

CORE COMPONENT 5A

The organization learns from the constituencies and analyzes its capacity to serve their needs and expectations.

In these four findings, we introduce the people we serve, discuss how we organize to learn their needs, and examine what tools are used to gather reliable information about their needs, ideas, and expertise.

Finding 5a.1: GC has identified its diverse constituencies and periodically surveys their needs and expectations.

Greenville College's **key constituencies** include current students, prospective students, parents, employees, alumni, donors, the Greenville community, area churches, and Free Methodist churches across the United States and Canada. These traditional constituencies are complemented by unique relationships with the Illinois State Board of Education and community colleges in central and southern Illinois.

SWOT analysis - All of the above constituencies were included in a Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (**SWOT**) analysis conducted in 2004. The purpose of the SWOT analysis was to update the findings of the "**New Millennium Commission**" strategic planning process and make necessary programmatic corrections. This strategic plan guides the decision-making process in virtually all areas of the college, from curriculum design to campus master planning.

Homecoming and Parents Weekend - As the name implies, **alumni and parents** of current students are encouraged to attend Homecoming and Parents Weekend in the fall. In addition to the 5-year class reunions for the 20-year and younger alumni, there are also special interest reunions. For example, plans for fall 2005 included an Education Department Reunion, a reunion for those who were involved in music, and a dedication service for the new Music Center. There are also sporting events, tailgate parties, concerts, and a Homecoming king and queen coronation each year. The views of these alumni are solicited while on campus and through a new Online Community established last year. By December 2005, participation in that forum had exceeded its goal of 500 regular users by 100.

Donor communications - GC's financial **donors** are another important constituency group. Several events for major donors are held throughout the year, both on campus and in other regions of the country where there are significant clusters of alumni and friends of the college. The President's Society is a donor recognition program for those who contribute \$1,000 or more per year to GC. Two or three President's Society Dinners are held on campus each year, which usually include an update report and word of appreciation from President Mannoia, along with special entertainment such as the GC Choir or a play at the Factory Theatre. The two-fold goal of these events is

1) to thank our major donors and 2) to encourage them to continue or increase their giving.

Regional campaign dinners - Over the past three years, as part of our comprehensive campaign, "Transforming Lives, Shaping the Future," a series of regional campaign dinners has brought GC to other areas of the country where we have significant concentrations of alumni, such as Indianapolis, Chicago, St. Louis, Florida, Michigan, and several other locations. These dinners helped to focus attention on elements of the \$18 million campaign, which began with the silent phase in 2001 and concluded successfully in December 2005.

The President – The Greenville College president works very hard to engage multiple constituencies regularly in order to learn from them and share with them. The president hosts at least six "fireside chats" each year with students in the college residence halls. He deliberately seeks out a group of minority students each year who are willing to dine at his home regularly where he learns about their experience and how the college can best serve them. The president takes care to have an open community discussion after each trustee meeting in order to share the content of the trustee visits as well as field any questions that the campus community may have. The president also provides regular updates at Faculty Assembly meetings twice a month when he is in town, including an open opportunity for questions from the floor. The president meets regularly with the Faculty Assembly moderator to hear and discuss matters critical to the faculty. He also meets monthly with the pastor of the "College Church," the regional bishop of the Free Methodist Church, the City Manager, and by phone weekly with the Chair of the Board of Trustees. The president meets with the Student Body President each week for an hour to hear directly from the elected student governance. The entire student government "cabinet" comes to his home for dinner at least once or twice each semester.

Finding 5a.2: GC has established various advisory boards to engage, learn from, and respond to its constituencies.

The Board of Trustees - The College's most important advisory group is the **Board of Trustees**, which meets at least twice a year. Their two main responsibilities are 1) to hire the president and periodically evaluate his or her performance, and 2) to set the broad policies that guide decision-making at all levels of college governance. Geographic representation, gender, and culture vary widely among the 30 members currently serving on the Board.

As Criterion 2 reported, the Board, by creating operational policies, requires regular analysis and reporting on a number of issues like finance, curriculum and the physical plant. One notable example occurs each meeting of the Board of Trustees. The Vice President for Student Development and the Vice President for Academic Affairs are required (through Board Policy) to showcase a list of three to four items illustrating how they have used feedback to alter something on campus.

The Parents' Cabinet - Twelve to fifteen parents, including couples and single parents representative of our student body meet twice a year. The President gives an update at each meeting. Discussion also includes 1-2 hours of focused interaction with parents sharing their concerns and ideas. This board has chosen to extend the reach of G.C. to its constituents by volunteering to call not only parents of prospective students, but parents of first semester students as well. This serves these important constituents in an unusually effective way.

The Alumni Board, officially named the Alumni Association Advisory Board of Directors, meets two or three times a year to advise the Director of Alumni and Church Relations on matters important to the Alumni Association. In addition to these campus meetings, the Alumni Board stays in frequent contact with the director by phone and e-mail, actively participating in the planning for such events as Homecoming, Alumni Reunion Weekend, and regional alumni gatherings. The size of the Alumni Board changes, but usually ranges from 20-25 members.

GC2GC- The Greenville College to Greenville Community Advisory Group (GC2GC) brings together college and community leaders on a quarterly basis to share information, advice, and counsel, focusing on how the college and community can work together to achieve common and mutually beneficial goals. In addition, President Mannoia, Greenville mayor Alan Gaffner, and the City manager Dave Willey meet monthly to discuss college/city-related matters. Twice a year, a larger group of businessmen and women come to campus for GC Community Business Leaders Breakfasts to exchange information and ideas.

CCAC - As a Free Methodist-affiliated college, GC also seeks to maintain a close relationship with Free Methodist pastors and congregations throughout the U.S. and Canada. The College Church Advisory Committee (CCAC) helps GC host the **Annual Conference on Ministry** every October. In the past this was exclusively a Free Methodist event. In an effort to reach out to other like-minded denominations, beginning last fall, ministers from the Free Methodist, United Methodist, Nazarene, and Wesleyan denominations in the states of Illinois, Indiana, and Missouri were invited. This inclusiveness mirrors a similar trend among the students we recruit and enroll. In recent years, the percentage of Free Methodist students at GC has been declining as overall enrollment has increased.

Finding 5a.3: Greenville College's academic departments regularly interact with community college partners, alumni, and other professionals in their fields to maintain the currency and relevancy of our courses and majors and to respond to new opportunities in the marketplace.

Community College Partners – Faculty from Kaskaskia College and Lewis and Clark Community College each have representation on the Committee on Teacher Education (COTE). COTE meets monthly during the academic year. Through participation on this committee, the partner schools gain important knowledge of

program policies and issues. The Dean of Adult and Graduate Studies and the Director of Assessment for Teacher Education also serve on the Kaskaskia College Teacher Education Advisory Board. This reciprocal relationship allows GC participants to better understand community college needs.

In addition to committee membership, Greenville College and its community college partners regularly meet to discuss changes to partnership agreements and ways to improve program quality. In February, after receiving approval from HLC, meetings were held at Lewis and Clark Community College and Kaskaskia College to discuss the addition of a Special Education certification track to the current Early Childhood and Elementary Education offerings.

Education Department – The Education Department regularly engages advisory councils that include faculty and local P-12 teachers. Interviews with program advisors and unit faculty and minutes from council meetings confirm that P-12 teachers provide important information about the content and experiences that candidates need in order to be successful in their future classrooms. Unit faculty indicated that the recommendations from their P-12 partners often result in program changes.

The teacher education unit utilizes an assessment system in which data for both undergraduate and graduate programs are collected, analyzed, and used to evaluate candidates' performance and improve the unit and its programs.

While the P-12 Advisory Council makes recommendations regarding changes in the unit operation, program outcomes, and unit assessments, COTE is responsible for establishing, managing, and evaluating the unit's assessment system; recommending and/or implementing changes in assessments, programs, and unit operations; revising the conceptual framework; and approving candidates' admission to teacher education, clinical practice, and exit from the program (refer to the Teacher Education Conceptual Framework for details on the assessment tools used to provide information to program constituents, Exhibit 5a.3.1).

Academic departments regularly formally survey and informally garner feedback from their graduates regarding the quality and effectiveness of their programs. Recent departmental reviews of English, Communication, and Biology are cases in point. Each of these departments has developed or is developing new emphases in response to alumni and student interest.

Finding 5a.4: Greenville College periodically surveys perspective students, current students, employees, and alumni to understand their expectations of and satisfaction with services/engagement.

NSSE – During the 2000 academic year, Greenville College participated in the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) project which annually surveys undergraduates at four-year colleges and universities to assess the extent to which they engage in a

variety of good educational practices (Exhibit 5a.4.1). The project is supported by a grant from the Pew Charitable Trusts and is cosponsored by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and the Pew Forum for Undergraduate Learning. NSSE sampling procedures call for an equal number of first-year and senior students to be sent the survey with the standard sample size determined by the number of undergraduate students enrolled at the institution.

Best Christian Places to Work Survey – The Best Christian Workplaces (BCW) survey was conducted on campus in 2003-2004. (See Exhibit 5d.3.2 for the BCW Survey, and 5d.3.3 for a complete copy of the BCW Report.) The survey was designed to help Christian organizations of all kinds get a sense of how well they are doing at making their institutions good places to work. By providing employees with an opportunity to comment anonymously on their feelings about where they work, it allows us all to focus our efforts in making it an even better place.

Student Satisfaction Inventory - Current students are surveyed semi-annually as part of the **Student Satisfaction Inventory** (SSI, see Exhibit 5a.4.2). Students rate their satisfaction with nearly every phase of college life, such as academics, social life, athletics, chapel speakers, and food service. SSI findings are reviewed and shared with the faculty and staff to help identify areas where improvement is needed and make necessary changes. They are especially useful in the construction of macro level strategies for student success by the Student Success Council and the Assistant Dean for Student Success.

In recent years we also tried an **electronic “Community Feedback Forum”** on the GC website, accessible from on campus only, where students, faculty, and staff could speak their minds freely on any subject that concerns them. GC administrators sometimes used this online forum to respond to specific concerns or questions raised in the various conversation threads.

Chapel Comments - Since the fall of 1998, students are given regular opportunity to express their needs and concerns during each chapel service, when they can submit written “**chapel comments** and prayer requests.” These comments are circulated weekly to key individuals (such as advisors, administrators, faculty and staff) best capable to assist the student through action, prayer, or personal intervention.

Alumni Surveys - The **Alumni Office** periodically conducts surveys of various alumni groups to get feedback on existing programs or to gauge interest in new proposals. Most recently, **surveys** were distributed to about 80 alumni who were on campus to attend Homecoming and Parents Weekend in October 2004. The questionnaire addressed the issue of whether the college should initiate plans and seek funding for the establishment of an Alumni House on campus, and what services should be provided by such a facility. Due to the small sample size, the results of the survey were inconclusive. A follow-up survey on the same issue was planned for spring 2005. The questionnaire will be sent out electronically to all alumni for whom we have a

current e-mail address. Another **alumni survey** is currently being developed to gauge interest in starting regional “alumni chapters” in areas around the country where we have significant clusters of GC alumni, such as the immediate Greenville area, St. Louis, and Indianapolis.

The **Office of Public Relations and Marketing occasionally conducts surveys** of its various constituency groups. In the fall of 2003 a reader survey was included in *The Record*, our magazine for alumni and friends (Exhibit 5a.4.3). *The Record* is published 2-3 times per year and mailed free to more than 13,000 households. The 2003 survey asked readers to rate their satisfaction with various aspects of the magazine, such as the quality of writing, photography, graphic design, and the subjects covered. They were also asked specific questions about what they would like to see improved. Response to the survey was minimal, with only 62 total respondents, but those who responded indicated an extremely high level of satisfaction in most areas.

The Retention Task Force study of sophomores - The Retention Task Force looks particularly at the Graduation Rate Declines and the “Sophomore Slump” phenomenon being studied by the larger CCCU project. A “Sophomore Slump Sub-committee” was formed to discuss the findings and make recommendations including:

- Developing an improved exit interview for students not returning to GC prior to graduation, in order to elicit more information for study.
- Discover, design, or make better use of an instrument such as the CSI which isolates and identifies those factors associated with the propensity for sophomore dropout and integrate its use with student advising and student life.
- Work with the FIPSE Grant Steering Committee to develop a sophomore retreat that continues to learn from and work with the “StrengthsFinder” program, enhances community building, and integrates with the General Education Core program.
- Determine or clarify the student population characteristics that are most compatible with the mission of GC in order to determine whether there is a “student fit” problem in students admitted, and how best to address it.

Recruiting Research – Admissions is mainly concerned with two constituency groups: prospective students and their parents. (Parents have become increasingly important in the “Millennial Generation” of students. We have had on campus “in-services” for employees to understand this kind of student and their “helicopter parents.”) Four market research studies have been commissioned by the College in the past seven years, each one in conjunction with the production of a new Viewbook. These studies were conducted by Davison, Dietsch and McCarthy, Corcoran Communications, and most recently Stein Communications. These studies help the Admissions staff and viewbook designers to understand how GC is perceived by prospective students and their parents and identify the factors most significant to them in a college search.

Maguire and Associates conducted a market research study in January 2001 which precipitated several key findings for action (Exhibit 5a.4.4). The survey was titled “An

Attitudinal Study of Prospects, Inquirers, Parents of Inquirers, Non-Matriculants, and Matriculants.” As part of this survey, we also received a “Marketing Opportunity and Image Analysis” addendum report specific to GC.

One key finding was that higher-ability students start the college search earlier than other students. In response to this finding, Admissions has moved up its contact schedules to begin the process in students’ junior years rather than waiting until they are seniors. The Enrollment Management Marketing Plan includes further expanding early contacts to as early as the sophomore year.

Summary

The college has identified and interacted with its diverse constituents to determine their needs and expectations, enabling effective and appropriate responses. We maintain significant regular contact with them individually and through advisory boards with alumni, parents, the local community, area community colleges, and supporting churches. We use a variety of assessment instruments with students, alumni, and faculty. Academic departments make regular contact with alumni and professionals in the field in order to keep current with trends and opportunities.

Areas for Improvement

In the past decade, Greenville College has been true to its Mission but has expanded its vision to serve new constituents. There are several ways the college can improve how it learns from the people it serves:

- Integration of community college members on the Committee on Teacher Education exemplifies ways to bind external relationships to the College. These types of structures need further development in other majors.
- The GOAL program has been offered at multiple locations since the spring of 1997. Hundreds of alumni have earned their undergraduate degree in organizational leadership through the program. However, this group of alumni who often hold leadership positions in government, community organizations, and business, are currently underutilized by the College. This group could improve internship possibilities for residential students and serve on advisory boards in majors besides organizational leadership.
- Additional opportunities to learn and serve exist by further reaching out to area chambers of commerce, school districts, and employers.