

Vision 2017 Survey/Focus Group Results, SCC Board of Trustees

Part 1- Survey Questions

What is your perception of how well prepared Southwestern Community College students/graduates are for employment or further education?

Poorly Prepared

Prepared 18.2%

Very Prepared 81.8%

Please explain your reasons for the response you selected:

*Students I am familiar with bring necessary skills to the workplace without the employer providing further job skills training considered "basic" to perform duties. Training can be focused on skills relevant to particular situations/organizations

*Having seen the report concerning graduation rates of four-year institution via SCC- very impressive!

*Personal contact with students who have graduated from SCC- are very acceptable into the workforce.

*Seeing them operate

*Because of the excellent instructors and staff

*Based on actual feedback from the community

*Students get very focused information vital to obtaining jobs or further education. SCC has a high standing as well as high standards which is very important. SCC strives to have accredited programs following national guidelines.

*Experience working with graduates from SCC

*Some graduates are well prepared- others just barely- depends on individual ability.

*Both of my children chose SCC, and continued education at WCU. Both have done well as a result of choosing to begin at SCC. SCC prepared them well for WCU.

*My interactions with students and graduates has been very positive. Many of the institutions, businesses and other organizations with whom I have ongoing interaction employ SCC students/graduates. I have been extremely impressed with their knowledge, skills and work ethic.

How can Southwestern Community College better meet the educational needs in Jackson, Macon, and Swain counties and in the Qualla Boundary?

*Understand efforts in each community to develop needed workplace skills of new employers or potential employers, expansions of existing employers into new arenas requiring new or enhanced skills: make SCC available as a resource.

*Continue meeting with economic development leaders, educators and political leaders for updates and resources.

*By continuing to offer the courses that are needed to provide students with the background for our area workforce.

*Just continue doing the things now being done and make sure you have qualified personnel.

*I feel the college is meeting the educational needs in these counties.

*Hard to improve on current status, however I trust that SCC will always strive to find ways to improve service.

*Continue to develop certificate programs as well as obtaining more articulation agreements with universities. Work to get the dual enrollment guidelines to align with university admission requirements.

*An adult high school program is needed in Swain County. Expand services on the Qualla Boundary- a facility would be nice!

*Keep offering everyday needed classes- nursing, automotive, carpentry, electrical, plumbing, heating, etc.

How can Southwestern Community College better meet the educational needs in Jackson, Macon, and Swain counties and in the Qualla Boundary? (Cont.)

*Continue to advocate effectively for those who it is our mission to serve. By continuing to ask questions in our service area that relate to what employers need of new hires we can better equip our students. We must also continue to forge even stronger relationships with the 4-yr. institutions in our area- particularly WCU and UNCA.

*Continue to offer Early College and College Transfer, work with our community to offer continuing education, work with and try to bring companies with good jobs to our area.

What emerging trends in education, business, or government do we need to be aware of during this planning process?

*Potential expansion of gaming operations

*Fiscal responsibility

*How does the growth of SCC affect the quality of services in education that we provide?

*Technical training

*Everyone has to do more with less without losing the quality of service.

*Technology and multiple languages. Additional health care options due to job retention.

*How to meet needs during a very depressed economy.

*Students are not coming to SCC as well prepared as high school graduates were a few years ago.

*The continuing development of new technology that is required in the 21st Century workplace as well as the development of highly specific and technical job requirements.

*Every field of employment is going high tech. SCC needs to offer the very best training so our students can be competitive in the high tech environment. SCC has to produce students ready for the workplace they will enter.

What is the overall impression/perception of Southwestern Community College in your county?

*SCC is well respected as an educational institution; affordable and offers training, education and skills that can be implemented in the work place- prepared, educated and well-trained graduates.

*Excellent 2-yr. Institution, professional staff, curriculum changes as needed.

*A very successful educational institution!

*Excellent

*Excellent

*Known for quality, commitment, and value.

*SCC is considered a good source of information/education. Graduates obtain jobs and are respected in the workplace. Employee morale is high which says something in today's world.

*Excellent program and serves a very much needed group of our community- SCC is great!

*A very good school to get the first two years toward a 4-yr. degree.

*Excellent!

*I think SCC has always been well perceived in our area. SCC has greatly impacted this area and I hope we will continue to do so in the coming years.

Part 2- Focus Group Questions

If you know of individuals or groups who have not attended SCC, explain why.

- *We need to do a better job publicizing ourselves
- *Many cannot (or think they cannot) afford the cost of college tuition
- *We need to increase college marketing to parents
- *Many local students want to go out of the area for school
- *We need to do a better job marketing our online course offerings
- *Some people are too intimidated to enroll in college
- *Suggest we improve relations with local high school counselors by inviting them to our campuses

If you could change one element in the relationship between Southwestern Community College and Western Carolina University what would that be?

- *The two institutions are off to a good start by the collaboration of our president and the university's chancellor
- *Develop and maintain articulation agreements between the institutions
- *The community perception of the relationship between the two institutions is good

If you could change one element in the relationship between Southwestern Community College and the local public schools, what would that be?

- *GEAR UP and STEP are key programs and need to be supported
- *The New Century Scholars program is good
- *Our liaisons in Franklin are very good and promote the college well in Franklin
- *We need to strengthen our relationships with local school administrators
- *Make an effort to re-sync our college calendar with the public school systems and WCU

What do perceive as the future direction of Southwestern Community College?

- *We need to increase our FTE to 3,000, and get students involved in helping us achieve this goal
- *We should expand our Healthcare Technology and Language programs
- *We need to teach our students to be strong alumni and advocates for SCC
- *Suggest we connect with the Economic Development departments in our service area counties to focus on training the emerging workforce for future businesses and industries in these counties
- *Our college growth must be quality, and we must maintain and sustain our quality
- *Emphasize to students and instructors that they are the measure of SCC's success

