

## **Potential Challenges Associated with Listening Session Themes**

### **Introduction**

This document outlines anticipated challenges related to strategic themes identified through feedback collected from internal stakeholder groups at Cuyahoga Community College (Tri-C). Input was gathered from faculty, staff, managers, and students, serving as valuable insights to guide the ongoing strategic planning process. This assessment employs a structured rubric that evaluates each theme based on stakeholder perceptions of potential challenges, rated on a scale from 1 to 10, where higher scores indicate greater perceived challenges. Each theme includes specific areas of concern detailed from stakeholder feedback, along with group-specific perspectives. This feedback serves as critical input into the development and refinement of the College's strategic transformation plan. Integrating this input thoughtfully will help Tri-C leadership proactively address potential barriers and facilitate a smoother institutional transformation.

Careful consideration of stakeholder feedback is essential for Tri-C's strategic implementation planning. The insights gathered represent firsthand experiences and perspectives from across the College community, highlighting both explicit and implicit barriers that may influence strategic efforts. Thoughtful integration of these perspectives into planning processes ensures strategies are not only practical and feasible but also aligned with institutional culture and operational realities. Addressing stakeholder concerns regarding communication, resources, and institutional culture can significantly mitigate resistance, fostering a more collaborative environment. Clearly acknowledging the role stakeholder input plays in strategic planning will also reinforce organizational trust and support an atmosphere of transparency and participatory decision-making, enhancing Tri-C's ability to achieve its strategic objectives.

## **Rubric and Scoring Methodology Description**

The rubric employed to assess these challenges was designed based on direct feedback collected from comprehensive listening sessions involving faculty, staff, managers, and students. Each strategic theme was evaluated against clearly defined "Areas of Tension," explicitly identified by stakeholders during feedback sessions.

Stakeholders provided qualitative feedback in the form of direct quotes, detailing their concerns, perceptions, and experiences related to each thematic area. ChatGPT analyzed this qualitative input to derive quantitative scores using two main criteria:

1. **Frequency and Prevalence:** The scores reflect how frequently stakeholders referenced specific concerns within the themes. Repeated mentions of similar concerns across various stakeholder groups increased the assigned scores, indicating broader perceived challenges.
2. **Intensity and Language:** The type of language and emotional intensity used in stakeholder comments were also evaluated. Expressions of strong concern, urgency, or explicit dissatisfaction significantly contributed to higher scoring, reflecting greater perceived challenges.

Scores were then assigned on a scale from 1 to 10 to reflect perceptions of potential challenge intensity:

### **Scoring Key:**

- **1–2:** Minimal Challenge
- **3–4:** Low Challenge
- **5–6:** Moderate Challenge
- **7–8:** Significant Challenge
- **9–10:** Critical Challenge

## Summary of Overall Scores

<b><u>Strategic Theme</u></b>	<b><u>Average Score</u></b>	<b><u>Anticipated Challenge Level</u></b>
Transformational Change and Agility	7.0	Significant
Holistic Belonging and Student Success	7.25	Significant
Innovative, Future-Ready Learning Models	6.25	Moderate-to-Significant
Authentic Partnerships and Community Impact	4.75	Moderate
Empowered Culture, Clear Communication, Bold Leadership	7.25	Significant
Crosscutting Theme: Lifelong Educational Value and Skills-Based Design	6.5	Moderate-to-Significant

## Detailed Breakdown of Sources of Challenges by Theme

### 1. Transformational Change and Agility

Rated as a significant challenge, this theme is predominantly driven by internal cultural resistance, reflecting substantial concerns about faculty disenfranchisement and systemic responsiveness. Bureaucratic complexity further compounds the situation, highlighting a clear need for institutional streamlining and enhanced adaptability mechanisms.

<u>Area of Tension</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Score</u>
<b>Internal Cultural Resistance</b>	Level of anticipated internal resistance, trust deficits, and faculty disenfranchisement.	<b>8</b>
<b>System Responsiveness</b>	Current capacity to quickly adapt and implement institutional changes.	<b>7</b>
<b>Bureaucratic Complexity</b>	Institutional complexity potentially hindering swift transformation.	<b>7</b>
<b>Curricular Integration of New Skills</b>	Effort required to embed skill certifications and competency frameworks.	<b>6</b>

Average: 7.0 (Significant Challenge)

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### 2. Holistic Belonging and Student Success

This theme emerged as one of the most challenging areas, primarily due to difficulties in aligning resources equitably and consistently institutionalizing equity practices. Stakeholders expressed notable concern regarding shared accountability, emphasizing the importance of cross-departmental coordination and clear communication of support services.

<u>Area of Tension</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Score</u>
<b>Resource Alignment for Equity</b>	Extent of budgetary and resource alignment with holistic student support goals.	<b>8</b>
<b>Institutionalizing Equity Practices</b>	Anticipated difficulty in embedding equity consistently across services and curriculum.	<b>8</b>
<b>Communication and Awareness of Services</b>	Current visibility and student awareness of comprehensive support services.	<b>6</b>
<b>Cross-Departmental Equity Accountability</b>	Challenges related to shared accountability for equitable outcomes institution-wide.	<b>7</b>

Average: 7.25 (Significant Challenge)

### 3. Innovative, Future-Ready Learning Models

Moderate-to-significant challenges here include faculty and institutional readiness to adopt innovative pedagogies and emerging technologies like AI. Curricular flexibility, faculty development, and experiential integration are seen as significant, but manageable, areas for strategic enhancement.

<b><u>Area of Tension</u></b>	<b><u>Description</u></b>	<b><u>Score</u></b>
<b>Curricular Flexibility and Modularity</b>	Institutional capacity to introduce and expand modular and flexible curricular structures (micro-credentials).	<b>6</b>
<b>Technological Adoption (AI)</b>	Faculty and institutional preparedness for adopting AI and other emerging technologies.	<b>7</b>
<b>Real-World and Experiential Integration</b>	Current capability to systematically integrate internships, experiential learning, and industry engagement.	<b>6</b>
<b>Faculty Training and Development</b>	Extent of professional development needed to achieve and sustain innovative curriculum approaches.	<b>6</b>

Average: 6.25 (Moderate-to-Significant Challenge)

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### 4. Authentic Partnerships and Community Impact

This area presents moderate challenges, with relatively balanced stakeholder confidence regarding the College's readiness for authentic community collaboration and structured partner engagement. Improvement opportunities center on cross-sector coordination and expanding community presence.

<b><u>Area of Tension</u></b>	<b><u>Description</u></b>	<b><u>Score</u></b>
<b>Community Collaboration and Co-design</b>	Existing institutional culture and readiness for authentic community partnerships.	<b>5</b>
<b>Cross-Sector Coordination</b>	Complexity and effort required to build effective partnerships across different sectors (industry, nonprofit, civic).	<b>5</b>
<b>Expansion of Community Presence</b>	Institutional challenges to expanding physical and digital community engagement effectively into underserved areas.	<b>5</b>
<b>Structured Alumni and Partner Engagement</b>	Current readiness and infrastructure to leverage alumni mentorship and structured partnerships.	<b>4</b>

Average: 4.75 (Moderate Challenge)

## 5. Empowered Culture, Clear Communication, Bold Leadership

Marked as significantly challenging, this theme underscores concerns about trust, transparency, and participatory governance. Faculty and staff feedback particularly emphasize the perceived disconnect between leadership and operational realities, suggesting a critical need for improved communication and leadership development infrastructures.

<u>Area of Tension</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Score</u>
<b>Transparent Communication</b>	Degree of challenge in achieving effective and transparent communication across all College levels.	8
<b>Participatory Decision-Making</b>	Existing challenges in implementing robust participatory governance and inclusive leadership practices.	7
<b>Leadership Development Infrastructure</b>	Institutional readiness to identify and nurture internal leadership capabilities.	6
<b>Trust and Cultural Alignment</b>	Anticipated challenges regarding internal trust-building and alignment between leadership and frontline staff/faculty.	8

Average: 7.25 (Significant Challenge)

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## Crosscutting Theme: Lifelong Educational Value and Skills-Based Design

Stakeholders identify moderate-to-significant challenges related to integrating credit and non-credit programs, managing stackable credentials, and maintaining robust industry alignment. Communicating these lifelong learning pathways effectively to diverse populations also emerges as an important area for attention.

<u>Area of Tension</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Score</u>
<b>Integration of Credit/Non-Credit Programs</b>	Complexity and effort required for coherent integration of credit and non-credit pathways.	7
<b>Stackable Credentials and Pathways</b>	Institutional readiness to rapidly develop and manage stackable credential systems effectively.	6
<b>Employer and Industry Alignment</b>	Effort needed to consistently align credentials and learning outcomes with employer needs and expectations.	6
<b>Visibility and Market Communication</b>	Current ability to effectively communicate and market lifelong learning opportunities across diverse demographics.	7

Average: 6.5 (Moderate-to-Significant Challenge)

## Tri-C Challenges by Stakeholder

### Scoring Key:

- 1–2: Minimal Challenge
- 3–4: Low Challenge
- 5–6: Moderate Challenge
- 7–8: Significant Challenge
- 9–10: Critical Challenge

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### Summary of Overall Scores by Stakeholder

<b><u>Strategic Theme</u></b>	<b><u>Faculty</u></b>	<b><u>Staff</u></b>	<b><u>Managers</u></b>	<b><u>Students</u></b>	<b><u>Average</u></b>
Transformational Change and Agility	8	7	7	5	6.75
Holistic Belonging and Student Success	8	7	7	6	7.00
Innovative, Future-Ready Learning Models	7	6	7	5	6.25
Authentic Partnerships and Community Impact	6	6	7	4	5.75
Empowered Culture, Clear Communication, Bold Leadership	9	8	7	6	7.50
Crosscutting Theme: Lifelong Educational Value and Skills-Based Design	7	6	7	5	6.25

## Detailed Breakdown of Sources of Challenges by Stakeholder

### 1. Transformational Change and Agility

<u>Stakeholder</u>	<u>Major Concerns from Feedback</u>	<u>Score</u>
<b>Faculty</b>	Resistance to frequent changes, disenfranchisement, need to rebuild trust, concerns about managerial layers over teaching mission.	<b>8</b>
<b>Staff</b>	Frustration with bureaucratic complexity, desire for streamlined processes, and clearer pathways to agility.	<b>7</b>
<b>Managers</b>	Concerns about institutional inertia and challenges aligning programs swiftly with rapidly changing market needs.	<b>7</b>
<b>Students</b>	Recognition of necessity of change; however, anxiety about ensuring education aligns closely with real-world outcomes.	<b>5</b>

Average: 6.75 (Significant Challenge)

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### 2. Holistic Belonging and Student Success

<u>Stakeholder</u>	<u>Major Concerns from Feedback</u>	<u>Score</u>
<b>Faculty</b>	Strong advocacy for comprehensive support services; concern about equity practices being episodic rather than systemic.	<b>8</b>
<b>Staff</b>	Desire for clearer accountability measures, concerns about resources not matching stated institutional equity goals.	<b>7</b>
<b>Managers</b>	Concerns around aligning equity goals with resource allocation, consistency in equitable practices across departments.	<b>7</b>
<b>Students</b>	Deep appreciation for holistic services but highlighted challenges regarding awareness and visibility of these supports.	<b>6</b>

Average: 7.0 (Significant Challenge)



### 3. Innovative, Future-Ready Learning Models

<u>Stakeholder</u>	<u>Major Concerns from Feedback</u>	<u>Score</u>
<b>Faculty</b>	Emphasis on the significant need for professional development and potential resistance to adopting AI and emerging technologies.	<b>7</b>
<b>Staff</b>	Recognition of the need for agile program designs; moderate concerns about institutional support for innovation in curriculum and pedagogy.	<b>6</b>
<b>Managers</b>	Awareness of challenges in developing and implementing flexible, technology-enhanced curriculum rapidly enough to meet market demands.	<b>7</b>
<b>Students</b>	High enthusiasm for practical, real-world learning; moderate concern regarding current access and consistency of experiential learning opportunities.	<b>5</b>

Average: 6.25 (Moderate-to-Significant Challenge)

### 4. Authentic Partnerships and Community Impact

<u>Stakeholder</u>	<u>Major Concerns from Feedback</u>	<u>Score</u>
<b>Faculty</b>	Interest in community collaboration; moderate concerns about institutional mechanisms for genuine co-creation and involvement.	<b>6</b>
<b>Staff</b>	Recognition of potential challenges around comprehensive community outreach and creating effective, sustained partnerships.	<b>6</b>
<b>Managers</b>	Highlighting the complexity of managing cross-sector collaborations and effectively coordinating efforts across different community stakeholders.	<b>7</b>
<b>Students</b>	Positive towards community-focused initiatives; minor concerns about visibility and integration of existing community engagement programs.	<b>4</b>

Average: 5.75 (Moderate Challenge)

## 5. Empowered Culture, Clear Communication, Bold Leadership

<b><u>Stakeholder</u></b>	<b><u>Major Concerns from Feedback</u></b>	<b><u>Score</u></b>
<b>Faculty</b>	Significant concerns about top-down decision-making, lack of participatory governance, trust deficits, and insufficient communication clarity.	<b>9</b>
<b>Staff</b>	High frustration around perceived disconnect between senior leadership decisions and frontline realities; need for improved communication.	<b>8</b>
<b>Managers</b>	Moderate-to-high concern around insufficient communication mechanisms and challenges to effective participatory decision-making.	<b>7</b>
<b>Students</b>	Desire for more consistent and timely communication regarding institutional decisions affecting student life.	<b>6</b>

Average: 7.5 (Significant-to-Critical Challenge)

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## Crosscutting Theme: Lifelong Educational Value and Skills-Based Design

<b><u>Stakeholder</u></b>	<b><u>Major Concerns from Feedback</u></b>	<b><u>Score</u></b>
<b>Faculty</b>	Moderate-to-high concern regarding complexities of integrating credit and non-credit programs into coherent pathways and embedding lifelong learning concepts.	<b>7</b>
<b>Staff</b>	Recognition of implementation challenges, especially around clear communication and visibility of lifelong learning offerings.	<b>6</b>
<b>Managers</b>	Concerns about aligning rapidly evolving workforce requirements with flexible, modular credentials; complexity in industry validation processes.	<b>7</b>
<b>Students</b>	Strong positive response to lifelong learning but moderate concerns regarding clarity of pathways and visibility of stackable credential offerings.	<b>5</b>

Average: 6.25 (Moderate-to-Significant Challenge)

## Conclusion

The anticipated challenges highlighted in this document provide crucial insights drawn directly from stakeholder feedback, which are essential for informing Tri-C's strategic planning efforts. Notable areas of concern identified by stakeholders, including "Transformational Change and Agility," "Holistic Belonging and Student Success," and "Empowered Culture, Clear Communication, Bold Leadership," reflect consistent themes regarding internal cultural dynamics, resource allocation, communication clarity, and collaborative governance. Recognizing and proactively addressing these challenges will better position the College for successful strategic outcomes by reducing potential resistance and improving resource alignment and internal communication processes.

To effectively navigate these perceived challenges, it is recommended that Tri-C leadership maintain sustained stakeholder engagement, ensuring continuous feedback mechanisms and clear communication throughout the implementation stages. Cultivating an inclusive institutional culture that values stakeholder perspectives will build trust and strengthen collaborative relationships across all College groups.

Ultimately, by treating stakeholder feedback as informative input rather than definitive strategic directives, Tri-C can transform identified challenges into actionable opportunities for growth and innovation. This approach not only supports immediate strategic execution but also establishes a foundation for long-term institutional resilience and excellence, ultimately advancing Tri-C's broader mission and community impact.

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For any questions regarding these listening sessions or this document, please reach out to [Gregory Stoup](#), Vice President of Institutional Progress and Effectiveness.