

Summary of Findings

Tri-C Campus Listening Sessions

(Feb 17 – Feb 20)

Summary for Staff, Faculty, and Students Across All Campuses

The listening sessions across staff, faculty, and students at Metro, Westshore, Eastern, and Western campuses reveal a collective understanding that Tri-C must adapt, innovate, and refocus on its mission in response to shifting workforce demands, technological advancements, and declining enrollment. Across all groups, there is strong support for expanding workforce-aligned programs, strengthening institutional transparency, and fostering a more engaged student experience.

There is an ongoing tension between administrative expansion and direct student and faculty support, with concerns that resources are being allocated inefficiently. Faculty and staff voiced a need for improvement in decision-making processes saying that they feel there is a disconnect from those working directly with students. Students, on the other hand, emphasize the need for clearer communication about available services, stronger career development pathways, and a richer, more engaging on-campus experience.

Despite these challenges, Tri-C's affordability, flexibility, and commitment to student success remain highly valued. All stakeholders agree that the college must maintain these strengths while investing in more relevant and accessible educational pathways, improving community and employer partnerships, and leveraging emerging technologies to prepare students for future careers.

Summaries for Each Stakeholder Across All Campuses

Faculty Perspective (All Campuses)

Faculty at Tri-C express concern about the shift away from prioritizing teaching in favor of administrative expansion. There is a shared belief that faculty governance and professional development must be strengthened to maintain educational excellence. Key concerns include:

- The need for greater faculty input in institutional decisions and concern over a growing divide between faculty and administration.
- Ensuring academic programs remain rigorous and workforce-relevant while maintaining the integrity of the community college mission.

- Increasing investment in professional development, particularly in AI, media literacy, and evolving workforce skills.
- Expanding tenure-track positions and reducing reliance on adjunct faculty to ensure instructional quality and faculty stability.
- Addressing public skepticism about higher education through clearer communication of the value and outcomes of a Tri-C education.

Staff Perspective (All Campuses)

Staff focus on institutional efficiency, student success, and the need for stronger operational strategies. There is a strong belief that Tri-C's bureaucratic structure hinders student engagement and support services. Common themes include:

- Streamlining administrative processes to make student services more effective, responsive, and personalized.
- Strengthening workforce partnerships and employer engagement to increase internships, apprenticeships, and job placement opportunities.
- Investing in professional development for frontline staff, ensuring stronger student advisement, career counseling, and technological competency.
- Improving transparency and internal communication so that staff feel more involved in institutional strategy and direction.
- Leveraging technology to enhance the student experience, including better integration of AI-driven support systems, career tracking tools, and data-informed decision-making.

Student Perspective (All Campuses)

Students are primarily focused on career readiness, affordability, and fostering a stronger sense of belonging at Tri-C. They recognize the importance of education in achieving their goals but want more direct connections between their coursework and employment opportunities. Key issues include:

- Expanding career services, internships, and networking opportunities to help students transition successfully into the workforce.
- Providing more in-person class options and engagement opportunities to create a more vibrant and interactive college experience.
- Strengthening communication about financial aid, academic support, and student services, ensuring all students are fully aware of the resources available to them.
- Enhancing mental health and well-being initiatives, ensuring that students have access to counseling, support groups, and resources to navigate personal challenges.

- Ensuring technology keeps up with student needs, including better online learning tools, digital literacy support, and AI-assisted career planning.

Unique Perspectives For Each Campus

Metro Campus

Faculty voice frustration over the shift away from direct classroom support and toward more administrative oversight. They advocate for stronger faculty governance, greater investment in faculty development, and increased financial support for professional training.

Staff and managers focus on enhancing student career pathways and reducing administrative inefficiencies. They advocate for more strategic business partnerships and stronger faculty-staff collaboration.

Students focus on ensuring the value of their education and making stronger connections to career pathways. They appreciate the availability of personalized student services but want more real-world application in their studies.

Westshore Campus

Faculty stress the need for better integration between credit and non-credit programs, as well as stronger connections between workforce education and traditional degree pathways. They express concerns about declining student ROI and call for clearer institutional messaging on career outcomes.

Staff and managers emphasize community engagement, fundraising, and student-centered program development. They stress the importance of better communication between the institution and the broader community.

Students enjoy the sense of community but want more extracurricular activities, athletics, and leadership opportunities. They emphasize the importance of in-person learning and clearer career pathways

Eastern Campus

Faculty focus on the growing skepticism surrounding higher education, emphasizing the importance of maintaining open enrollment and keeping Tri-C's programs accessible to all learners. They call for stronger faculty-student relationships and personalized academic mentoring.

Staff and managers focus on supporting non-traditional students, improving flexibility in course delivery, and enhancing lifelong learning opportunities. They see a need for more agility in institutional decision-making.

Students highlight affordability and accessibility as top priorities, with a strong appreciation for small class sizes and faculty engagement. They call for improved on-campus services, better food options, and more technology training.

Western Campus

Faculty highlight the challenge of balancing online and in-person education while maintaining student engagement. They express strong support for liberal arts education and emphasize the need for faculty-administration collaboration to sustain academic integrity.

Staff and managers stress mental health support, student-centered approaches, and operational efficiency. They call for more streamlined processes to improve student experiences and better collaboration across departments.

Students stress career preparation and job placement opportunities. While they appreciate Tri-C's affordability, they want more engagement from leadership, better advising services, and greater student participation in decision-making.