermittently with the help of a part-time person to manage only the student employment requirements of the campus. In choosing the current staff, consideration for future development was critical. Given the high enrollment numbers, the new staff needed strong bandwidth to manage both reviving the programs and the anticipated high traffic. Selected individuals hold master’s degrees and have relevant experience. The clerical support person was the same person that worked part-time during the transition, and is very knowledgeable of the operations. Specifically, the program is coordinated by a Master Career Counselor who possesses a certification as a Registered Professional Counselor (RPC #1137, California Registry). These designations require knowledge be refreshed and current. Further, membership in professional organizations include: American Counseling Association, National Career Development Association, National Association of Colleges and Employers, and California Placement Association.

The intention is to build a case to increase staffing and include a graduate student internship program that can work cooperatively with university counseling programs and Sacramento City College counselors to better serve students. This partnership will provide a valuable mentoring and educational service which can also provide relief for the already impacted SCC Counseling Division which managed over 61,000 student visits in the 2007-2008 academic year.

Continued enrollment growth coupled with ongoing human resource constraints, highlights the merits for augmenting the existing program in such a way that it reflects a university career center. A key aspect of developing this model would be to create a permanent career counseling position. Having a career counselor on staff allows for greater focus for student career development, longer specialized sessions for assessment and interpretation, and collaboration with general counselors to keep their career skills current. This in turn provides greater access to quality career development. By modeling this program after a university career center, Sacramento City College could become the model for the District, and perhaps for the State, as community college career centers generally tend to be minimal or non-existent. There is a unique opportunity to grow something special with the current players in place.

**Staff Participation:** Staff participate on a number of committees through the division, College, District and region as follows: The Career Sub-Committee (8 staff); Student Services areas (1); Career and Job Services at both District and regional level (3); and Career Fair Planning Group (15).

**Staff Professional Development:** Professional development is strongly encouraged. It is a developing culture, in which nurturing is needed. There is opportunity for conference participation (at least one per year per person), and educational support. It is anticipated professional development will be integrated into future strategic planning and become a part of the normal experience for those who work with the Career Center.

**Facilities & Equipment:** Space is limited, and staff have little or no buffer from students visiting the Career Center. While serving students is priority one, constant interruption leaves little development time, which is critical not only to the revival of the Career Center, but to reach a higher standard of programs and services. The space issue is also a concern for direct delivery of services to the students. There is little room to do research, and storage with student access of important reference materials is miniscule.

**Finances & Budget:** Historical evaluation is not applicable. A Career Center and programs have been absent, and in the past one year has included a major reconfiguration of the area to house staff. An evaluation of past expenditures is irrelevant to current plans and future anticipated needs. The current budget is monitored, and spending is planned to leverage with other resources in order to extend the value of the funding.

**Future Directions:** Comprehensive planning is a part of the current year’s objectives. Projecting staffing needs at this point is pending. Possible considerations include: regularly scheduled visits to outreach centers, more involvement with campus outreach to area high schools, community participation and collaboration, and
in-reach to educate campus community on career development and job services
Possible professional development activities could include team building, technology training in the delivery
of career and job services, training in SLO assessment measure development, and in Holland RIASEC
assessment.

Facility constraints are felt campus-wide; the Career Center is no exception. More space is needed, and
current space is maximized. Administration needs to address this as soon as possible, and communicate the
process so that appropriate planning can take place. Equipment and budget needs are adequate for the current
year. Projections for future spending are pending until the current planning process is complete. Support,
both in concept and financially, will be critical to the future program success. It will take strong planning and
implementation energy to move the Career Center and its career development and job services program to the
high standard of quality expected by the current coordinator. Without support, it could easily stay flat and
ineffectual. There is a great unseen potential at this point in time that could develop into an amazing service
to Sacramento City College students.
6) **Collaboration Across Our Communities**

**Current Partnerships:** Collaboration and partnership with several internal programs are being established. Work Experience programs are in partnership with the Career Center in prepping students to apply to internships, and in providing presentations campus-wide, including “Don’t Cancel That Class,” and targeted presentations to specialized groups. The counseling faculty has developed a career sub-committee to provide a venue to share the great wealth of knowledge and expertise of those on campus. This committee will be a conduit for communication with the counseling faculty. There is also a partnership with Financial Aid in further developing the Federal Work Study program, and another partnership with DSPS to provide a career exploration workshop to targeted groups.

By participating in district-wide and regional career development groups, networking and sharing of resources enhances services for all. Challenges faced have often been experienced by others. Lessons learned can be applied. In the past year, much discussion on a job posting software that can collect job search data and assist students occurred. Research on several options narrowed the search to two vendors, and all campuses had a voice in the selection process. It was a time to learn while contributing to others’ efforts throughout the northern California region.

**Future Directions:** The plan is to continue to grow these budding partnerships, and develop more as opportunity allows. The next major collaboration to be explored is with Sacramento State University’s Counselor Education program to develop a graduate internship program that will service Sacramento City College student needs while providing a quality mentoring experience for graduate students. The greatest foreseeable barrier is resistance to the concept until it is fully understood. The interns will require counseling supervision. It will be important to develop at a pace that allows for communication and understanding, and holding implementation until the concept is fully adopted. There will be collaboration on program development, and information sessions to allow all stakeholders to have a voice.
7) Other Program Issues

All concerns have been previously addressed in this document. As this is the first cycle of this particular planning and review process, it is anticipated that further and more comprehensive responses will be available in the next cycle.