



World Café Report

A Qualitative Overview of Resulting Discussion Themes

Executive Summary

Development of the 2018-2023 Strategic Plan began in March 2017. Part of this process involved the administration of the Institutional Capacity Assessment Tool (ICAT), an online assessment tool from Achieving the Dream (ATD). The results of this survey were used in a World Café event attended by approximately 70 faculty, staff, administrators, trustees, and students. The purpose of the World Café was to discuss the Strengths, Challenges, and suggested Actions for COM in seven capacity areas:

- Leadership and Vision
- Data and Technology
- Teaching and Learning
- Policy and Practices
- Equity
- Engagement and Communication
- Strategy and Planning.

The majority of comments were in regards to Challenges (41%) and Actions (35%). Comments were coded for major themes. The five most frequently discussed themes were:

- Communication
- Student Services
- Data
- Engagement
- Students

More opportunities to participate in the planning process will be coming in the next four months in the form of:

- World Café event
 - Staff and Faculty
 - Student feedback
- Town hall meetings
 - Community
 - ISD superintendents
 - Business and Industry
 - Chambers of Commerce

Introduction and Background

The development process for College of the Mainland's 2018-2023 Strategic Plan began in March 2017. 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
- *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

Methodology

A total of 138 people participated in the ICAT survey – it was sent out via email to all staff and faculty 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.

The World Café event was held on April 18, 2017. An invitation was sent to the campus as well as students and trustees. Approximately 70 people attended the World Café including staff, faculty, administrators, two trustees, and a few students. Round tables were set up for discussion of the different areas. At least one table was utilized for each subject area and every table had a facilitator and chairs for 6-7 participants, as well as the ICAT summary report for the table's topic area. Participants in the World Café were asked to join a different topic table for each of the five rounds and facilitators remained at their table for the entire event. In each round the facilitators had twenty minutes to guide the participants through discussing:

- **Strengths:** *Where do we have the greatest strengths to build upon in this capacity area?*
Areas COM is doing well and can expand or build on to further expand success.
- **Challenges:** *Where do we have the greatest needs for bolstering capacity?* Areas where COM is struggling or needs to allocate resources to overcome barriers to success.

- **Actions:** *What actions can we take to build strength in this capacity area?* Specific suggestions for changes or initiatives that would increase success.

In order to avoid rehashing the same information in each round, the facilitators gave a brief overview of what had previously been covered at the start of each round. During the rounds facilitators also took detailed notes for later review.

After the World Café was completed, facilitator notes were gathered and typed into a word document. On May 1, 2017, the facilitators were invited to a debriefing lunch session with the President, Dr. Nichols, and Strategic Plan lead, Dr. Walker, in order to discuss the common themes that came up during the World Café. The President's Cabinet was also invited. Prior to the lunch session the facilitators received the aggregate word document as well as PDF copies of the notes taken at the World Café. Each facilitator gave a brief overview of how their sessions went, any points or themes that stood out, and any "off topic" themes that came up frequently in different rounds.

Results and Discussion

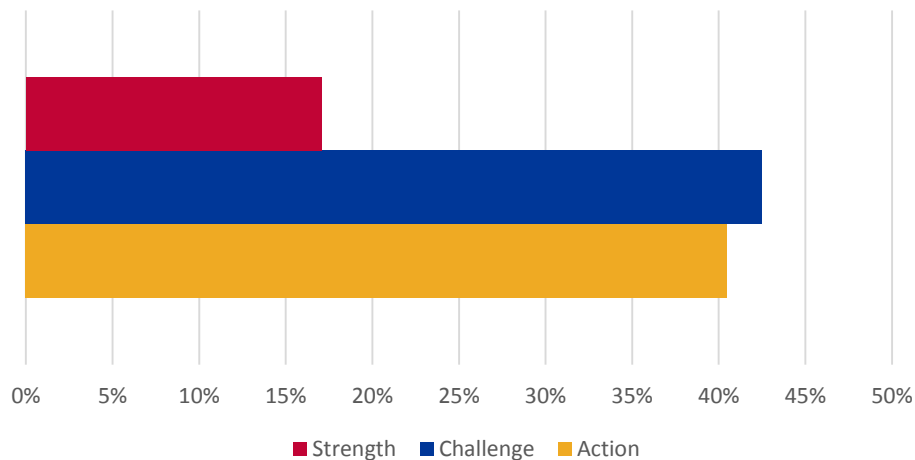
The aggregated notes were transferred into Microsoft Excel for qualitative coding and analysis of themes (comments are available in the Appendix at the end of this report). The data were split out by the seven capacities (e.g. *Leadership and Vision, Data and Technology, etc.*) and comment type (**Strength, Challenge, Action**). Two rounds of coding were conducted, pulling out the main points and themes of every noted comment ($n = 587$). The largest proportion of comments recorded were in the topic areas of *Engagement and Communication* ($n = 118, 20\%$) and *Equity* ($n = 119, 20\%$). The smallest proportion of comments recorded was in the area of *Teaching and Learning* ($n = 53, 9\%$). The types of comment (**Strength, Challenge, Action**) were also not evenly distributed. The largest number of comments were in regards to **Challenges** ($n = 240, 41\%$), followed by **Action** ($n = 207, 35\%$) and the least number of comments on **Strengths** ($n = 140, 24\%$).

Table 1. Distribution of Comments by Topic Area and Type

| | Action | Challenge | Strength |
|-------------------------------------|--------|-----------|----------|
| <i>Data and Technology</i> | 31 | 18 | 18 |
| <i>Engagement and Communication</i> | 33 | 61 | 24 |
| <i>Equity</i> | 47 | 40 | 32 |
| <i>Leadership and Vision</i> | 39 | 32 | 17 |
| <i>Policies and Practices</i> | 21 | 39 | 17 |
| <i>Strategy and Planning</i> | 18 | 32 | 15 |
| <i>Teaching and Learning</i> | 18 | 18 | 17 |

Across all topic areas, the five most frequent themes (accounting for over a third of all coding) in the recorded comments were: *Communication*, *Student Services*, *Data*, *Engagement*, and *Students*. Of these, 40% were **Action** comments, 42% related to **Challenges**, and 17% to **Strengths**.

Top Five Themes: Comment Type Breakdown



The largest proportion of comments, accounting for 15% of coded themes, were centered on the theme of *Communication*. Of the comments that related to *Communication* 40% were **Action** comments and 49% were comments related to **Challenges**. Many of these comments referenced needing to better communicate resources that are already available for both students and employees, developing clear and consistent processes for communicating with students on their level, and improving communication between employees and leadership across campus. **Strength** comments referred to specific positive ways communication occurs, such as newsletters to the community and

ISDs, communication between colleagues, and open forums for students to ask questions of the President and Administration. Some of the *Communication* comments were as follows:

- *Consistent communication and language of processes with students*
- *It seems that more information is being given; however, it isn't reaching the "boots on the ground" people*
- *Better communication through the college and ensuring that the information is consistent and relevant and will lead to action*
- *Communicate data with employees – share and explain. Bite size reports*

Student Services was the next most frequent theme pulled out of the recorded comments.

Comments related to Student Services were somewhat evenly distributed in comment type: 38% related to **Challenges**, 36% to **Action**, and 26% to **Strengths**. **Strength** related comments often focused on positive changes being made currently or initiatives such as Upward Bound or the College Connections Advisors. **Challenge** and **Action** comments often discussed processes that need to be created or implemented consistently, the importance of adjusting some of our practices to remove or mitigate student barriers, and improving communication with students. Some of the *Student Services* comments were as follows:

- *Increase collaboration between Advising and Instruction during planning of course offerings*
- *Let students know what resources exist and have mechanisms in place to make it easy for the students to access those resources*
- *Need to communicate more with students to tailor initiatives*
- *Lack of follow through with students when trying to enroll (we wait for the student to make contact)*

Data related comments were largely **Action** (46%) and **Challenge** (39%) oriented, with 15% touching on **Strengths**. **Strength** related comments referenced recent improvements in existing data and reports available as well as the implementation of ZogoTech. **Challenge** and **Action** oriented comments focused on training needs, forming consistent data processes for entering data, the need for more access to data and reports, and using data to make decisions or take action. Some of the *Data* comments are as follows:

- *Provide information to the institution showing student success data broken down by marginalized groups to determine which groups needs assistance*
- *Find “value” in data for staff/faculty*
- *Mandatory campus wide training about accessing and entering data*
- *Larger overview of existing data and reports – make available and communicate to everyone*

Engagement themes from the comments were evenly split between **Action** and **Challenge** at 39% each, with 21% focused on **Strengths**. **Strength** related comments were generally in regards to ways in which COM engages with high school students, reaches out to the community, and tries to keep new students engaged once they have enrolled. **Challenge** and **Action** oriented comments discussed the need to increase general campus engagement from Faculty and Staff, reaching out to underserved populations, increasing community interaction and service, and improving the level and quality of communication occurring on campus. Some of the *Engagement* comments are as follows:

- *Expanding engagement with HS students – recruitment (TRiO, College Connections)*
- *Increase employee involvement in campus activities*
- *Community involvement and service would increase engagement*
- *Faculty and staff need to be more involved in strategy and planning*

The theme of *Students* was also predominant – 21% of *Students* themed responses focused on **Strengths**, 42% on **Action**, and 37% on **Challenges**. **Strength** related comments focused on specific initiatives focused on students such as Student Planning and Random Acts of Kindness, technology available, and the level of diversity in our student population. **Challenge** and **Action** comments referenced needing to adjust processes and communication for students’ level of understanding, improving our data and tracking of students’ goals and the reasons they leave without an award, and increasing opportunities for students to become involved on campus in a variety of ways. Some of the *Students* comments are as follows:

- *More computers/laptops for students to help with enrollment and computer literacy*
- *Students are included more in the building processes and have a voice – hiring committees, etc.*
- *Communicate changes that affect students to everyone so departments are aware*
- *Students need consistent information – need training within departments*

Beyond these most discussed themes, the themes that came up the most in **Challenge** or **Action** comments were: *Employees, Training, Planning, Process, and Leadership*. These comments often intersected with the themes of *Communication, Engagement, Data, and Student Services*.

Next Steps

Over the next 4 months there will be more opportunities to provide valuable feedback to the strategic planning process. At least one more World Café event will be held in the hopes of involving as many Staff and Faculty as possible. A series of town hall meetings will also be held to gather information from the community and other key stakeholders such as the local ISDs, businesses, and Chambers of Commerce. All employees are encouraged to participate in this important process as we determine the future direction of College of the Mainland.

Appendix

Data & Technology

Strengths

- Data that exists is relevant and reliable.
 - Employees need to be trained on how to access data.
 - Going in right direction with what we want to ask regarding data.
 - Access to request data is helpful.
- Technology committee for instruction.
- Faculty evaluations data is a good system.
- Faculty use of data.
- Institutional Research has great grasp of data – Zogotech will help.
- Increasing distance education numbers.
- Resources for IT are strong, spending the money
- Distance Ed. numbers are increasing annually.
- iPad carts.
- Go to meeting, skype interviewing, electronic payments.
- Financial Aid new software is user friendly.
- Technology and data have improved drastically over last 3 years.
- Innovations lab
- Kiosks in hallways.
- Increase in the purchase of technology lately.
- Microsoft Office is free to students.

Areas to Improve

- People are not using the data or don't know how to get it.
 - Provide training.
- Clean up data.
- Let everyone have access to data – run own reports.
- Decisions not often guided by data (by real data)
- Online registration needs to be improved – system was down during first day of registration.
- Expand evaluation used for faculty to other staff.
- Online Learner Workshop is a barrier.
- No consistency in data entry.
- How do we identify data issues?
- Find ways to track non-traditional data (event attendance, student life, etc)
- Communication
- Better WIFI ability to access for everyone on campus.
- Decisions are not guided by data.
- What is marker of success – how do we measure success?
- Share data successes.

- More computers/laptops for students to help with enrollment and computer literacy.
- Change the data culture to show why data is important.
- Once we have data, there needs to be action.
- Network infrastructure update.

Actions

- IT and OPEAR should communicate with campus.
- Mandatory campus wide training about accessing and entering data.
 - Refresher training for heavy users.
- Clean up data.
- Communicating success.
- Training to use technology.
- Communicate changes.
- Work outside of silos.
- Revisit OLW requirement.
- Correct information entered constantly.
- Get data sources “out there.”
- Convocation presentation –possible supervisor training.
- Find “value” in data for staff/faculty.
- Agreed upon terms – data governance – standards.
- Training/standards – get everyone on the same page.
- Communicate needs to the right people – BPOC Committee.
- See what students need (courses) and how to schedule.
- Training on how to generate reports, how to use data – what is important
- Microsoft certified – everyone on campus.
- Easier WIFI access for visitors.
- Need some type of office to train, offer training to all faculty.
- Make access more obvious.
- Make computers more accessible to students in each classroom.
- Laptop lending, more computer labs to get technology in the forefront.
- Offer student services online “virtual office hours.”
- Incorporate data into every action plan.
- Technical support after 5pm and on weekends.
- Make WebAdvisor more user friendly (flip login).

Engagement & Communication

Strengths

- Community stakeholder newsletter – publicize internally.
- Focus on other industry programs beyond the most known (nursing, Ptec).
- Random Acts of Kindness - Micro scholarships.
- Individual communication of colleagues.
- Expanding engagement with HS students – recruitment (TRiO, College Connections).

- Community and ISD newsletters.
- Individualized engagement for students.
- Social media engagement.
- Communicate a sense of urgency.
- Administration willing to have these discussions about student success.
- Strategies to put into place to improve admissions.
- Admissions willing to evaluate the process.
- Student diversity is our asset – have them engage with each other.
- Have great student stories about success, overachieving obstacles, sharing them.
- College connections
- Reaching out to high schools – imbedded counselors in the schools – reaching out earlier.
- Use our employees as resources – best recruiters.
- Alumni – great outreach
- CHS and PTEC have great engagement and communication (mock interview, clear communication) workforce and credit programs can take these strengths to build on and expand.
- ISD Administrators breakfast – shared information and feedback.
- Live operator.
- Recognition of a need to improve communication.
- Engagement for students - variety of activities – community and welcoming of students.
- First Friday as additional communication.

Areas to improve

- Many “Don’t Knows” – our own people don’t know what is going on.
- Internal communication
- Web pages – update ALL department pages.
- Digitize and update information – newsletters, communication, etc.
- President’s report – send to everyone.
- Larger overview of existing data and reports – make available and communicate to everyone.
- Data availability – knowing what data/information exists.
- Lack of information about services available.
- Increase community involvement.
- Encourage employees to be more interested in what is going on elsewhere.
- Include all employees in the loop – President’s report.
- Consistency in outgoing messages.
- Increase cross dept. communication and cooperation.
- Increase self-awareness.
- Make staff feel valued and needed.
- Need to communicate more with students to tailor initiatives.
- Communication with feeder schools – reaching students.
- Following up with graduates – departments keeping track.
- Follow up with students who disappear.

- Devote resources (budget) to supporting the community.
- Improve ease of navigation of web pages for new students.
- Increase student service focus.
- Before areas make policies, get feedback from area it might impact.
- Consistent communication and language of processes with students.
- Community/public outreach.
- The value of student success being communicated.
- Focus on student's goals – what is success for the student and did they attain that goal when they exited?
- Need clear plan and resources to implement.
- Get on the same page to define student success.
- Need specific achievement goals.
- Communicate the positive.
- Internal discussions about success data and strategies.
- Are we communicating with students effectively – text instead of email?
- Disperse data that everyone can understand and use.
- All staff should know about all areas of the college.
- Staff and faculty need to engage more - # of people at world café.
- Culture of fear instead of sharing diverse ideas.
- We all need to challenge ourselves – we are all here for student success.
- Do we know our mission is student success?
- Assistance with answering phones/transferring too many times.
- Improve our customer service (internal & external).
- Use our manners – we can lose all enthusiasm.
- Would personal email be better to use for those who don't already have email?
- Make the students feel welcome – face to face help, someone to listen.
- Student's need consistent information – need training within departments.
- Are we willing to step beyond our job description? (go above and beyond)
- Have a backup for a staff member to help if someone is overburdened.
- Increase staff in Student Help Center.
- Communication for multiple steps in the process and changes in process.
- Communication with new students – more than a welcome email – send a letter.
- Need face to face communication with applicants and new students.
- At least three communications with applicants to get them as students – a special communication – signed letter from president.
- Need a culture of action for all students.
- We need to break the silos and share information so we all benefit.
- Share documentation, best practices.
- Complaints from students – regarding inability to speak to a live person.
- There is a disconnect between instruction and student services.
- More diverse communication with students – not just email
- Send out specific documents and links, not just a statement to check I-drive.
- Nurture/mentorship dynamic - include students in this role.

- Overall communication from top down.
- More prominent place for communications – make it easy to access (minutes, documents etc.).
- Educate students and staff on how to find information, next steps, etc.

Actions

- Internal report card summaries – Annual report of department activities.
- CE- Student completes recognition event.
- Job Fairs – business stakeholder, include information on what is needed to get these.
- Interview preparation
- Career exploration fair
- Bring back First Friday's with president.
- Forums for students with board members.
- Publicize success survey.
- Mentoring of students in departments.
- Focus group on web page usage.
 - Two clicks for important services – apply, advising, enrollment.
- Tracking system for students' interaction with services (student partner).
- Referral forms – next steps for students.
- 2+2 programs with 4 year colleges, plan out for transferring.
- Focus on student's goals, track if they achieve it.
- Find out what students want, what fits their reality.
- Community involvement and service would increase engagement.
- Undercover applicant/student go through the application process.
- When a call is answered take responsibility for caller – forward customer, answer the question or find the answer.
- Consistent staff meetings to talk about any issues that arise.
- Mystery caller for interdepartmental communication as well as student experience.
- Information department or desk for face to face help – students with knowledge to manage the desk.
- Recommendation for employees to staff the Help Center for a week to learn.
- Invite someone from another department to a staff meeting.
- Have divisional meetings to share information with other departments.
- Invite all students who have applied to an event – tour campus, inform them of their next steps.
- Examine everyone's processes for continuous improvement-remove fear factor of retaliation/firing.
- Have students forward com email to personal email.
- Mandatory training for customer service.
- House the operator in the Admin. Building or someone with the same knowledge for customer service.
- Virtual discussion/message board.

Equity

Strengths

- Multicultural committee includes students.
- HSI – grants
- Hispanic serving institution (success advisor), minority make initiative, male summit, STEM girls.
- Professional development funded by grant.
- Students are included more in the building processes and have a voice - hiring committees, etc.
- Addressing the gaps with African American males.
- Diversity and equity position at COM.
- Overcame the perception that COM does not hire diverse populations.
- Created place in innovations lab to allow ESL students to feel comfortable practicing English.
- Collaboration tables to let student work together in innovations
- COM is prepared to work with a diverse student population.
- Male minority for excellence.
- We have awareness of our issues and are willing to work on our weakness.
- We have a system to include outlier populations (ABE).
- Our Hispanic student population is at 28% which is greater than the population.
- We do analytical studies on our employee diversity and are in compliance.
- Our search committees are diverse.
- Low tuition rate.
- We have programs that target 1st generation students - Upward bound
- We have a fine arts department/theatre.
- Perception that hiring and retention policies are in place to attract equity and diversity.
- Initiative for all males.
- Upward Bound
- Title V grant pushed great initiatives.
- Speaking, Reading & Writing Center is a great strength.
- We have a very diverse student population.
- Tug of war mural highlights our equity.
- Data has improved.
- The campus is committed to the concept of equity.
- We know the diverse community we serve.
- Campus connections advisors.
- Cultural diversity training.

Areas to Improve

- Policies in place, but not carried out.
- Hiring issues lately - compression issues.
- Students have a hard time getting through financial aid. One person says one thing, another person says something else.
- Admissions process is kind of long, could be shortened.
- Need to give students more direction. They don't even know that they've been accepted.
- Meningitis shots should be offered free.

- Could do better in diversity in hiring across the board. Staff diversity should be closer to the student population we serve.
- Retention - Hispanic females stay, Hispanic and African American males do not stay, why? Have we worked on that?
- There's more than one minority male - Hispanics?
- HSI - need to focus more on Hispanics.
- Weakness in understanding equity.
- Communicate specific important information so everyone is aware of what is going on.
- Communications/survey regarding the programs/groups that we have and need.
- Need to improve on inclusivity and inclusive language across HR & students.
- Offering additional co-curricular activities, especially for evening students.
- Provide information to the institution showing student success data broken down by marginalized groups to determine which groups need assistance.
- Increase employee involvement in campus activities.
- Increase faculty awareness to deal with students and how they learn.
- Communication issues – ICAT data had 79 “I don’t know”, but data committee has this information. Need to send out and use the data.
- Employee training for diversity and equity, not just hiring committee; it's been done in the past, but not consistent.
- Communicate disaggregated data.
- View big picture more often.
- Reaching African American students.
- Communication
- Equity gets lost in sea of emails.
- Composition of faculty and staff to match service area.
- Understanding equity vs. equality.
- Bridge into non-credit/adjunct– equity into continuing education side.
- Better advertise services available – especially with continuing education
- Gap of services provided to credit vs. CE classes (ie: gym membership)
- Continuing to keep fair hiring practices – find qualified diverse candidates to fill positions.
- Relate to the students we serve – develop a model to help students.
- Access to data but does not get shared well.
- Provide more training to be able to serve our diverse populations.
- Is equity being shown in the classroom?
- Campus makeup does not reflect the student population.
- Overall COM advertises to diverse pool association, but we are not getting the applicants.
- An officer of diversity for students.
- Cultural training – day to day ex: handshakes.

Action

- Offer more employee training and workshops on diversity & equity.
- Broaden where HR positions are advertised. Evaluate HR processes, such as minimum requirements for job descriptions and screening process. Bilingual should be considered.
- Include retention in SEM plan.

- Offer something for bilingual students and employees.
- Need environmental scan/survey to gauge diversity and equity on campus. Send results (1 or 2 pages) to campus.
- Offer faculty diversity training - how can I help low income and diverse students?
- Offer literature in Spanish.
- Create data base of bilingual employees.
- Communicate data with employees - share and explain. Bite size reports.
- Employee compensation.
- Create other groups, such as student women's group.
- Include club information at New Student Orientation.
- Use inclusive language in our student handbook.
- Meningitis shot should be free and offered on campus.
- Reword catalog and schedule for 1st generation students to understand and offer definitions.
- Create a master list of resources for students in a central location (disability services, bilingual).
- Be aware of cultural sensitivity and be diverse in our publications.
- Include all populations when discussing diversity and equity (veterans).
- Communication
- Include equity in SEM plan, if it's not already.
- Curriculum - educate the campus on inclusion and social justice that is embedded.
- Get feedback from students.
- Ask ATD Coaches for help in how to accentuate equity across campus.
- BOT should be looking at data at monthly meeting.
- Advertise scholarships/grants.
- Accentuate student ambassadors.
- Increase visibility of faculty and staff at events.
- Campus definition of equity.
- Professional Development training with specific ways of how to treat students with equity. Need actionable ways to move forward (ie: case study, small webinar).
- Incorporate into strategic plan.
- Identify achievement gaps and create strategies (dialog) to close gaps.
- Helping students to feel connected.
- What model can we look at to obtain diverse population?
- Getting the message to the students about services.
- Facilitate student focus groups to see how we can better service diverse populations.
- Celebrate Italian heritage – missing from multicultural team.
- Simplify data to make it easier to understand and send to campus.
- Send student success point data to campus.
- Revisit some sort of Student Success Council.
- Staff meetings to discuss equity, especially including student feedback on how we can improve.
- Dig deep into topic of equity – consistent training.
- Follow through on supervisor training – make sure it is meaningful.
- Social justice series that allows faculty/staff to attend with diverse speakers.
- Student council for diversity.
- Why don't we have an office for diversity?

- Sign on door that states you are a safe place to talk about LGBT etc.
- Make ourselves approachable.

Leadership & Vision

Strengths

- COM employees have an overall vision of what student success is but it needs to be clearer.
- Unit Plans support mission, goals, and vision.
- Faculty supports and initiates student success and campus is unified in that vision.
- Students are noticing Dr. Nichols trying to get out there, meet with them and listen to them. He is approachable to students.
- The new President is setting a vision of openness and is a true leader.
 - Dr. Nichols is transparent and empowering. He is taking the reins and giving clear directions.
 - Dr. Nichols is in his “honeymoon phase” so right now everything is okay.
 - Dr. Nichols is challenging the status quo and asking things change that will make the way we do business more student centered
- New leadership equals new opportunities.
- The “Ask the President” and open forums with administration is a good way to facilitate communication with students
- Adjuncts bring great knowledge and experience to the campus
- The PDA fund to improve student success-investing in faculty and tutoring staff is great
- Overall consensus to helping students.
- Shared leadership for student success.
- It seems that more information is being given; however, it isn’t reaching the “boots on the ground” people.
- Adjunct Academy is great and needs to continue.
- Training modules for DE instructors is very good.

Areas to Improve

- Communication from BOT regarding data to support student success.
- Leadership has to come from the top down.
- All of the leaders need to be on the same page. We all have the same goals but have different ways of describing it and ways to get there.
- Define student success. It varies by student and employee.
- Improve overall communication across campus.
- Improve communication methods with students.
- Should make like comparisons (apples to apples) when looking at staffing, salaries, programs, and advisor presence.
- Consistency and stability in leadership and faculty members.
- Need to make COM first choice for students and faculty.
- Leadership and vision are a work in progress.

- Open dialogue and risk taking is not encouraged by college leaders.
- Retention
- Stable work environment
- Processes formatted by departments yet commonly used across campus.
- Students lack knowledge of resources available on campus.
- Students are intimidated to ask questions and don't understand our processes.
- Students are afraid to ask questions.
- Students don't know who to go to for issues.
- Student success isn't ever mentioned in the hiring process...except that one question on the application.
- Student success isn't always taken into consideration when college decisions are made (moving nursing advisor to the advising center).
- Involve more PT faculty in at campus events.
- Need to improve in-house training opportunities to better utilize the PDA funds.
- Leadership needs to give one cohesive message.
- Leadership needs to stop talking negatively about the BOT. It filters down and makes students uncomfortable with COM's stability.
- Faculty and staff are afraid of losing their jobs----there is a lack of trust in the administration.
- Boots on the ground people need to know the specific vision for the entire college so we can work toward that.
- Need more useful data that boots on the ground people can use.
- Policies are reactive and driven by practice vs. policy driving practice.
- We need better focus on collaboration.
- Lower/mid management not on same page as upper management regarding working collaboratively.
- Some (people/areas) decide they don't want to change anything because that is the way it has always been done and are resistant to change.
- Students need to be more involved in decision making.

Actions

- Provide training to BOT to help them understand data and ramifications behind their decisions.
- BOT transparency – BOT needs to report out the justification and processes used for decision making.
- Increase accuracy of communication and provide explanations for actions.
- Provide employee appreciation to better serve the students.
- More commonality and goals are needed.
- Survey more frequently with progress reports.
- First Friday meetings were very open.
- Make effort to communicate as a listening skill.
- Create team building opportunities.
- Celebrate and reward communication and risk taking.
- Create open dialogue opportunities.
- Provide on the spot awards.

- Obtain more feedback from students to measure student success.
- Determine students preferred method of contact.
- Dr. Nichols needs to clearly communicate his vision and other college leaders need to take action to ensure we reach his vision.
- Provide 360 evaluations.
- Need non-voting student trustee that preferably is paid a stipend.
- Need more true intrusive advising.
- Need to have administration go to the various areas to see what the students and staff are experiencing and what is really going on and what staff have to deal with.
- Administration needs to visit areas that students congregate to just talk to them.
- Administrators need to be more visible.
- Based on data---give us concrete goals....i.e. increase enrollment by ___%
- Need to invite PT/Adjunct faculty to employee recognition events and let them be eligible for employee of the month and teacher of the year, etc.
- People need to take responsibility and be held accountable.
- BOT and Administration need to have a common vision and be united.
- Administration should convey information to the campus before reading about it in the newspaper.
- BOT needs to get to know the leaders on campus.
- Data should be provided before meetings occur so people have time to digest the information before speaking.
- Provide more opportunities to get together (like today) and discuss college issues.
- Create a transition program for students to get into college or return to college, to get them acclimated.
- Front line people should be approachable and work well with students.
- Provide more education to students on the roles of the BOT, Pres. and Administration.
- Let students know what resources exist and have mechanisms in place to make it easy for the students to access those resources.
- Break down silos.
- BOT should be available to meet with the students in an open forum or something similar.
- BOT meetings should be moved to a later time so students, COM faculty, staff, and the community can attend.
- Provide more than student/faculty luncheon to facilitate more interaction between students, administrators, staff and faculty.
- Faculty and staff need to be comfortable that their voices are being heard, as this trickles down to the students who feel that if the people who work here aren't being heard, then students surely aren't going to be heard.
- Reinstigate the "rumor mill" or other discussion board for students to bring up issues and questions they want to raise, but are too afraid to ask.

Policies & Practices

Strengths

- Transparency and ability to communicate with administration.
- Clarifying rumors.
- Employees recognize that there is an issue with student success.
- Effort is being made to improve.
- Dr. Nichols formed a policy subcommittee.
- Knowledge about COM in the high schools.
- Enrollment has maintained but not increased.
- Student Planning implementation.
- Implementing co-req classes to get through developmental.
- Nursing admissions committees.
- ISD Administrators meetings held twice a year.
- Common course numbering and common core make it easier for students to know what will transfer.
- Committees are in place but composition could improve.
- The recently available Extension list is helpful; however it hasn't been distributed to all employees.
- Psych for Success classes.
- Welcome back events.
- College event communications.

Areas to Improve

- Strategic enrollment.
- May not make an impact when talking to administration.
- Regime changes.
- Communication (grape vine/culture of "rumors")
- Lack of follow through with students when trying to enroll (we wait for the student to make contact)
 - A checklist should be created.
 - Need to determine if students understand the process.
 - Acceptance letters should be sent via mail, not just email.
 - Students are unclear about where in the process they hit a roadblock.
- Improve communication and the conveying of information to students.
- Limited course offerings prevents students from progressing.
 - The courses students need to complete are often not available.
 - Students are sometimes referred to other colleges to complete requirements that can't be met at COM.
 - Systematically look at course offerings and assess needs.
 - Lack of class availability to complete specific areas.
- No post high school outreach.
- Awareness of policies and practices.
 - Not always easy to find current policies.
 - Not everyone is always aware of current practices.

- Lack of communication when policies have been revised.
- Streamline practices with involvement from correct parties.
- Provide awareness of college daily practices to the BOT.
- Implementation of policies should be made by the right people.
- Improve collaboration.
- Communicate changes that affect students to everyone so departments are aware.
- Student Success Council did not lead to anything.
- Clarification between policy, procedure, and practice is needed.
- Increase retention efforts by contacting students who drop out.
- Unclear who is responsible for evaluating policies.
- Strengthen relationships with 4-year institutions to ensure credits will transfer.
- Academic Progress Policy has been discussed for several years, but still not clearly implemented.
- Early Alert
 - Frustration from faculty who feel their alerts go through the process but get referred back to them.
- Lack of awareness about available resources.
- Disconnected efforts and lack of follow through.
- Student event time is limited and overlapping of events prevents participation.
- More awareness and better relationships with external stakeholders.
- Determine best form of communication with students and staff.
 - Use multiple means of communication with students.

Actions

- Send outreach surveys to determine how community would like to receive information about COM.
- Provide face to face opportunities for guidance through enrollment process (not just through email).
- Reinstitute acceptance letters.
- Adhere to policies in place rather than turning practice into policy. Ex. Online New Student Orientation
- More involvement at all levels when creating and implementing policies and practices.
- Create a communication plan for policy changes and how they affect the campus.
- Prevent policies from becoming barriers.
- Bring back articulation agreements with 4-year institutions.
 - 2+2 agreements (TSU agreement has recently been set up)
- Tuition rate for full-time students.
- Offer more 8-week courses.
- Evaluate course offering patterns.
 - Track courses students need but cannot get.
 - Create master schedules.
 - Increase collaboration between Advising and Instruction during planning of course offerings.
- Career Center – transition to workforce.
- Reverse articulation is handled at the university level but efforts should also be made by COM.
- Review previous work made by the Student Success Council and identify viable options to be implemented and followed through with.
- Use Convocation and New Employee Orientation to bring clarity to college.

- Increase use of SharePoint on campus.
- Create student cohorts. Ex. Pair Psych for Success with other core classes or virtual mentoring shell

Strategy & Planning

Strengths

- COM positively responded to planning focused on student success.
- External grant funding.
- Integrated into core work.
- Revenue and resources available.
- Lab resources.
- Good strategic plan.
- Strength in planning.
- Faculty and staff want students to be successful.
- Desire to improve processes.
- Culture of continuous improvement.
- Use of SPOL.
- Title V grant – capacity for professional development and innovation grants.
- Tap into strengths and skills of faculty and staff to continue grant initiatives.
- Professional development in available.
- Advising staff are working on improving individual relationships with students.

Areas to Improve

- Establishing the key performance indicators.
- Define student success by listening to our students.
- Align our mission towards the different needs of our students.
- Minimal involvement of faculty and staff.
- Short-term measures need to be defined.
- Better use of key performance indicators.
- Professional development needs to be aligned with student success and strategic plan.
- Student success goals need to be better defined.
- Better strategic plan is needed.
- Must have the right people at the table making strategic planning decisions.
 - Broader input during creation of strategic plan.
- Better communication of strategic planning process.
 - Internal coaches need to better communicate the strategic plan.
- Two versions of the plan needed – SACS version and layman’s version.
- Better implementation of the strategic plan.
 - Holding people accountable for implementation of plan.
 - More assurance that the plan will be implemented.
 - Better evaluation measures needed.
- External people need to assess, evaluate, and give input about the strategic plan.

- Promote culture within of willingness to change based on strategic plan.
- Better culture of continuous change.
- More staffing and resources are needed.
- Increase recruiting for COM programs.
- Better communication about the grants and funds available.
- Improve communication about student success.
- Improve the sharing of data regarding student success.
- Coordinate with community partners.
- Look at the difference between community and change.
- When a major change occurs, it is so overwhelming and scattered that nothing changes.
- Coordination and unity in a certain direction.
- Buy in from all across campus.
- Improve customer service.

Actions

- Faculty and staff need to be more involved in strategy and planning.
 - Focus groups to guide development of the strategic plan.
 - Define core processes and activities as plan is developed.
- Implement new strategic plan.
 - Strategic plan needs to be easily accessible and broken down into digestible portions.
 - Commit resources to fund the plan.
- Better definition of student success (key performance indicators).
- Increase grant opportunities.
- Better dissemination of key performance indicators.
- Better communication about the strategic plan.
- Better understanding of the new strategic plan.
- Buy in is needed for the new strategic plan.
- Discussion board for strategic plan development.
- Increase recruitment practices.
- Full implementation of SPOL is needed.
- Better communication throughout the college and ensuring that the information is consistent and relevant and will lead to action.
 - Share data regarding Student Success Points every semester to faculty and staff.
- Communicate COM's mission of student success to our students.

Teaching and Learning

Strengths

- Different formats for developmental education (advising techniques and co-requisite change)
- Quality faculty and department chairs.
- Diverse faculty and staff.
- Faculty are engaged and reaching out to assist students beyond the classroom.
- Receptive to innovative courses and programs.

- Large amount of programs.
- Adjunct Academy is good.
- Good IT and Media Services staff.
- Resources available for use of technology in educational practices.
- Funding for professional development.
- Data used in making decisions.
- Reading and Writing Center
- Library resources for students.
- Math Lab – different learning styles are supported.
- TRiO Program and availability of resources.
- Adult Education Program to improve student success.
- Innovation services available to students.

Areas to Improve

- Professional development process does not allow for equitability (first come, first serve and some faculty get more than others).
 - Increase professional development for adjuncts and offer incentives/compensation.
- Professional Development Academy – organize training sessions on campus.
- Increase length of Adjunct Academy.
- No train-the-trainer course available for adjuncts.
- Provide instructional designers across campus.
- Encourage educational attainment of employees.
- OPEAR turnaround is long and there is a limited amount of data accessibility in Colleague and OPEAR.
 - Increase communication about data available for faculty to use.
- Supplemental instruction and tutoring are not centralized.
- Offer online learning modules and incentives for completion (compensation).
- Improve training on accessing information on the Library's webpage.
- Online Learner Workshop needs improvement – not user friendly and turnaround time is long.
- Student Planning needs to be marketed and pushed more. Better communication about what classes are not in the degree plan.
- Offer more mock interviews for all areas.
- Career center services are needed.
- Improve course availability – dates and times.
- Increase communication to students about what services are available.

Actions

- Centralize tutoring and supplemental instruction.
- Continue Student Success Council.
- Make data for accessible.
- More involvement from Faculty Senate in instructional practices and support services.
- Bridge gap between Instruction and Student Services – cross functional collaboration.

- Better communication of services offered for students (accessing Students with Disabilities services/accommodations)
- Assign a point person in each department to answer questions instead of going to department head.
- Create a directory with roles and responsibilities of staff members.
- Include faculty section on Performance Evaluation that measures use of data to improve Instruction.
- Identify learning styles of students and use the best fit for each student.
- Better description of course content including teaching style. Ex: Heavy lecture.
- BOT approval of proposal to increase salaries for adjunct and 9 month faculty.
- Communicate availability of professional development to adjunct faculty.
- Create list of services available to students on one sheet to distribute.
- Consistently invite Speaking, Reading, and Writing Center to New Student Orientation.
- Create video of Speaking, Reading, and Writing Center services.
- Develop adjunct online learning courses and compile data analysis on course completion and correlation between course completion and student evaluation.
- Organize faculty to teach the train-the-trainer course.