

Strategic Planning Stakeholder Feedback Report 2024



**GLENDALE
COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

A MARICOPA COMMUNITY COLLEGE



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I. Executive Summary

This Stakeholder Feedback Report (SFR) provides the consolidated themes and strategic areas of emphasis identified in stakeholder feedback provided in GCC's Strategic Plan Environmental Scan conducted in Spring 2024. It includes feedback from ten Internal Stakeholder Focus Group Listening Sessions as well as eight External Stakeholder Interviews. Links are also provided to notes from each Focus Group Listening Session, as well as to the SWOT Survey results and the SWOT Survey Theme Analysis.

This feedback will be used to inform the Strategic Plan Design Team's work in developing the college's next three-year strategic plan (2024-2027), to be completed in Fall 2024.



II. Introduction and Overview

Glendale Community College (GCC) is presently in the process of developing its next college-wide strategic plan. The college's current strategic plan, "Focus 2024", has a three-year scope that sets forth the key areas of strategic emphasis and indicators of success for the period from Fall 2021 to Fall 2024. The new strategic plan will take the college boldly into the next three years – from January 2025 through December 2027 – as we innovate to fulfill our college *Mission, Vision and Values* ([linked here](#)) to prepare students for further higher education, employment and advancement, and successful participation in a global society, while we foster student success by providing innovative, quality learning experiences for all members of the community.

Integral to this strategic planning effort, GCC leadership has taken an intentional approach to innovation while we ensure both process and product are firmly grounded in industry best practices. These include practices related to shared governance, meaningful inclusivity and stakeholder engagement, sound data review and analysis, a commitment to planning that is comprehensive, aligned and integrated at all levels, and an emphasis on strategic relevance and innovation in service of our community needs. To that end, the college is leveraging industry-leading Higher Education expertise embodied in the research and recommendations provided by *The Society for College and University Planning* (SCUP). Key resources that inform GCC's strategic planning include the overall SCUP framework for Strategic Planning ([linked here](#)), and the very helpful resource, *A Practical Guide to Strategic Planning*, by Karen Hinton ([linked here](#)). Both Hinton's work, and the SCUP framework more broadly, communicate a top-tier model for higher education strategic planning projects in a shared governance context.

Based on these best practices, in Fall 2023, GCC engaged with our Shared Governance Council (SGC) to begin the process of developing the college's next three-year Strategic Plan (2025-2027). Based on the recommendations of the SGC, a Strategic Plan Design Team (SPDT) was constituted to carry out this work, and was composed of three Tri-Chairs, a Project Director, and ten additional team members. The Tri-Chairs included one member from each of the primary employee constituencies (Administration, Faculty and Staff), the Director of Strategic Planning served as the Project Director, and the rest of the team was constituted from three representatives of each of the aforementioned employee constituencies, plus one student representative. All SPDT members are listed in Appendix C of this document.

In Spring 2024, the SPDT developed an eight-question SWOT Survey based on a combined SWOT/PEST model. With the assistance of the college's Institutional Research (IR) team, the SWOT Survey was administered to all college employees and elected student leaders (including Associated Student Government as well as Student Club Officers). The responses to this SWOT Survey were minimally processed by the IR team and the Project Director to eliminate any Personally Identifying Information. The SWOT Survey results (totaling approximately 80 pages of feedback) are [linked here](#).

Based on the SWOT Survey results, the SPDT developed a Themes Analysis of all of the SWOT Survey feedback. That 13-page SWOT Themes Analysis is [linked here](#). Based on the themes identified, the SPDT then developed a list of ten Focus Group topics to guide discussion in Internal Focus Group Listening Sessions. The ten Listening Sessions were held virtually in April 2024, with an average of 30 attendees at each Listening Session. The topic list and notes from each Focus Group can be found in Appendix B of this document. The feedback from these Internal Stakeholder Focus Groups was consolidated into key areas of emphasis and included in this document in Section III.A. Additionally, Consensus Statements from all Focus Group sessions are collated and provided in Appendix A.

In addition to the ten Internal Stakeholder Focus Groups, eight interviews were conducted in Spring and Summer of 2024 with key External Stakeholders. These interviews consisted of either one-on-one or large-group discussions with highly relevant government, industry and community partners. The results of these External Partner interviews were also consolidated into areas of emphasis and are included in this document in Section III.B.

All stakeholder feedback included in this Stakeholder Feedback Report will be used by the SPDT to identify critical strategic areas of focus, to inform the development of GCC's next three-year Strategic Plan (2025-2027).

III. Consolidated Themes from Stakeholder Feedback

The Stakeholder Feedback presented below is organized in ten "Areas of Focus", aligning to the feedback received in the ten formal Focus Group Listening Sessions held in April 2024. Each of these ten Focus Groups was organized around a given theme, developed from a thematic analysis of the SWOT Survey responses. The tenth Focus Group was intentionally General in scope, soliciting feedback in any area of interest to the participants, though a segment of that Focus Group including a specific targeted prompt on Health, Safety, and Environment.

The ten scheduled internal Focus Group topics were:

- 1. A Culture of Belonging: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**
- 2. Building Community: External Partnerships and Workforce Development**
- 3. Effective Teamwork: Accountability, Collaboration, and Communication**
- 4. Employee Recruitment and Retention**
- 5. Infrastructure: Facilities**
- 6. Infrastructure: Technology**
- 7. Instructional Innovation and Competitive Program Offerings**
- 8. Student Recruitment and Enrollment**
- 9. Student Success: Retention, Completion, and Beyond**
- 10. General Topics (plus Health, Safety and Environment)**

In addition to these ten internal stakeholder Focus Group Listening Sessions, several interviews of External Partners were conducted from April-June 2024. These interviews were not constrained by a specific theme, and as such, are compiled into a single treatment that is more broad in scope, though more relevant to External Stakeholder interests (e.g., community partnerships, workforce development, etc.).

A. Internal Stakeholder Feedback (Focus Group Listening Sessions)

AREA OF FOCUS 1. RECRUITING AND ENROLLMENT

A. Areas of Strength. Based on feedback received from stakeholders, GCC seems to have a solid foundation in its student recruitment and enrollment efforts, with several strengths evident in its current strategies, including:

- 1. Aggressive Marketing:** Increased marketing efforts and social media exposure are driving engagement and visibility.
- 2. Robust Pre-Screening Process:** The pre-screening process effectively tracks students seeking advisor meetings, ensuring timely follow-up and support.
- 3. Commitment to 1:1 Student Service:** GCC's dedication to personalized student service, including high school meetings and Spring Forward events, fosters strong connections and promotes enrollment.
- 4. Collaborative Advisement Teams:** The collaborative approach between advisement teams and faculty enhances support for students, ensuring a seamless transition and registration process.
- 5. Efficient Enrollment Processes:** Streamlined enrollment processes, such as expedited forms processing, enhance the overall student experience and efficiency.
- 6. Targeted Outreach and Support Programs:** Targeted outreach efforts, including support for special population groups, demonstrate a commitment to inclusivity and student support.

B. Opportunities for Improvement. Despite these strengths, stakeholders identified some suggested opportunities for improvement and recommendations for strategic development, including:

- 1. Improving Enrollment Services and Processes:** Address reported issues with enrollment center services, such as long wait times and difficulties in finding class information. Invest in additional staff or streamline processes to provide more timely and efficient service to students and parents. Focus on developing and implementing strategic re-enrollment strategies, particularly targeting recently enrolled and stop-out students.
- 2. Improved Technology Tools:** Invest in better tech tools, including district-wide systems, to streamline processes and improve functionality for advisors and recruiters. Implement inclusive software systems that cater to the diverse needs of end-users, including students, and provide training for both backend users and students. Invest in accessible technology tools for students, including Universal Design principles, to facilitate accurate degree progress reporting and enhance overall accessibility.
- 3. Community Integration and Outreach:** Develop a strategic approach to community integration and outreach, ensuring alignment with community needs and fostering diversity and accessibility. Focus on engaging the community and providing offerings that cater to diverse interests and needs. Consider summer or intersession activities targeting younger students to foster early interest in GCC. Take a holistic approach to outreach that fosters equity and reflects the needs of students and the community.

- 4. Data-Driven Marketing and Recruitment:** Implement a more data-driven approach to measure the effectiveness of marketing efforts in converting impressions to enrollments. Learn from competitors and explore innovative strategies such as sending offer letters before students apply.
- 5. Revitalize Community College Experience:** Reevaluate the focus on completion and create and recognize other pathways for success and lifelong learning. Make it easier for community members to access offerings and navigate the academic structure, fostering a sense of inclusivity and accessibility.
- 6. Optimize Advising and Support Services:** Develop an approach to student advising that supports real-time, same-day meetings, both in-person and online. Increase training for advisors to assist students promptly and utilize Student Information System (SIS) notes to inform staff of student experiences and promote communication.

C. Consensus Statement. Focus Group participants developed the following Consensus Statements related to Recruiting and Enrollment:

“GCC needs a holistic, universal design approach to development and implementation of an outreach, recruitment, enrollment, and retention program that considers student individualized systems, resources, and processes to best achieve students success and community (outreach or benefit), and strategically increase student recruitment and retention. It should integrate outreach to the varied special populations, foster equity, and reflect the needs of students and the community. It should provide greater integration of GCC in and/or reflection of the community and vice versa, with diversity, accessibility, and community education. It should also Improve accessible technology tools for all end users, including students and employees alike, to allow (among other things) for accurate degree progress reports for all students. We view this statement as elaborating an important strategic area of focus for the college to improve student recruitment and enrollment, with the greater goal of improving student success and sense of belonging.”

AREA OF FOCUS 2. STUDENT RETENTION, COMPLETION AND BEYOND

A. Areas of Strength. Overall, stakeholders report that GCC demonstrates a comprehensive approach to supporting student success, with a focus on proactive advising, peer mentorship, interdepartmental collaboration, and a wide range of support services to meet students’ diverse needs. These efforts contribute to higher retention, completion rates, and overall student satisfaction. Notable areas of strength include:

- 1. Wrap-Around Student Support Services:** GCC offers a range of support services, including food pantry services, benefits assistance, and peer success coaching, ensuring students have access to resources that promote their well-being and success. Peer mentorship programs provide valuable support and guidance to students, fostering a sense of community and enhancing student success. Free tutoring services and extracurricular activities such as athletics and performing arts provide students with additional support and opportunities for personal and academic growth. Collaboration and communication across departments contribute to a holistic support system for students, addressing their various needs and challenges.
- 2. Strong Faculty-Student Relationships:** Stakeholders noted the positive effect of Faculty members who actively reach out to students and build relationships, which

can significantly impact student engagement and success in the classroom. Instructor flexibility in recognizing the emergent and distinctive needs of students, and adapting the instructional experience where appropriate.

- 3. Proactive Advisement and Tracking:** GCC employs proactive contact regarding students' education plans, systematically tracking student persistence to increase retention and completion rates. This includes activities such as developing semester-by-semester Ed Plans and striving for high contact rates, resulting in impressive re-enrollment rates. The implementation of Guided Pathways helps students navigate their academic journey more effectively, ensuring they stay on track towards completion. Advising and career service teams are readily available to assist students, providing immediate support and guidance. Career services also facilitate experiential learning opportunities and job readiness skill development.

B. Opportunities for Improvement. Stakeholders identified a number of areas and suggestion for consideration to enhance the overall student experience and satisfaction, to improve student retention and completion, including:

- 1. Enhanced Progress Tracking and Case Management:** Implement more robust tracking systems to monitor students' progress and intervene proactively when necessary. Develop case management protocols to ensure students receive personalized support and follow-up, particularly when they are struggling, to retain students before they drop courses, such as implementing early alert systems, providing resources or support interventions, and fostering better communication between faculty and advisors.
- 2. Enhanced Accessibility and Universal Design:** Prioritize accessibility and Universal Design principles to ensure that all students have equitable access to resources and services. Invest in technology and infrastructure that meet diverse needs and foster service excellence.
- 3. Improved Partner Communication and Alumni Engagement:** Enhance communication with university partners regarding program requirements and changes. Create opportunities for alumni engagement and celebration to strengthen the alumni community and showcase success stories.
- 4. Expanded Course Offerings and Transportation Options:** Increase in-person course offerings for degree programs and provide intercampus shuttle transportation to improve accessibility for students. Address student drop times for non-payment by improving timely communication and support for affected students.
- 5. Student-Centered Approach to Program Offerings and Policy Changes:** Build a stronger culture of evidence to ensure that changes to programs, policies and systems evaluate and consider the community needs, the student experience, and frontline staff feedback to promote growth, mitigate any negative impacts, and foster a relevant, supportive environment. Conduct regular assessments to understand the educational needs of the community and align programs and services accordingly. Define what success means for students and develop metrics to measure it beyond traditional academic outcomes.
- 6. Enhance Financial Literacy Support:** Institutionalize and broaden financial literacy initiatives to help students better understand the financial aspects of enrollment and education. Provide resources and support to help students navigate financial aid options, tuition costs, and budgeting. Educate on the value proposition of a college education and the lifelong costs of stopping out.

C. Consensus Statement. Focus Group participants developed the following Consensus Statements related to Student Retention, Completion and Beyond:

“We agree that students should be provided holistic support prior to and throughout their time with GCC and beyond to ensure their success via data-driven processes, structures that are responsive to their needs, and via proactive communication and strengthening relationships within our campus and student community.”

AREA OF FOCUS 3. A CULTURE OF BELONGING

A. Areas of Strength. GCC Stakeholders report that the college is actively engaged in fostering a culture of belonging through various initiatives across different departments and areas of campus life, including:

- 1. Promotion of Cultural Events:** Promoting various cultural events throughout the campus celebrates diversity and fosters cross-cultural understanding.
- 2. Accessibility and Inclusion Training:** Providing training through CTLE and DRS for accessibility and inclusion ensures that faculty and staff are equipped to support students with diverse needs.
- 3. Flexible Course Modalities:** Allowing students to take courses in different modalities based on their needs accommodates diverse learning preferences and circumstances.
- 4. Online Community Support:** Discord servers and e-Sports initiatives support the online community, ensuring that all students, including remote learners, feel connected.
- 5. Global Education and International Departments:** These departments provide support for international students and promote global perspectives, enriching the campus community.
- 6. Support for Foster Youth:** Outreach to foster homes and assistance with admissions applications demonstrates a commitment to supporting marginalized populations.
- 7. Peer Support Programs:** Programs like Foster Youth Champions and Peer Success Coaches provide support and mentorship from diverse backgrounds.
- 8. Respect for Preferred Names and Pronouns:** Respecting preferred names and pronouns creates an inclusive environment for transgender and gender non-conforming individuals.
- 9. Interdepartmental Collaboration:** Programs like the Reimagine program encourage collaboration across departments, fostering a sense of community and innovation.
- 10. Basic Needs Support:** Student Life initiatives addressing basic needs, financial literacy, and implicit bias help create a supportive and equitable campus culture.
- 11. Accessibility Initiatives:** Offering senior tuition discounts, disability services, and fitness center accommodations demonstrate a commitment to accessibility and inclusivity.
- 12. Community Gardens and Wellness Activities:** Initiatives like urban gardens and wellness walks promote physical and mental well-being for all members of the campus community.
- 13. Student Clubs and Organizations:** Providing opportunities for students to join clubs and explore new interests fosters a sense of belonging and community involvement.
- 14. Employee Appreciation and Celebration:** Recognizing employee contributions and celebrating milestones fosters a sense of belonging among staff members.

15. **Departmental Engagement:** Events like potlucks and departmental celebrations provide opportunities for social connection and community building among faculty and staff.
16. **General Collaborative Instructor Efforts:** Instructors collaborating to support students and stay connected with them demonstrates a commitment to student success and belonging.
17. **Reflecting Diversity in PR:** Reflecting diversity in promotional materials helps create an inclusive environment where all students can see themselves represented.

B. Opportunities for Improvement. Stakeholders identified a number of areas and suggestions for consideration to enhance the college's approach to developing a Culture of Belonging, including:

1. **Support for Evening and Night Students:** Providing advisement, tutoring, and other essential services for evening and night students ensures that they receive the robust support they need to succeed academically.
2. **Support for Parents:** Offering childcare services can significantly support students who are parents and enable them to attend classes with peace of mind. Providing summer classes for children allows parents to pursue their education while ensuring their children are engaged in productive activities.
3. **Outreach and Accessibility for Diverse Communities:** Innovate for accessibility by providing guidance and resources on Universal Design principles for the physical spaces to help ensure that campus facilities and services are accessible to everyone by default. Implementing all-persons trails for campus navigation and Braille trails for visually impaired individuals can greatly enhance accessibility. Hosting events and providing assistance specifically tailored to groups like students with autism or those with visual impairments can improve accessibility and inclusivity. Ensure that all classroom technology and materials are accessible, including captioning and utilizing universal design principles, to benefit all students, including those with disabilities.
4. **Inclusion Spaces and Mechanisms:** Creating advocacy centers, cultural celebration spaces, and safe spaces that foster equity and inclusion, coupled with visible celebrations of diversity, to help strengthen the sense of belonging on campus. Include an "opt-in" question on admission applications for LGBTQIA+ identification to signal the college's commitment to being welcoming and supportive.
5. **Course Scheduling and Options:** Scheduling courses considering students' major maps, offering weekend classes for working individuals, and providing classes for community enrichment contribute to inclusivity and accessibility. Offering auditing options without extra fees could enhance participation and awareness of available college instruction and services.
6. **DEI Training:** Provide additional professional development training to employees in diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), emotional intelligence, and inclusive leadership to build a more supportive and empathetic campus community. Encourage cross-training and shadowing opportunities among employees to foster empathy, collaboration, and a deeper understanding of diverse roles and perspectives.
7. **Reflective Faculty and Staff Diversity:** Striving for diversity among faculty and staff to reflect the diversity of students, including considerations of race, ethnicity, gender, religion, and disability status, fosters a more inclusive environment.

- 8. Cultural and Community Offerings:** Create more opportunities for community building, such as cohort programs, cultural celebrations, and sports events, to foster a sense of belonging and connection among students, faculty, and staff. Leveraging campus spaces like the Solari Amphitheater, the college Quad, and the Performing Arts Center to showcase music and performance arts from different cultures could promote greater cultural awareness and appreciation.
- 9. Metrics and Assessment:** Set specific goals to increase diversity among students, faculty, and staff, and track and measure progress through demographic data and representation metrics. Track retention, graduation rates, and student satisfaction among underrepresented groups to assess the effectiveness of support services and initiatives aimed at promoting belonging. Measure employee satisfaction, participation in DEIB-related events, and perceptions of inclusiveness and community to gauge progress in building a supportive campus culture. Monitor participation rates in DEIB-related events, training programs, and support services to evaluate engagement levels and identify areas for improvement. Analyze and use the results of these assessments to inform ongoing efforts and initiatives.

C. Consensus Statement. Focus Group participants developed the following Consensus Statements related to Student Retention, Completion and Beyond:

“Emphasize innovative strategies to remove barriers (internal and external), including Inclusive Spaces Designing with Everyone in Mind, etc..”

AREA OF FOCUS 4. INFRASTRUCTURE: FACILITIES

(Note: stakeholder feedback in this Focus Group also included some responses related to technology aspects that overlap with Focus Group 5, “Infrastructure: Technology”. Those suggestions are included here for fidelity of documentation.)

A. Areas of Strength. Stakeholders identify several ways that its physical infrastructure – including Facilities and related support processes – is supporting the college’s mission by providing a safe, supportive, and comfortable environment for students, faculty and staff, including:

- 1. COVID-19 Safety Measures:** GCC was particularly praised for its work in going above and beyond to implement safety measures during the COVID-19 pandemic, ensuring that campus spaces were safe and accessible for students and employees.
- 2. Aesthetics, Maintenance, and Repairs:** GCC’s grounds are well-maintained, ensuring a visually appealing campus environment. The Facilities team was praised for promptly addressing maintenance issues and repairs – particularly in emergency response situations – ensuring that facilities are functional, safe, and comfortable for everyone on campus. Restrooms are maintained in a clean and functional condition, with timely responses to issues as they arise.
- 3. Responsive and Effective Request Support Systems.** The room reservation system works efficiently, minimizing conflicts and double bookings, and providing alternative solutions when needed. Facilities manage shipping and receiving well, ensuring timely deliveries and documentation when external vendors meet service level agreements (SLA). The Facilities team also efficiently manages external rentals, ensuring smooth coordination and avoiding event overlaps. Facilities team ensures timely and well-executed event

setups, contributing to the smooth functioning of campus events. The OIT HelpDesk ticket system was noted as an area of appreciation in effectively addressing technology requests promptly and prioritizing them appropriately.

- 4. Commitment to Ongoing Improvements:** GCC demonstrates a commitment to ongoing improvements in campus amenities and features, including shading structures and signage. GCC allocates a capital budget for ADA accommodations, demonstrating a commitment to accessibility and inclusivity in facilities infrastructure.

B. Opportunities for Improvement. Stakeholders recommended several areas for consideration and suggestions for improvement to the college's Facilities and other physical infrastructure, including:

- 1. Enhanced Communication and Transparency:** Implement a "Check on My Request" feature for Facilities requests – similar to the HelpDesk Ticket System used by OIT – to allow requesters to track the status of their tickets and provide additional comments. Improve documentation and communication regarding ticket resolutions, ensuring requesters understand the actions taken and the timeline for resolution.
- 2. Comprehensive Facilities Plan:** Allocate funding for developing a full facilities plan that integrates IT infrastructure needs with broader facility improvements. This plan should encompass longer-term goals and address issues like access control and security. Ensure that funding sources and requests align also with Facilities' yearly plan to avoid conflicts and delays. Coordinate grant applications with ongoing facility projects to better manage resources and expectations.
- 3. Identifying Student Needs.** Consider polling the student base to gather feedback on their expectations for public spaces and available resources, providing valuable insights for future facility planning and improvements. Conduct an audit of computer usage in public spaces and consider replacing underutilized computers with a smaller batch of more powerful ones. Use student survey data to inform decisions and prioritize high-tech spaces for collaboration, such as e-sports arenas and private gaming/meeting rooms.
- 4. Accessibility and Inclusivity:** Increase the availability of gender-neutral restrooms and family-style restrooms across campus, catering to the needs of diverse student populations. Consider the inclusion of gender-neutral locker rooms to provide inclusive facilities for all students.
- 5. Shade and Signage:** Install more shaded walkways and seating areas across campus to provide relief from the sun and enhance outdoor comfort for students, faculty, and staff. Improve signage to help students and visitors navigate the campus more easily, especially for high-traffic areas such as the library and enrollment center.
- 6. Sustainability and Environmental Impact:** Continue to integrate and expand energy-efficient upgrades, waste reduction measures, and green building practices to align with environmental objectives. Expand electric vehicle charging stations on campus to accommodate the growing number of electric vehicles and promote sustainable transportation options. Increase the use of solar power and explore opportunities for additional solar installations to reduce the campus's carbon footprint.
- 7. Security and Safety Measures:** Regularly survey students and employees to gauge their sense of security on campus and identify areas for improvement. Use feedback to inform security measures and enhance overall campus experience. Enhance night lighting on campus to improve visibility and safety during evening hours. Consider modernizing

bike parking with secure access lock and unlock racks to reduce bike theft attempts and enhance security for cyclists. Upgrade card key access programs and devices to ensure efficient and secure access to all areas as required. Develop with Campus Security an action plan and list of contacts for employees to follow in the event of emergencies during and after hours, ensuring clear procedures are in place for responding to various situations.

- 8. Recruitment and Retention Strategy:** Develop a comprehensive plan for recruiting and retaining skilled trade staff to ensure continued support for infrastructure maintenance and development. Evaluate the balance between in-house staffing and contract work for services like custodial work. Strive to minimize reliance on contract work by hiring adequate staff where necessary.
- 9. Proactive Safety Measures:** Implement proactive OSHA and safety project management practices to address issues before they become emergencies. Allocate budget for preventative measures.

C. Consensus Statement. Focus Group participants developed the following Consensus Statements related to GCC's Facilities Infrastructure:

1. Increase funding to add staff support and attract and keep qualified staff.
2. We would like to see GCC commit to developing a communication plan addressing issues of safety, funding, and staffing. This communication plan should include communication with all departments.
3. Develop an annual Facilities upgrade plan with allocated funding that includes a process for submitting requests and ranking projects. This upgrade plan should provide education about the process and equity to underrepresented departments/areas for upgrades. (Departments that are familiar with the funding process otherwise may be prioritized more frequently without this consideration as they are more familiar with the funding request process.) This upgrade plan should also include sustainability efforts.

AREA OF FOCUS 5. INFRASTRUCTURE: TECHNOLOGY

A. Areas of Strength. Stakeholders identified key areas of strength related to how GCC's technology infrastructure is supporting the college Mission, including:

- 1. Classroom Technology:** The implementation of Crestron controllers in classrooms, supporting various devices and facilitating teaching, reflects a commitment to enhancing the learning experience for students.
- 2. Helpdesk Support:** The responsive and effective helpdesk support, with quick response times and knowledgeable technicians, ensures that technical issues are addressed promptly, contributing to smooth operations across the institution.
- 3. Technology Accessibility for Students:** Providing technology resources such as laptops and hotspots to students in need, along with the support from the Center for Teaching, Learning, and Engagement (CTLE), ensures equitable access to educational opportunities.
- 4. Training and Support:** Offering training materials and sessions on various technology topics, including the use of IT ticketing systems, reflects a commitment to empowering staff with the necessary skills and knowledge to perform their roles effectively.

- 5. Infrastructure Upgrades:** The recent upgrade of the campus fiber optic infrastructure demonstrates a commitment to staying current with technology trends and providing a robust network infrastructure to support teaching, learning, and administrative functions.
- 6. Virtual Assistance and Meetings:** Leveraging platforms like Cranium Cafe for virtual assistance and conducting virtual meetings showcases a willingness to adapt to changing circumstances and provide support and services in a flexible manner.
- 7. Remote Work Support:** Providing employee laptops for remote work demonstrates an understanding of the importance of flexibility and mobility in today's work environment, enabling staff to remain productive regardless of their location.
- 8. Marketing Efforts:** Utilizing YouTube for targeted marketing videos and handling website updates efficiently demonstrate a proactive approach to engaging with different student populations and maintaining an effective online presence.
- 9. Robinson Room:** The provision of a well-equipped space like the Robinson Room for recording and presenting workshops indicates a commitment to facilitating professional development and knowledge sharing among faculty and staff.

B. Opportunities for Improvement. Stakeholders recommended some areas for consideration and suggestions for improvement to the college's technology infrastructure and processes in order to better serve students and employees, including:

- 1. Student Progress Tracking:** Consider investing in a student tracking or CRM software to better monitor student progress, identify potential issues, and provide timely support interventions. Improve the Student Information System (SIS) tools, including degree progress reports and access to information, to provide a more user-friendly experience for students. Implement a degree progress meter for students to track their academic progress more easily.
- 2. Infrastructure Planning:** Align technology investments with institutional goals and expansion plans. Advocate for sufficient funding to meet technology needs as part of regular technology refresh cycles. Advocate for increased IT personnel to support student service areas. Prioritize hybrid/remote/online learning environments as integral parts of technology projects. Implement a more inclusive process involving stakeholders in the purchasing decisions for new equipment to ensure that the needs and preferences of various departments are considered. Develop a comprehensive plan for regular review and maintenance of instructor stations. Assess the need for new technology to handle the uptake in AI usage. Develop a strategy for creating and managing reports efficiently.
- 3. Technology Accessibility for Students:** Provide more advanced technology materials and accessibility tech for all students. Address desktop and bandwidth slowness issues to ensure smooth Zoom meetings and other online activities. Address the shortage of hotspots by increasing the availability to meet the demand. Explore alternative power sources or more reliable wireless microphones for classroom recording to ensure uninterrupted recording sessions. Invest in additional storage space or cloud solutions to accommodate larger video files for recording lessons. Continue improving the student printing process, considering options for further enhancements based on user feedback.
- 4. Specific Technology Initiatives.** Create training materials for all users to efficiently use PeopleSoft and other key systems. Implement an introductory guide for new students to familiarize them with campus resources and terminology. Consider offering weekend tech courses for working adults to expand access to education. Educate students about

online surveillance capitalism and privacy implications of technology use. Continue with the planned overhaul of the wireless infrastructure to meet the increasing demand for mobile technology on both campuses. Address system performance issues, such as slow loading times and glitches, to provide a smoother user experience for both students and staff. Ensure reliability and performance metrics for meeting and classroom technology, especially in a hybrid learning environment, to minimize disruptions and delays. Ensure campus computers are equipped with sound capabilities for students to listen to videos without needing to rely on personal devices.

- 5. Improved Communications:** Gather direct feedback from students to understand their concerns about the current webpage and make necessary improvements to enhance usability and searchability. Increase higher-tech signage in key locations and improve visibility in financial technology processes to enhance user experience and transparency. Differentiate between campuses more clearly in class search tools and implement alerts to notify students when they enroll in classes at the North Campus or online.

C. Consensus Statements. Focus Group participants developed the following Consensus Statements related to GCC's Technology Infrastructure:

1. Current, reliable high-tech infrastructure, informed by the users, to meet the needs of students and employees, with intentional funding and training support.
2. Adopt an intentional, expanded and more visible program of data tracking to support student retention and success, e.g. Degree Progress Reports, Early Alert, etc.
3. We strive for students to be prepared to be fully functioning and participating citizens. For career training, they need to be prepared to operate in jobs that will be using emerging skills and tools (technology). Our technology should be geared to reflect and advance those goals.
4. In our approach to technology infrastructure and processes, we should strive to promote a safe environment of personal opportunity and freedom of choice for students and employees.

AREA OF FOCUS 6. EMPLOYEE RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

A. Areas of Strength. Stakeholders identified a number of areas of strength in GCC's approach to fostering Employee Recruitment and Retention that support the institutional Mission, including:

- 1. Professional Development:** The district's investment in training and professional development opportunities, along with GCC's specific initiatives like the CTLE training, demonstrate a commitment to enhancing employee skills and knowledge. The availability of workplace training and resources, along with creative opportunities for career advancement, fosters a supportive and growth-oriented environment.
- 2. Salary and Benefits:** Revising salary bands and offering competitive benefit packages contribute to attracting and retaining talented employees. Providing the ability to work remotely and offering flexibility in job titles and responsibilities can increase employee satisfaction and retention. Recognizing years of service and providing wellness resources demonstrate an appreciation for employee contributions and well-being.

- 3. Transparent Leadership:** Strong and transparent leadership that communicates effectively and involves employees in decision-making can enhance trust and morale within the organization.
- 4. Equal Opportunity and Diversity:** Commitment to equal opportunity and diversity ensures an inclusive work environment where all employees feel valued and supported.

B. Opportunities for Improvement. Stakeholders identified several opportunities for improvement in the way the college promotes Employee Recruitment and Retention, including:

- 1. Improving Recruitment and Hiring Processes:** Use time-to-hire metrics to address bottlenecks in the recruitment and hiring process. Address slow recruitment and hiring processes by hiring more support staff for HR and providing clearer timelines and expectations for both hiring teams and candidates. Ensure transparency and clarity in the recruitment process, including communication of status updates for applicants. Increase investment in communicating job opportunities more broadly, including partnerships with external institutions like ASU. Utilize diverse channels and job boards to reach a wider pool of qualified candidates, especially for specialized roles. Provide for some flexibility in minimum qualifications for entry-level positions to attract a diverse pool of candidates. Address issues with slow or inaccessible software used for job applications and other processes to reduce friction in the recruitment process.
- 2. Strengthening Career Pathways and Succession Planning:** Develop transparent career pathways and succession plans to help employees understand how they can progress within the organization. Offer mentoring, coaching, and leadership development programs to support career advancement. Provide opportunities for temporary or part-time employees to transition into full-time roles.
- 3. Compensation and Benefits:** Ensure staff pay is competitive and commensurate with responsibilities and market standards. Address issues related to reclassification processes and inequities in compensation that can result from reclassifications. Explore opportunities to create or enhance benefits and incentives for employees and faculty to encourage retention within GCC, such as professional development opportunities, wellness programs, and campus amenities to enhance employee satisfaction and loyalty.
- 4. Training and Onboarding:** Improve onboarding experiences with role-specific training, standardized processes, and comprehensive knowledge transfer from departing employees. Encourage cross-functional mentoring and training to develop a well-rounded workforce and expand skill sets.
- 5. Recognition and Support:** Increase recognition efforts at both departmental and college-wide levels to foster team building and morale. Ensure consistent and meaningful recognition for years of service through both digital and in-person awards. Celebrate cumulative employment (as well as continuous employment) years in service. Highlight campus amenities and benefits as recruitment and retention incentives, such as fitness centers and campus classes. Increase availability of budget-friendly food choices on campus to improve employee convenience and satisfaction.
- 6. Remote Work and Virtual Engagement:** Improve remote and virtual work experiences through updated policies, support mechanisms, and professional development opportunities. Enhance communication and community-building efforts for remote and virtual teams, including guidelines for meetings and events

C. Consensus Statements. Focus Group participants developed the following Consensus Statements related to GCC's Employee Recruitment and Retention processes and policies:

1. We believe GCC needs to optimize and communicate the hiring, onboarding, and offboarding process, to include college- and department-level attention to: expanding the reach of jobs postings, increasing the hiring speed, providing clear communication to applicants about their stage in the process, providing better support to hiring committees with tools, and communication about what is expected and how long each stage of the process might take, providing some flexibility in interpreting minimum qualifications, and a checklist standardization for onboarding (including capturing training resources for incoming employees) and offboarding (including structured transfer of institutional knowledge from the offboarding employee).
2. We believe that GCC needs to develop greater support for employees in their career development, including intentional mentoring and training for prospective advancement, as well as support in reclassification and compensation to ensure that it is equitable and commensurate with job duties and assumed risk.

AREA OF FOCUS 7. BUILDING COMMUNITY: EXTERNAL PARTNERS

(Note for clarification: This section includes Internal Stakeholder feedback related to External Partnerships. See Section IV.B for External Partner feedback.)

A. Areas of Strength. Stakeholders identified several areas in which GCC is excelling in several areas relevant to supporting its institutional mission through external partnerships and workforce development, including:

- 1. Exceptional CTE Programs:** GCC's automotive, nursing, EMT, and fire programs receive high praise and directly benefit the community by producing skilled professionals in crucial fields. Specialized programs like Law Enforcement Training Academy (LETA), 2+2 programs with universities, CEP programs in nursing, and non-credit ESOL programs, cater to diverse student needs and career pathways.
- 2. Community Collaboration and Engagement:** Regular advisory council meetings and partnerships with organizations like police departments, EMT services, and IT companies ensure program relevance and currency. Collaborations with companies like St. Mary's, Discover Card, and others enable GCC to offer innovative programs and provide students with real-world experience. GCC has strong relationships with local governments and universities, facilitating collaboration on projects and ensuring smooth transfer processes for students.
- 3. Career Services and Experiential Learning:** GCC's Career Services staff and faculty provide valuable resources and lead courses on experiential learning, enhancing student employability and readiness for the workforce. The presence of Career Services staff ensures that students have access to resources and support for career planning and job placement. Investments in STEM partnerships, including hiring dedicated staff for career partnerships, show a commitment to preparing students for careers in high-demand fields.
- 4. Grant Funding and Philanthropic Support:** GCC secures significant grant funding, such as the \$5 million STEM grant, to support workforce development initiatives and facility improvements. GCC also receives philanthropic support from community partners, including scholarship donations and program funding from organizations like Microsoft.

B. Opportunities for Improvement. Stakeholders identified a number of areas for possible improvement in the college's approach to building community through external partnerships, including:

- 1. Strategic Workforce Development:** Develop a strategic plan for workforce development, including a systematic approach to building partnerships, securing donations, and leveraging grant opportunities. Reorganize resources to provide adequate support for Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs. Develop a comprehensive plan for workforce development that includes the creation of a dedicated department, the appointment of a Director, and the allocation of sufficient support resources to coordinate internal programs with external partnerships effectively. Coordinate with emerging industries, such as sports careers, to identify workforce needs and create relevant programs and partnerships.
- 2. Partnership Development:** Allocate resources to hire a dedicated Development Director to oversee fundraising efforts and manage relationships with industry partners. Strengthen partnerships with local firms, universities, and military organizations to create pathways for student success and address workforce needs in key sectors. Strengthen engagement with alumni to leverage their experiences and networks for workforce development and partnership opportunities. Collaborate with community partners to address students' basic needs, fostering innovation and win-win solutions.
- 3. Early College Outreach:** Improve marketing efforts to attract dual enrollment students from local high schools and strengthen partnerships with ASU and NAU. Increase outreach to public schools and parents to showcase GCC as a valuable educational institution and promote dual enrollment opportunities. Establish connections with charter schools, home-schools, and tribal communities to broaden outreach efforts and increase diversity in student populations. Partner with teacher education programs to provide teaching assistant opportunities within existing classes, leveraging the expertise of faculty with K-12 teaching experience to mentor future educators.
- 4. Targeted Initiatives:** Provide dedicated support and outreach for Native students, including assistance with Tribal scholarships and financial aid applications, as well as culturally appropriate programming, to address systemic barriers and promote equity. Explore the establishment of summer camp programs in STEM and other fields to engage students and foster interest in educational pathways. Expand opportunities for experiential and community-based learning across all academic offerings to provide students with practical skills and connections to the community.

C. Consensus Statement. Focus Group participants developed the following Consensus Statements related to GCC's approach to building communities through external partnerships:

1. We believe that GCC needs to develop and implement a strategic approach to Workforce / External Partnerships including the expansion of the existing Workforce office/staff, and the formation of a dedicated team to provide college-wide support and coordination for Workforce Development. The committee should have well-defined milestones and metrics to measure success, and there may be a need for institutional reorganization to provide systematic and strategic support for this effort.
2. We recommend expanding GCC's Experiential and Community-Based Learning approach to provide industry and on-campus experiences across all academic disciplines and Fields of Interest, as well as increasing the staffing — including a dedicated team — and

resources to support this work, so that every student has at least one class that includes ECBL in their program.

3. We believe that GCC is improved by the diversity of students that we serve. We further believe that these students should be served equitably, which includes reaching out into communities in which we have not been consistently active. This includes reaching out to communities such as Tribal communities to understand their unique needs and offering opportunities that respond to those needs.

AREA OF FOCUS 8. EFFECTIVE TEAMWORK, ACCOUNTABILITY, COLLABORATION AND COMMUNICATION

A. Areas of Strength. Stakeholders identified several areas in which the college is promoting effective teamwork in support of its Mission – particularly in the areas of accountability, collaboration and communication – including:

- 1. Shared Governance and Collaboration:** The establishment of shared governance structures and efforts to foster collaboration between different departments and campuses, such as the involvement of staff in curriculum planning discussions and chair evaluations, have strengthened engagement, inclusiveness in decision-making, accountability and teamwork.
- 2. Improved Internal and External Communication:** Efforts to enhance communication both internally and externally have been noted, with initiatives such as increased outreach from the Assessment Team and ramped-up communication from the Marketing Team contributing to better transparency and accountability. The responsiveness and personable communication style of leadership, particularly from the President, have contributed to a positive culture of communication and collaboration across the institution.
- 3. Strategy Execution Framework:** The implementation of a structured strategy execution framework (4DX) has helped in keeping individuals and departments focused on their most important strategic goals, thereby promoting accountability and driving collaboration towards shared objectives.
- 4. Data-Driven Accountability:** The use of data gathered by Institutional Effectiveness (IE) or Institutional Research (IR) teams has facilitated accountability by providing insights that inform decision-making and help hold individuals and teams accountable for their actions and outcomes.
- 5. Technology-enabled Collaboration:** Adoption of virtual meeting tools has enabled greater participation and collaboration, allowing staff and faculty to connect and work together more efficiently, even when face-to-face meetings are not feasible.
- 6. Cross-College Review and Compliance:** Initiatives such as the Compliance Committee provide avenues for cross-college review and accountability, ensuring that standards are met and processes are followed consistently across the institution.

B. Opportunities for Improvement. Stakeholders identified several areas for improvement in the way GCC fosters effective teamwork, including:

- 1. Strengthen Cross-Departmental Collaboration:** Develop structured processes and platforms to encourage and facilitate collaboration across departments, especially

on projects involving external stakeholders. This could involve establishing cross-departmental project management teams or utilizing collaborative software tools. Standardize the use of communication and collaboration tools across departments to reduce confusion and improve efficiency. Implement clear guidelines on which platforms to use for different purposes.

- 2. Student Focus Groups and Feedback:** Increase opportunities for student input through focus groups and feedback mechanisms to ensure that communication efforts resonate with student needs and preferences. This could involve incorporating student representatives in decision-making processes and gathering feedback on communication strategies.
- 3. Improve Visibility and Transparency:** Enhance visibility of departmental activities and events by expanding the use of the college calendar and ensuring that all campus-wide events are included. Implement clear labeling and categorization of events to aid in organization and planning.
- 4. Promote Accountability:** Continue to develop a college-wide understanding of what accountability means in the various employee contexts. Encourage leaders to share their Strategy Execution (4DX) goals and lead measures to foster accountability throughout the institution. This could involve regular updates on progress towards goals and ensuring alignment with departmental objectives.
- 5. Recognition and Celebration:** Expand initiatives such as the Years of Service Awards to recognize and honor long-term employees, including those who may have left and returned (cumulative vs continuous years or service). Consider creating an announcement page for faculty and staff publications to celebrate achievements and promote accountability in teaching and research scholarship.
- 6. Strengthen Marketing and Communication Strategies:** Review and refine marketing and communication efforts to ensure they are tailored to students' language and preferences. Utilize student feedback and data analytics on effectiveness and conversions – beyond impressions and “virality” – to inform communication strategies and make them more effective. Develop a cross-divisional, collaborative approach to Marketing, to provide cross-college advocacy and input into the processes as a way to leverage expertise and insights from employees and external partners. Collaborate with HR and Marketing teams to develop a publication page showcasing faculty, staff and student achievements, research publications, and other notable accomplishments. Utilize this platform to highlight the contributions of the college community and foster a sense of pride and recognition. Mobilize faculty members to participate in high school recruitment efforts to increase the new-student fall cohort. Encourage faculty involvement in outreach activities, such as visiting high schools, attending college fairs, or conducting informational sessions for prospective students.
- 7. Increase District Communication and Collaboration:** Strengthen communication and collaboration between GCC and the district level by ensuring that GCC representatives are actively involved in district committees and initiatives. This could involve regular updates from district leadership on relevant topics and opportunities for GCC staff and faculty to contribute to district-wide efforts.

C. Consensus Statements. Focus Group participants developed the following Consensus Statements related to GCC's approach to fostering effective teamwork in support of its institutional Mission:

1. We believe that GCC should have an inclusive, deliberate and structured approach to acknowledging and expressing appreciation for contributions and good work.
2. We believe that GCC should engage in collaborative and transparent communication through a cross-functional, cross-divisional approach to effective teamwork.
3. We believe that we should enhance collaboration, accountability, and effectiveness in our work at GCC through leveraging data and technology, among other methods and processes.

AREA OF FOCUS 9. INSTRUCTIONAL INNOVATION AND COMPETITIVE PROGRAM OFFERINGS

A. Areas of Strength. Stakeholders identified several areas in which the college is promoting Instructional Innovation and Competitive Program Offerings, particularly related to community engagement, faculty development, and student support, including:

- 1. Instructional Innovation through CTLE:** GCC's Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence (CTLE) plays a crucial role by providing innovative and varied training opportunities for faculty. This includes short and long-term programs that engage faculty in continuous learning. By incorporating feedback from faculty and bringing in external experts, CTLE ensures that instructional practices remain dynamic and effective.
- 2. Preservation of Canvas Features:** GCC has listened to its faculty and taken proactive steps to preserve useful features in Canvas, a learning management system, that other institutions have discontinued. This responsiveness enhances faculty satisfaction and effectiveness in teaching.
- 3. Partnerships with Business and IT:** GCC has fostered new partnerships, particularly in Business and IT departments, leveraging support from associated businesses. These partnerships not only enrich program offerings but also enhance job market relevance, benefiting both students and the local community.
- 4. Community-Centric Programs:** Programs like the Behavioral Science expansion and student-developed NARCAN kits demonstrate GCC's commitment to addressing community needs. These initiatives go beyond traditional education by directly impacting community welfare and engagement.
- 5. Professional Development Support:** GCC facilitates professional development through travel grants, sabbaticals, and summer projects. These opportunities empower faculty to grow personally and professionally, enhancing their effectiveness in the classroom.
- 6. Career and Technical Education (CTE) Promotion:** Efforts led by Susan Campbell to promote CTE programs and forge partnerships are instrumental in expanding educational offerings that meet workforce demands and community needs.
- 7. Dual and Concurrent Enrollment Programs:** GCC's ACE program and concurrent enrollment initiatives enable high school students to earn college credits, facilitating a smoother transition to higher education. This expands access to college-level coursework and prepares students for future academic pursuits.
- 8. Modalities of Instruction:** GCC supports diverse instructional modalities, providing faculty with training and resources to excel in different teaching approaches. This flexibility enhances student engagement and learning outcomes.

9. **Basic Needs Support:** GCC's attention to basic needs, such as free parking and bus passes, contributes to a supportive environment for students. This accessibility helps in retaining students and supporting their overall well-being.
10. **Fast Track Programs:** Fast Track programs at GCC offer rapid training in high-demand technical skills, aligning education with job market needs and improving students' employability.

B. Opportunities for Improvement. Stakeholders identified several areas for improvement in the way GCC promotes Instructional Innovation and Competitive Program Offerings, including:

1. **Enhancing Co-enrollment Support and Reducing Roadblocks.** Streamline administrative processes to facilitate co-enrollment initiatives with high schools and universities. Simplify paperwork and approvals required for faculty to teach at off-campus locations, such as high schools.
2. **Strengthen Grant Support.** Increase visibility and priority of grant-seeking activities at the administrative level. Institutionalize processes for managing grant funds more efficiently across departments. Utilize the newly hired Grants Coordinator to maximize funding opportunities.
3. **Strengthen Community Relationships for Innovative Programming.** Strengthen relationships with academic institutions like Midwestern University for collaborative programs such as Occupational Therapy and Veterinary Technology. Forge partnerships with educational institutions and organizations to offer programs for incarcerated individuals or those in detention centers. Collaborate with universities like ASU to expand access to online education at reduced rates for these populations. Explore partnerships with reintegration organizations to support post-incarceration education and workforce re-entry. Expand support for intentional, strategic Workforce Development partnerships in the community. Tap into emerging fields like Health Communication by partnering with local health organizations. This could involve internships in physicians' and dentists' offices, enhancing practical learning opportunities. Develop courses in Sports Administration and create certificates tied to local sports teams (NBA, MLB, NFL, NHL). This can attract students interested in sports-related careers and align with local industry needs. Investigate strengthening Film and Media Production partnerships. Foster a culture of innovation by encouraging "outside-the-box" thinking in course and program development. Consider offering unique certificates or programs, such as a certificate for Social Media Influencers, to attract new student demographics.
4. **Improving Faculty Support and Professional Development.** Allocate additional resources (staff, space, technology) to CTLE to expand its training offerings. Reduce bureaucratic hurdles for faculty attending conferences, engaging in summer projects, or taking sabbaticals. Provide streamlined administrative support to minimize time spent on paperwork. Invest in language programs for faculty to support a multilingual campus, potentially offering bilingual classes or tutoring. This enhances inclusivity and instructional effectiveness. Consider developing academic certificates in areas like adult learning, teaching & learning, and educational technology to benefit faculty development. Expand professional development opportunities for faculty to incorporate Open Pedagogy, Open Educational Resources (OER), and related teaching methodologies. Consider dedicated faculty development weeks or periods focused on specific educational innovations, similar to what has been done with Assessment.
5. **Promoting Intercultural Competence and Global Engagement.** Offer faculty training

in intercultural competence through programs like True North or similar initiatives. This prepares faculty to effectively engage with diverse student populations and fosters a global perspective among students. Re-establish a robust study abroad program or introduce short-term study programs within the U.S. that focus on under-represented cultures or areas of interest. Actively engage with other universities to promote collaborative international learning experiences. This enhances students' global awareness and cultural competence.

- 6. Diversifying Course Delivery and Schedule Options:** Explore offering weekend classes and consider breaking away from traditional semester structures (Fall, Spring, Summer). Introduce flexible course scheduling options to accommodate working adults, including evening, weekend, and intensive short-term courses. Evaluate the feasibility of a 12-month academic calendar with a robust summer session, allowing faculty and students flexibility in scheduling classes. Explore opportunities to offer online classes to students outside of Arizona, potentially expanding GCC's reach nationally or internationally.
- 7. Addressing Basic Needs and Student Success.** To provide a foundation for all innovative programming and competitive program offerings, the college should continue to strengthen comprehensive support systems for students facing basic needs challenges, such as housing insecurity and food insecurity. This could include partnerships with community organizations to provide affordable transportation options like rideshare subsidies or shuttle services. Develop metrics to track student success and retention linked to these support initiatives.
- 8. Enhancing Course Relevance and Appeal.** Consider developing online learning experiences that emphasize community and experiential learning, ensuring that all programs offer meaningful skills aligned with student and industry needs. Revise course names to be more appealing and relevant to students' interests and career aspirations. For example, renaming courses like "ENG 101" to more engaging titles such as "Swiftly Essays" or "YouTube It Media" could increase student enrollment. Enhance marketing efforts with a proactive approach to highlight innovative programs and unique course offerings.
- 9. Program Review and Assessment:** Strengthen the college's approach to academic program review and assessment, to measure the effectiveness of new programs and instructional initiatives, adjusting strategies based on outcomes to ensure continuous improvement and relevance of programming. Regularly solicit feedback from students, faculty, and community partners to refine offerings and adapt to evolving educational and workforce trends.

C. Consensus Statement. Focus Group participants developed the following Consensus Statements related to GCC's approach to Instructional Innovation and Competitive Program Offerings:

1. We believe GCC could intentionally expand its academic calendar to promote new class offering times and new inter-session opportunities to allow students to have greater flexibility and reach their goals in less time, and more effective use of campus facilities.
2. We believe that GCC should actively collaborate with external organizations, including city, state, federal, and industry partners, in grant outreach, sustainability, and development.

AREA OF FOCUS 10. GENERAL TOPICS, PLUS SAFETY, HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT

A. General Areas of Strength. Stakeholders identified several General areas in which the college is excelling at promoting its institutional Mission through its infrastructure and processes, including:

- 1. Commitment to Student Well-being and Success.** Many faculty and staff are dedicated to supporting students, particularly those in crisis or needing extra attention. The responsiveness and supportiveness of counselors play a crucial role in student retention and success.
- 2. Effective Communication and Community Engagement.** Proactive communication initiatives – such as the College Conversations series – help keep faculty and staff informed about important topics and dispel rumors swiftly. This fosters a transparent and well-informed campus community.
- 3. Passion for Teaching and Instruction.** Both instructional and service faculty demonstrate a strong commitment to teaching excellence and student learning, which enhances the overall educational experience at GCC.
- 4. Professional Development and Support Services.** The CTLE (Center for Teaching and Learning Excellence) is highly regarded for its comprehensive support services, benefiting instructors at all levels of experience. This contributes to ongoing professional growth and skill development among faculty.
- 5. Inclusive and Welcoming Campus Environment.** GCC is noted for its welcoming atmosphere not only for students but also for members of the community attending campus activities. This inclusive environment supports community engagement and campus life.
- 6. Adaptability and Crisis Response.** The proactive response to the challenges posed by the pandemic reflects GCC's commitment to employee empowerment and student welfare during crises, demonstrating flexibility and prioritizing health and safety.
- 7. Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives.** The focus on diversity training and awareness underscores GCC's commitment to fostering an inclusive campus environment that celebrates diversity and promotes cultural competence among students and staff.
- 8. Technology Integration and Infrastructure.** GCC maintains a commitment to providing faculty with current classroom technology, ensuring that instructional environments are equipped to support modern teaching methodologies and student learning needs.
- 9. Support for Arts, Student Life, and Organizations.** The Performing Arts program and support for student organizations contribute significantly to campus culture, providing enriching co-curricular opportunities that enhance the student experience.
- 10. Effective Administrative Support and Operations.** The positive feedback regarding HR communications and the local HR office highlights effective administrative support and operational management, which are crucial for faculty and staff satisfaction.
- 11. Sustainability and Campus Beautification.** Initiatives like planting more trees and maintaining campus grounds contribute to a pleasant and sustainable environment, reflecting a commitment to campus aesthetics and environmental responsibility.

B. General Opportunities for Improvement. Stakeholders identified several General areas in which GCC has an opportunity for improvement, including:

- 1. Assessment in a Culture of Evidence.** Improve coordination and transparency in assessment practices at all levels—from course-level assessments and course outcome reporting to program-level and general studies assessments. Ensure that assessment data is used effectively to inform decision-making and enhance educational outcomes. Ensure that data related to student outcomes and program effectiveness is actively shared and used to inform improvements in curriculum and teaching strategies.
- 2. Continuous Improvement and Strategic Alignment.** Conduct regular assessments of progress on previous Strategic Plan goals to inform the development of new initiatives for Focus 2027. Ensure alignment between strategic priorities and institutional goals to maximize impact and effectiveness.
- 3. Enhancing Coordination Between GCC Main and GCC North.** Improve coordination, especially in Disability Resources and other student services, between GCC Main and GCC North campuses to ensure seamless support for students regardless of campus location.
- 4. Fostering a Culture of Belonging.** Reinforce commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion within the new Strategic Plan. Ensure DEI goals are integrated across all aspects of operations, from recruitment and retention to curriculum development and campus climate initiatives.
- 5. Streamlining Enrollment Processes.** Simplify the enrollment process, both for in-person and online enrollment, to make it less intimidating and more efficient. Clearly indicate campus locations for classes during online registration to prevent confusion and unnecessary travel for students.
- 6. Strategic Sustainability Development.** Integrate goals for reducing GCC's carbon footprint into the college's next Strategic Plan. Implement initiatives focused on sustainability, such as energy efficiency improvements, waste reduction programs, and promoting sustainable practices across campus operations. Increase the number of electric vehicle (EV) chargers, particularly Level 2 chargers, on campus to support sustainability initiatives and accommodate the growing number of electric vehicles among students, faculty, and staff.
- 7. Enhanced Communication and Engagement.** Consider expanding the College Conversations series to incorporate elements that build on the success of these Focus Groups sessions, to involve regular updates or feedback sessions to foster ongoing communication and collaboration across the campus community.
- 8. Revitalizing Electives and Student Curricular Exploration.** Explore ways to restore the vitality of electives and elective programs while maintaining the benefits of Guided Pathways. This could involve promoting unique course offerings, integrating career readiness components, and enhancing student engagement through innovative learning experiences.
- 9. Strengthening Scholarships and Degree Completion Initiatives.** Consider implementing proactive scholarship offers like the Presidents' Honors Scholarship and the Valley Scholars program to attract and retain top students. Streamline the process for degree and certificate awarding to ensure timely recognition of student achievements.
- 10. Accessibility and ADA Compliance.** Implement a strategic initiative to achieve and maintain compliance with Title II ADA standards, including updates for digital accessibility such as websites and online content. Set clear goals and timelines, ensuring accessibility

permeates all aspects of campus life. Strengthen robust online platforms for attending events and accessing campus services to facilitate universal access and accommodate varying student needs, including those related to privacy (FERPA) and emergency management.

- 11. Improving Campus Safety and Digital Security.** Conduct regular safety inspections across campus, particularly in areas where chemicals are stored, to ensure compliance with safety regulations and maintain a secure environment for students, faculty, and staff. Address digital security concerns by providing and highlighting alternative access methods, like multi-factor authentication security keys, to ensure uninterrupted access to accounts for students and employees without smartphones.
- 12. Investing in Technology.** Keep pace with technological advancements to enhance IT infrastructure and address computer issues promptly. Ensure that departmental expertise is respected and integrated into decision-making processes regarding building improvements and technology upgrades. Address barriers to technology resources by expanding access to necessary tools for students participating in online or hybrid courses. Develop initiatives to provide affordable or subsidized technology solutions and support digital literacy among students.
- 13. Promoting Data Literacy and Automation.** Invest in enhancing data literacy among staff and faculty to facilitate informed decision-making and improve administrative processes. Leverage automation where possible to streamline operations and reduce administrative burden.
- 14. Improving Promotions for Performing Arts Programs.** Establish a clearer process and strategy for promoting performing arts programs to increase visibility and attendance. This could involve enhanced marketing efforts, collaboration with student groups, and utilizing digital platforms effectively.
- 15. Supporting Journalism and Media Education.** Establish a robust college journalism presence, potentially including a news publication and academic journalism program, to promote media literacy and student engagement. This fosters a platform for student voices and provides valuable experience in media education.

C. Feedback Specific to Health, Safety and Environment. Responding to a targeted prompt, Focus Group participants also provided recommendations specific to Health, Safety and Environment, including:

- 1. Sustainability Initiatives.** Expand efforts like the food garden, urban garden, and orchard to further promote student health and well-being awareness. Enhance these spaces with improved walking paths and signage to increase awareness and encourage utilization. Maintain efforts to support pollinators and sustain biodiversity, such as being a Bee Campus.
- 2. Indoor Air Quality and Temperature Control.** Conduct assessments of indoor building air quality and implement measures to improve ventilation and filtration systems where needed. Address localized temperature control issues to ensure comfortable working and learning environments throughout the campus. Ensure all buildings have updated AC systems functioning at appropriate setpoints to maintain comfortable and safe indoor temperatures.
- 3. Water and Waste Management.** Maintain and increase the frequency of filter changes for water bottle refill stations to ensure continuous access to clean, filtered water. Improve

recycling efforts by clearly marking bins and providing educational signage to educate students and staff on proper recycling practices. Continue promoting initiatives like zero waste containers in faculty offices and expand campus-wide recycling efforts.

- 4. Health and Hygiene.** Continue providing hand sanitizing stations and consider the ongoing need for these amenities in the context of evolving health concerns. Continue to regularly check and restock emergency first aid kits across campus to meet safety regulations and ensure preparedness.
- 5. Campus Accessibility.** Enhance visibility and accessibility of campus walking tracks and maps to promote physical activity and campus exploration. Prioritize repairs to sidewalks and pathways to prevent accidents and injuries, addressing recent incidents of staff members falling.
- 6. Safety Committee and Compliance.** Ensure the Safety Committee meets regularly to monitor compliance with OSHA regulations and conduct safety inspections campus-wide. Document safety procedures and ensure they are accessible to all faculty, staff, and students to enhance safety awareness and preparedness.
- 7. Campus Security and Preparedness.** Given current safety concerns nationwide, consider reviewing and updating campus security protocols and emergency response plans. Implement Stryker chair training and excessive heat response plans to enhance emergency preparedness, particularly for multi-story buildings.

D. Consensus Statement. Focus Group participants developed the following Consensus Statements related to General areas of strategic focus, in order to better support the college's Mission:

1. We believe GCC should develop and implement a comprehensive project, including broad based stakeholder input, to improve the admissions and enrollment process for students, to minimize barriers and maximize efficiency in the process. (This should be informed by any District-level efforts to improve these processes.)
2. We believe that GCC should develop and implement an effort to address accessibility through universal design principles for the physical campus and the learning environment. This should also explicitly address digital accessibility in compliance with the new ADA regulations.
3. We believe that GCC should be a forward-thinking steward of the environment and make it a priority to complete, at minimum, the sustainability outcomes defined in the college's [Climate Action Plan](#).

B. External Partner Feedback (Interviews)

In addition to the ten internal stakeholder Focus Group Listening Sessions, several separate interviews were conducted with some of GCC's key external stakeholders, including representatives of local , industry, and other community organizations. The separate interviews were conducted individually by GCC President Dr. Tiffany Hernandez, Interim (now Permanent) Vice President of Academic Affairs Dr. Lorelei Konopka, and Director of Strategic Planning George Gregg. The feedback from these separate interviews is collected and condensed here, with external stakeholders' feedback on key areas of GCC's institutional strength and opportunities for improvement.

A. Areas of Strength. External Stakeholders identified several areas in which the GCC is excelling at promoting its institutional Mission, including a deep industry knowledge, a community-focused approach, and its ability to foster partnerships. Specific identified strengths include:

- 1. Workforce Development Expertise and Programming:** GCC has extensive experience in workforce development, particularly in vocational and career-technical education (CTE), with a strong background in training programs and strategic partnerships aimed at meeting specific industry needs. The college demonstrates a clear understanding of industry trends and needs, such as the shift towards onshoring and nearshoring in manufacturing and the growing demand for healthcare professionals in rapidly developing areas. GCC demonstrates a strong capability in aligning educational offerings with emerging job market demands. This responsiveness is crucial for preparing students effectively for next-generation careers. Specific programs such as Nursing, Law Enforcement and Fire Science were lauded as highly credible and responsive to community needs.
- 2. Strategic Partnership Building:** GCC engages in a proactive effort to strengthen partnerships with local economic development teams and businesses, aiming to create a cohesive strategy for workforce development and economic growth. The college emphasizes the importance of community involvement in workforce readiness, aiming for graduates to stay and contribute locally, fostering economic growth. This includes collaboration with educational institutions, businesses, and local government entities, including organizations like West-MEC and Credit Union West, promoting effective integration into the local workforce ecosystem and contributing positively to economic development. GCC is also recognized as a hub for arts and culture, actively partnering with local entities like performing arts organizations. This involvement enhances its role beyond education, contributing significantly to community vibrancy.
- 3. Holistic Approach to Accessible Education:** GCC offers a wide variety of programs, from academic to recreational (e.g., fitness center and recreational classes), catering to diverse community needs. GCC's emphasis on wraparound services and lower tuition fees reflects a commitment to accessibility and student support, essential for a diverse student body. GCC excels in facilitating transitions to university education, including the offering of bachelor's degree programs. This holistic and longitudinal approach supports the community by providing accessible higher education opportunities locally that will support their present and future success. Respondents praised GCC for its embrace of the community college mission to provide education for all, with emphasis on accessibility and integration. GCC provides a lower cost, more flexible alternative for students who may not be able to relocate, or who may not be ready or decided on a 4-year university program. Recognizing that "one size does not fit all" students, GCC provides a variety of learning experiences, from certificates to degree pathways to just-in-time training. The community focus permits students to proceed from Dual Enrollment to Community College to Transfer Institutions to Career Opportunities, permitting students a pathway they can tailor to their needs. This is a great resource and service to the community.

B. Opportunities for Improvement. External Stakeholders identified several areas of possible improvement, including some strategic partnership opportunities, in which the GCC could enhance its institutional effectiveness, including improved agility and closer alignment with industry expectations and broadened community service through traditional and non-traditional offerings. Specific recommendations included:

- 1. Strategic Alignment with Business Needs and Expectations:** While GCC is broadly effective at engaging with businesses, there's a call to streamline processes further to improve responsiveness to workforce needs and avoid delays caused by curriculum committees or other bureaucratic hurdles that could slow down the college's responses. Similarly, stakeholders identified room to improve GCC's communication strategies to ensure regular coordination between the college and industry/government partners, to inform proactive rather than reactive responses to economic trends and workforce needs. Maintaining strong engagement with local chambers of commerce is crucial for aligning educational offerings with workforce demands and community development. There is a recognized need for quicker adaptation in educational offerings to match rapidly changing industry demands. This involves ensuring educational programs can pivot swiftly to meet emerging workforce needs without bureaucratic delays. Special focus should be given to those employee shortages in companies and sectors that have already been identified. This emphasis should include expanded programming especially to meet growing engineering, technology, artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, allied health care, digital literacy skills, business services, and educator training needed in the West Valley. Programming should also include internships, on-site training, and community-based learning opportunities. The GCC North campus was noted as a special opportunity to strengthen GCC's Mission success by providing targeted programming to better meet local workforce needs. This should be considered while balancing "centers of excellence" programming across Valley regions.
- 2. Greater Integration across Educational Levels:** There is an identified opportunity to enhance collaboration between the university system, community colleges, and K-12 institutions to create a more seamless educational pipeline. This would require more robust student engagement, marketing and support, especially at the High School level, to highlight GCC as a better alternative. Better support for math transition from High School to College would greatly facilitate this momentum. Better integration would also benefit from greater engagement with workforce partners and the development of specialized training programs, as discussed above. This could also include an increased focus on practical application of learning to careers, ensuring graduates are not just academically prepared but also practically skilled and ready for the workforce demands of today and the future, such as in artificial intelligence and other future-focused skills development. Respondents especially urged GCC to continue to expand its support of student basic needs, to improve student momentum through the educational experience by enhancing equitable accessibility and retention/completion success, while reducing stigma associated with receiving this support.
- 3. Supporting Non-Traditional Learning and other Community Needs:** GCC has an opportunity to improve its program offerings and services outside of traditional academic coursework to promote practical learning and cultural experiences for the community. This could include program offerings such as helping older adults maximize their use of technology devices, addressing digital literacy gaps, personal finance classes, and professionalism, job search/career planning, and financial literacy skills development. GCC could also explore more creative and unconventional methods to integrate itself into the community beyond traditional education. This includes leveraging its campus infrastructure and space as cultural hubs and exploring opportunities for hosting student athletic and other community events and broadening cultural partnerships that highlight the college's role in enhancing quality of life beyond academic offerings.

IV. Appendices

APPENDIX A. COMPREHENSIVE LIST OF INTERNAL STAKEHOLDER CONSENSUS STATEMENTS

This section includes a compilation of all Consensus Statements developed in the ten internal stakeholder Focus Group Listening Sessions held in April 2024. (Please note that these Consensus Statements do not reflect the totality of the recommendations or key themes that were developed in the Focus Sessions, but instead reflect only those Consensus Statements that were developed within the time constraints at the end of the Listening Sessions. Many Focus Groups expressed that they would have appreciated more time to develop these and additional statements.)

FOCUS GROUP 1. RECRUITING AND ENROLLMENT

“GCC needs a holistic, universal design approach to development and implementation of an outreach, recruitment, enrollment, and retention program that considers student individualized systems, resources, and processes to best achieve students success and community (outreach or benefit), and strategically increase student recruitment and retention. It should integrate outreach to the varied special populations, foster equity, and reflect the needs of students and the community. It should provide greater integration of GCC in and/or reflection of the community and vice versa, with diversity, accessibility, and community education. It should also Improve accessible technology tools for all end users, including students and employees alike, to allow (among other things) for accurate degree progress reports for all students. We view this statement as elaborating an important strategic area of focus for the college to improve student recruitment and enrollment, with the greater goal of improving student success and sense of belonging.”

FOCUS GROUP 2. STUDENT RETENTION, COMPLETION AND BEYOND

“We agree that students should be provided holistic support prior to and throughout their time with GCC and beyond to ensure their success via data-driven processes, structures that are responsive to their needs, and via proactive communication and strengthening relationships within our campus and student community.”

FOCUS GROUP 3. A CULTURE OF BELONGING

“Emphasize innovative strategies to remove barriers (internal and external), including Inclusive Spaces Designing with Everyone in Mind, etc.”

FOCUS GROUP 4. INFRASTRUCTURE: FACILITIES

1. “Increase funding to add staff support and attract and keep qualified staff.”
2. “We would like to see GCC commit to developing a communication plan addressing issues of safety, funding, and staffing. This communication plan should include communication with all departments.”
3. “Develop an annual Facilities upgrade plan with allocated funding that includes a process for submitting requests and ranking projects. This upgrade plan should provide education about the process and equity to underrepresented departments/areas for upgrades. (Departments that are familiar with the funding process otherwise may be prioritized more frequently without this consideration as they are more familiar with the funding request process.) This upgrade plan should also include sustainability efforts.”

FOCUS GROUP 5. INFRASTRUCTURE: TECHNOLOGY

1. "Current, reliable high-tech infrastructure, informed by the users, to meet the needs of students and employees, with intentional funding and training support."
2. "Adopt an intentional, expanded and more visible program of data tracking to support student retention and success, e.g. Degree Progress Reports, Early Alert, etc."
3. "We strive for students to be prepared to be fully functioning and participating citizens. For career training, they need to be prepared to operate in jobs that will be using emerging skills and tools (technology). Our technology should be geared to reflect and advance those goals."
4. "In our approach to technology infrastructure and processes, we should strive to promote a safe environment of personal opportunity and freedom of choice for students and employees."

FOCUS GROUP 6. EMPLOYEE RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

1. "We believe GCC needs to optimize and communicate the hiring, onboarding, and offboarding process, to include college- and department-level attention to: expanding the reach of jobs postings, increasing the hiring speed, providing clear communication to applicants about their stage in the process, providing better support to hiring committees with tools, and communication about what is expected and how long each stage of the process might take, providing some flexibility in interpreting minimum qualifications, and a checklist standardization for onboarding (including capturing training resources for incoming employees) and offboarding (including structured transfer of institutional knowledge from the offboarding employee)."
2. "We believe that GCC needs to develop greater support for employees in their career development, including intentional mentoring and training for prospective advancement, as well as support in reclassification and compensation to ensure that it is equitable and commensurate with job duties and assumed risk."

FOCUS GROUP 7. BUILDING COMMUNITY: EXTERNAL PARTNERS

(Note: Excludes feedback from External Partner interviews. See Section IV.B for External Partner feedback.)

1. "We believe that GCC needs to develop and implement a strategic approach to Workforce/ External Partnerships including the expansion of the existing Workforce office/staff, and the formation of a dedicated team to provide college-wide support and coordination for Workforce Development. The committee should have well-defined milestones and metrics to measure success, and there may be a need for institutional reorganization to provide systematic and strategic support for this effort."
2. "We recommend expanding GCC's Experiential and Community-Based Learning approach to provide industry and on-campus experiences across all academic disciplines and Fields of Interest, as well as increasing the staffing -- including a dedicated team -- and resources to support this work, so that every student has at least one class that includes ECBL in their program."
3. "We believe that GCC is improved by the diversity of students that we serve. We further believe that these students should be served equitably, which includes reaching out into communities in which we have not been consistently active. This includes reaching out to

communities such as Tribal communities to understand their unique needs and offering opportunities that respond to those needs.”

FOCUS GROUP 8. EFFECTIVE TEAMWORK, ACCOUNTABILITY, COLLABORATION AND COMMUNICATION

1. “We believe that GCC should have an inclusive, deliberate and structured approach to acknowledging and expressing appreciation for contributions and good work.”
2. “We believe that GCC should engage in collaborative and transparent communication through a cross-functional, cross-divisional approach to effective teamwork.”
3. “We believe that we should enhance collaboration, accountability, and effectiveness in our work at GCC through leveraging data and technology, among other methods and processes.”

FOCUS GROUP 9. INSTRUCTIONAL INNOVATION AND COMPETITIVE PROGRAM OFFERINGS

1. “We believe GCC could intentionally expand its academic calendar to promote new class offering times and new inter-session opportunities to allow students to have greater flexibility and reach their goals in less time, and more effective use of campus facilities.”
2. “We believe that GCC should actively collaborate with external organizations, including city, state, federal, and industry partners, in grant outreach, sustainability, and development.”

FOCUS GROUP 10. GENERAL TOPICS, PLUS SAFETY, HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT

1. “We believe GCC should develop and implement a comprehensive project, including broad based stakeholder input, to improve the admissions and enrollment process for students, to minimize barriers and maximize efficiency in the process. (This should be informed by any District-level efforts to improve these processes.)”
2. “We believe that GCC should develop and implement an effort to address accessibility through universal design principles for the physical campus and the learning environment. This should also explicitly address digital accessibility in compliance with the new ADA regulations.”
3. “We believe that GCC should be a forward-thinking steward of the environment and make it a priority to complete, at minimum, the sustainability outcomes defined in the college’s Climate Action Plan.”

APPENDIX B. FOCUS GROUP LISTENING SESSION SCHEDULE (WITH LINKS TO SESSION NOTES)

Internal Stakeholder Focus Group Listening Sessions were conducted virtually in April 2024. Each facilitated Listening Session was scheduled for 90 minutes, with time for open sharing as well as consensus building. Feedback was also solicited via email and ad hoc follow-up meetings with the Facilitator, without restriction, and many individuals provided additional feedback in this manner.

Session #	Session Topic	Date & Time
1	Student Recruitment and Enrollment. (Session Notes)	Wed 4/10 @ 3:30pm
2	Student Success: Retention, Completion, and Beyond. (Session Notes)	Thu 4/11 @ 3:30pm
3	A Culture of Belonging: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. (Session Notes)	Fri 4/12 @ 2:30pm
4	Infrastructure: Facilities. (Session Notes)	Thu 4/18 @ 9:00am
5	Infrastructure: Technology. (Session Notes)	Thu 4/18 @ 3:30pm
6	Employee Recruitment and Retention. (Session Notes)	Fri 4/19 @ 12:30pm
7	Building Community: External Partnerships and Workforce Development. (Session Notes)	Tue 4/23 @ 1:00pm
8	Effective Teamwork: Accountability, Collaboration, and Communication. (Session Notes)	Tue 4/23 @ 3:00pm
9	Instructional Innovation and Competitive Program Offerings. (Session Notes)	Fri 4/26 @ 12:30pm
10	General: Discussion of any and all topics. (A portion of this session also addressed Safety, Health and Environment specifically.) (Session Notes)	Fri 4/26 @ 3:00pm

APPENDIX C. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS AND CREDITS

The Strategic Plan Design Team would like to express its appreciation to the hundreds of GCC employees, student leaders, and external partners who shared their insights and feedback in surveys, focus group listening sessions, interviews, and other consultations as part of this planning process. A special thanks also goes to GCC President Dr. Tiffany Hernandez for her leadership, encouragement and support of this project.

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