The National Labor College Mission Statement

By establishing the physical and intellectual space for the labor movement to imagine its future, the mission of the NLC is to make higher education available to workers, to prepare union members, leaders and staff for the challenges of a changing global environment; and to serve as a center for progressive thought and learning.

Mission of the National Labor College

The National Labor College (NLC) is one of a kind, the only college in the United States with an exclusive mission to serve the educational needs of the labor movement. It is an activist institution made up of students, faculty and alumni who together form a learning community based on a common understanding of the world of work and the ecology of the labor movement. The College respects that its student body is made up of experienced, highly skilled working adults who have multiple commitments to family, job, union and community. In its academic programs, the NLC honors higher learning that takes place both inside and outside the collegiate community.
**Values**

Since its inception in the 19th century, the American labor movement has placed great emphasis on education. In 1969 the leaders of this movement founded the George Meany Training Center, which was created to offer the training programs that would produce a diverse movement of working men and women dedicated to a more equitable and just society. In 1997, the AFL-CIO established the National Labor College at the George Meany Training Center to offer union members the opportunity to earn a high quality baccalaureate degree in Labor Studies.

The contemporary labor movement faces the twin challenges of rapid technological change and a hostile political environment, which have together produced a long-term decline in union density. In recognition of these challenges, another critical role of the NLC is to explore labor’s often underappreciated role in the development of a stable middle class in the world’s most prosperous society and to transmit the values of the movement to all workers, especially younger people who may not know of labor’s essential role in the development of this society.

The labor movement’s values that are embodied today at the NLC are the same values that first brought working people together in a common movement to advance and protect their interests in the spheres of politics, economics and culture. Among these values are the following:

- Labor is the source of all wealth.
- There is honor and dignity in all work.
- Working people should have equal protection under the law and the freedom to bargain collectively to advance and protect their interests.
- Education is the key to a free and democratic labor movement.
- Democratic trade unions are essential to economic justice and to a free and democratic society.
- For working people to fully realize their potential and that of their children, they must have equal access to high quality education at all levels.
- Labor arts and culture are an essential part of education, as they provide the labor movement with its soul and spirit.
Institutional Goals

The NLC works to achieve the following institutional goals, which are guided by our mission and values:

1. To articulate and transmit the values of the labor movement to successive generations of union members
2. To respond to the needs of those in the labor movement for knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to secure their futures and those of their families
3. To incorporate workplace and union learning into degree programs in order to provide efficient and effective pathways to degree completion for workers
4. To provide unions and labor-related organizations with a diverse group of members and leaders who are critical thinkers and skilled communicators
5. To work in partnership with unions and other organizations who support the labor movement to provide relevant and collaborative programs that advance the movement

National Labor College Outcomes

NLC graduates achieve the following outcomes as a result of their educational experience, rooted in the NLC mission, values, and goals:

1. **Leadership:** The ability to reflect upon, share and deconstruct experience with a goal of improving personal and organizational leadership practices.
2. **Critical Thinking:** The ability to understand, question, analyze and discuss underlying assumptions that define a particular position or viewpoint.
3. **Effective Communication:** The ability to clearly communicate, orally and in writing.
4. **Information Literacy:** The ability to analyze and make intelligent decisions based upon massive amounts of information, determine the nature and extent of needed information, know where to obtain critical information, and assess the validity of sources.
5. **Technological Proficiency:** The ability to understand and use basic digital communication tools to function effectively in the changing society.
Institutional Strengths 2012

- NLC is the nation’s only accredited higher education institution devoted exclusively to education and degree completion for the men and women of the labor movement and adult learners in their families.
- NLC has a 43-year history of providing high-quality education to labor leaders, activists, rank-and-file members and staff.
- NLC offers high-quality education that combines liberal arts with union skills and professional studies.
- NLC works with academic and union partners on arrangements that facilitate degree completion for working adults.
- NLC recently expanded its degree programs and certificate program offerings.
- NLC offers various modes of delivery designed to provide access to higher education for working adults with complex employment, family, union and community commitments.
- NLC’s faculty and staff are dedicated to the mission of the College.
- NLC has a well-staffed, responsive admissions team.
- NLC has a strong student orientation and advising program.
- NLC builds writing skills in all courses through the NLC’s “Writing Across the Curriculum” policy.
- NLC’s baccalaureate curriculum has a common core that spans the Schools of Labor Studies and Professional Studies.
- NLC has a streamlined Labor Studies curriculum.
- NLC offers a streamlined cohort model in SPS with a mandatory student success course.
- Programs in SPS have high rates of retention and persistence.
- NLC includes rigorous research requirements in all academic programs that, in combination with other requirements, enhance critical thinking skills.
- NLC offers a robust selection of electronic resources.
- NLC integrates part-time faculty into the academic life of the college through a variety of activities, including mentoring, training and communication.
- NLC conducts learning assessment designed to effectively analyze the learning outcomes of all academic programs.
- NLC has institutional research capacity to effectively generate and analyze institutional assessment data used to define and achieve strategic goals.
- The Academic Affairs Committee of the Board of Trustees is actively engaged in the academic affairs governance process.
Vision 2017

By the year 2017, the National Labor College will be widely recognized as the premier labor educational institution in the United States, central to an emerging global labor movement. As such, the NLC will serve US and global labor organizations as the principal laboratory where new ideas are incubated, analyzed, critiqued, and tested. Union leaders, policy makers, scholars, teachers, students, and activists will come together to broaden labor's political, economic, social, and cultural agenda.

Areas of Strategic Focus for 2012-2015

• Academics
• Enrollment
• Student Services
• Financial Stability
• Technology
I. Strategic Focus on Academics

GOAL
Strengthen academic excellence to provide high quality, accessible, and affordable higher education with a strong liberal arts foundation to the men and women of the labor movement and adult learners in their families.

OBJECTIVES
1. Expanded academic offerings, in terms of both degree level and content areas
2. Course development and delivery that incorporate best practices
3. Systematic assessment of student learning above the course level
4. Administration, faculty, and staff that reflects more accurately the diversity of the labor movement we serve

INITIATIVES
1. Support professional development of full-time and part-time faculty as teaching scholars and practitioners
2. Develop and implement a comprehensive evaluation process for full-time and part-time faculty
3. Expand outlets for recruitment; track diversity of applicants and hires
4. Pursue licensure in the District of Columbia to offer degrees, including associate degrees, and establish an AA program as early as Fall 2013
5. Review and revise Union Skills offerings and delivery to better meet the needs of a strong 21st century global labor movement
6. Incorporate the NLC outcomes in course objectives
7. Provide support for students in writing and other critical skills
8. Ensure that that students have multiple and frequent opportunities to examine their assumptions and world views
9. Expand opportunities for students to debate critical issues regarding an emerging global labor movement

OUTCOMES
1. Academic offerings meet the needs of union members, leaders, staff, and their families
2. Diversity of administration, faculty, and staff reflects more accurately the labor movement we serve
3. Graduates demonstrate having achieved the intended outcomes of their major program, school, and college
4. Online course delivery and residential components are consistent with best practices
II. Strategic Focus on Enrollment

GOAL
Greater access to quality higher education for union members and their families, union leaders and staff through marketing, outreach and academic programs and by aligning ourselves with organizations that share our values

OBJECTIVES
1. Well-known and respected brand throughout labor movement
2. Data-driven strategic marketing program
3. Student population that reflects labor’s increasingly diverse membership
4. Balanced enrollment across Schools and degree programs

INITIATIVES
1. Conduct comprehensive market research on existing degree programs and potential new offerings
2. Develop and execute strategic marketing campaign plan
3. Ensure consistent communication across all platforms (print, digital, voice)

OUTCOMES
1. Improvement in marketing placements, website analytics, inquiries generated and converted
2. Meet overall enrollment expectations set by Board of Trustees
3. Reduction in the cost per inquiry, applicant, and enrollee
4. Increased diversity in student population
III. Strategic Focus on Student Services

GOAL
Strengthen services and enhance student satisfaction through efficient, responsive and personalized support services at each stage of the student life cycle, from inquiry to graduation

OBJECTIVES
1. Vision, values and mission statements for NLC Student Services
2. Cohesive, integrated approach to student services and functions
3. Professional faculty and staff who are well trained and well informed
4. Students who are prepared to succeed in a challenging academic environment
5. An NLC community in which students are engaged and empowered

INITIATIVES
1. Develop a clearly articulated statement on NLC’s values and vision for student services
2. Streamline the student life cycle by defining and documenting internal processes and procedures
3. Manage student expectations through clear direction, communications and messaging
4. Advance a culture of excellence and professionalism in student services
5. Create new opportunities for student engagement and enrichment in both online and residential settings

OUTCOMES
1. Well documented internal policies and procedures
2. Increased retention, persistence, and progress to degree
3. Enhanced student satisfaction with their NLC experience
IV. Strategic Focus on Financial Stability

GOAL
Establish a path toward sustainability and self-sufficiency by increasing the available resources and managing existing resources

OBJECTIVES
1. Elimination of both the long-term debt and the structural operating deficit of the College
2. Broader base and expanded scope of financial giving to the College
3. Increased annual revenue from grant opportunities that are consistent with the College’s core mission
4. Increased revenue, on an annual basis, obtained through tuition and fees

INITIATIVES
1. Complete the sale of the campus property and make arrangements for the College’s physical space that are affordable and adequate to its needs
2. Complete the winding down of the operations of the Conference Center and Archives
3. Implement a detailed plan to broaden the base of donors and to increase the number of large individual contributions to the College
4. Create and staff a senior position for institutional advancement, including the acquisition and management of grant funding
5. Enter into one or more strategic partnerships that will provide additional resources necessary for the further growth of the College

OUTCOMES
1. The achievement of a balance between operating costs and revenues on an annual basis
2. A progressive annual increase in the amount of money raised to support the College
3. A progressive annual increase in the amount of grant funding obtained by the College
4. A progressive annual increase in the amount of tuition and fees revenue earned by the College
5. A gradual but significant reduction in the amount of the AFL-CIO’s annual support to the College
V. Strategic Focus on Technology

GOAL
Technology infrastructure and technical services meet the College’s needs to attract, educate, and provide services to a growing student population

OBJECTIVES
1. An Enterprise System (ES) that supports recruitment and admissions, registration and student records, financial aid and student accounts, human resources, advancement, finance, and administration, capable of keeping up with enrollment growth
2. A Learning Management System (LMS) that serves the needs of students and faculty, and interfaces with Enterprise System
3. A Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system for marketing and recruitment, which interfaces seamlessly with the Enterprise System
4. A fundraising database software system for institutional advancement, which interfaces seamlessly with the Enterprise System
5. End users empowered to use these systems to full advantage with only minimal ongoing help

INITIATIVES
1. Create and staff a senior position that will provide vision and leadership to develop a robust technical environment
2. Expand PowerCampus to a true Enterprise System; provide staff training and support
3. Acquire/license an appropriate and reliable Learning Management System; provide training and support for full-time and part-time instructors
4. Acquire and implement an appropriate Customer Relationship Management system for student recruitment; provide staff training and support
5. Acquire and implement Raiser’s Edge or other appropriate fundraising database software system; provide staff training and support
6. Maintain and support hardware and software systems, with upgrades as needed; provide ongoing professional development for those responsible for these systems

OUTCOMES
1. Integrated reporting and data analysis for decision-making
2. Improved student and instructor satisfaction with LMS and its interface with administrative computing system
3. Improved reliability and reduced downtime for online access and services