Cape Cod Community College

Academic Master Planning
Focus Group Report
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Executive Summary

Overview

Between December 10, 2002 and January 6, 2003, a series of focus groups was conducted at Cape Cod Community College for the purpose of gathering data to support the Academic Master Planning and Strategic Planning initiatives currently under way. The project received funding and support from Barnstable County through the Cape Cod Economic Development Council. The focus groups were facilitated by consultants from an outside organization, the Center for Career and Business Development, located in North Eastham, Massachusetts.

The enthusiastic response of the focus group participants affirms the existence of broad interest in maintaining dialogue with the College to improve the ability of its programs to meet the needs of business and the community. 162 people participated in twelve groups divided according to the following areas of expertise:

I. Criminal Justice
II. Business and Entrepreneurship
III. Healthcare
IV. High Tech
V. Arts, Language and the Humanities
VI. Human Services
VII. Science and Technology
VIII. Hospitality, Culinary, Recreation and Tourism
IX. Education
X. Trendsetters
XI. Applied Technology
XII. Fire Science and EMT

Participants from business, community and the College were invited to discuss:

- programs at the College which are perceived to have been successful
- how well collaboration with the College is working
- the role of the College in professional development
- programs that need more attention or programs that should be added to the curriculum
- trends affecting the future of Cape Cod

The agenda containing the actual discussion questions used in each of the meetings appears as Appendix A of this document.
Programs Perceived as Successful
Over the years a number of degree and certificate programs have been developed at the College to meet recognized needs: which College programs have been successful at serving students, business, and the community?

The programs most often listed as successes were:
- Health Science (Nursing, CNA, etc.)
- Liberal Arts/General Studies
- Two-Plus-Two
- Environmental Technology
- Early Childhood Education

Other successful programs cited with less frequency:
- Fire Science/EMT
- Advancing the Field
- Dual-Enrollment
- Project Forward
- Cape Open Door
- School-to-Careers
- Theater Arts and Dance
- Adult Basic Education

Measures of program success were usually expressed in terms of placement, salary, retention, and meeting business or community needs, although one group believed quite strongly that the "true" measure should be the achievement of students' educational goals. A number of the groups felt the introductory statistical information provided was inadequate for measuring program success.

Two factors were frequently cited as important to program success:
- close connections with stakeholders, e.g., strong advisory boards
- a clear point of contact to reach out to business and the community and facilitate communications

Where programs were viewed as less than successful these factors were deemed to be missing or in need of being strengthened.

Collaboration
Recognizing that sustainable economic growth on Cape Cod requires closer cooperation between the academic and business communities than in other geographic areas: how well is the collaboration among the College, business, and the community working?

Opinions as to how well collaborations with business, community and the College are working ran the gamut from the lack of awareness that any existed to the celebration of fruitful partnerships. The improvement of collaboration under the current President was often acknowledged.

Groups which generally viewed collaboration as strong:
- Science and Technology (especially Environmental Technology)
- Healthcare
- Criminal Justice
- Arts, Language and Humanities
- Education

Groups which generally viewed collaboration as weak or in need of improvement
- Business
- Human Services
- Trendsetters
- Hospitality
- High Tech
- Fire Sciences/EMT
- Applied Technology

The obstacle to collaboration most often cited was the lack of a clear point-of-contact to field inquiries and maintain dialog.
Professional Development
What role should the College play in upgrading the skills of workers and providing opportunities for ongoing professional development?

It is important to note that although the survey (see the accompanying document containing the survey responses) put professional development in third place, behind preparing students for transfer to four-year institutions and inculcating basic skills, in the ranking of the College's top academic priorities, this does not reflect the level of emphasis this subject received during the group discussions. Participants from business and the community place a great deal of value on the professional development opportunities the College has to offer and they are virtually unanimous in wanting more.

Based on the discussions in these focus groups, there is every reason to believe that business and community organizations will support the increased availability of professional development courses. When several of the groups were asked directly if they would be willing to "put their money where their mouth is" the responses were positive.

The head of a large social service agency spoke in very moving terms of how the College provided for his clients in a way that his agency often could not. "You [at the College] hang in there with them," he said, "you give them hope." Later he spoke of his need for professional development training for his staff and expressed the wish that he could get it locally through the College. When asked if he would have any problem with sending his clients and his staff to the same place he responded, "Not at all."

In another exchange, a social service professional asked a participant from the College, "Why can't you be a resource to us as professionals?" She replied, "We have traditionally seen our role as that of serving our students." The social service professional responded, "Don't you see us as potential students? We live here and it's an hour and a half to Boston."

There was consensus in most groups, especially Business and Entrepreneurship, Human Services, High Tech, Science and Technology, Hospitality et. al. and Education, that the College should:

- make professional development a much higher priority than it currently is
- package educational offerings in ways that make them more accessible to working professionals
- recognize that the credit hour need not be the only "coin of the realm"
- target middle-management for professional development training

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Programs Lacking Attention or Programs that Need to be Added

Which programs currently offered by the College need more attention?

What programs are needed that are not being offered? (Please cite evidence for the need).

Should the College place more emphasis on developing competence in areas such as work-ethic and professionalism?

I—CRIMINAL JUSTICE
- reinstatement of the internship program
- practical foreign language and cultural sensitivity training
- certificates in corrections and programs in forensic science

II—BUSINESS
- professional development for middle-management
- stronger hospitality and culinary programs
- an entrepreneurial certificate

III—HEALTHCARE
- ESOL for immigrant healthcare workers
- Masters programs in Social Work and Health Care Management
- revitalization of the gerontology program

IV—HIGH TECH
- affordable alternatives to expensive training offered by private vendors
- professional development
- more emphasis on core business competencies

V—ARTS, LANGUAGES AND THE HUMANITIES
- expansion of the graphic arts program to include new media arts
- distinguished programs that leverage Cape Cod’s rich history in the arts

VI—HUMAN SERVICES
- continuing education for licensed human service professionals
- middle-management training
- software application training

VII—SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
- certificates in sanitation and aquaculture
- workshops in regulatory compliance
- stronger emphasis on writing skills

VIII—HOSPITALITY, ET. AL.
- stronger connections with the College
- program packaging to meet the needs of seasonal employers
- substance abuse education
- customer service training

IX—EDUCATION
- teacher certification
- curriculum changes to facilitate preparation for the teacher’s exam
- professional development

X—TRENDSETTERS
- software applications training
- professional development for middle-management
- non-credit courses teaching practical business skills for people in the arts

XI—APPLIED TECHNOLOGY
- continued exploration and discussion
- entrepreneurial education

XII—FIRE SCIENCES/EMT
- an independent emergency medical program under the aegis of health sciences
- expedited preparation of permanent call firefighters.

Executive Summary
Trends Shaping the Future

Sustaining economic growth requires anticipating what education and skills will be needed in the future: what do you see as the major trends shaping the future of the region served by the College?

How do you see these trends affecting the numbers of workers who will be required and the kinds of training they will need?

When asked about trends shaping the future, common responses included:

- the high cost of housing and its effect on the workforce
- the aging of the population and its consequences for healthcare
- the growth of the immigrant population
- rapid changes in technology
- the impact of MCAS failures
- state budget cuts

Other issues mentioned by specific groups:

- the opportunities and problems of an increasingly diverse population (Education)
- increasing social problems, e.g., crime, drug abuse, domestic violence (Criminal Justice)
- building a retiree workforce (Business and Entrepreneurship)
- problems related to the environment, particularly waste-water treatment (Science and Technology)
- the movement of the Cape economy away from seasonality (Hospitality, et. al.)

Conclusion

Through the focus groups participants from outside the College gained a better understanding of all that is expected of Cape Cod Community College—variously described by them as "the College and the only game in town." Paradoxically, suggestions that the College should "not spread itself so thin, not try to do so much, not try to be all things to all people" were heard almost simultaneously with requests for the College to do more, especially in the area of professional development.

Every group, even those which were most negative, offered praise for the College. The following represents a sampling of comments:

"The college goes far beyond what the average community college is able to do."

"You are very skilled at assessing the abilities of students."

"You have very talented faculty."

"There is a large population of high school students who would thrive on the individual attention given here."

"The College does an excellent job of preparing students to go further in higher education."

"The word needs to get out that there's good stuff happening here."

"Your record is outstanding."

"We need this place."

Explicitly or implicitly, the comments, both those expressing criticism and those expressing praise, reflected the firmly held belief common to virtually all the participants that the College is capable of accomplishing great things for Cape Cod.
Focus Group I—Criminal Justice
December 10, 2002, 11 AM
16 Participants

Participant Affiliation (n=16)

- College: 38%
- Community/Gov: 49%
- Business: 13%

Introduction
The Criminal Justice Focus Group meeting was well-attended by senior people representing local and state law enforcement, the state parole board, Cape Cod Healthcare, and the College. Most of the participants knew each other quite well and the discussion was informal with virtually no negative feeling against the College expressed. There was a lively and informative exchange between College and non-College participants. There was nearly 100% participation and for the most part speakers kept their remarks relatively brief and to the point. They kept a tight focus on their own area of expertise and responded almost exclusively from the criminal justice perspective. The participants showed an interest in meeting again. One participant noted that the private security and TSA sectors were not represented.

Programs Perceived as Successful
Over the years a number of degree and certificate programs have been developed at the College to meet recognized needs: which College programs have been successful at serving students, business, and the community?

The associate's degree programs in Criminal Justice have been beneficial, not only to individuals but to the community: “These Graduates are better police officers. The College provides quality employees.”

By far, the top-rated success across the board was the currently discontinued internship program. During its tenure the participants “would not think of looking elsewhere for interns.” Because it allowed police chiefs to exercise their natural preference for students from the Cape over other applicants, it had virtually a 100% placement rate. “Good officers came out of this program—its loss has been felt deeply by the leaders of area police departments. Many of those officers..."
Currently working are former interns—two of them are program coordinators at the police academy.” The internship program was a success because its students “learned what they never could in a classroom, gained valuable credentials early in their careers, and developed networks for future professional growth.”

When asked why the internship program was halted, a participant from the College explained that interest eroded because of a “philosophical difference” with the administration, which required a minimum class size of 17 while it was felt in the department that 10 was the maximum that could be adequately supervised. “It became easier for us to just have our students take an elective,” he said.

**Collaboration**

Recognizing that sustainable economic growth on Cape Cod requires closer cooperation between the academic and business communities than in other geographic areas: how well is the collaboration among the College, business, and the community working?

The participants would like to see the College collaborate with outside organizations to bring in experts in such fields as forensics. The rapid growth of the criminal justice profession is a major concern among them and they believe it will require collaboration with off-Cape organizations to keep skills current.

The participants had little specific to say about collaboration and the reason may be that the working relationship between the law enforcement and the College is so positive that the matter is too self-evident to merit attention.

**Professional Development**

What role should the College play in upgrading the skills of workers and providing opportunities for ongoing professional development?

Educational opportunities for employees in mid-career are needed to complement their experience.

Practical foreign language and cultural sensitivity training are needed to help officers function better on a day-to-day basis as they work with the ethnic groups that now inhabit the Cape. Language skills can reduce misunderstandings and give officers a “leg up” in competing for jobs. Heightened cultural awareness can forestall the violence which sometimes results from the clash of cultures. “The college would be surprised at how many officers would take advantage of these types of training if they were offered.”
Programs Lacking Attention or Programs that Need to be Added

Which programs currently offered by the College need more attention?

What programs are needed that are not being offered? (Please cite evidence for the need).

Should the College place more emphasis on developing competence in areas such as work-ethic and professionalism?

In answer to the question, “What should be changed,” the immediate and vociferous response was a virtually unanimous plea to “bring back internships.”

Criminal Justice electives and a certificate program in corrections are needed. “In the past, the pursuit of a Certificate in Corrections has frequently lead to students going on to get a Criminal Justice degree … More and more students are asking for it … There is a lower rate of turnover in corrections than there used to be and people are beginning to look at it as a long-term career; the whole field is becoming more professional and there will be opportunities for specialization.”

Forensic science is getting a lot of attention these days because of the way it is portrayed on television. “There is no such program in the state and the College has the opportunity to take the lead here. The College could partner with presenters to bring in a forensics program.”

A participant from Cape Cod Healthcare wanted the College to offer electives in the area of healthcare security. “We had wanted to use the College as our primary resource but we finally had to bring a 40-hour training program in-house. There is a growing need here and everywhere for a role that is a cut above the usual security officer.” Jobs in healthcare security are often easier to get than positions on municipal police forces and they provide a good entree for people who want to get into the criminal justice field but do not have the qualifications or the time to wait for positions in government to open up. “We have 54 officers at CCHC and they are needed—just about all the problems on the Cape will sooner or later wind up at Cape Cod Hospital.”

All agreed that much more emphasis needs to be placed on developing communication skills, especially practical writing. The head of the Police Academy described student writing at the time of his arrival as “horrible: I had to test my students nine times before I could get them to spell critically important words correctly.” Extensive on-the-job training is required to teach employees basic English composition because, “in our line of work, if it isn’t written down it didn’t happen.”

“Police officers in general have a low tolerance for ambiguity and they often suffer from rigidity and burnout.” A broader-based, more humanistic education could help them become “more flexible” in their thinking.

“Keep the work-ethic message coming at them—the only way to get it across is to have it ingrained incrementally by as many voices as possible.” The participants applauded one of the instructors from the College for establishing a policy of not giving students credit for class attendance when they come late. “At least you didn’t get fired,” she tells them.

The College should do a better job of preparing the students who enter the Criminal Justice program for background checks so they do not set goals for themselves that cannot be met.
Trends Shaping the Future

Sustaining economic growth requires anticipating what education and skills will be needed in the future: what do you see as the major trends shaping the future of the region served by the College?

How do you see these trends affecting the numbers of workers who will be required and the kinds of training they will need?

How should program priorities be ordered to conform to anticipated needs?

The growth of the immigrant and retirement populations means that the Cape is becoming both richer and poorer at the same time and thus polarized between ethnic groups and affluent retirees.

There will be an increase in social problems as people become displaced because of the high cost of living.

The growth of the correctional clientele will place demands on the entire criminal justice system and more and more workers will be needed to meet the demand: the new correctional facility in Barnstable will require 94 employees.

The growth of healthcare facilities will increase the need for personnel knowledgeable in issues of healthcare security.

Computer training is generally not needed because the newer recruits are young and comfortable with using them.

Recruits often have “unrealistic expectations about criminal justice work because of what they see on TV.” This trend is likely to continue but its effect could be offset by internships.

Closing Thoughts

Is there anything that has not been discussed here today which could help the College serve students, business, and the community better

—or—

What is the best idea you have heard here today?

Again and again the participants asked for the reinstatement of the internship program.

There is active and focused interest in strengthening the Associates Degree programs in Criminal Justice; in adding a certificate program in corrections; and in providing professional development training in areas such as forensics, practical foreign language and cultural sensitivity. “The law enforcement profession is shifting from patronage to professionalism.”

The criminal justice field will continue to grow. The predicted increase in social problems and the growth in correctional clientele have far wider implications than simply how they affect workforce development. Education that gives people in the field strong interpersonal and communications skills—the sort of education the College is best equipped to offer—could brighten the gloomy picture the predicted need for more police, security personnel, and correctional officers presents.
Introduction
The Business and Entrepreneurship Focus Group meeting was a large group comprising participants from print media, consulting, retail, tourism, banking, chambers of commerce and the College. Those who attended had strong opinions and were eager to participate. For the most part they appeared to have limited knowledge of the College’s successes. There was some open criticism of the College and a few participants were skeptical that the focus groups would result in palpable benefits. They did express interest in meeting again and some wanted the opportunity to meet with the leaders of the College.

Programs Perceived as Successful
Over the years a number of degree and certificate programs have been developed at the College to meet recognized needs: which College programs have been successful at serving students, business, and the community?

Participants found the statistical information provided as background inadequate and questioned how program success could be evaluated without data on placements and salaries. One of them suggested that the most successful programs were likely to be those which were funded by sources outside the College or for which students were able to receive credit-hour reimbursement from their employers. Unlike most of the others, this group did not list highly visible College programs such as nursing under the rubric of College successes. Comments throughout the session reflected a general lack of knowledge about the College.

II—Business and Entrepreneurship
Collaboration

Recognizing that sustainable economic growth on Cape Cod requires closer cooperation between the academic and business communities than in other geographic areas: how well is the collaboration among the College, business, and the community working?

When asked how well collaboration between the College and business is working, one participant replied, “On the Lower Cape it isn’t.” He went on to say that those who live and work there would be more engaged if the College were easier to get to, but distance and traffic are “insoluble problems.”

There is a shared sense of frustration over the difficulty of establishing channels of communication with the College. One business professional told the story of his effort to engage students from the marketing department in a collaborative venture—he gave up after several attempts to establish communications with the College failed to result in a single returned telephone call. He described it as “a missed opportunity.” The lack of response is a significant obstacle to collaboration; another is simply not knowing who to call to begin the exploration.

Professional Development

What role should the College play in upgrading the skills of workers and providing opportunities for ongoing professional development?

Educational offerings packaged in ways to make them more accessible to working professionals are wanting. The need for upgrading skills is an ongoing problem and some participants said they were unable to get their employees trained at the College, although they would very much like to. Those businesses which are most likely to be successful are the ones who are able to find good people and “bring them along”, consequently there is a clear need for professional development targeted at middle-level managers and it is not being met by the College. The participants would like to see experts in various fields of study brought in for seminars similar those offered by the Einstein Institute and the Cape Cod Institute. They enthusiastically recommended this as a way of positioning the College as a leader by drawing “big names” to the area. Continuing education credits for those attending would add to the appeal.

There is concern that that the emphasis on fostering new businesses, particularly on the Lower Cape, will dilute, not strengthen, economic development in the region. As one participant put it, “Why are we bringing in more businesses? We need to be bringing in more customers.” Shifting the focus from fostering new businesses to making existing businesses more profitable by teaching them ways to make their operations run more efficiently has a higher probability of long-term success and job creation.

II—Business and Entrepreneurship

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Programs Lacking Attention or
Programs that Need to be Added
Which programs currently offered by the College need
more attention?

What programs are needed that are not being
offered? (Please cite evidence for the need).

Should the College place more emphasis on
developing competence in areas such as work-ethnic
and professionalism?

“There is a disconnect between what
businesses need and what is being offered by
the College,” one participant claimed. This is
particularly acute in the area of hospitality,
where there is a lack of cooperative
educational opportunities that meet the needs
of employers. More and better structured
internships are needed to help businesses that
depend directly or indirectly on tourism to
gear up for the season.”

One participant went so far as to advocate
doing away with the “Silicon Sandbar”
initiative, on the grounds that it does not fit
the Cape business climate and the
infrastructure does not exist to support it, and
replacing it with a culinary institute to be
called “5CP”: the “Cape Cod Community
College Culinary Institute”. This precipitated
a discussion of why the culinary program at
the College does not attract more students.
Some concluded that the College has failed to
establish visible connections with the
hospitality industry on the Cape. The
problem is compounded by the fact that the
hospitality industry does a “poor job of
marketing career opportunities” within itself:
high school students are not being told that
there are career tracks in the industry which
involve far more than waiting tables. The
Cape’s hospitality industry must “grow its
own middle managers” because the costs of
importing them are too high. Training similar
to the Johnson & Wales program for first-line
supervisors recently offered by the Cape Cod
Chamber of Commerce and a well-attended
Customer Service Training program offered
on the Lower Cape would help to meet this
need.

“The Cape is a world-class destination” and
the College should capitalize on this by
offering the most sophisticated types of
training available in the hospitality industry,
e.g., workshops in computerized reservation
systems conducted by leading experts in the
field. By doing this the College could become
a player on the regional level. “The College
needs to get out from behind the curve on
what’s hot.”

Other specific needs mentioned:

- a certificate program in entrepreneurship
- programs to strengthen existing
  businesses
- a core program of basic business
disciplines in the College curriculum
- business mentors
- a “speakers bureau” of business and
  academic professionals acting as co-
presenters.

The importance of integrating project
management, team participation and
information management into the curriculum
cannot be overstated. The need for
improvement in communications skills,
written and oral, is particularly acute.
**Trends Shaping the Future**

Sustaining economic growth requires anticipating what education and skills will be needed in the future: what do you see as the major trends shaping the future of the region served by the College?

How do you see these trends affecting the numbers of workers who will be required and the kinds of training they will need?

How should program priorities be ordered to conform to anticipated needs?

"The high cost of housing is driving people away. The jobs that are here will not support life on Cape Cod." This is a regional problem, one in which the participants would like the College to have a more prominent voice.

More and more services to the elderly and aging will be needed. Many of the participants had a somewhat gloomy outlook: they do not see the sort of people on the Cape who want to care for these people, nor do they see the sort of people they would want to be taken care of in old age.

In the course of the session, one of the participants had a minor epiphany: "I just realized," he said, "that retirees and tourists are the same people." He noted that the new retiree/former tourist is "healthier, younger, more active, and wealthier, looking for challenging opportunities beyond golf and volunteering." He wondered how much the College was doing to reach and retrain or enrich the lives of this segment of the Cape population.

The owner of a retail business that employs a large number of young people observed that many of her employees stay on the Cape because of the richness of the arts environment. "They are not looking to make a lot of money, only a decent living which will allow them time to pursue their artistic goals." She viewed this group as a rich and unrecognized Cape resource and advocated programs that would help these young people preserve and further their dreams.

Because it seems likely there will be less and less money coming from government sources, the College will need to look elsewhere for financial resources. The business community is willing to help provide those resources and serve as advisors and adjunct professors but only in proportion to how engaged they are in creating programs that meet their needs.
Closing Thoughts

Is there anything that has not been discussed here today which could help the College serve students, business, and the community better

—or—

What is the best idea you have heard here today?

Public awareness falls short of what is needed to build strong collaborations and garner support from the private sector. Visibility, public relations, marketing—especially of career tracks—is inadequate. The College is “not getting the word out.” The perception of the College by area high school students as “the last resort” and its failure to provide career choices for young people who feel trapped here are major problems. In general, the College is not doing an adequate job of marketing itself to area schools. It should be developing a younger base of students. The College has a track record of success with a large number of individuals and these stories need to be told.

Entrepreneurship cannot be taught, but it can be encouraged and supporting existing businesses is at least as important as helping startups. Cape businesses in general prefer to “hire on this side of the bridge”; they also want to be able to “groom” their employees for managerial roles locally but the College is not viewed as a resource for helping them to do this.

Although the relationship of the College with the business community has improved dramatically over the last ten years, the difficulty in establishing and sustaining an ongoing dialogue has made the members of this group skeptical about the benefits to ensue from their participation in the focus groups.
Focus Group III—Healthcare
December 11, 2002, 1 PM
11 Participants

Introduction
The Healthcare Focus Group meeting consisted of participants from hospitals, nursing homes, rehabilitation centers and other organizations. All those present participated and the discourse was more conversational and anecdotal than presentational. Participation between College and non-College attendees was well balanced and when questions arose about the College and its programs they were effectively answered by participants from the College.

Programs Perceived as Successful
Over the years a number of degree and certificate programs have been developed at the College to meet recognized needs: which College programs have been successful at serving students, business, and the community?

THE GERONTOLOGY CERTIFICATE The program had its heyday in the 90’s but enrollment has fallen off, primarily because it has not been made a requirement in the workplace, even though one participant, holder of the certificate, testified that the training had been of great value to her in the work she does for a community organization serving the elderly.

NURSING The placement rate is high and graduates tend to stay on the Cape—over 50% of the RN’s and CNA’s working for Cape Cod Healthcare are from the College.
One participant had special praise for the professionalism of CNA's. "I don't know what we'd do without them," she said.

**LIBERAL ARTS/GENERAL STUDIES** Especially psychology: "The availability of these courses has improved the self-esteem of workers in the trenches."

**DIAGNOSTICS** "The phlebotomy program is top notch with regard to both skill level and professionalism."

**MEDICAL INTERPRETER** "The program has been highly responsive to the needs of the community."

**Collaboration**

Recognizing that sustainable economic growth on Cape Cod requires closer cooperation between the academic and business communities than in other geographic areas: how well is the collaboration among the College, business, and the community working?

Collaborations work well in the area of healthcare. The College has been very responsive to the needs of healthcare businesses and it receives universal endorsement.

"Collaboration begins with networking and dialogue and the President epitomizes this. She is constantly out there, visible, seeking ways to interact."

Help is needed in bringing people from the immigrant population into healthcare. There has already been some work done in this area through the Cape and Islands Workforce Investment Board. Language is an issue; the packaging of courses to take into account the realities of work schedules, especially in phlebotomy, is another.

**Professional Development**

*What role should the College play in upgrading the skills of workers and providing opportunities for ongoing professional development?*

There is keen interest in establishing Masters programs on the Cape in the areas of social work and healthcare management.

Language training for immigrants working as or wanting to work as CNA's is needed. Their average age is 34; many of them were well-educated in their native land, but they all need ESOL. The need is especially critical for employees in mental health. Recently a facility for the elderly set up an ESOL program for Brazilian CNA's. Twelve were enrolled in an intensive 100-hour course and their success was astonishing because the students came together every night after hours to study as a group. "These are motivated adults, grateful for the opportunity. They don't feel employed unless they have two jobs." Such programs could be expanded to other areas of healthcare but course packaging is key: the people who need language training are already working many hours a week.

Many people wanting to work in the healthcare industry have started at the College and ended up staying on the Cape. "The people to meet our needs are right here. We just have to find ways to make it possible for them to get the training they need." Business has a part to play in encouraging and facilitating training.

"Nursing needs to develop its own. As it does, the self-esteem of its people will grow incrementally. Employers are shooting themselves in the foot if they don't help fund professional development."

**III—Healthcare**

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Programs Lacking Attention or Programs that Need to be Added
Which programs currently offered by the College need more attention?

What programs are needed that are not being offered? (Please cite evidence for the need).

Should the College place more emphasis on developing competence in areas such as work-ethic and professionalism?

Qualified teachers in healthcare have been and still are difficult to find but constraints are beginning to ease and adjunct faculty is getting easier to come by.

Even though the College’s healthcare programs are highly visible, public awareness could be improved. One participant reported discovering them in a roundabout way: “I’m a Brandeis alumnus and I had to find out from Brandeis that something was happening here.”

The gerontology program needs to be revitalized but this will require making employers and employees understand its value in the workplace. There should be a core of courses related to issues of aging that could supply electives for students in the criminal justice and business programs—one participant suggested an AA with a gerontology concentration. There are palpable benefits to businesses in knowing how to market to seniors. Employers want these skills but unfortunately they have been reluctant to pay for them.

Much needs to be done to overcome the “Cape Cod attitude”. Self-presentation should be taught, along with job search and basic life skills. Work-ethic and professionalism should be integrated into every course.

Trends Shaping the Future
Sustaining economic growth requires anticipating what education and skills will be needed in the future: what do you see as the major trends shaping the future of the region served by the College?

How do you see these trends affecting the numbers of workers who will be required and the kinds of training they will need?

How should program priorities be ordered to conform to anticipated needs?

The high cost of living on the Cape is causing the workforce to diminish.

Technology is rapidly changing the nature of every job in the healthcare field.

Distance education is the wave of the future but the holdings of local libraries are limited and there are problems in making resources available to students at remote locations.

Accelerated learning is beneficial for many but it does not work for roughly a third of students. The College needs to use its skill at assessing learning styles to help students determine the best course for them.

There is currently a need for LPN’s, which always arises whenever there is a nursing shortage. As the function of the RN becomes more one of assessment and patient management, the role of the LPN is expanding. The nursing field has not done a good job of distinguishing between the two and much work needs to be done to articulate clearly the differences.
Closing Thoughts

Is there anything that has not been discussed here today which could help the College serve students, business, and the community better?

—or—

What is the best idea you have heard here today?

A participant from the College observed: "In the healthcare field there is an ongoing conflict of perceptions: on the one hand, people in business say, 'We need people, bodies, and we need them fast'; on the other hand, the people in academia say, 'But we need them to be confident, well trained and well qualified and that takes time and money.'

Reconciling these conflicting viewpoints is not easy."

"Free doesn't work—subsidized is better." Students need to make a financial commitment to their education.

The population of the Cape is aging, but many of these new retirees need to work. The healthcare professions need to make a place for them and make them feel welcome.

We need to find ways of getting more men into the educational system.

III—Healthcare
Focus Group IV—High Tech
December 12, 2002, 2 PM
9 Participants

Participant Affiliation (n=9)

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Introduction
The High Tech Focus Group meeting consisted of participants from a local municipality, the Cape Cod Tech Council, a software vendor and the College. Due to a scheduling mix-up, one participant thought the topic of the meeting was healthcare. Business and community representation was sparse but highly vocal. Participants from the College were very forthcoming in expressing their feelings of being overextended and in recognizing the limitations of their programs, and the non-College participants were sympathetic. The discourse was informal and at times there was a tendency to get off point and “talk shop”. The non-College participants took great pains to praise the College.

Programs Perceived as Successful
Over the years a number of degree and certificate programs have been developed at the College to meet recognized needs: which College programs have been successful at serving students, business, and the community?

This question led to a discussion about how to measure the success of a program. Some participants felt there was no basis on which to respond: there is some tracking of placements for the AS program but it is optimized for securing grant funding and the only other information is anecdotal. “We tend to hear only the success stories. We don’t hear from the ones who are frustrated,” one of the participants said.

Relations with the Cape Cod Tech Council, the voice for technology companies on Cape Cod, have improved. The recent
apprenticeship program for thirty students was cited as an example.

“Healthcare and Criminal Justice are serving the community well—IT, too, thanks to a lot of changes over the last four years. But we need to pay more attention to certification that provides outside credentials, e.g., MSCE.”

A participant from Falmouth cited its successful use of interns from the College in its GIS department. The College has also been a resource for the professional development of its staff and has been used as a location for offsite training.

The College “does an excellent job of getting people engaged in higher education who otherwise might not be. It has an excellent reputation among the people who know it, but the problem is that too many people don’t.”

Collaboration

Recognizing that sustainable economic growth on Cape Cod requires closer cooperation between the academic and business communities than in other geographic areas: how well is the collaboration among the College, business, and the community working?

The town of Falmouth has developed a “nice relationship” with the College which has resulted in the placement of interns and in the use of the College for the professional development of staff.

One participant felt that business and the College have a generally good relationship but he also observed, “I’m not sure how involved businesses are in curriculum development. It’s tough to get their attention and the field is changing so rapidly they often don’t know what they want. Consequently there is a need for these types of discussions and for strengthening advisory boards as well.”

A participant from the College pointed out that, although the IT advisory board has been inactive for the last four years it will be revived starting in February, 2003. “The College needs help in determining if it’s on the right track. There have been big changes in IT recently and we need to take another look at our offerings.”

At the annual Tech Fair, exhibitor participation is declining but attendance is holding steady, indicating that interest is still there. “The Fair is now for showing what’s going on in the field, not for collecting resumes.”
Professional Development

What role should the College play in upgrading the skills of workers and providing opportunities for ongoing professional development?

The College is capable of providing affordable alternatives to the often prohibitively expensive computer training offered by private vendors. A participant from one of the Cape towns praised the College for supplying Visual Basic training to her staff at a huge cost savings. Both employers and the College could gain tremendously by the creation of such cost-effective alternatives, but packaging programs to meet the needs of working professionals is key.

One participant wondered if the IT department teaches what businesses need or what they have instructors for. Participants from the College pointed out that it is difficult to find instructors to help working professionals keep their skills current, partly because non-credit courses do not count as part of a normal teaching load; they are viewed as “extra work.”

Professional development offerings could attract many people in the field who are primarily self-taught but need to boost their skills. Again, the key is program packaging: short, intensive seminars rather than a full semester courses.

There should be professional development offerings that, instead of trying to be comprehensive, “take a Help Desk approach, teaching people how to address specific types of problems.”

“If the resources are unavailable for making the College a beacon of technology, it might make more sense to focus on professional development.”

Programs Lacking Attention or Programs that Need to be Added

Which programs currently offered by the College need more attention?

What programs are needed that are not being offered? (Please cite evidence for the need).

Should the College place more emphasis on developing competence in areas such as work-ethic and professionalism?

The College is better suited to providing training in “applied technology” rather than “raw technology,” i.e., the use of existing technologies to solve problems rather than the development of new technologies. A participant from the College wondered if a two-year degree in IT was not in some sense a disservice to students: “We don’t want to market a dead end,” she said. The manager of an IT department echoed her concern: “It would never occur to me that two years would be sufficient to prepare someone for a job in this field, not when there are people with Masters’ degrees working on the Help Desk. This program is a beginning or a supplement.”

IT education needs to be more broadly-based, with more emphasis on core business competencies and communications skills. “It doesn’t make sense to have someone who knows nothing about accounting work on a General Ledger system … Students know how to build websites and networks, but do they understand business? Can they relate to customers? IT can’t be an end to itself.”

There are notable gaps in the College’s computer offerings:

• Unix training
• training that focuses on server-side, not client-side, processes
scripting languages, especially PERL
- E-commerce
- Oracle (NOTE: since this is a database technology designed for large installations, it is not used locally; a participant from the College noted, “We don’t have the money to teach it and, anyway, it would only train people to leave.”)

The owner of a software business asked, “Where is the network of College-sponsored IT people? I’ve been in media technology for thirty years and I’m always looking to build teams but I go over the bridge because there’s no network here.”

There is a need for students to gain real-life experience but they may not be ready for it. Internships have to be carefully structured and they require time to develop. It is difficult to have interns in IT because they require a close supervision and are limited in the kinds of work they can do. The director of an IT center noted, “I can only use interns at certain types of tasks and even then they are limited mostly to data entry.”

It is the perspective of business that “an active, involved advisory board is needed to restructure the way the College operates in addressing the market.”

The College is the “poor stepchild, the last resort for area high school graduates. A lot has been done to improve this but much more work is needed. The College should be the first choice for many.”

**Trends Shaping the Future**

Sustaining economic growth requires anticipating what education and skills will be needed in the future: what do you see as the major trends shaping the future of the region served by the College?

How do you see these trends affecting the numbers of workers who will be required and the kinds of training they will need?

How should program priorities be ordered to conform to anticipated needs?

“From the professional side, it’s more and more of a scramble to keep up. I need WindowsXP networking expertise—where do I find it? The College needs programs which are ahead of the curve technically.”

As businesses take advantage of the increased availability of high-speed Internet access to allow more people to work remotely, the need for professional development training will grow. This opens up opportunities for the College: “The IT program should become a two-plus-two program with expanded professional development offerings.”

Budgetary constraints at the state level mean that the financial future of the College is cloudy. “I worry about the educational priorities set by the State. I’m clueless as to where things are going.”

The high cost of living means that for many young people living on the Cape is not a viable alternative. Many of them would not be here if they didn’t have family to rely on. To get people to come here will require selling them on the intangibles of life on Cape Cod because there is a lack of horizontal mobility in the job market.
Closing Thoughts
Is there anything that has not been discussed here today which could help the College serve students, business, and the community better — or —
What is the best idea you have heard here today?

There is a good deal of enthusiasm in the business community for the College, but there is insufficient awareness of what it has to offer. The mobile computer lab was cited as an example: few knew anything about it.

"Right now, being in IT is tough; the job prospects are not good. But all business is cyclical and the message needs to be put out that now is the time to get the education you will need to prepare you for the day when the situation improves. But the AS degree can no longer be an end in itself."

- The IT department has to be clear about its mission and make judgments about what it is able to do well instead of trying to do it all. The department is spread too thin; it is overburdened; it would be preferable to do less if it could be done better.

- By paying more attention to professional development, the IT department would create for itself an "aftermarket".

"The College goes far beyond what the average community college is able to do. For IT professionals there is a constant need for upgrading skills and those who live and work here should not have to go off-Cape to get it."

IV—High Tech
24
Focus Group V—Arts, Languages and Humanities

December 13, 2002, 8 AM
17 Participants

Introduction
The Arts and Humanities Focus Group meeting comprised participants from print media, television, performing arts, the visual arts, secondary education and the College. There was a broader mix of ages than most other groups and there was good participation from all. The attendees demonstrated a high level of commitment to their work. Two of them were graduates of the College and offered themselves, quite eloquently, as “success stories”. The discussion was collegial and articulate and was perceived as creative by the participants. In many ways this was the most positive of all the groups.

Programs Perceived as Successful
Over the years a number of degree and certificate programs have been developed at the College to meet recognized needs: which College programs have been successful at serving students, business, and the community?

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY/ENVIRONMENTAL TECHNOLOGY These programs were praised for their high placement rates.

• HEALTH SCIENCES “They are proactive, they stay visible, and they raise money.”

• TRANSFER AND TWO-PLUS-TWO The College has a proven track record of success in building students’ confidence and preparing them to move on in higher education. The two-plus-two programs reduce “cherry-picking” on the Cape by other institutions.
ASSESSMENT The College is skilled at assessing the abilities and learning styles of its students

  •

DUAL-ENROLLMENT “It enriches and supplements what the high schools offer.”

  •

ARTS Successes include Campus Provincetown and the Film festival, which grew threefold in one year

  •

There are many “statistically anonymous” successes in concentrations of study that do not produce diplomas or certificates.

  •

Finally, the Academic Master Plan Focus Group process itself was mentioned as a success: the turnout was viewed as evidence of the positive interest in the College that resides within business and the community. (NOTE: when the facilitator asked how many of the participants would be willing to serve on an advisory board every hand was raised.)

Professional Development

What role should the College play in upgrading the skills of workers and providing opportunities for ongoing professional development?

Business needs to “take responsibility for availing itself of the College.” A participant from an art gallery that employs 40 people said, “I’ve been in business for 25 years on the Cape but I don’t feel much of a connection to the College and I have never thought of looking here to fill my staffing needs.” The College needs to do more to make itself known to the business community. The best way to do this is to point to its successes and tell those stories.

  •

The College needs to “take the initiative and go to businesses and ask them for seed money. Go with a plan—tell them what you want to do and how much it will cost and ask them to help you so that you can help them.” In the future “the College will need to rely more on the business community for financial support and teachers ... Continuing education is a potential money-maker and much more attention should be paid to it.”

Collaboration

Recognizing that sustainable economic growth on Cape Cod requires closer cooperation between the academic and business communities than in other geographic areas: how well is the collaboration among the College, business, and the community working?

Program success is often synonymous with success in collaboration: PAIA, Shakespeare at Payomet and the dual-enrollment initiative with Barnstable High School were cited as examples. Now that there has been some “fence-mending” there is additional potential for collaboration with the Cape Cod Conservatory for music instruction.

In many cases, facilities (e.g. The Tilden Arts Center) play an important role in external organizations seeking out the College as a collaborative partner. One participant said, “I wouldn’t think of holding a conference anywhere else, and I have to admit that I don’t broadcast that fact because I don’t want too many people to know about it.”
Programs Lacking Attention or Programs that Need to be Added

Which programs currently offered by the College need more attention?

What programs are needed that are not being offered? (Please cite evidence for the need).

Should the College place more emphasis on developing competence in areas such as work-ethic and professionalism?

More distance learning for core courses is needed, especially English.

For PAIA, “improved ‘customer service’ would make it easier for people to find their way into the system.”

Businesses need management training, particularly computer skills and emphasis on entrepreneurial outlook. The owner of a large art gallery noted that “retail is very technical now—we’re no longer looking just for bodies to stand behind a cash register.”

Improved math and writing skills are lacking across the board. “Collaboration with employers is necessary to show students how these skills are used in the real world and how they can make a real difference in their earning power.”

Advocacy is needed to “explain to students what is possible, how expanded knowledge can enrich their lives.”

Other requests: a course of study at the Highland Center; peer education in the arts; monthly professional seminars; programs designed to “get the community into the College.”

“The College needs distinguished programs” but, because of the scarcity of space and resources, “what works best in the arts is decentralization.”

Media communications programs should be enhanced: a participant from a local newspaper said, “We’re not seeing students from the College in our newsroom and we should be.”

The graphic design program should be expanded to include new media arts. “There is great career potential in this area, but it requires institutional commitment. Build it and they will come.” The current graphic arts program is not integrated with new media and television. Students should serve as producers for cable channel programs. “The College should be aggressive here: Channel 98 could become a major marketing tool.”
**Trends Shaping the Future**

*Sustaining economic growth requires anticipating what education and skills will be needed in the future: what do you see as the major trends shaping the future of the region served by the College?*

How do you see these trends affecting the numbers of workers who will be required and the kinds of training they will need?

How should program priorities be ordered to conform to anticipated needs?

Government support will continue to decline but: “We need to stop waiting for Beacon Hill.” One participant suggested the College should seek support from Barnstable County because, unlike most local governments in the area, it has a surplus.

The population of the region is aging and mature adults are “attracted to the arts, culture and technology.” But they also prefer not to travel long distances and decentralization, facilitated through collaboration with other organizations, will continue to be important. The College should become “their primary resource and their guiding light.”

The burgeoning Brazilian population will continue to enrich Cape Cod.

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**Closing Thoughts**

*Is there anything that has not been discussed here today which could help the College serve students, business, and the community better*

—or—

*What is the best idea you have heard here today?*

A new media studies program incorporating video, production, graphic design, and digital imaging, playing off resources in the arts the College already has, would be of great benefit. It could offer a “giant opportunity for workforce development,” attracting both young people and boomer retirees. A well-designed program could also draw students from off-Cape.

Cape Cod’s rich history in the arts should be leveraged to attract students.

It was generally agreed that public awareness of arts events at the College is lacking. A participant from the media indicated that there is great variation among the groups at the College with regard to how well they are able to utilize public relations resources to promote events. “You can’t expect the press to come to you,” she said. “You have to go to them and establish relationships with the appropriate people.”

Students with good communications skills and a broad foundation in the liberal arts “go farther in whatever they do … The arts and humanities are the heart and the pulse of the College … We can do so much by collaborating, but we have to know what we have to offer each other—there is a richness of creative thinking in the room and there is tremendous power in new ways of thinking.”

The College should trumpet its value to the world by aggressively publicizing the stories of those individuals who have gone on from the
College to succeed. Two of the participants, both graduates of the College, described themselves as “success stories” and the rest agreed that these stories need to be made widely known. The public needs to understand that there are far more important reasons to seek out the College than the three most often cited: lack of money, poor grades or test scores, and the desire to stay at home.

Successful programs can grow from humble beginnings as long as there is the vision to start small and carry them through to completion: a participant from Barnstable High School told the story of building a large graphic design laboratory from the purchase of a single computer.

There is not enough public awareness of Cape arts events. The College is in a unique position because of its location in the midst of a vibrant resort area. “We should be able to use our heritage to our advantage: people come to the Cape first to go to the beach and then to seek out culture; they go to the Berkshires first for culture and then to look at the trees.” The College should be a pivotal player in promoting the cultural offerings on the Cape rather than “going dormant” in the summer season.

The College should stop competing with the high schools and technical schools. It should aim higher, blaze trails, take on the role of coordinator.
Focus Group VI—Human Services
December 13, 2002, 1 PM
17 Participants

Participant Affiliation (n=17)

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Introduction
The Human Services Focus Group meeting comprised participants from area social service agencies, a service organization, a Cape municipality and the College. The group was diverse from the point of view of both gender and age. Both large and small organizations were represented and the discussion was animated. Several of the participants were passionately outspoken on the need for social action on the Cape.

Programs Perceived as Successful
Over the years a number of degree and certificate programs have been developed at the College to meet recognized needs: which College programs have been successful at serving students, business, and the community?

The appreciation expressed by the participants for the College was comprehensive and sincere. Among its successes they listed:

- **NURSING/CNA**
- **DIAGNOSTIC TECHNICIAN**
- **MEDICAL INTERPRETER**
- **EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**
- **CAPE OPEN DOOR**
- **THE TWO-PLUS-TWO PROGRAMS**
- **THE WOMEN IN TRANSITION CENTER**
- **WERC**
These programs were judged as successful because they “meet real-world needs” and “offer empowerment” both to the people being trained by them and the populations they serve. One participant, now the head of a non-profit agency pointed out that were it not for the existence of the two-plus-two program she would have been forced to leave the Cape.

Collaboration
Recognizing that sustainable economic growth on Cape Cod requires closer cooperation between the academic and business communities than in other geographic areas: how well is the collaboration among the College, business, and the community working?

The initial response to this question was a long silence. It was finally broken with the comment: “It’s not good enough.” Others chimed in: “With the exception of this meeting I am not aware of any ... In clinical fields such as nursing there is strong collaboration but in human services the connection is very weak ... Collaboration has been a struggle: we would have continued to try to build it if the College had shown more interest ... Instead of isolated programs, such as the Cape Open Door, we need programs to be coordinated so that they become stepping stones in a larger and more comprehensive initiative.”

... The Executive Director of a non-profit agency told of receiving a commitment from the College to a collaborative effort and later finding out that it had not been placed on the calendar. “I felt it was not important to the College,” she said. Others agreed that the collaboration process needs to be structured better with special emphasis placed on communications and follow-through.

The major frustration in attempting collaborations has been the lack of a point of contact, “knowing who to call to get things started.” Both College and non-College participants wanted a designated person to field requests and act as liaison. One agency head lamented, “I would love to have psychology students as interns, but I don’t know how to make it happen.” Another participant who works with troubled youth repeated the persistent theme of not knowing who to contact to get started.

Professional Development
What role should the College play in upgrading the skills of workers and providing opportunities for ongoing professional development?

There is a clear need for help from the College in fostering professional development. “Human service agencies have ongoing needs for staff development, but we usually go off-Cape ... Survey us to find out what we need and then provide it ... Make professional development a much higher priority; social service is a $110 million business on Cape Cod and we have a lot of people to train ... We would prefer to get our staff development training locally but we can’t because we are mandated by the state to go off-Cape; I’d like to see a better connection between the College and state agencies ... We need continuing education for licensed human service professionals, along the lines of the Cape Cod Institute.”

Training in human resources is needed, along with fundraising and management.
“Nonprofit organizations need sales and marketing education; we are too busy to tell people we exist and that’s counterproductive.”

There is a need for computer training for all levels of staff within agencies. One agency director called the College’s IT department asking for help in this regard but got no response. “I have a definite need for my staff to become more proficient in using applications such as MS Word, Excel and Access. Our employees are older; they have computers on their desks but don’t know how to use them effectively.” None of the participants knew about the College’s mobile computer training lab, but many of them welcomed the idea of training that would “come to their parking lot.”

Programs Lacking Attention or Programs that Need to be Added
Which programs currently offered by the College need more attention?

What programs are needed that are not being offered? (Please cite evidence for the need).

Should the College place more emphasis on developing competence in areas such as work-ethic and professionalism?

Early childhood educators need training in ways to deal with trauma and stress in young children.

Bilingual professionals are needed in all areas of human services, especially those related to mental health.

Teacher certification is needed for professionals in other fields to be able to enter the teaching profession.

Training in psychological testing would be beneficial.

There was general agreement that in order to counter the sorts of negative cultural messages that are ubiquitous today standards of conduct need to be set. “The College needs to get it across to students that they can be presentable and courteous and yet still be who they are. Professionalism doesn’t mean tossing out diversity or individuality … Above all, the College needs not to enable: there is a fine line between being supportive and being overly permissive. What you let slide here becomes a problem in the business world … Ethics should be taught in every business course, but ethics should include the message that human beings have the right to an income that supplies the basics of food and shelter.”
Trends Shaping the Future
Sustaining economic growth requires anticipating what education and skills will be needed in the future: what do you see as the major trends shaping the future of the region served by the College?

How do you see these trends affecting the numbers of workers who will be required and the kinds of training they will need?

How should program priorities be ordered to conform to anticipated needs?

The high cost of housing and its consequences are a major concern: “I’m advising people who are struggling financially to leave the Cape ... You can’t afford to live here as a single person even if you have a college degree ... There’s no place for local employees to live ... The single mother with three children is being replaced by immigrants ... People in their thirties are leaving and people over 55 are coming ... There will be more homeless and more hidden homeless.”

The non-English speaking community is growing. The College has an important role helping to integrate this population.

MCAS failures could “sap the resources of the College. We need the College to be much more than a remedial institution.”

State budget cuts will have major impact. A decrease in financial resources will force the College “to look for creative solutions and new partnerships that were never thought of before.”

Closing Thoughts
Is there anything that has not been discussed here today which could help the College serve students, business, and the community better

—or—

What is the best idea you have heard here today?

There is tremendous interest in accessing the College in new ways, particularly related to professional development, which the participants believe the College is well equipped to provide. “You have very talented faculty in the psychology department. If they gave workshops out in the community the College would be more visible and better appreciated.”

There is interest in collaborating with the College, but also a great deal of frustration over previous attempts to do so that have been unsuccessful.

Participants from the College are eager to improve communications: “We thought we were marketing, but if people come in here and tell us they have no clue, then they have no clue. Clearly we need to communicate better. The people in this room have the ideas and creativity to address all these issues.” There was general agreement the meeting had been a “good discussion and the process of outreach should continue.” Participants from social service agencies concluded with the request to “come see us in the trenches.”
Focus Group VII—Science and Technology

December 16, 2002, 8 AM
18 Participants

Participant Affiliation (n=18)

- College: 22%
- Community/Gov: 45%
- Business: 33%

Introduction
The Science and Technology Focus Group meeting was a large group, predominantly male, made up of participants from business, the Upper Cape Cod Regional Technical School, Cape Cod municipalities, a veterinarian, Cape Air, Waquoit Bay National Estuarine Research Center, the Cape Cod Commission and the College. Most of them were concerned in one way or another with environmental issues; many, if not most, of them had taken advantage of professional development opportunities at the College and elsewhere. There was good participation and the discussion became highly technical at times. Many of the participants had and intense engagement with the College and its programs.

Programs Perceived as Successful
Over the years a number of degree and certificate programs have been developed at the College to meet recognized needs: which College programs have been successful at serving students, business, and the community?

THE HORTICULTURAL CERTIFICATE
Landscaping on the Cape has gone from a seasonal to a year-round business. Graduates of four-year institutions have availed themselves of this program.

LIBERAL ARTS “The College does an excellent job of preparing students go further in higher education.”

ENVIRONMENTAL TECHNOLOGY Employers reported tremendous success using interns from the Environmental Technology program. “They don’t mind doing the grunt
work of collecting samples," one of them noted. Some have been involved in doing significant work in the field and are being groomed to take on more significant roles. It has been of significant benefit that this program has had a point of contact who reaches out to employers so that they "know who to call" when they want to work in tandem with the College.

**Co-op Programs** Cooperative education is "a good tool for any company—it means that students will hit the ground running when they go to work." A participant from one of the towns who had used four interns from the College said, "They were a big help; they had a great attitude."

There was consensus among the participants that program success should be measured by the three criteria of placement, retention, and compensation.

**Collaboration**

Recognizing that sustainable economic growth on Cape Cod requires closer cooperation between the academic and business communities than in other geographic areas: how well is the collaboration among the College, business, and the community working?

Many people in the environmental science field are accessing the College for internships and professional development education and much of it can be attributed to the presence of a coordinator who has reached out to business and the community and has been instrumental in maintaining communications with them. To show how far ahead the College is in this regard, one participant related his experience trying to establish collaborations with five different community colleges in northern New Jersey—he did not receive a single return phone call from any of them.

Other participants were generally unaware collaborative efforts with the College. This was especially true for the participant from a local air carrier: the focus groups were his first contact with the College. "We go into each season short-handed," he said. "Each pilot we are unable to hire costs us $300,000 and we always need people in meteorology and dispatching. We want to be able to get them locally. We don't want to go to Florida any more."

A participant from the College told of a collaboration with the State of Rhode Island, helping them to identify sources of e-coli contamination, and others in the group were very interested because they were unaware that the capability existed.

Some participants viewed the focus groups themselves as a kind of collaboration in embryo. There was interest in keeping the conversation going, perhaps through an annual Science and Technology Forum hosted by the College. Opportunities and venues for brainstorming are wanted.

“"The College has made great strides in environmental science and collaborations would expand opportunities in this area. But it should beware of competing with the tech schools." The College should collaborate with the technical schools to fill gaps in training in such fields as auto engineering, marine technology, HVAC and renewable energy. "There ought to be a connection with them similar to the two-plus-two program—call it a 'four-plus-two'". The tech schools get many "late-bloomers" and when they go on to the College it "does well by them."
**Professional Development**

What role should the College play in upgrading the skills of workers and providing opportunities for ongoing professional development?

Working professionals have taken advantage of offerings at the College to gain skills in GIS (Geographic Information Systems). These are not people seeking degrees, consequently their success is not easily measured. They range in age from early twenties to late fifties with the average age being around thirty. One of the participants, who is currently taking a course in GIS at the College simply because it enables him “to talk the language”, maintained that there are opportunities to expand participation significantly by targeting professionals who work for the towns, letting them know that quality GIS training is available that is convenient and reasonably priced.

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**Programs Lacking Attention or Programs that Need to be Added**

Which programs currently offered by the College need more attention?

What programs are needed that are not being offered? (Please cite evidence for the need).

Should the College place more emphasis on developing competence in areas such as work-ethic and professionalism?

Affordable vet tech training is needed: programs off-Cape cost $16,000 a year to prepare someone for a job that pays $10-15 an hour. In addition, “There should be ways of combining the health, veterinary and environmental sciences to combat disease in the area. The more we all know what each of us is doing the better.”

The science and math programs need to be strengthened.

There is a need for certificates in sanitation and aquaculture. There is great demand for interns in the latter, “young people with strong backs who can work the tides and do their course work in between.” Student interest is high as well, but the main problem in establishing aquaculture studies at the College is the lack of seawater facilities.

Workshops for municipal employees and others on regulatory compliance would be helpful: there is a need to know not only how to meet requirements but also how to realize organizational goals within compliance. “What are the regulations? What’s in the pipeline? How do we work with others to meet them and still perform our mission? The College could become a leader by helping us to do this.”

The need for education in the environmental sciences is growing by leaps and bounds but...
many are not aware of the programs that exist at the College. The information must be communicated outward to managers and, at the same time, downward to lower-level employees because insecurity in upper echelons often results in information not being passed on.

Businesses need training in dealing with the public: customer service, stress management, client relations.

The importance of a solid foundation in the Liberal Arts cannot be overstated. People need to be prepared to make informed decisions on questions related to the environment and for this they need a broadly-based background in the humanities. “This is everyone’s concern. Employers want people with technical expertise, but the fundamentals of a liberal education are just as important: communication skills, the basics, how to function within an organization.”

Communications skills can be improved by incorporating writing assignments into every course of study. One participant made what he called “a naked plea for English literature—the more reading and writing the better.” A participant from the College wisely observed, “A big part of the problem is the multiple-choice exam,” because it requires only that students identify the correct answer among several and does nothing to help them learn how to express ideas in language.

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**Trends Shaping the Future**

*Sustaining economic growth requires anticipating what education and skills will be needed in the future: what do you see as the major trends shaping the future of the region served by the College?*

*How do you see these trends affecting the numbers of workers who will be required and the kinds of training they will need?*

*How should program priorities be ordered to conform to anticipated needs?*

Because of the high cost of living, and for various other reasons, the labor pool on the Cape is shrinking. “We are losing young, educated professionals, our ‘intellectual infrastructure’. They won’t settle here.” It is often difficult to find entry level employees; retired or second-career workers are being hired instead.

The lack of public transportation, and the congestion it contributes to, is a growing problem.

There will be “a void in municipal employment” as people in the towns begin to retire at a time when government is the fastest growing segment of the workforce. “Government is still the largest employer base. People are demanding that it become more professional and that is happening.”

Waste-water will become a key issue. There is a market for decentralized waste-water treatment that could favor small engineering firms who are able to do it economically. “The public wants safe food, water, sanitation, and they want it done locally.”

GIS is growing. “It’s now a standard component of IT and it makes up a large part
of what the people who work for the towns do. It's taking hold everywhere."

The healthcare occupations are growing. Anything that serves the “affluent elderly” is thriving.

“There are 40-plus golf courses on the Cape. It is a $200,000,000 industry and growing.” Its workforce is increasingly made up of the semi-retired.

Significant numbers of “pre-retirement” people are moving to the Cape to care for elderly parents. Many of them are giving up primary careers for secondary careers or part-time employment.

There is general lack of concern in many communities about the problems of the future. There is no interest in bringing manufacturing to the Cape but there is also little movement toward developing “soft” industries.

Closing Thoughts
Is there anything that has not been discussed here today which could help the College serve students, business, and the community better

—or—

What is the best idea you have heard here today?

There is hope that MCAS will improve the quality of education in the state; at the same time there are fears that it could lead to the unintended narrowing of educational goals, i.e., “teaching to the test.”

The experience of using interns from the College has been uniformly positive.

The College is “THE College”, the “only game in town.” It should be better utilized. The participants expressed a lot of sympathy for the College in view of the tasks it has set before it. “You need to ramp up your public relations to get the word out: there’s good stuff here.”
Introduction
The Hospitality, Culinary, Recreation and Tourism Focus Group was made up of participants from Cape Cod inns, a recreational facility and the College. The participants were overwhelmingly from the hospitality industry and there was a tendency toward sub-grouping; at times the discussion became more chatty than substantive. There was not a lot of knowledge of the College and its programs. There was a much higher level of knowledge about competing programs (e.g. Johnson & Wales) because of their visibility. Participants representing the College were highly receptive to criticism, eager to hear what was said and extremely gracious in dealing with some heavy blows.

Programs Perceived as Successful
Over the years a number of degree and certificate programs have been developed at the College to meet recognized needs: which College programs have been successful at serving students, business, and the community?

From the owner of a hospitality business employing 400 people: “I don’t know—I haven’t been exposed to it by marketing, advertising or personal contact.” Others felt that to judge the success of a program using placement is difficult because many if not most students already have jobs when they arrive. The true measure of success ought to be the achievement of the individual student’s educational goal, whether it is earning a degree, getting a job or just learning to cook.

TRANSFER The College has had considerable success in helping students prepare for four-year institutions and that success should be
Academically Master Planning
Focus Group Report
January 31, 2003

aggressively promoted. The College should consider formally offering a post-graduate year—a “13th grade.”

TWO-PLUS-TWO The success of the two-plus-two programs has helped the College’s image but it has also resulted in the College’s programs becoming confused with others: “Because of their more aggressive marketing, other schools get the recognition and the role of the College gets lost in the mix.”

**Collaboration**

Recognizing that sustainable economic growth on Cape Cod requires closer cooperation between the academic and business communities than in other geographic areas: how well is the collaboration among the College, business, and the community working?

All would like to see more collaboration with the College. Those who go to the College’s competitors, such as Johnson & Wales, do so because they are more visible. “It’s an embarrassment to me that I do it,” said the owner of several large B&Bs. “I should be directed here but I have to keep a lot of balls in the air and I simply don’t think here first. The message needs to come to me and be clear and strong.”

Collaboration between the industry and the College is the best way to educate people about careers in hospitality. “As an industry we have somehow put out the message that this is a 7-day-a-week, 20-hour-a-day job with no vacation and no benefits; it’s critical that we tell people there are professional career tracks in hospitality and we need the College to help us do this.”

- “The spirit is willing, but there may or may not be capacity to deliver.”
- “I was unaware of any collaboration until today.”
- “Collaboration needs to proceed from the top down.”
- “We need this place: without it there is a tremendous void—we have to grow our employees here because once they leave they’re gone for good.”

A participant from the College noted the collaborative role of WERC in food safety certification and the participants who were not from the College were unaware of it.

**Professional Development**

What role should the College play in upgrading the skills of workers and providing opportunities for ongoing professional development?

Referring to a first-line supervisors’ training program offered last year in connection with the Cape and Islands Workforce Investment Board, a participant said, “We need to see that kind of professional development activity continue.” The upcoming program developed by WERC for owners, managers and employees was announced and Lois Andre identified as the point of contact. “There is a great need for in-service training, especially for new hires and supervisors ... The hospitality industry needs to be better trained in the techniques of business: you can’t be hospitable if you’re not making money.”
Programs Lacking Attention or Programs that Need to be Added

Which programs currently offered by the College need more attention?

What programs are needed that are not being offered? (Please cite evidence for the need).

Should the College place more emphasis on developing competence in areas such as work-ethic and professionalism?

"The hospitality program used to be better organized and more highly visible than it is now. The business community was more engaged and recommendations were solicited and acted upon." One attendee recalled that he had formerly participated in a hospitality awards program at the College and had been invited to speak to classes. He believes that the presence of business owners in the classroom helps to motivate students and he regrets that his involvement had fallen by the wayside.

The participants claim that competition from institutions such as Johnson & Wales and Newbury College is the cause for the decline in the College's hospitality programs; the aggressive marketing of these institutions enables them to "cherry-pick" on the Cape and a wealth of local talent is going to these places because they offer internships and "name" people in the field.

Programs should be organized to accommodate better the needs of employers: interns should be able to stay on the job through Columbus Day; classes should be held Monday through Thursday so that students are available to work on Fridays.

The sole participant not from the hospitality industry, a golf course manager, echoed the need for interns who are able to work through October. For him, turf management and horticultural courses would also be helpful.

Training in institutional rather than gourmet cooking is needed; also vegetarian cooking.

"The program at the College is a shadow of what it could be because of the lack of faculties. There is demand but there is no space."

Computers are ubiquitous in the hospitality industry and, rather than training in specific software applications, the participants are interested in a kind of computer training that would give employees the confidence to "get in there" and learn their way around a system on their own.

Some participants want the College to keep their labor pool, the average age of which is about 20, "on this side of the bridge." They also want the College to help make them more professional. They are eager for employees possessing well-developed interpersonal and communications skills and who understand the critical roles that marketing and customer service play in making a business a success. Others have negative feelings about recruiting locally: one participant said he'd "given up on the local kids" and preferred to hire immigrants.

There is a need for substance abuse education that helps employees understand how the problem affects their customers, their coworkers, the business and themselves.
Trends Shaping the Future
Sustaining economic growth requires anticipating what education and skills will be needed in the future: what do you see as the major trends shaping the future of the region served by the College?

How do you see these trends affecting the numbers of workers who will be required and the kinds of training they will need?

How should program priorities be ordered to conform to anticipated needs?

“The future is here: congestion and the lack of affordable housing prove it.”

“The trends in the hospitality industry are scaring me: there is a high turnover rate and a lack of understanding of the business part of hospitality; people don’t have business plans.”

The service economy is growing and becoming less seasonal; with it there is a need for a ever-larger labor force and that is a “difficult trend to buck.”

The industry needs to change its image by making it known that there are “jobs in hospitality that pay well and that at the same time will allow a person to have a life.”

Closing Thoughts:
Is there anything that has not been discussed here today which could help the College serve students, business, and the community better

—or—

What is the best idea you have heard here today?

The participants want the College to become more engaged with their industry. They want internships and believe that graduates from the College working in the local industry along with “name” people on the faculty will draw students into the program. There is a wealth of talent that is going to other schools because they are more effective at outreach and have well-known faculty in the culinary field to attract students. In order to compete, the College needs to revitalize its image and mission and upgrade its facilities.

The institution that offers programs that best meet the needs of employers with regard to content and logistics will have the greatest number of placements. “We’d like to think here first, but we don’t.”

Professional development seminars and workshops featuring prominent people in the industry are needed.

Work-ethic and professionalism should be tightly integrated with the curriculum. “We need people who recognize the critical importance of customer service and know how to interact with customers in a professional manner. If we don’t have competent, knowledgeable workers visitors will go elsewhere.”
Focus Group IX—Education
December 16, 2002, 1 PM
18 Participants

Participant Affiliation (n=18)

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Introduction
The Education Focus Group was made up of participants from early childhood education facilities, public schools and the College. The meeting tended to be dominated by articulate academic voices, but there were also good contributions from feeder organizations such as the technical high schools. This group was more ethnically and racially diverse than most others, hence there was more discussion of issues related to diversity. There was also a broader appreciation of programs college-wide. This group was the only one in which there was no discussion of the aging population on Cape Cod.

Programs Perceived as Successful
Over the years a number of degree and certificate programs have been developed at the College to meet recognized needs: which College programs have been successful at serving students, business, and the community?

- NURSING The program has been highly successful at providing much needed healthcare workers.

- EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION The same holds true for childcare professionals.

- ADVANCING THE FIELD This program deserves high praise for offering “a clear-cut career and academic path” to 32 local students with a 100% retention rate. A key factor in its success is that the funding grant made possible “release time” for the faculty member in charge, allowing her to provide one-on-one counseling to the students, helping them to
cope with stress and keeping them from dropping out.

**ENVIRONMENTAL TECHNOLOGY** The presence of such designated leadership also plays a significant role in the success of the Environmental Technology program. One participant reported having hired several ET interns who worked out very well.

**THEATER ARTS AND DANCE** These programs “accomplish wonderful things with a small staff. They do two to four productions year, outreach to the schools, ‘Shakespeare by the Shore’, actor training, etc.”

**ADULT BASIC EDUCATION** There is a “a very strong network of adult basic education funded by the Department of Education and run out of the downtown education center. It serves five- to six-hundred adults, helping them attain GED’s and providing ESOL, entry level to advanced. Many of these people transition to college; most improve their employment potential.”

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**Collaboration**

Recognizing that sustainable economic growth on Cape Cod requires closer cooperation between the academic and business communities than in other geographic areas: how well is the collaboration among the College, business, and the community working?

Community partnerships, particularly with The Cape Cod Childcare Network, are indispensable: “They wrote letters for us and helped us to get grants.”

Collaborations with secondary schools, such as Dual-Enrollment, School-to-Careers, The Cape Open Door program and Project Forward, are valuable because they provide the opportunity for students to “advance academically and gain workplace skills.”

Collaborations that make graduate education possible on Cape Cod, such as the Social Work and General Education Master’s programs were commended: “fifteen years ago there was nothing for teachers on the Cape.”

A participant from a technical high school noted that two of his students had spent their entire senior year at the College thanks to dual-enrollment: “They did their shop work at our place, and their academic work here. It was very successful. The technical school is constrained in what it is able to offer academically.”

Other collaborations that should be explored: alternative education for disenfranchised students; advanced placement courses; ways to link the technical schools’ culinary facilities to the hospitality program at the College.
Professional Development
What role should the College play in upgrading the skills of workers and providing opportunities for ongoing professional development?

The Department of Social Sciences gets “an amazing amount of calls” asking about teacher certification. “We need to be able to give professionals in other fields the ability to get certified to teach here on the Cape.”

“Bring in tried-and-true proprietary programs by well-known organizations for the education community … Survey to find out what people go off-Cape for and offer it here … Host a Professional development Day … We’re looking at a whole new group of educators taking course work who are already teachers; there’s nothing on Cape Cod for them.”

Programs Lacking Attention or Programs that Need to be Added
Which programs currently offered by the College need more attention?

What programs are needed that are not being offered? (Please cite evidence for the need).

Should the College place more emphasis on developing competence in areas such as work-ethic and professionalism?

The curriculum should prepare students for the teacher test at Bridgewater. “The College needs to work with teachers to help them to pass this test.”

The College should present what it has to offer to students in the middle schools. “We’re not targeting the student population as early as we should. There are hundreds of students in public schools who would fit well into the College programs, but the local high schools don’t promote the College; they think in terms of the bigger schools. There needs to be more dialogue with local schools; you need to put a face on the place.”

The culinary program is weak: “There are better facilities at the tech school.”

“The College doesn’t offer enough post-secondary technical education. Kids who graduate from the tech school go elsewhere for advanced training in diesel repair, construction technology, etc. We need more of what Springfield has to offer.”

More practical experience in early childhood education is needed, particularly an internship that is longer than a single semester. “Young people, even with a four-year degree, often have difficulty in this challenging work. They need more than a practicum … We need a lab school, a functioning school staffed with
supervised students … Many of those who enter early childhood education are nurturing and caring, but they don’t have a clue how to interact with parents and staff and they don’t understand that childcare is a business and how that affects them.”

“There is huge concern about MCAS and we’re looking to the College to strengthen transitional programs.” A participant from the technical school added: “88% of students failed the 8th grade MCAS. It’s a big challenge. We’re looking for help from the College. We need another voice, another venue, another presenter.”

Another participant voiced the concern that increasing the emphasis on remediation will make the College “too much like high school” and further damage its image.

**Trends Shaping the Future**

Sustaining economic growth requires anticipating what education and skills will be needed in the future; what do you see as the major trends shaping the future of the region served by the College?

How do you see these trends affecting the numbers of workers who will be required and the kinds of training they will need?

How should program priorities be ordered to conform to anticipated needs?

Community colleges will be the only higher education facilities students who fail MCAS will be able to access. “We’ll have a large crop of ‘Grade 13’ students; basic skills will require more and more attention; the GED program will explode.”

The immigrant population will continue to grow. Even now, many more than can be served want to learn English: some are well-educated in their native countries; others are unskilled or semi-skilled and have little education. They will be increasingly needed by Cape businesses as we lose more and more of the year-round residents who used to be laborers because of low salaries and the high cost of living. “The profile of the student as a 27-year-old single white mother will and should change. We need diversity here; we need to reach out to immigrant groups. We should be embarrassed by the disparity between the campus population and the actual demographics of the area … This is my home. I work here; I graduated from here. It’s a wonderful place, but I’ve never had a teacher here who looked like me.”
Closing Thoughts
Is there anything that has not been discussed here today which could help the College serve students, business, and the community better
—or—
What is the best idea you have heard here today?

The programs that are most effective have a name and a face attached to them: e.g. Advancing the Field, Environmental Technology.

The College needs to think “beyond brick and mortar.” Distance learning and accessibility are huge concerns. “Give us more options—the local community should not be dialing in to somewhere else ... Facility limitations are real, but they can also become excuses to block innovation ... The real impediments are not physical. This ought to be a 24/7/365 institution.”

“The College is a well-kept secret—potential students don’t know what is available ... There is a large population of students that would thrive with the individual attention given here.” Parents are not aware of the transfer record, the career tracks and the cost savings offered by the College. Marketing should emphasize the College’s success stories.

“I feel like I’ve been given a transfusion. We should keep getting people around the table. This has been a very good beginning and it feels great to be part of the plan.”
Focus Group X—Trendsetters
December 19, 2002, 11 AM
12 Participants

Participant Affiliation (n=12)

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Introduction
The Trendsetters Focus Group was made up of participants from community organizations, the Cape Cod Commission, area banks and businesses and Chambers of Commerce, and the College. The participation was generally good, though two of the attendees had to leave shortly after arriving. The group seemed less knowledgeable about the College than most others but the participants tended to look at things more globally, from a higher vantage point. The group was made up of strong personalities and the interaction was lively at times. The participants tended to be more certain of their perceptions and more emphatic in expressing their opinions than most others—when asked at the end of the meeting if there was anything they wanted to discuss which had not been brought up, they mostly repeated statements they had made earlier. The members were very interested in reviewing the introductory statistical material provided but found it inadequate.

Programs Perceived as Successful
Over the years a number of degree and certificate programs have been developed at the College to meet recognized needs: which College programs have been successful at serving students, business, and the community?

NURSING  “It has served as an entrée into the healthcare field for many interested people.”

ENVIRONMENTAL TECHNOLOGY  “Under the leadership of President Schatzberg the College has developed a program that is successful on all levels.”

ENTREPRENEURSHIP  “I attended the awards ceremony for a business plan writing competition and was blown away by the quality of the entries.”

CNA PROGRAM  “I don’t see information about it in the statistics provided.”

X—Trendsetters
48
TWO-PLUS-TWO “It is a huge legacy ... The College does a great job preparing people to go on, but it could do more, especially on the Lower Cape, to prepare people for the good service jobs in hospitality, healthcare and criminal justice that might keep them here.”

PROJECT FORWARD “It gives learning disabled adults who cannot handle the standard curriculum the opportunity to get past collecting grocery carts. Cape Cod can’t afford to overlook any group of potential employees. Many types of jobs are hard to fill and Project Forward people are thrilled to get them.”

There was a great deal of dissatisfaction with the statistical information provided. The participants wanted to know what degrees and certificate programs resulted in what jobs and how much those jobs paid: “There’s no completion information here and we need some idea of what’s happening to the students who enter these programs ... One of the functions of the College should be to serve as an employment agency: the first priority ought to be placement ... We should not think just in terms of Cape Cod—if more jobs are created here more students will stay but it’s not necessarily a loss if someone finds work off-Cape.”

Collaboration

Recognizing that sustainable economic growth on Cape Cod requires closer cooperation between the academic and business communities than in other geographic areas: how well is the collaboration among the College, business, and the community working?

The topic of collaboration was greeted by the question: “Are you talking about pre- or post-Kathy? Before Kathy the College was not business-friendly. It was a fortress and businesses felt shut out. Now a listening climate has been created. Kathy has reached out to chambers and business groups and worked at adapting programs to suit current needs.” This point of view was echoed by another participant who noted that President Schatzberg had made “efforts to strengthen the connection between the College and the business community.” Participants from the Lower Cape, however, felt a serious disconnect with “those people across the bridge—the Bass River bridge, that is.” They want the College to pay attention to the unique needs of their region, perhaps by considering a branch on the Lower Cape.

One participant maintained that if the College does not actively contribute to uniting the Cape under a single regional identity it will contribute to its further fragmentation. Another claimed with equal fervor that the regionalization of the Cape is a good thing and should be celebrated. All acknowledged that working together to determine “who we are and what we are trying to do” is essential and that the College needs to talk more to the business community. “Communications have started, but there’s a long way to go.”

One participant asserted that the lack of centralized business leadership on Cape Cod makes it harder for the College to establish
fruitful collaborations with business. However, participants from the Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce responded by saying that they, in representing the three pillars of the Cape economy, retirement, tourism and small business, are not utilized as much as they should be for the purpose of providing linkages with the College. Regarding problems in collaboration from the College’s side: “Too often there is no well-defined, easily accessible point of contact.”

From one business owner: “I need, on a full-time basis, three editors and four to five advertising people with advanced skills in communications and marketing. Why am I not fully engaged in the College’s curriculum development process? Why is my organization not being used as a co-op extension? Every business could do that. If you try to bring in people from off-Cape, they can’t afford to live here and you end up going crazy. I’m not the only person who would like to integrate my operations with the curriculum but how do you connect the dots? It offers the potential for a tremendous rate of return on investment and translates into a quality channel of talent. But it demands a partnership between academia and business and an understanding of their mutual goals.”

**Professional Development**

*What role should the College play in upgrading the skills of workers and providing opportunities for ongoing professional development?*

“Many of the new Cape businesses are lifestyle businesses because the Cape is the ideal place for building a business based on where and how you want to live.” But there exists the need to support these businesses through a curriculum comprising non-credit courses in the practical application of business principles accessible to those who wish only to achieve core competencies, not attain a degree. This would be “education that sends people away with something they can use tomorrow … The seeds are there with WERC, but they need to be cultivated by the use of more adjunct faculty from the business world and focusing more attention on career development. We absolutely need middle-management and customer service training.”
Programs Lacking Attention or Programs that Need to be Added

Which programs currently offered by the College need more attention?

What programs are needed that are not being offered? (Please cite evidence for the need).

Should the College place more emphasis on developing competence in areas such as work-ethic and professionalism?

TECHNICAL EDUCATION “The need for expanding the program is huge: we can’t get basic computer training here; if you want to become more versed in the use of software and hardware, there’s nothing available here for you—that’s the perception.”

FOUR-YEAR DEGREES “The College should set its sights on becoming a four-year institution. Toward this end, it should convene and publish, i.e., facilitate meetings of movers and shakers and publish the results.”

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY “Science and technology are not being exploited commercially for the benefit of the Cape. The ‘Silicon Sandbar’ is not happening, because of a lack of training available locally.” Technology programs, especially those related to the environment, need to be boosted; the most compelling problems on the Cape are environmental in nature. “If we identify issues specific to our region, such as eco-tourism, waste-water management, affordable housing, native landscaping, and create programs to address them, those programs will serve as magnets for attracting new students.”

NURSING AND GERONTOLOGY There is a need to pool students to meet the cohort requirements of educational partners. The value of the gerontology program needs to be understood in the workplace.

ARTS MARKETING “The Lower Cape is evolving into a grass roots arts and culture community. These artists need training in business disciplines and in how to build web-based marketing so that they can sell globally and extend their summer season. The College is poised to become a leader in this creative new economy, to serve as focal point and provide opportunity for a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts.”

WORK-ETHIC, PROFESSIONALISM AND BASIC SKILLS “It’s frustrating to find someone with an AS degree who can’t write a sentence.” Plymouth has had success with a program in its schools that provides incentives for professionalism and teaches students the social skills they need to get along in the business world; the same principles should be applied at the College.
Trends Shaping the Future
Sustaining economic growth requires anticipating what education and skills will be needed in the future: what do you see as the major trends shaping the future of the region served by the College?

How do you see these trends affecting the numbers of workers who will be required and the kinds of training they will need?

How should program priorities be ordered to conform to anticipated needs?

The discussion began on a positive note when a participant predicted that the increase in year-round residents will mean a better economy in the future.

Another observed that an economy with a high percentage of people over 50 and a high concentration of retirees requires new ways of thinking. “A second-home economy calls for different strategies. We don’t need new businesses—we need business development. Growth opportunities are nil; in fact we are in a state of attrition. It’s not a question of inviting in new businesses but adapting training programs for the businesses that are already here.”

The Cape is not highly rated as “desirable business climate; there are major geographic hurdles and because of the limiting effect of the Cape Cod Commission there aren’t going to be big employers here, so we need to come together to make what we have work better. The College has to rethink its curriculum and plan its future around what people are telling them they need.”

Social problems are a serious impediment for small businesses owned by men: substance abuse and other forms of addiction, the seasonal attitude, hiding money in cash businesses, all keep them from realizing their full potential.

Casino gambling is coming. The College could play a role in assessing the impact. “I’m afraid that gambling will suck the life out of an already fragile economy.”

Employers are having a hard time holding on to long-term employees because of the lack of affordable housing but “the College sits back and observes. There is a need to get over the not-in-my-back-yard thinking where affordable housing is concerned or we will continue to lose young people to economic opportunities over the bridge. You can only stay so long in your parents’ house. Will we be left with the dregs?”

Legislative action is needed regarding housing eligibility: “A homeless person who has just moved to the Cape goes to top of the list, while someone who is living here marginally, working as a home health aide or CNA with ties to the community, is forced to leave. Critical areas of employment like these need to be given priority.”
Closing Thoughts
Is there anything that has not been discussed here today which could help the College serve students, business, and the community better

—or—

What is the best idea you have heard here today?

The College needs to market to reality-based needs and differentiate itself from other resources such as the Chambers, SCORE and the CDC.

The real need is not for more business but for developing the businesses that are established, helping them to survive and grow. “75% of the jobs on the Cape come from businesses, that employ 20 people or less.” The College needs instructors that “come from the real world. Reading about running a business is different from actually running one.” A participant from the academic community agreed: “Many of our full- and part-time faculty are active in business. We believe that the tie to the real world is key and going forward we will need more and more adjunct faculty to fulfill our mission.”

The College needs to think bigger, more regionally, e.g.: becoming a hub for art entrepreneurs, utilizing organizations like the Chambers throughout the region. “The Chambers are more than just business-to-business organizations—they strengthen the fabric of the community and have the ability to communicate quickly with a lot of people.”

Such regional thinking should include seeking support from local government: “We’re here for every town on the Cape, but only the state supports us.”

“The College has tremendous value just because it’s here, but it has become a jack-of-all-trades and a master of none. Until the College decides what it wants to provide it will feel dismembered … Business should be closely involved with the College; grow the skills and business will grow.”
Focus Group XI—Applied Technology
January 6, 2003, 9 AM
6 Participants

Participant Affiliation (n=6)

Business 17%
Community/Gov 17%
College 66%

Introduction
The Applied Technology Focus Group was made up of one participant from business, one participant from a community organization and four participants from the College. Consequently, it became more like a focused interview of the two non-College participants by the participants of the College. There was more expression of ideas from College participants in this group than usual.

Programs Perceived as Successful
Over the years a number of degree and certificate programs have been developed at the College to meet recognized needs: which College programs have been successful at serving students, business, and the community?

A participant who had formerly managed an inn praised the hospitably program. She felt that graduates were well-rounded and had “much more realistic expectations” than students from larger institutions. She felt very positive about hiring graduates from the program. “How long someone stays on the job and on the Cape is also a measure of success.”

Another participant commended the training in Microsoft Office for “bolstering the confidence and improving the skill level” of the people in her office. She observed that her fellow employees had very little interest in earning credits; they measured success by how...
well the program improved their skills and boosted their confidence. A participant from the College noted the contrast between this point of view and the way the State and the College measure success in terms of enrollment and degrees. “Currently there is no tangible way to measure the value of enhanced entrepreneurial abilities or on-the-job performance.”

Collaboration
Recognizing that sustainable economic growth on Cape Cod requires closer cooperation between the academic and business communities than in other geographic areas: how well is the collaboration among the College, business, and the community working?

On one hand, the fact that many of the instructors at the College have ties to business and the community suggests a kind of “built-in” collaboration; on the other hand, an active dialogue is missing in some areas. “The College is doing well some of the time and terrible some of the time. It is well connected in some sectors and missing in others; and because it is well-connected in some areas we may not look closely at the others.”

Any serious pursuit of an applied technology program will required collaboration, but before than can happen the College needs to decide if this is a direction it wants to take. “There are huge employment opportunities in applied technology: architects, designers, construction, boat builders, heavy equipment companies, highway departments are screaming for people; but programs require expertise, facilities, financial resources and acceptance by the faculty. The technical schools offer this training but they are not appropriate for adult learners; yet they do have the expertise and equipment and could be potential partners.”

Applied technology could attract men to the College and help to reverse the trend of the “disappearing male”.

A participant who had utilized interns from the technical schools as interns pointed out that a high level of collaboration with the employer is necessary because interns require such close supervision that “it often defeats the purpose of increasing staff and the question becomes, are you willing to pay in the short run for long-term gain.”

There are problems related to mindset to be overcome: “People who go to a tech school are labeled as losers—that is, until they show up as master plumbers making a lot of money.” Issues of class and status are obstacles both to gaining acceptance of applied technology within the College and in attracting students from outside. “Partnering is critical. Traditional recruitment methods won’t work for getting students into these programs: they are not usually members of the local chamber and they do not network; their connections tend to be ‘underground’ and peer approval is critical.”
Professional Development

*What role should the College play in upgrading the skills of workers and providing opportunities for ongoing professional development?*

Professional development is “the missing piece: these are not the sort of disciplines that can be packaged into a series of three-credit-hour courses.” A participant from the College noted, “Our coin of the realm, which has always been the credit hour, doesn’t mean anything to these folks.” Another participant observed, “A non-credit class at night is not as intimidating to someone who has been out of school or is new to school as a for-credit course is.” There is also more prestige associated with coming to the College for a class that going to a technical high school.

**Programs Lacking Attention or Programs that Need to be Added**

*Which programs currently offered by the College need more attention?*

*What programs are needed that are not being offered? (Please cite evidence for the need).*

*Should the College place more emphasis on developing competence in areas such as work-ethic and professionalism?*

The College needs to take a more active role in entrepreneurial education. “Many small business owners are insular and they don’t know how to wear the many hats of finance, business development, human resources and management it takes to run a business well.” To be in business successfully requires a broader background than many of these small entrepreneurs possess. “How to tie it all together is a tough thing to teach, but the College is well equipped to do it: create a core business curriculum with spokes off of it.”

*There is a need for training in marketing that is not part of a degree program. “Don’t make it necessary to matriculate. Cater to short-term, specific training. Make courses more approachable: many people can’t commit to semester hours and all that goes with them. Make it OK to just take a class. Many people are more inclined to take a program if it is designed specifically for their needs: for example, accounting for the hospitality industry—they like being in a room full of peers.”*

Internships, cooperative education and strong emphasis on work-ethic and professionalism are important components in any applied technology program. “Professionalism and ethics can be taught if instructors set policies and model the desired behavior … There is a definite need for setting expectations for what
students will find in the workplace, bringing the real world into the classroom and making sure that students understand the links between the two ... Applied technology disciplines are more real world: not only the discipline should be taught, but also how it is practiced on the job. This should be done by using case studies based how things are done locally.”

Trends Shaping the Future
Sustaining economic growth requires anticipating what education and skills will be needed in the future: what do you see as the major trends shaping the future of the region served by the College?

How do you see these trends affecting the numbers of workers who will be required and the kinds of training they will need?

How should program priorities be ordered to conform to anticipated needs?

The older population will include retirees who are looking for a new career and life skills. Some areas of applied technology, such as boat building, might appeal to them. This type of training could provide mature workers with work that is more satisfying that “answering telephones”. The Academy for Lifelong Learning offers enrichment rather than skill development and it is designed for people who do not need or want to work but the number of older people who will have to work will increase in the future. “Are there retired welders, boat builders, etc. out there who could serve as adjunct faculty or advisors?”

The rising cost of housing makes it hard to attract people here. This trend will continue, as will problems with transportation and the environment. “Cape Cod is the canary in the mine shaft.”

There will continue to be a lack of industry employing large numbers of people, consequently smaller businesses will continue to need support.

MCAS may cause those who fail to “turn their backs on academia forever.”

Closing Thoughts
Is there anything that has not been discussed here today which could help the College serve students, business, and the community better — or —

What is the best idea you have heard here today?

There should be more discussion concerning applied technology, including representatives from the technical schools. The College has a responsibility to “people not on the radar screen” and it needs to continue to explore ways to bring these programs to them. Applied technology programs could greatly contribute to workforce development.

The College has a tendency to “go where it has been” and it has not taken a look at what is needed to be an “economic driver for Cape Cod. We’ve created the same College over and over again and haven’t tried new things. We haven’t gone after particular groups and showed them how we can help them, which requires more effort than just putting something out there and whoever comes, comes. These focus groups have proved that there is an audience for things we have not traditionally done.”
Focus Group XII—Fire Science/EMT
January 6, 2003, 1 PM
11 Participants

Introduction
The Fire Science/EMT Focus Group was made up of participants from Cape fire departments, the Cape EMT consortium and the College. Like the first focus group, Criminal Justice, most of the participants knew each other quite well and there was close camaraderie between College and non-College participants. One of the participants noted that most of the issues discussed had already been taken up in advisory board meetings. The discussion was low-key and the participants tended to address each other instead of the group as a whole; as a result there was a lot of back and forth between individuals. Attendees from the Outer Cape tended to observe more than participate.

Programs Perceived as Successful
Over the years a number of degree and certificate programs have been developed at the College to meet recognized needs; which College programs have been successful at serving students, business, and the community?

The Fire Science program “has done a great job for the departments and a lot for the community.” It has been successful at advancing people in their careers but there is a lot of competition from Internet-based training and the College should make it easier to enter the program. As it is now, there are problems for many students in transferring credits. “The way people are treated when they ask about transfers is very important; if there’s a hassle they go to the Internet programs. Several of the men in my department are doing home-based programs.”
The paramedic program is very effective at training those who are “responsible for life support on Cape Cod.”

One participant who, along with two of his siblings and two of his children, earned an associate degree from the College and then went on to a four-year institution, praised the Liberal Arts program for the quality of its instruction and its cost-effectiveness. He believed that the College does not “put its best foot forward” in presenting itself to high school students and guidance counselors. “Your record is outstanding. The kids who come here for their first two years learn how to study and they are well prepared to succeed when they go on.”

Collaboration

Recognizing that sustainable economic growth on Cape Cod requires closer cooperation between the academic and business communities than in other geographic areas: how well is the collaboration among the College, business, and the community working?

The consensus of the group was that there has been little in the way of collaboration with the College: two seminars and the HAZMAT program were cited as steps in the right direction. The lack was partly attributed to the fact the Fire Science and Paramedic programs are offered exclusively in the evenings.

Some participants felt that the “need for a four-year degree, a BS in Fire Science or BS in Public Administration, is acute. We’ve made a couple of attempts at getting a two-plus-two program going, but they didn’t get off the ground. The departments just can’t fill the gap. I’d love to see the College become ‘UMASS Cape Cod’.”

Other possibilities for collaboration:

- a program to train LPN’s and paramedics as RN’s
- collaboration between the College and the Fire Academy to provide Firefighter I and II training. From a fire chief: “80% of new hires come in as paramedics and are sent to the Fire Academy at the expense of the department. If they can get through the paramedic program, the Fire Academy is a breeze, but it costs us $16,000-$18,000 to do it. Other states allow people to be trained as firefighters right out of high school and there are collaborations to take the financial burden off the departments but here that would require legislative action.”
Professional Development
What role should the College play in upgrading the skills of workers and providing opportunities for ongoing professional development?

Computer skills, especially “a solid foundation in Microsoft Office,” are a high priority in all the fire departments. WERC was suggested as a potential resource but very few in the room knew about it. All agreed that building students’ confidence in the use of computers is as important as instruction in specific applications.

Only professional development programs which are directly linked to career advancement will attract people working the field of fire science, even if the content of the program offered is excellent. Distance is a significant obstacle for those who work in Lower Cape fire departments: “No one wants to work all day and then drive all the way to Hyannis. But we get really good turnout when something is offered locally. Give us satellite classes, distance learning.”

Programs Lacking Attention or Programs that Need to be Added
Which programs currently offered by the College need more attention?

What programs are needed that are not being offered? (Please cite evidence for the need).

Should the College place more emphasis on developing competence in areas such as work-ethic and professionalism?

Although a participant from the College explained in detail why the decision had been made to place EMT within the Fire Science curriculum, the professionals in the room clearly voiced their preference for an independent paramedic program under health services. “The paramedic program is a gender-appropriate entrée to the healthcare profession for men. Fire science is a young person’s vocation; EMS is often a second career option—right now there are two doctors at Cape Cod Hospital who started out as EMT’s. The current course is not serving the students: there is specialization in the field, but no room for it in the curriculum. Where is the money being spent in the departments—fire suppression or EMS? Today most of us fight just enough fires to keep us honest, but EMS is jumping. If the College is going to serve the fire departments, the key is to develop the EMS programs.”

The role of the paramedic has expanded over the years, in part because of the shortage of nurses, and it continues to grow rapidly: e.g., paramedics are being enlisted for smallpox vaccinations. Because of the increasing need for their services, separate curriculums are fully justified. The pool for an EMS program could even be expanded because “it’s not happening on the other side of the bridge and the College has written the book on how EMS should be done in a rural area; there’s no reason why it shouldn’t continue to take the lead.”
Trends Shaping the Future
Sustaining economic growth requires anticipating what education and skills will be needed in the future: what do you see as the major trends shaping the future of the region served by the College?

How do you see these trends affecting the numbers of workers who will be required and the kinds of training they will need?

How should program priorities be ordered to conform to anticipated needs?

“The demographics of those coming in to Fire Science program have changed: we now have younger people entering and many of them are not ready for it—they lack the maturity. In the last five to six years there’s been a shift in attitude: the thinking is now more about getting an easy job in a fire department. Before the shift, very few came into the program that were not already affiliated with a department somewhere.”

The Cape’s population is moving from tourists to retirees and, with an increasingly older population, more emergency medical personnel will be needed. There will be an increase in ambulance calls and more of them will be related to the problems of aging. There will be a need to create urgent care centers where calls can be triaged to avoid flooding hospital emergency rooms.

Public services, which in general require a younger work force, will increasingly need to look off-Cape. This is already happening for the Provincetown and Truro fire departments: “Our department is getting older and we have a very hard time getting new recruits. There are not many kids and the kids that are here go off-Cape because they can’t afford to stay. It affects preparedness in the towns.” Towns will have to move to full time fire departments and provide affordable housing for firefighters and EMT’s.

Closing Thoughts
Is there anything that has not been discussed here today which could help the College serve students, business, and the community better

— or —

What is the best idea you have heard here today?

The College is a valuable resource to the profession and a re-examination of the structure of the current curriculum in light of changing community needs is welcome.

“Infuse life into the EMS concentration ... Reactivate the advisory board ... Work toward a collaboration with Fire Academy to get permanent call Firefighters ready for the job quickly and cost-effectively.”

“We at the College have not yet been able to focus our resources on what we do best: faculty positions come and go depending on the flavor of the month; we need to integrate the curriculum with the needs of the Cape. A lot is asked of us for a small college. Now we need to ask ourselves what we can do and do well. We will need to say no to some things but we need to rely on the experts to help us make those decisions.”

The College is “the only game in town; we in the department are grateful that it cares enough to ask us what we think. I congratulate the administration for offering this forum.”
Appendix A: Focus Group Meeting Agenda
62
Academic Master Planning Focus Group Agenda

Introduction (5 minutes)
• The College now faces a fiscal and economic climate in which the region’s needs are growing at the same time resources to address these needs are becoming less available. Consequently there is a need to find ways to use these resources in the most efficient manner.

• The situation is not unique; it is one that most businesses find themselves facing today.

• The purpose of the focus groups is to gather information on how best to develop the College’s program offerings.

• The experts, those who know better than anyone else how to do this, are in this room.

• As facilitators, we are “outsiders” with no vested interest in the outcome.

• All participants are assured anonymity; any speaker who is quoted in the final report will be identified only by area-of-interest: academic, business or community.

• The report will be submitted to Bob Ross and President Schatzberg and its information fed into the academic master planning process; it can also be made available to any participant who wants to view it.

• In order to hear from as many people as possible please keep comments succinct; at times I will need to cut off discussion to advance to a new topic; space to comment on issues not raised during the discussion will be provided at the end of the meeting.

• Housekeeping: no break, refreshments, rest rooms.

Part I—Where Do We Stand Now? (30 minutes)
Discussion Question 1: Over the years a number of degree and certificate programs have been developed at 4C to meet recognized needs: which 4C programs have been successful at serving students, business and the community?

Discussion Question 2: Recognizing that sustainable economic growth on Cape Cod requires closer cooperation between the academic and business communities than in other geographic areas: how well is the collaboration among 4C, business and the community working?

Discussion Question 3: What role should 4C play in upgrading the skills of workers and providing opportunities for ongoing professional development?

Appendix A: Focus Group Meeting Agenda
Part II—What Needs to be Changed? (30 minutes)

Discussion Question 1: Which programs currently offered by 4C need more attention?

Discussion Question 2: What programs are needed that are not being offered? (Please cite evidence for the need).

Discussion Question 3: Should 4C place more emphasis on developing competence in areas such as work-ethic and professionalism?

Survey (10 minutes)

Part III—What Does the Future Hold? (30 minutes)

Discussion Question 1: Sustaining economic growth requires anticipating what education and skills will be needed in the future: what do you see as the major trends shaping the future of the region served by 4C?

Discussion Question 2: How do you see these trends affecting the numbers of workers who will be required and the kinds of training they will need?

Discussion Question 4: How should program priorities be ordered to conform to anticipated needs?

Closing (15 minutes)

Polling Question:

Is there anything that has not been discussed here today which could help 4C serve students, business and the community better

—or—

What is the best idea you have heard here today?

Appendix A: Focus Group Meeting Agenda
Appendix B

Survey Form
# Academic Planning Focus Group Survey

**Part I: Rate the Effectiveness of 4C in:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 Preparing students to think critically, communicate effectively and participate as informed citizens:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Preparing students for transfer to four-year colleges and universities:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Preparing students for employment:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Upgrading the skills of workers and providing opportunities for professional development:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Establishing fruitful collaborative arrangements with business and community resources:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Responding to the changes taking place in the Cape Cod region:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Fostering workforce development on Cape Cod:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 Responding to the needs of a demographically and ethnically diverse population:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Meeting the continuing education needs of the region:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Some of this material was adapted from the Hudson County Community College Effectiveness project Community Questionnaire)

*Appendix B: Survey Form*
Part II: Collaboration

1. How engaged are business and the community in developing 4C programs?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not Engaged</th>
<th>Slightly Engaged</th>
<th>Engaged</th>
<th>Very Engaged</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

2. How engaged should business and the community be in developing 4C programs?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Not Engaged</th>
<th>Slightly Engaged</th>
<th>Engaged</th>
<th>Very Engaged</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Part III: Using keywords or short phrases, briefly list:

A. The top academic priorities of 4C:

1. 

2. 

3. 

4. 

5. 

B. The most important trends shaping the future of Cape Cod:

1. 

2. 

3. 

4. 

5. 

Appendix C: Survey Responses
C. The most significant barriers or frustrations in establishing collaborative arrangements among 4C, business and community:

1. 

2. 

3. 

4. 

5. 

Part IV: Preparation

1. How well qualified for employment do you feel 4C graduates are?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Don't Know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

2. How well prepared do you feel they are in relation to comparably trained employees from other places?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>Don't Know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

List gaps in preparation (if appropriate):

1. 

2. 

3. 

4. 

5. 

Appendix C: Survey Responses

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Appendix C

Survey Responses