Listening Session Summary
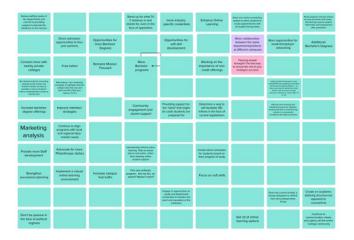Management and Staff
Tuesday, February 18, 2025

Strategies to Thrive

What strategies should Tri-C consider to do more than
meet the challenges ahead, but thrive?

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Question 1

Reflecting on our Vision: Consider the context and vision casting message you just heard, what resonated with you the most? What challenges do you see?

Summary

The responses emphasize the importance of acting and adapting to avoid being left behind. It highlights the need for designing one's destiny, building bridges, and working together as a community.

Key themes include cultural changes in education, resilience, inclusivity, and the challenges faced by community colleges. Strategic planning, innovation, and balancing online and on-ground classes are crucial. The responses underscores the importance of addressing individual group challenges to provide needed support and emphasizes the significance of proactive measures and investment in community and student programs.

Responses

Community Building and Collaboration

...As a community

Bridges toward one another

build bridges

Building bridges

Dr. Baston just mentioned "community needs to stick together building bridges," but we just paused the LBGTQ center moving forward. We are removing DEI, so we're saying stick together but without acknowledging the challenges of individual groups so we can actually provide the needed support.

Working together

Embracing Cultural Adaptation

Adapt or be left behind

Adaptability

Adapt Change through us

challenges

Cultural changes in education

Stick together, challenge ourselves

HLC Reaccreditation and Academic Support

2027 HLC Reaccreditation

Community colleges have different challenges than 4 year

English and Math in the first year

HLC Reaffirmation in 2027-2028 school year

Navigating Enrollment Challenges

Challenges exist in our changing enrollment

Challenges in higher ed (generally)

Schedule balance of online and on-ground classes

Trending up because we were so low in enrollment

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Other

"Not allowing things to happen to us" -- we just paused grant-funded positions and a Pride PM position to be "proactive" so things are already happening to us.

Building programs and opportunities that are both an investment for the community and the students.

Importance of planning

Leaning In

Push for innovation in times of change

We're surprised by the Levy EVERY time

Resilience and Strategic Planning

2028 Levy campaign

Emphasizing resilience and inclusivity over the next four years

I think Dr. Baston's emphasis on resilience will be important over the next 4 years

June 2025 current strategic plan sunsets

Whats in next 5 years? Priorities changing

Seizing Opportunities and Building Bridges

Act now or be left behind later

Act now or get left behind

Adapt now or risk being left behind.Build bridges

Adapt or be left behind

Design own destiny.Unique opportunity

designing destiny

Now's the time!

Question 2

Reflecting on our Mission: What unique strengths or characteristics does Tri-C have that differentiate it from other local educational options that give our students a competitive advantage in getting a good paying job or getting their BA?

Summary

The Career and Transfer Centers provide comprehensive support to students, helping them align their academic plans with long-term career and transfer goals. They offer holistic transfer planning, strong community partnerships, multiple campus locations, and affordable tuition. Students can access free tutoring, flexible scheduling, practical education opportunities, internships, and career services. The centers emphasize student engagement, skillset development, and adapting programs to local economic needs. The focus is on ensuring students are well-prepared for their future careers and academic advancements through personalized and accessible support.

Responses

Advising and Scheduling Flexibility

Ability to meet with advisors both virtually and in person.

Flexibility

Flexibily in scheduling terms

Affordable and Flexible Education

Affordable options for all students

Affordable tuition

Flexible class schedules/terms

Low cost tuition

Low tuition costs

The affordability, the wide range of credit and non-credit programs, multiple campuses to ease transportation concerns, multiple modalities for courses (in-person, online, morning and evening) - we provide options for students at different stages of their academic and professional careers (CCP, Program60, students making career changes, etc.)

Brand Recognition and Value Proposition

Access

Brand

Name recognition

Not sure if I am doing this right

Price

quicker access to resources

Value proposition

We are well-known in the area. Branding.

Career Development Programs

Career Center that offers job shadow opportunities, summer internship program, bus tours to allow students to get on-site, hands-on experience. (all of the experiential learning opportunities (outside the SIP program are grant funded and could be removed based on our current government directives)

Health Career Programs (Nursing)

Internships/Exposure for students

Practical education leading to known job opportunities

Virtual tools like Career Coach to help students determine the best Career Path for them and Handshake that allow them to connect with employers/jobs/internships/events connected to their desired path.

Community Engagement and Partnerships

Community and employer partnerships

Community partnerships

Create new programs to match local economic needs

Leverage partnerships with established employers and universities

Relationship with community partners

Represent local community demographics

Strong connections with both external and internal stakeholders

Convenient Campus Locations

Close to home

Ease of access

Ease of access and multiple locations

Great customer service

Multiple campus locations - flexibility in options

multiple campuses

Multiple locations

Some state-of-the-art facilities

Customized Support and Adaptability

Articulation agreements

Individulized support

OUr ability to pivot based on enviornmental changes

Other

Administrators who are intentionally engaging in strategic planning to advance quality improvement initiatives.

Device like hotspots is offered to current students so they can continue to attend their online classes and complete their homework

Diverse student body

Excellent faculty & dedicated staff who truly care about student success

Many options for working adults

More in-person classes.

online offerings

Value/ low student loans

Vast offerings

workforce/non-credit options

Student Engagement and Support

Ability to meet students where they are in life

Strong out of classroom engagement

Student engagement activities for everyone

Student Success and Transfer Support

A transfer center designed entirely to help students move to a four-year school.

Center for Entrepreneurship

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Co-located Career and Transfer Centers on all campuses to ensure students receive support for their long-term career and transfer plans.

Connecting students to the Transfer Center early to ensure academic plans/majors align with long-term bachelor's degree goals.

Dedicated Career and Transfer Center teams who center student needs in all of their work.

Enrollment Center at Westshore that truly cares and makes connections to career/transfer/counselors to ensure they are on the right path.

Facilitating connections between students and four-year partners to build student confidence and comfort through events and external advising.

Holistic transfer planning to ensure four-year target schools fit both students' academic and personal needs.

I think our free services for all students can really help matriculate and be prepared for the future, i.e. Career Services, Counseling, etc.

Most high functioning, cutting edge, Transfer Center who works collaboratively with Career center to ensure that students are in the correct transfer programs to allow them to achieve their career goals.

Supportive Learning Environment

Having our own Foundation Office/Scholarships

Location, location, location...our campuses are conveniently located and cost is the lowest in the state.

Low cost tuition

Lowest tuition

small class sizes

Strong Educational Foundation

We offer free excellent tutoring to students. Our tutors are experts in their fields (not students)

Workforce Skill Development

Focus on skillset development

Increase medical training programs - Cleveland is a medical hub for the country

Programs built around local skill needs and recently arrived immigrants. Re-tool current programs to match local economic needs.

Workforce Programs

Workforce training opportunities

Question 3

Reflecting on our Mission: What skills, knowledge or competencies do you think are most critical for students entering today's job market, either immediately after leaving Tri-C or after further education?

Summary

To be successful in their careers, students need a blend of critical thinking, problem-solving, adaptability, and flexibility. They should develop strong communication and interpersonal skills, ethical decision-making, and information literacy. Understanding diversity, persistence, and a willingness to learn and grow are crucial, as are networking and organizational abilities. Technical skills, financial literacy, AI knowledge, and the ability to recognize misinformation are also important.

Employers value teamwork, independence, and the ability to work with diverse populations. Relevant industry-specific skills, job shadowing, and internships help narrow career interests and build practical experience.

Understanding the impact of social media on employability, self-advocacy, and maintaining a strong work ethic are also essential.

Overall, a combination of hard and soft skills tailored to individual career paths is necessary.

Responses

Adaptability and Growth Mindset

Adaptability

Adaptability and Flexibility

Exploring new ideas

Flexibility

Open to change/can't be stuck in your own ways

Persistence

See Natalie H. for more information

Understanding and tolerance of diversity

Willing to learn

Willingness to continue learning and growing

AI Awareness and Information Literacy

AI knowledge

Knowledge of resources available

Recognizing misinformation/ know fake news

Students need to understand AI and know the benefits and its limitations

Career Readiness and Skill Development

An understanding of how their social media presence impacts their employability.

prior work or internship experience, networking, interview prep, resume building, degree or certificate geared towards particular field of entry, soft skills

Relevant skills in their field - required internships

Skills they need to just be an overall successful employee

Social Capital

Students need to understand the steps needed to achieve their long-term career goals (certifications, bachelor's degree, graduate degree, professional degree, etc.)

Career Skills Development

Industry-specific skills that students gain through workforce programs

job shadowing to help narrowing in on their field of interest and what matches their skills and goals

On the job training

Communication Skills Enhancement

Ability to write in non threatening manner

Presentation skills

Verbal skills

Written skills

Financial Literacy and Planning

Financial Literacy

Financial Planning

understanding of US economy/world econcomy

Interpersonal Skills Development

Communication

Connections within field/networking

Interpersonal communication

Networking

Organizational Skills

Speaking. Share opinions/thoughts

Teamwork skills

Teamwork/Collaboration skills

Other

Ability to Network. It's not just what you know. It's what you know and who you know.

Ability to speak in person

CommunicationSkills

Depends on the field

financial competency

Hard skills like financial management

How to write a professional email

Independent work with little oversight

interpersonal skills

Knowledge of self and personal strengths

Research and Resource skills

Self-Advocacy

Show up in-person

Soft skills

Teamwork

Technologically savvy

Technology - Computer skills/AI

They need a strong mix of technical skills and transferable skills.

This would be tailored by their individual career. Overall though, employers want strong communication, ability to collaborate, and adaptability.

Time Management

Time management skills

Working with diverse populations

Professional Skills Development

Critical Thinking

Critical thinking ability

Critical thinking skills

ethical decision making

Holistic mindset

information literacy

Problem solving

understanding how the "real world" operates

Soft Skills Development

Communication / soft skills

Soft skills

Soft SKills - ability to communicate, etc.'

Work Ethic and Professionalism

Attendance & punctuality

Demonstrate initiative

Engage in their place of business

Look people in the eye

Not rely on instant results, rather hard work

perception vs reality of having a job

Right attitude

Strong work ethic

Working Independently

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Question 4

Reflecting on our Values: What institutional values might we need to nurture or develop further to meet the challenges ahead?

Summary

Tri-C is focused on community and alumni engagement, fundraising, employer partnerships, and acquisition of other institutions. Emphasizing teamwork and collaboration across campuses, the institution prioritizes student-focused academic excellence and holistic approaches to support every student.

Tri-C values compassion, respect, diversity, equity, and inclusion, and is committed to transparency, flexibility, and innovation.

Tri-C aims to provide accessible and affordable education, prepare students for future careers, and support professional development for staff.

The institution also seeks to maintain clear communication, advocate for workforce training, and ensure practical and forward-thinking practices.

Responses

Adaptability and Innovation
ability to continuously innovate
Adaptable
continuing to be accessible
Flexibility
Openness to change
Career Development
Career centered-what credential is needed and what is needed in our community
Flexible learning options
Skill development
Caring and Respectful Environment
Caring
caring for others
Compassion
compassion and respect
empathy
Respect everyone
Respect for the Individual person
Teamwork and collaboration with empathy and sympathy
Community Engagement and Collaboration
Acquisition of other institutions
Alumni engagement
Building Trust
Civil Discourse
Collaboration

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Community engagement

Employer Parternships

Fundraising

Government relationships

improving community engagement

K-12 partnerships

Opportunities to generate scholarship on our experiences and best practices to publish or present elsewhere.

Teamwork makes the dream work

Teamwork, being on the same page across campuses, supporting each other, willingness and openness to support

DEI Challenges and Solutions

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Diverse opinions

Diversity,Equity,Inclusion

DiversityEquityInclusion

Everchanging DEI challenges

Diversity and Inclusion

DEI

Diverse backgrounds

DiversityEquityInclusion

Employee Recognition and Development

Initiatives to retain and promote internal staff

Recognition of employees at lower levels of the organization

Training for mid-level managers

Future Planning

Clarity on degree future

Planning Ahead

preparing for the future

Innovative Thinking

Be a trailblazer and not complacent

forward thinking

Innovative thinking

Other

Adequate workforce training

advocacy/ lobbying of law makers

Clarity of needs/plan (what's the end goal before we start the plan?)

Class sizes/structures

Commitment and acknowledgement of the diverse student populations we serve

Communication

Culture of CLARITY

democratic

Keeping up with technology trends/changes

making procedures as accessible as possible - from applying to Tri-C, to accessing course materials and books, to connecting with campus resources and opportunities

Support all employees

Support of those working on the ground rather than higher administration

Valuing folks who interface directly with students through pay, increasing staff # instead of continuing to add top-heavy leadership

Professional Development

Staff development opportunities via funding for professional development

Support professional development

Workforce Training

Strategic Partnerships

Best transfer programs

Future partnerships with peer colleges

Opportunities to engage in best practices that are empirically demonstrated at other institutions.

Student Accessibility and Affordability

Access and Affordability

Accessibility

student accessibility to student facing offices appointment scheduling systems

Student-Centered Approach

academic excellence

Changing the idea of "continuation of high-school" perspective of community college

Continue student-focus

Continued commitment to every student, in every program, in every zip code

Courage to stand up for what Tri-C embodies in the face of opposition

Meeting each student where they are and building a plan for their needs and situation

Student Success

student-first and wholistic approach, serving the whole student, shape procedures and programs based on making the student experience streamlined, efficient, supportive, welcoming and uplifting

Student-focused in all that we do

Transparency and Flexibility

Availablility

Flexibility

practicality

Transparency

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Strategies to Thrive

What strategies should Tri-C consider to do more than meet the challenges ahead, but thrive?

Summary

The respondents discussed several initiatives to enhance educational offerings and improve student experience at a college. These include providing free tuition, increasing bachelor degree programs, offering more flexible course schedules, enhancing community engagement, improving the student experience from application to graduation, boosting campus traffic, developing soft skills, and focusing on career and transfer planning.

The college aims to align programs with local labor market needs, foster partnerships for internships and employment, advocate for philanthropic support, enhance online learning, and maintain its mission despite external challenges.

Responses

Advancing Online Education

Enhance Online Learning

Implement a robust online learning environment

Pick one software program. Are we ALL on teams? Webex? zoom?

Enhancing College Image and Engagement

Community engagement and alumni support

Continue to communication clearly and openly will the entire College community

Engage in opportunities to create and disseminate scholarship to broaden the reach and reputation of the institution.

Increase campus foot traffic

making student experience more streamlined from applying to enrolling all the way through graduation - so they know who to contact for which needs, how to access campus resources, embark on career after Tri-C, etc.

More collaboration between the same department/positions at different campuses

Rebranding / new marketing campaign to highlight what the college looks like now and what we offer ("Not your father's Tri-C")

Enhancing Soft Skill Development

Focus on soft skills

Improve retention stratagies

Opportunities for soft skill development

Provide more Staff development

Strengthen succession planning

Enhancing Student Support

Get rid of online learning options

Intentionality behind online learning. Take an actual stance and action, rather than masking online student support.

Providing support for the "extra" that might be costs students are prepared for

Expanding Bachelor Degree Opportunities

Additional Bachelor Degrees

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Free tuition

Increase bachelor degree offerings

More Bachelor programs

offering more evening and weekend courses for students working full-time or transitioning careers or are parents/caretakers with tight schedules

Opportunities for more Bachelor Degrees

Working on the importance of non-credit offerings

Fostering External Partnerships

Connect more with nearby private colleges

Direct admission opportunities to four-year partners.

More opportunities for student/employer networking

Other

Don't be passive in the face of political regimes

Given the current climate, a strong willngness to rethink how we've always done things

Marketing analysis

more industry specific credentials

Planning ahead/foresight! The best way to ensure the rest of your strategies succeed.

Remaine Mission Focused

Stand up for what Tri-C believes in and stands for, even in the face of opposition.

Strategic Departmental Support

Advocate for more Philanthropic dollars

Continue to align programs with local and regional labor market needs

Determine a way to still facilitate DEI initives in the face of current legislatoion.

Review staffing needs of the departments and commit to providing support to execute the initiatives on the horizon.

Student Career and Transfer Support

Be intentional about connecting students to the Career and Transfer Centers as early as possible to ensure student's have a comprehensive career or transfer plan.

Build programs directly related to local economic skill needs. Partnerships lead to student internships and employment after graduation.

Create an academic advising structure (as opposed to counselors).

Create block schedules for students based on their program of study.

Have one online scheduling system to allow students to create appointments with all student facing areas.