

# Strategic Planning Stakeholder Feedback Report *February 26, 2021*



**GLENDALE  
COMMUNITY COLLEGE**  
A MARICOPA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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This report summarizes the feedback from strategic planning listening sessions in the development of the Glendale Community College (GCC) *2021-2024 Strategic Plan*. The GCC Strategic Plan Design Team (SPDT) formed in September 2020 and was charged with soliciting feedback from stakeholders to formulate the College's next strategic plan. From October 2020 to January 2021, the SPDT conducted listening sessions with twelve stakeholder groups consisting of more than 150 students, employees, and community members. These listening sessions were part of the second phase of the strategic planning process essential to informing the creation of college-wide strategic goals.

The five stages of the strategic planning process include:

1. Form Team and Finalize Framework - *September 2020*
2. Conduct Listening Sessions and Publish Feedback - *October 2020 to February 2021*
3. Draft Strategic Goals - *February to March 2021*
4. Present Strategic Goals and Elicit Feedback - *March 2021*
5. Finalize and Present Plan to the College - *April 2021*

Listening sessions and survey feedback suggests that GCC has highly qualified faculty and staff committed to providing high quality educational opportunities to a diverse community. As a large college operating within a complex system, GCC has found new ways to support students, and specifically identify ways to meet the multifaceted needs of its community.

Stakeholder feedback emphasized opportunities for improvement and expansion to enhance existing efforts to further support equitable completion and educational attainment. This feedback is contextualized within four key focus areas:

1. Building an Efficient and Effective Institution
2. Enhancing GCC's Presence in the Community as an Innovative Educational Provider
3. Expanding GCC's Approach to Integrated Student Support
4. Providing Employee Support Through Supportive Leadership

These four areas represent the holistic nature in which college-wide effort is needed to address student barriers in access and completion and employee barriers to working at optimum performance. The SPDT is publishing this report in a transparent effort to develop the College's next strategic plan and ensure all stakeholders feel their voices were heard and represented in this feedback that informed the creation of the college's strategic goals.



## BACKGROUND

Glendale Community College (GCC) began its strategic planning process in August 2020 with the adoption of a new college-wide framework emphasizing focus, simplicity, flexibility, and alignment of college goals with department and committee planning. This framework was approved by the College Leadership Team (CLT) on August 6, 2020 at their annual retreat. Upon the approval of the framework, the Strategic Plan Design Team (SPDT) formed and was charged with crafting new college-wide strategic goals emphasizing three key dimensions: (1) Effective Teaching and Learning, (2) Strategic Enrollment Management, and (3) Operational Excellence.

To elicit feedback from various college stakeholders on the future directions of the College's strategic plan, the SPDT hosted listening sessions with twelve stakeholder groups:

1. Academic, Business, and Student Affairs Managers
2. Academic Strategic Planning Committee
3. Adjunct Faculty
4. Administrative Services Managers
5. College Assessment and Review Team
6. Community Members
7. Enrollment Management Team
8. GCC North Employees
9. Integrated Resources and Planning Committee
10. Office of Curriculum and Academic Scheduling
11. Residential Faculty
12. Student Leaders



More than 150 individuals engaged in these listening sessions to craft the College's new strategic goals. Each listening session was conducted in a similar manner including a pre-survey sent to the group before the listening session to collect college strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Results from these surveys were summarized and used to craft discussion questions for each stakeholder group during the listening sessions. Responses were anonymous as no personally identifiable information was collected. The summary of the aggregate survey results are available in Appendix A. Rather than collecting additional student survey feedback, the SPDT chose to utilize three existing surveys to inform conversations with students. These three surveys include: (1) "My One Thing" Survey, (2) Students of Color Student Satisfaction Survey, and (3) Achieving the Dream Equity Opportunity Assessment Student Survey. The key themes of these surveys are summarized in Appendix B. During each listening session, groups crafted statements that reflect the group's consensus on the topics discussed. These statements were synthesized, analyzed, and used to inform the design of the College's new strategic goals. The comprehensive list of consensus statements is available in Appendix C.

Analysis of key themes from consensus statements portrayed the following four core focus areas shared across the twelve stakeholder groups:

1. Building an Efficient and Effective Institution
2. Enhancing GCC's Presence In The Community as an Innovative Educational Provider
3. Expanding GCC's Approach to Integrated Student Support
4. Providing Employee Support through Supportive Leadership

Each of these core themes is discussed further in this report.

## BUILDING AN EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE INSTITUTION



Prevalent across several listening sessions, employees and students shared interests in building a more efficient and effective institution of higher education. Feedback from stakeholders in this core focus area are categorized into six themes, ranked by prevalence across listening sessions:

1. Ensuring and allocating adequate resources
2. Improving organizational effectiveness and efficiency
3. Improving course scheduling
4. Expanding diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts
5. Enhancing the enrollment process
6. Ensuring quality teaching and learning.



### Ensuring and Allocating Adequate Resources

This theme was prevalent throughout listening sessions where employees felt they had less than adequate resources to provide high quality services to students. Comments related to feeling spread too thin, being unable to keep up with industry standards and benchmarks, slow hiring practices, inadequate compensation and decreased revenue streams for the College. Recognizing that GCC is part of a larger system that may have influence over some of these elements, GCC should consider how they can better locally determine greatest resource needs. The College could benefit from developing two-way communication channels to ensure college employees know how and why resources are allocated and provide mechanisms for employees to convey to leadership the additional resources needed to successfully carry out the college mission. Transparent and inclusive financial resource planning aligned to strategic planning will be critical to the continued success of the College.



## **Improving Organizational Effectiveness and Efficiency**

Another theme across listening sessions was employee and student concerns for organizational silos and inability to rapidly change and evolve in a competitive industry. Described as needs for standardized, streamlined, efficient, and effective business processes, college stakeholders described needs for the College to better react and embrace change to compete in the higher education industry. Described by one group

as “[o]ur resources are spread thin when we are not focused.” Removing barriers and streamlining processes should be a critical priority for the College moving forward. Providing focus and direction to all college employees and providing support to contextualize their role in achieving college-wide goals will be critical to improving organizational effectiveness and efficiency.

## **Improving Course Scheduling**

Frustrations were shared regarding the College’s current approach to course scheduling. Stakeholders described the need to investigate alternative scheduling models and increase overall room and space utilization to meet evolving student needs. As the College considers alternative course schedules, it will be critical to engage faculty, staff, and students to design a schedule that meets the needs of all groups and that aligns to the District’s new Guided Pathways model and focus on strategic scheduling.

## **Expanding Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Efforts**

Another common theme shared across listening sessions was the College’s interest in expanding existing efforts to support students from diverse backgrounds. Evidenced by the College’s recent investment in an Equity Opportunity Assessment with Achieving the Dream and hiring a part-time Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, GCC is beginning to make good headway on this work. A newly formed DEI Council will be instrumental in establishing baselines, proposing outcomes, and maintaining focus for the College in this area. These steps are setting the foundation for creating an equity agenda for the College, but stakeholders shared that there is still much work to be done. More intentional efforts are needed to recruit and retain diverse faculty and staff and expand GCC’s efforts to create a culture of inclusion and caring. Listening session participants described this as the need to “[f]oster diversity, equity, and inclusion by recruiting and retaining diverse faculty and staff, identifying differential student needs and strategies to address them, and cultivating a welcoming institutional environment that acknowledges the beauty of each individual and help them find a path that allows their gifts to meaningfully contribute to the institution and the broader community.” As the DEI Council is established and begins its work, the College looks forward to a more systematic and intentional approach to making this a priority. While GCC is well on its way to expanding diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts, College stakeholders portrayed the long road ahead to providing equitable access and opportunities for all students.

### Enhancing the Enrollment Process

Stakeholders described various opportunities to expand existing enrollment efforts. Comments suggest needs to streamline and simplify enrollment processes and enhance the College's approach to one-stop enrollment services. To compete with other higher education institutions, stakeholders illustrated the need to expand its service model to further support students when navigating complexities of enrollment processes. Groups emphasized needs to focus equally on new enrollment and retention, recognizing the declining population of 18-24 year olds in the near future. Suggestions included needs to rethink communication strategies and provide ongoing messaging and communication with students that expand beyond enrollment messaging during peak periods. These should be coordinated and targeted to specific student populations to increase effectiveness, engagement, and integrated student support.



### Ensuring Quality Teaching and Learning

Described by external community partners, "GCC...leaders, faculty, and staff are highly qualified, supportive, innovative, proactive, [and] collaborative" reaffirming the high quality programs and offerings available at GCC. Identified by several stakeholder groups is the need to continuously expand, enhance, and improve course and program offerings to meet current and future student needs. Attributed to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, several suggested needs to re-examine online offerings to ensure they are designed to meet students where they are in a new learning environment. Increased participation in professional development (e.g., training, conferences) that leads to improved student learning were suggested as a potential strategy to engage faculty and staff in these discussions. Groups also described needs to improve student learning measured using course, program, and institutional learning outcomes assessment leveraging best practices in evaluation and improvement of teaching and learning.

## ENHANCING GCC'S PRESENCE IN THE COMMUNITY AS AN INNOVATIVE EDUCATIONAL PROVIDER



"GCC, as a driver of commerce and workforce, has a strong reputation for its culture, leadership, and long-time historical presence in the Glendale community and throughout the nation." This statement emphasizes the external presence of GCC in the West Valley community. College stakeholders voiced suggestions for enhancing GCC's presence in the community as an innovative educational provider with highly qualified faculty, quality programs, and supportive resources for students.

Three themes identified relevant to this core focus area include:

1. Building Community and Strong Partnerships
2. Strengthening GCC's Brand and Marketing Efforts
3. Remaining Future-Focused in GCC's Pursuit of Excellence

### **Building Community and Strong Partnerships**

Adding more than \$1.2 billion in income to the Maricopa County economy, equivalent to 15, 983 jobs, GCC has created a historical presence in the community with lasting impacts[1]. College stakeholders echoed these sentiments during listening sessions, and reaffirmed that the College must continue to innovate and evolve in order to stay relevant in a complex and competitive environment. Recognizing strong partnerships with local high schools, stakeholders suggested the need to expand the pipeline of students to GCC to include K-8 and middle school students that could provide venues to destigmatize the value of a community college education from an early age. Expanding opportunities for middle and high school students to engage in learning at GCC (e.g., bootcamps, summer bridge programs), expanded retention initiatives, building strong workforce partnerships, and building a presence in senior living communities were all described as potential opportunities to increase GCC's enrollment and commitment to lifelong learning. GCC's community partners described how "[i]ndividuals in the West Valley have the ability to go to high school, earn professional degrees, and enter the workforce without having to leave the West Valley, illustrating strong opportunities and exponential growth in our community."

Evidenced by the strong footprint of GCC Main and North campuses, several stakeholders suggested needs to bring community members together on-campus to highlight our innovative learning spaces, culture for caring, and overarching commitment to student success. Past festivals and community events have proven successful at bringing the community together and reaffirming our position as a supporter of the community and several feel this is necessary to remain relevant. Engaging workforce partners in these efforts will be critical to demonstrating how GCC can meet the needs of the West Valley workforce and design programs that are relevant to existing job opportunities and economic demands. Workforce partnerships were described as mutually beneficial, specifically for high-cost programs requiring significant financial resources to be deployed.

### **Strengthening GCC's Brand and Marketing Efforts**

A prevalent theme across listening sessions was the need to enhance and expand GCC's brand and marketing efforts to reach a broader audience. Many shared concerns about stigmas of the value of higher education and specifically a community college education as a potential barrier to GCC's enrollment efforts. Participants felt it is the role of GCC to reaffirm the ideals of the community college mission in the minds of the College community. Several stakeholders felt they could not adequately describe GCC's identity, or purpose, aside from providing educational degrees and certificate programs. Being able to communicate this identity in a cohesive manner was described by many as a potential way to expand GCC's presence and role in supporting the community. Individuals suggested needs to better communicate information to students and community members of events, activities, and offerings at both GCC Main and North campuses, and specifically portraying the College's diverse student body.

[1] Emsi (2019). *The economic value of Glendale Community College fact sheet*. Emsi Economic Modeling.



## Remaining Future-Focused in Pursuit of Excellence

Attributed to declining resources and being spread too thin, stakeholders emphasized the need now more than ever to remain focused on the College's key strategic goals. Acquiring tools and software to reduce manual efforts and eliminating outdated business processes were identified as key frustrations stifling the advancement of college priorities. Remaining future focused while appreciating historical contexts of GCC was prevalent during listening session discussions, as well as portrayed in GCC's Core Values. Reaffirming support for innovation, deployment of best practices, and encouraging professional development to acquire new skills would serve GCC well in building the higher education institution of the future.

## EXPANDING GCC'S APPROACH TO INTEGRATED STUDENT SUPPORT



Described using many variables, GCC has used several metrics to portray student success including persistence, retention, completion, transfer, and transition. Stakeholders voiced concern about inconsistencies in the term "integrated student support" and felt the College lacked clarity as to what this term meant and how it diverged from existing service models. Defining and modeling integrated student support will be a critical component to expanding student success efforts.

Students and employees described needs to improve communication about student support services offered and their availability likely exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic when the College needed to transition a significant portion of student support services to online offerings. Others felt it was equally important to communicate the vast number of student resources available to students to the internal employee community in order to provide appropriate referrals when necessary. Many echoed that the GCC website was not enough to inform college employees of available resources, emphasizing needs to explore creative solutions to keep the college informed of service offerings.

Lastly, there were concerns voiced by stakeholders regarding the gaps in student support throughout the student life cycle. There are needs for a cohesive process to onboard students to the college environment, design intentional first-year experiences in which all students should partake, and provide targeted support to students in need. Additionally, participants reaffirmed the desire to meet students where they are and provide equitable support to students, something that has been a focus of GCC and the District through the redesign of Developmental Education. There may be additional opportunities for improvement in proactively identifying student loss points and minimize disruptions to the learning experience caused by external factors.

## PROVIDING EMPLOYEE SUPPORT THROUGH SUPPORTIVE LEADERSHIP



The final core focus area of stakeholder feedback illustrates need for increased employee support by intentional and visionary leadership. Several groups conveyed concern related to accountability and ensuring employees at all levels meet objectives and outcomes. Others described gaps characterized by inconsistent employee expectations and standards by which they are held compared to others. Leadership was identified as both a reason to work for GCC as well as an area of frustration by others, illustrating the complex role of perception calls for additional efforts to support college stakeholders at all levels.

GCC's external community identified GCC as having a "strong reputation for its culture, leadership, and long-time historical presence in the Glendale community and throughout the nation" as well as "[l]eaders, faculty, and staff [being] highly qualified, supportive, innovative, proactive, collaborative, and follow-through on things that need to get done, something not prevalent across



higher education." Internal employee groups voiced concerns requiring "employees and leaders who are empowered to question processes and change things that are not working." An overarching need to improve support for employees is prevalent as one group described, "there are a wide range of supports that could include feeling genuinely appreciated and valued, compensation, autonomy, release time to work on projects, and being able to participate in things outside of their department." Stakeholders recognized that the role of a college leader is by no means easy or simple and requires a variety of skills to be successful, and emphasized that communication skills were of paramount importance. Some stakeholders expressed that "leadership behaviors need to match what is being communicated, as there sometimes appears to be a "lip service" where employees don't feel the 'thank you's' are meaningful and always come with additional asks and requests." Regular two-way communication channels to convey clear expectations, hold employees accountable, and authentically express the state of the College could improve employees' engagement and sense of support and meaning in their work.

Training, mentoring, and ongoing professional development were mentioned as additional supports from which employees could benefit. Inconsistencies in performance review and expectations were conveyed as an area of opportunity that could further enhance the two-way communication channels described throughout this report as well as identifying ways to incentivize, engage, and motivate employees could leverage GCC's existing employees to further support students and the institution.

## NEXT STEPS

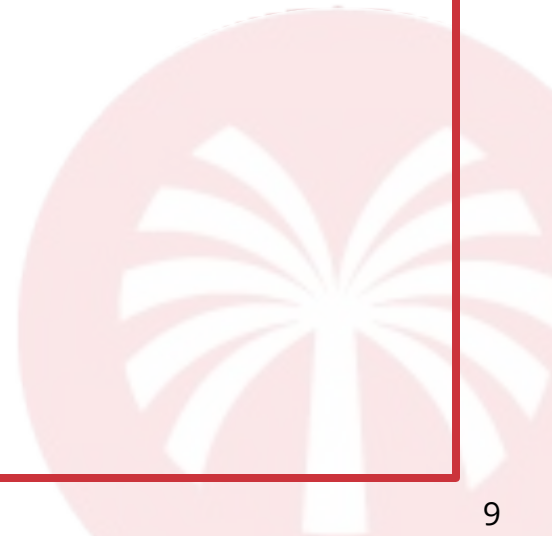


The themes included in this report are intentionally contextualized for consideration in development of the College's next strategic plan. Representing a broad range of stakeholders, the more than 150 employees who engaged in the strategic planning process by providing survey feedback and participating in listening sessions expressed their ideas for the future state of GCC and what the College would need to do to attain its vision.

Building an effective and efficient institution, enhancing GCC's presence in the community as an innovative educational provider, expanding GCC's approach to integrated student support, and providing employee support through supportive leadership are four fundamental pillars expressed by stakeholders as the areas to focus to move the College into the future. Recognizing the complexities of these areas, it will require college-wide support and buy-in to ensure the success of the College's next strategic goals.

The College's rich history in the West Valley community have positioned GCC to expand and enhance its teaching and learning agenda, leverage community partnerships to increase educational attainment, and provide holistic student support to further the College's completion agenda. As it embarks on this journey, it will be important to ensure structural and organizational mechanisms are in place to support students, employees, and the community.

GCC's Strategic Plan Design Team (SPDT) will use the information provided in this report to craft the College's strategic goals. Additionally, it is the intent of this report to summarize the courageous conversations that have taken place between August 2020 and January 2021 with students, employees, and community members in designing the goals that represent the future state of GCC.



**Top Reasons to Work for GCC**

- **Autonomy** (e.g., ability to be creative)
- **Benefits** (e.g., general benefits, leave benefits, retirement, healthcare, insurance, time off, pension)
- **Employees / People** (e.g., supportive, friendly, collegial co-workers in faculty, staff and administration, lead instructors for adjuncts are communicative and supportive, supportive department chair, responsive department secretary, dependable scheduled courses, climate created by residential faculty towards adjuncts, CTLE support is better than many other institutions, incredible colleagues, close-knit group of good people, feels like working with neighbors, respectful, confident, committed, small teams, diversity)
- **GCC culture** (e.g., family-like culture, engaging, great colleagues and people, expert faculty, comfortable, relaxed culture, caring employees, teamwork and collaboration, rooted in community, living the community college mission, giving back to students, employees care, relaxed, belief in mission, community, less stress, innovative and collaborative, campus environment, commitment to student success, commitment to shared governance, academic freedom, shared ethics and values, high academic standards, positive energy, employees feel valued, community with a big vision, commitment to academic freedom, support for faculty, collegial environment)
- **Leadership** (e.g., goal-driven leadership, persistent, listens, approachable, communication from leadership, student-centered leadership, approachable leadership, strong leadership, cohesive leadership)
- **Our student population** (e.g., diverse students, diverse population, in it for student success, diverse student body and faculty, students become successful, Veterans friendly campus)
- **Physical elements** (e.g., close to home, beautiful grounds, proximity to home, close to home, small town feel, easy parking, smaller campus, close to home, beautiful campus, convenient location, work in the community in which I live)
- **Program Offerings** (e.g., CTE offerings, technology programs, flexibility, nationally accredited CTE program)
- **Personal and Professional Growth Opportunities** (e.g., professional development opportunities, professional growth, support for professional growth, opportunity to learn, grow, and promote)
- **Role in the community** (e.g., dedication to students)
- **Other** (e.g., the challenge)

## Areas of Frustration in Working at GCC

- **Access to resources** (e.g., limited technology resources, lack of enough staff, always being in survival mode, advertising GCC and its programs, professional development and training offered during business hours when adjuncts aren't available, adjuncts receiving last minute access to materials days before the class starts, access to a reliable schedule to teach, no easy information about pathways or checksheets on the website anymore)
- **Accountability** (e.g., everyone knows the problem and no one does anything, not holding employees accountable)
- **Administration / Leadership** (e.g., administration, support to gather data, inconsistent expectations across departments, lack of communication from the top to the front-lines, duplication of efforts, lack of vision and leadership among senior leadership, advocating and communication for resources at the District-level, group-think, lack of direction in specific college divisions, lack of coherent, well-articulated, and achievable set of college priorities, support, recognition, shared governance, not feeling valued, slow decision making, not forward thinking)
- **Communication** (e.g., lack of clarification on college's direction, college priorities are not communicated from the top down, poor communication from administration, college priorities are not communicated that may guide hiring practices, lack of communication to adjunct faculty from departments, failure to communicate by senior leadership, need for more consistent top-down communication)
- **Compensation** (e.g., no salary increases, unrealistic salary/promotion schedules, access to competitive career advancement, pay inequality, no raises/steps, poor pay for adjunct faculty, low pay for part-time employees)
- **COVID-19 pandemic** (e.g., lack of engagement by students in online classes due to COVID-19)
- **Enrollment process** (e.g., role ambiguity of enrollment staff, overlap between admissions and recruitment, doing the same things to increase enrollment expecting different results, not truly a "one stop" enrollment process)
- **Hiring practices and HR-related factors** (e.g., HR policies, perceived unfairness in hiring, ineffective hiring processes, wasteful hiring processes, employee advancement, favoritism, no support during the onboarding process, slow hiring, lack of training, recruiting/hiring issues, ineffective onboarding, antiquated systems and structures, lack of coherent faculty staffing process, compensation model, complicated, no performance incentives, district-wide and local challenges related to a method to manage poor performance, no accountability or sanctions for poor performance, no incentive / repercussions to complete performance reviews, inconsistent application of performance reviews across the College and District, , paycheck errors, compensation, benefits, hiring practices)
- **Inconsistencies** (e.g., lack of continuity in the employee / student experience, inconsistencies in business processes across the District, inconsistent employee expectations, organizational chart is outdated and missing information, written processes outdated)

- **Information Technology** (e.g., antiquated systems and structures in IT, systems are patched together and don't talk to one another, current technology has created many manual processes)
- **Infrastructure** (e.g., lack of solid policies/procedures from DO, inconsistencies between campuses, IT lags behind industry, poor administrative support services, lack of resources to work from home, limited resources, Find a Class does not support searching by campus, little advertising for the North Campus, outdated classroom technology)
- **Institutional innovation** (e.g., challenges with agile approaches in curriculum and other areas, takes a significant amount of time to get things done, trying new things for old processes, technology doesn't support innovation, passionate employees that are held back by systematic barriers, reactive and not proactive)
- **Lack of focus** (e.g., inability to focus on a sustained goal, making promised then moving on to new projects without completion)
- **The "Maricopa Way" / Bureaucracy** (e.g., bureaucracy, finger-pointing, working in silos, slow pace of change, resistance to change, inability to effect needed change, "The Maricopa Way", inability to change, doing things the way we always have, traditional approaches to problem solving, entitlement mentality, recognizing faculty and not staff)
- **Not having access to information** (e.g., reliable information needed to carry out my job isn't always available)
- **Professional growth** (e.g., lack of upward mobility, finding a permanent position, inadequate compensation through District's Comp and Class study)
- **Shared Governance** (e.g., lack of involvement of front-line employees impacted by policies and processes, inconsistencies in communication with GCC Main, not always brought to the table, often an "afterthought")
- **Other** (e.g., too many emails and "reply all" response)

### **Greatest External Threats in Pursuit of the College Mission**

- **Ability to meet student needs** (e.g., in-person scheduling, late start course offerings, housing options, support for underserved students, unable to meet their needs due to COVID-19, access to technology, financial needs, need to be offering programs and modalities that students need and want, we act on what we think students want but we often don't ask students what they want)
- **Cultural, societal, and economic pressures** (e.g., changing world, lack of focus and trying to be everything to everyone, changing opinions of education's value in society, political climate, economic instability in the community, COVID-19 impacts on students enrolling, hesitancy in the community to move towards a global society)
- **Enrollment Decline** (e.g., decreased enrollment, reduced ftse, covid 19 damper on head count and ftse, diminishing enrollment)
- **Lack of external funding** (e.g., lack of funding from state government)

- **Other higher education institutions** (e.g., competing institutions with more flexible course offerings and stackable credentials, for-profit colleges with no wait times to start, extensive marketing campaigns and budgets of competitors, more affordable university experiences, need to be more responsive to change, quality of online instruction, enrollment declines and the pressures to increase enrollment, flexibility of for profit educational institutions to adapt, online education, other MCCC colleges and other schools/Universities, institutions with more robust learning, opportunities and program offerings from other institutions, advent of online degrees)
- **Self-created barriers** (e.g., Governing Board and District Office created barriers to profess and innovation, do we really place the students at the center of decision making, ensuring both campuses have program offerings wanted by employers, District's apathy toward employee contributions, being our own worst enemy, sister colleges are not supportive of each other, traditional brick and mortar approaches to education)
- **Student and employee retention** (e.g., lack of staffing, retaining students, retaining staff, inadequate training and professional development of staff)
- **Other** (e.g., lack of marketing, budget to be current with technology, lack of community support, COVID-19 pandemic, ineffective marketing of program options)

### Things Employees Would Fix if they had a "Magic Wand"

- **Accountability** (e.g., holding low performing employees and managers accountable, leadership to lead rather than maintaining the status quo, implement performance management, hold employees accountable, incorporate student feedback in decision-making)
- **Autonomy** (e.g., independence for GCC and its departments)
- **Branding, Marketing, and Community outreach** (e.g., offer program open houses to show our state-of-the art classrooms and facilities, "display windows" with student and program pictures on buildings, increased administrative involvement in development of industry and community partnerships, advertising and presence in the community of GCC North, informing employees of what advertising is being done)
- **Employee attitude** (e.g., resistance to change, get along and work fluidly together, complaining about perceived injustices, wish more people would appreciate the opportunities GCC affords to many)
- **Enrollment process** (e.g., more intuitive and user friendly, simplify the enrollment process, streamline the enrollment process)
- **Hiring processes and compensation** (e.g., improve residential faculty hiring process, improved faculty and staff compensation, improved adjunct pay, onboarding processes, disciplinary procedures, stagnating salaries, lack of raises, ensuring market wage is equitable for all employees)
- **Increase / Leverage resources** (e.g., hire more advisors to be closer to the suggested ratios, integrate more technology tools to support process automation, upgrade classroom technology, increase use and functionality of chat to stay current with student needs, acquire and use an early alert system, refine focus and shift resources, building through the summer, funds for IT, improved efficiency of operational processes, improve HR and IT department processes, improve staffing levels, increased full-time faculty positions, additional groundskeepers, expand standardization of Canvas)

- **Leadership model** (e.g., top-heavy, removed from student experiences)
- **Planning** (e.g., need to be more deliberate about planning efforts, plan for expansion and inclusion, designating buildings for department faculty, staff, and support)
- **Program offerings** (e.g., expand course offerings for skills development and lifelong learning experience, experiential learning in all classes, faculty using new pedagogical approaches, becoming community-focused college)
- **Scheduling** (e.g., 2-day a week classes instead of three, offer complete academic programs at GCC North, increased flexibility)
- **Support for employees** (e.g., removing barriers between departments, understanding other employees' perspectives, concrete pathway from pt to ft, diversity and inclusion in faculty/staff, improved residential and adjunct relationships, support or compensation for faculty taking training outside of contractual obligations)
- **Support for students** (e.g., increase the use of open educational resources such as low- and no-cost textbooks, provide students with a welcome packet and GCC swag, offer more flexible course offerings, establish common service standards, establish culture of service excellence, focus on what will best serve our students, improve student engagement / enthusiasm in their own learning experience, reduce or eliminate tuition, going beyond 8-5 or standard service hours, more retail-oriented mindset to support students, would need more staff to make this happen, support students who struggle online)

### COVID-19 Impacts that have Changed GCC for the Better

- **Exposed inequities in processes** (e.g., diversity, equity, and inclusion in all aspects, student access to technology and campus resources)
- **Increased collaboration, communication across departments, and innovation** (e.g., evaluating department impacts on other areas, collaboration among departments, forcing change, focus, adapting to remote needs, flexibility, evaluation of processes, improved faculty familiarity and use of new instructional technologies and pedagogies, increased awareness of strengths of online instruction, required greater collaboration on shared curriculum development, thinking outside the box to solve problems, proven that online courses are needed, quickly adapting to changes, using new technologies and teaching methods, extraordinariness of employees who are dedicated and capable of finding ways to perform their jobs)
- **Increased flexibility and agility** (e.g., employee adaptability, pushed us to learn and grow, forced us to find new ways of doing things, offering all services online to meet student needs, more agile and responsive, rapid and innovative change but this may not be sustainable long-term, pushed GCC into new instructional modalities, scheduling and enrollment options)
- **Increased support for employees** (e.g., increased trust in employees, decreased in employee absences, better work/life balance, awareness for the health and safety of employees, allowed employees to work from home without interrupting office processes, promoted employee well-being)
- **Infrastructure** (e.g., outside maintenance, technology more modernized)



- **Procurement of new tools** (e.g., Cranium Cafe, chatting with students, Zoom, WebEx and using them to participate in meetings remotely)
- **Technology skills** (e.g., employees have developed technology skills)
- **Telecommuting Options** (e.g., opportunities to work from home, flexible work schedules, showed that employees can work remotely, telecommuting options)

### Things Employees Hope Return to Normal after COVID-19

- **In-Person Events & Engagement** (e.g., personal interactions important to success, human experience, campus events, graduation ceremony in-person, students and the community on-campus again, return to sense of campus community, interacting with students and colleagues, strong employee relationships, large gatherings to bring employees and the community together, increase opportunities for networking and relationship-building, need to continue some in-person experiences as we are a traditional brick and mortar institution)
- **In-Person Instruction and Student Support** (e.g., interact, full-time classes on campus, people on campus, in-person/walk-in services, good blend of in-person and online services, being together in-person again, student access to on-campus technology, interacting with students during peak time, in-person classes, return to direct student contact and interaction in face-to-face learning and support, COVID-19 demonstrated how online learning is not a panacea)
- **Return with a Forward Focused Attitude** (e.g., return with a sense of urgency to embrace meaningful change to become more responsive to students' needs, need to move forward not backward, finding ways to continue to evolve and look forward, expand efforts to make college and work life better for students, employees, and the community)

### What do you see as the greatest barriers to enrollment growth at GCC, if any?

- **Access** (e.g., student access to technology, student knowledge of GCC program offerings, competing student priorities, student challenges with online courses, access to college services in a timely manner, student access to transfer partners during evenings and weekends)
- **College-created barriers** (e.g., internal barriers and bureaucracy we create, lack of in-person classes, course scheduling, inconsistent service standards across the college, complexity of enrollment and admissions process, employee mindsets of "this is how it's always been done", duplication of processes across colleges)
- **Cultural** (e.g., need to focus on a few critical activities/initiatives)
- **Employee Attitude** (e.g., self before students, apathy, redundancy, lack of responsibility, unwilling to entertain and explore new ideas, lack of future thinking, old mindsets, conflict creating barriers)
- **Lack of college resources** (e.g., lack of advising staff, lack of early alert system, lack of retention strategies, poor technology infrastructure)
- **Leadership** (e.g., management not willing to progress)

### Ideas to Increase Enrollment

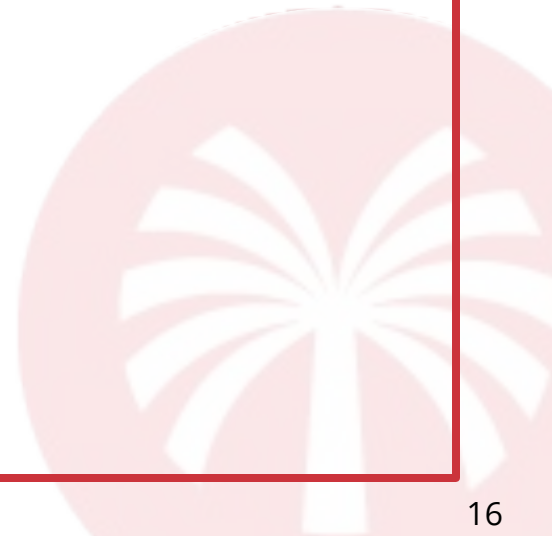
- **Eliminate silos** (e.g., collaborate and integrate staff to help students through the enrollment cycle when we don't have enough people in the Enrollment Center)
- **Focus more towards non-traditional student populations** (e.g., Veteran students, adult learners)
- **Revised recruitment / admissions strategy** (e.g., more intuitive admissions process, non-digital and digital marketing materials for non-traditional students)
- **Student-centric service model** (e.g., model for service excellence, student wait times and access to services, one-stop enrollment counselors / advisors to support the student through the entire enrollment process - not necessarily do all the work but facilitate this process)

### The Role of Assessment in the College's New Strategic Dimensions

- **College-wide** (e.g., not limited to teaching and learning)
- **Measurement** (e.g., determining success of goals, knowing where we're going)
- **Using data** (e.g., not just collecting data but using it to make changes in all areas)

### GCC North's Role in College-Wide Strategic Plan

- **Building a strong identity** (e.g., being known in the community)
- **Increased program offerings** (e.g., expand academic offerings, expanding services, bring certificates and degrees to the North campus, expand offerings so students can experience full student experience at GCC North)



## APPENDIX B: SUMMARY OF STUDENT SURVEY FEEDBACK ANALYZED

# B

The Strategic Plan Design Team utilized three existing surveys to substitute the pre-survey for the student leaders listening session. Selected based on recency, validity, and response rate, these three student surveys were used to inform the planning of the student leader listening session:

1. "My One Thing" Survey
2. Fall 2020 Students of Colors Student Satisfaction Survey
3. Fall 2020 Achieving the Dream Equity Opportunity Assessment Student Survey

The core responses identified across these three surveys include:

### "My One Thing" Survey

#### **One thing that someone at GCC has done to help students succeed at the college, that students think would help others succeed.**

- Having supportive and caring instructors who are always available and willing to help both in and out of the classroom has been helpful in my success at GCC.
- Free tutoring on a variety of subjects has helped in my success at GCC.
- Instructors who make classes interactive/engaging, take the time to simplify lessons and adapt lessons to different styles of learning have been helpful in my success at GCC.
- Instructors who upload lecture notes to Canvas and provide study guides for exams have been helpful in my success at GCC.
- Advisors who help me with picking the right classes needed to graduate have been helpful in my success at GCC.
- Classmates who are available and willing to help have been helpful in my success at GCC.

#### **One thing that GCC could start doing better to help students succeed at the college.**

- Improve student support facilities, including more and better parking options, better night lighting, more signage and maps, more power outlets for laptop charging, more quiet spaces, longer hours of service for student resources (cafeteria, library, HT1).
- Improve course scheduling options, with more courses offered in the early morning, later afternoon and evening, on the weekend, via online and at North Campus. This is especially important for courses required by specific majors.
- Reduce the cost to students by lowering tuition, reducing textbook and printing costs, offering less expensive (healthy) food, cheaper gym access, and subsidizing bus passes.
- Improve Financial Aid services to improve communication and streamline efficiency, so that students are aware of scholarship opportunities, are not delayed in getting approval for enrolling in courses, and are not dropped from courses without warning because of a paperwork issue.
- Improve awareness and breadth of extracurricular activities, family-friendly events, and club options, so that students can get engaged in the college community outside of class.

- Improve college communication with students, so that announcements are sent by email, particularly for upcoming campus events and activities, as well as important administrative deadlines, such as course enrollment and withdrawal, financial aid, payments due, club meetings and tutoring times.
- Improve student advisement services by streamlining the process to minimize redundancy and run-around, improving advisor knowledge base in specific programs and pathways to improve accuracy of information, increasing the number of advisors to reduce wait times, and following up with students at regular intervals.

### **Fall 2020 Students of Color (SOC) Student Satisfaction Survey.**

#### **Key themes**

- The best way to learn more from GCC about community resources is electronically / through the student email address.
- Two out of every five GCC students expect to face, or have already faced, barriers to their success as a college student based on a social identity such as race, ethnicity or sexual orientation.
- Support services that are especially important to success as a student include tutoring, supplemental study guides, and videos.
- Increasing availability of services is important to improving the student experience at GCC.
- Improving engagement with faculty/staff is important to improving the student experience at GCC.
- Increasing communication about the availability of programming and services related to my identity is important to improving the student experience at GCC.
- Students need help with coping, anxiety, stress, resiliency, or having a space to speak openly and honestly.
- Family responsibilities and time constraints are key factors that prevent students from participating in support programs and services.
- Students need increased communication about on-campus services and trusted campus staff to serve as advocates for students.

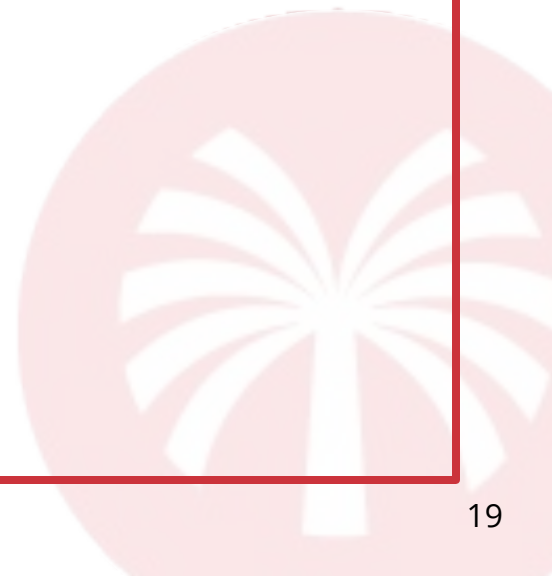
### **Achieving The Dream Equity Opportunity Assessment Student Survey**

#### **Things the College Does Well**

- Faculty are very supportive of students and connect them to resources when they need them.
- Students feel welcomed on campus and employees are always friendly.
- Frequent and accurate communication from the College.
- Students know where to go to access resources.
- Faculty and staff care about student success.
- Quality program offerings that reflect what jobs and employers want.
- Great support system on campus from faculty and staff.
- Easy website navigation, know where to find things online.

### Things the College Needs to Do Better

- Without on-campus support or experiences [during the COVID-19 pandemic], students are feeling disconnected and disengaged.
- Challenges with advising and getting consistent information from advisors.
- Students often get the “Runaround” from departments and get inconsistent information
- Appear to be challenges with diversity on campus.
- Complex business processes specifically where students get inconsistent information.
- Employees aren’t visible when they’re on campus.
- No support for part-time or parenting students.



## APPENDIX C: COMPREHENSIVE LIST OF STAKEHOLDER CONSENSUS STATEMENTS

# C

1. Improve Advisement by providing faster access to advisors and guidance resources, advisor scheduling options, regular check-ins with students, and advisor training to improve accuracy and efficiency.
2. Increase effective and accurate communication through student email between GCC departments and students regarding GCC events, availability of student resources, and administrative deadlines.
3. Improve empathetic training for faculty and staff so they are better equipped to be more supportive, open, informed, and caring as they communicate with and guide students.
4. Improve student support services and resources such as financial aid and free tutoring and that help students (and especially First-Year students) worry less about the amount of money they owe and have them focus on their education.
5. In order to proactively support students, GCC must first define what it means by “student support” and provide clear direction on how to execute the goals and visions for student success. Then, GCC must address student support and success across the college with support from staff, faculty, and administrators to move the student success agenda forward. This could include the centralization of college resources so that all employees are aware of the broad range of support available and be able to connect students to these resources. There is a significant need to reinforce the student experiences that we would like all GCC students to participate in which requires common, clear, and consistent messaging across the college.
6. Increased support to managers through intentional engagement by senior leaders and being willing to hold employees accountable. There is a need to break down what GCC means by “support for employees” as there are a wide range of supports that could include feeling genuinely appreciated and valued, compensation, autonomy, release time to work on projects, and being able to participate in things outside of their department. Leadership behaviors need to match what is being communicated as there appears to be a “lip service” where employees don’t feel the “thank you’s are meaningful and always come with additional asks and requests. GCC should consider adopting an employee-first culture because if employees feel supported and engaged, they will be better able to serve our students at a level of service excellence.
7. Improve persistence, completion and transfer rates for GCC students.
8. Develop a strategic class schedule that accommodates the needs of students, faculty and the college budget (e.g., varied modalities, length, meeting patterns, and campus locations).
9. Enhance teaching and learning with transformative technology and facilities.
10. Support equitable access to academic support services.
11. Improve student learning as measured by course, program and institutional outcomes assessment.

12. There are antiquated systems in IT that need to be updated to keep up with the industry standards. Standardizing software and hardware would streamline implementation and support for our IT systems and be a better use of our resources. There are processes that could be improved if we are willing to look closely at why we do something and be willing to make a change based on what is best rather than it's the way we've always done it. Working collaboratively on solutions, providing tangible benefits and clearly defining timelines were identified as ways to overcome the resistance to change.
13. Our resources are spread thin when we are not focused. Streamlining our processes by removing barriers was identified as the most important priority for Administrative Services.
14. We already stand out among our competitors because of our community (i.e., impact on students' lives, approachable, class size and offerings, personal relationships with instructors, etc.), we need to promote those benefits and use video clips rather than written ads.
15. Identify student needs and improve student experience with a particular focus on course scheduling and streamlining and simplifying the enrollment and registration process.
16. Improve communication between administration, students, faculty, staff, and community to promote and ensure shared governance.
17. Increase employee participation in professional development that leads to student learning improvement (e.g., CTLE training, assessment processes, conferences).
18. Increase efficiency of administrative and business processes (e.g., HR, IT and Scheduling) to maximize the percentage of our time dedicated directly to instruction and student support.
19. Foster diversity, equity, and inclusion by recruiting and retaining a diverse faculty and staff, identifying differential student needs and strategies to address them, and cultivating a welcoming institutional environment that acknowledges the beauty of each individual and helps them find a path that allows their gifts to meaningfully contribute to the institution and the broader community.
20. Improve adjunct pay in order to ensure highest quality of instruction and implement course protections for adjuncts.
21. Improve the Adjunct Faculty on-boarding, training, and mentoring process.
22. Require student introduction seminar which includes participating in the on-boarding process.
23. To ensure student success, expand standardization and consistency of navigation in Canvas.
24. To meet students where they are, employ best practices to assure the delivery of high quality online courses which harness Canvas.
25. To fully realize student success, optimize staffing, training, and hiring practices to provide effective academic advisement.

26. In order to develop a student-centric service model, the College needs to identify its strategic directions / goals first. Then, the College should purchase technology to reduce manual processes to support students and employees allowing employees to spend more time focused on student success.
27. College goals / strategies should focus equally on enrollment and retention to increase completion rates. This should include ongoing messaging and communication with students, not just messaging during peak enrollment periods.
28. One strategy should emphasize strengthening collaboration and eliminating silos to provide one-stop enrollment where employees are trained to facilitate the entire enrollment process.
29. To develop processes that are more nimble and responsive, we need employees and leaders who are empowered to question processes and change things that are not working.
30. Increase effectiveness of college leadership including clearly delineated, action-oriented, and attainable priorities to guide the college.
31. Development of formal two-way communication channels for college employees to share information with college leadership and transparent processes to determine their alignment with college priorities.
32. Increase IT responsiveness to employee requests including a response by IT on the same business day with a progress update.
33. Increase IT individualized communication about processes, priorities, and timelines. These communications should be aside from existing weekly emails and updates. Employees should have basic understanding of technology systems to support students when they are approached with questions.
34. GCC should seek additional sources of funding to mitigate the effects of declining enrollment including grants and significantly expanding partnerships. Specifically, examples such as Amazon, demonstrate how GCC can build partnerships with industry and educational partners to share the costs of high-cost programs instead of GCC absorbing the entire cost. The group also shared the potential of GCC seeking new streams of revenue such as space rentals, GED programs, and non-credit offerings such as boot camps.
35. The group identified three potential ways to maximize resources including: (1) reconsidering existing space utilization models, (2) centralizing business processes and designing targeted approaches to student points of loss, and (3) cross-training staff who might not be as busy in entirely remote environments. Specifically, revisiting remote work for areas that might need to be on-campus and reconsidering classroom utilization models could help maximize space.



36. In order for GCC to identify a strong identity in the West Valley, GCC must first define its “brand” in order to be able to communicate this. Once GCC identifies its brand, it should work to create this strong identity through strong community partnerships with both industry and educational institutions. This should include a pipeline from early childhood outreach opportunities (e.g., ReadFest), high school outreach, retention programs, workforce development, and senior opportunities for lifelong learning. Developing fast-paced courses and programs could help in creating a strong identity in order to compete with growing higher education institutions in the West Valley.

37. In order to bring full degree and certificate programs to GCC North, faculty, staff, and administrators need to be involved in discussing which programs would best serve GCC North students and the community. This process will need a great variety of data including high school student interests and growing Northwest Valley needs. This process could also include revisiting the GCC North schedule to maximize room and lab capacity, although the group agreed that students tend to prefer the twice a week schedule.

38. To build a strong identity at the GCC North campus there is greater need in advertisements (digital and local businesses), freeway signs, and increased visibility of the GCC North campus. This should include expanded presence on the website to describe GCC North events and activities that students and community members can access from the main webpage. It would also be beneficial to develop advertisements that represent the diverse audiences served by GCC North (traditional students, senior population). The group also agreed that bringing the community to the GCC North campus more often could help expand the campus’ identity. In the past, science festivals and other events have been held and could be expanded to include arts festivals, promoting meeting spaces for community use and neighborhood association meetings. GCC North could also build partnerships with local restaurants and businesses to promote the campus within their stores and shops.

39. To close communication gaps between campuses, departments should continue collaboration between respective groups. Participants shared that faculty departments tend to do a good job at involving GCC North faculty, and Main Campus has been doing better at involving North staff in conversations now that we have technology (e.g., Zoom, Google Meets) to do so. The group discussed the potential of hosting department meetings at North after the pandemic to increase the awareness of the campus and ensure North’s voice is heard and incorporated in operational and strategic planning.

40. GCC, as a driver of commerce and workforce, has a strong reputation for its culture, leadership and long-time historical presence in the Glendale community and throughout the nation. Leaders, faculty, and staff are highly qualified, supportive, innovative, proactive, collaborative, and follow-through on things that need to get done, something not prevalent across higher education.

41. The diverse community has come together to appreciate the historical successes of the Glendale community all while being future-focused and thinking ahead of how to improve our community and solve current challenges. Individuals in the West Valley have the ability to go to high school, earn professional degrees, and enter the workforce without having to leave the West Valley, illustrating the strong opportunities and exponential growth in the West Valley.

42. Some of the greatest gaps in the community include (1) eliminating stigmas centered around the value of education and specifically a community college education, (2) providing equitable higher education access, services, retention, and completion, (3) creating relevant credentials applicable to current workforce demands ensuring students have seamless transitions to other institutions and the workforce, and (4) the ability to eliminate poverty, support West Valley families, and elevate the current economic conditions. Resources should be prioritized to students, employee professional development, and increasing partnerships and marketing efforts to enhance and expand GCC's current efforts to build a strong identity in the West Valley.

43. The College should consider long-term flexible telecommuting options to enhance and expand the virtual workspace.

44. The College should continue offering flexible course modalities to meet student needs.

45. We need to improve our operational efficiency and flexibility, specifically in acquiring new tools or rolling out new systems.

