

## Standard One: Mission and Purposes

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### DESCRIPTION

Washington County Community College began as a trade school offering a limited number of programs in 1969 at the Calais Armory. Over the years, the College evolved in size and scope and became Washington County Vocational Technical Institute, Washington County Technical College, and, finally, Washington County Community College.

WCCC's mission statement has evolved along with the College. In 2003 the Maine Community College System was established, and our mission statement was formally expanded to reflect our new institutional identity as a comprehensive community college, supporting a more diverse student population with a broader range of services. As the College has continued to evolve, WCCC has maintained its focus on technical, occupational, and career education while expanding its mission to provide associate degrees in professional programs and liberal studies, leading to opportunities for transfer to four-year institutions. The College has continually sought to expand the general education curriculum by increasing its offerings in math, English, science, social science, arts, and humanities. While WCCC's mission has evolved, its essence has remained constant: to provide high-quality education that leads to degrees, certificates, diplomas, and training for the citizens of Washington County and the State of Maine.

**The Maine Community College System Mission Statement** is to provide associate degree, diploma and certificate programs directed at the educational, occupational and technical needs of the State's citizens and the workforce needs of the State's employers. The primary goals of the System are to create an educated, skilled and adaptable labor force that is responsive to the changing needs of the economy of the State and to promote local, regional and statewide economic development. The MCCS mission, goals structure, and governance is clearly defined in [Title 20-A, Part 5, Chapter 431](#) of the State of Maine Revised Statute.

**The Washington County Community College Mission Statement:** is to serve as an educational, community, and economic development resource for Washington County and beyond by providing educational and workforce training opportunities with individualized attention to all who desire to gain technical skills, develop career specializations, engage in self-improvement, and/or prepare for transfer.

The WCCC mission statement complements the MCCS Mission Statement, while capturing the essence of the College and the community in which the College operates. WCCC's mission provides the framework for the College's goals and activities and sets the guiding principles utilized by management in our decision-making process. Our mission clearly articulates the purpose of WCCC and the importance of the institution in providing educational opportunities to our region as well as the entire State. The mission statement identifies many roles that the College seeks to serve, including being "an educational, community, and economic development resource" for the area. It expresses a balance inherent in being a comprehensive

community college. It identifies technical skills and career specializations, but also transfer to other institutions of higher education as goals. These characteristics are hallmarks of community colleges. Beyond the mission statement, the College holds a vision that expands how it defines its purpose as a community college.

The vision of Washington County Community College is:

- To foster the development of academic, technical, and leadership skills of students seeking degrees in career and technical fields;
- To provide students with the academic foundation to transfer to 4-year colleges;
- To instill an appreciation for individual responsibility for citizenship and leadership in a multicultural society;
- To provide lifelong-educational experiences and skills for individuals;
- To provide out-of-class learning and developmental experiences in the environment of a quality campus community; and
- To develop strategic alliances and partnerships with government, business, and industry with which to enhance the economic development of the region and the state.

WCCC serves an area of Maine that is currently and historically economically challenged. The county is demographically notable for its aging population and the decreasing number of young people and families with school-aged children living in the County. Washington County's population has achieved among the lowest level of educational attainment in the state. The county leads the state in the percentage of people receiving SNAP assistance (nearly one-quarter of the population) and in subsidized school lunches. Additionally, Washington County consistently has among the highest levels of unemployment and the highest percentage of people living in poverty in all of Maine. All of this points to the importance of WCCC to its service area. If the region and the individuals living here are to gain economic stability through education and employment, WCCC will be central to those efforts.

WCCC publishes its mission statement widely in its publications. The mission is on our [website](#), in the [student handbook](#), the [faculty](#) and [adjunct faculty](#) handbooks, and the [catalog](#). The mission is posted in various buildings around campus.

## APPRAISAL

WCCC's Mission and Vision Statements are in full accordance with those of Maine Community College System and are consistent with the enabling legislation ([MRSA section 12703](#)) that created and continues to define the Maine Community College System. The Mission and Vision

Statements are featured prominently in the College's catalog, on its [website](#), in its [strategic plan](#), and on other printed and electronic materials produced by WCCC.

When WCCC reflected on its mission in the 2009 self-study, we indicated that the College was wrestling with its identity. With the switch to becoming a comprehensive community college still fresh in its experience, WCCC struggled to balance its identity as a technical/vocational school and a liberal studies college. As the College has grown into its role as a comprehensive community college and has delivered on the promises outlined in its mission and vision statements, the crisis of identity has abated. The College is comfortably both an outstanding trade and technical college and a challenging professional and liberal studies institution. The key to this balance is that the College serves the needs of the individuals living throughout Washington County and the State of Maine, whether those needs be technical, career-focused, or require a general education appropriate for professional work or transfer to a university.

The mission and vision of WCCC are widely understood inside our community. During the process of preparing our last self-study, WCCC recognized that its mission statement needed to be updated and pledged to undertake that work. Since that time, the College has revised and updated its mission on two different occasions. The most recent update was a result of work on the College's strategic plan in 2017. Our mission continues to provide the framework for all college planning and activities including the development and implementation of our strategic plan. We recognize that reviewing the College's mission must be ongoing in order to plan for capital improvements effectively, facilitate the budgeting process, support our student success and retention plans, and evolve our academic programs to meet the needs of our region, promote economic development, and close identified workforce skills gaps.

As the basis for strategic planning, the mission statement guides administrative and academic decision-making, for planning for the future, and for resource allocation. As the College recognizes the importance of frequent reflection upon the institution's mission and vision and its critical importance in planning, the mission and vision statements were presented for community feedback at our October 2018 campus-wide Community Meeting to ensure that they are relevant to our current and future institutional advancements. It was the consensus of the group that the current mission and vision continue to reflect the true mission of the College. Some minor language changes were suggested, which were approved by the Community Council in February 2019. Ongoing discussions of this nature reinforce the widespread understanding of the mission and vision within our internal community and bring focus on how this statement shapes the strategic planning and decision-making process at the College.

Although there are significant challenges for Washington County and WCCC, the economic and social conditions here illustrate the importance of WCCC playing a proactive role in the economic development of the county. The communities served by the College highly value the institution for its long and proud tradition within the community and the vital economic role it plays within the region. An increased focus for WCCC, as stated in its mission statement, as well as in the Maine Community College System mission statement, is the support of business and

industry through workforce training for current and potential employees. Washington County has been slow to recover from the recession of the last decade. However, recent mission-driven work to support economic development within our region is evidenced by WCCC's critical role in the training of a workforce to support the establishment of a new tissue paper mill in Baileyville, Maine. St. Croix Tissue is the first new paper plant to open in Maine in decades. The College collaborated with this industry partner to train potential employees and then, later, actual employees for the new paper mill. This example highlights the College's work carrying out its mission. WCCC supported a new business and strengthened our collaboration with the largest employer in the County, helped individuals attain well-paying jobs through offering an upskill training opportunity focused on hiring individuals in the low-income quartile from within our County, and enrolled a number of those employees in an associate degree program at the conclusion of their industry training. In addition, the College continues to offer management level training workshops to improve leadership, communication and various soft skills for the mill as they build a high-performance work team.

Our mission and vision are central to the direction for building and developing partnerships of collaboration within Washington County and the State of Maine. The external community continues to have a clear understanding of our mission and vision through our program Advisory Council committees, the President's Advisory Council, well-established relationships with educational partners and economic development leaders within the region and around the State, the community stewardship and involvement of faculty and staff in community-based organizations, and our well-publicized mission and vision statements.

Evidence of the College utilizing our mission and vision for decision making would be the creation of a full-time Dean of Business and Industry position to advance our workforce development opportunities and to strengthen partnerships within Washington County and the State of Maine. As the College continues to expand our business and industry outreach and training with a renewed focus on workforce and economic development, these partnerships will be the impetus for campus transformation. The College continually seeks opportunities to deliver short-term, work-related programming and training certifications to build pathways to program matriculation.

One example of this is the Fall 2018 Manufacturing Skills Standard Council, Maine Quality Center Project, which offers online modularized, short-term training needed within the production industry in the County and beyond. This training leads to a national certification upon completion of a six-month training program. The five courses within this certification are components of our one-year certificate and two-year associate degree in Production Technology. Upon completion of the national certification, individuals have the opportunity to enroll in our matriculated programs. We will be working on a substantive change with NECHE to make our current programs in manufacturing/production available as online offerings in the future. The partnerships we build today with businesses in our area have the potential to be the catalyst for transformation. The College recognizes the central role that workforce preparation plays in the completion agenda at WCCC.

Another example of a collaboration between the College and external partners is our Family Futures Downeast (FFD) program. Recognizing that many students have young children and may face significant external barriers to higher education, WCCC is fortunate to be one of two FFD sites in Washington County, Maine. Family Futures Downeast is a two-generational educational approach; it provides academic advisors and life coaches who work with the students and their families to provide wraparound supports. While parents are attending College classes, their children are also on campus attending Early Childhood Educational programming with the Downeast Community Partners Head Start program. This program is at no cost to the students and their families and is supported by generous grants from the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the John T. Gorman Foundation, and a State of Maine SNAP E&T/TANF contract. FFD is one of ten national White House Rural Impact Initiatives, and it is supported by multiple partner agencies and funders. This program collaboration is evidence of the strong partner relationships established within the region to provide access to higher educational opportunities, build strong community connections, and advance the economic future of the citizens of Washington County while providing individualized supports to under-resourced students and families who might otherwise not have an opportunity.

These aforementioned workforce development trainings in partnership with external organizations and agencies have helped to inform and reinforce the College's mission and vision within Washington County. Our continued focus on building and maintaining programming and workforce development opportunities that align with industry needs and trends will continue to strengthen the external communities understanding of the College's complexity and broad range of educational, social and economic functions.

The College continues to employ several assessment strategies to evaluate the institutional effectiveness of the mission statement, as well as awareness of it among faculty, staff, students, and administration. These strategies include the Noel Levitz Student Satisfaction Survey, the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE), Institutional Capacity Assessment Tool (ICAT), semester course evaluations, focus groups, key performance indicators, and our graduate survey.

## PROJECTIONS

The College will continue to reevaluate the content and appropriateness of its mission and vision statements on an annual basis to ensure the relevance of and our adherence to the mission and to make necessary recommendations for change. This work will be conducted through the Community Council, which provides a forum for feedback from faculty, staff, students, and administration.

The Community Council will regularly review and assess the visibility and effectiveness of communication of the College's mission and vision statements and provide recommendations to the President and senior staff. The review and assessment will be reflective of various college constituencies including students, faculty, staff, and public.

The senior management team will utilize a mission management process as the framework to advance the institution and to guide our decisions to ensure mission alignment. The team will monitor their respective departments and ensure the mission and vision statements of the College are used and incorporated to direct activities, undertake initiatives, guide policies, support decision-making, and align the overall direction of the College.

## Standard 1: Mission and Purposes

Attach a copy of the current mission statement.

Document	Website location	Date Approved by the Governing Board
Institutional Mission Statement	<a href="https://www.wccc.me.edu/about-wccc/">https://www.wccc.me.edu/about-wccc/</a>	September 28, 2011

Mission Statement published	Website location	Print Publication
WCCC Catalog	<a href="https://www.wccc.me.edu/wp-content/uploads/WCCC-Catalog-2018-2019.pdf">https://www.wccc.me.edu/wp-content/uploads/WCCC-Catalog-2018-2019.pdf</a>	Course Catalog, Page 7
WCCC Website	<a href="https://www.wccc.me.edu/about-wccc/">https://www.wccc.me.edu/about-wccc/</a>	
Student Handbook	<a href="https://www.wccc.me.edu/wp-content/uploads/Student-Handbook-2018-2019.pdf">https://www.wccc.me.edu/wp-content/uploads/Student-Handbook-2018-2019.pdf</a>	Student Handbook, Page 4
Faculty Handbook	<a href="https://www.wccc.me.edu/wp-content/uploads/Faculty-Handbook-Final.pdf">https://www.wccc.me.edu/wp-content/uploads/Faculty-Handbook-Final.pdf</a>	Faculty Handbook, Page 6
Adjunct Faculty Handbook	<a href="https://www.wccc.me.edu/wp-content/uploads/Adjunct-Faculty-Handbook-Final.pdf">https://www.wccc.me.edu/wp-content/uploads/Adjunct-Faculty-Handbook-Final.pdf</a>	Adjunct Handbook, Page 4
Strategic Enrollment Management Plan	<a href="https://www.wccc.me.edu/wp-content/uploads/WCCC-Enrollment-Plan.docx">https://www.wccc.me.edu/wp-content/uploads/WCCC-Enrollment-Plan.docx</a>	SEM Plan, Page 3

Related statements	Website location	Print Publication
Vision Statement	<a href="https://www.wccc.me.edu/about-wccc/">https://www.wccc.me.edu/about-wccc/</a>	Course Catalog, Page 7
Library Mission	<a href="https://www.wccc.me.edu/wp-content/uploads/WCCC-LIBRARY-HANDBOOK-2018-1.pdf">https://www.wccc.me.edu/wp-content/uploads/WCCC-LIBRARY-HANDBOOK-2018-1.pdf</a>	Library Handbook, Page 2
Student Affairs Mission	<a href="https://www.wccc.me.edu/wp-content/uploads/Office-of-Student-Affairs-Mission.pdf">https://www.wccc.me.edu/wp-content/uploads/Office-of-Student-Affairs-Mission.pdf</a>	

### [Washington County Community College Mission Statement](#)

Washington County Community College serves as an educational, community, and economic development resource for Washington County and beyond by providing educational and workforce training opportunities with individualized attention to all who desire to gain technical skills, develop career specializations, engage in self-improvement, and/or prepare for transfer.