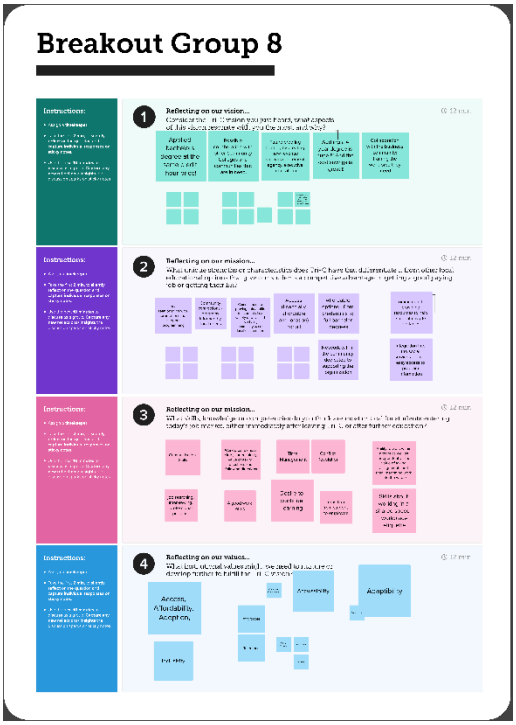
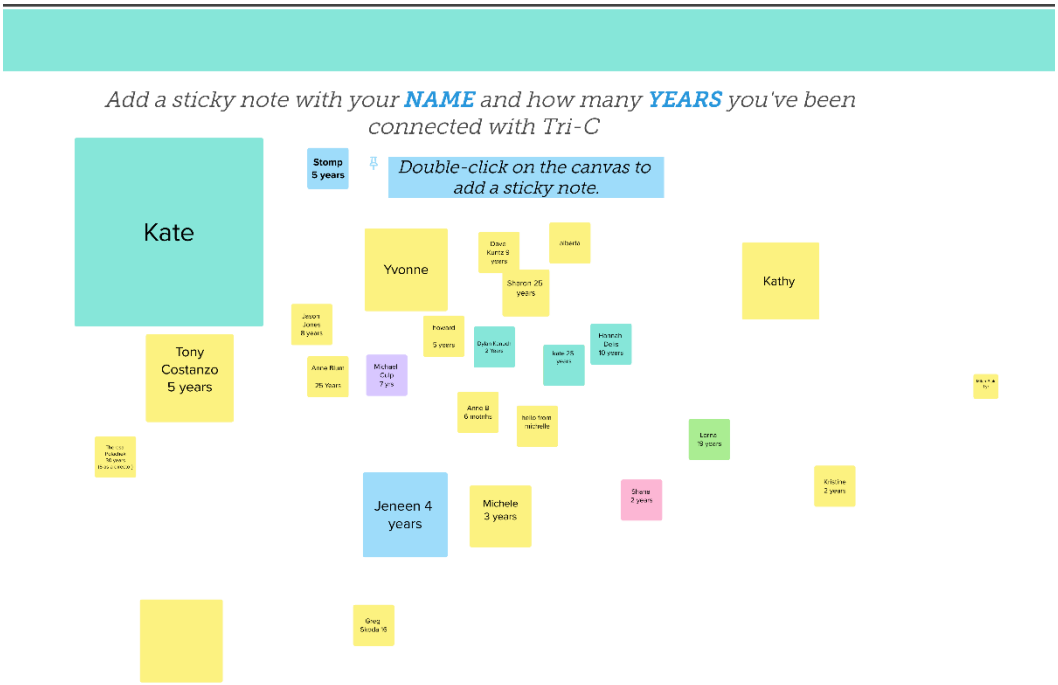
Listening Session Summary
Tri-C Foundation Board
Thursday, February 20, 2025





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Question 1

Reflecting on our Vision: Consider the context and vision casting message you just heard, what resonated with you the most? What challenges do you see?

Summary

Immediate action is needed to address declining enrollment and the changing needs of students in Northeast Ohio.

The Foundation Board emphasized the importance of community impact, strategic planning, and innovation, the focus is on collaboration with businesses, community partnerships, and understanding generational needs. Affordability, accessibility, and removing barriers like food and housing insecurities are critical.

The introduction of applied bachelor's degrees at lower costs and the need for multiple revenue streams are highlighted.

The role of the Foundation is crucial in enabling access and focus. Ultimately, the goal is to provide transformative education, economic opportunities, and a sense of belonging while maintaining the mission.

Responses

Accreditation and Program Expansion
Addiing a 4 year degree is huge!!!! And the cost savings is great!!!
Applied bachelors degree at the same credit hour price!
Need for accreditation given all the new programs (4 year) planned.
Adapting to Technological Innovations
innovation
innovation and non-traditional approaches - what are the unintended implications and how do we get ahead of those
Strategies around technology of the future (AI)
Technology is changing rapidly = skills must also change
Ambition and Opportunity
ambition
Ambition meets opportunity
loved the reference to linking ambitions to opportunities
Barrier-Free Educational Support
reducing barriers
removing obsticles
The need to eliminate barriers as a way to affirmatively help moving forward
Call for Immediate Action and Strategic Planning
Be willing to think/work outside the box as part of executing on the vision.
can't do it alone - need to engage others
Data and how it's used to tell the story of need

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Immediate action needed
Must work to effectively regenerate public support
Need to re-think our norms; act differently
sense of urgency - act now
Strategic planning NOW is critical
That we don't have time to waste, we need to be moving now.
The urgency of need to define next steps
Timely marketing campaign
Understanding the generational needs

Community Engagement and Sustainability

cmmunity support shrinking
Collaboration with the business community; training the workforce they need
community impact
community partnerships
community support
connecting the college with community.
Consolidation/partnerships
Long term viability of the organization... what it takes to sustain ourselves and community impact
measure of success is broad - its about the community
Possible collaboration with other Community Colleges and communities that are in need.
power of collective
Recognizes that transforming communities starts with an individual's needs
sense of belonging
the connection to our diverse communities

Diversifying Degree Programs

Addition of Applied Bachelor degrees
Applied bachelors degrees
Bachelor's degrees--additional offerings
Lower cost for bachelor's degrees

Emphasizing Communication and Access

Focus on access

Empowering College Aspirations

How to get high choolers to talk about going to college? Have aspirations
I went to college because my peer group went to college.
Job placement on campus

Empowering Student Opportunities

creating the systems that help students overcome social/economic opportunities
helping students see their future by making them aware of their opportunities
helping students see their opportunity

Enabling Student Success

Clarity of school model
providing access to start future students on the right path
the role of the Foundation is increasingly cirtical to enable student access and focus

Enhancing Affordability and Funding

accessibility
affordability
affordabilityproacrive approach.

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Enhancing Toga Parties and Resources
strengthen
Enrollment and Demographic Challenges
Declining enrollment
Demographic shift = declining enrollment & challenges
North East Ohio seeing major population headwinds so going to be challenging to continue to grow enrollment
overcoming demographic trends
some of the stats around the student population may discourage more traditional students
Impactful Opportunity Development
Economic opportunity
Provides economic impact
Provides opportunity for generational impact
Improving Community College Outreach and Services
Strengthen student services
Inclusive Education Support
foundation message may dissuade those that don't have barriers... need to demonstrate it is for all students
make sure taht we are removing the barriers to education like food and housing insecurity
Students want system that overcomes barriers
Other
case for change - data driven
differentiating between certification, degree, and professional programs in a visual manner
Doubling down on the mission
emphasis on ambition, and ultimately impact on health of our region
Engage the community to understand the true value add of the programs to allow for better pipeline of students and successful outcome.
For all
Grabbing people off of the SNH virtual bus and putting them on fhe Tri-C bus
I though it conneced well to the Tri the Tri C brand
Increasing student ambition
Life changing education
Must make the clear case between completion and job/career opportunities
obstacles to success
Opportunities look different to different students
resonates most is focus on workforce an having an employment agency
Students demand ROI
Students want sense of belonging
the botanical garden v flower shop analogy was powerful
thrive and succeed
Transformative
two major milestones ahead of us (accreditation and levy) not that far away
Understand where students' ambition comes from
vision stays true to the Mission
Will a rebrand be necessary for the bachelor degree addition portion of the vision to work (stigma around community college)
Revenue Diversification and Sustainability
Additional revenue sources
Development of multiple separate and distinct funding streams for the College

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Future proofing funding by creating new revenue streams (placement agency, executive education)
Internal placement agency, would like to learn more

Strategic Focus on Access and Agility

Access is still at the forefront with strategic shifts/adds. (Hannah)
Agility is important
How do we compete in the online market place
The need to stay focused on the goals despite the times

Student Support and Education Access

can we help overcome a culture of non-education?
Student economic challenges--housing, food insecurity
Students juggle jobs, classes, family

Sustainable Economic Growth Strategies

Multi-directionality of model
the idea of multiple, creative revenue streams
understanding of different paths

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Question 2

Reflecting on our Mission: What unique strengths or characteristics does Tri-C have that differentiate it from other local educational options that give our students a competitive advantage in getting a good paying job or getting their BA?

Summary

Tri-C offers affordable tuition and accessible education through multiple campuses and strong community partnerships. The institution is committed to affordability, providing wrap-around services, and having strong corporate connections to ensure job readiness. Tri-C offers a variety of programs, including credentials, associate, and bachelor's degrees, with an emphasis on lifelong learning and innovative approaches.

The college maintains a strong presence in the community, supports students financially through scholarships, and focuses on student success and outcomes.

Tri-C's experienced faculty, leadership, and comprehensive support services contribute to its positive reputation and adaptability to meet the needs of non-traditional students.

Responses

Affordable Education Access
Access (financially affordable and location) for all
accessibility
affordability
Affordabiltiy
Affordable options - from credentials to full bachelor degrees
Affordable tuition
cost! value of the offering for the cost as compared to other options
funding model
good financial tax structure
low cost, high accessibility to programs
More easily adaptive
Campus Accessibility
access - multiple campuses
Facilities across all of Cuyahoga County.
location location location
Multiple campuses in region
multiple locations
multiple locations across the region
CMSD Student Partnership
all CMSD students auto-enrolled
CMSD partnership
Connection to CMSD students
partnership with CMSD to admit all students
Community Engagement
A strong presence in the community
focus on community impact

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good community support
Partners in community

Community Program Alignment

Community connections - programs informed by local needs
connectivity to business community
strong community connections

Comprehensive Student Support

commitment to providing resources to help student navigte obstacles.
providing support and wrap-around services that meet students where they are
range of services that support students so they can focus on education not other stressors

Corporate Partnerships and Engagement

Community partnerships - specifically inviting employers in to curriculum design, sharing soft/durable skill focus areas or needs, etc. (Hannah)
Connectivity to key influencers
Corporate connections
Established relationships with employers in a wide variety of industries
How to engage the small to mid-size employers in what Tri-C is doing.
partnerships with corporations
relationships and partnerships with employers in the region
Strong corporate partnerships

Diverse Program Offerings

2+2 programs give Associate Degree grads access to higher paying jobs while finishing their BS
cost effective 4 yr program no assoc college provide
Credential programs
Enrepreneurial programs have potential to help students gain financial literacy
Successful outcomes in specific majors/programs
Variety of options (2 year, 4 year, certificates)

Educational Program Diversity

non-credit programs
Programs for everyone
range of programs - the four components of the overall system of opportunities
variety of educational options (but.. are all still viable)
variety of programs / paths

Experienced Faculty Leadership

Dr. Baston well known in community college world
Experienced faculty
Our talented President , faculty and staff
strength of faculty

Faculty and Student Focus

350 tenured professors
College has a good brand, positive image
Generations of students attending at the same
knowledgeable faculty
Student first culture

Innovative Education Programs

Deep curriculum
disruptive vision & willingness to take smart risks

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Hands on training. Need more on the soft skills.
Innovative culture
Lifelong learning
Practical useful education that can be immediately applied
Programs which resonate with the students of today
Willingness to try new and creative approaches to education

Other

are we being efficient? doing too much? trying to be all things to all people?
compelling leader
connectivity to local public and private sector organizations
education options reflect the life/work needs of non-traditional students
excellent facilities
favorable repurtation
flexible schedules and modality
great community partner
Integration into the social services fabric = easy access to program information
Local relationships with corporations that support programming
multiple aveues to success
Network within the community dedicated to supporting the organization
partnership with four-year institutions
reach and breadth; embedded in the community with reach
Reputation for comprehensive training in the employer community
Strong levy support; and capital campaign support
support services and affordability
the community partners Tri C has established
value
we care!
Wealth of institutional resources

Skills Development Focus

adaptability
Job readiness
Perseverance
Wayne

Strong Leadership and Governance

active board
Consistent strong leadership
Great board members
humility - listening to constituents
visible leadership

Student Financial Support

graduating with little to no student debt
Scholarships
Strong scholarship support for students
Student transfer

Student Success Commitment

100 % of students are accepted

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Cammittment to proving entry poitts for students in a variety of ways nad eve haing community based locations to enter
Invested in student success
We understand and try to address the unique challenges our students face.

Student Support Services

Sense of belongingthrough wrap-around support services
wrap around services, all CMSD kids are accepted, strong ties to community groups
Wrap-around services (Hannah)
Wraparound services for students like food pantries
Wraparound support
Wrap-around support services

Tri-C Institutional Support

Tri-C allows life to not get in the way of learning
Tri-C Foundation Board
Tri-C Jazz Fest

Workforce Development Focus

High growth workforce focus
Responsive to regional employers' hiring needs
That Tri C is very outcomes focused on work placement

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Question 3

Reflecting on our Mission: What skills, knowledge or competencies do you think are most critical for students entering today's job market, either immediately after leaving Tri-C or after further education?

Summary

The Foundation Board identified several key skills and traits for success include adaptability, flexibility, resilience, self-awareness, effective communication (both verbal and written), problem-solving, critical thinking, work ethic, financial literacy, collaboration, time management, social and networking skills, leadership, a positive attitude, and a continuous learning mindset.

These encompass both soft and technical skills, emphasizing the importance of being able to adapt to changes, handle feedback, work within a team, and navigate the modern workplace effectively.

Responses

Adapting to Change
Ability to adapt to a changing world
ability to influence
able to handle rejection
adaptability, flexibility
Adaptability/ flexibility
career flexibility
change - ready - ability to adapt
curiosity - ability to ask questions, be inquisitive
Flexibility
flexibility and adaptability
Flexibility, adaptability
open-mindedness
remain affordable
Resilience
self awareness and adapting to feedback
Timeliness
Willingness to forge unknown paths
AI Awareness and Transition
AI understanding - how to use in daily work or how impacts area of specialty
basic financial fundamentals - how businesses make money
Financial awareness. How to help an employer be successful.
financial literacy
Know to ask for help
Knowing how to find information
transition from student to employee
Critical Problem Solving
basic math competencies
Conflict Resolution
Creative problem solving

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Critical Thinking
critical thinking skills
critical thought
general common sense and how it supports your trained expertise
Problem solving
Problem solving & critical thinking
problem solving and critical thinking
solution seekers

Curiosity and Continuous Learning

curiosity
Desire to continue learning
life long learner mentality

Effective Communication

communication - verbal and written skills
Communication & interviewing skills --ie: elevator pitch
communication skill sets and Interviewing training
communication skills
communication skills
Communication: verbal and written
effective communication skills without using a smartphone
Student's ability to communicate or "sell" their skills /experiences and/or identifying skill adjacencies (Hannah)
the soft skills of communication, awareness, discipline, self-promotion are critical
The ability to communicate verbally

Networking and Collaboration

networking skills & approach
Skills about working in a shared space - workplace etiquette
Social / collaboration skills (Soft skills)

Other

Applied Experiences
Assertiveness, speak their mind
communication of resources available will ensure student success to the degree that students will engage
Communications skills
Community support/interest in giving back
effective listening
ensure an understanding of what is current/contemporary in the market vs existing curriculum
Entrepreneurial skills
Excitement for work
Familiarity and comfort with technology
find a way to engage with community
job searching, interviewing, professional presence
leadership traits
life skills support
mix of trades and business/ entrepreneurship
planning and organizing skills
positive attitude
sense of entrepreneurship
Verbal and written communication

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visionaries/ change agent
work experience/internships
Workforce readiness skills, understanding value of asking questions and following directions

Personal Resilience

accountability
Confidence
empathy
Grit
Overcome obstacles
Perseverance

Professional Skills Development

networking skills
soft skills - professional development
technical skills

Social Interaction and Relationships

Ability to build relationships
Ability to develop and maintain relationships
The ability to interact socially

Soft Skills and Business Acumen

Both technical skills around technology and AI, but also soft skills. showing up on time, interacting in person, pushing through challenges
self help abilities
skills plus business acumen - how ensure both?
Soft skills
soft skills
soft skills, showing up on time
soft/durable skills (Hannah)

Team Collaboration and Management

Ability to work within a team as well as independently the value of taking assignments and then integrating work into the whole
collaboration
multitasking/juggle and prioritization
project management
Team player/collaborative
Time Management
time management - how to juggle multiple priorities across work and life

Work Ethic and Values

A good work ethic
EQ is far more important than IQ
how to be a responsible contributor to our society
Morality
Organizational understanding
sense of purpose
Understanding of importance of commitment, reliability, hardwork
Understanding of Workplace culture
work ethic
work ethic, dependability, integrity,

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Question 4

Reflecting on our Values: What institutional values might we need to nurture or develop further to meet the challenges ahead?

Summary

The Tri-C Foundation Board identified several key institutional values that should be nurtured or further developed to meet future challenges. Their responses emphasize the importance of empathy, compassion, flexibility, adaptability, and resilience in fostering a supportive and inclusive environment for students.

Additionally, they highlighted the need to strengthen educational excellence, student experience, faculty development, and continuous improvement to drive innovation and quality. Core values such as integrity, accountability, ethics, respect, humility, and trust were also noted as essential for maintaining a strong institutional culture.

To enhance community engagement and accessibility, the Board emphasized affordability, inclusivity, sustainability, and partnership building as priorities. Finally, they underscored the importance of technology, critical thinking, self-reliance, and risk-taking in preparing students for the evolving workforce.

Overall, the focus remains on creating a dynamic and forward-thinking institution that prioritizes student success, faculty growth, and strong community connections.

Responses

Accessibility and Accountability
accessibility
accessibilty
accountibiity
Adaptability and Resilience
adaptability
Adaptibility
Connectivity
Flexibility
flexibility and creativity
Resilience
responsiveness
Affordability and Accessibility
Accwssibility
affordability
Affordable
Community Collaboration
collaboration
Collaboration (with industry, other institutions, etc)
community engagement
community listening and connection

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Community Engagement
community
community engagement
CommunityCommitment
connections
Creativity and Innovation
Creative
Creativity
Entrepreneursim
innovation
Innovative
Empathy and Compassion
caring
Compassion
empathy
responsible
supportive
Inclusivity
Inclusion
inclusivity
inclusivity
Other
Access (Hannah)
Access for all
Access, Affordability, Adoption,
accountability
analytical thinking
collaboration
continuous improvement
Critical Thinking
customer service
Energized teams (it's going to take a lot to get there)
inclusiveness
inquisitiveness
integrity
legacy
partnership building
quality vs. quantity
Remaining current
Self Reliance
students are at the center of everything
succession planning
sustainability
technology
the best ROI
Trust and trustworthy
Truth sincerely faithful resilience

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Value should exceed the cost.

Risk and Tolerance

appreciation of incredibly varied circumstances
embracing risk
Risk Taking
Tolerance

Student Support and Excellence

campus/student experience
Educational Excellence (Hannah)
excellence in academics and work
Help students find their 'ambition' to take advantage of those opportunities
help students self-promote
training & development of faculty

Wellness and Ethics

ethics
Humility
mental/emotional wellness
moral compass
respect/civility

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Strategies to Thrive

What strategies should Tri-C consider to do more than meet the challenges ahead, but thrive?

Summary

To not only meet future challenges but thrive, the Tri-C Foundation Board recommends a strategic focus on access, flexibility, and collaboration in higher education. Strengthening communication and community engagement while maintaining fiscal responsibility will be key to sustaining long-term success.

The Board emphasizes the importance of building strong partnerships with other institutions and industries to expand student opportunities and career pathways. Additionally, Tri-C should prioritize high-impact initiatives, work to increase endowment growth, and explore strategic acquisitions of struggling colleges to broaden its reach and influence.

By fostering innovation, resource sustainability, and community alignment, Tri-C can position itself as a leader in higher education and workforce development.

Responses

Emphasizing Communication and Access
Be bold
Clear Communication
Flexibility
Keep access at the forefront
Enhancing Higher Education Partnerships
Connect more with small and mid-size employers.
Develop deep partnerships with other higher ed institutions, reduce under performing certificate/degree programs,
Further cultivate community/employer partnerships
Increase alignment with industry to put students to work during degree completion
Enhancing Toga Parties and Resources
Clear
Resources
Toga Parties
Improving Community College Outreach and Services
consider acquisition / leadership of other community colleges that are struggling
program outreach to high performing high schools
Other
community engagement
deepen and build on relationship with the corporate partners
Establish additional groundbreaking employer partnerships
INCREASE ENDOWMENT
Partner with nonacademic institutions
Promoting Fiscal Responsibility and Community Growth
A+O=TC ambition & opportunity creates a thriving community

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ensure rigorous and transparent fiscal responsibility - broadcast ROI/outcomes!
fiscal health community
self-reliance funding sources & environment are uncertain

Strategic Course and Training Focus

Be as flexible as possible while remaining within thre requirements of higher ed accreditation
Collaboration/Affordability/Access
Continue to focus on multiple modalities and parts of term for courses and training
Focus on the highest ROI paths. Should we trim some majors, courses or projects
Leveraging technology/digital learning

Student-Centric Strategy and Funding

ask students their thoughts on this
RAISE MORE MONEY FOR STUDENTS
Ruthlessly prioritize based on what will make the most impact for students. A smaller list of excellent accomplishments is better than a longer list of mediocre accomplishments.
takeover CSU