



**COMmunicate! Series: ICAT and College  
Goal 2**

**A Qualitative Overview of Resulting Discussion  
Themes**

## Executive Summary

Development of the 2018-2023 Strategic Plan began in March 2017. As part of this process a COMmunicate! session was held in November 2017. The focus of the event was three ICAT topics – Teaching and Learning, Equity, and Engagement and Communication – and College Goal 2: Employee Success. There were five rounds of discussion:

- Round 1: Teaching and Learning
- Round 2: Equity
- Round 3: Engagement and Communication
- Round 4: If you were in charge of attracting and retaining innovative faculty and staff, what *professional development opportunities* would you create or make available?
- Round 5: If you were in charge of attracting and retaining innovative faculty and staff, how would you *maintain a level of high performing and highly engaged workforce*?

The resulting comments and notes from the COMmunicate!: ICAT and College Goal 2 event were aggregated and coded for qualitative analysis. Five main themes arose from this analysis:

- Communication
- Professional Development and Training
- Faculty Involvement
- Student Success
- Data and Technology

The information from this COMmunicate! session as well as previous World Cafés and community engagements is being used in codifying the Strategic Plan for 2018-2023. Further COMmunicate! sessions will be held as needed to engage with internal stakeholders regarding important topics or initiatives.

## Introduction and Background

As part of College of the Mainland's strategic planning process a series of college-wide forums has been held with the intent of gathering input on the future direction of COM from employee stakeholders. Two previous World Café events were held to discuss ICAT capacities and Student Success. Part of this process was the administration of the Institutional Capacity Assessment Tool (ICAT), an online assessment tool from Achieving the Dream (ATD) to assist colleges in assessing their strengths and weakness in seven areas. The seven areas assessed by the ICAT are:

- *Leadership and Vision:* the commitment and collaboration of the institution's leadership with respect to student success and the clarity of the vision for desired change.
- *Data and Technology:* the institution's capacity to collect, access, analyze, and use data to inform decisions, and to use powerful technology to support student success.
- *Teaching and Learning:* the commitment to engaging full-time and adjunct faculty in examinations of pedagogy, meaningful professional development, and a central role for them as change agents within the institution; also the college's commitment to advising, tutoring, and out-of-classroom supports as well as restructuring developmental education to facilitate student learning and success.
- *Policy and Practices:* the institutional policies and practices that impact student success and the processes for examining and aligning policies and practices to remove barriers and foster student completion.
- *Equity:* the commitment, capabilities, and experiences of an institution to fairly serve low income students, students of color, and other at-risk student populations with respect to access, success, and campus climate.

## COMmunicate! Series: ICAT and College Goal 2

- *Engagement and Communication*: the creation of strategic partnerships with key external stakeholders, such as K-12, universities, employers, and community based organizations, and internal stakeholders across the institution to participate in the student success agenda and improvement of student outcomes.
- *Strategy and Planning*: the alignment of the institution with the umbrella goal of student success and the institution's process for translating the desired future into defined goals and objectives and executing the actions to achieve them.

A total of 138 people participated in the ICAT survey – it was sent out via email with the Everyuser Admin DL, a distribution list of all benefits-eligible COM employees, and completed by a combination of faculty, staff, administrators, and trustees. ATD created a report based on the results of the survey. This report was used as a baseline to begin the larger discussion on the direction of the Strategic Plan by quantifying how well COM was meeting the standards of each capacity in different ways.

On November 3, 2017, the first COMmunicate! Series event was held to discuss three ICAT capacities and College Goal 2: Employee Success. The event consisted of five rounds of discussion lasting 20 minutes each, and each was followed by a brief recap and summarization by individual tables. Three rounds related to ICAT topics: **Teaching and Learning**, **Equity**, and **Engagement and Communication**. During these rounds participants were able to review results from the previously administered ICAT and discuss Strengths, Challenges, and potential points of Action related to these topics. The remaining two rounds related to **College Goal 2: Employee Success**. Participants discussed two prompts: “If you were in charge of attracting and retaining innovative faculty and staff, what *professional development opportunities* would you create or make available?” and “If you were in charge of attracting and

retaining innovative faculty and staff, how would you *maintain a level of high performing and highly engaged workforce?*”.

The event was held in the gym, and 43 faculty and staff participated. Participants were split into eight tables and rotated tables between rounds. Tables were provided with information regarding ICAT capacity survey results as well as the results of prior internal and external engagements to aid discussion. Each table had a facilitator to take notes during each session and prompt discussion as needed. Participants were also encouraged to take their own notes as desired.

## Results and Discussion

After the COMmunicate! session was completed all notes were gathered and typed into a word document. The aggregated notes were transferred into Microsoft Excel for qualitative coding and analysis. In total there were 332 comments. Two rounds of coding were conducted, pulling out main points and themes of each comment. Through coding, five main themes were determined as overarching aspects of all rounds of discussion. The overarching themes of discussion were: **Communication, Professional Development and Training, Faculty Involvement, Student Success, and Data and Technology**. There were various subcategories revealed within each of the five themes, and these are identified in the text by italics.

The most discussed theme was **Communication**. Comments acknowledged the progress COM as a whole has made towards improving communication both internally and externally but made it clear that there is more work to be done in the area. Several comments reflected a desire for more internal communication on changes in *processes* and *policies* in different areas of the college as well as for more communication of *data* on different topics. Comments also expressed a need for more *clarity* in communication, for instance more clearly *defined constructs*, setting discussions in context of relevant *data*, and delineating *clear processes*. Comments further conveyed a need to improve communication to

new, returning, and potential students as well as about student success initiatives and processes. Some of the **Communication** comments were as follows:

- *Internal communication is slowly improving but still lacking (for example, when buildings were rekeying) (Faculty Senate revising syllabus template)*
- *Find a way to improve communication with students in connection with Early Alert (student contact info often outdated)*
- *Improve use of data – use data to have collaborative conversations with faculty, staff, and students*
- *Communicate, collaborate with local high schools to discuss transition expectations with advising and counselor discussions*

Many comments during the COMmunicate! session revolved around **Professional Development and Training** both as part of ICAT topics and as ways to attract and retain innovative faculty and staff. Several comments suggested a need for a more *centralized* and *consistent* method of providing and *funding professional development* across campus for both faculty and staff. Comments also recommended providing *structured* professional development and *training* to aid employees in becoming more successful. New *initiatives* and *technology* were specified as requiring specialized or structured training as well as aiding faculty in *improving teaching practices*. Some of the **Professional Development and Training** comments were as follows:

- *Utilize convocation for meaningful Professional Development*
- *Educational opportunities – when employees want to pursue additional degrees, some form of help with that*
- *Dedicated department or include Professional Development within Human Resources to attract faculty and staff*

- *More focused, topical trainings in things like Excel – faculty: building a grade sheet*
- *Leadership training – consistent management*

**Faculty Involvement** was another topic of several comments during the COMmunicate! session.

Multiple comments were positive regarding faculty's access to *professional development* and *engagement* with students and *student success initiatives*. Comments also focused on a desire for faculty to have more *opportunities to collaborate* with each other and other areas of campus.

Comments expressed that faculty use *data* to improve their teaching methods. There were also multiple comments regarding faculty *contracts, tenure, and compensation*. Some of the **Faculty Involvement** comments were as follows:

- *Faculty stay current in fields through professional development (PD funds are depleted each year)*
- *Faculty do not have enough opportunity to collaborate because of time pressures and competing initiatives*
- *Students appreciate the caring factor of the faculty. They appreciate faculty being available to stay after class*
- *Faculty want good facilities – that attracts innovative faculty*

Another common theme of discussion was **Student Success**. Several comments acknowledged the efforts and initiatives that have taken place over the past year to improve student success such as changes in the expanded use of *data*, the *co-requisite* implementation, and Student Services processes like *Advising*. Comments also reflected on other needs, challenges, and potential *future initiatives* to undertake. Suggestions included initiatives to assist students in discovering their strengths and learning styles, mock interviews for professional skills and etiquette, lowering enrollment caps in some classes,

centralized tutoring services, and programs for marginalized groups. Some of the **Student Success** comments were as follows:

- *We have identified groups on campus that need support and have infused resources in those programs (bringing people in)*
- *We need to improve the access for our students to academic support services*
- *Get info to campus on student success and general info between departments can be better*
- *Develop actionable goals toward student success*

The final overarching theme of discussion was **Data and Technology**. There were multiple positive comments regarding the improved and increased use of data college wide, but other comments made clear that there is a desire for more. Suggestions were made on need for *training* and *access* to *ZogoTech*, increased *data sharing*, and ways to use data to *support students*. Various suggestions were also made regarding the use and availability of technology on campus. Comments recommended *updated* and *increased technology* in general and suggestions for technology to assist in *student success initiatives*, *improve communication*, and *share information*. Some of the **Data and Technology** comments were as follows:

- *Stakeholders given student success data (Board Reports)*
- *Need to look at data for different populations within courses*
- *Technology – math/science students had better tech in high school*
- *More consistency with practices like attendance tracking – technology could help with this*
- *Improve use of data – use data to have collaborative conversations with faculty, staff, and students*



## Next Steps

The information from this COMmunicate! session as well as previous World Cafés and community engagements is being used in codifying the Strategic Plan for 2018-2023. Further COMmunicate! sessions will be held as needed to engage with internal stakeholders regarding important topics or initiatives. The information gathered in these sessions is invaluable in determining the course of action and the future of College of the Mainland.

## Appendix

### Table Notes

*All comments were transcribed verbatim from notes; some comments may be incomplete or include grammatical or spelling errors.*

### **INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY ASSESSMENT TOOL (ICAT)**

#### ***Teaching and Learning (20 minutes)***

##### **Strengths**

*Where do we have the greatest strengths to build upon in this capacity area?*

lot of interaction between departments actively engaged in changes  
we have many changes going on and faculty are involved in these efforts  
different configurations of classes – dealing with this  
following protocols  
active engagement, math pathways, co-requisites  
PDA money available for improvement  
Many support services; SI's, tutors, Math Lab, Net Tutor, learning platforms  
Community college allows us to have a diverse student population  
Array of learning for specific/targeted programs and courses  
Nursing, sciences  
Developmental – co-reqs will increase retention  
Majority of faculty do use assessment data to improve courses/student success  
Faculty stay current in fields through professional development (PD funds are depleted each year)  
Math Pathways – FA2018 will help retention and success  
COM has adequate academic support services for student their classes  
Overall most faculty enjoy what the  
Access to professional development for faculty  
Data assists faculty in improving their teaching methods  
Doing more remediation – nursing  
Good faculty  
Good technology – Blackboard  
We do data – do more of it, have more time to do it  
Dev. Ed – new co-req is allowing students to move through classes faster  
Math Pathways/Degree Pathways  
Learning outcomes are working on improving curriculum and instruction  
Students appreciate the caring factor of the faculty. They appreciate faculty being available to stay after class  
The pay it forward initiative is very important

##### **Areas to Improve**

*Where do we have the greatest needs for bolstering capacity?*

More consistency with practices like attendance tracking – technology could help with this  
Faculty do not have enough opportunity to collaborate because of time pressures and competing initiatives

Not a large amount of research based institutional practices  
Increase tech  
Better technology  
High schools getting bonds to increase tech  
Arduous amount of paperwork for PDA  
Research based instruction  
Need to share information from professional development  
Need set degree plans that are available/accessible easily readable by students  
Technology for engaging students  
Wi-fi campus concerns  
Caps are too high – data shows 18 is ideal for student success  
Need more labs for comp ½. COWS are not ideal.  
We need to improve the access for our students to academic support services  
There is no feedback on data that is being put into SPOL  
Increase  
Better internet in TVB  
More specifics on what is actually being done at successful coreq models  
How to apply data we collect  
Professional development for all employees (Fac/Prof/Clas)  
More utilization of data to improve ed. Practices  
More use of job market info in creating classes  
Need closer monitoring of student progress  
Monitor student progress sooner than when grades are posted  
Include students voices in planning and decision for everything  
Need STEM tutorials

### **Actions**

*What actions can we take to build strength in this capacity area?*

Find a way to improve communication with students in connection with Early Alert (student contact info often outdated)  
Seeing what other colleges have/use (high schools as well)  
Incorporate information/share information from conferences  
Mini grants  
Submit tech request  
Communicate, collaborate with local high schools to discuss transition expectations with advising and counselor discussions  
PD center for faculty to watch videos or be like a student (go & learn)  
Lower caps on enrollment to increase student success (20 preferable)  
If caps can't be lowered, possibly add S/s  
Need to centralize tutorial services  
Creating methods/processes for sharing data  
Share more data  
Remedy problems we see based on data  
Provide training/details on coreqs – more details  
Continue to upgrade facilities in areas to attract more students  
Offering professional development or formal training for adjuncts (maybe on a Saturday)  
Need media services, maintenance services to support adjuncts in the evening

Identify student constituent groups

Improve use of data – use data to have collaborative conversations with faculty, staff, and students

## **INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY ASSESSMENT TOOL (ICAT)**

***Equity (20 minutes)***

### **Strengths**

*Where do we have the greatest strengths to build upon in this capacity area?*

We're working on NSO to better serve our population and decrease barriers

Retention and completion rates have closed for certain ethnic populations

Grants – Title V, Hispanic Serving

Minority Male Initiative

TRiO

TriO

Title V

International students

AA Male Initiative

Diversity representative training

Equity/Non Discrimination

STEM conference – focus on minority populations

Plethora of support services

Multicultural committee (represents many cultural groups/holidays)

Programs such as TRiO, Random Acts of Kindness, Minority Males for Excellence

Minority Male Initiative

We have identified groups on campus that need support and have infused resources in those programs (bringing people in)

There are a lot of activities and events for

Faculty prepared to work with diverse groups

Services for students – but how do we get them to use?

TRiO/Upward Bound/Achieving the Dream

Student demographically and more diverse than community

Our family day event

Different events for veterans

Title V Grant – to help with transition to college

### **Areas to Improve**

*Where do we have the greatest needs for bolstering capacity?*

College should understand broader definition of equity with respect to income gaps

Maybe NSO should be in middle of week

Could do a better job of supporting students with different backgrounds (home schoolers and disability)

Food services

Maturity issues

#9 resources for students needing economic assistance

Professional training for students and faculty

Faculty/or all staff need access to Zogotech to see data

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More resources need to be infused into support services for minority students

A better long term plan

We need to address the achievement gaps for minority students

More info on Zogotech

Be more aware of learning styles

Faculty could be more diverse – although we are close – according to HR

More Hispanic instructors

Define equity

Use data in conversations around equity

Teach learning styles to faculty – generational differences

Offer a military transition course

Offer other special groups transition courses

### **Actions**

*What actions can we take to build strength in this capacity area?*

Communication

More support for variety of courses

Weak students need increased support (talks outside of class assistance outside of class)

Really push financial resources

Orientation time to head to computer lab to complete FAFSA, financial resources paperwork

Special financial subsidies

Expand services in TRiO for other groups

Connect students by encouraging presentations in classrooms i.e. TRiO/Foundation

Mock Interviews to allow students to learn social, professional skills/etiquette

Better communication about new advising model (linked to pathways) – this is already being done

Zogotech training for all, especially with student contacts/tracking

We need to mainstream programs such as Minority Males

We have good idea generators just not good implementation

We need to create programs/services for marginalized groups

Provide continued diversity training – things change constantly

Share more data, remedy problems that data shows

More training on Zogotech

Better flexibility for student learning styles

- Maybe teach/test learning styles day 1
- Strengths workshop first week/before school

Use data to address achievement gaps

Provide professional development

Have meaningful conversations to improve equity issues

Teach learning styles to faculty

Offer professional development

Begin collaborative conversations with faculty, students, and staff to build an understanding of needs

## **INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY ASSESSMENT TOOL (ICAT)**

### ***Engagement and Communication (20 minutes)***

#### **Strengths**

*Where do we have the greatest strengths to build upon in this capacity area?*

ZogoTech – getting better with data  
Sharing of teaching ideas  
Observations - classroom  
College connection counselors in HS  
Initiatives- Pathways/Co-requisites – urgency to improve  
Stakeholders given student success data (Board Reports)  
Reaching out to transfer colleges  
Weekly report from Dr. Nichols  
Good relationships with chamber/ISDs  
Adult Ed./Workforce  
SS/Dual Credit and Collegiate  
PTech/Marathon  
Internal updates by Dr. Nichols allows awareness of what is happening in other areas  
Involving external stakeholders – advisory boards  
The town hall meetings we've been having  
Community members on presidential search committee  
Dr. Nichols weekly reports  
BOT agenda item posted  
Campus signage is improved  
The capacity for good communication with our external stakeholders is there  
Student life  
Faculty engage students well  
Text aim  
The Torch is good for communicating the student success  
President weekly update to campus and board  
Fact sheet talk about careers and offerings at COM  
Partnerships with different community organizations that provide assistance to students  
Dual Credit – college connection advisors  
Identify student success as a college goal  
Adult Ed and Literacy Grant  
Guided pathways work supports strategic partnership

#### **Areas to Improve**

*Where do we have the greatest needs for bolstering capacity?*

Need to look at data for different populations within courses  
Need more data on desired schedule (what students need/want)  
Must look at data over time  
Communicate student success into community  
Be your own advocate for COM

## COMmunicate! Series: ICAT and College Goal 2

No data to discuss regarding student success

Early Alert committee, do students respond and what is being discussed or completed by staff/faculty and students that directly brings student success

Internal communication is slowly improving but still lacking (for example, when buildings were rekeying) (Faculty Senate revising syllabus template)

We need student success on a deeper level

Develop actionable goals toward student success.

We email way too much

We need to address how we are communicating data

Communication to faculty/staff from above

Too much info vs. no information

Get info to campus on student success and general info between department can be better

More employer surveys to see if students are working out for them

Start earlier to plant seeds in students and families

Have a comprehensive recruitment plan to increase awareness of COM's programs

Identify different groups (16-18 yrs, 18-24 yrs, workforce training, senior program, adult ed, new careers after age 50)

### **Actions**

*What actions can we take to build strength in this capacity area?*

For communication, we have to dig for it

Include all stakeholders in communication

More communication besides email/website

Should have a course expiration rule on individual courses

Need more articulation agreements in place

Expand years on Reverse Articulation

Tools to apply with students and in the classroom

Track early alert students to find end result

Announce when people leave or are hired

Committee info centrally posted (this is in progress)

Prioritize what we are sending out as a D-L every user

Improve internal communication with staff and faculty

Improve outgoing communication with students

More info provided re: events on campus

Who do you ask after 5 pm?

Differentiate emails visually

Direct link to early alert

More updates on website

Sharing data

Part time childcare to allow students to engage with campus activities

Interactive calendar on website with events displayed prominently

Better communication with K-12/university to have them aware of our student success

Have college day events at middle schools

Increase trade offerings

Increase articulation agreements with area colleges

Include recruitment plan in SEM

**College Goal 2: Faculty and Staff Success (Reference ICAT – Leadership)**

*If you were in charge of attracting innovative faculty and staff, what professional development opportunities would you create or make available? (20 minutes)*

Pay for faculty to take additional classes outside of the institution (graduate classes, credentials)

Central place for PD resources/library (Teaching and Learning Center)

We do PD pretty well

Better communication regarding existing resources

Team-building development

PDA funding

Shouldn't be used as a recruiting tool

First Year Experience

Give committee list

Utilize convocation for meaningful Professional Development

10.5 month or 12 month contract

Tenure/or opt out/salaries

steps

pay for class to try and improve your education

reduce time it takes to get hiring process completed

teaching and learning center

Be strategic about diverse staff attending sessions, it is found that bringing ideas back is not easy to do

Opportunities for Professional Development during convocation

Dedicated department or include Professional Development within Human Resources to attract faculty and staff

Marketing professional development to potential candidates

Hiring of adjunct to fill the co-requisite/finish faster

Implementation of co-requisite/finish faster launched bypassing a pilot program

More on campus opportunities

- Speaker from TN about co-reqs
- Other speakers
- Invite public or surrounding colleges

Generally COM does a good job. Easy to get funds as long as you justify

PD through GCIC – partner with other colleges

Marketing for highly qualified applicants has improved

More focused, topical training in things like Excel – faculty: building a grade sheet

Leadership training – consistent management

Need to have levels to grow into, ways for people to improve skills and move up

Managers should be trained to support their employees in endeavors even if it applies to a job they'd like to move into

Tenure attracted faculty to the college

We have to have more competitive salaries

- Discussed merit increases
- Salary increases for receiving tenure



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- Faculty contracts went from 10 months to 9 months

The lack of retaining good faculty impacts the stability of the college

We should incorporate 360 feedback during the evaluation system

We do a good job. Need to find a way to bring back and share the information they've learned

Speed dating for your discipline during convocation

Certain amount of money for each faculty to choose their own PD

Pay for higher level education at other institutions (maybe one class per semester)

Trainings on campus vs. travel (sometimes)

Department cross training

Increase capacity of career through PD

Leadership/management training

Hard skill vs. soft skill

Need to advertise in job descriptions – funding of PD

Increase funding for adjunct PD

Opportunity to observe other faculty in your field

Specialize PD for admin assistants and classified

Faculty want good facilities – that attracts innovative faculty

Tenure, salaries, benefits

PD opportunity

Internal training in special areas

Soc. making Plan for new employee so they can move up

Pay for class as person improves themselves

### **College Goal 2: Faculty and Staff Success (Reference ICAT – Leadership)**

*If you were in charge of attracting innovative faculty and staff, how would you maintain a level of high performing and highly engaged workforce? (20 minutes)*

Reconsideration of tenure policy, whether it's called tenure or not (job security)

Salary student is good step we need to make sure compensation is in line

Are the steps being equitably applied? Systematic?

Are salaries stagnant in terms of steps?

Facilities, though this point has been made many times

Review of hiring processes

Committee involvement

Faculty input on schedule

Give more administrative privileges in online platform/academic freedom – can't make new assignments despite the need for supplemental assignments

New facility – updates

Comfortable environment – chairs/desks

360 degree evaluation process

Exit interviews

Require staff and faculty to attend 2 student activities during the year

Accountability of Professional Development plans to review measurement of success

Include and improve interview questions for critical thinking

Merit base incentive for education and training with measurable improvement in your position

Bring back tenure for faculty (and it actually mean something)

## COMmunicate! Series: ICAT and College Goal 2

10.5 month contracts – as long as there are people here who had that taken away morale can't improve like it should

Facilities – working on it

Technology – math/science students had better tech in high school

Pay – some may retire before they get back to what they were paid on 10.5 month contracts

Make sure more than one instructor can teach each class so instructors can have a sub for PD, etc.

Not have same teachers teach same classes every semester

Educational opportunities – when employees want to pursue additional degrees, some form of help with that

Free classes offered on campus, more flexibility for classes during the day

More consistent management across campus – being allowed or encouraged to serve on committees, participate across campus

Possible volunteering opportunities, community service, possibly functioning like wellness program (give up part of lunch, gain some extra time to volunteer)

Committee work (this is in progress)

Implement tenure. Bring it back!

More competitive salaries

Implement merit raises

Retain good faculty and staff to sustain a sense of stability for the college

We should implement a 360 evaluation process

We need to be more aware of the information that we are sharing with the community

Individual meetings – “what do you need to be more successful”

Acknowledge successes from administration

Clear salary advancement process – different steps

Availability of different contract lengths

Provide tenure

Feeling of security in job

Break rooms, placed to collaborate (faculty lounge)

“team building account” for department chairs

Update technology, option of mac vs. pc

Exit interviews

Training and development academy

Merit pay

Pay increase for rank advances (ast to asc to prof)

Recognition (we value you)