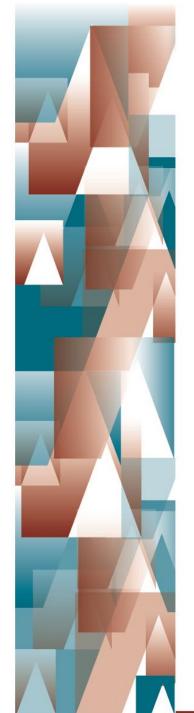


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**GASTON COLLEGE** 

2014-2018

**Strategic Visioning Plan** 

"Opportunities for Life"

February 2014

## GASTON COLLEGE STRATEGIC VISIONING PLAN

#### **OVERVIEW**

The "Strategic Visioning Process" follows a comprehensive methodology that is diagnostic in scope and is proactive and marketing oriented. The methodology is structured to assist community and technical colleges

in developing and implementing a pathway for growth and development that is consistent with changing local circumstances associated with economic, social, educational and other environmental influences and conditions. It is an integrated technique that applies review and data collection processes as a means of implementing a holistic review and evaluation thus generating a realistic and relevant course of action.

This "revalidation" process is grounded in acquiring significant amounts of data pertaining to internal (micro) and external (macro) environments. The data are then used to determine degrees of completion of major tenets of the college's prior plan, eliminate major goals no longer relevant or are fully completed, and identify and incorporate additional goals as verified by environmental conditions, and/or adjust/modify existing goals to accommodate alternate degrees of emphasis and resource allocations.

Some of the process's features include:

- It is a proactive and not reactive process
- It recognizes significant changes within the environments impacting the organization
- It assists the leadership and management in developing strategic thinking, strategic vision, and a
- strategic marketing orientation
- It involves as many employees, stakeholders and other community leadership as possible in the
- process
- It facilitates early buy-in to the planning and resource development process
- Promotes communication between groups within and outside of the organization
- It combines top down and bottom up planning
- It includes activities designed to teach the concepts of strategic planning and resource development
- It provides the organization an opportunity to assess and change the perceptions of the institutions.

The "Strategic Visioning Process" develops and maintains a strategic fit between the institution's goals, capabilities and its changing marketing opportunities. When an institution is market driven, it becomes more flexible in meeting the needs of its constituents. It must identify markets, develop and deliver products and services that meet their needs. Relationships are built between the institutions and its various constituents, which provide other business opportunities as well as the basis for successful resource development efforts.

Goals and outcomes of the "Strategic Visioning Process" include the following:

Unify the organization around its core mission and its vision of the future as well as strengthen its cohesiveness through the team-building activities that are infused throughout the process

Clarify the organization's role and its relationship with other entities as the organization sets its strategic directions toward the proactively selected and prioritized future initiatives and areas of concentration



- Strengthen the effectiveness of the organization and its staff as its energies and resources strategicall focus upon those actions necessary to achieve its community-based mission
- Empower the organization to exercise greater and extended leadership and ownership
- Identify and produce the strategies and work-programs needed for the organization.

### **PROCESS**

The "Strategic Visioning Process" was developed for implementation within a two-year college setting. The process is designed to create the needed internal and external review mechanisms by involving as many people from the institution and community as possible. The process is designed to develop an understanding and consensus for college advancement among the staff, faculty, boards, students, alumni, community, and business and industry leaders. The "revalidation" process applied three analysis techniques over a six month period of time, including:

### Part I. Organizational Analysis:

The purpose of the organizational analysis is to assess the past and present effectiveness and productivity of the Gaston College's growth strategies and devise a plan of action to revalidate the strategic goals of the 2008-2013 "Growing to Serve Plan." Individuals were identified who were to participate in an interview or forum. The initial identification was comprised of representatives from leading corporate entities, and individuals identified as influential and/or affluent. During the organizational analysis, senior administrative personnel were interviewed. All existing resource and planning documents were acquired and reviewed. A proposed project plan was developed for the remainder of the project that include tasks, projected schedules timelines, and a project organization and management plan.

Specific outcomes realized included:

- Selected and interviewed internal leadership (professionals engaged with relevant data sources and evaluative processes and external stakeholders)
- Reviewed and assessed the effectiveness and completion of the "Growing to Serve" Strategic Plan
- Assembled relevant data resource materials reflecting all major "institutional-level" initiatives, assessment techniques and outcomes
- Assembled relevant data resource materials reflecting all major college operational units programs and services
- Assessed completion of prior strategic plan and benchmarking processes and outcomes
- Confirmed corporate sector representation to be engaged in macro assessment and analysis via forums and summits
- Confirmed listing of community leadership and processes to be employed for engagement and interaction
- Confirmed proposed listing of college leadership (including Boards) to be engaged and the specific engagement techniques (interviews and survey)
- Confirmed other stakeholder groups and affinities to be engaged such as student populations
- Confirmed processes of data collection and engagement for each of the constituency groups identified in the "Macro Environmental Scanning Process"



During Part II, the focus was on the collection of pertinent data pertaining to Gaston College's micro (internal), macro (external), and market environments.

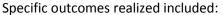
The leadership team reviewed a listing of potential constituency groups and individuals to be interviewed, survey techniques, and other data collection strategies that served as the basis for the study. Expectations and limitations of each question were developed and appropriate data sources and gathering methods were acquired. The information compiled during the macro, micro and institutional needs assessment was used to glean major changes and events that would have a bearing on the college's strategic directions. Regional (when relevant) and local trends, which impact the institution, were identified from the information gathered.

Specific outcomes realized included:

- · Reviewed and analyzed bodies of internal data depicting trends
- Identified and accessed initial sources of external data sources
- Conducted of internal interviews, forums, summits and survey
- Completed community engagements including: 2 community based summits; 6 corporate forums and 1 student summit, interviews with select community leadership; surveys with Foundation Board members; survey of students
- Completed review and analysis of all surveys and interview responses
- Discerned core trends as realized via existing data sources and compared with results of data collection techniques
- Conducted process to develop strategic goals discernment, validation and confirmation
- Finalized institutional needs assessment—strategic needs analysis
- Used implications of trends on the community to validate college's strategic needs analysis
- Confirmed core trends as witnessed via data collections and engagements (interviews, forums/summits and surveys)
- Reviewed results of interviews and validate core trends, college priorities and major initiatives
- Reviewed draft list of trends (with rationale) and emerging issues and make recommendations
- Revised list of trends (with rationale) to project manager, scan team chairs, president, and president's leadership team
- Completed trend analysis
- Completed strategic goals analysis.

### Part III. Strategic Plan Development:

Part III includes the revalidation of the institution's strategic plan based on the information received and during the situational analysis. The institution's strategic plan prioritizes the major directions of the college as communicated via "Strategic Goals." Each goal is verified and supported by the analyses processes and aggregated data collected in the "Situational Review and Analysis." The impact of the values, judgment, and intuition of the persons representing the college and community sectors is taken into consideration during the development of all the phases. Gaston College's educational responsibilitie to the community, corporate obligations, and major events within the institution's environments are analyzed and provided within the planning process. The vision and mission of the institution were validated to confirm the consistency of the strategic goals of the institution.

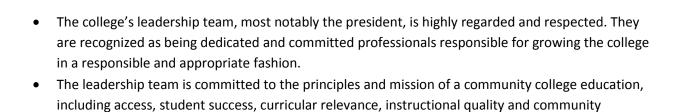


- Developed Gaston College's "Opportunities for Life" Strategic Plan
- Developed Gaston College's "Macro Analysis and Summary"
- Developed Gaston College's "Corporate Workforce Forum Report"
- Developed Gaston College's "Community Leadership Aggregate Report"
- Developed Gaston College's "Foundation Board Aggregate Report"
- Developed Gaston College's "Faculty and Staff Aggregate Report"
- Developed Gaston College's "Internal Forum Summary"
- Developed Gaston College's "Internal Team Summary"
- Developed Gaston College's "Student Survey Aggregate Report"
- Developed Gaston College's "Institutional Advancement Review Report."

### **HIGHLIGHTS AND OBSERVATIONS**

The Strategic Visioning Process generated a significant amount of data as a means of verifying the college's existing goals and initiatives as well as justifying the inclusion of a series of modified and new directions. As observed from the analysis phases, consistencies in trends and internal and external environmental conditions resulted in a number of observations. Some of these observations include the following that will have influences and implications for the implementation of the "Opportunities for Life" Strategic Plan:

- The population base for Gaston College's two-county "service district" will grow at a higher rate during the next five years than the same preceding timeframe.
- Poverty rates for the two-county region are significant and income levels are not projected to increase significantly.
- Within the service district, there is a substantial degree of disparity between ethic groups with regard to income and economic status.
- Traditional manufacturing entities represent a major proportion of the corporate representation. There is limited diversification within the manufacturing arena.
- Much debate centers upon the future role and representation of the textile sector. Two opposing
  view points expressed by community stakeholders are evident, including the belief that the textile
  industry will maintain a strong presence in the district while others contend that it will continue to
  experience a diminishing representation.
- Projected job growth in the area will be concentrated in the health care sector.
- There is a strong representation of a corporate community, however, there are limitations in terms of its diversification.
- Levels of educational attainment are slightly below the State averages.
- The corporate community, in general, is concerned about the future availability of qualified workers. Areas of education and training include soft skills, interpersonal communications (customer service), work ethics, and overall job readiness.
- The area maintains a significant quality of life for residents.
- Community leader regard the college as a tremendous asset that supports potential corporate relocation and quality of life. The mission is comprehensive and reflects the needs of the service district.



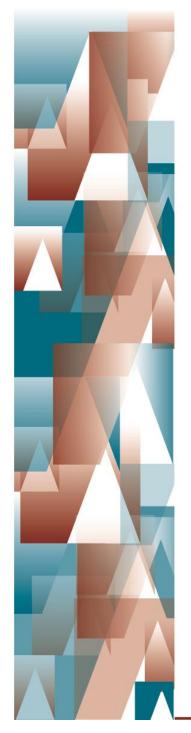
- The college's quality of instruction is revered as being excellent and supportive of student needs and diversities.
- The college maintains an extensive amount of accountability, research, and program review mechanisms to assess institutional effectiveness, financial allocations, and outcomes.

responsiveness.

- The college is recognized as being "student-centered." Some additional attention could be given to the service deliveries of the auxiliary services and a select number of Student Services functions.
- Recommendations for college enhancements centered upon continuous attention to technology infusions, partnerships with K-12 and 4-year colleges, and continued collaborations with area corporations.
- The role of the Foundation Board, in terms of private sector intervention, will be enhanced. Greater dependency on financial support from the private sector will occur.
- Some fundamental infrastructure development is required of the Foundation Board as a means of enhancing its potential role and impact.
- Students greatly appreciate the value of Gaston College, including its dedication to open access, its commitment to ensure student success and its student-focus and orientation.
- It is evident that students recognize the need for the college to enhance availability of course offerings. In addition, expressions were made to promote "customer service" training for some units within the Student Services area.



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GASTON COLLEGE
2014-2018 STRATEGIC PLAN

"Opportunities for Life"

## GASTON COLLEGE 2014-2018 STRATEGIC PLAN "Opportunities for Life"

### **MISSION STATEMENT:**

Gaston College is an open-door public community college, located in Gaston and Lincoln counties, that promotes student success and lifelong learning through high caliber, affordable, and comprehensive educational programs and services responding to economic and workforce development needs.

#### **VISION STATEMENT:**

Gaston College will be viewed as the premier post-secondary educational resource in the region, consistently recognized as an exceptional community college and known in the state and nation for successful and innovative programs.

#### **VALUES:**

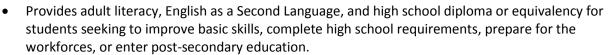
- Students
- Excellence
- Accessibility
- Employees
- Responsibility
- Ethical Behavior
- Public Trust
- Communities
- Cooperation and Partnerships
- Diversity
- Our College

#### MISSION STATEMENT

Gaston College is an open-door public community college, located in Gaston and Lincoln Counties, that promotes lifelong learning through high caliber, affordable, and comprehensive education programs and services responding to economic and workforce development needs.

### **ACTIVITIES IN SUPPORT OF THE MISSION**

- Provides comprehensive Associate in Applied Science (A.A.S.) degree programs designed primarily to prepare students to enter the workforce.
- Provides diploma and certificate programs consisting of a sequence of courses that frequently can be completed in one year or less by full-time students. These programs are intended for individuals seeking employment in a specific occupation.
- Provides Associate in Arts (A.A.), Associate in Science (A.S.), and Associate in Fine Arts (A.F.A.) degree programs primarily designed to prepare students to transfer to a four-year college or university.
- Provides developmental education to prepare students for entry into a degree, diploma, or certificate program.



- Provides continuing education programs for individual, personal, and professional development and for employee education and training to satisfy the skill development needs of business, industry, and public agencies.
- Assures quality in all educational programs by measuring performance on a set of wellestablished criteria and by identifying and analyzing program needs.
- Assures quality instruction by establishing effective, innovative, and professional teaching practices; by frequent evaluation of instructor effectiveness; and by updating methods, materials, technology, equipment, and facilities.
- Provides support services for all students, including services for students with disabilities and other special needs to support student success and completion of academic goals.
- Promotes collaborative relationships with school systems, colleges and universities, and with business and industry.
- Promotes positive relationships with the community and provides services that support economic, educational, and cultural efforts.
- Promotes access to educational programs through off-campus offerings and through distancelearning opportunities.

#### PHILOSOPHY:

Gaston College students, faculty and staff share a committed responsibility to nurture a mentoring, collaborative, and diverse culture of skilled lifelong learners who are empowered to succeed in a constantly changing world. Self-growth and empowerment are realized through many innovative processes, including an effective balance of assessment and evaluation. Empowered people set and achieve high standards of quality, create challenges for themselves and others, and support an active learner-centered environment offering real life educational experiences.

## **ETHICAL PRINCIPLES:**

- Integrity
- Competence
- Equality and Acceptance
- Honor and Trust
- Privacy



## Strategic Initiative I: Serve the Lifelong Learning Needs of a Diverse Community and Workforce

Goal 1: Enhance accessibility, availability, and delivery of educational programs that are reflective of student, workplace and community-based needs

Goal 2: Develop new and revise existing market-driven programs focusing on the skills students need for successful employment

Goal 3: Understand, support and celebrate the diversity of the internal and external college communities

## Strategic Initiative II: Provide Effective Student-centered Services

Goal 4: Enhance and support a student-centered learning environment that fosters persistence and completion at key momentum points

Goal 5: Continue implementation of a comprehensive enrollment management process

Goal 6: Increase and provide activities and services to promote student-oriented community engagements

## Strategic Initiative III: Promote Collaborative Partnerships in the Community

Goal 7: Enhance partnerships with other educational organizations to provide opportunities for students to achieve their goals

Goal 8: Strengthen partnerships with businesses, industries, and the community to enhance educational programs and economic and workforce development

## Strategic Initiative IV: Deliver Quality Educational Programs

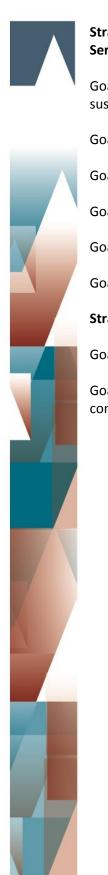
Goal 9: Ensure excellence in teaching and learning by providing opportunities for professional development

Goal 10: Comply with all standards of regulatory bodies that govern the quality of educational programs

Goal 11: Evaluate and support selected programs and coursework to meet or exceed State performance measures

Goal 12: Continue to assess instructional deliveries and course content to ensure "active and collaborative learning and academic challenge" per the "Community College Survey of Student Engagement Standard"

Goal 13: Enhance the quality of educational practices and curricular offerings through the development of data collection and analysis processes



## Strategic Initiative V: Provide Adequate Resources to Support Quality Educational Programs and Services

Goal 14: Secure and/or allocate the financial, facility, material, and personnel resources needed to sustain quality educational programs and services

Goal 15: Update and implement a facilities master plan

Goal 16: Develop strategies to ensure retention and advancement of quality staff and faculty

Goal 17: Review and update the safety and security plan to meet the changing needs

Goal 18: Foster innovation, including new systems and technologies, throughout the institution

Goal 19: Continue to support the unique statewide mission of the Textile Technology Center

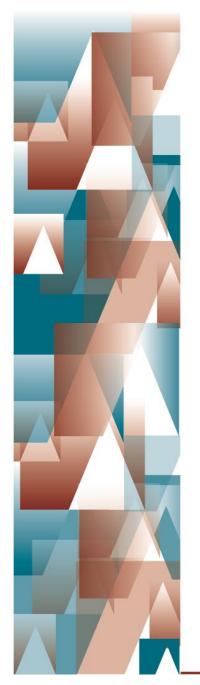
## **Strategic Initiative VI: Enhance Communication**

Goal 20: Continue the implementation and assessment of an integrated marketing strategy

Goal 21: Develop effective communication to encourage participation, interaction, and engagement from constituency groups, stakeholders and the community at-large



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STRATEGIC PLAN 2014-2018

"Opportunities for Life"

**Addendum A: Macro Assessment** 

## **ADDENDUM A: Strategic Plan: Macro Assessment**

## GASTON COLLEGE STRATEGIC PLAN: MACRO ASSESSMENT

SOURCE(S)	MACRO INFLUENCES FOR PRACTICE	GASTON COUNTY	LINCOLN COUNTY
4.0	OVERALL PORTH ATION DATA:		
1, 3	OVERALL POPULATION DATA:	000.000	70.005
	2008 Population/2010 Population	206,833	78,265
	2012 Population	208,049	79,313
	Projected 2017 Population	215,919	
	Projected Average Age (2017)	40	
1, 2, 3	SPECIFIC POPULATION DATA (2012):		
, ,	Persons under 18 years of age	23.5%	25.3%
	Persons over 65 years of age	14.2%	14.5%
	White population (State average: 71.9%)	80%	91.9%
	Hispanic population (State average: 8.7%)	6%	7.0%
	Black population (State average: 22.0%)	14%	5.9%
	Median Age	39	39
	Percent Over 40 Years of Age		60%
	Number of households	79,234	15,130
	Persons living below poverty level	17%	14.9%
	Median household income (State average: \$43,916)	\$43,220	\$41,081
	Projected 2017 Median Income		\$40,780
3, 4, 5, 12	GENERAL OCCUPATIONAL SECTOR CATEGORIES (2012):		
3, 4, 5, 12	Employed (other than self-employed)	84%	84%
	Government	11%	11%
	Self-employed	5%	5%
	Unemployment (State average: 9.1%)	11.4%	9.8%
	White	10.3%	9.4%
	Black	18.0%	23.3%
	Hispanic	17.4%	13.4%
4, 5,	SPECIFIC OCCUPATIONAL SECTORS TYPES (2011):		
	Production, transportation, and material moving	18.5%	20.9%
	Sales	18.0%	25.0%
	Service: commercial and retail	15.2%	13.8%
	Natural resources	10.8%	12.3%
	Production and related occupations	9.8%	
	Education	9.7%	8.0%
	Professional	7.3%	
	Healthcare	5.3%	4.3%
	Computer, engineering and science	3.8%	3.3%

4, 5,	MOST COMMON OCCUPATIONAL SECTORS (2011):		
	Manufacturing		32.0%
	Retail trade		14.0%
	Construction		11.0%
	Transportation and warehousing		8.0%
	Accommodations and food services		6.0%
	Health care and social assistance		4.0%
	Other services, except public administration		4.0%
5, 6, 7, 13, 14	OCCUPATIONAL SECTORS: FASTEST GROWING (2012)		
, , , ,	Ambulatory Health Care Services	3.15%	
	Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book and Music Stores	2.91%	
	Hospitals	2.69%	
	Administrative and Support Services	2.68%	
	Misc. Store Retailers	2.62%	
	Social Assistance	2.59%	
	Support Activities for Mining	2.48%	
	Securities, Commodity Contracts and Other Investments	2.47%	
	Accommodations	2.46%	
	Heavy and Civil Engineering	2.37%	
	Trout y and on an angular mag		
7, 8, 9, 12, 14, 15	ASSOCIATE DEGREE GROWING OCCUPATIONS (Hourly Wage):		
1,0,0,1=,11,10	Registered Nurses	\$24.14	
	Radiologic Technologists	\$21.67	\$26.50
	Dental Hygienists	\$28.39	\$33.31
	Computer Support Specialists	\$19.20	φοσ.σ τ
	Medical Records and Health Information Technicians	\$11.73	
	Medical and Clinical Laboratory Technicians	\$14.97	
	Paralegals	\$16.21	
	Respiratory Therapists	\$20.73	\$26.56
	Physical Therapist Assistants	\$19.41	\$25.54
	Diagnostic Medical Sonographers	\$26.77	\$31.35
	Veterinary Technologists	\$11.83	\$14.49
	Cardiovascular Technologists	\$19.49	\$24.53
	Industrial Engineering Technicians	\$20.76	ΨΞ 1.00
	Civil Engineering Technicians	\$18.18	
	Chemical Technicians	\$17.85	
6, 7, 8, 12, 15	ECONOMIC AND EMPLOYMENT INDICATORS:(2011)  Estimated house value	\$454.000	
		\$151,800	1 C11
	# of Establishments with Employees	4,104	1,644
	# of Establishments with 100 or more Employees	107	26
	# of Establishments with 50-100 Employees	163	35
	# of Establishments with 20-50 Employees	431	145
	Total Labor Force	99,000	48,000
	Percent Working in Manufacturing	17%	22%
	Percent Working in Accommodations and food Services	9%	9%
	Percent Working in Arts and Entertainment	1%	2%
	Percent Working in Construction	4%	8%
	Percent Working in Education	10%	10%
	Percent Working in Health Care	17%	10%
	Percent Working in Information and Financial Activities	1%	1%
	Percent Working in Mining Percent Working in Professional and Business Services	0% 10%	0% 8%
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	Percent Working in Retail	6%	6%
	Percent Working in Public Administration	14%	14%
	Percent Working in Transportation and Utilities	20%	20%
	Cost of living index (2012: Gastonia)	93.1	82.2
9, 11, 16	EDUCATIONAL DATA (2012):		
	Persons with high school degree or higher (State average: 84%)	80.70%	82.9%
	Total students enrolled in public education	33,000	
	Non-high school completers 25 years of age and above		16.0%
	Persons with Less Than High School Degree )State average: 15.3%)		18.9%
	Persons with High School Degree (State average: 27.3)		27.2%
	Persons with Less Than One Year of College (State average: 6.4%)		
	Persons with One or More Years of College (State average: 6.4%)		17.3%
	Persons with Associates Degree (State average: 8.7%)		8.1%
	Persons with Bachelors Degree or Higher (State average: 26.8%)	18%	19.3%
	Persons with Graduate Degree or Higher		5.7%
	Total college completion	1,705	•
	Total college enrolled	11,300	

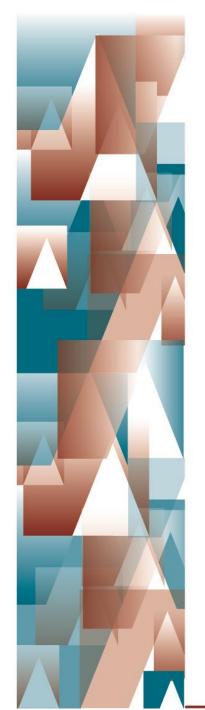
- 1-LMI Projections Program: (2013). "2004-2014 Job Growth and Replacement for Occupational and Industrial Employment."
- 2- United States City Facts. (2010). "Occupational Employment and Wages Survey: Income and Economy."
- 3-United States Department of Commerce. Census Bureau (2012).
- 4-North Carolina Commerce, Labor and Economic Analysis Division. (2013). "Recent Home Sales, Price Trends, and Home Value Evaluator."
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- 8-United States City Facts. (2012). "Lincoln County Income and Economy."
- 9-North Carolina Department of Education. (2012). "Education Statistics and Data."
- 10-Federal Reserve Bank. Rural Data Bank (2012). "Economic Research."
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- 12-Center for Economic Research: (2012). "Unemployment Rate in Gaston and Lincoln Counties."
- 13-The Gaston County Health Department, et al. (2013). "Gaston County 2012 Community Health Assessment Report."
- 14-A Profile of Socioeconomic Measures. (2012). "Selected Geographies: Gaston County North Carolina.
- 15-The North Carolina Commission on Workforce Development Commission. (2007). "State of the North

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16-McKay, Dawn. (2012). "Fastest growing Jobs for High School Graduates. High Growth Careers."



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**GASTON COLLEGE** 

STRATEGIC PLAN 2014-2018

"Opportunities for Life"

**Addendum B: Forum Summary** 

## GASTON COLLEGE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS COMMUNITY AND OCCUPATIONAL SECTOR FORUMS ADDENDUM B

## **FORUM OVERVIEW**

Six "community and occupational sector forums" were implemented which provided a methodology for Gaston College to have a significant interaction with local leaders and corporate representatives to help refine a vision for future. Areas of focus included educational, economic and community development and workforce development trends in the local region. Further, the groups provided a framework for how the college can partner with community organizations and business and industry to meet current and future needs including those of the labor force.

## **FORUM OBJECTIVES**

- Proactively enhance economic development of the region and position the college to drive workforce development discussions linked to community needs, workforce, and academic areas
- Identify new sources of revenue for the college
- Closely link the colleges mission and vision to emerging community needs
- Identify the industry sectors most important to the region's future success
- Define and align community and workforce needs with the college's economic development and workforce advancement strategies
- Focus on cultivating and building "active" CEO-level partnerships
- Build awareness of the college's current services and impact on the community and its business and industry
- Build advocacy for the college for future legislative funding
- Determine potential partnering areas
- Drive new or expanded joint initiatives between regional educational partners
- Gauge corporate culture and align with institutional priorities
- Create a sense of ownership and genuine engagement in the planning process

### FORUM METHODOLOGY

Recognized community leaders from the private and public sectors were invited to participate in a summit/forum to better define the local/regional needs, trends and conditions as well as potential partnering areas. With assistance from the Armistead Group, the college identified the organizations and individuals in the service area who were offered invitation to participate in the summit/forum.

During the summit/forums, participants were asked to respond to questions related to the current and future challenges in the region, status of specific industry sectors, specific workforce needs, projected changes, and ways in which the community and important industry sector firms could develop meaningful partnerships with the college. Additionally, participants were asked to candidly assess current services provided by the college and to recommend future services, programs, and initiatives that can positively impact regional growth and development.

Each summit had a range of participants amounting to 12-20 with a balanced cross-representation of community and business leaders. Each summit lasted approximately 2 hours and consisted of guided questions, responses, and interaction. Six forums were conducted in total.

### **FORUM #1: HEALTHCARE AND EDUCATION**

## What do you view as the region's top three healthcare-related workforce trends and/or conditions?

- Research indicates that recruitment of experienced and qualified nursing and physician clinical staff as challenges facing the healthcare industry over the next three years.
- Governmental regulations are also top operational challenges. In open discussion, participants voiced that meeting evaluation measures and participating in an increasingly complex and competitive environment are top concerns.
- Many of the participants indicated that meeting the demands of a growing aging population is one of the ways that they see the industry expanding over the next three years. In further discussion, a number of participants noted that the business model for the healthcare industry is evolving due to regulatory changes, advancements in care practices and technology and longer life expectancy.
- Participants voiced that a tight labor market, including the health-care industry, is constraining the economic prosperity of industry in the region.
- A number noted the rural communities face very significant challenges in recruitment and retention or qualified workers (the labor market is being drained by higher paying entities in metropolitan area, such as Charlotte).
- A number of participants noted that hindrances to effective employee recruitment are related to the need to focus on infrastructure improvement including information technology.
- It was also offered that the region's health-care system is important to maintaining the quality of life in the community and economic development—thereby attracting new populations and industry into the communities.
- Participants noted that the shifting demographics in the region, aging baby boomer generation, and
  the large increases in life expectancy over the last decade and those projected in the future, will
  significantly increase the demand for health-care services and put added pressure on the industry
  requiring a larger and more qualified labor pool.
- A number of participants added that the roles of health-care providers including hospitals, practitioners, nursing homes, retirement facilities, hospice, home health, and assisted living will evolve extensively particularly as funding sources change due to the federal government's policy mandates.



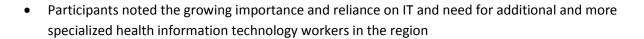
- Many forum attendees identified the lack of qualified applicants in the labor pool over the next three years as their top challenge.
- In open discussion, it was noted that the tight labor market for individuals with the appropriate skills has created a competitive environment that threatens employee loyalty and the organizations ability to maintain a competitive pay scale.
- A common response was that there were not enough nursing employee candidates (CNA, LPN, RN) currently and that a significant portion could potentially retire in the next three years.
- Participants also indicated that dealing with new federal regulations and forecasting and navigating
  the medical insurance, Medicaid and Medicare systems as a top challenge. Adding the
  unpredictability of the related reimbursement systems puts a substantial strain on their operations
  and planning. In addition, participants noted the looming conversion to electronic medical records
  systems is a concern.

## What are the most difficult challenges you face in hiring qualified workers?

- Participants see the potential of their businesses growing in the region over the next three years.
   Participants voice and agreed there will be an increased need for care due to the aging population in the region over the next three years and beyond.
- Many participants noted the importance of an organization achieving and maintaining a high quality care performance level. Participants stressed the importance of "soft skills" and commitment for customer service focused care. Participant noted the industry is increasingly competitive, scored on performance and marketing driven.
- A number of participants believe that expansion will take place within the scope of services they
  currently provide. Additionally, participants see home health services becoming more sophisticated
  as they begin serving more patients in the home with more complex healthcare needs and as funding
  models evolve.

## What new or emerging healthcare processes/technologies do you anticipate needing training for in the next three years?

- Participants stated that the rapid pace of technological change puts their organizations and employees under great stress--that the expense of keeping pace with technological innovations and adoption training are extensive.
- IT maintenance, as well as replacing and upgrading existing equipment, was cited as obstacles. Participants indicated that managing the new medical information electronic patient record system mandates is one of the top technological challenges.



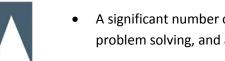
- Individuals observed that many employees, including a high number of older workers, lack basic proficiency in keyboarding and other computer applications.
- A significant number of participants voiced that they face budgetary and fiscal challenges due to purchasing technology and training.

## What are the top three occupational areas in which the healthcare industry is facing the most severe employee shortages?

- Participants stated that they do not, or only partially, anticipate having a large enough pool of qualified candidates from which to draw employees in the next three years.
- A number noted that technically skilled care providers, (PT, OT, Rad Tech) are increasingly in short supply.
- A majority of participants identified registered nurses as a top occupational area in which they
  expect to see the most severe shortages over the next three years.
- Participants also noted the potential growth in demand for patient care, home health assistants, geriatric care, and other health specialist workers—specifically, Licensed Practical Nurses, Certified Nursing Assistants, Dental Care, Occupational Therapy, Nutritionist Physical Therapy, Respiratory Therapy, and Case Managers.
- Interviewees suggested that the "age wave" of retiring workers has already begun in full force. A
  number of individuals noted that shortages are requiring the industry to redesign job functions and
  look to those that are technically skilled in more than one service area, which would be provided
  operational flexibility.
- Participants indicated: concerns regarding competition for employees within the industry and with competitors from outside the region—particularly the Charlotte community which generally offers higher salaries.

## What do you perceive to be the three most important soft skill sets that healthcare workers are missing?

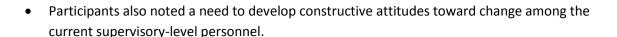
- Participants responded that poor work ethic and lack of professionalism and caring are weaknesses seen in current employees.
- Professionals added the need to develop appropriate customer service skills in all types of
  employees as significant challenge. Participants suggested that an emphasis on customer services
  should be integrated into all healthcare related educational programs. These participants indicated
  that poor customer service impacts client retention, satisfaction ratings, and ultimately the



- A significant number of participants also indicated improving workplace professionalism, problem solving, and advanced technical skills as important improvement areas.
- Participants identified a lack of leadership and motivational skills, as well as not acting as a team player as weaknesses in-patient care and non-patient care employees.
- A number of participants indicated that the lack of skills in critical thinking, problem solving and decision-making are the greatest weaknesses in their nursing employees.
- A majority of participants identified written, oral, and listening communication skills as areas for immediate improvement to assist allied health employees become more effective within their working environment.
- The lack of an understanding of the importance of thorough documentation was cited by participants as a crucial weakness in their new nursing and allied health technician employees. General discussion emphasized the point that this weakness is costly to the business as accurate documentation is necessary for insurance and government reimbursements.
- In further dialogue, participants noted that the challenges they face with their patient care and technicians are becoming increasingly complex as the industry becomes progressively more complex.
- Participants also felt that employees needed a more thorough understanding of the industry in general and an orientation to the core business model for this sector of the health-care industry.
- Overall, participants responded that there is a need for more training at all phases of the health-care continuum and specifically a need for more hands-on training in controlled environments.

## What are the three most important perceived skills for supervisory personnel required in the next three years?

- Participants indicated that they do not or only somewhat anticipate having a large enough pool of qualified supervisory candidates from which to draw employees in the next 3 years.
- The professionals noted that the majority of supervisory level employees have historically been promoted from within the organization. A few participants voiced that the practice of promotion from within has become increasingly difficult due to a limited number of truly qualified applicants.



- A few participants mentioned a need for current supervisors to understand the core business model, to think critically and to be able to analyze data.
- A number of participants feel their supervisors need a better balance of hard skills (technical) and soft skills, particularly "people skills" to be more effective.
- Participants believe their supervisors can benefit from training in team building, coaching, conflict resolution, communication, customer services and financial skills.

## What can employers and educational providers do cooperatively to enhance the qualified local workforce environment?

- The group stressed that it is important for the college and the health-care community to collaborate in order to address the nursing (CNA, LPN, RN) workforce shortages in the healthcare industry.
- Participants noted a need to partners with the college as they anticipate that increased specialization of allied health technician employees will continue and current workforce shortages will grow.
- Case management certification and training was cited as an area for industry and college collaboration.
- Representatives noted the potential of partnering related to IT support training, health-care
  information technology and further development of certification or continued education
  programs.
- Participants indicated that while most supervisory and customer service training has
  occurred within their organization, it comes with a great expense—as such, it could be
  beneficial to investigate partnering with the college.

## FORUM #2: COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER FORUM

## What are the region's top three economic development strengths and challenges over the next three years?

- Thirty-one percent of Lincoln County residents live below the poverty level.
- The labor force will dictate the types of industries that come to our region. We need hitechnology skilled workers
- A lack of a diversified industrial base
- An under-prepared workforce
- An outward migration of the region's labor pool talent
- Manufacturing industry cyclical changes and challenges—we need to attract high tech industries that are high paying



- Limited creative economic development strategies and support
- Increased illegal drug dependency
- Retention of qualified young workforce
- Age wave or retirements
- Access to capital for small employers
- Limited labor pool with effective interpersonal, communication and work ethic skills and attributes
- · Significant drug abuse levels impacting employability

## What are the region's top three quality of life strengths and challenges?

- Our infrastructure is excellent...roads, water, sewer, and the proximity to Charlotte
- Very safe place to raise a family
- Recreational facilities, low crime rate, and neighborhood schools are a positive.
- Natural beauty in the area, excellent healthcare facilities, and a social environment
- Great opportunities for employment
- There is a slow come back of the housing market
- We are seeing an infusion of minority populations coming to the region
- Proximity to large metro city
- The College offers a tremendous appeal to individuals and industries wanting to relocate here

## What are the top three workforce development strengths and challenges facing the region over the next three years?

- Industry base diversification
- Gaps in skill levels at supervisory and technician levels
- The workforce is available but not at the higher levels
- The higher level jobs are not as plentiful—more education is needed
- Limited student enrollments in certain programs—inability to supply adequate workforce numbers
- The workforce has too many gaps...to many uneducated or undereducated
- Access to capital for small employers
- Manufacturing industry changes and challenges--stigma
- Limited state funding to grow companies
- Infrastructure investment
- Keeping pace with changes in technology
- Increased need for certification or other credentials
- Limited support of small business
- Lack of opportunities for employment after graduation
- Lack of educational attainment
- Shortages of technically skilled workers
- Poor work-ethic of young workers



- More jobs are requiring higher skill levels and technical education
- Drug test barriers for many employee applicants
- Intergenerational workforce considerations
- Increase need to provide training of new employees
- Young workers leaving the region
- The perception that manufacturing is gone and what is left is not a good place in which to work
- There are less manufacturing openings due to changes in technology and production
- We have a motivated and intelligent workforce that is looking for something to do
- Longer new employee orientation requirements
- Families require two income households
- The global competitiveness is a hindrance to Gaston County
- Perception of lack of available jobs for recent graduates
- Perception of lack of career advancement opportunities
- Work ethic; professionalism
- Communication skills, writing and listening

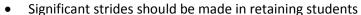
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## The top issues facing the region's educational system over the next three years?

- Funding (federal, state & local)
- Declining school age population
- Increasing a focus on vocational education
- Lack of college readiness of high school graduates
- Lack of effective advising in the public schools
- Testing in public schools and increased accountability of performance
- Know the workforce base and train them accordingly
- Pool of quality teachers and instructors and retaining them
- Career advisement and guidance
- Affordable access to higher education
- No career pipelines or pathways exist between the entities
- Availability of programs that are aligned to available jobs in region
- Circle and cycle of lack of educational attainment for some demographics areas and populations
- Alignment of curriculum to industry needs
- Distance education program availability and access
- Lack of a desire to improve operations

## How successful has the college been in meeting its mission and programs?

- The College should create a customer services class
- The College should pursue the image of innovation
- Gaston has a strong reputation throughout the region
- Gaston College is approachable at all levels
- Gaston has to work on its advising services



- The College should provide more emphasis on career education
- Soft skills training and education are critical in occupational programs
- Students should graduate with competency in interpersonal skills, ability to negotiate, and communication skills.
- College should incorporate writing, computers and reading across the curriculum.
- Affordability, cost; how to qualify for student aid grants
- Enhance students' motivation, attitude, commitment
- Lack of opportunities for employment after graduation Not prepared in reading and math skills
- College should ensure that self-motivation, soft skills (getting along, team, following directions), thinking; critical thinking; problem solving, decision making, basic skills--reading, math and writing, customer service skills, basic computer; MS Office
- Balancing work and school
- Trained/educated in wrong field, lack of career tracks
- Not choosing degree programs appropriate for the current and future market
- Lack of life skills (ex. budgeting, personal finance)
- Culture if education v. culture of dependency

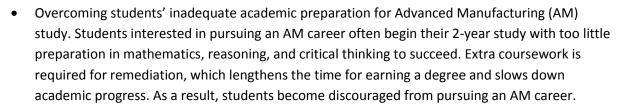
## What are the areas in which college, industry and community partnering can improve the region's chances for economic success?

- Co-ops and internships; more exposure to on-the-job training
- Guest lecturers (business)
- Tech/vocational schools; certificates, licenses rather than degrees
- Direct alignment with employer training needs; collaboration with industry
- Events/job fairs on-site; business expos
- Cooperation on tuition, scholarships
- More technology or certificate programs for business and industry
- Soft skills communicate; workplace skills
- Partnering with schools (public and private) for outreach into schools
- Education and workforce development; enhance the education and skill levels of the community
- Leadership-mentoring programs

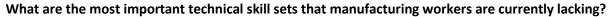
## **FORUM #3: MANUFACTURING**

### What are the area's top manufacturing workforce challenges?

Forum participants indicated that recruitment of qualified labor/line-level, skilled technicians, and supervisors can be a major challenge. A number of participants suggested that the roles, tasks, and skill-set requirements of employees are evolving as new advanced equipment and technology is adopted and efficiency practices ("Lean") are incorporated. Many of the participants indicated that meeting the challenge of replacing the retiring, aging, baby-boomer workforce as a major concern.



- Recruiting and retaining students in AM education. Outreach to aspiring students to pursue an
  AM career and then helping them overcome barriers along the way is a significant challenge.
  Transfer and articulation policies and practices are a frequently mentioned barriers to retention
  in AM education that, when combined with this economic turndown, where students are not
  taking a full course load, further lengthens time-to-degree and increases student attrition.
- Creating and sustaining effective partnerships between 2-year and 4-year institutions. Although
  individual 2-year and 4-year institutions have forged some effective AM education partnerships,
  these partnerships are not recognized as important on a broad scale. In particular, 4-year
  institutions need to have a greater appreciation for the AM education offered at Gaston College.
  Partnerships are needed to address such issues as curriculum and other program alignment
  issues, getting staff and faculty at both institutions on board with student needs and program
  requirements.
- Finding the funding resources to support and sustain AM education program improvements.
   There is a universal lack of time and resources to support the necessary AM education collaborations and program improvement initiatives. Furthermore, the current economy has had a major impact on these efforts.
- Aligning AM education with workforce demands and priorities. The academic and corporate
  agendas for AM education and careers are not always well aligned. As a result, institutions may
  spend precious resources building AM education programs and pathways that do not lead
  students to successful AM careers.
- Basic industrial engineering skills are lacking which requires significant training resources spent by the employer.
- There is a need to reduce annual voluntary turnover rate for manufacturing professionals who
  are in the first three years of practice and the creation and implementation of marketing and
  recruitment strategies for targeted manufacturing programs—as a means of identifying a
  dedicated and committed workforce.
- A continuing focus on the alignment of local manufacturing industry employee training needs with workforce development solutions that have provided high quality, cost effective training and course customization.
- Strategies should be employed that identify academically under-prepared students interested in manufacturing fields and which recruits them into a structured program that addresses remediation needs.
- There is an outward migration of skilled workers that are moving to the surrounding areas because of higher paying jobs (Charlotte).



- Participants indicated line/labor-level employees in the labor pool possess poor work ethics,
  limited mechanical aptitude, low commitment to consistent attitude of quality performance and
  lack an attention to detail. A number of participants voiced concerns with no-show no call and
  attendance problems. Additionally, participants identified basic math, English, communication, and
  basic business skill sets. Participants also voiced the need for line/labor-level employees to be able
  to function and respond in team environments.
- Participants noted that they face long and expensive orientation time in training new line/labor-level employees. A number of the organizations indicated that they have a formal pre-employment proficiency and skill assessment program in place that has proved to be an effective tool in screening potential employees. In a few of the cases, the college has partnered with organizations to design and deliver customized training and remediating training programs.

Rank Ordering of Technical Skills	Mean	Rank
Ensuring Quality Standards	9.6	1
Troubleshooting	8.6	2
Environmental health and Safety	8.5	3
Usage of Hand Tools	8.4	4
Creating/Implementing SOPS	8.2	5
Mechanical	7.2	6
Prioritizing Tasks	6.8	7
Shipping/Receiving Materials	6.5	8
Fabrication	6.3	9
Managing Inventory	6.2	10
Calibrating Measuring Instruments	6.1	11
Electrical	6.0	12
Jointing, Welding, & Assembly	6.0	13
Robotics	5.8	14
Packing Products	5.7	15
Electronics	4.8	16
Hydraulics	4.7	17

### What are the most important soft skill sets that manufacturing workers are lacking?

Participants indicated improving teamwork, workplace professionalism, problem solving, critical
thinking, and quality control as important improvement areas. Additionally, participants identified
written, oral, and listening communication skills as areas for improvement to assist employees in
becoming more effective in their jobs. A number of the forum participants indicated that they are
cross-training employees and assigning new roles and responsibilities to keep machines functioning
at top performance levels.



The inquiry found employers citing the same major skill gaps in the current workforce to
include: teamwork skills, math/computational skills, interpersonal and communication and
listening skills, quality assurance skills, work ethic and motivational skills and professional
appearances.

Ranking Ordering of Soft (Personal) Skills	Mean	Rank
Positive Attitude	9.8	1
Attendance Issues	9.6	2
Solid Character	9.1	3
Problem-solving Ability	9.1	4
Good Quality Focus	8.4	5
Good Communication Skills	8.3	6
Productivity Issues	7.6	7
Adequate Math Skills	7.5	8
Adequate Reading Skills	7.0	9
Adequate Computer Skills	6.5	10
Adequate Writing Skills	5.7	11
Prior Work Experience	5.4	12

## What emerging manufacturing processes/technologies are anticipated needing training for in the next 3 years?

- Participants also voiced increased use of technology and equipment, information technology, and communication systems in automating systems as challenges.
- Operational management, basic accounting, and performance systems were identified as
  particularly important given the organizations' increasingly complex production process,
  competitive pressures, and a desire to be fiscally successful. Participants suggested formal
  manufacturing training (internships) as an area for college and industry collaboration. A number
  suggested that the program should be flexible, directly aligned to manufacturing, and highly
  interactive.
- A number of participants voiced that the shortage of workforce is forcing them to review
  automation opportunities in all parts of the operation—automation is replacing the workforce
  needs but maintains high initial costs for the company. Participants voiced that the speed and cycle
  time of adoption of equipment has increased. To be competitive, organizations must have
  employees willing to be innovative and flexible.
- Participants also noted the slow growing economy's impact on profitability and the resulting difficulty of projecting demand and volume due to consolidation of customer base.
- Reorganizing and optimizing equipment performance was noted as an important operational strategy. To meet growing competitive challenges, a number of participants are adopting performance improvement techniques including "Lean" systems.

- Participants indicated that leveraging new robotic, programmers, systems and logistics, computer-assisted design, automation equipment, and IT systems (SAP) continue to be among the top challenges they face. A number of participants noted that the ability to keep lines operating optimally is reliant on qualified technicians who can troubleshoot and repair systems quickly. Some participants indicated a need for painting, coating and adhesive workers.
- Lean manufacturing was frequently cited in the context of requiring visualization, industrial engineering, quality analysis and processing skills and mechanical understanding.

## What manufacturing job areas are seen as the most severe in terms of employee shortage?

- Forum participants indicated a shortage of qualified technical skilled employees the region's
   (Gaston and Lincoln counties) top challenge including industrial maintenance, welders,
   troubleshooting, quality standards, knowledge of environment standards, and robotics.
   Participants also indicated growing recruitment competition and employee retention as top
   concerns with the area's employment climate—"job hopping."
- Many participants indicated that they have recently increased wages and benefits to attract
  engineer and technician employees. Participants voiced that they will likely have to expend
  resources to increase new employee orientation and training—and already conduct significant
  amounts of in-house training.
- A number of participants voiced that the manufacturing industry's image of layoffs, outsourcing, and dirty jobs is a deterrent to attracting the next generation of employees. A few participants noted that "parents are miss-informed" and K-12 advisors are "unaware" of career paths.
- Participants voiced that recruitment challenges for qualified (skilled and passing drug testing)
  entry-level line/labor employees have escalated. Furthermore, respondents indicated that they do
  not, or only somewhat, anticipate a large enough pool in the next three years. A few participants
  voiced s a strong concern that they are being forced to consider lowering their long-standing
  employment standards to capture employees.
- The majority of participants indicated that they do not, or only somewhat anticipate having a large enough pool of qualified technically skilled candidates from which to draw employees. Participants also indicated they do not anticipate having a large enough pool of qualified candidates from which to draw employees in the next three years. Participants suggested that the age wave of retiring technically skilled workers is now starting to hit.
- Participants indicated that industrial maintenance, welding, HVAC, electricians, electronics, robotics, and mechanic employees continue to be difficult to recruit. A number of participants suggested that recruiting technically skilled employees is getting increasingly competitive.
   Participants added that the incorrect perception of lack of career advancement opportunities has steered people away from the occupation. A number of participants suggested that they are competing with organizations in other regions of the state (Charlotte) for skilled technicians.
- A number of participants noted the need for the college and industry to partner to grow talented and skilled workers.

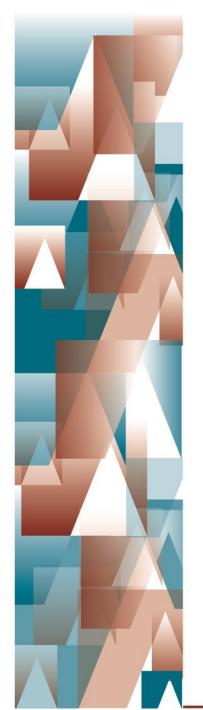


## What are the top areas identified for college and industry partnering (K-12 and Gaston College)

- To promote the industry to potential future employees, forum participants noted the importance of developing flexible internship schedules, strong mentoring programs, and teamteaching activities.
- A number of participants noted the value of the internship and co-op programs and their potential as a recruitment tool. While very favorable to internship and apprentice programs, the participants identified a number of top concerns in working with student interns and apprentices. These concerns include poor work ethics, lack of commitment and dedication to the company, unrealistic expectations of job function and role, lack of understanding of industrial workplace safety and behavior requirements, limited scheduling flexibility, and liability issues.
- Forum participants agreed on the need to continue new methods and non-traditional solutions, including the development of a K-12 and adult-learner career pathway efforts to build awareness of all opportunities in manufacturing (line/labor-level, technician, engineering).
   There is a need to "reach down" further into the K-12 setting to initiate orientation of occupational career fields.
- Participants indicated increasing the performance of incumbent line/operator workers as a
  focus area. The participants indicated that the levels of technical skills and the roles and
  responsibilities are evolving.
- Additionally, participants identified the need to formally document the technician occupational labor pool needs of the regional employers. The industry and college could then collaborate to build a plan to increase the number of skilled industrial technicians in the labor pool.
- Participants suggest a supervisory-level training or certificate program focused on the unique challenges of the manufacturing industry should be viewed as a primary area for partnering to improve the industry.
- It was recommended that the college should teach young people to work for a purpose and do not expect an entitlement.
- It was recommended that the college should continue to be very responsive and engaged with the corporate community.



# armistead



**GASTON COLLEGE** 

STRATEGIC PLAN 2014-2018

"Opportunities for Life"

**Addendum C: Community Leader Aggregate** 

## GASTON COLLEGE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS COMMUNITY INTERVIEWS (N=14) ADDENDUM C

### A. 1-6. GENERAL LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

## A.1. How would you describe the local economic development?

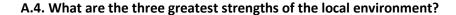
- Economies are good; convention center here now, to bring people in, school goes to Charlotte to host graduation. Conservative in spending tax money. 2-year bond issue passed
- Growing much slower than Mecklenburg, 1-30 year history of failure to lead; 2- poor past leadership; 3-skills gap between K-12-college. Related to Gaston College, connector to skills gap
- Weak compared to Mecklenburg to Cleveland (west)
- People tend to leave and not stay here, Economic development "does a good job"-no
  new industry that hires people. "Right to work state" culture. Transfer students do not
  return, kids stay there because they are not taught to work in industry here
- Declining, Textiles have left, not been replaced
- Cotton mill county-clustered in Piedmont area, an abundance of textile industry for area and state. Textile has moved off shore however, it has survived. Left over legacy of illiteracy. Gaston College has a vibrant GED program. Gaston College has been a blessing to high schools students
- Economic development is sustainable, but with new technology. Why new business instead of helping existing companies. General decline in "specialty machine business". Product based companies do better than contract services companies
- Growth at a much slower rate than surrounding counties, recession: Gaston College has a
  "blue collar" reputation. With that there were not very good schools due to laborers,
  uneducated. Mills owned land; Education is trying to do better but has a lot of ground to
  make up
- Educated skilled work force is a great need. Education period drives workforce
- Where is this commitment to upgrade workforce. What they needed in the past is not needed now. Gaston College-updates skills to meet needs. Don't become stagnate.
   College would be better served by being proactive with needs, not responsive to needs.
   Will see resurgence of manufacturing
- EDC- he's on it-does a great job in recruiting new industry. Japanese company here last week on campus (ball bearings)--very impressed with college
- Unemployment high-10/13%, need to get new companies but difference is not a lot of incentives to come here, Govt. "doing weird things"- cut backs
- Flat economy and not much sign of improvement



- Businesses need people who have hands on skills, always in short supply-business people,
   people here willing to work, college want to train
- Skills gap on math and reading on high school level. A lot of remedial training replicates training to teach math and basic reading.
- Excellent workforce
- Average. In 1994 he left business arena. Back then kids knew what to do first day.
- Primarily blue collar, Gaston College meeting need
- Manufacturing jobs are limited, Unemployment rate up 14%, over qualified people doing under level work
- Good workforce and very capable thanks to the college
- 10-11% unemployment, Governor has been accountable fiscally. He cut unemployment by 40%--did help rate. People don't have skills to do work. New equipment--\$50 M to upgrade; needs workers to be able to run it. Need to go to high school and attract students prior to leaving
- Diverse--Gaston College is one of the top community colleges in North Carolina. Need to be proactive in vocational training. "Cheerleading" about school
- Continue to suffer from low value for education. Difficult transition--between lifestyle change and education. Good schools across state, students need to be pushed harder
- Good work ethics, honorable people, have lost some of that due to lack of work
- Historically, textiles-skilled but uneducated people; have to go to Hispanics to get help.
   People want kids to go to 4-year. Difficult to get high school students to enroll
- Textiles driven in the past--manufacturing; not as skilled as other areas, more hands on

## A.3. How would you describe the local quality of life?

- Good, museums. United Way- involved in not much else-promoted Hickory
- Incredible mountains, lake, things to do-downtown, hiking trails, Belmont College, gardens, quiet place to live, good quality of life
- Good, lived here all life. Growing, nowhere to go but up
- Low cost of living
- Price benefit ratio, easy commute; smaller and closer community
- Close to Charlotte; museum; good place to raise kids, churches are active
- Lives here and feels community is great and people are great, people embrace new comers, good church support-accepted well
- Lived here all life- beautiful- mountains or beach--3-4 hr drive. Small city life, Charlotte close by for major stuff
- Climate is great both mountains/beach; cost of living high; good medical care; schools not that great



- 1-People (environment), 2-friendly; 2-relaxed, not like Charlotte (bedroom community); 3committed people
- People happy to be here; 2-religious ethic; 3-natural surroundings
- 1-Quality of workers, labor force is solid; 2-strong church going community; 3- location- close to Charlotte
- 1-Caring community; 2-philanthropy; 3- lots of diversity of people; 4-next door to Charlotte/airport
- 1-People accepting, hardworking; 2-climate, gardens, outdoor playground
- 1- Friendly atmosphere; 2-climate great (seasonal); 3-acceptance into community-southern culture
- 1-Quality of life; 2-close proximity to Charlotte airport; 3-people good work ethic in county, people want to work, work force is strong
- 1-Value; 2-educational system; 3-growing metro area, cardiologist chose Gastonia to be close to airport, value, education
- 1-Proximity to Charlotte airport, University, sports, culture; 2-overflow from Charlotte (Belmont); 3-climate of area, good people, educated by Gaston
- 1-Geography, state parks, Crowder's Mt.; 2-pretty county; 3- Botanical Gardens
- 1-Work ethic of community residents; 2- proximity to Charlotte- economy; 3-13 municipalities of counties that is a huge strength for area.
- 1-Support of education here; 2-good medical care here; 3-past-supported libraries and public schools-cut backs not now

## A.5. What are the three greatest challenges?

- 1-Education; 2-experience and training for future jobs; 3-keeping up with growth
- 1-Transportation; 2-unemployment; 3-lack of gov't planning
- 1-Appearance of Gaston when you enter; 2-ebetter education, better quality; 3- need to keep infrastructure up to date, transportation issue- Garden Parkway-needs to go through
- 1-Own worst enemy; 2-Garden Parkway; 3-short sightedness of county leaders
- 1-Garden Parkway; 2-excellent school system—primary school for attracting industry leaders; 3-community college system for manufacturing
- 1-Schools- education (K-12) is not given proper place in all areas. Need to pay teachers more, raise caliber; 2-too politically oriented, gets in the way; 3- there are jobs but people don't really want to work
- 1-Air quality is issue, hydroelectric plants add to pollution; 2-importance of education system; 3-availability of jobs, need to provide jobs for local people
- 1-Recruiting opportunities; 2-major negative rep from Charlotte area "across the river is low rent"; 3-leadership-good mayor before but not now



- 1-Infrastructure-highways; 2-county wide- water/sewer, making improvements to grow region for jobs and homes; 3-close to Charlotte but not easy access
- 1-Municipalities-individual focus as 1 county and that we all need to work together; 2-believing that education is important as a community
- 1-Economic development-jobs closed-get unemployment rate back down; 2-mathscores low (GED on campus); 3-no employment without GED

### A.6. What are the three greatest opportunities?

- 1-School system; 2-great community college; 3-leadership in community, always trying to bring in more business.
- 1-Building garden parkway; 2-opportunity to develop downtown-turn in to thriving area; 3-develop county wide action plan for future
- 1-Proximity to Charlotte, to get spillover for new industry and jobs; 2-econ development to grow industrial base, 3-replace textiles-used to be largest of textile companies than anywhere in state
- 1-Churches, synagogues; 2-people are friendly and accepting
- 1-Low cost housing
- 1-Opportunity to provide improvement in education; 2-opportunity to provide economic development, improvement that we are not exploring as much as we should; 3-more effective education team
- 1-Good place to raise a family; 2-good education system; 3-good healthcare
- 1-Gaston College is a "diamond in the rough"; 2-has land to grow; 3-desire to do what it takes to make it economically viable
- 1-Nice environment for management people; 2-we are a part of Charlotte; 3-lots of culture, sports, theaters, pro teams
- 1-More business to come in; 2-to improve quality of life thru education; 3- better local government
- 1-Got the bodies, not the training; 2-have people, want to work, need to be redirected for future; 3-facilities to increase manufacturing

#### B. 1-12. GENERAL IMPRESSION OF GASTON COLLEGE: MISSION

# B.1 General Impression of Gaston College. Average 10 Point Likert-type Scale: 8.81 Responses Count % Positive 11 78.5 Negative 0 0 Mixed 1 7.2

- Best asset for county, Gaston College has touched each family in Gaston county
- Most people consider it "Crown Jewel", highly respected

14

 People look at Gaston College and feel it's contributed a lot to people's education who could not afford it

14.3

100%

- Dr. Skinner's leadership, took textile school to make viable training for those that lost jobs
- Economic impact, quality of life
- Dr. Skinner

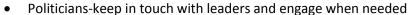
No Opinion

Total

• "Shining City on the Hill"

B.2. What is the overall reputation of Gaston College?		
Average 10 Point Likert-ty	pe Scale (Aggreg	gate): 8.95
Responses	Count	Average By Group
Community Leaders	11	9.0
Corporate Citizens	12	8.4
Politicians	11	8.5
Students	11	9.1

- Dr. Skinner is highly respected
- The industries are good corporate citizens
- Supportive and expansion of Gaston College is excellent; GED program is asset and successful
- Good education and has employees there
- Bragged on college, been supportive, all buildings have names; those that don't support
- Most involved and active
- Outstanding reputation
- Dr. Skinner is highly regarded by community; but not happy with quality of student caliber
- Everyone likes it and appreciates it, if they get support for college then they will get support for their position; Students realize how good it is



- Politicians supportive
- Capacity is full. Critical transportation; bus stopped 1 minute from Gaston College
- Very good and helpful; Students-retention rate low; depends on students
- Politicians support is good but not great; matter of money

B.3. Has the College excelled in achieving its Mission?		
Responses	Count	%
Yes	13	92.8
No	1	7.2
Total	14	100%

- Increasing-too much apathy from parents, poor income, raising kids; Enrollment increasing, 1
  of 10 highest community colleges in the state; Achieving but not excelling
- Working on it and they know it

B.4. Impression of the Gaston College: Instructional quality (Strengths/Challenges)		
Responses	Count	%
Positive	8	57.2
Negative	0	0
Mixed	1	7.2
No Opinion	5	35.6
Total	14	100%

- Overall strive to do well
- Doing incredible in some areas, lacking in certain skills
- Wife takes classes there for computer science
- Feels it's good
- Pat Skinner-good continuity
- Good-suffered a little due to the needs to economy and not hiring full time faculty,
   "permanent part-time" due to budget; like to hold off on part-time faculty change so will have little to no turn-over in staff
- All instructors have served well and continue to build on what exists
- Both went there and feel it is great
- As far as he knows
- For the most part it is good

B.5. Impression of the Gaston College: Quality of Academic (Transfer) Programs		
Responses	Count	%
Positive	8	57.2
Negative	0	0
Mixed	1	7.2
No Opinion	5	35.6
Total	14	100%

- Good, stats show well or better than 4-year level and good preparation
- Good fundraiser-he started program to 4-year
- Uncertain, unknown; staff reports are good; Low "limited number that go to a 4-year school"
- They benefitted from it
- Do well at 4-year colleges, better than average

B.6. Impression of the Gaston College: Quality of Occupational Programs		
Responses	Count	%
Positive	9	64.3
Negative	0	0
Mixed	2	14.3
No Opinion	3	21.4
Total	14	100%

- Businesses emphasize the need for huge quality to support their workforce
- Programs for skills are taught-good outcomes; lowest tuition in state-greatest success
- Has confidence in Board
- There is huge reliance on the occupational programs by the local business and industry
- Good reputation
- 10 programs with college
- Outstanding curricula and relevant to our needs
- Just don't get numbers for economy

B.7. Impression of the Gaston College: Quality of Workforce Development Programs		
Responses	Count	%
Positive	8	57.2
Negative	0	0
Mixed	2	14.3
No Opinion	4	28.5
Total	14	100%

- "Fair"
- The ones we have are good, funding is an issue, some grants help
- As far as he knows
- They started Career Readiness Program
- Feels Gaston College is doing well but has no benefit from it
- Excellent, no complaints, if there had been, he'd heard about it
- Hard time filling skills gap
- Dr. Greer's area-good job

B.8. Impression of the Gaston College: Student Success		
Responses	Count	%
Positive	8	57.2
Negative	0	0
Mixed	2	14.3
No Opinion	4	28.5
Total	14	100%

- No numbers seen so how do we know
- Some do well, some drop out
- As far as he knows
- Need to market and cheerlead success
- High success rate
- Need to market students success
- Excellent-knows of many that went on to 4-year
- Based on student input; learning can't be forced; continuing education is a must!

B.9. Impression of the Gaston College: Life-long Learning		
Responses	Count	%
Positive	10	71.4
Negative	1	7.2
Mixed	0	0
No Opinion	3	21.4
Total	14	100%

- Strong continuing education program, state increases for these programs, although there is a lack of advertising for these programs
- Heard of some that have benefitted from the programs
- Unfamiliar but hears that they are proud of courses
- Touched 1,000s of citizens in county
- Feels short term goals, not long term career position
- Good job for continuing education; dual enrollment as well. State used to pay for 65 and over courses

B.10. Impressions of the Gaston College: Affordable and Accessible Programs and Services		
Responses	Count	%
Positive	11	78.5
Negative	0	0
Mixed	0	0
No Opinion	3	21.5
Total	14	100%

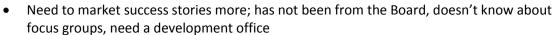
- Affordable-very good; Accessible-not very good because of transportation, bus stop 1 mile from campus
- Inching toward cost being too high due to state mandating; cost of books going up; Pell Grants-very poor; scholarships-not enough
- Affordable only, not access
- Not always responsibility of college but legislature could make more affordable
- Very affordable, much less than Virginia rates

B.11. Impression of Gaston College: Level of community responsiveness		
Responses	Count	%
Positive	10	71.4
Negative	0	0
Mixed	1	7.2
No Opinion	3	21.4
Total	14	100%

- Bond issue 2004, 54-56%, this campus-host voting, chamber etc.
- Dr. Skinner is outstanding
- Several successful campaigns in past but can't give now
- They need to get community involved
- Pass bonds for them. Get support from community
- They are trying to respond, ask for input-they get mixed signals but they are trying
- Both work together well to meet needs

### **B.12.** What can Gaston College do better?

- Look at future with regard to facilities-go all technology
- 1-Keep students; 2-Retention rate low due to friend and family stress; 3-Involvement declining; 4-Need more money-statewide and county
- Keep doing what they are doing. Keep community supporting it with \$\$, state can't keep it up; work on Governor
- Promote and market, get administration more involved and be more visible. Didn't know R and D existed; need to do Fund Development
- Proactive in working with school system and local businesses
- Leadership visibility can be enhanced. Pat is visible but who else is there. Community involvement but not visible
- Good Leadership, they have strived to do all they can



- Outreach to people who don't have confidence or vocabulary to go to college. Adults in need of retraining education/awareness programs-go through churches to access
- Continue outreach to young people who have mental skills to succeed and offer financial aid to get them involved. Create more scholarships
- Work with high school guidance counselors; connect to a 2-year program. Connect on all levels to stay in county. Need to offer options for 2-year and that it's not a failure to not go to a 4-year
- Strive to have total quality in all you do. Good 2-way communication, continually working at it

### C. 1-3. GENERAL IIMPRESSION OF GASTON COLLEGE: VISION

### C.1. In your mind, what is the highest priority of Gaston College over next three years?

- Technology upgrade; Manufacturing-highly skilled with technology
- 1-retention-start at high schools, development courses, costs- Pell won't pay; 2-college study skills courses; 3-TRIO-Title 3-select group, work with special group to solve problems so they stay and need to do this for all; 4-Advisors-planning long term for students
- Advanced technology, medical focus on healthcare
- More engaged with business community; staying relevant; meet needs; proactive not reactive
- Remain financially viable; Resources to provide the education to students
- Increase enrollment-has decreased this last year; larger classes; develop scholarships
- Match education with workforce based on needs; vocational department and have available
- Make productive citizens out of our weakest citizens
- Continue to partner with econ development efforts
- Connect with high schools, close skills gaps between what is needed for students and businesses. Continue to improve Gaston College through marketing internally and externally
- Meeting the needs of business and industry to fill positions

### C.2. In your mind, what should the College immediately change or improve?

- Awareness/Marketing/Deliver success
- Doing what we can do with funding
- Finish STEM building; Keep doing what Pat wants done, good people follow Pat
- Self promotion/Marketing
- Don't know much about what is going on, Board and trustees would answer better
- More communication in the community; advertise on TV and marketing
- Just did huge career day with high schools, continue to do 1-2 times per year; Monthly
  meeting between workforce development and Gaston College workforce team to talk
  about connecting

### C.3. What would you like to see the College do more of/less of with programs/services?

- Relationships between school/students and community mentor program; Boys and Girls Clubs-get them involved in going back
- More emphasis on enrollment and retention
- Go out to meet community to "learn the needs"; keep up with the demand
- Bring high school's in more; Ball teams-encourage them and have fun things for them to do on campus
- Try to get involved with high schools
- Community involvement/host events on campus; more opportunities in community
- Marketing/advertising
- More vocational training; "vocational high schools" have been recommended, he disagrees
  with this, but should fund the community colleges to do it; never has received a negative call
  about Gaston College; Dr. Skinner does a great job. Very visible
- More-market success more. Partner with Gazette and Charlotte Observer (media sources);
   Less-get out of fundraising "talk"/action talk about funding all the time
- More technology; technology committee that "meets", ours does not meet and no decisions are made

### D. 1-2. GENERAL IMPRESSIONS OF LEADERSHIP

D.1. Impression of the College's Administration		
Responses	Count	%
Positive	12	85.7
Negative	0	0
Mixed	0	0
No Opinion	2	14.3
Total	14	100%

- Dr. Skinner is a huge asset. She is the image of the college. Highly engaged with all aspects of the community
- Dr. Skinner and vice presidents are responsible, responsive and dedicated
- Dr. Skinner is highly engaged in the community; need to be more visible
- Pat but doesn't know others
- Excellent group of professionals
- Not familiar enough to answer
- Dr. Skinner is great and maintains a terrific professional image. She is what the college needs
- Overall leadership (Pat and group), maybe a little disconnect from "frontline"; balance of relating to small business leaders and connections to make sure they stay a "community college"--not total focus on advancement of higher education level. Balance chasing the funding
- Dr. Skinner does a great job working with community

D.2. Impression of the College's Faculty		
Responses	Count	%
Positive	9	64.3
Negative	0	0
Mixed	0	0
No Opinion	5	37.7
Total	14	100%

- Great, good leadership
- Good, interested in the students, dedicated, no tenure
- Doesn't know any of the faculty
- Knows few faculty
- Excellent
- Appear capable
- It is a quality place for learning
- Faculty are as good if not better than any in the State
- Feels it is good now, used to have professors that "aren't working" but that is not the case now
- Struggle keeping up with technology-maintain change and updates (staff development)
- Both full and part time (need to weed out ones that are not doing well)

### E. 1-3. RELATIONSHIP OF COLLEGE WITH COMMUNITY

### E.1. How can the College work closer with the community?

- Get kids involved and active in community to represent school and success
- Business and Industry Outreach-need one for the community; need better communication with community, people just don't know
- Do a good job, good Foundation Board, tied close to business
- Focus groups-on going basis with community leaders. Make it tangible and make it worthwhile-show results and obtain objectives, set goals-meet team
- College fund grants to work with local business
- Hosting clubs and arts use the facility
- Get out in the community
- Econ development, if school asks to create program they would do it, communicate with citizens regarding such need
- Reach out to high schools, chamber of commerce, outreach going well
- More involved you are with community organizations, the better off you are-be visible; faculty should be encouraged to be involved



- More hands on courses for jobs
- "Soft skills" need work
- Go to campuses to find need
- Excel spreadsheet, customize needs
- Current need being met, if anyone is addressed, they step up and meet the need
- Upgrade computer system; do poll surveys
- HVAC (personally); Advanced manufacturing, on right track with nursing program; work to improve reading skills which is overall constant struggle

### E.3. Opportunities for future workforce engagement?

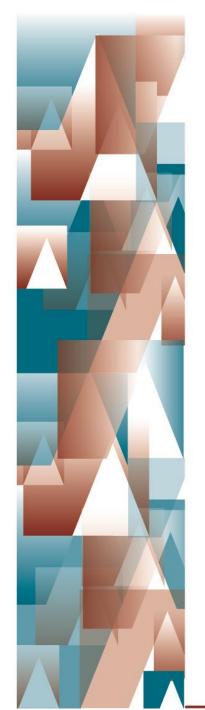
- Apprentice programs, quality employees aids in confidence in workforce
- Additional short courses, need in continuing education, hard to get them to come in; supervisory, quality courses not well attended
- They are doing it now through Chamber of Commerce
- Alignment; Partnerships; Develop relationships ongoing to keep up with needs of industries
- Keep building and working together for future
- Prior relationship was of no benefit to campaign
- Plans for new building-manufacturing center/workforce development center
- Do survey to see need and meet the demand
- Program that gives assistance in "How to run a business and be successful"
- Scholarships program to be promoted, school should market it

### F. OTHER COMMENTS, REACTIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

- Textile center-partially funded by the state, difficult to obtain funding-legislature-comes
  directly state to school, not through school. Hard to keep funded; School has own BP, does
  its own thing. Has had growth since 2005, having to keep salaries for people who are good
  to do the job-have to pay more to keep them.
- Wish college and success in continuing relationship; Marketing could be better
- Board of Trustees should be asked these questions
- Need medical school between Charlotte/Gaston
- Tell chancellors across the state, concentrate on quality not quantity; do the best for what we have
- Make sure they see that they reflect Gaston College to be positive image. Project the positives more
- Gaston College is doing good job for both counties.
- Gaston College works closely with Chamber to keep up with needs



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**GASTON COLLEGE** 

STRATEGIC PLAN 2014-2018

"Opportunities for Life"

**Addendum D: Foundation Board Aggregate** 

### GASTON COLLEGE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS FOUNDATION BOARD SURVEY (N=6) ADDENDUM D

### A.1-7 OVERALL GENERAL IMPRESSION OF GASTON COLLEGE

A.1 What is your overall impression of Gaston College?		
Responses	Count	%
Positive	6	100
Negative	0	0
Mixed	0	0
No Opinion	0	0
Total	6	100%

- Gaston College is a huge asset to this area. It keeps us progressive and offers much to our residents
- The college has come a long way in a short period of time. It fills an important niche

A.2 What is Gaston College's overall reputation in the community?		
Responses	Count	%
Positive	6	100
Negative	0	0
Mixed	0	0
No Opinion	0	0
Total	6	100%

• The reputation is outstanding

A.3 What is the impression of the college by the community leadership?		
Responses	Count	%
Positive	6	100
Negative	0	0
Mixed	0	0
No Opinion	0	0
Total	6	100%

A.4 What is the impression of the college by corporate leadership?		
Responses	Count	%
Positive	6	100
Negative	0	0
Mixed	0	0
No Opinion	0	0
Total	6	100%

• The local businesses and industry depend on the college a great deal. We have a strong relationship with many of the corporate players in this area. Much has been done.

A.5 What is the overall impression of the college's level of community responsiveness?		
Responses	Count	%
Positive	6	100
Negative	0	0
Mixed	0	0
No Opinion	0	0
Total	100	100%

• The college is actively engaged in the community. It has a strong presence.

### A.6 What can the college do better?

- Make sure curriculum matches industry/future industry needs
- Marketing
- More help for people who need transportation and/or child care
- Let more people know about college options

### A.7 What should be the highest priority of the college?

- Graduating students ready for the workplace
- Offer programs for community that will lead to jobs
- Preparing students for higher wage jobs
- Match education with jobs
- Open access-both academic and financial

### **B. 1-9 GENERAL IMPRESSIONS OF COLLEGE LEADERSHIP**

B.1 What is your overall impression of the college's administration:		
Responses	Count	%
Positive	6	100
Negative	0	0
Mixed	0	0
No Opinion	0	0
Total	6	100%

- Pat Skinner is a treasure
- The entire administrative team is excellent. They are dedicated to the college as well as to the community. We are lucky to have them

B.2 What is your overall impression of the Foundation Board of Directors:		
Responses	Count	%
Positive	5	83
Negative	0	0
Mixed	1	17
No Opinion	0	0
Total	6	100%

- Our board has some excellent membership. We do need to get focused and active
- It is comprised of an excellent group of local professionals

B.3 Is the Foundation Board comprised of influential and affluent members?			
Responses Count %			
Yes	5	83	
No	1	17	
Total	6	100%	

B.4 Does the college and Foundation Board effectively work together?		
Responses	Count	%
Yes	6	100
No	0	0
Total	6	100%

B.5 How effective are the Standing Committees of the Foundation?		
Responses	Count	%
Very Effective	5	83
Effective	1	17
Mixed	0	0
Not Effective	0	0
Total	6	100%

### B.6 What are some of the most effective programs?

- Not sure
- Fundraising for buildings
- Scholarships, building facilities

### **B.7 What additional opportunities are there to partner?**

- Not sure
- Scholarships, business partners

B.5 How effective are the Standing Committees of the Foundation?		
Responses	Count	%
Very Effective	5	83
Effective	1	17
Mixed	0	0
Not Effective	0	0
Total	6	100%

### B.6 What are some of the most effective programs?

- Not sure
- Fundraising for buildings
- Scholarships, building facilities

### B.7 What additional opportunities are there to partner?

- Not sure
- Scholarships, business partners

B.8 Does the Foundation Board have a fund-raising plan?		
Responses	Count	%
Yes	4	66
No	0	0
Don't Know	2	34
Total	6	100%

Not that I am aware of

### B.9 What should be the highest priority of the Foundation Board?

- Efficiently raise funds and distribute to college needs
- Fundraising to support the College's programs
- To raise funds for students scholarships and programs & facilities
- Support each other in making college great
- Continue to find funding not tied to State budget
- Encouraging financial support throughout the community
- We have some huge opportunities ahead with the construction of the advanced manufacturing center. We should be involved in the fund-raising for this project

### C. 1 GENERAL IMPRESSIONS OF STRATEGIC NEEDS

### C.1 What are the specific and most important needs of the college for the next 3 years?

- #1--Increase state funding
- #2--Advanced manufacturing
- #3—Healthcare
- #4--Support emergency services
- #5--Continuing education

### D. 1-9 OPINIONS REGARDING THE CONCEPT OF A FUND-RAISING INITIATIVE

### D.1 What are some general observation of college's institutional advancement program?

- Not familiar enough to rate
- I don't even understand the question!
- Just develop a plan
- Meeting citizens educational needs
- I am not well versed on this
- It has successfully cultivated large givers for many years

## D.2 What has been the role of the Development Office/Foundation? Average 10 Point Likert-type Scale: 7.6

- Raise and administer fundraising and charitable fund distributions
- Fundraising;
- Developing large gifts, applying for grants

### D.3 What has been the role of the annual gifts program? Average 10 Point Likert-type Scale: 6.4 (N=6)

- Emergency scholarship funds
- Student emergency aid; Reminding people of ways to make a difference in a persons' life
- Small but growing; it identifies and cultivates future givers

## D.4 What has been the role of the special events program? Average 10 Point Likert-type Scale: 5.6 (N=5)

- Involving public;
- To educate and cultivate potential givers

### D.5 What has been the role of the major gifts program? Average 10 Point Likert-type Scale: 7.8 (N=5)

- Building and upgrading physical structure on campus
- Help meet college growth needs;
- It has provided the lead gifts for most of our building projects

## D.6 What has been role of the planned gifts program? Average 10 Point Likert-type Scale: 5.5 (N=4)

- Gives people options
- Small

### D.7 What has been the role of the prospect research program? Average 10 Point Likert-type Scale: 7.5 (N=5)

- Good in identifying prospects;
- It is the basis of our major gift cultivator;

### D.8 Has the institutional advancement function maximized its opportunities? (N=4)

- No
- Yes (2); we can always do better
- Not sure

### D.9 What is the highest priority for the institutional advancement program?

- Jobs
- Not sure

#### E. 1-2 PERSONAL COMMITMENTS TO COLLEGE AND FOUNDATION

E.1 Do you currently hold a leadership role on the Foundation Board? Yes: 3; No: 3

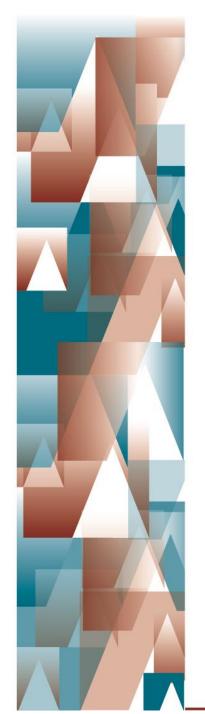
• Would consider one (3)

E.2 Do you currently support the Foundation financially?

Yes: 4; No: 2



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**GASTON COLLEGE** 

STRATEGIC PLAN 2014-2018

"Opportunities for Life"

**Addendum E: Faculty and Staff Aggregate** 

# GASTON COLLEGE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS FACULTY AND STAFF SURVEY ADDENDUM E

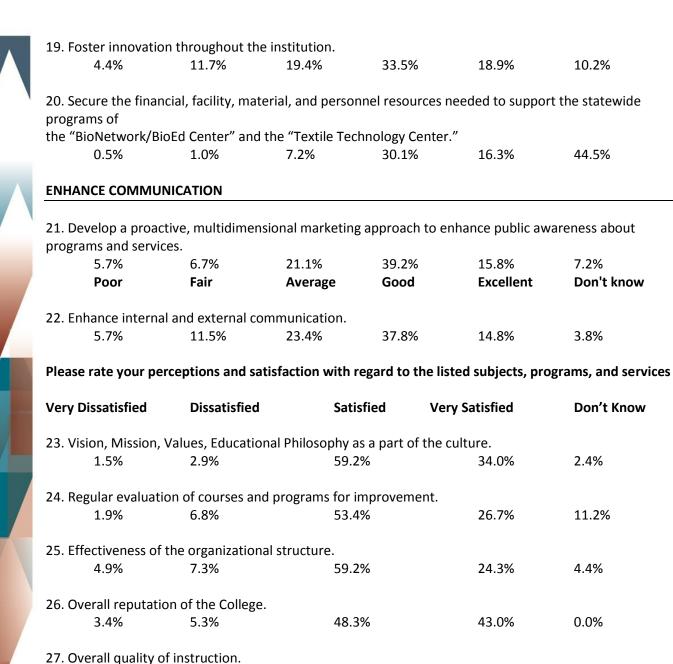
Total Respondents: 205-211 (Range) Faculty Employee: 45.5% Staff Employee 54.5% N=140

### A. SERVE THE LIFELONG LEARNING NEEDS OF A DIVERSE POPULATION AND WORKFORCE

Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent	Don't know		
1. Increase accessibility, availability, and delivery of educational programs to meet the diverse needs of our students, businesses, and industries.							
0.5%	1.9%	12.0%	36.5%	44.2%	2.4%		
2. Develop new progra	ms to meet the	changing emplo	vment needs of	our community.			
1.9%	3.8%	12.3%	44.5%	29.4%	4.3%		
3. Increase student en					•		
1.9%	6.2%	23.8%	39.5%	22.9%	3.3%		
4. Proactively increase	, understand, an	d celebrate the	diversity of our i	region, students	, faculty, and staff.		
3.8%	5.7%	17.2%	34.4%	31.6%	4.8%		
5. Promote the develo place and community. 5.2%  B. PROVIDE SEAMLESS	8.1%	21.4%	35.2%	unction successf	fully in the work		
D. PROVIDE SEAIVILESS	AND EFFECTIVE	E STUDENT FUCI	DSED SERVICES				
6. Ensure advising and	•						
10.1%	9.7%	21.3%	29.0%	21.3%	6.8%		
Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent	Don't know		
7. Ensure continuous r	eview of a comp	rehensive enrol	lment managem	ent plan.			
3.9%	3.9%	15.5%	30.0%	16.4%	27.5%		
8. Increase campus act	ivities and servi	ces to improve s	tudent life and c	ommunity conn	ections		
4.8%	4.8%	15.5%	39.1%	27.5%	34.9%		

### C. EXPAND PARTNERSHIPS

<u> </u>								
9. Increase partnerships with regional schools, other community colleges, and four-year institutions to provide opportunities for students to achieve their education goals.								
1.9%	5.7%	12.9%	39.0%	28.1%	12.4%			
10. Strengthen regional partnerships with businesses, industries, and the community to enhance								
educational progran	ns and econom	ic and workforce	development.					
1.4%	5.2%	10.5%	34.8%	30.0%	18.1%			
D. ENSURE QUALITY	/ EDUCATIONA	L PRACTICES						
11. Provide faculty a	and staff onnor	tunities for profes	sional develon	ment				
3.3%	6.6%	16.1%	32.2%	36.0%	3.3%			
12. Ensure excellence	ce in teaching a	nd learning.						
1.9%	4.3%	12.4%	40.5%	33.8%	5.2%			
13. Develop strategi	es to ensure qu	uality staff and fac	culty for the fut	ure.				
2.9%	4.8%	16.7%	39.2%	23.9%	7.7%			
14. Comply with all sat Gaston College.	standards of re	gulatory bodies th	nat govern the o	quality of education	onal programs			
1.4%	1.9%	5.3%	29.2%	49.8%	10.5%			
Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent	Don't know			
E. PROVIDE THE ESS	E. PROVIDE THE ESSENTIAL RESOURCES TO SUPPORT QUALITY EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS AND SERVICES							
15. Secure the finan educational needs, a				needed to sustain	support services,			
•	•	•	•	24.00/	0.50/			
3.3%	6.2%	18.0%	38.9%	21.8%	8.5%			
16. Develop and implement a facilities master plan to guide the construction and renovation of facilities to meet the changing program needs of the region's economy.								
1.9%	5.2%	8.5%	36.0%	20.9%	23.7%			
17. Strengthen the o	college's safety	and security plan	to meet chang	ing needs.				
1.4%	2.9%	13.3%	39.0%	33.3%	8.6%			
18. Upgrade technol support services.	logy to provide	quality academic	experiences ar	nd efficient admin	istrative and student			
3.3%	10.0%	12.4%	42.9%	25.2%	3.3%			



0.5%

2.4%

1.9%

1.0%

10.2%

5.3%

28. Response to new trends in the labor marker.

52.7%

47.1%

38.6%

29. The extent to which Business and Information Technology curricula reflect workplace needs.

10.2%

44.5%

7.2%

3.8%

2.4%

11.2%

4.4%

0.0%

6.3%

19.9%

30.9%

39.6%

20.4%

23.2%

Don't know

**Don't Know** 

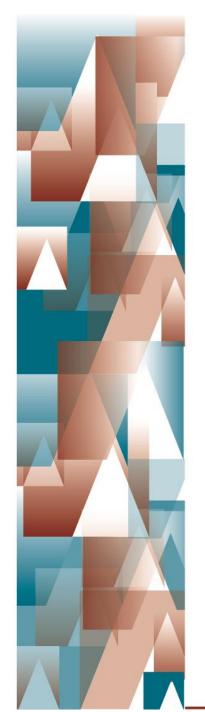
Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Don't Know
30. The extent to which	n Engineering and Indust	rial Technologies	s curricula reflect workpl	ace needs.
1.4%	4.3%	31.4%	17.4%	45.4%
31. The extent to which	n Health and Human Serv	vices Education o	curricula reflect workplac	ce needs.
0.5%	1.4%	33.8%	34.3%	30.0%
32. The extent to which	n Arts and Sciences curric	cula reflect work	place needs.	
1.0%	4.4%	43.7%	21.8%	29.1%
33. The encouragemen	t and support of innovat	ive methods of i	nstruction.	
0.0%	10.2%	47.3%	30.7%	11.7%
34. Adequacy of acade	mic standards.			
1.4%	5.3%	55.1%	29.5%	8.7%
35. Developmental Edu	ication meeting the need	ds of students.		
2.4%	6.3%	39.5%	30.7%	21.0%
_	neeting the needs of stu			
2.9%	6.8%	43.2%	28.2%	18.9%
37. Overall quality of ed				
0.5%	2.9%	50.7%	42.9%	2.9%
38. Student/faculty rati				
2.4%	4.4%	44.2%	37.4%	11.7%
Vam. Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Catiafiad	Vam. Catiafiad	Door Not Apply
Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Does Not Apply
39. Technology resource	oc for instruction			
	9.7%	47.8%	20 5%	10.6%
2.4%	9.770	47.0%	29.5%	10.0%
40 Overall adequacy of	of buildings, classrooms,	and lahs		
3.4%	7.3%	55.3%	30.6%	3.4%
J. <del>4</del> /0	7.570	33.370	30.070	3.470
41. Library resources at	nd student support and I	earning resource	<b>-</b> \$.	
1.0%	1.9%	42.2%	46.6%	8.3%
1.070	1.570	72.270	40.070	0.570
42. Printing and duplica	ating services			
1.9%	5.8%	45.1%	42.7%	4.4%
1.570	5.5/5	.3.170	.2.770	
43. Campus bookstores	meeting the needs of st	tudents.		
2.9%	3.9%	54.9%	31.6%	6.8%
<del>-</del>		- · -	<del></del>	
44. Student-centered c	ulture.			
3.4%	13.6%	46.6%	27.7%	8.7%
	- · <del>- · -</del>	=:=:=	· · · ·	

	45. Admissions process 4.9%	ses meeting the needs of 12.6%	f students. 47.1%	16.5%	18.9%
	46. Counseling and adv 5.4%	vising meeting the needs 16.1%	of students. 48.3%	15.1%	15.1%
	47. Effectiveness of stu 2.9%	udent success programs a 5.4%	and initiatives. 48.5%	27.9%	15.2%
\	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Don't Know
	48. Registration and Re	ecords meeting the need	ls of students.		
9	1.9%	8.7%	48.1%	21.8%	19.4%
	49. Financial Aid meeti	ing the needs of students	S.		
	2.4%	8.7%	44.9%	19.8%	24.2%
	50. Testing Center mee	eting the needs of studer	nts.		
۱	1.0%	0.5%	42.7%	37.4%	18.4%
	51. Food and vending	services meeting the nee	eds of students.		
	1.4%	15.5%	47.3%	21.3%	14.5%
	52. Facilities and space	e to study and interact m	eeting the needs	s of students.	
7	3.9%	17.6%	47.1%	24.5%	6.9%
	53. Public safety progr	ams (EMS, BLET, Fire) me	eeting the needs	of students.	
	0.5%	0.5%	33.3%	34.3%	31.4%
	54. Continuing educati	on meeting the needs of	f students.		
V	1.4%	1.9%	36.2%	24.6%	35.7%
/	55. Community educat	ion meeting the needs o	of students.		
	1.4%	2.4%	36.2%	21.3%	38.6%
	56. Corporate Education	on meeting the needs of	business and inc	lustry.	
	1.4%	1.4%	30.0%	20.3%	46.9%
	57. The Small Business	Center meeting the nee	ds of the comm	unity.	
	1.5%	0.0%	29.1%	21.8%	47.6%
	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Don't Know
/	58. Internal marketing 4.9%	and public relations med 15.0%	eting the needs of 42.2%	of the College. 19.9%	18.0%
	59. Institutional Effecti 1.9%	iveness meeting the need 5.3%	ds of the College 46.1%	20.9%	25.7%

60. The	e spirit of cooper 1.5%	ration within my departn 5.8%	nent. 32.0%	60.7%	0.0%
61. The	e spirit of cooper 1.4%	ration within my division 10.1%	34.8%	52.7%	1.0%
62. The	e clarity and suff 1.5%	iciency of communicatio 11.2%	ns within my de 36.4%	partment. 51.0%	0.0%
63. The	e encouragemen	t of professional develop	oment.		
C4 <b>T</b> I	2.9%	11.2%	40.3%	43.7%	1.9%
64. The	8.8%	ort given to professional of 15.6%	42.0%	22.9%	10.7%
65. The	e overall level of 4.4%	staffing. 15.0%	53.4%	25.7%	1.5%
66. The	e clarity and und 2.0%	erstanding of my job dut	ties and respons 39.7%		0.00/
Vory D	issatisfied	2.5%  Dissatisfied	Satisfied	55.9%	0.0%  Don't Know
VEIVE					
,	issatisfied	Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Don't know
		ance of the campuses an		52.4%	0.0%
67. The	e overall appears 1.5% equacy of parkin	ance of the campuses an 3.9% g.	d buildings. 42.2%	52.4%	0.0%
67. The	e overall appears 1.5% equacy of parkin 1.9%	ance of the campuses an 3.9% g. 13.0%	d buildings.		
67. The	e overall appears 1.5% equacy of parkin	ance of the campuses an 3.9% g. 13.0%	d buildings. 42.2%	52.4%	0.0%
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67. The 68. Add 69. The 70. Hou 71. Gro	e overall appears 1.5% equacy of parkin 1.9% e safety/security 1.0% usekeeping. 1.0% ounds.	ance of the campuses an 3.9%  g. 13.0%  of the campus. 2.9%	d buildings. 42.2% 52.7% 46.9% 38.0%	52.4% 32.4% 48.8% 59.0%	0.0% 0.0% 0.5% 0.0%



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**GASTON COLLEGE** 

STRATEGIC PLAN 2014-2018

"Opportunities for Life"

**Addendum F: Internal Forum Summary** 



#### **FORUM METHODOLOGY**

The Gaston College hosted two separate "Internal Forums" which included members of the President's Cabinet and a select number (3) of student representatives to provide a means to help further identify and prioritize a framework for how Gaston College can discern trends and conditions impacting the educational environment. Participants were asked to provide responses related to many aspects of Gaston College, but more specifically, general perceptions of the college as a whole, the curriculum and instructional and student support services units and immediate challenges to be resolved. Forum participants were asked a series of questions in a closed-response format followed by a group discussion.

This summary of findings is based on individual participant responses to direct questions, ensuing informal discussions, and conclusions drawn from the responses.

### PRESIDENT'S CABINET FORUM FINDINGS/(FREQUENCIES)

### What is your overall impression of the Gaston College?

- The college is excellent is meeting its mission. (17)
- Our faculty are dedicated, committed and student-centered employees. (10)
- The college has tremendous leadership. It is exemplary and known across the State. (10)
- This is a great place to be. The college is progressive and in tune with community needs. It is innovative and responsive to the needs of the community. We are always improving. (9)
- We provide huge economic development opportunities for our service district. (9)
- This college is committed to student success, achievement, and completion. (9)
- Our highest priority is to graduate a job ready graduate for the corporate community. It is demanding that of us. We are in tune with community and corporate needs. (7)
- Our mission is to teach the young people with a purpose and have hope for the future. Set specific goals and work toward them. (7)
- Instruction, curricula, and all support services are exemplary is what they do. The college is a comprehensive two-year institution that advances the local workforce and life-long learning needs of its citizenry. We are excellent in achieving this mission. (7)
- Our students graduate with useable and worthwhile educations. (4)
- Financial aid is now considered to be a "strength." Whereas in years past, it was a huge weakness. In the past it was mismanaged and hurt the college's reputation. Now it is a million times better and is truly student centered.
- The college has been very success in meeting its mission.
- The college is comprised of highly talented and dedicated professionals that are student-centered.



- The administration is very supportive and visionary.
- Our faculty is excellent and I would put them up to about any other college.
- Funding from the State is going to continue to be an issue. We are receiving less and less each year and the idea of having more to do with less is problematic.

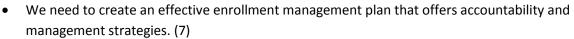
### What is your overall impression of the instructional quality?

- We have the best faculty in the region.
- Our faculty is student centered and dedicated professionals.
- The college uses a variety of instructional delivery systems that accommodate the unique and diverse needs of the students.
- Technology applications are extensive throughout the college.
- A lot of our resources are dedicated to ensuring a high quality of instruction.
- We should continue to provide ample professional development for our faculty in order to keep them current with course content and instructional delivery systems. They are the reason why we are here.
- The occupational curricula should continue to be assessed in terms of job relevance. The workplace is changing faster than we are. We should assess and "sunset" programs.
- The college is doing much with curricular alignment, such as advanced manufacturing.
- There may be some "disconnect" between the current skills sets of our graduates and the immediate future of the workplace demands.
- There is always something that we should be considering with 'Education to Go" courses, small business center, learning solutions center, adult life skills center, etc.
- Host a "teaching/learning conference" with area high school instructors.
- The trend is lessen credits for the Associates Degree. This will become problematic.

### What is your overall impression of the quality of "Student Services"?

- Our Achilles heel is the marketing. We need to change the perception that GC is not a "fall back school" and start attracting the best high school graduates. More advertising in the community is needed. Increase marketing to high school students. We need a realistic marketing plan that will make significant changes. (15)
- Enrollment management should focus on recruitment, retention, and completion. Student retention is a major problem. Increase enrollments immediately. Increase enrollments...it is our "life-line." Enrollment increases and retention (14)
- Counseling and advising functions should be enhanced. Immediately change/improve working with current students to focus on completion. Right now we get them in the door but need a plan to retain them and advance them towards completion. We need qualified "student success" counselors. Enhance advising efforts now. (12)

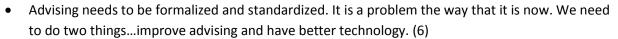




- Students get a great deal of support from the college.
- Some of the areas need to be strengthened such as advising and counseling.
- The college has secured a wide number of grants that are student success oriented.
- The college should be the connection between the parents and the high school counselors.
- We should define who our pipeline is and create a plan for targeting it. For instance, we could concentrate more heavily on displaced workers. Gaston High School has a 25% dropout rate and the enrollment is down by 8.6%. There is not much opportunity there.

### What should the college immediately change or improve?

- Funding for new initiatives is critical. Raising funds to complete the CAM project. Equipment is needed for this building. Alternative funding solutions are required. We need to find funding for a new student services building. New funding opportunities are mandatory. We have to think outside the box and become aggressive such that new opportunities open up and that we get our fair share. We should look to the private sector for support. After all, we support them. (19)
- Marketing has always been a mess until the past couple of years. Finally, the college started to address it and seek outside help. The PR and internal efforts continue to struggle and need to be fixed. This is a huge weakness at the college and hopefully it can be fixed. (17)
- We should integrate into the occupational programs more competencies associated with computer tech skills, writing and effective communications skills, and time management skills. (12)
- The college should have a complete infusion of new technologies. (10)
- We need to make the public more aware of the great things happening here. Our graduates excel
  at the four-year college. Our marketing program should become more sophisticated and proactive.
   Strategic marketing is required. (11)
- Additional support is required for faculty to enhance instruction. We need to keep our faculty
  current in instructional deliveries as well as content. Greater support and incentives for faculty are
  required. (8)
- Strategic planning is required due to the negative influences of the State and the funding issues.
   We need to become more efficient with our budgeting. I am doubtful that this strategic plan will amount to make change. We are generally asked for input, but little is ever done. Most people are asked to offer ideas but only superficially. Input is not really wanted. While this forum is good, we need a lot more time and thought. (8)
- Students out of high school are not prepared for college level work. In Gaston and Lincoln Counties, employers constantly complain that they cannot find qualified workers. Developmental education is going to be a high priority if it is not already. (7)
- Our career counseling services should help students to make good career choices leading to
  equitable employment. Greater student access to support services during off hours. Greater
  student communication throughout their lifecycle would promote student success. Graduate
  placement services are needed. Bring our students together with employers. (6)



- Our workforce is not educated enough. (6)
- We should be educating students for job that pay well. The college is an incentive for businesses and industries to relocate here. (5)
- Lifelong learning needs of our citizens will become even more important. We need to diversify our approach. (4)
- Continue with Achieving the Dream and Completion by Design. (2)
- We should teach our students ways to become motivated.
- We need to discern the needs of the community and then tailor the educational opportunities to meet those needs.
- Develop career ladders that promote advancement in education.
- We should provide access to all; however, tuition is limiting that ability.
- The Early College will take on more and more importance.
- We should address the needs of EWD/continuing education students and the needs of the corporate clients.
- The college has a responsibility to get our citizens off of the entitlement programs.
- Need increased technology/web infrastructure to provide online student support and learning resources (i.e.: holistic advising software, online graduation portfolios, online surveys, and orientation). On-going technology advancements should be planned.
- Establishing partnerships within the communities that we serve. Match the gap needed by corporations and the workforce. Who are GC's clients? Students? Corporations? Or, both?
- Because of our aging employees, we must develop an effective succession plan.
- We do many things and become spread too thin. Departments that focus on narrow core do better than departments that try to offer everything.
- Our strategic metrics are weak. Contrary to popular opinion, asset utilization is low. There is almost no instruction from noon to 5:30 PM. No on-line scheduling exists. Rooms are assigned on paper and no one can access the data.
- There are silos between departments and they are impediments to effective management. Internal communication is a problem.
- We should become more accountable to the taxpayers...open, accessible, affordable, efficient, and transparent.
- Why are we 15 miles from a community college that is over-crowded and needs more facilities?
   Why can't we offer more of what they need.
- Adjust the pay scale because of inflation
- We need to stay current with technology. It is expensive but we have no choice if our students are going to be able to get and keep jobs.
- We have a number of programs that have low enrollments. It seems like we are always looking to development new ones but not discontinuing the obsolete ones. This scenario can break the bank.

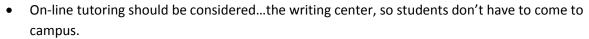
#### STUDENT FORUM FINDINGS

### What is your overall impression of the Gaston College?

- The faculty is outstanding. They are student-focused and are excellent in the classroom. The generally care about the needs and welfare of their students. The faculty is challenging and requires a significant amount of work. They are really preparing us for the workplace.
- We are outdated in terms of technology and facilities. The college needs a face-lift. Everything should be automated. A good example of this obsolete environment is the registration processes. Those processes should take no time for a student.
- We need more certificate programs focusing on short-term educational programs that are designed to train a student on a specific skill.
- Some of the programs have low enrollments due to dropouts. When this happens, it is troublesome for the other students who may need that class for their program area.
- Our branding and imaging is stuck in the 1980s. It does not need to be standard across the entire college.
- I fully believe that Gaston College is meeting its mission. The problem is going to be to continue to provide programs and services in the future. I hope that proactive planning is being conducted to ensure a quality education.
- We need to add more classes. Many classes do not make.
- There should also be better cooperation among all educational institutions. When I was a senior, I didn't know what my options were for college. If counselors in the high schools were better informed and taught about Gaston, it would save the student a lot of time and money.
- The cafeteria people are not student focused.
- Same thing exists with the bookstore employees. The prices of books are also getting out of control. The faculty requires many books that are not even used in the classroom. They forget that we have to pay for them and we are not made of money. If they are not to be used, then don't ask us to buy them. Also, the bookstore sells "bundles" which cost students more.
- The college is a blessing. I am glad that it is here otherwise I would not have the ability to go.
- CPCC is actually closer to my home, but I have decided to get my degree here.

### What is your overall impression of the instructional quality?

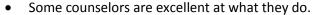
- Generally, the level of instructional quality is very good. There are exceptions on both sides.
- The faculty has great relations with students. They care and are dedicated. They take their time with students. They are terrific in pedagogy and content.
- All faculty should use "Blackboard" Many do not. Due dates should be mandatory.
- The on-line courses are excellent but they can be troublesome. It takes a discipline person to be successful in these courses. Greater attention should be given to student enrollment in outlines. It could promote dropouts.
- The technology in most classrooms needs to be updated.
- I am interested in getting a job immediately after my education. I do believe that the college is preparing me to be competitive in the marketplace.



- Some rules are too restrictive for the nontraditional student population.
- As with all colleges, there are some excellent faculty members and others that are just there.
   Generally, I have experienced only good ones. Students know which instructors to avoid.
- The learning center is fantastic. And so is the writing center.
- There should be greater levels of awareness of the academic support services, such as the learning centers. It is amazing how many students do not know of these services. The college needs to develop a "welcome package" for all students, which details every service and program available for student success.
- The orientation program is on-line which can be ineffective and it is not mandatory.
- We have had some students that know more about the subject area then the teacher...particularly
  in the computer sciences.
- There could be some disconnect between the workplace and what is being taught in the classroom. Teachers should be given ample time and budget to stay current within their discipline.
- Various instructional techniques and deliveries should be incorporated into the classroom.

### What is your overall impression of the quality of "Student Services"?

- Many students do not know their advisor and do not meet with them until after the first semester.
  The first semester is a critical time for a new student. Many factors come into play that will have an
  impact of their success or failure. An effective advising program is necessary to promote the level
  of student success and drop the amount of attrition.
- TRIO is great. It has made a huge difference. The whole school should be set-up like the TRIO program.
- Orientation is not effective.
- Students should have portfolios for their programs of study via on-line...perhaps thru the college's website. It just doesn't seem like the college is up-to-date in terms of the integration of technology into these services. We are behind the scenes.
- The college has a lot of student success programs. These programs do a great deal in terms of promoting student achievement and career goals.
- It appears that the student services unit has one way of doing things. They do not have any flexibility in their procedures. They should remember that the vast majority of the student body is diverse and nontraditional. Therefore, certain accommodations should be made to handle uniqueness's in student needs and abilities.
- The advising program (not TRIO) is not effective. Advisors are restrictive and unaccommodating.
   They are not supportive and can cost students a significant amount of time and money. I would say that one-half of all students are out of sequence due to ineffective advising and counseling.
- Some divisions have great checklists...others have nothing.
- Students are encumbered to find financial aid. There really is not much assistance by the Student Services Department to help.
- Financial aid assistance is not strong.



- How to take a placement test should be a focus of the support services unit...like Boot Camp, as a
  means to prep for the exam. The placement test is a major requirement and one that students
  and faculty should concentrate on.
- The administration (student services) should make it easier to transition into college. There should really be just one pathway that is standard and consistent where students know what to do and how to do it.
- We should never have to stand in a four-hour line. PERIOD.

### What should the college immediately change or improve?

- Many times, a lot of the required courses for various programs are offered during the summer when Pell is not available.
- We need more satellite offerings so students do not always have to come to the Gaston campus. Further, the number of on-line courses should be expanded.
- The hybrid classes are good.
- There should be a greater emphasis placed on improving the orientation processes as well as the registration processes.
- Flexibility in course requirements due to nontraditional student populations is needed. Some instructors are very inflexible.
- There should be consistency in instructor practices.
- Something should be done to lessen the amount of student dropouts. This is a significant problem that affects all students.
- Perhaps some focus should be on engaging students and create a sense of "community."
- The campus appearance is important. It should continue to be a place of pride and look collegian.
- Computer applications should be everywhere across the campus—in the classrooms and support programs. The campus needs to be known as a hi-tech, state-of-the-art college. It sends a message of credibility and quality to the community and employers.
- The college should provide professional development and training to adjunct faculty. They play a major role at the college and some of them are not trained to teach.
- The college should develop more short-term certificate programs that focus on skill sets that lead to immediate employment. Students could attend on a part-time basis and continue their education while working.
- We should promote the concept of a learning community.
- When specific attention is not given to the individual needs of students, then there is a greater tendency for them to discontinue their education. Many of these students are already looking for an excuse to not come back.
- Articulation agreements should be automatic and in place. Students should not lose any of their credits upon transfer to another college. It is too costly in terms of time and money.
- The remedial programs should be given more attention.
- Occupational programs need to stay current with the demands in the workplace.
- We need to have foreign exchange programs.

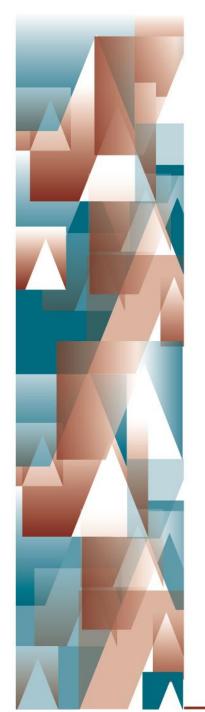




- The entire student services function should be infused with technology such that registration, advising and other programs can be the responsibility of the student. We should be able to do many of these activities at home. The college needs to do the same thing as other colleges and universities, such as CPCC and UNC-Charlotte.
- Positive messaging is important. Teachers should all learn how to teach and not just be experts in subject matter.



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**GASTON COLLEGE** 

STRATEGIC PLAN 2014-2018

"Opportunities for Life"

**Addendum G: Internal Team Summary** 

## GASTON COLLEGE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS LEADERSHIP TEAM INTERVIEWS ADDENDUM G

### Strategic Initiative I: Serve the Lifelong Learning Needs of a Diverse Population and Workforce

Goal 1: Increase accessibility, availability, and delivery of educational programs to meet the diverse needs of our students, businesses, and industries

- This area is fundamental to who we are and what we do. It has to be given the necessary resources. It is recognized as the number one priority for the college.
- Students are only becoming more and more diverse.
- I don't know how we can improve it a lot. It never goes away. We just have to determine where students are placed.
- The huge growth potential of the Hispanic community didn't happen.
- The business community is something that always needs to engage and it is constant change.
- The "return to work" was terminated. So, we can't be as good as we once were. We do have advisory committees that are pretty good. We do assessments thru our IR and academics. We need to renew the information.
- We have a significant number of excellent processes and priorities that speak to this initiative, including Faculty and staff Work Ethic, Instructional quality, Comprehensive curricula, Inclusive environment, Trustees qualifications and dedication, Leadership, ATD, Completion by design, and a Foundation is vested in college
- We are running a college that has a multitude of priorities.
- Transfer programs keep humming on. The State is implementing a tuition differential program, which could result in a lessened amount for tuition reimbursement.
- This goal has been met adequately.

Goal 2: Develop new programs to meet the changing employment needs of the region

- We have built programs based around short-term needs and they have not flourished. We need outside monies to continue to develop programs such as PT.
- If we are going to continue to remain responsive then we have to do a better job with resource allocations. For instance, we need to evaluate the effectiveness and cost factors of several programs. In some cases, phasing out of programs is needed.

Goal 3: Increase student enrollment and retention to meet the growing need of our community.

- We need to counter balance the enrollment decline with attrition reduction. Now we have to connect things. The writing center got funded...we need to connect things that we already have.
- We had to go to where the energy was. Bring it all together. AtD and completion by design will have a tremendous positive effect.
- The AtD, SEM, and Completion by Design should be merged. Many problems are managed out of academics.

- From my perspective, we need to put more emphasis on advising. We allow students to self-advise. Not sure that this is the right thing. Our students are not academically prepared to self-guide; (b) Engage the student early; and (c) a true "student success" center.
- We don't have a formalized student engagement function. Our culture should embody this kind of function. The ones that are first generation are at huge risk. We need to engage these students immediately. This will be a culturally change. It is happening on a very small scale and late in the process.
- We have done an excellent job in securing grants to assist with this area: ATD (to be determined in terms of effectiveness); Completion by Design (very useful and will be successful); Title III (have great data from Title III, highly successful); TRIO (highly successful. Retention rates were higher than 90%. We exceeded all goals).
- We need to increase student enrollment, but this year it decreased by 5.8%.

Goal 4: Proactively increase, understand, and celebrate diversity of our region, students, faculty, and staff.

- Diversity is a value...but we have an ethics book and diversity is a major part of it.
- Our student activities coordinator wants to see more educational activities that are relevant and legitimate.

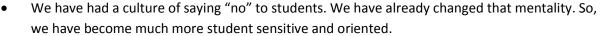
Goal 5: Promote the development of "soft skills" necessary for students to function successfully in the workplace and community

- This is a major issue not just here but throughout the country. We need to integrate more fully the life skills that are needed for our students to remain successful.
- There are many example programs that successfully integrate important "soft skills" into their occupational programs. We should attempt to replicate them.
- It is evident that these types of skills are critically important not just to the students, but to the entities and organizations that are employing them.

#### Strategic Initiative II: Provide Seamless and Effective Student Focused Services

Goal 6: Ensure advising and registration processes are effective and Student-focused

- This is still a major concern and needs additional work and engagement. There is a lot to be done...including not segmenting our faculty and staff from the students.
- I believe that throughout the college, employees will say that we need to address this area.
- Our processes are not seamless. It is convoluted.
- There has been a significant amount of improvement. We have gone from paper driven to automated. Now, we just have to take the next step.
- We will reorganize student services...front-loading of advising processes. We can increase our enrollment...there will be completers.
- Acquiring Title III, AtD, and Completion by Design will force us to change our processes.



- We still need to automate our processes. This would create greater efficiencies as well as quality performances.
- We need to further look at the whole student experience...and ask ourselves "What leads to student attrition?"
- When students come here they are bounced around from one office to the next. The admissions office needs to become more student-sensitive.
- The advising piece needs to be more effective.
- We will need to secure more and more student scholarships.

Goal 7: Ensure continuous review of a comprehensive enrollment management plan

- The preliminary report was good. Our goal was to connect it to completion by design. We have to peck away at it. We need to address things over a 2-5 year timeframe.
- The advising compound is a huge thing. The academic advising function needs help. It is something that we can do better, but we can do it better.
- A formalized and aggressive plan is required.
- This area of the college has to be an institutional priority.
- We know that student enrollments within the K-12 system have leveled off, if not reduced. Therefore, our priority to keep our current students in the classroom through retention programs. We are moving in that direction.
- We will look at ways to reorganize the student services functions. We will take our time to include as many people as possible in the process.

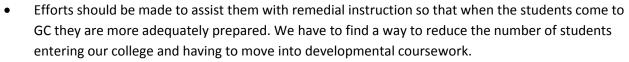
Goal 8: Increase campus and off-campus activities and services to improve student life and community connections

- We need to create the atmosphere of a "student centered" campus.
- The college should o more with student engagement activities.
- A campus community would be beneficial for students.
- If you are in a sub-group, then yes. But, you have to be a part of the targeted group of students.

### **Strategic Initiative III: Expand Partnerships**

Goal 9: Increase partnerships with regional schools, other community colleges, and four-year institutions to provide opportunities for students to achieve their educational goals

- There is so much more that we could be doing in the public school settings. The schools are changing year after year in terms of their student needs. Dropout rates are high. However, we can't do it all.
- This is a significant source for future students. It always will be. We need to get proactive in establishing additional linkages with these organizations.



More dual enrollment programs are important. This should be a high priority for the college.

Goal 10: Strengthen regional partnerships with businesses, industries, and the community to enhance educational programs and economic and workforce development

- We have come a long way with this. Our folks are involved in many training programs with corporate entities throughout the service district. But, we can do more.
- This is the direction that I see us going.
- It is critical that we continue to provide programs and services to the existing businesses and industries...as a way of attracting more to the community.
- We need to ensure that our instructional processes and curricular content are relevant with workplace demands.
- We do still have a strong partnership with both school systems. But, it has taken the back seat to the national agenda with corporate.
- We need to re-establish the k-12 relationship.

### **Strategic Initiative IV: Ensure Quality Educational Practices**

Goal 11: Provide faculty and staff opportunities for professional development

- The biggest gap is leadership development and professional development. . You win from the team approach. We don't have a professional development plan that is cohesive and comprehensive. We have no funding for it.
- Isothermal CC is exemplary in professional development—they focus a great deal on collaborative learning, assessment and portfolios.
- We have limited funding for these types of activities.
- Our faculties have to remain sharp, including the adjunct faculty.
- Faculty is required to be experts in teaching methodologies as well as content.
- Pushing my employees along and promoting them to advance professionally. It has been a challenge due the slowness of the processes. I also have to say that the technology has been a challenge. We still need to make changes...time and attendance, leave of absence reports...these are systems that do not exist in other enterprises. But money is tight and the complexity of the place does not lend itself to a quick change.
- The State now has it whole focus on "designs"...it is like sewing a Frankenstein to draw them all together. The college staff needs to become much more student-oriented--a cultural change.

#### Goal 12: Ensure excellence in teaching and learning

- We are actively involved in the life of the student and we are centered up with why we are here. We have great interaction with the employees--faculty and staff. We have introduced a lot of technological advances. You actualize things when you walk up to a housekeeper and ask, "What do you do here? And the answer is "we educate students." We serve those that serve the students.
- Employers need to have soft skills integration...team learning, etc.

Goal 13: Develop strategies to ensure quality staff and faculty for the future

- We need a succession plan (2).
- We need to break down silos and infuse team learning and cross training. We need to work on advising. We do not have a faculty development center. We have done on due diligence on on-line learning. Our professional development plan is weak...our plan is not excellent. We need a center for professional development.
- I don't think it is ever a 100% happy boat. There are always some complainers—which is nit necessarily a bad thing. The salary memo was sent out so morale is down a bit. People do not fear change...they fear the unknown. It is cyclical...at the start of the year it is always good...then it trickles away. On a scale of 10 it is 6.5.

Goal 14: Comply with all standards of regulatory bodies that govern the quality of educational programs at Gaston College

• We are still nicking away at policy and procedures. There was a "back log" of issues in the department. We needed to bring an essence of accountability. I have to get out of my silo.

### Strategic Initiative V: Provide the Essential Resources to Support Quality Educational Programs and Services

Goal 15: Secure the financial, facility, material, and personnel resources needed to sustain support services, educational needs, and training requirements of the community

- We have a pretty rich package, which equals around 30%. The medical and retirement plans are excellent. We bring additional plans such as flexible benefits to vision to 401 K plans—a robust cafeteria approach. It is a true strength. We have a "benefits fair" which is attended by 30 of the 400 employees. The peripheral items are extremely good.
- We are in the top ten in the system in the 58 colleges. This past year there was no increase. The local trustees do not have sole authority to give raises...it all comes from the State legislature.
- We have to find alternative funding...private sector and thru the Foundation Board. We have our hands tied.

Goal 16: Develop and implement a facilities master plan to guide the construction and renovation of facilities to meet the changing program needs of the region's economy

- The college should update the "Master Plan."
- We know what we are doing tomorrow, but probably not the next day in terms of long-range facilities planning.

Goal 17: Strengthen the college's safety and security plan to meet changing needs

- Depends of the subject that you are talking about. For emergency response issues we have a process and procedure in place. If you look at it a little less procedural then we have the necessary operational structures.
- We have a proactive plan—little bit of both. In terms of legal and infrastructure things we are good. I do have a couple of different hats but there are different sets of goggles.

Goal 18: Continuously upgrade technology to provide quality academic experiences and efficient administrative and student support services

• From my perspective we generally rely on a select few to do that. Aside from the prescriptive changes, I don't remember a forum to have that kind of to gauge it. Discussion...because many people do not understand it. Is there an inflection point where those things come together? No. There is no unified undertaking. People do not work in vacuum. We have made some fairly decent strides with technology. The more personal devices are infused...and advancements. As far as checking the box to make sure that everything is in sync, I don't know.

Goal 19: Foster innovation throughout the institution

- We need to additional program review and "sunset" that is true, deep and accountable. Get it done. It is critical to our existence and future.
- We need to make some significant technological changes.

Goal 20: Secure the financial, facility, material, and personnel resources needed to support the statewide programs of the BioNetwork/BioEd Center and Textile Technology Center

- The problem is that the programs that have to be "sunsetted" are the ones that have enrollments. We just started a nuclear technology program—but we don't know about the value of it yet in terms of graduates' employability and future enrollments. If it dwindles, then we are in trouble. Those programs have huge costs and limited placement. The average age is into the 30s.
- We need someone to come in and evaluate the usefulness of the Radio station and the sun setting of academic programs.

### **Strategic Initiative VI: Enhance Communication**

Goal 21: Develop a proactive, multidimensional marketing approach to enhance public awareness about programs and services

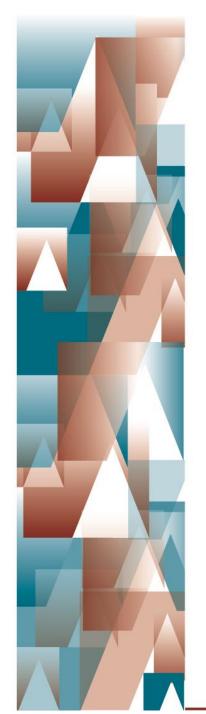
- We have contracted with "Northstar." Marketing has always been reactionary and knee jerk. We need to do things to keep the students that we have. We need to have a better marketing plan. We now have a plan and are becoming much more proactive. We are heading in the right direction. We need to put together a listing of what we are doing unique to Gaston.
- Everyone recognized the criticality of the website and every funnels to it. Perhaps specifically with students this is true. It is an information tool. It is a combination of information and learning. The college has said that this is important. It needed to be updated and upgraded. It is not easy to navigate and it has redundancy and discrepancy. The fundamental is that it has to have integrity.
- The new revision will get on the road...not the panacea. Even a general policy would be beneficial but we have to set up a social media function.
- We have to counter the "institutional silo effect."
- We have faculty and staff senates. The senates have a liaison to the administration.

Goal 22: Enhance internal and external communication

- The college has progressed at becoming more team oriented. We changed our performance appraisal instrument as a measure or factor to evaluate someone. It has raised the conscientiousness. Being three campuses and spread out, it is a problem. It has become the way of the world. We will not be able to counter the problem. We are probably pretty normal. We have committee structures.
- We are decentralized and we have pockets of this here and there.



# armistead



**GASTON COLLEGE** 

STRATEGIC PLAN 2014-2018

"Opportunities for Life"

**Addendum H: Student Survey Aggregate** 

## GASTON COLLEGE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS STUDENT SURVEY AGGREGRATE ADDENDUM H

Total Respondents: First-time: 25.6% Returning: 66.1% Transfer to GC: 8.3% N=128

Figures highlighted in "Blue" represent 50% and above "very satisfied" response

Figures highlighted in "Orange" represent a 7% of higher "Dissatisfied" response

### A. General

A. General					
Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Don't Know
1. Overall experience at 1.1%	t Gaston College 2.9%	: 3.4%	32.0%	60.6%	0.0%
2. Overall value of educ 0.6%	cation for the cos	st: 5.1%	38.3%	51.4%	1.7%
3. Overall commitment 2.3%	to student succe 2.9%	ess: 4.6%	34.9%	54.9%	0.6%
5. Overall commitment 1.7%	to instructional 6.3%	quality: 7.4%	36.9%	46.6%	1.1%
6. Overall commitment 1.7%	to student acces	ss to facilities: 4.0%	37.1%	50.3%	2.3%
B. Academics & Instruc	tion				
8. Academic reputation	:				
0.6%	1.7%	9.1%	41.7%	44.0%	2.9%
Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Don't Know
9. Academic advising: 2.3%	5.7%	8.0%	36.6%	44.6%	2.9%
10. Quality of the facult	ty: 6.3%	6.9%	33.7%	52.0%	0.0%
11. Availability of the fa	aculty:				
0.0%	5.1%	9.7%	38.3%	45.7%	1.1%
12. Thoroughness and r 1.2%	rigor of courses: 2.9%	7.5%	42.2%	45.1%	1.2%

13. Co	13. Comprehensiveness of academic programs:							
	0.6%	4.0%	5.7%	38.9%	48.6%	2.3%		
14 0	uality of courses o	offered:						
14. Q	•		7.50/	27.40/	47.70/	4.40/		
	1.7%	4.6%	7.5%	37.4%	47.7%	1.1%		
15. A	vailability of cours	ses:						
	1.7%	13.7%	12.0%	39.4%	32.0%	1.1%		
16. Cl	assroom facilities	) <b>:</b>						
	0.0%	3.4%	8.6%	40.6%	41.1%	6.3%		
17. La	ab facilities							
17. 20	0.0%	2.9%	9.7%	34.3%	40.6%	12.6%		
18. Av	vailability of comp							
	0.6%	2.8%	6.3%	31.3%	49.4%	9.7%		
Vorv	Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Don't Know		
very	Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Weither	Satisfied	very Satisfied	Don't know		
	19. Availability of technology resources other than computers:							
19. Av	vailability of techr	nology resources	other than com	puters:				
19. A	vailability of techr 0.6%	nology resources 1.7%	other than com 13.2%	puters: 31.0%	35.6%	17.8%		
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### **C. Student Support Services**

26. Application proce	ss:						
0.6%	0.6%	4.6%	49.7%	43.4%	1.1%		
27. Testing services:							
0.0%	0.6%	5.1%	48.0%	40.0%	6.3%		
Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Don't Know		
28. Financial aid service	ces:						
2.9%	5.1%	6.3%	29.7%	43.4%	12.6%		
29. New student orier	itation:						
0.0%	2.3%	10.3%	37.1%	44.0%	6.3%		
30. Academic advising	services:						
2.3%	4.0%	12.1%	34.5%	43.1%	4.0%		
31. Course registration	n process:						
0.6%	3.4%	6.8%	38.1%	49.4%	1.7%		
32. Counseling service	es:						
1.7%	5.1%	11.4%	25.7%	40.6%	15.4%		
33. Tutoring services:							
0.6%	2.9%	9.1%	24.6%	30.3%	32.6%		
34. The Writing Cente	r:						
0.6%	0.6%	8.0%	27.3%	39.8%	23.9%		
35. The Learning Cent	er:						
0.6%	1.7%	8.6%	24.7%	36.2%	28.2%		
36. Student Activities:							
1.1%	2.3%	16.1%	23.6%	31.6%	25.3%		

### D. Other

Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Don't Know		
37. Availability of parking:							
6.3%	10.8%	11.9%	38.1%	27.8%	5.1%		
38. Food services: <b>2.3</b> %	8.6%	18.4%	23.6%	15.5%	31.6%		
39. Vending services: 1.1%	8.0%	13.1%	35.4%	28.6%	13.7%		
40. Campus safety/sec	urity:						
0.0%	3.4%	8.0%	35.4%	45.7%	7.4%		
41. Physical appearance of the campuses:							
0.6%	2.9%	6.3%	28.7%	59.8%	1.7%		
42. College website: 1.1%	4.0%	9.7%	32.6%	52.0%	0.6%		

### **COMPANY CONTACT INFORMATION**

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