



Blue Mountain Community College

LISTENING SESSIONS Summary & Recommendations

By: Susan L. Bower, MBA
Eastern Oregon Business Source



October 2, 2023

Table of Contents

Background and History	2
Background.....	2
History.....	2
Process and Methodology	3
Process and Timeline.....	3
Third Party Expertise.....	3
Community Visibility.....	3
Webpage.....	4
On-line Response Form.....	4
In-Person Listening Session Format.....	5
Responses	5
In-Person Listening Session Participation	6
Request a Call from BMCC Administration.....	6
Method to Summarize the In-Person Listening Session Input.....	7
Method to Summarize the Input Provided through the Online Response Form.....	7
Responses-What Constituents Had to Say	7
Purpose of a Community College.....	7
Strengths	9
Weaknesses	10
Opportunities	11
Challenges or Threats	12
Recommended Priorities	13
Overview	13
Increase Morale and Build Trust Internally.....	14
Marketing and Publicity.....	15
Decision-making	15

Background and History

Background

Blue Mountain Community College (BMCC) embarked on a Listening Session tour beginning the Spring of 2023. The purpose of the Listening Sessions was to gain valuable feedback from college constituent groups—students, staff, faculty, business and industry partners, alumni, and community members. The input gathered from the Listening Sessions will be used to inform the College’s 2025-2029 Strategic Plan, Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) plan, as well as other future operational planning. The College last conducted a SWOT analysis in 2015-2016. Historical context from this to the current time period follows in this report.

It was important to the College that the process be transparent and inclusive. In October 2022, the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU) conducted an accreditation site visit to the College as part of its evaluative process. NWCCU made seven recommendations to the College. NWCCU’s Recommendation #2: Fall 2022 Evaluation of Institutional Effectiveness states that Blue Mountain Community College should “maintain a stable and effective administrative structure and fully engage college constituencies in decision-making processes on matters in which each has a direct and reasonable interest.” The Listening Sessions help fulfill this directive.

The NWCCU is recognized by the United States Department of Education (USDE) and the Council on Higher Education (CHEA) to accredit postsecondary institutions.

History

Since the last SWOT analysis in 2015-2016, the College has had many events which understandably has influenced its organizational culture and health. Between 2015 and 2023, the College has had notable leadership changes. There has been three (3) Presidents, two (2) interim Presidents, and significant and frequent reorganization both of administrative positions and department functions. The average length of time a college President served during this span was less than three years. The current President, J. Mark Browning, Ed.D. began with the College in July 2021. The turnover of key leadership caused multiple changes to the priorities for the College and development of one strategic plan 2015-2016. The marketing and the grant management programs were cut due to a shift in focus, then to be brought back staffed with people other than those originally who served in those roles just two years later. The admissions department and recruitment initiatives were cut, then reestablished in 2022. The remaining staff were expected to take on duties. Throughout BMCC’s history of staff reductions, it seems likely there has not been a change in the expected outcomes for each department. The same or more productivity has been expected from fewer employees.

BMCC has seen enrollment decline for the last ten (10) years despite the addition of a Certified Medical Assistant Program and non-credit training certificates during the same period. Partnerships with local industry were formed to provide Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) courses and computer programming as well as a data center technician program with Amazon Web Services (AWS). There have been contract negotiations and faculty and staff reductions. There has been an elimination of programs of study and

the College, and the Department of Justice did not renew the contract for BMCC staff to teach courses offered at Eastern Oregon Correctional Institution (EOCI). A new website is expected to launch in September 2023 after migration and beta testing has occurred throughout 2023. It was identified that the student information system, Anthology, was not adequate and caused a tremendous amount of frustration for faculty, staff, and students. In early 2022, commitment was made to develop a customized student information system which is expected to be released in 2024. While there is a definite sense of hope the new system will be a viable solution, many acknowledged the reality of a potentially steep learning curve and trepidation.

Process and Methodology

Process and Timeline

Eighteen Listening sessions were conducted between April 27 and May 31, 2023, for staff/faculty, students, and community members involving 90 people. Sessions were offered throughout BMCC's service area to include Hermiston, Boardman, Pendleton, Athena, Milton Freewater, La Grande, and Baker City. The internal sessions (staff/faculty/students) included in-person and Zoom options; the external sessions (community members) included in-person sessions and one Zoom-only session. College administrators thoughtfully did not attend the staff and faculty sessions to ensure open and honest feedback and discussion at the sessions. The College President and at least one member of the administrative team attended nearly all community sessions. An additional session with the College Board of Education will take place during their summer planning meeting.

Third-Party Expertise

Susan Bower from Eastern Oregon Business Source (EOBS) was hired to conduct the Listening Sessions for the College internally and externally throughout BMCC's service area. Hiring a third-party allowed for external input and expertise, as well as objective input on the process used an impartial view of the process itself. Susan Bower conducted all sessions except for one due to an emergency circumstance. Notes were taken to capture participant input. The sessions were engaging and intentionally facilitated to promote conversation. There were informational points added by the facilitator at each session for consistency and to increase awareness about the declining State support for operating budgets of community colleges.

Community Visibility

It was important that the College hold Listening Sessions to its communities and not to expect community members to come to the College. Most of the sessions, except for the Zoom session, were offered at local high schools and public meeting areas. Sessions were offered throughout BMCC's service area to include Hermiston, Boardman, Pendleton, Athena, Milton Freewater, La Grande, and Baker City. Some acknowledged the convenience of this approach and most made it a point to express appreciation

for the College offering an in-person opportunity to meet in their cities. Listening Sessions were held throughout the BMCC service areas (see table below).

	COMMUNITY SESSIONS	DATE
1.	La Grande	May 1
2.	Pendleton	May 2
3.	Mission	May 8
4.	Boardman	May 9
5.	Baker City	May 10
6.	Hermiston (Hispanic Advisory Committee)	May 16
7.	Milton-Freewater	May 18
8.	Hermiston	May 22
9.	Athena	May 23
10.	Zoom-Only	May 24

	INTERNAL SESSIONS	DATE
1.	Staff/Faculty	April 27
2.	Staff/Faculty	April 28
3.	Staff/Faculty	May 5
4.	Staff/Faculty	May 9
5.	Students - General	May 10
6.	Students - General	May 16
7.	Students - Ambassadors	May 23
8.	Administrative Team	May 31

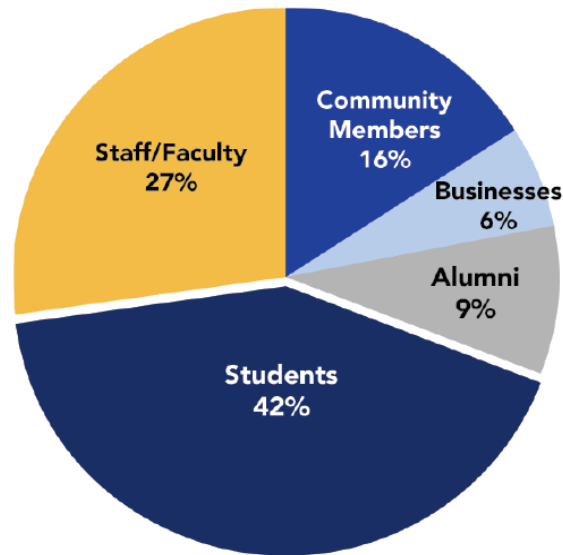
Webpage

A college webpage--www.bluecc.edu/ListeningSessions was created to inform the public about the purpose, times and locations of sessions, and to offer an anonymous Online Response Form for respondents to write input. The webpage was open from the end of April through May 31, 2023, with updates about how long it would be available. The facilitator promoted the webpage and Online Response Form in each of the in-person and remote listening sessions.

Online Response Form

An anonymous Online Response Form was provided in English and Spanish for any constituents that were unable or uninterested in attending the in-person or Zoom sessions. The response form included the same questions and format as the in-person sessions and allowed an extra open field for comments and feedback. In response to the input of the Hispanic Advisory Committee in Hermiston, Oregon, the form was made available in Spanish within 24 hours. A certified translator was hired to assist.

Fifty-seven people responded to the Online Response Form, 42% were students (see the chart below). Respondents came from 13 towns in the College’s market area: with most responses coming from constituents in Pendleton, Hermiston, Umatilla and Boardman (in this order).



In-Person Listening Session Format

Each session began with an explanation of the purpose of hosting the events, where to get more information, and a list of upcoming events. The purpose of the process was shared to be a way for the College to hear about the needs of the community it serves and to get ideas about how it could enhance its services and value to the region. It was emphasized that obtaining input from a broad group of people in the community was a priority for the College and that input from all constituents would be used to shape the future of the College. Obtaining input from constituents is also a part of a continual review of the quality of programming and service, and a requirement of accreditation. It was explained that the process was intended to inform the next strategic plan, the strategic enrollment management plan and would be used to inform decision-making and operational planning processes.

The sessions discussion questions were led by first asking “What is the purpose of a community college?” Participants were encouraged to think about what needs a community college helps to fill for their service area. The question was designed to obtain perspectives on the purpose of community colleges broadly, not just BMCC.

The second question was “What are the strengths of Blue Mountain Community College?” with a strength defined as a strong favorable attribute or inherent asset.

The third question was “What are the weaknesses of Blue Mountain Community College?” with a weakness defined as a quality or feature regarded as an inherent disadvantage or fault.

The facilitator proceeded by next asking “What are the opportunities for Blue Mountain Community College?” and lastly “What are the challenges or threats for Blue Mountain Community College?” An opportunity was defined as a set of circumstances or an external favorable factor that makes it possible

to do something. A challenge or threat was defined a set of conditions or external unfavorable factor that makes it difficult to accomplish something.

The sessions concluded with bullet points about next steps and how to continue to participate in the process. The methods involved visiting the College website to obtain details for upcoming listening sessions and to access the Online Response Form. As part of the response form, it was possible to request to receive a call from the President or any other administrator. There was an open field for providing additional input using the Online Response Form. As part of the conclusion, participants were encouraged to visit the College website to review the current strategic plan and to follow updates on initiatives that have come as a result of this process.

The final slide was a quote by Margaret Mead, “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has;” along with gratitude for participants’ time and engagement as well as a commitment that the input was valuable to the College and that it would be used to shape the future of the College.

The facilitator expressed inspiration and excitement about the future of the College and the importance of community involvement.

Responses

In-Person Listening Session Participation

Throughout the 18 sessions, a total of 90 people participated. Participants included the following constituents: current students, faculty, parents of past or present students, alumni, classified and exempt staff, business owners, industry leaders, and elected officials. Each group had a variety of people and almost every session had at least one BMCC employee. Input was provided by sharing aloud in the group setting and talking one-on-one with the facilitator.

The attendance and level of engagement in the In-person Listening Sessions were both above average to high when compared to similar community engagement initiatives. Nearly all the sessions had a balance of facilitation and conversation that was positive, forward-thinking and oriented toward future opportunities and solutions. Two internal sessions involved conversation that was direct about administration turnover, the passionate desire to be included in decision-making, and the need for more communication and transparency.

Overall, it was evident that both internal and external community members wanted the College to succeed, and that student success was of most importance to all.

Request a Call from BMCC Administration

The Online Response Form provided an option for respondents to request a phone call from the College administration. Both President of the College, J. Mark Browning, Ed.D. and Dean of Student Services, Theresa Bosworth returned a total of 10 calls. The callers were from communities throughout the College market area and consisted of people from a variety of constituent groups. The topics were

diverse and there was no common theme. Many expressed gratitude and surprise to receive a call from the College President.

Method to Summarize the In-Person Listening Session Input

Notes were taken during the Listening Sessions and reviewed by the facilitator at the conclusion of each session. Repeated similar or identical participant input became evident after the third session; helping to identify and better understand common themes. The facilitator was tasked with summarizing the input, highlighting recommendations made by the participants and offering professional commentary. A summary of the input, highlighting recommendations made by participants follows in this report.

Method to Summarize the Input Provided through the Online Response Form

The Online Response Form was reviewed each day for requests for phone calls from administration. At the close of the survey, repeated similar or identical participant input was identified. A summary of the input, highlighting recommendations made by survey respondents follows in this report.

It appears that some people offered more detailed input perhaps when given the ability to write anonymously using the Online Response Form. In another instance, a respondent expressed gratitude for the anonymous way to provide input and acknowledged that the process used to obtain input was thoughtful.

The common themes of input that follow is a summary of both the In-person Listening Sessions and the responses to the Online Response Form. The input obtained via both methods was similar and fell under most of the same common themes, therefore the input from each is integrated into the summaries that follow.

Responses-What Constituents Had to Say

Purpose of a Community College

In-Person Sessions & Online Response Form

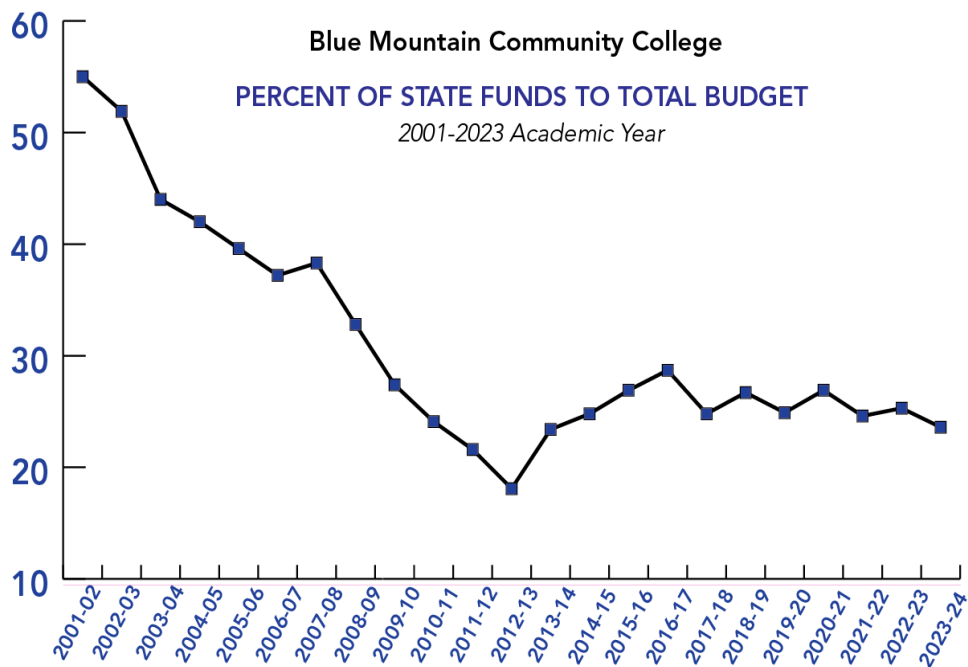
This part of the discussion and survey was robust and seemed to be an effective way begin the conversation and to spur input.

Responses in no order included such things as:

- Community events (arts, theater, sports)
- Transfer degrees
- Associate degrees
- Certifications
- Continuing education
- Small class sizes

- Community classes (hobby or personal interest)
- Small business training
- Community meeting spaces available for public use
- GED education
- Corrections Program Education
- Offering training needed by the region’s business and industry
- Retraining for people reentering the workforce or making a mid-life career change
- Education for all people, all ages, and all interests
- Serve underserved and marginalized populations
- Being a transition option close to home for students wanting to pursue higher education, but not wanting to move away or attend a larger university
- Dual credit opportunities for high school students

The facilitator consistently shared the following points to increase awareness: 1-state funding to all community colleges has declined from funding most expenses to funding 20% of the costs; explaining the trend of consistent decline over the last two decades, and 2-community colleges across the nation are having to diversify their revenue streams and depend less on state funding to cover the costs of offering classes and programs for students. In 2001, the State of Oregon funded 55 percent of BMCC’s total budget. The funding from the State today is less than half that amount. (See graph below.) To this, a few participants responded that a community college is a non-profit organization and therefore it “does not have to make money.” Many expressed surprise to learn how much less community colleges were receiving from the state than in the past.



Strengths

In-Person Sessions & Online Response Form

The conversation about the strengths of Blue Mountain Community College was lively and generated a long list of attributes participants considered to be strengths. In each session, a sense of pride and appreciation of the College was felt. Nearly all the survey respondents offered more than one strength.

The list of most noted strengths, in no order included the following:

- The College's long-standing favorable reputation, some even knew the inaugural year 1962
- Positive public image
- Quality programs, with emphasis on the quality of instruction and instructors' care for student achievement
- Dedication and length of service of classified and exempt staff, noting historical knowledge as a positive
- Quality of instruction
- IT department
- Partnership with Amazon Web Services and quality programming that leads to a job in less than one-year
- Dual credit program and relationships with area high schools
- High job placement for some programs
- Diverse geography in eastern Oregon and with the advent of remote learning, an even larger geography can be served
- Number of buildings around the service area and the Pendleton campus, was noted to be a source of pride
- Presence in West Umatilla County and Morrow County
- Scholarships and funds made available by the Foundation for more than tuition
- Variety of classes offered to students of all ages and stages in their academic pursuits
- Availability of sports and student life programs, with specific reference to basketball, baseball, and volleyball, softball and rodeo
- Proximity close to home for students who do not want to leave the area, go to a larger university, or have jobs and families that necessitated they stay in the area
- Technological competence
- Affordability, especially when compared to large universities
- Affordability of the dual credit program
- Agility with which the College adjusted to offer remote learning during the pandemic
- Relationships and positive reputation around the state with elected officials and other academic institutions
- Updated branding

All sessions and all responses to the Online Response Form included a list of perceived strengths and a sense of pride in the College, as well as a sense of optimism about its future direction.

Weaknesses

In-Person Sessions & Online Response Form

The conversation about the weaknesses of Blue Mountain Community College seemed to depend upon the mix of participants. The Online Response Form asked about the respondents' affiliation with the College, it's possible that respondents could have more than one affiliation.

Broadly speaking, people associated with the College internally (employees of all levels and faculty) had more weaknesses and challenges or threats to share than those looking from the outside in or externally (community members, alumnae, or business owners). The most common theme of weakness from those associated internally with the College was the perception of administrations' lack of vision, direction, communication, and the absence of accountability. Low morale and a lack of feeling valued by administration was brought up in every session where there was an employee or faculty member. Internal constituents strongly desire to be involved in decision-making and would like more communication from the Office of the President. The concerns have been felt for many years, likely given the significant turnover in administrative positions, particularly the President.

It was mentioned in each session that there has been significant turnover in the President position and frequently changing directions from administration. It was stressed how damaging this was to the College, both internally to morale, and externally to its reputation. Some described internal customer service, that is how employees within the organization work with or serve one another to fulfill the mission of the College, as a predominant concerning weakness. Shared examples of internal customer service included unanswered phones and unresponsive calls and emails. A lack of accountability for employee performance and attendance was expressed as a concern. It also came up more than once that there was frustration about how some employees were allowed to work remotely, while others were not. There was a feeling of unfairness, a perceived absence of remote worker accountability, and difficulty reaching managers at times. The insufficiencies of the student information system, Anthology, were frequently discussed, along with an acknowledgement of hope for the upcoming replacement student information system anticipated for 2024.

Further, the relationship between the faculty and administration was brought up as a detriment in every internal session. A lack of trust throughout the College was presented as a common denominator. The discussion about trust suggested mistrust among peers, between departments, and of members of administration. Multiple sessions included discussion about how bargaining agreements were considered by some to be "part of the internal service problems and low employee morale." For example, a long discussion amongst classified, technical staff, and faculty was about the "silos" within which various groups of people work. Quotations from participants included "administration's hands are tied by the requirements of bargaining agreements," "there's too much time and resources spent talking about how administration and some of the bargaining agreements are at odds with one another," and "bargaining agreements create silos."

Many students spoke about the difficulty in navigating the registration process, getting a phone call or email returned by student services and faculty, and not being able to take classes consecutively. Erratic course offerings in some cases extended the time it took for students to graduate or otherwise greatly interfered with their personal plans or schedule. Some explained that it was not uncommon to be enrolled in a class then to find out the class had been cancelled due to lack of enrollment or that a class

was scheduled outside the academic calendar by adjunct instructors who sometimes seem unaware. Along these lines, students commented about the onerous application process and disappointment with the communication about acceptance. A recent high school graduate said he had applied to several schools but did not receive any response from Blue Mountain Community College. Other young adults, most of which were current Blue Mountain Community College students expressed disappointment about the lack of on-campus activities and meeting spaces extending to a concern about the lack of students on campus in general.

Across all groups, regardless of internal or external affiliation, there were common themes. Many commented about the lack of available training programs, certificates in lieu of a degree, especially for high demand jobs. Examples of high demand jobs included: commercial driver's license, hospitality/food handling, construction, childcare, agriculture, events planning, tourism, computer programming/website design, cosmetology and basic bookkeeping or career technical education. These specific examples were offered by people who appeared to be under the age of about 30 and those who identified themselves as business owners.

Concerns about the arduous process and waiting period to get into trades apprentice programs were also seen as a weakness for the College.

An in-person session participant commented, "BMCC is Hispanic enrolling, not Hispanic serving." This opened a conversation that concluded that the College may not understand the needs of Hispanic and Latino students. Similar responses on the Online Response Form suggest broad agreement with this perceived weakness.

Another weakness expressed by a diverse group was the concern that the College has a poor reputation and a lack of vision. When asked to explain further, the discussion continued to include such examples as negative newspaper articles, the perceived "constant fighting" between faculty and administration and how disparaging some employees talk about their employer in public. Nearly every session, a concern about the ambiguity of top programs or mission of the College was expressed. It was suggested that unlike some of our regional partner colleges who have established their niche, it is not clear what BMCC offers, has or does which makes it stand out. Some compared the College to what it was known for in the past (diesel mechanics, dental and nursing programs, and agriculture) others compared the College to regional community colleges that had a niche. The overarching concern was that BMCC has not been consistent in its messaging, branding, or use of marketing materials, leading to ambiguity.

A lack of succession planning is considered a weakness. There is a concern about how many employees are at or about to approach retirement, which will create openings and a loss of historical knowledge and experience. The concern includes a perceived lack of upward mobility.

Opportunities

In-Person Sessions & Online Response Form

An opportunity was defined as a set of circumstances or an external favorable factor that makes it possible to do something. Further, an opportunity was presented as something realistic and timely the College could do to enhance its offerings. In most cases, this was a time for the participants to offer

suggestions for how the College could make their strengths stronger and how to mitigate the weaknesses.

The Hispanic Advisory Council offered many suggestions about how to increase communication with Latino and Spanish-speaking people. Ideas included more branding and other communication in Spanish, sharing more stories of successful Latinos, for the College to have a stronger presence in school districts with a high percentage of Latino students, and for the College to work closely with the Latino population to offer classes and design programs that meet their needs. Also noted in a variety of input sessions and the Online Response Form was the belief that having more Spanish-speaking employees and Latino staff members would bring benefits to both the College and the community.

The College is encouraged to delve into the regional emerging industries of value-added agricultural practices, drones, cyber security, precision irrigation, natural resource management, tourism, food processing and water resource development. Some business owners offered specific high demand positions that the College could train the workforce to do such as auto mechanics, trades, small equipment operators, maintenance and repair, cosmetology, food service and hospitality. Some noted the shortage of medical assistants, mental health professionals, and K-12 teaching assistants as an opportunity for the College. The participants in the Baker County Listening Session offered specific possibilities for the College to partner with the local trades school and high school. Suggestions were made that local experts in their field are qualified and interested in teaching for the College, possibly making more classes available locally and designed to meet local needs.

The opportunity for student housing and repurposing real estate were common themes. Some complained of the lack of affordable housing in general, others more specifically expressed a need for on campus housing. Others pointed out the fact that the College owns many buildings which are either not being used or are depreciating because of deferred maintenance. Conversation about possible repurposing, leasing, and selling real estate was robust. The idea to repurpose buildings into affordable student housing seemed to gain traction amongst many of the people across more than three sessions. It was suggested that a community group in each of the cities might be established to discuss local needs and to brainstorm for uses of real estate owned by the College and vacant properties in general.

Challenges or Threats

In-Person Sessions & Online Response Form

A challenge or threat was defined a set of conditions or external unfavorable factor that makes it difficult to accomplish something. Further it was explained that a threat was a reality in the current environment that poses a significant challenge for the College.

Most of the conversation and Online Response Form input about challenges or threats had to do with the College maintaining relevancy, declining enrollment and financial instability. Some discussion took place about the decline in state funding for community colleges compared to universities and the lack of hope the trend will change. A historical concern about the lack of data was added as a challenge or threat to the College when applying for grants or other funding.

Each of the groups and several Online Response Form respondents touched on the many choices available in the marketplace to help people meet their educational needs and how easy it is in the market to get registered and begin taking classes. The plethora of online classes and short pathways to certification gives students more options across a wide selection of post-secondary education alternatives. The College has unprecedented competition, and its competitive advantage seems too many to be unclear. The internet, social media, and access to information bombard potential students with choices. The increasing popularity of remote learning poses a competitive challenge and students' desire for immediate response and flexible learning requires the College to stand out. Relevance of programming, relationship with business and industry, and generation of diversified income streams are necessary for financial sustainability.

Recommended Priorities

Overview

The facilitator was inspired by the attendance and participation in the Listening Sessions and Online Response Form. Compared to similar efforts, the engagement was considered above average to high. This commitment of participants' time and energy demonstrates the care, pride, and interest people have for the College. It further suggests that internal and external groups want the College to be competitive, financially sustainable, and to prioritize students as the top priority. When people care enough to be frank, direct, and honest in their assessment of weaknesses and threats, it is a positive sign that the process is appreciated and that the future is hopeful. This openness also suggests that people trusted in the process and offered input to help the College hear from a variety of constituents.

Important to note is the fact that input obtained during Listening Sessions is subjective and an expression of opinion. Therefore, it is expected to see some responses or themes be considered strengths by some and weaknesses by others. Similarly, some may consider something an opportunity, while others may consider the same to be a threat. All input is valuable, and it is the responsibility of the facilitator to create an environment where people feel safe speaking openly. The facilitator is also responsible for identifying themes and to ask follow-up questions to better understand the input provided. While it is essential for an organization to be aware of its strengths, the facilitator listed the strengths without as much explanation or as many examples as was done for the weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. The facilitator considers the strengths to be self-explanatory. Most of the time during the Listening Session was spent discussing weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. More follow-up questions were asked intentionally about the weaknesses, opportunities and threats to better understand the issues and to draw out possible solutions for the College to consider.

The facilitator offers the following initiatives for the College to consider as it seeks to maximize opportunities. It is suggested to include initiatives such as those listed here in the next strategic plan, the student enrollment management plan, future operational planning, and decision-making. The suggestions are listed under three headings and were informed by the input learned through the Listening Sessions, review of past strategic plans, student enrollment management plans, evaluations of the College and consultant's expertise in organizational health.

Increase Morale and Build Trust Internally

- Make available robust professional development opportunities for faculty and staff to include ongoing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI), Harassment and Cultural Awareness training. While it is acknowledged that faculty is more than capable of leading such sessions, it is advised to use an external source or an in-house training expert so the faculty can enjoy the experience as participants. Offering book clubs, remote guest speakers, and in-service conferences for professional development are also common in post-secondary education. An introduction to the professional development topics and full sessions of the DEI, Harassment, and Cultural Awareness should be offered at each new employee or onboarding session.
- Offer internal budget workshops to promote transparency and increase understanding of the budget and how it works. Administration, faculty and staff collaborate to identify alternative funding streams and develop plans to pursue them.
- Research and consider the feasibility of offering confidential, professional mental health access on campus or well-publicized convenient access to service providers. Consider making the services available to students, faculty, and staff. It is advised to use an external source instead of an internal position for maximum credibility, trust, and professionalism.
- Maximize the upcoming new student information system by requiring high quality internal training provided by the chosen organization, committing to use it and to being positive about the system and its features compared to the existing system. It is critical that the new system is presented and embraced with a positive intent on it being successful. Further, it is imperative that enough time is given to learn, maximize, and test drive the system.
- Host routine, casual opportunities for faculty and staff to interact with administration, in particular the President and Human Resources. Promote open dialogue, inclusivity, and display a genuine interest in engagement. Establish and model an open-door policy and be visible and available throughout the campuses and across the community.
- Write routine op ed articles for the East Oregonian to keep the public updated on the successes of the College and progress toward goal attainment. Incorporate comments from faculty, staff and students.
- Thoughtfully consider the input and concerns of faculty and staff around accountability and work to establish and expect minimum internal customer service expectations. Communicate the minimum expectations, model them, and be sure to take swift action when the minimum standards are not achieved. This is not an easy thing to do, especially if accountability has been perceived to be a challenge for a long time. Modeling accountability, expecting accountability, and communicating about accountability is crucial for a culture shift and trust must become a part of the culture.

Marketing and Publicity

- Increase public awareness of existing partnerships with other community colleges which make possible programs including EMT, fire science and diagnostic imaging. Pursue additional partnerships to broaden course and program offerings. Market heavily to increase awareness of the opportunities to attend BMCC and train for these positions.
- Engage with students younger than high school, for example middle schoolers, to introduce BMCC earlier and before other colleges. Offer more hands-on experiences for students visiting the campus and have a presence at the middle schools including such involvement as career fairs, guest speaking, have a BMCC representative in the school on a regular, scheduled basis, and coordination with the guidance counselor's office to offer enrichment opportunities that would expose the College to students in their current environments.
- Establish and enforce design standards for the use of branding, use consistently with intentionality. Ensure that marketing has a seat at the strategic planning table and anytime something is communicated externally. Consistent marketing must be used both internally and externally to be the most effective. Making marketing a top priority and staffing and supporting such efforts with the most experienced and professional people is a key to success. Ensure that all marketing efforts are made available in both English and Spanish. Work with the Confederated Tribe of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR) to offer marketing efforts that are culturally aware and appealing to potential Native American students. CTUIR has an outstanding language program that could be helpful. Work with the Hispanic Advisory Council to do the same.
- Develop intentional efforts to engage and recruit Latino and Native American population to increase enrollment. Share stories of successful first-generation college graduates, internships, and completion of industry-led training programs such as the data technician program collaboration with AWS. Seek and share student and industry testimonials. Promote diversity among faculty and staff. Seek bilingual faculty and staff.

Decision-making

- Create opportunities for BMCC to be involved in the communities it serves and embrace diversity. Be intentional when communicating both internally and externally about topics such as: BMCC career opportunities, upcoming open board seats, volunteer activities and events. Strive to have decision-makers be representative of the communities served by the College.
- Involve faculty and staff in decisions through advisory groups, routine, scheduled meetings to increase collaboration and opportunities to build healthy working relationships. Promote sharing information.
- Perform an updated employer needs assessment, the last one was done in 2015. Make decisions using data with agility to offer relevant programming to meet the needs of business and industry throughout the market service area.

- Establish systems to encourage people to work together and to discourage working in silos. For example, multiple departments might work together to write a grant or to plan an event for current or potential students. Create opportunities for faculty and staff to work together across departments. Promote sharing information.
- Involve a committee of faculty and staff to inform each grant application process and implementation. Ensure that faculty and staff are involved in identifying funding sources and planning the use of grant funds.