

A. Pulaski Technical College's Present**1. Distinctive organizational features**

Pulaski Technical College (PTC) is a comprehensive, public two-year college serving four Arkansas counties—Faulkner, Lonoke, Pulaski, and Saline. These counties are located in the heart of central Arkansas and include the state's largest metropolitan area and capital. PTC currently operates with a main campus and seven sites in Pulaski and Saline counties.

PTC is governed by a seven-member board of trustees that are appointed to seven-year terms by the governor of Arkansas. Pulaski Technical College's mission, role, and scope are set through state legislation and Arkansas Higher Education Coordinating Board policies. PTC's major sources of funding are through the State of Arkansas and student tuition and fees.

Pulaski Technical College's history dates back to October 1945 when it was established as the Little Rock Vocational School under the supervision of the Little Rock Public Schools. Since 1945, administration of the institution has changed hands from local school districts to the state. In 1991, the legislature transformed thirteen of the state's vocational-technical schools, including Pulaski Vocational Technical School, into technical and community colleges.

Eighteen years after becoming a two-year college, Pulaski Technical College is still maturing and growing. PTC is the fifth largest institution of higher education in the state according to a headcount of 9,092 in Fall 2008, ranking behind four other public universities. The college expects enrollment to keep growing steadily between now and 2015 when enrollment is estimated to be at 12,000.

Pulaski Technical College's mission statement is to serve the educational needs of central Arkansas through technical programs, a university-transfer program, and specialized programs for business and industry. It further states that the college will provide access to high quality education that promotes student learning, will enable individuals to develop to their fullest potential, and will support the economic development of the state. In fulfilling this mission, PTC focuses on workforce development, both at the individual-level by promoting education as a road to success and at the business and industry level by partnering with regional entities in offering specialized preparation through non-credit continuing education and through credit-bearing degree and certificate programs in specific career areas.

Pulaski Technical College's student body is unique when compared to other peers around the state. According to statistics reported by the Arkansas Department of Higher Education in Fall 2008, PTC is the largest two-year college in the state with 9,092 students. The second largest two-year college, Northwest Arkansas Community College, has 7,229 students, and the third largest, Arkansas State University—Beebe, which is located on the fringe of PTC's service area, has 4,453 students. Furthermore, a "traditional" student on average at PTC differs from most other colleges and universities in that he or she is in his or her late 20s, first-generation to college, African American, low-income, a parent, and in need of remedial coursework to prepare for college. A growing number of students from all backgrounds also are taking courses both

online and in the physical classroom, marking the versatile needs of students and the versatile capabilities of PTC.

PTC responds to the needs of its students and community through thorough planning and evaluation. The college studies its own trends and others' best practices in devising programs and evaluating current ones. Planning and evaluation go hand-in-hand, and PTC engages administrators, staff, faculty, and students at all levels in the effort through strategic and operating planning, institutional research, academic assessment, and accreditation.

2. Scope of educational offerings

- Pulaski Technical College is a comprehensive two-year college, offering 15 short-term certificates of proficiency (approximately one semester of full-time study), 31 technical certificates (approximately one year of full-time study), a certificate of general studies (approximately one year of full-time study), and 24 associate degrees in general education and applied sciences.
- PTC is approved to offer the Associate of Arts through distance technology. Other certificate programs may also be completed online. In support of faculty in these areas, PTC maintains an Office of Distance Learning and Instructional Technology Support with three full-time employees to facilitate online course deployment.
- Through the Division of Academic Success, PTC offers developmental education for underprepared students in the areas of mathematics, reading, and writing. While developmental courses do not carry college credit, these three-hour courses are prerequisite for students who score low on placement tests. The division also houses a first-year experience seminar for incoming freshmen to adjust them to college expectations.
- Through the Business and Industry Center, PTC offers an array of non-credit programs, including specialized business and industry training and community education.
- Pulaski Technical College's physical facilities include a main campus and seven sites in serving a four-county service area.

3. Students

- 9,092 undergraduate, credit-seeking students (non-auditor) were enrolled in Fall 2008. Another 16 students enrolled exclusively as auditors of credit classes for a total of 9,108 students in academic programs.
- 44 percent (3,996) of undergraduate, credit-seeking students were full-time, and 56 percent (5,096) were part-time.
- 69 percent (6,248) of these students were female, and 31 percent (2,844) were male.
- The racial demographics for these students were 49 percent (4,439) African American, 47 percent (4,289) white, and 4 percent (364) other or unknown.
- The average age of these students was 28.9.
- Of the 9,108 students in academic programs (auditors included), 3,620 were enrolled in at least one online (distance learning) course, representing 40 percent of the overall college population.
- The number of full-time equivalent (FTE) students during the previous 12-months (2007-2008) as listed in the current IPEDS reporting year was 6,257.

- PTC is a commuter-campus with no on-campus housing. In Fall 2008, 77 percent (6,973) of undergraduate, credit-seeking students lived in Pulaski County, the largest in the college service area. 95 percent (8,598) lived within PTC's four-county service area.
- 70 percent (6,335) of all Fall 2008 PTC students received some form of financial assistance.
- During Fall 2008, 1,263 non-credit students took courses at the Business and Industry Center.
- PTC provides "open door" access to college and actively works with underprepared students to help them achieve their educational and career goals.

4. Collaborative or partnership arrangements

- Business and Industry Partnerships: Though the Division of Economic Development and the Business and Industry Center site, Pulaski Technical College coordinates several regional and state consortia, including the aerospace consortium, manufacturing consortium, insurance consortium, welding consortium, and "green" technology consortium.
- Educational Partnerships: PTC helps generate a pipeline of future K-12 teachers and works with local school districts to provide students with opportunities for practical experience in introductory college courses in education. PTC maintains a multi-faceted partnership with Arkansas' largest healthcare provider, Baptist Health, in providing general education to their nursing education programs and in offering the Associate of Applied Science in Occupational Therapy Assistant. PTC maintains partnerships with other institutions of higher education through the statewide credit transfer program, articulation agreements, and the Arkansas Association of Two-Year Colleges.
- Accreditation Partnerships: PTC actively participates in regional accreditation through the Higher Learning Commission and will transition to AQIP in support of continuous quality improvement.

5. Faculty and staff (Employment numbers taken from November 2008 Office of Civil Rights reporting to the Arkansas Department of Higher Education.)

- Full-Time Executive, Administrative, and Managerial Employees: 56
 - 23 male (41 percent); 33 female (59 percent)
 - 9 African American (16 percent); 47 Caucasian (84 percent)
 - 6 with doctoral degrees (11 percent); 34 with masters degrees (61 percent)
- All Other Full-Time Staff: 127
 - 39 male (31 percent); 88 female (69 percent)
 - 36 African American (28 percent); 2 Hispanic Origin (2 percent); 89 Caucasian (70 percent)
 - 1 with doctoral degree (1 percent); 22 with masters degrees (17 percent)

- Full-Time Faculty: 144
 - 76 male (53 percent); 68 female (47 percent)
 - 10 African American (7 percent); 134 Caucasian (93 percent)
 - 10 with doctoral degrees (7 percent); 86 with masters degrees (60 percent); 48 with other credentials (33 percent)
 - In Fall 2008, full-time instructors taught 649 of the 1,454 sections across all modes and locations of instruction at PTC, representing 45 percent of the semester course load.

- Adjunct Faculty: 308
 - 116 male (38 percent); 192 female (62 percent)
 - 59 African American (19 percent); 4 Hispanic Origin (1 percent); 4 Asian American (1 percent); 241 Caucasian (78 percent)
 - In Fall 2008, adjunct instructors taught 805 of the 1,454 sections across all modes and locations of instruction at PTC, representing 55 percent of the semester course load.

6. Three operational environment requirements

- Funding/Budget: Pulaski Technical College's budget is funded primarily through state funds and tuition and fees. Currently, PTC has no local tax support.
- Accreditation: Pulaski Technical College was last accredited by the Higher Learning Commission in 2002 and will begin the AQIP process during the 2008-2009 academic year. PTC maintains program-level accreditation in six technical and occupational programs.
- Mandatory Placement for Developmental Education: Arkansas state law requires placement testing for college-level mathematics, reading, and writing. Students scoring below the state minimum on the ACT or COMPASS must take preparatory courses in the Division of Academic Success as a prerequisite to enrolling in the relevant college-level course.

7. Three important competitors (Statistics gathered from Fall 2007 IPEDS Peer Analysis System.)

- Arkansas State University—Beebe: ASU—Beebe is located on the outskirts of Little Rock's metropolitan statistical area in White County and serves 4,311 two-year college students. We share the service area counties of Faulkner, Lonoke, and northern Pulaski counties with them and thus compete with them for students, faculty, and staff.
- University of Arkansas at Little Rock: This public university serves 9,494 undergraduate students, is located within Pulaski County, and is in very close proximity to three of our credit-offering sites. We compete with UALR for first-time entering students and students who want to earn undergraduate transfer credits. While we also compete with them for faculty and staff, we employ many people who have obtained bachelor, masters, or doctorate degrees from them.
- University of Central Arkansas: This public university serves 10,675 undergraduate students and is located within our service area county of Faulkner. We compete with them for first-time entering students and students who want to earn undergraduate transfer credits. As with UALR, we compete with them for faculty and staff but benefit from their presence since many of our faculty and staff are alumni.

8. Three important opportunities and three critical vulnerabilities

Opportunities	Vulnerabilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PTC continues to grow in enrollment and services. • There is a potential funding growth from lottery passage. • PTC works vigorously to streamline the educational pipeline for all students—from high school to college, from two-year college to transfer institution, from two-year college to work, from older and returning students to transfer or work goals, and from remedial student to prepared-for-college student. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a lack of racial and ethnic diversity among faculty and staff. • PTC is dependent on state funding and tuition and fees with no local tax base and a declining economy with state budget cuts. • There are high non-successful grade rates (D, F, NC, W, and I) in developmental and gateway courses, especially among students of color.

B. Pulaski Technical College’s Future

1. Three chronic frustrations

- The college’s budget is dependent on state funds, tuition and fees, and grants with no local tax support.
- “Revolving door” students drop out early in the semester and re-enroll the next semester only to drop again. We want to help these students succeed and work to make sure we are not the source of the problem.
- There is a mismatch between faculty who are subject matter experts and students with low skills in reading, writing, and math. The college will continue to offer faculty opportunities regarding improving and expanding upon various teaching methods that engage a wide-variety of learners. We also need to continue developing our case management model where faculty and staff proactively engage students in resolving their problems and celebrating their successes.

2. Three elements of your shared vision

- Pulaski Technical College will be recognized as the state’s two-year college leader, pioneering the way in workforce development and university transfer education.
- Pulaski Technical College will promote student success without compromising high standards for learning and achievement.
- Pulaski Technical College will be a strong partner in economic development of central Arkansas and the entire state, providing education, leadership, and services in support of new and current businesses and industries.

3. **Three most critical Principles of High Performance Organizations**

- Pulaski Technical College places critical importance on the high performance principle of **learning**. As a college, learning is our “reason for being.” We are currently studying and learning from ourselves the areas where we need to improve. By offering enrichment activities and opportunities to our faculty and staff, we are working to improve instructional techniques that in turn will improve student learning.
- Pulaski Technical College also places critical importance on the high performance principle of **people**. Our administration seeks to develop employees to achieve their full potential and harnesses that energy to improve the college as a whole. We also meld the principles of people, collaboration, involvement, and leadership into one aim as we seek to involve employees at all levels in shared governance, standing committees, and campus-wide initiatives.
- Pulaski Technical College places critical importance on the high performance principle of **information**. We are committed to the growth of a “culture of evidence” by which we use sound data to drive decision making. We bolster this aim through ongoing commitments to strategic and operational planning, academic assessment, service program evaluation, and staffing of an office of institutional research, planning, and effectiveness to assist faculty and staff in planning and data processes. We proudly take on special initiatives such as Achieving the Dream: Community Colleges Count where our data and planning efforts are a part of national best practices. We also identify areas of weakness such as lack of diversity among faculty and staff to target for improvement.

4. **Two challenges to address with Action Projects**

Pulaski Technical College will address the following challenges with Action Projects:

- To improve African-American male enrollment, persistence, and graduation rates; and
- To open the mathematics gateway for our students.

C. Action Project Worksheets –following pages.

Action Project Worksheet

Institution: Pulaski Technical College	City & State: North Little Rock, AR
What is your short identifier (10 words or fewer) for this challenge (or opportunity or problem) that you would like to address with an Action Project? To improve African-American male enrollment, persistence, and graduation rates.	
Explain concisely the nature, scope, and/or urgency of this challenge. We are a predominately black institution, as approximately 50 percent of our students are African American. There are large achievement gaps between Caucasian and African-American students, and there are considerably different achievement gaps between African-American females and African-American males.	
What made you aware of the need to develop a strategy to address this challenge? What stimulated you to confront it now? We have systematically reviewed student data from the past five years through our participation in Achieving the Dream: Community Colleges Count and Foundations of Excellence in the First Year of College. We are aware of the challenge, and we have sought outside feedback and grant funding in addressing the issue.	
Which specific needs of your students, other external stakeholders, faculty, or staff could you meet better if you addressed this challenge? How? We could better address retention, graduation, and transfer rates overall and for African-American males by tackling this issue. We will also be addressing the unique needs of our service area's African-American community. We will address the challenge through the ongoing improvement cycle of planning, implementation, and evaluation.	
How might addressing this challenge change or strengthen your institution's quality culture and infrastructure? Addressing this challenge will build upon our "culture of evidence," as we determined the urgency of this issue through disaggregated analysis of student data. In proactively responding to this issue, we hope to build morale for students, faculty, staff, and the community.	
What enthusiasm and support exists among your leadership and employees for addressing this challenge now? We have secured a federal Predominately Black Institution grant to implement a Student Success Center that will support and assist students with academic and non-academic needs. This center will be open to all students but is of particular interest in addressing African-American student needs.	
Describe briefly what you might want an Action Project addressing this challenge to accomplish. We would like to expand upon case management programs with known successes to help an ever growing number of students, as budgets and staffing become available. Our ultimate accomplishment would be increased persistence, graduation, and transfer of our predominately black population.	

Action Project Worksheet

What ideas for potential Action Projects addressing this challenge have you already brainstormed? (Provide 3 - 6)

- Student Success Center is in implementation phase. We need to grow, monitor, and evaluate it.
- We will be developing a chapter of the Student African-American Brotherhood to mentor and support black male students.
- We will study and pursue ways to expand case management services that are available through many grant programs on-campus to the full college community. We believe that intrusive services on our part will engage students who may otherwise fall through the cracks.

Action Project Worksheet

Institution: Pulaski Technical College	City & State: North Little Rock, AR
What is your short identifier (10 words or fewer) for this challenge (or opportunity or problem) that you would like to address with an Action Project? To open the mathematics gateway for our students.	
Explain concisely the nature, scope, and/or urgency of this challenge. We have studied grades in developmental and gateway courses. All four courses in the developmental math curriculum ranked highest in non-successful grades of no-credit and withdrawal with such rates in excess of 50 percent of all grades. Many students struggle with getting successfully past developmental math in order to enroll and succeed in College Algebra, which is needed for graduation in the high enrollment Associate of Arts and Associate of Science.	
What made you aware of the need to develop a strategy to address this challenge? What stimulated you to confront it now? We have systematically reviewed student data from the past five years through our participation in Achieving the Dream: Community Colleges Count and Foundations of Excellence in the First Year of College.	
Which specific needs of your students, other external stakeholders, faculty, or staff could you meet better if you addressed this challenge? How? We would positively affect the retention, graduation, and transfer rates of our students by addressing this issue. We will address the challenge through the ongoing improvement cycle of planning, implementation, and evaluation.	
How might addressing this challenge change or strengthen your institution's quality culture and infrastructure? In addressing this issue, we will build upon our culture of evidence, as we will propose and implement changes as the result of examining previous baseline data. Furthermore, our efforts in this area should improve course design, instructional methods, and student learning outcomes.	
What enthusiasm and support exists among your leadership and employees for addressing this challenge now? We have identified developmental mathematics as a priority area for our Achieving the Dream grant funds. With this funding, we are implementing supplemental instruction and learning communities as alternative, supporting instructional techniques. We have also identified developmental mathematics and College Algebra as courses to be redesigned through federal Title III funds. Developmental math redesign is underway, and College Algebra redesign will occur in upcoming academic terms.	

Action Project Worksheet

Describe briefly what you might want an Action Project addressing this challenge to accomplish.

We want to keep our instruction current and accommodating of various learning styles. Ultimately, our goal is student success in mathematics along the pathway to a degree.

What ideas for potential Action Projects addressing this challenge have you already brainstormed? (Provide 3 - 6)

- We are continuously developing and implementing supplemental instruction led by student leaders.
- We are developing and implementing learning communities where developmental mathematics courses are paired with courses such as the first-year experience course of College Seminar. We need to expand learning communities to other math and college courses, especially for returning students in subsequent semesters.
- We have debated and adjusted placement scores higher than the state minimum in mathematics to address deficiencies that we see in students with placement scores at state minimums. We want to make sure that students are best prepared in their path through developmental math to College Algebra and on to a degree. We will continue to prepare appropriate course redesign based upon our new placement scores.