Planning Assumptions

• Planning is a necessity and will place the needs of students and potential students first.

• The emergence of federal college ratings and Chancellor’s Office mandated goals for community colleges will increase the need for the college to be data-focused and responsive to areas of needed improvement as revealed by the data.

• Ohlone Community College District will continue to become less “White” as growth among Asians and Hispanics continues. Most Asian migrants and immigrants to the district come from traditions that respect and encourage higher education. That may not be true for other groups, where growth is expected.

• The district will witness a declining pool of adult learners between the ages of 30 to 49, but a dramatically increasing pool of adults aged 60+.

• The college district has the whole range of both income levels and college preparedness levels within its service area. While the majority of the district’s household incomes are average for the Bay Area, and two of the district high schools are at or below the state standards for Academic Performance Index, the district also includes one higher income zip code area and two high performing high schools.

• The resources provided by the state are not keeping pace with the needs of the district and entrepreneurial sources of revenue must be developed to fulfill the college’s vision to be known throughout California for inclusiveness, innovation, and superior rates of student success.

• Recent surveys of students disclosed important information about student perceptions and satisfaction, including the fact that they find Ohlone to be a positive and supportive environment, concerned about issues of diversity and equity, and successful in helping students prepare for careers or other educational goals. Over 90% of students would recommend to others taking classes at Ohlone and would choose again to attend themselves. This satisfaction among students will continue.

• The college mission will continue to comprehensively address the needs of transfer, career and technical education, and basic skills students, as well as provide opportunities for lifelong learning and personal enrichment.

• Students will want course choices and convenience, and they are capable of finding options elsewhere when the college cannot meet their needs.
• Younger students will be “digital natives.” Their technology skills and awareness will bring expectations for technology and they will constantly redefine “state of the art.”

• Also known as “Millenials,” children born between 1982 and 2002, approach learning in new ways. Their preference is to learn: with technology, with each other, online, in their time, in their place, and by doing things that matter.

• The global marketplace will influence curriculum in every department and will provoke changes to content and delivery.

• As the institution for higher education within the district, the college can model excellence to district schools.

• Implementation of innovations and interventions resulting from the college’s Student Equity Plan and the Student Success and Support Plan will provoke higher rates of retention, success, and completion.

• With the implementation of Common Core, students will come to the college with preparation from high school that better aligns with the academic expectations of the college.

• Technology’s rapid obsolescence will result in challenges to budgets as the college seeks to remain technologically relevant while continuing to meet other critical campus needs.

• For the foreseeable future, the college will continue to do more with less.

• Planning documents will be available to all major stakeholder groups. Research data used in planning will also be widely available. All plans will include “successes” defined in measurable terms to track progress and will be updated regularly.

• Ethnically diverse students will increasingly dominate enrollment, and their needs and interests will be fully considered and addressed appropriately.

• The college will maintain its commitment to access and to appropriately serve traditionally under-represented populations.

• As performance measures become more important to the public, performance-based funding will become more important to legislators. The college will have to continue its emphasis on degree completion and transfer.

• Despite the recent upturn in the economy, the college will take years to recover from the effects of the recession, particularly in the areas of enrollment and numbers of full time faculty.
• Part-time students will place the same demand on student services as full-time students.

• The college will support a culture of evidence and will promote a culture of inquiry in the learning college model. Current, relevant data will be available for ad hoc planning, and independent research will be encouraged.

• The college will fully embrace innovations and opportunities that promote student success and equity, including associate degrees for transfer, electronic education plans, and interventions to alleviate disproportionate impact.

• In the midst of construction, flexibility and change will characterize the college, but will result in increased turbulence and uncertainty among employees.

• Some traditional programs will become increasingly irrelevant for the 21st century as down-sizing, out-sourcing, and automation replace district employment opportunities.

• Silicon Valley will continue to lose jobs in manufacturing but will remain a center for innovation and for research and development.

• The Bay Area will continue both to attract international students seeking degrees in science and engineering, and to draw highly educated scientists and engineers to the area’s employment and entrepreneurial opportunities. Both groups will bring high expectations of excellence in education, especially in the sciences.

• Conversely, the rate of growth of college graduates in the state will decline, the result, in part, of the retiring and migration of members of the extremely educated baby-boom generation, and the reversal of the historic trend of people with degrees migrating to California.

• Interest in a “green economy” will continue. As more environmentally-sensitive skills and vocations develop, the college will respond programmatically.