

## NEWS RELEASE

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### COLLEGE OF MARIN RELEASES FIRST DRAFT OF EDUCATIONAL BLUEPRINT *Document Clarifies Challenges Ahead*

**KENTFIELD, Calif., Jan. 11, 2006**— A College of Marin Task Group has released the first draft of a new educational blueprint that ultimately will outline which programs the College should offer in order to best serve Marin residents.

The first draft of the blueprint, called the Educational Master Plan, clarifies the challenges the College faces. When finalized this Spring, the plan will include specific recommendations for increasing enrollment, better utilizing space, and strengthening the institution.

“To develop this first draft, the College used our new shared governance model to focus the efforts of many members of the community and the constituent groups on items that are of crucial importance to the College’s future,” said College president Frances White. “The Plan confronts the reality of the present situation and its challenges as it promotes a vision of a future that can be embraced to create program quality, relevance, viability and sustainability at the College of Marin.”

The first draft includes a thorough analysis of data including the College’s enrollment patterns, Marin’s demographic, economic and employment trends, and the county’s housing and transportation situation.

The blueprint is the product of an Educational Master Plan Task Group co-chaired by Academic Senate President David Rollison and Interim Vice President of Student Learning Elise Schneider. COM hired COM instructor Michael Brailoff and community college planning consultant CCS Group to co-facilitate the process.

### Key Findings

The draft Educational Master Plan identifies several factors that could have a significant impact on the future of the College, including:

- Marin’s demographics work against the College:
  - the college-age (18-24 years old) population is only half the State average;
  - the population has the highest income level of income of any county in the State;
  - a large number (51.3%) of residents already possess higher education degrees;
  - unemployment is low (about half the State average).
- Fewer students are enrolling in College of Marin classes, and those who do enroll are taking fewer classes.
- The large number of classes with a small enrollment (average 20.7 students) makes the cost of instruction unusually high. This resource allocation means that other programs may not have adequate financial support.

- To alleviate the loss of students, College of Marin would need to make its classes more attractive and/or remove obstacles that discourage or prevent students from enrolling.
- COM offers 71 academic programs, yet only seven of them account for 41% of the student load. Another 41 programs each attract less than one percent of students.
- COM has a significant surplus of facility space when compared to State standards. The situation at Indian Valley is particularly acute, which could accommodate five times the number of students it currently serves.

“Everyone at the College must face the internal and external factors that affect us,” said President White. “Such soul-searching is never easy, but must happen for COM to become a thriving institution again. We will keep Marin informed as we progress.”

Developing the Educational Master Plan is part of COM’s efforts to comply with the recommendation to institute an institutional planning process that was identified last year by of the Western Association of Schools and Colleges Accrediting Association. Additionally, the plan will be used as a key input into facilities planning as the College implements its Measure C modernization program.

### **About College of Marin**

College of Marin has been providing exceptional educational opportunities for students of all ages since 1926. Each semester, nearly 8,000 students are enrolled in over 1,100 credit classes. An additional 6,000 students take advantage of the College's many outstanding community education and community services classes. The College administration is located in Kentfield, CA. The College also operates the Indian Valley campus in Novato, CA.