



Annual Planning Guide

Revised October 2021

Purpose of the Annual Planning Guide

The following document serves to provide an overview of the Annual Planning and Budgeting process at El Camino College. More specifically:

- What is annual planning and why is it important?
- How to draft an annual plan?

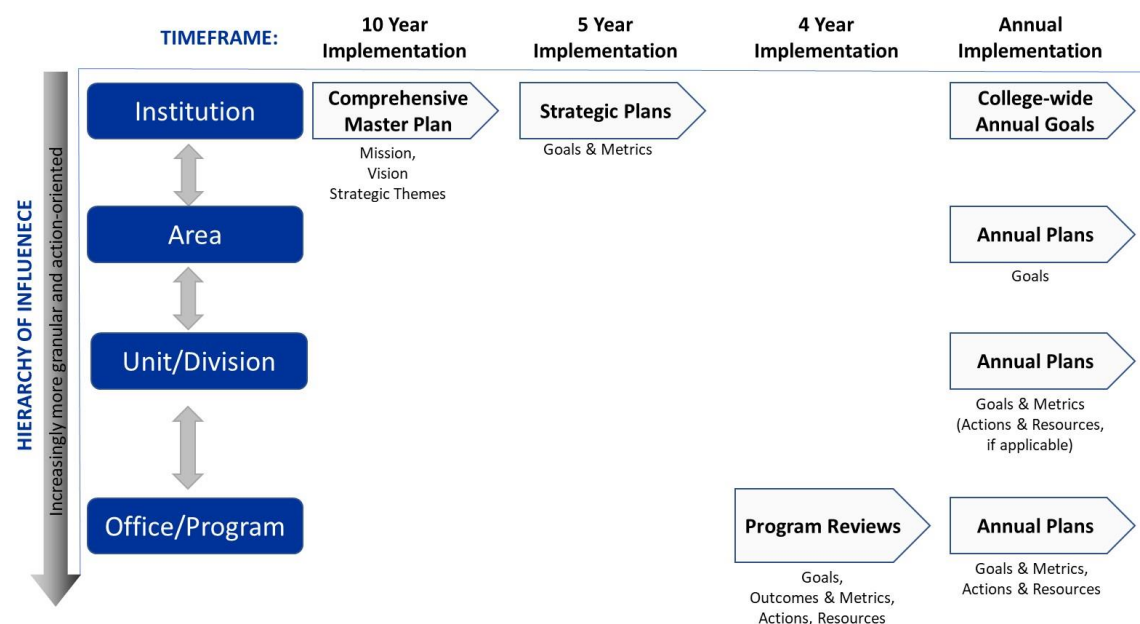
What is Annual Planning?

The annual planning process at ECC articulates the priorities that a reporting entity (area, division/unit, or office/program) will address within a *single fiscal year*. The annual planning process is a part of the broader planning cycle at ECC where the plan of each entity informs and aligns to the plans of other entities (see Figure 1). The priorities identified in the annual planning process will inform the annual budgeting process where the budget needs are articulated and prioritized to align to goals across the institution.

The annual planning and budgeting process begins in October of every year to plan for the following fiscal year. For example, FY2022-23 planning would begin in October 2021. It involves all five areas of the College (President's Office, Academic Affairs, Student Services, Administrative Services, and Human Resources) and every level within each area: programs/offices, divisions/units, and areas.

As presented in Figure 1 below, the area contextualizes the College-wide annual goals. The area's contextualization of the College-wide annual goals provide direction to divisions/units as they articulate division/unit-level annual goals. Similarly, the division/unit-level annual goals will provide direction to the office/program's annual goals. Each annual plan aligns and contributes to the annual plans at the next level and so on. In addition, Program Review documents (multi-year plans) serve as input into the annual planning processes of the offices or programs.

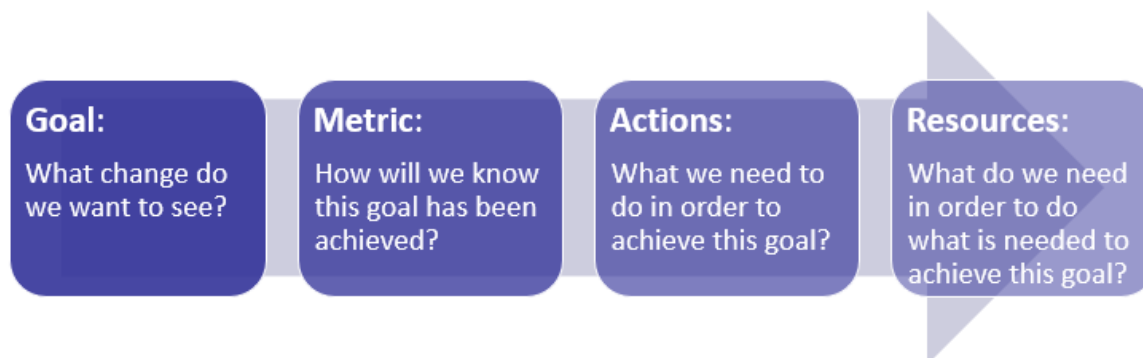
Figure 1: Alignment between ECC Planning Processes



How to draft an annual plan?

All annual plans should have the following four elements: goals, metrics, actions, resources (see Figure 2). *Nuventive* is the online planning platform where annual plans with these four elements are documented and tracked.

Figure 2: Elements of an Annual Plan



Goals are statements that describe the change that is needed for greater impact. Essentially, what changes in the day-to-day operations can be made in order to be more effective or efficient to improve College services for students. An action-oriented goal should start with a word such as: improve, increase, reduce, decrease, enhance, strengthen, grow, etc. to reflect progress towards the desired result. These broad statements may or may not have budget implications.

Example of a goal (from IRP): *“By Spring 2023, increase understanding of the annual planning processes so that all areas and division/units have clear annual plans.”*

Goals should be formulated in a collaborative environment to facilitate alignment vertically and horizontally (see Figure 1). Goals should cascade down from the institution to areas to divisions/units and to offices/programs. At the same time, the goals of the division/unit or area should be drafted in consultation with the entities that will be impacted by the goal. Planning processes can break down silos and encourage communication throughout ECC for greater impact. By intentionally articulating what each entity will focus on, there will be more clarity of how all ECC entities plan to work together towards fulfilling its mission of providing “innovative and excellent comprehensive educational programs and services.”

At the area level, all areas should contribute to all College-wide Annual Goals; however, each area may contribute to these goals in a different way to recognize the unique role of each area.

To contextualize the 2022-23 College-wide Annual Goals for each area, each area (either collectively or individually by the Area VP) may reflect on the following questions. (see Table 1)

Table 1: Reflection questions to contextualize the College-wide Annual Goals for each area

2022-23 College-wide Annual Goals	Sample reflection questions for area-level contextualization
1. Support all ECC students in achieving their educational goals by removing barriers	What barriers could the area focus on in 2022-23 to support all ECC students in achieving their educational goals? (financial, learning, housing barriers, etc.) What can be done differently from last year?
2. Build an inclusive teaching and equitable learning environment that supports quality education for all	What key projects should the area focus on in 2022-23 to support a more inclusive and equitable learning environment? What can be done differently from last year?
3. Promote a more equitable educational experience for non-traditional students to meet the needs of the workforce and to pursue employment opportunities	Are there specific services offered by the area that need to be strengthened in 2022-23 in order to provide a more equitable educational experience to non-traditional students? What can be done differently from last year?
4. Build an innovative institutional environment that strives for continuous improvement for greater effectiveness, efficiency, and equity	What key processes need to be improved in the area in 2022-23 to serve students more efficiently, effectively and equitably? What can be done differently from last year?
5. Demonstrate engagement and commitment across ECC's community constituencies in pursuit of equitable student success	When engaging internal and/or external constituencies, what major issues should the area address in 2022-23 to further equitable student success? What can be done differently from last year?
6. Implement strategies that contribute to an increase in enrollment towards our aspirational goal of 20,000 FTES by 2024-25	Considering the unique role of the area, what initiatives could the area pursue in 2022-23 to leverage opportunities and address key areas of improvement to contribute to increased enrollment? What can be done differently from last year?

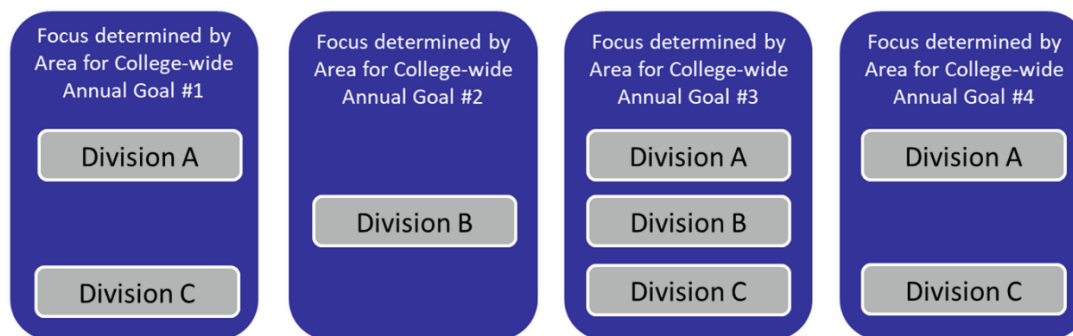
Each Area VP/Superintendent/President should then provide these annual areas of focus to the divisions/units so divisions/units may begin their annual planning process. Table 2 below shows examples of areas of focus for Academic Affairs and Student Services in regards to one of the college-wide annual goals:

Table 2: Examples of areas of focus for College-wide Annual Goals

	Area of Focus Academic Affairs	Area of Focus Student Services
Support all ECC students in achieving their educational goals by removing barriers .	Assess academic-student support and make it more efficient for student success.	Simplify the onboarding process for all students by removing barriers.

Each division/unit should contribute to some or all the foci determined by the Area for the College-wide Annual Goals. Some divisions may contribute to only one focus, while another division may plan to contribute to all foci determined by the Area for the College-wide Annual Goals (see Figure 3).

Figure 3: Example of division's contribution to foci determined by area for College-Wide Annual Goals



To develop annual goals, reflect on how your entity could contribute to the goals provided by the manager. How could the division/unit contribute to some or all of the College-wide Annual Goals? More specifically, each division/unit should:

- *Reflect on strengths:* What strengths can the division/unit leverage to contribute to the area's focus within each of the College-wide Annual Goals?
- *Reflect on challenges:* Which challenges are the most critical to address for your team to effectively contribute to the area's focus within each of the College-wide Annual Goals?

For example, if College-wide Annual Goal #1 is to remove barriers and the Student Services area has agreed to address barriers related to the onboarding process, what strengths can the division leverage or what changes are necessary to improve the onboarding process in 2022-23?

Likewise, each office/program should review: 1) the latest Program Review document, 2) annual goals of the division/unit, and 3) any available data to determine how the office/program could make the greatest impact next year. More specifically, each office/program should:

- *Reflect on strengths:* Considering your team's current strengths articulated in the last Program Review and identified from additional data sources, how can the office/program support the annual goals of the division/unit?
- *Reflect on challenges:* Which challenges articulated in the Program Review and identified from additional data sources, are the most critical to address for your team to effectively contribute to the progress of annual goals of the division/unit?

To ensure annual goals are informed by data:¹

- If the office/program's primary day-to-day interactions are mainly staff and faculty, use feedback from the office/program's constituents or operational efficiency data.
- If the office/program's primary day-to-day interactions are mainly students, use student data (for Academic Affairs and Student Services) or SAOs (for Student Services) to identify trends.
- If the last Program Review is less than 2 years old, refer to existing data analysis from the last Program Review process. If the last Program Review is more than 2 years old, additional data analysis for more recent insight may be helpful.
- To set division/unit goals informed by data, use similar data sources if available at the division/unit-level.

¹ More resources regarding data analysis for office/program-level annual planning will be provided prior to office/program-level annual planning kick-off meetings in January-March.

In general, goals should be S.M.A.R.T. (Smart, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, Time-bound).

- Ensure goals are quantified and are time-bound:
 - *Bad goal*: “Significantly increase X” (“significantly” is subjective and can’t be measured)
 - *Good goal*: “Increase X funding from 5% to 10% by June 2021.”
- A good goal should answer: How much? By when? Goals may be quantified by one of the following metrics:
 - Time – e.g., a decrease in time required to provide a service
 - Dollars – e.g., a decrease in cost or increase in funding
 - Percentages – e.g., a decrease in time to fulfill a service or increase in student/staff
 - satisfaction
 - Numerical counts
 - A specific accomplishment is used to demonstrate that a goal has been accomplished (e.g. a completed document, the installation of a software, the development of an updated syllabus, etc.)

As with any of the planning processes within ECC, the activities involved in the annual planning process are cyclical. At the end of the year, before the next annual planning cycle begins in October, an assessment is needed to determine to what extent the goals have been achieved. Relative to the established targets, has there been progress towards achieving the goals? Why or why not? Goals that have not been fully achieved may continue to be pursued the following year.

For the 2022-23 Annual Planning process, assessment of goals will not be required. Some areas (Administrative Services, Human Resources, and the President’s Office) have developed clear annual goals for 2021-22 as part of the 2021-22 Annual Planning pilot. However, assessment cannot be completed when the 2022-23 Annual Planning process begins in October 2021 since the 2021-22 Annual Plans are still being implemented. For the other areas (Student Services and Academic Affairs), 2022-23 will be the first-year a clear cascading of annual goals will be required. Rather than assessing progress against existing goals, the Student Services and Academic Affairs areas will be establishing baselines in 2022-23. The 2022-23 annual goals should be established with the expectation that assessment of their progress will be necessary in subsequent years.

Metrics are used to track progress towards achieving a goal. How will ECC entities know the goal has been achieved? Action-oriented goals must be bound by a baseline and target. What is the current state and what can each area, division/unit, or office/program reasonably achieve in the next fiscal year?

While performance indicators are usually quantitative, some goals may be linked to the successful completion of a project (e.g. drafting a document, installing software, the development of an updated syllabus, etc.). In these cases, the performance indicator is not quantitative, but whether a particular project has been completed or accomplished.

Example of a performance indicator: *“Percentage of office/program managers who participated in the annual planning training who are comfortable articulating clear goals for their programs.”*

Example of an accomplishment: *“Materials and templates for the annual planning training were developed for all planning levels.”*

Actions are tasks to complete in order to progress toward desired goals (e.g., update procedures, refurbish technology, establish equity-based teaching practices, etc.). Each goal could have one or multiple actions, although no more than three actions is recommended for the greatest impact.

Example of action: *“Provide training to equip new deans and directors to lead the annual planning process within their division/unit or office/program.”*

To ensure that there is a clear connection between the action and the goal, ask *what are the results of the action* and *how do these results support the goal?* In the example above, the action (providing training) will deliver a result (equipping to lead) which will contribute to the goal (increased understanding of the annual planning process).

Resources are assets needed to achieve the goals (e.g., additional staff capacity, staff with specialized skills, access to software/hardware/equipment/facilities).

Offices/programs should reflect on the resource requirements needed to support the desired actions. The resource requirements of the office/program would then inform the resource conversations at the division/unit and area levels. Thus, as annual plans and budget priorities are cascaded up from offices/programs to divisions/units and from divisions/units to areas, there are intentional opportunities to confirm that the annual plans and budget allocations are fully aligned throughout the institution.

After determining what actions are needed to achieve the goals for the next fiscal year, determine what additional resources are needed in the next fiscal year. In order to execute the actions required to achieve each goal, what additional resources are required beyond what the office/program currently has? Reflect on each of the following type of resources: a) staffing, b) technology/software, c) instructional equipment, d) non-instructional equipment, e) furniture, f) facilities, and g) contracts/services/memberships/travel and conferences. These resource requirements are then inputted into *Nuventive* for review and prioritization.

Example of resource requirements: *“Additional online team collaboration tools and hiring an additional staff member to coordinate and facilitate the training, and to develop training materials.”*

Nuventive Required Fields

All divisions/units and office/programs should have annual goals and metrics in *Nuventive*. Offices and programs are the only teams required to articulate specific actions and reflect on resource requirements. For the divisions/units, the action and resources fields are optional in *Nuventive*. Although the divisions/units would provide guidance to the office/program, usually divisions/units do not unilaterally execute actions without the involvement of an office/program. Therefore, including actions and resources for each goal is optional for most divisions/units. (see Table 2)

However, divisions/units should include actions and resources in their annual plans for the following reasons:

- If the actions and resources affect all offices/programs within the same division/unit.
- For the purposes of annual planning, some smaller divisions/units without offices/programs reporting to them may function more like an office/program. For example, since the IRP division

does not have any office/program that reports to it, IRP will develop annual plans with actions and resources for all goals as if it were an office/program.

- If the offices/programs within the same division/unit are relatively small, the dean/manager may choose to submit annual plans for all office/programs collectively as one division/unit. This will need to be confirmed with the Institutional Research & Planning (IRP) office ahead of time so that proper adjustments can be made in the process and in Nuventive.

Table 2: Information to input into *Nuventive*

Annual Plans should include:	Goal	Metrics	Actions	Resource Requirements
Division/unit	✓	✓	✓ *	✓ *
Office/Program	✓	✓	✓	✓

* Note: Action & Resource Requirements are optional fields for most Division/units.

Annual Planning and Budgeting Calendar

TASKS	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT
Areas contextualize College-wide annual goals	by mid-Oct												
Divisions/Units develop annual plans		by mid-Dec											
Divisions/Units (without Office/Programs) develop annual plans			by mid-April										
Offices/Programs develop annual plans						by mid-April							
Division/Units and Areas complete Budget Worksheets					by mid-March								
Prioritization of budget requests within Divisions/Units and Areas								by end of May					
Prioritization of budget request with Cabinet									June				
Identify funding source for high priority budget requests										June - July			
Approve budget requests												Aug - Sept	
Final budget approved													9/15