

Strategic Transformation Planning Survey Narrative Summary and Recurring Themes

Introduction

The Tri-C stakeholder surveys were designed as supplementary tools to complement the 22 listening sessions conducted during Spring Semester 2025 and capture detailed insights from various institutional stakeholders including faculty, staff, managers, students, and multiple external partner groups. Similar to the listening sessions, the survey instruments solicited open-ended feedback on numerous topics critical to Tri-C's future strategic directions. In total, the surveys captured 245 responses, providing a rich data set of qualitative information, adding more depth to the over 6,000 artifacts captured in the listening sessions. Survey feedback independently highlighted significant issues such as instructional consistency, flexible scheduling, comprehensive support services, alignment with workforce demands, redefinition of student success, and balanced technological innovation. Respondents provided candid and thoughtful insights that collectively illuminate both the strengths and areas requiring attention within the institution. The College deeply appreciates the thoughtful contributions of every respondent, recognizing that this collective input is foundational to shaping an innovative, entrepreneurial future aligned with community and student needs.

Theme 1: Student-centric Curriculum and Instruction

Students emphasized the need for greater consistency and clarity in course delivery and expectations, frequently identifying variability as a significant obstacle. Respondents expressed a desire for standardized instructional practices and clear communication of course requirements. Many students reported frustration with the wide variability in their course and instructor experiences. One student suggested, “**Standardize basic guidelines that professors can follow based on their course, so students have consistent educational experiences.**” Another emphasized, “**It would be helpful if professors could provide additional online resources or recorded materials to supplement classroom learning, especially for students who need flexibility.**” Another student mentioned, “**Allow students to briefly shadow courses—one or two sessions—to help them make informed decisions about classes and instructors.**” Additionally, students remarked, “**Offer more on-campus**

classes in all subject areas at various times” and “Continue with these types of meetings to engage the student body concerning any upgrades.”

Theme 2: Expanding Accessibility through Innovative Scheduling and Support

Stakeholders highlighted the critical need for flexible scheduling options and comprehensive student support services. Students repeatedly called for greater accessibility to childcare, career support, and affordable meal solutions. One student stated clearly, “Childcare. On-site preferably!” Another noted, “Offer lunch for students who can't afford it and have long class days.” Faculty and staff echoed these sentiments, advocating for “more evening and weekend class offerings,” “extended hours for support services,” and “campus-based childcare services.” Additionally, one student articulated the need for practical support: “Expense of childcare. I have to work just to pay for childcare so I can go to school.”

Theme 3: Workforce Alignment and Real-World Engagement

Alignment of academic programs with workforce requirements emerged as a strong theme. External stakeholders advised, “Aligning academic offerings with real-world workforce needs is critical,” and suggested the College “target high school students for early enrollment opportunities.” Staff and faculty emphasized partnerships, recommending Tri-C to “maintain close collaboration with employers to understand the criteria they use for job requirements,” “sunset certificates without clear employment pathways,” and explore “micro-internships and stipends” to facilitate practical training. Another input highlighted the importance of “robust Credit for Prior Learning processes” to validate professional experience effectively.

Theme 4: Redefining Success Beyond Traditional Degrees

The survey underscored a need to redefine educational success to better serve students with diverse goals. Participants advocated strongly for stackable credentials and competency-based education (CBE). One faculty member stated, “Quit thinking in terms of 2 or 4-year degree timeframes, and focus on industry-recognized credentials and competency-based education where students can complete in their own time.” Another suggested providing more short-term certifications as “individual stand-alone credentials” to support career advancement. Further comments included recommendations for “internships and work-study programs,” “career mentors,” and opportunities for “additional growth after starting careers.”

Theme 5: Comprehensive, Holistic Student Support

Stakeholders consistently called for a holistic approach to student support, addressing mental health, food insecurity, housing, and transportation needs. A faculty member notably emphasized, “Imagine yourself as a poor, single parent... This is what our current average student looks like.” Another respondent highlighted the significance of partnerships with external organizations, stating, “We should strengthen our connections to resources like the Cleveland Rape Crisis Center and the Cleveland Pregnancy Center.” Students emphasized, “Stay engaged with the student body to encourage them to continue their educational goals,” and highlighted supportive campus culture elements, stating, “The staff greets us on campus, knows us by name, and asks how things are going.”

Theme 6: Leveraging Technology and Innovation with Integrity

Technology's role in education was widely discussed, with an emphasis on balancing innovation with maintaining educational integrity. Stakeholders acknowledged online learning's advantages but warned against compromising quality, especially in critical fields like nursing and science labs. One faculty member advised, “Utilize technology to adapt to the changing landscape,” while another stressed the importance of “investing in high-quality simulation software.” Comments also supported hybrid learning models, suggesting a balance between online flexibility and necessary in-person interactions. A student specifically mentioned, “Online learning is a game changer; keep improving this method of teaching,” and another added, “All hands-on training, online flexibility, and mentorship are important.”

Conclusion

The stakeholder feedback offers a nuanced and comprehensive view of Tri-C’s operational and strategic landscape, providing essential context for future strategic planning and decision-making. The candid and diverse range of perspectives highlights not only key challenges but also strengths and opportunities that can position Tri-C as a leading and adaptive educational institution. This collective input is instrumental in guiding the College's strategic direction, reinforcing its commitment to innovation, inclusivity, and alignment with both community expectations and evolving workforce demands.

.....

For any questions regarding the listening session or this summary, please reach out to Gregory Stoup, Vice President of Institutional Progress and Effectiveness.