



**LARAMIE COUNTY  
COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

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**OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT**

Dr. Joe Schaffer

DATE: January 20, 2016

TO: LCCC Board of Trustees

FROM: Dr. Joe Schaffer, President

CC: President's Cabinet

RE: FY16 Goals Mid-Year Update

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In the following I will provide you with a brief update of my efforts and progress on my personal goals we have established for the current year. I look forward to discussing these in further detail with the Board, should you have questions or would like further information.

**LCCC President's FY16 Personal Goals**

**1. Update the Campus Master Plan**

Per State statute, the community colleges are required to update their campus master plans every five years. LCCC's most recent one was updated in the Fall of 2011, shortly before I began my tenure at LCCC. Thus, the master plan will need to be updated by the Fall of 2016, necessitating work on this during the Spring and possibly Summer of 2016.

**UPDATE:** Vice President of Administration and Finance Rick Johnson is leading the coordination efforts to update the campus master plan this spring. At this juncture, what we have planned is a significant update to the existing plan, rather than the development of a completely new, comprehensive plan. This decision is primarily driven by the facts that the current plan is still relevant, and there are still projects in the plan that align with the Building Forward facilities plan that are yet to be completed.

The approach being developed would be to update key areas of the plan, such as the campus master plan map to illustrate completed projects (e.g., Gateways), and to identify actual placement of projects under construction (e.g., Flex-Tech Building and University/Student Center Building). In addition, the facilities condition inventory will be updated, space needs and utilization data will be updated, enrollment and enrollment projections will be updated, consideration will be given to how LCCC's facilities activities interface with Laramie County's development plans for property around us, ACC plans will be updated as appropriate, and some focused conversation will take place on repurposing vacated space as a result of new buildings and on the College property in the Vedauwoo area.

An RFP will be let within the next few weeks to secure a consultant to facilitate the update process. Please note, as I have referenced previously at your Board meetings this past fall, this work will likely require an investment from the College needing your approval. You can look forward to the details coming to the Facilities and Finance Committee and the full Board later this spring.

## **2. Develop an LCCC Succession Planning Process**

It has become a national agenda to better prepare for significant transitions in community college leadership. LCCC is not immune to this, and the Board clearly and rightfully desires a planned approach to mitigating reductions in institutional performance and stability when vacancies occur, as well as to providing incentives for employees to further develop themselves professionally.

In the coming year, I will work with LCCC leadership, and the Trustees as appropriate, to develop a Succession Planning Process and document it clearly to aid in implementation. This process should include items such as abilities and attributes profiles for leadership positions at the College, as well as suggest different approaches for internal professional development of employees, who may aspire to taking on increasing responsibilities and/or levels of leadership, and institutional approaches to tracking and inventorying skills and attributes developed.

**UPDATE:** As you are aware, we have held some policy-level, and clarification conversations during past Board meetings to help guide the discussion regarding this goal. Based on that feedback, my approach has been to focus on the concepts of professional development of College employees to help ensure continuity of institutional knowledge, stabilize the College in times of transition, and to prepare exiting faculty and staff to be competitive candidates when opportunities for advancement arise at LCCC.

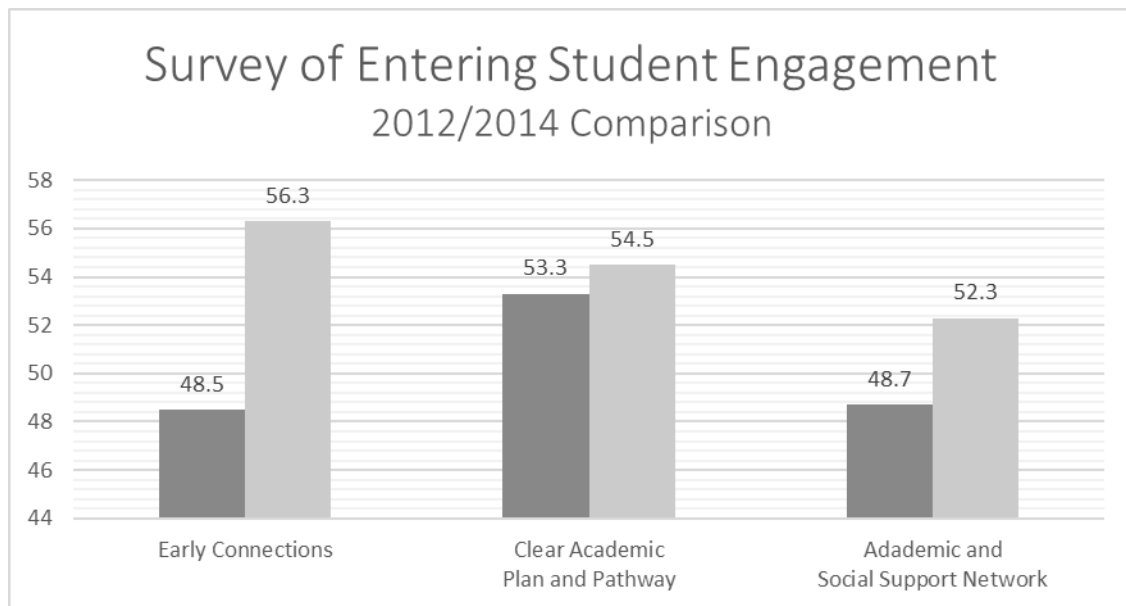
Over the course of the spring semester, I will be inviting interested individuals to help identify areas of most interest for advancement, develop general leadership and management competencies, identify and assess existing professional opportunities, and recommend new areas for professional development for College employees solely focused on preparing them to be competitive in advancing to other leadership positions. This information will be the foundation of an employee development/leadership plan. Human Resource Executive Director Tammy Maas and her staff have been and will continue to be valuable partners in this endeavor.

## **3. Continue to strengthen and improve key student services with specific focus given to the new LCCC Advising Model and Center.**

Last year was the first full launch of the new advising model and center at LCCC. As with any new program or service, initial implementation is never perfect from the onset and can always be improved. This is inherent in our commitment to continuous improvement. In the coming year I will work closely with leadership in student services to improve and strengthen the most recent high impact practices in the area of student advising and student engagement with specific attention given to areas such as student and advisor interaction, academic plans, orientation, etc. The Board can expect to see reported outcomes pertaining to student-reported satisfaction on early connections, advising and such.

**UPDATE:** Under the leadership of Vice President of Student Services Judy Hay we continue to make solid progress in strengthening our student services arm of the College. While still developing, many of the key functions associated with changes in student services are creating the right environment for our incoming and current students. This is most evident in improvements in our

Survey of Entering Student Engagement (SENSE) that assesses student perceptions about how the College engages them early on to help them be successful. The following chart provides a visual analysis of our survey data from 2012 (prior to many changes in Student Service) and from 2014 when our changes were taking shape:



Early Connections examines how well we are engaging students early on through activities such as orientation and initial advising. Clear Academic Plan and Pathway examines our students' perspective on how well we assist them in developing clear academic goals and their path to achieving those. Academic and Social Support Network examines the support environments we provide for our students through key functions that we know will help them succeed. As you can see, we made improvement in our mean scores on all three of these, and I anticipate that trend continuing when we conduct the survey again this coming fall.

There have been other highlights in the Advising Center this fall. A successful and growing implementation of an early alert system (called Starfish) helped provide a stronger network of support for our students that includes their academic advisor, faculty, and the students themselves. As the participation in Starfish grows among faculty, the benefits will be increasingly seen in our student retention rates and I believe through to completion.

The Advising Center has also established advisor liaisons for each school and program areas. We have established these to ensure better connections between advising and the academic program faculty. The various programs and departments each have an advisor they invite to their regular meetings and communicate with (back and forth) so that we have strengthened linkage between the two and to keep any changes on either end communicated well with the other.

There are still some areas we have focused on for improvement in the Advising Center. The two that are of most importance include the need to be fully staffed with advisors. I do not believe the Center has been fully staffed since we originally redesigned the Center. Turnover in staff has been a result of some departures, but more so because advisors have successfully applied for and moved into other positions with the College. However, we need stability in the advising staff to meet students' needs, as well as to sustain our commitment of providing each student one person with whom they will have a connection throughout their time at LCCC.

The other area we are working on is finding better ways to gather feedback from students to ensure the Advising Center is responsive to their needs. Dr. Kathryn Flewelling, the Director of Student Success and Planning, is doing a few things to advance us in this area. First, she will be meeting with SGA this spring to seek their feedback and assistance in making the connection to students at that level. In addition, Dr. Flewelling and the advisors are implementing a short survey for students to complete as they leave the Advising Center, or at a later time, to collect better information on how students' interactions with their advisors have gone. They also have plans to work with our Web team to update the Advising web page to include pictures, bios, and contact info for Dr. Flewelling and all advisors, as well as a link to submit concerns or suggestions so that students have a few ways to communicate their issues easily and quickly.

Finally, Dr. Flewelling and key staff will be attending a customer service skills training and higher education certification program in Denver this spring. This program is focused on developing individuals, teams, and programs to provide exceptional service to students.

**4. Continue to improve communication within the College, specifically focusing on the sustainment of major change efforts (e.g., strategic plan).**

Communication requires constant attention, especially in times of change. I will continue to focus on improved communication, both formally and informally, especially where it centers on major change initiatives of the institution. Through the continued practices started this previous year, as well as new approaches to change management planned for the coming year, I am committed to working with the LCCC leadership to improve and maintain sound communication.

**UPDATE:** As I have mentioned before and continue to believe, organizational communication must be an effort continuously engaged in by all employees. As it has been over the past couple of years and will likely continue to be into the near future, our communication challenges continue to center around two areas: (1) organizational change in our goals, procedures and practices and (2) bringing on new employees. Thus, communication continues to be an area of emphasis across the College. However, some updates are worth mentioning.

First, we are working on two items to help keep communication flowing and recorded pertaining to our organizational change efforts. The first is the hiring of our Institutional Projects Coordinator Janet Webb and the development of the LCCC project management process. Janet has been hired to help individuals at LCCC who have been tasked with leading major projects or initiatives by using the project management process. I believe this has and will continue to help create transparency and more effectively and accurately communicate the various aspects of our change efforts that are primarily focused on the LCCC strategic plan.

Also in this domain, we are working through the LCCC Strategic Plan refresh process. I'll admit, I had naively thought this process would go much more quickly. However, it has taken time to develop tools and ask various individuals to provide comprehensive updates to the various strategies and goals associated with the plan. While the process is taking some time, it has provided for strong documentation and formative assessment of where the various strategies are at in terms of their implementation. This in turn will assist in better awareness across campus on various change efforts underway at LCCC.

The second area pertains to how we are helping new employees transition to LCCC. I have asked all of the President's Cabinet to focus on continuity of understanding and messaging around

institutional actions, specifically with newer employees, but also with those that have been here for some time. Many areas have developed communication tools (e.g., websites/pages, newsletters, etc.) to keep people informed. In addition, Executive Director Maas has successfully filled the Human Resources Development position with Dr. Bobby Baker and has already set this position in motion for the development of supervisor and management training that will incorporate organizational orientation as well as helping develop communication skills.

**5. Incorporate a compensation analysis component to the LCCC Budget Development Process.**

Personnel, specifically in the areas of compensation and benefits, make up nearly 80 percent of the College's annual operating budget. This past year the College has participated in various salary/wage studies, and conversations about compensation and benefits adjustments—whether cost of living, market, or merit—continue to arise and therefore give reason for consideration. Over the next year, I will work with LCCC leadership to develop and implement a component into the budget development process that would assess for needed adjustments to employee compensation and benefits. This may include market analyses, inflationary assessments, or merit-based compensation components. This goal also ties nicely to our planned work in updating the College's compensation policy, procedure, and practices.

**UPDATE:** As you know, we have spent a considerable amount of time this fall discussing and framing your policy perspectives on compensation. This work has been extremely helpful in guiding me and the College's leadership in the development of updated compensation procedures and processes. The review and update of the College's compensation system and models is one of the strategies under Goal #3 in the strategic plan, so this work is both timely and appropriate.

For the short-term, Executive Director Maas and I have been working on some market adjustment considerations to help advise the College in the development of the FY17 operating budget. This is a singular approach for considering changes to the budget for this year, and I recognize where we are headed will have to be much more complex.

To that end, under the leadership of Executive Director Maas, we have developed a scope of work that will be incorporated into an RFP for the solicitation of a firm to help us review and develop our compensation, classification, and titling system at LCCC. The RFP is currently being drafted and we anticipate its release in the next few weeks. Once a firm has been identified, we will begin the process of reviewing and updating the compensation system of LCCC. This work, along with your earlier policy work, will lead to updated policies, procedures, and processes pertaining to employee compensation at LCCC, through which we will be better positioned to inform the annual budget process on compensation adjustments pertaining to cost of living, market, and advancement.

A final note on this work, I anticipate that the Board, as well as various individuals and groups on campus, will be engaged in the activities associated with this goal over the spring semester.

**6. Continue to advance articulation agreements with regional institutions.**

LCCC has taken on a leadership role in the state with regard to curriculum alignment and articulation with our educational partners. This has been driven by elements of our strategic plan, goal two, pertaining to student transitions. In the coming year I will work with the campus to continue the formalization of programmatic articulation agreements, as well as alignment with K12. In addition, this goal will lead us to better documentation, reporting, and promotion of articulated pathways and academic partnerships.

UPDATE: I am very proud of the work that continues in regard to articulation agreements. Our academic administration and faculty have worked diligently on shaping and successfully negotiating articulation agreements with our university partners, specifically UW. I believe LCCC continues to lead the state in the number of signed articulation agreements with UW, and as I have shared previously, our initial documentation continues to be the model used by the entire state. To date, 19 programmatic articulation agreements are in place out of our 26 programmatic areas.

One update I do want to share is the recent signing of a general education articulation agreement between LCCC and UW. This agreement essentially creates a 1=1 arrangement whereby students who complete the LCCC General Education Transfer Block can transfer to UW having completed the UW University Studies Program (except for one upper division COM3 course). This is the first of this type of agreement in the state and allows for earlier transfer to UW without an associate's degree, but still allowing for a seamless transition and satisfying the general education requirements of both institutions. Interim Vice President of Academic Affairs Terry Harper and the Academic Standards Committee leadership, specifically Crystal Stratton, as well as Kari Brown-Herbst, should be credited for this accomplishment as they helped shepherd it through the prolonged process.

Finally, we are making progress with our articulation work with our school district partners. You are aware of the work we have done in LCSD#2 on the alignment of our mathematics curriculum, and that good work continues. I understand we have plans to take a similar approach with aligning our English curriculum as well this spring.

We have also drafted a joint agenda between LCSD#1 and LCCC. This draft identifies three key areas where the College and LCSD#1 can collaborate to improve student transitions and success. These include curriculum alignment and college readiness, dual and concurrent enrollment with a programmatic focus, and support for students through transitions. Our next steps are to have a focused conversation between the LCCC and LCSD#1 leadership teams to flush out the shared goals and develop strategy for moving forward. Much of this will happen over the next few months.