Strategic planning supports the mission through the creation of intentional action to meet the future challenges of both the organization and its stakeholders.

Cowley College is committed to providing opportunities for learning excellence, personal achievement, and community engagement.

Introduction

The Institutional Effectiveness Office surveyed team leaders (10) and members (47) to collect information for needs assessment and strategic planning effectiveness using the College's SurveyMonkey platform. Survey delivery method to team leaders included Cowley College email information; survey delivery method to team members utilized an anonymous, email link.

Both surveys lead with the following introduction and statement of purpose:

Successful strategic planning rests on a foundation built by team composition. High performing strategic planning activities involve an organization at every level of its hierarchy and as such, becomes one of the organization's most important, shared governance activities.

This assessment asks a series of questions about team effectiveness. The intention of this assessment is not to "grade" a team or to identify "poor" performing team members, nor to imply inadequacy for team leaders. This assessment plays the same role as other learning assessments on campus: The purpose of this assessment is to increase self-awareness, foster critical conversations, and increase the quality of strategic planning at Cowley College.

Thank you for stepping into the role of team member for Year Two of the 2022-2025 Cowley College Strategic plan. You are not in this role by chance – your expertise and experiences make you the right fit, and I hope you know how much I value your willingness to contribute to one of the most important, but often most challenging, activities on our campus.

The Role of Strategic Planning in Accreditation Reporting

Cowley College's regional accrediting agency, the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), focuses its attention on institutional planning processes in *Federal Criterion 5, Institutional Effectiveness, Resources, and Planning*.

5.A. Through its administrative structures and collaborative processes, the institution's leadership demonstrates that it is effective and enables the institution to fulfill its mission.

1. Shared governance at the institution engages its internal constituencies—including its governing board, administration, faculty, staff and students—through planning, policies and procedures.

5.C. The institution engages in systematic and integrated planning and improvement.

1. The institution allocates its resources in alignment with its mission and priorities, including, as applicable, its comprehensive research enterprise, associated institutes and affiliated centers.
2. The institution links its processes for assessment of student learning, evaluation of operations, planning and budgeting.
3. The planning process encompasses the institution as a whole and considers the perspectives of internal and external constituent groups.
4. The institution plans on the basis of a sound understanding of its current capacity, including fluctuations in the institution's sources of revenue and enrollment.
5. Institutional planning anticipates evolving external factors, such as technology advancements, demographic shifts, globalization, the economy and state support.
6. The institution implements its plans to systematically improve its operations and student outcomes.

Survey Items

Table 1 below includes the survey items and the mean, or average, scores for each group whose feedback was solicited. Items are scored on a scale of 5 where 5 = Very satisfied, 3 = Somewhat satisfied, and 1 = Not satisfied at all. The items listed below mimic items included in the 2020 Spring Noel Levitz College Employee Survey (CESS).

	Mean Score		
Table 1. Strategic Planning Alignment, Campus Involvement and Support	**Team Leaders**	**Team Members**	
Response Rate	**80%**	**53%**	**Gap**
The strategic priorities and goals of the 2022-2025 Strategic Plan support the mission, purpose, and values of the College.	4.63	4.44	0.19
Year One to Year Two Change	**-2.1%**	**+3.5%**	
Strategic planning processes (environmental scanning; SWOT analysis, strategic challenge identification; team-based goal setting with action planning) support the College's efforts to plan carefully.	4.75	4.32	0.43
Year One to Year Two Change	**+0.04%**	**+4.9%**	
Strategic planning activities at Cowley College provide employees with an opportunity to plan for the future.	4.75	4.08	0.67
Year One to Year Two Change	**+13.6%**	**+10.6%**	
A spirit of teamwork and cooperation at Cowley College supports the successful achievement of strategic planning goals.	4.00	3.72	0.28
Year One to Year Two Change	**-4.3%**	**+5.4%**	
Summary Score (Mean of the Mean)	4.53	4.14	0.39
Year One to Year Two Change	**+1.6%**	**+5.9%**	

Table 2 below includes the survey items and the mode, or frequency, scores for each group whose feedback was solicited. The items listed below as "How involved in strategic planning are" for nine stakeholder groups and scored on a scale of 5 where 5 = Too much involvement, 3 = Just the right involvement, and 1 = Not enough involvement. These items are included in the 2020 Spring CESS.

Table 2. Involvement in Strategic Planning	Mode Score			
Survey Item	Team Leaders		Team Members	
	2022	2023	2022	2023
Faculty	3	3	3	3
Staff	3	3	3	3
Directors of Administrative Units	3	3	3	3
Administrative Council	3,4	3	2,3	3
Students	2	2	2	2
Trustees	2,3	3	1	2
Alumni	2	3	1	2
Foundation	2	2,3	1	2
Community Members	2	3	1	2

Table 3 below includes a mode, or frequency, score and summary information for a rubric scored by team leaders. The rubric, introduced with the verbiage reproduced below, included three dimensions:

- Team Composition: Asking, "Are the right people in the room?"
  - Scoring on a scale of 3 where 3 = Members represent all departments with the expertise to achieve team goals, 2 = Somewhere in the middle, and 1 = Members do not represent any of the departments with the expertise to achieve team goals.
- Team Resources: Asking, "Is the team supported with the fiscal resources needed to be successful?"
  - Scoring on a scale of 3 where 3 = All needed support from leadership has been received to accomplish strategic planning goals, 2 = Somewhere in the middle, and 1 = No support from leadership has been received to accomplish strategic planning goals.
- Team Support: Asking, "Does the team receive support from College leadership?"
  - Scoring on a scale of 3 where 3 = Members represent all departments with the expertise to achieve team goals, 2 = Somewhere in the middle, and 1 = Members do not represent any of the departments with the expertise to achieve team goals.

Introduction: *At first glance, the rubric below may appear to be an "all or nothing" assessment but the largest section for each dimension has been left blank so you can enter feedback that communicates team needs. If your response to one or more of the dimensions is "somewhere in the middle," then please assign a score between 2.00 and 2.99 to this milestone and use the space provided to share detailed feedback.*

Table 3. Team Effectiveness Rubric   **Mode Score**

	2022	2023
Team Composition	2	2
Overall, team leaders appear to believe that current team membership is appropriate to the purpose and activity of their team; however, leaders continued to share concerns about the need for adequate representation across the campus. Specific to this concern is the recognition that "the departments with representatives missing are understaff, overburdened, or overcommitted and unable to participate to the extent needed.		
	Mode Score	
	2022	2023
Team Resources	3	2
The Year Two assessment found a change in response frequency with a change from "All needed support from leadership has been received" to "Somewhere in the middle." Specific feedback from leaders included concern that while some funding is available, it is "not enough to be impactful across campus."		
	Mode Score	
Team Support	3	3
Team leaders expressed satisfaction with current support from College leadership but also desire to see more leadership at the Administrative Council (AC) level.		

Conclusion and Recommendations

Robust employee feedback from the 2020 Spring CESS provides evidence for needed improvement in strategic planning processes with significant gap scores (>1.0) and higher deviation in satisfaction scores (>1.0) for survey items associated with organizational planning. (See Table 4 below). Employees will participate in a new administration of the CESS in April 2024.

Results from the 2023 fall, mid-year survey offer evidence that employees who participate on strategic planning teams recognize this activity supports mission, purpose and values; support careful planning efforts; and corresponding processes provide employees with an opportunity to be involved. However, when comparing mean scores by team role type, the largest gap in Table 1. Strategic Planning Alignment, Campus Involvement and Support, (0.67), was related to opportunity for employees to participate in activities focused on planning for the future. This gap is not in contradiction to the gap evidenced for similar item in the 2020 Spring CESS.

Table 4. Campus Feedback, CESS Section 1: Campus Culture and Policies

Scoring where 1 = "Not important at all"/"Not satisfied at all" and 5 = "Very important"/"Very satisfied"	N	Importance		Satisfaction		GAP
		Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	
This institution involves its employees in planning for the future	144	4.41	0.71	2.97	1.07	1.44
This institution plans carefully	143	4.57	0.67	3.00	1.01	1.57
This institution's leadership demonstrates support for shared planning and decision-making	136	4.33	0.67	3.13	1.04	1.20
There is a spirit of teamwork and cooperation at this institution.	139	4.48	0.61	3.28	1.07	1.20

Campus perceptions about specific stakeholder group involvement in planning activities, Table 5 below, reflect similar feedback from 2022-2025 strategic plan team leaders and members. Three specific stakeholder groups identified through both assessments for increased involvement are students, alumni and community members.

Table 5. Campus Feedback, CESS Section 3: Involvement in planning and decision-making

How involved are:	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Faculty	140	2.96	0.85
Staff	140	2.37	0.71
Directors of Administrative Units	139	3.43	0.77
Senior administrators	140	3.61	0.74
Students	140	2.33	0.72
Trustees	138	3.78	0.89
Alumni	138	2.72	0.80
Foundation	137	2.88	0.71
Community members	139	2.81	0.84

Overall, feedback received through the 2023 fall team leader and member assessments, when evaluated in light of the 2020 CESS campus results, indicates a continued need for College leadership to identify coordinating improvement actions to increase specific stakeholder participation in planning activities and to provide the necessary resources to support participation, specifically time and fiscal supports.

For more information about this report, please contact the Office of Institutional Effectiveness at debbie.phelps@cowley.edu