Reading the Tea Leaves, Part II:
A Forecast of significant challenges that may confront HCC in the next ten years.

December 7, 2009

In follow-up to a similar exercise with the President’s Cabinet, members of the Institutional Advisory Council were polled to predict major challenges to face HCC in its ten year future through 2020. The poll also asked respondents to identify significant strengths and weaknesses of the institution as well as likely external opportunities and threats. This report displays verbatim the responses to the poll. Responses were organized into thematic categories.
THE CHALLENGES

1. Maintaining Academic Quality
   A. It is possible that some of our trade/technical programs might become outdated or equipment will become obsolete.
   B. More real-life work-related and/or entrepreneurial training courses.
   C. More courses available that are needed for those students who want to transfer to a four year institution
   D. program quality, continuity, development
   E. faculty standards
   F. Faculty leadership
   G. Underprepared students/prep. programs
   H. More courses teaching the student “how to fish” rather than giving a handout.
   I. Greater demand for workforce programs
   J. Producing in house energy, becoming independent and teaching our students a skill that will make them independent as well.
   K. academic support services

2. Doing More With Less
   A. Lack of state funds to educate the additional students
   B. An unusually high staff to student ratio
   C. Funding for additional faculty and staff/capital expenses; additional resources needed
   D. Increased enrollment will lead to more educational professionals being needed
   E. Requiring the technology to teach those students at a time of a stagnant or diminishing budget.
   F. Looking for program funding and support from the private sector
   G. Pursuing external funding as money becomes more competitive
   H. fiscal concerns in a changing world
   I. Foundation stepping up their game
   J. Lack of funds to DM campus

3. Aggressive Competition
   A. Marketing plan to appeal to minority populations to compete against other schools
   B. Competition with other colleges.
   C. Competition for online classes and programs
   D. For-profit colleges
   E. Increased popularity of for-profit institutions
   F. Distance education (there is much ground to “catch up”)
   G. Continuing to put Customer Service on the back burner

4. Technologic Deficiencies
   A. Faculty not keeping up with technology
   B. Major technological advances and changes and HCC’s ability to stay up to speed.
   C. Technology
   D. technology
   E. online access
   F. HCC’s Datatel system not being able to keep up with technological demands of students
   G. Keeping up with technological changes
5. **Responding to External Forces**
   A. Transportation and climate change
   B. Major hurricane with storm surge
   C. Continuing pandemic diseases
   D. Availability of fresh water in this geography
   E. Safety of students, faculty, employees
   F. Dealing with catastrophic event, whether hurricane or flu outbreak or other likely event
   G. Any major changes in the demographics, economy, climate, etc. of Florida.

6. **Succession Planning in Leadership**
   A. Growing our own leadership as individuals retire and leave – Succession planning. All that was mentioned above
   B. Vested members of HCC will be retired – continued succession planning efforts will be needed to sustain that certain knowledge is not lost.
   C. Share 3, 5, & 10 year plans with everyone, the more buy-in the easier the execution
   D. Innovative Leadership – Cabinet
   E. Changes in college leadership
   F. Leadership that can make a significant connection to faculty and staff based on passionate and intentioned vision

7. **Organizational Structure**
   A. Getting away from de-centralization
   B. Creating a united image of ONE college as opposed to five campuses.
   C. Control of educational services at DM campus
   D. Inform the community as to what you are doing to help Hillsborough County
   E. Cohesiveness (I know this is very general; however, **maintaining unity** among workers is very key - often very difficult to foster and maintain.)

8. **Enrollment Management**
   A. Sustaining enrollment growth.
   B. Having the capacity to host students (housing, classroom, advising, etc)
   C. Are we efficiently preparing our students for the jobs / careers of the future!?
   D. Methods/models of delivering educational products to students
   E. Enrollment management

9. **Teaching Generation Next**
   A. Ever-changing incoming student profile – new students have been taught to the test (FCAT), thus they might not have the critical thinking and study skills that are required to be successful in college
   B. Teaching a new generation of students who grew up online.

10. **Transportation/ Mobilization**
    A. Understanding how mobilization can cause HCC to lose students
    B. Accessible Transportation (connect the campuses ...in house transportation).
OPPORTUNITIES

1. Enrollment Management
   A. Overall, population is increasing even though it decreased this past year.
   B. More stringent four year college acceptance policies means potentially increased HCC enrollment.
   C. High enrollment due to job losses
   D. Higher expense & acceptance requirements of Colleges & Universities can further increase HCC enrollment
   E. Enrollment Growth
   F. Increasing enrollment due to economic decline and need for more knowledge based careers (single parents, gap between rich and poor decreasing, etc.)
   G. Minorities becoming the majority of student population (establishing how to meet their needs)
   H. Increasing collaboration between school districts and HCC
   I. If the economy improves in Florida, then we will attract talented individuals from other states. If the economy remains poor, then many students will attend HCC, rather than enter the workforce (if they cannot find a job) or attend a four year university.
   J. Global and national economic recovery
   K. Our size – How will we continue to provide dev ed programs as universities continue to close their doors and we bring in more college level prepared students?

2. A Changing Program Mix
   A. Continued demand for educating health care workers/providers
   B. Greater need for bachelor programs in criminal justice and public administration
   C. Growth of alternative energy sources will spur the growth of new degrees
   D. need for new programs
   E. global workforce needs
   F. Increasing number of former members of the military returning to school for the new GI Bill
   G. Green Campuses!!! All of the campuses should be pursuing sustainable green projects. Our Science department should already have a prototype ready for activation to heat, cool and light our campuses. Our students should have “hands-on” experience of a working energy producing solar system on our campuses. Our students should have a “hands-on” of every aspect of the project including figuring out the cost.
   H. A changing economy (especially high tech) will provide new job opportunities and programs for our students.
   I. Need for workforce training
   J. Workforce Development
   K. Offering programs that will place us in the forefront as a highly diverse and competitive institution

3. Expansion of Distance Education
   A. Expanding technology will enhance Distance Learning, thus reaching non-traditional populations
   B. Significant globalization, hence opportunity to further globalize our curriculum and internationalize our students
   C. Increasing interest in distance learning in a true form – educating students around the world
   D. More distant learning classes, with technically skilled faculty teaching. At the same, we should recruit more teachers who are willing to teach outside the box, sometimes the classroom is not always the best learning environment, taking the student to a hands-on learning environment can be very rewarding.
E. Development of Online courses

4. Technological Advancement
   A. Developments in technology will improve our ability to teach our students.
   B. Technological advances could decrease costs and increase efficiencies
   C. Increasing technological opportunities
   D. expanded technology

5. Alternative Funding Sources
   A. Funds need to come from other than state.
   B. Federal grants
   C. Funding for education and co-related “green” sustainability issues
   D. Maximizing the external funding opportunities that we elect to participate in – ensuring we meet objectives

6. A Baccalaureate Institution?
   A. More area schools are becoming 4 year institutions (+)
   B. Excellent opportunity to convert to a four-year institute.

7. Expansion of Mass Transit
   A. Statewide efforts dealing with central transportation issues in middle Florida
   B. Transportation in the state of Florida, especially the proposed train service between major cities. HCC should be a part of that task force. With an invested interest to have the campuses connected to the future services of the train lines. It would be great to open the tracks at the back of the Brandon campus and have a stop at that location for students coming from one of the other campuses...mmmm!!!
THREATS

1. Inadequate Funding
   A. Lack of funds
   B. economy; inadequate state support
   C. If the economy remains poor, then we might not receive much from the state and local budget. It is doubtful that tuition increases could fill in the gap.
   D. A spike in utility costs or some other unforeseen cost could increase our operating expenses at the same time that our budget might remain stagnant or even decline (see trend 1).
   E. Governmental resources for education (state and federal)
   F. Decreased budget
   G. Legislative mandates regarding budget – setting tuition
   H. Demand for more accountability
   I. Spiraling textbook prices.
   J. (nationwide threat) Downward spin in the economy: high food and gas prices; lack of financial assistance for taking classes.

2. A Changing Economic/Labor Market
   A. A better economy will contribute to a drop in registration
   B. Continued economic uncertainty or depression
   C. Inability to meet the training and education needs for the workforce in our area
   D. More specialized training (Welding, Medical billing and encoding, etc)
   E. Continued job loss and economic downturn
   F. Economic forecast – lack of movement in population growth FL
   G. Lack of tourism growth and influx of Florida visitors (diminished travel)
   H. state of economy
   I. Student mobilization and workforce

3. A Vulnerable Competitive Position
   A. Other colleges offer degrees totally online. We need to become more competitive.
   B. online education opportunities elsewhere
   C. Increased popularity of for-profit institutions
   D. Growing number of on-line courses offered could decrease “engagement” among faculty & students
   E. Competition
   F. Competition amongst schools students select from
   G. The lack of customer service (we’re not the only game in town)
   H. Decreased enrollment

4. Threats from Within
   A. Slow adaptation
   B. Continuous change and evolution in technologies
   C. Privacy issues and existing technology infrastructure
   D. Too many students
   E. Too much use of adjunct and part time teachers
   F. continued reliance on part-time faculty/employees
G. (Inward trend) – “Closed Minded” administration, faculty and staff to the need for innovative real-life and real-time learning opportunities, example: solar energy on all the campuses. (Spend now...save later.)

H. (Outward trend) “Not” expecting more and demanding more of our students, just because we are a Community College, our students should be held just as accountable as the college, in their achievement of success and in retention as student and as a productive member of our community.

5. Weather/Acts of God
   A. Hurricane
   B. Hurricane
   C. flooding at District
   D. One or more of our campuses could be seriously damaged by a hurricane.
   E. “acts of God”, i.e., hurricanes, flooding

6. The Baccalaureate Degree?
   A. Are two year colleges becoming obsolete due to external and internal pressure to convert to a four-year institution.
   B. Adverse image of “community college” versus a four-year college image.
   C. Unwillingness to become a state college rather than remaining a community college
   D. Universities possibly abandoning expensive programs such as nursing expecting baccalaureate granting CC to take on cost

7. An Uncertain World
   A. Political and global threats
   B. Next new U.S. presidential and FL state elections (both a threat and opportunity depending on outcomes – see above)
   C. political unrest; i.e., wars, i.e. Veterans benefits
   D. mass shooting
STRENGTHS

1. Responsiveness to Workforce & Community Need
   A. Creation of new degrees and programs to match the new industry needs
   B. The ability and resources to look out into our community to survey and create appropriate courses and programs that are needed to train skilled workers for the current job markets and relevant life time professions.
   C. During these economic times, it seems clear that many workers are looking to integrate back into the workforce. Programs offered at HCC are primed for “second occupation” opportunities in a number of areas including healthcare and the general workforce areas. Tampa General Hospital and the University of South Florida are larger entities linked to the curricula at HCC. Students wishing to move into the health care field or work toward a four-year degree can do precisely that.
   D. Looking toward the future in planning of programs
   E. Health Science programs
   F. Workforce Programs
   G. Programs supportive of vocational/technical employment and a four-year degree
   H. Our mission- to remain a CC and serve the community’s needs
      I. Its relationship with the community.
      J. Responsiveness to community needs, i.e. developing programs in response to community requests
      K. Community involvement
      L. Resources for technology
   M. Technology used in classrooms
   N. Quality resources and services for students
   O. Academic support
   P. Low tuition and other student costs
   Q. Class size
   R. High Enrollment

2. Faculty/Staff Resource
   A. Our spirit!
   B. Qualified staff and faculty that work diligently at preparing students to be career ready
   C. The number of opportunities available for faculty development.
   D. Willingness to serve
   E. Diversity of students and faculty
   F. Faculty
   G. Excellent Faculty
   H. 1. Faculty
   I. 1. Faculty
   J. Our pool of highly educated and talented faculty, administrators and staff.
   K. Faculty – generally strong
   L. 50% of Faculty
   M. 0% of Staff
   N. Good employee benefits
   O. Personnel
3. Leadership
   A. Good Deans
   B. It has a good vision to provide quality education at the associate’s level, rather than branching out into degrees at the bachelor’s level or to assist high school dropouts in receiving GED’s or low level trades.
   C. Stability
   D. Commitment to improvement
   E. Administrative Controls

4. Location, Location, Location
   A. Locations/facilities
   B. Its scale. It has multiple campuses, highly specialized employees, and a large budget.
   C. Various campus locations for convenience
   D. HCCs strategic location in the Tampa Bay area
   E. Tampa is central to a large population of citizens living 1) south, east and west of Interstate-75, on and off of the I-4/I-275 automobile routes, 2) adjacent to Raymond James Stadium with access to Tampa urban communities, WestShore and the central Tampa area, in the middle of Ybor City (see 1 above), in sustained areas of Sun City, and with a corporate center located in the generally affluent area of Davis Island.

5. Diversity
   A. College Diversity
   B. Cultural and demographic diversity among the campuses and students
   C. Diversity
   D. This could be a potential weakness if the various campuses were not open to improving effectiveness in communication. There is a rich diversity of faculty and students, making HCC one of the premier central Florida locations for modeling diversity. The Tampa Bay “skyline”, the Buccaneer football stadium (not to overlook a professional hockey team and accessibility to many baseball games), surrounding urban populations, the “fringe” agricultural community of Plant City (“strawberry capital of the world”), nearby commerce and port locations, Ybor city with its historical Cuban influences, tourism and “night life”, Tampa International airport, “Cracker Country”, the newly recognized environmental pursuits of the SouthShore campus (coupled with goals of sustainability recently implemented by the college), musical and art influences in a range of areas: African American, Latino, and native American cultures (Tampa Bay Performing Arts center nearby), professional development opportunities for women and minorities, additional art and musical interests, Tampa’s strategic military base location, the coastline (although tourism is currently declined) … Overall it is not difficult to “market” HCC as a genuine location for promoting a “zest ” for life (considering a possible marketing “spin”: sustained living theme)

6. Sound Fiscal Management
   A. The financial savvy to save and wisely allocate our College’s financial resources.
   B. fiscal responsibility in a cyclical economy
   C. Finances
WEAKNESSES

1. Technologic Deficiencies
   A. online capabilities
   B. Technology – our technology does not seem to be able to handle the demands of a large college
   C. Limitations, lack of flexibility & errors in Datatel program
   D. Poor technical vision
   E. There’s too much “scrambling”/shifting in areas of technical expertise. Not stable ...
   F. (How long has it been since Windows Vista was launched state-wide ... nation-wide?)
   G. (I just contacted a former colleague working at a neighboring university. I left a local voice message on his office phone to contact me. Twelve hours later (my time), he called me from Jerusalem, Israel. In the school’s distance education program [and for all faculty/staff at the school’s stateside location], when you leave a voice message on the phone, a recorded message is automatically sent to the faculty’s/staff’s e-mail; if the employee is monitoring e-mail, he/she can return anyone’s call almost instantaneously.)
   H. Technology
   I. Technology infrastructure
   J. Technology challenges

2. Poor Customer/Student Service
   A. Lack of Dale Mabry Campus student services
   B. Lack of Customer Service Training
   C. Poor customer service – Student Service Areas
   D. student services (registration, financial aid, etc.)
   E. Student Services
   F. Lack of training of Student Services & Financial Aid staff
   G. Understaffing of Student Services & Financial Aid staff
   H. customer service, students and fellow employees
   I. Unyielding bureaucracy/poor internal and external customer service
   J. Not meeting changing needs in our demographic – specifically the Hispanic community

3. Faculty/Staff Engagement
   A. There seems to be apathy among some staff, departments and faculty (anecdotal observation).
   B. (How many staff/faculty percentage-wise attended All College Day? How many empty tables were there up front? No disrespect intended ...)
   C. “Turf-Wars” among the faculty on the various campuses.
   D. 50 % of Staff
   E. 50 % of Faculty
   F. Not enough staff / faculty
   G. Potential problems: impassionate vision; some workers appear to center on mundane tasks without connection of purpose.

4. Incohesive Organizational Structure/ Policies
   A. Five campuses competing as individuals as opposed to working together as one college
   B. Need an e-department to take over dispersed responsibilities and eliminate bureaucratic obstacles
   C. lack of repercussions of not completing projects by deadline times
   D. Inconsistency in policies and procedures across campuses
E. Decentralization
F. Lack of alignment in processes by individual campuses

5. Official Internal Communication
   A. Communication with administration
   B. The size of the college makes it hard for individuals to have their concerns heard and acted upon.
   C. Weak communication between the campuses, our leaders need to step up and lead their campuses to the table of communication. We need to unite as a “Community College”, there is strength in unity. Courses offered at one campus, should readily be available on another, especially the computer and “the arts” classes. Example: Dale Mabry hold the Science Series, these sessions should be held on other campuses as well for a thorough saturation of the science knowledge that’s being shared during these sessions.
   D. Spread the word!! There are programs and services available for the students that are truly unheard of by the masses of students. Advisors and Administrators know, but the people who need to have this information are not aware. Example the Dream Keepers program, poll you adjuncts and see how many of them know about it. Yet they have students dropping because of problems that could easily be solved if they were advised of the assistance that’s available. Yet we are screaming about student success and retention...help all the students, not just the favored ones.
   E. Decision making process
   F. Established communication channels between faculty, staff, administration, and students

6. Academics Concerns
   A. Prep Programs
   B. Cluster system
   C. Control of student population growth
   D. Classes capped at 35 are too large

7. Inadequate Funding
   A. Lack of equitable division of funds between campuses
   B. Low salaries for faculty
   C. Low pay
   D. Most of our funding comes from the state and federal government. What if we lose that money?

8. Competitive Position (Proprietary and Distance Education)
   A. Fell behind in Distance Learning when compared with Valencia and SPC
   B. It has no real competition in Hillsborough County. If each campus was a small college, then they would compete with each other (or a different community college) to help raise standards.
   C. No cohesive plan/preparedness for a premier online distance education learning effort. (Not a dig ... just a truthful “off-the-cuff” observation)

9. Miscellaneous
   A. Lack of classroom / administrative space
   B. Safety of students and property
THE SURVEY QUESTIONS

Reading the Tea Leaves:
A Forecast of significant challenges that may confront HCC in the next ten years.

Assessing Internal Strength and Weakness

From your perspective as a vested member of the HCC Community, please identify the most significant strengths and weaknesses of Hillsborough Community College.

To stimulate your thinking consider our college goals, your division and campus plans, institutional performance as reported in the Critical Success Factors, program review results, survey results, etc.

The most important strengths of HCC (list up to 3)

1.
2.
3.

The most serious weaknesses of HCC (list up to 3)

1.
2.
3.

Forecasting external opportunities and threats

From your perspective, predict the most significant opportunities and threats that are likely to impact HCC in the next 5 to 10 years. You may also view opportunities/threats as emerging issues, trends, or events.

Note: your predictions must meet two conditions 1) they are highly likely to occur and 2) will have a significant impact on the college. For instance, it’s possible for an event to occur that would have a marginal impact on HCC.

To stimulate your thought consider a taxonomy of likely opportunities & threats in categories such as 1) economic, 2) political/legal, 3) technological, 4) social/demographic, 5) educational/pedagogic. Also consider trends & events at different levels of scale that are likely to impact the college at international, national, regional, state, and local levels.
Predict likely opportunities in the next 5 to 10 years that HCC could capitalize on (list up to 3)

1. 
2. 
3. 

Predict likely trends or events that could pose a threat to achievement of HCC’s mission & goals in the next 5 to 10 years (list up to 3).

1. 
2. 
3. 

The Challenges

In consideration of your responses above, what do you believe will be the most significant challenges HCC will face in its ten year future through 2020. Consider your assessed strengths and weaknesses in context of our preparedness to seize opportunities and minimize threats.

Predict major challenges (list up to 5)

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5.