Minutes of the President’s Cabinet Meeting
October 17, 2013
3 p.m., DBC 260

Present:
Ms. Julia Allen                                  Dr. Karen Less
Dr. Don Ammons                                   Mr. Conrad Martin
Mr. Todd Baney                                    Ms. Cynthia McCrory
Mr. Sam Buff                                      Dr. John McHugh
Ms. Michelle Byrd                                 Ms. Savonne McNeill
Dr. Rex Clay                                     Ms. Stephanie Michael-Pickett
Mr. Bruce Cole                                    Ms. Jennifer Nichols
Mr. Virgil Cox                                    Ms. Alisa Roy
Ms. Joyce Crumpton                                Ms. Judy Schneider
Dr. Dewey Dellinger                              Mr. Calvin Shaw
Ms. Carol Denton                                  Ms. Audrey Sherrill
Mr. John Erickson                                 Dr. Patricia Skinner
Dr. Linda Greer                                   Dr. Sharon Starr
Ms. Juanita Gunell                                Ms. Amy Weisgerber (K. Wyont)
Dr. Silvia Patricia Rios Husain                   Mr. Charles Wilson
Dr. Joe Keith                                     Ms. Heather Woodson
Mr. Wesley Landrum                                Mr. Chuck Wray

Absent:
Dr. Harry Cooke                                   Ms. Tanisha Williams
Chief Billy Lytton

Others Present:
Ms. Mary Ellen Dillon                             Ms. Sylvia Dixon

The format for this meeting was revised so the President’s Cabinet could participate in the Strategic Planning process. No formal reports were due for this meeting.

Welcome and Introduction

Dr. Skinner relayed to the Cabinet that the meeting would revolve around work on the Strategic Plan and turned the meeting over to Ms. Julia Allen.

Ms. Allen welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained that she had been charged to bring about a new Strategic Plan for 2014-19 and had looked for outside help. That help had arrived in the form of The Armistead Group, a leading institutional advancement consulting firm that provides the necessary tools to open doors to new opportunities for community and technical colleges, focusing exclusively on advancing the mission and vision of the two-year college. Information regarding Dr. Armistead, President, and Ms. Molly Armistead, Senior Consultant, were sent to the President’s Cabinet in advance.

The first step taken by The Armistead Group was to collect data from all the divisions and/or departments on campus for analysis.
The next step was to meet, during the week of October 14-18, face-to-face with College Stakeholders; local business, industry, healthcare, and educational leaders; our own College leadership; community and state elected officials; GC students; and the Board of Trustees and Foundation Board. A Stakeholders Summit, two Industry Forums, two Healthcare and Education Forums, and two Leadership Forums were held to gather input for creation of the next Strategic Plan.

The third step will be to send a survey to the campus for additional input. A draft Strategic Plan will be compiled after all the information has been gathered.

Ms. Allen introduced Dr. Armistead to the President's Cabinet.

The Work So Far

Dr. Armistead thanked Ms. Allen, Ms. Dalton, and Ms. Dillon for all their work scheduling all the meetings for him and his associate to meet with the many different groups whose input will be important to formulation of the next Strategic Plan.

Dr. Armistead relayed that GC is held in high regard in the community and is engaged in the community on all levels. The manufacturing companies felt the College works to save them money and solve problems. The meetings so far this week had been productive. He then asked the President’s Cabinet to respond to some questions:

What are the College’s Strengths?
- Leadership
- Focus on students
- Quality of instruction
- Student success and completion
- Striving to meet community needs
- Dedicated personnel
- Risk-takers
- Innovation across board
- Relevant CU programs
- Systems for continuous improvement
- Highly qualified and credentialed faculty/ staff
- Affordable education
- Flexibility – ability to adjust on the fly
- Purpose driven
- Reputation
- Rigor in the classroom (Academics)
- Beautiful campus
- Three convenient locations
- Data/Evidence driven
- Accountable
- Transparent

What are the College’s Weaknesses?
- Funding
- Legislative mandates
- Aging infrastructure
- Advising
- Need streamlined customer service
- Decreasing enrollment
- Partnerships – solve problems, expectations
- Gaston College doesn’t toot own horn
- Potential retirements in next five years
- Grooming others to take positions
- Not having centralized professional development center
- Need more comprehensive placement functions
- Need resume workshops
What measures are being taken to ensure quality of educational practices?

- Voluntary accreditations
- CCSSE -- SACS involvement
- Performance Measures in funding and bench marking
- Low employee turnover
- Student feedback
- Graduates come back
- ATD and CbD
- Word of mouth
- Active deans and chair persons
- Quality of instruction

How does the College maintain instructional excellence?

- 9-month faculty are required to complete 9 hours of professional development.
- 12-month faculty are required to complete 12 hours of professional development.
- The areas of professional development cover reading for enrichment, writing a paper, or attending a conference.
- Through the hiring process
- High quality adjunct instructors are hired
- Video tape professional development
- Shadowing and mentoring programs, offered stipend in the past
- Structured orientation for faculty
- Imbue new faculty with student-centered focus (staff too)
- Meaningful evaluations – corrective compliance through encouragement, not through money

Does the College provide essential resources to support quality educational programs and services?

- Equipment – We get a fraction of what we need; however, relatively speaking we do well.
- ATD and CbD forced us to look at resources. What is essential?
- Delivery systems good enough, just barely
- Yes, but we need a higher level of technical resources in some programs (Business and Information Technology)
- Can’t afford machinery in industrial and engineering programs
- Have to set up $250K equipment with outside companies so students can learn
- Need more apprenticeships, work-based learning
- Need to be purposeful with donations

What is the overall impression of the Instructional labs? Learning Resources?

- Writing Center – Need more full-time personnel, increase of 1400% in student traffic
- Simulation Labs – Equipment expires, need to replace, need more beginning level on campus
- EMS Simulators – Need $7-15K to maintain equipment, need $50K to buy a Sim-Baby (maybe share with Nursing Department)
- Business & Information Technology Labs – Ahead of other community colleges, labs in good shape
- Learning Labs – Pay scale is low for tutors, hard to get and keep them. Can’t have experts in all fields.
- CAD Labs – 13 labs, 300 computers on their own network. Must keep three levels of CAD running at all times.
Has the College been successful in serving the life-long learning needs of a diverse population and workforce?
- ATD helped GC identify a gap, and GC will help low-income students and students of color complete their education and obtain a market-valued postsecondary credential. A course was mapped; modifications are being made as needed, and a program is now under way.
- Financial Aid support services are better.
- Orientation is good, but could be better.
- Academic Advising could be improved. Changes in Developmental courses has proved challenging for advising.
- Students may say need more advising, or better orientation, but exit documents say all is good. Students also say they have met their goals.
- Do employers say our students are successful? We have gotten positive feedback. However, comments related to lack of work ethic or not showing up for work have been heard too. Courses in soft skills might help.

Has the College successfully expanded partnerships?
- GC has a whole notebook of partnerships.
- Chambers drive some partnerships.
- Partnerships with public schools, K-12. The question is how low to go – fifth grade?
- Partnerships with Corporations
- Partnership with Businesses
- Partnership with Industry
- Civic Partnerships

What are Challenges and Successes with Life-long Learning?
- Challenge to get programs students want
- Hard to get information to students
- Much of current advertising dictates students going to the web for information, not all students are computer savvy
- 99% of instructors are adjuncts
- Difficult to keep classes cost effective
- Offer customized training for three years
- GC is most effective in corporate training, need to toot own horn
- Continued work toward varied partnerships
- Recruit companies for economic development

Overall impression of College maintaining accessible programs. What are we doing?
- Revamping website
- Making ADA accessible improvements
- Have three campuses
- Hold Saturday classes, evenings
- Market and communicate to users
- Computer classes for new users
- Shift in Developmental classes
- Marketing firm is good, strategic marketing to diverse audiences.
Do we need enhanced communication?
- Internal communication good
- Lots of initiatives
- Lots of committees, some could be combined
- 15K student e-mail accounts – only 2k of students use them
- All media access not strategic, could be more organized

What would we like to immediately change or improve in this year?
- Increase enrollment
- Get website up and running
- Increase completion of students
- Retain students
- Continue with initiatives, not take on new ones
- Create succession plan
- Improved advising
- Increased funding

Dr. Armstead praised the Cabinet as a good collaborative group and thanked them for their input.

The next President’s Cabinet Meeting will be held January 30, 2014.

There being no further business to bring before the Cabinet, the meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Ellen Dillon
Recording Secretary