Asnuntuck Community College – ICAT/SOAA Virtual Café Sessions on 4/30/2020

ICAT/SOAA Café – SUMMARY OF NOTES

Overall Discussion Question: Given our ratings on the 7 fundamental capacities (ICAT): *Teaching & Learning, Engagement & Communication, Equity, Strategy & Planning, Leadership & Vision, Data & Technology, Policies & Practices*

- **What are your initial thoughts?**
  - Hard to know how good or bad these ratings are…do we have data from other schools to compare our results?
  - Not much difference between the highest and the lowest. Not near a 4 in any of the areas.
  - We were low scoring on Policies & Practices. Thoughts were that we don't have input in creating policies and that these directives are just handed down from the BOR. It is a one way, system implemented policy without any engagement from the campus leaving the faculty and staff feeling as if their voice is not heard.
  - Strategy & Planning – some unsure what that even is or where we would find that information. There should be better communication with regards to our strategic plan.
  - Some were surprised we did not score even higher in the Teaching & Learning section. However, given that this was not a survey taken by students, that could be a reason why the score was not higher.
  - Although listed as a strength under Equity, I don't think we are culturally, etc. representative of the student body.
  - Lack of support from management and lack of staffing to implement more effective institutional policies and practices regarding enrollment management and retention initiatives (e.g., mandatory orientation and advising, etc.) is a continual challenge.
  - Policy Review and Implementation is definitely a weakness. Do we regularly review policies and identify policies or practices that create barriers to student success ? Seems that policy is very top-down and stakeholders are not engaged in policy development.
  - When we collect data is it broadly shared? Are people being held accountable according to certain data points? Retention? Graduation Rates? Or do we focus too much on certain data like FTE?
  - In Manufacturing, there is an evaluation at the end of every semester. Usually students are lost at the beginning of the semester. There is a "slide" when students start taking tests.
  - Leadership instability. Too many changes in a short period. Nearly all leadership is interim and did not go through formal hiring process.
  - Leadership lacks vision. Everything comes from BOR. Need to feel grounded, inspired, and supported through time of change.
  - Communication is lacking. How effectively are we meeting as departments, divisions? No Enrollment committee. Hard to be strategic or use data effectively if we are not meeting in specific groups.
  - There is a general feeling on campus that administration is not forthcoming about information about planning, data, and budget. How is this information disseminated?
  - More transparency needed by leadership on how decisions are made. Data driven? Who informed decision?
  - Some areas such as policies & practices and data management have remained consistent as areas that needs strengthening over the years.

- o Lack of vision by leadership; seem to react to whatever comes from system.

- **What do you think is working well?**
  - o Faculty and staff take great strides in ensuring equitable practices.
  - o External Communication is very good- we have partnerships and community support
  - o Transfer fair and Transfer Tuesdays, students engage with other institutions
  - o Continuing Ed- Advisory Board meets to ensure curriculum meets goals for employers
  - o Advisory boards for credit programs provide insight into skills needed for workforce
  - o In manufacturing, there is also an advisory board so that students have the right skills and abilities in the manufacturing world and what employers are looking for.
  - o Providing Chrome Books during COVID-19
  - o PTK recognition events.

- **What do you think could be improved?**
  - o A big improvement would be in regards to data. We are unaware of the student data that is available.
  - o Many not aware that we can disaggregate data to show equity gaps. Achieving the Dream is making us realize that the data is there, but is not widely available or accessible.
  - o Improve data communication and what is consistently shared for data points throughout year. Make data available to easily identify at risk students.
  - o More broadly in policy specifically- Policy has to be changed at the system level, it's hard to be agile about changing policy. Getting students registered and the process and partnership with system office can be a barrier.
  - o Although equity is in the middle for results, not many know what equity is and what it means at ACC. ATD Success team is creating definition.
  - o Campus needs to understand what diversity means at ACC in order to help improve the equity issue at ACC.
  - o We struggle with development of programs that reflect the workforce needs because of statewide policies and strategies (mainly focused on transfer to 4-year institutions)
  - o Strategic plan is not widely known to various individuals. Many staff, faculty members, and other stakeholders are not aware of the plan.
  - o Communication issues could be contributing to the high numbers of "DK". Certain information is not useful for different parties depending on the individual's role at college. Communication needs to be relevant to specific roles and timely according to specific times during the semester
  - o Lack of data is another problem at the institution. General feeling that people do not have access to data or know where the data could be located.
  - o Not setting aside enough funding to deal with weaknesses in certain areas (advising needs, faculty needs, technology needs).

1. Our top two strongest capacity areas at ACC are **"Teaching & Learning"** and **"Engagement and Communication"**. In particular, under "Engagement and Communication", *"External Communication"* was reported as a strength with a 3.0 and under "Teaching & Learning", *"Developmental Reform"* was reported as 3.0.

   How do our strongest capacity areas relate to or impact helping a student identify goals for attending college?
   - We have a strength in connecting with high schools. Engaging with the population early will help.
   - We do look at labor market statistics and the programs that are in high demand and that's what drives our program creation. Undecided students can be directed toward good programs.
   - We have good advisory boards.
   - One of the ways we communicate to students is through the Marketing committee using social media from many platforms.
   - We do well in our outreach with outside agencies & organizations.
   - We do well in developmental education & getting students to quickly identify a degree or path.
   - Students have access to transfer institutions at transfer events on campus.
   - Dual enrollment program exists for high school students to help identify goals for attending college.
   - Early contact with HS help students to identify career/academic goals.
   - External Engagement is identified as a strength but DO we really reach out to K-12 to align curriculum?? This seems like something to particularly think about in current times, when students may be coming in significantly less prepared. In general, we should know what our students may be coming in with. For example, many high school students enter having been immersed in a Google Environment (Gmail, Google Classroom, etc.)
   - While reaching out to K-12 seems an important item, it needs to appear on an institutional plan or priorities list so it is something that faculty can work on.

2. What is the level of understanding among the college community in knowing and supporting current efforts to **help students start strong**? What initiatives at the college are especially effective? Any recent success stories?

   How does the current state of these capacity areas impact helping a student start strong at the college?
   - We hold Open Houses, Orientations, Workshops and FYE class.
   - We are worse at this than what is shown in the results.
   - Orientation is strong. Orientation starts students off.
   - Marketing takes dollars, and we don't have much.

- Advising – Faculty advising system doesn't work very well because of a lack of resources and a lack of faculty.
- FYE – a strength of the school. FYE helps students with setting and identifying their career and educational goals, but FYE is not required in each program.
- The reforms to developmental courses have helped students with making progress through their college path.
- Students are becoming more vocal about their needs.
- Advising is not clear to students. A lot of students are self-advised, more than not.
- Need to understand how to better communicate with all students (day, evening, online)
- It would be great if we can set up a schedule for high school visits and recruit faculty to attend as part of their A/R to help promote programs.
- FYE and Student Orientation work well but are not mandatory. Orientation may be helping students start strong, but not mandatory and how are we measuring effectiveness.
- New Student Workshops designed to help students start off strong but not mandatory
- We have some individualized approaches with various groups of students to make sure they have a good "footing" in school
- Talking with students early on to make sure they have supports in place (Disability Services, Tutoring, Career advisor, Transfer advisor…)
- Need Case Management Advising in order to effectively help students start strong and persist.
- Providing Chrome Books during COVID-19
- PTK recognition events.
- We may clear program maps for some programs, but not all regularly review program maps in term of sequencing, time to completion, when courses are offered. This needs to be consistent across the board and suggested "maps" be made readily available to students.
- Some of the information on student resources, events, and support efforts are posted late and that does not provide enough time for students to react.
- People are not aware of all efforts to help students start strong. Example: New Student Workshops.

3. **The following capacity areas have high numbers of "don't know" responses: "Data & Technology" and "Strategy & Planning". If there are high numbers of "don't know" responses with these capacity areas, what does that mean and how does this impact the college's effort to help students early?**
- In response to the, Don't Know answers it could be that we didn't understand the questions or we really don't know the answers because we are so focused on our own jobs that we just overlooked it, but we truly do care what's going on and want to know more.
- We don't have a communication forum in place for review of strategic plan.
- There is not a regular policy review process to even see if what is in place is even working to develop student success.
- We need clear and easy to read data in a meaningful way to know what is going on and how to help students succeed.
- Having a clearly defined path will help students have a clear way forward at Asnuntuck. This will require mandatory advising and easy to use technology so that students can easily understand and monitor own progress along their plan.
- The process to get data is difficult! As a result, we aren't proactively using data. (ATD group is, but before that, no. And not widely used by campus.)
- No, the college does not proactively review, identify and remove policies. It should.

- Technology is a barrier. The new email policy seems like it will make things even worse for students. It is hard enough to contact students now, but if they can't forward their mail, will they miss even more?
- The current COVID situation is making it difficult to receive transcripts and SAT scores, etc – stressful experience for students doesn't give them a comfortable experience starting with the Admissions process
- We can brainstorm the barriers, but it seems these capacity areas focus on policy and in order to enact positive change, there should be a FORMAL practice to review barriers. "Barriers to success committee"?
- How is the strategic plan crafted? It would be great if there was a 5 year plan for Advising, 5 year plan for Financial Aid, 5 year plan for Library, 5 year plan for Science Dept, etc. Plans for different areas were captured.

4. **The following capacity areas have the highest numbers of "Don't Know" (DK) responses: "Data and Technology", "Strategy and Planning", and "Equity". If there are high numbers of "don't know" responses within these capacity areas, what does that mean and how does this impact the college's effort to <u>help students early</u>?**

- Do "don't know" responses contribute a lack of communication?
- Do students have access to technology to do assignments and engage in class? Could be an equity issue
- The political drama on our campus keep things from happening, and this could definitely have an impact on students.
- Communication is definitely an issue on this campus.
- Keeping the Virtual ACC Visits even after the COVID-19 pandemic to target students that cannot get to campus or attend a session is something we would like to see in the future.
- A lot of students do not know who their advisor is and perhaps having a " Meet Your Advisor" night would help them feel comfortable and use this meet and greet to establish an open line of communication so the student feels comfortable reaching out if needed.
- There is not a process in which data is disseminated. Only by request.
- No system in place to easily look up data or to even know where to find the data and there is a lag in getting the data we need.
- Need to regularly assess student goals and use proactive approach to providing resources and supports along the way. Can only do this through one on one, regular, required advising.
- We need to ensure ALL students are given the training and resources necessary to be able to consistently access the technology tools they need to be successful on campus.
- More engagement activities need to be mandatory if they are contributing to student success. Activities such as orientation and advising should be made mandatory, but we have experienced pushback with regard to holds on student accounts (may impact enrollment/numbers).
- Could be creative about integrating career exploration into student experience – perhaps with a 1 credit career development course in programs that do not require FYE.
- Promote use of FOCUS2 Career Assessment more – we have great resources but communication and promotion is the issue.

5) Overall, how can the college improve its ability to support students early in the college experience? What actions are recommended? What actions should be given top priority?

- Need more of a survey at the beginning to help us understand students' lives. Some are working multiple jobs, dependent on technology in our building, the food pantry, etc. We need to be supportive and provide them with resources. Not only in the beginning but along the way as well.
- How do we identify what student success is? What is that? A degree? What is the students' goal when they come in? It's not just graduation. ATD has created a definition that needs to be communicated.
- Faculty – find ways to support teaching excellence.
- Students' college email has been working better, but students do not know about Office 365
- Extern/Internships are currently up to the professor. They are mostly AdHoc. There should be a formalized or mandatory requirement for those which can lead to student success and job placement.
- If we don't know the data and can't measure success for certain groups, then we lack in making their success a priority.
- Students get nervous and need more support and acclimation at the beginning. Mandatory Case management advising would be helpful in all areas: Credit, non-credit, manufacturing
- Clearly communicate how advising will work and make it a very clear process for students to understand and go through.
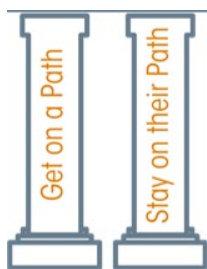
<u>ICAT Results and Student Success Pillars 2&3: "**Getting On (Choosing) & Staying on a Path**"</u>

1. Our top two strongest capacity areas at ACC are **"Teaching & Learning"** and **"Engagement and Communication"**. In particular, under "Engagement and Communication", *"External Communication"* was reported as a strength with a 3.0 and under "Teaching & Learning", *"Developmental Reform"* was reported as 3.0.

   How do our strongest capacity areas relate to or impact helping students persist towards achievement of a goal or goals—career, degree, transfer—whatever the student identifies as the ultimate purpose?
   - Developmental education – more courses, more students in them.
   - Embedded support is doing well and self-paced is very popular.
   - We should be more intentional in our communication to get info out to students on transfer opportunities. If we have good transfer pathways to different colleges, that helps students identify their goals early on.
   - In Early Childhood, when students do their fieldwork early on, that has helped them overcome barriers and reach their goal.
   - Good relationships with transfer institutions.

- Having good engagement with employers ensures students have skills that are applicable to the workplace.
- Continuing Ed Success Coach for SNAP. Helps students with personal challenges be it housing or childcare or other things. Constant check in throughout the program.

2. **What is the level of understanding among the college community in knowing and supporting current efforts to help students persist and achieve goals? What initiatives at the college are especially effective? Any recent success stories?**
   - Starfish early alert system is very effective in supporting the student.
   - PTK is very successful. Connecting us with scholarships.
   - Degreeworks helps students understand progress but many find it hard to read and interpret.
   - Students required to print out their own graduation audit.
   - We have resources in place for students, but getting them the access and letting them know what's available to them is sometimes lacking, particularly with trying to connect with the non-traditional population.
   - Starfish SOS Program effective.
   - Entire campus is not necessarily aware of everything in place to help students. Need an inventory of what is going on & how well it is working.
   - There is a lot of behind the scenes efforts & initiatives going on to help at risk students but more communication needs to be done to make everyone aware.
   - Need to capture more success stories but it's hard to capture that data accurately since every student may identify success differently.
   - A challenge is a student might be embarrassed or not want to share their needs up front. We don't always know which students are having the struggles.
   - In manufacturing many students have an understanding of what it is they need to do to complete the program.
   - Community partnerships and the community health center with wrap around services are going to be helpful to students. These students need support services. The food pantry has helped many students with food insecurity issues.
   - Where do we identify student needs? Knowing about student situations and working with them early and proactively is necessary. Cohort programs are helpful because students have sense of community and may feel more comfortable; resources shared in cohorts.
   - When we are onboarding students, we can onboard students differently even if they aren't in "cohorts". Giving students more of a learning community. Provide peers to support them and an intrusive advisor. Building infrastructure for those students to be successful.
   - Mandating orientation and advising – allows a student to learn what they're getting into and have a point of contact. Onus is on students now to make that initial contact with an advisor but lacking clear advising process and accountability for advisors.
   - Sometimes students have the perception that it's bad they have landed in a non-college level and they're not clear about how beneficial it would be for them to start in these types of levels. How do we get them to understand it's a good thing and will help them be successful?
   - Same idea relates to tutoring – we know tutoring will help a student persist, but many don't know tutoring is free and how helpful it is, especially in this time of virtual learning.
   - Early alert/Starfish, but that seems to be the only retention effort that anyone knows about.
   - Student Activities and Leadership opportunities help students stay engaged and connected, but some students then neglect their academics.

- Great resources but do all students know about them? The Food Pantry – addressing food insecurity is critical in helping students persist. Tutoring Center – provide students with support they need. Wellness Hub – provide students services they need in one place
- Starfish - progress surveys, flags – Student outreach by advising is essential.

3. The following capacity areas at ACC need strengthening: **"Policies & Practices"** and **"Data & Technology"**. In particular, under "Policies & Practices", *"Policy Review, Development & Implementation"* reported as 2.3 and *"Culture of Evidence"* reported as 2.5. Under "Data & Technology", *"Data Dissemination"* was reported as 2.2 and *"Talent Development"* was reported as 2.4.

   How does the current state of these capacities impact helping a student persist—stay in college, graduate (achieve the goals).
   - Nobody is held accountable. We are the college of hand holding. We are a school of exceptions. How can you be successful without rules or boundaries? The culture can have a negative impact.
   - High school behavior. Students try to find an alibi, not a solution. We constantly hear what students CANT do instead of what they CAN do.
   - We're not helping students become educated adults. We're preparing them for the workforce, so we shouldn't be taking calls from their parents.
   - A lot of success stories are due to flexibility. They come alive at their jobs sometimes even if they are lazy students. Flexibility saves lives from suicide sometimes.
   - Proactively remove policies and practices? We have students who don't even know how to login to Blackboard. Do we have a training? Yes, there are links to Blackboard training. All of the resources are right there on the website.
   - New Student Workshops cover Blackboard. Attendance is technically mandatory, but students who register at the last-minute fall through the cracks. This was a problem noted previously in the ATD process.
   - Not everyone takes FYE
   - We need data to know who is at risk so that they don't fall through the cracks.
   - We need data to help us identify if there are policies in place that don't help students
   - Financial incentives from the System Office inform policy recommendations and practices that are implemented on campus
   - ACC policies are informed or determined by BOR/System policy, which in turn influence ACC practice
   - Need understanding of how funding is set aside for Student success initiatives.
   - There is data but it is hard to find it. Data needs to be disseminated on a regular basis and be area specific data easy to locate and understand.
   - Impact of student success efforts relative to cost. How are we gathering information to measure their ROI to help dictate our services to help support the student's college experience.
   - We are good with identifying policy needed and creating it, but implementing it, maintaining compliance, and reviewing for effectiveness in terms of student success has not been out strong suit. No consistency.
   - Look more through lens of student success rather than enrollment. Data only focuses on enrollment statistics now.
   - Since data about student success is not readily available, it is difficult to know what areas or student populations to focus on to help students persist.
   - COVID crisis shows that lack of access to technology is an issue for students. Computer literacy is also an area that needs attention.

4. **The following capacity areas have high numbers of "don't know" responses: "Data & Technology" "Strategy & Planning" and "Equity". If there are high numbers of "don't know" responses with these capacity areas, what does that mean and how does this impact the college's effort to keep students making progress towards the goals?**

- Equity is most relevant at this time. Some students have just disappeared since quarantine. Their lives are overwhelming.
- A classroom is a separate place. But when they're online they have to police themselves. More time to think about the bad parts of their lives. Going to school could be the reason they get out of bed everyday.
- If we "don't know" about data, we won't have what we need to keep students on their path and make informed decisions regarding strategy and planning.
- Equity – we need measurable goals so that certain populations don't fall through the cracks.
- A huge number of students don't have internet or a computer at home and are struggling in this current environment. Until students were able to get the laptops, many of them were trying to do coursework on their phone. Equity issue. Can we potentially give students laptops as part of their tuition? That can potentially address the equity issues. What about internet service? Computer labs may now be a thing of the past but students still need space to do work.
- Data- Many faculty and staff don't know if and how we collect the data and are we actually using it? It seems like we should be regularly providing data and base level info annually so it can be used to be helpful to students.
- Because Asnuntuck is so small, sometimes if you get too granular you can identify students. Small numbers – sometimes we can't make conclusions based on the small numbers. We don't know if it is statistically significant.
- Present relevant and timely data in all college meetings. All college meetings are not always effective and are "show and tell" rather than strategic about timely and relevant information.

5. **How can the college improve its capacity to support students to persist and accomplish the goals? What actions are recommended? What actions should be given top priority?**

- Caseload advising. Why do students see so many different advisors?
- If we had a one-on-one approach for our students that would be better.
- We're going to have to that more intentionally now online. One on one or in groups.
- Clarifying the pathways will lead to more student success.
- Multiple credentials provide consistent rewards.
- Students need a clear path to begin with.
- Need more 1x1 advising
- Mandatory advising for students, however, we need staff & resources to be able to do this
- Need a mental health counselor on campus
- What about asking students questions when they are admitted about holistic needs; things like food insecurity.
- Advising is piloting an intake form now to try to catch students at the beginning. Maybe we can look at the intake form that the SNAP students are using and use something similar with student intake?
- It would be helpful to know up front, what students' challenges might be. Using an intake form, potentially using the SNAP model during the admissions process.

- Understanding students access to technology and internet. Potentially making technology a part of the registration process, students getting a laptop when they register.
- Recognizing student success, awards, ceremonies.
- Slide show in monitors highlighting students who made it. Including a picture of the student.
- Success stories. Disseminating meaningful information for students.
- Using Social media to celebrate students. Success by program or career.
- Providing more funding for retention and support services because retention and success initiatives to help students succeed. We tend to only focus on getting students in the door.
- Create mentorship programs.
- Intake survey assessing students' needs (such as Computer literacy) and providing supports and resources early on.
- It would be great to have a tool to capture student goals in an advising process and then regularly update a plan to help students achieve these.
- There have been many efforts recently on Enrollment, but not as much on Retention.
- There should be more focus on Starfish and faculty outreach to students
- Offices are more "silos" now, so it is difficult to share information. It would be good for staff and students if there was a HUB for student services. A one stop shop for students.
- Faculty don't regularly track students who meet with faculty advisors. Since we don't track that data, we can't say what percentage have met with advisor prior to registering. This could have a major impact on students persisting – if they are registering for the right classes. Mandatory advising? Need data about who meets with advisor.
- The more we can identify or partner with other transfer institutions, employers, the more we can assist students with their future goals. Need to assess and record student goals and align with employment or transfer opportunities.
- Provide faculty and advisors with data dashboard to easily track the most at-risk students. Also identify courses where students need most help.
- We need to be able to support students if their hierarchy of needs aren't met. Especially now, the stakes are high. You're not supposed to isolate in recovery. Isolation is impacting sobriety. We have a population that struggles with this.
- Mental health is a clear area of improvement. We have long had a weakness in mental health and social resources.
- What about our homeless population?

Ensure Learning

ICAT Results and Student Success Pillar 4: **"Ensuring Learning"**

Reflecting on the ICAT results:

1. Our top two strongest capacity areas at ACC are **"Teaching & Learning"** and **"Engagement and Communication"**. In particular, under "Engagement and Communication", *"External Communication"* was reported as a strength with a 3.0 and under "Teaching & Learning", *"Developmental Reform"* was reported as 3.0.

How do our strongest capacity areas relate to or impact ensuring the student has access to and is engaged in learning and other activities that prepare them for the next step?

- College career pathways, HS partnership, etc are great to recruit students and show them what the future could look like.
- TAP arrangements with the 4 year institutions are helpful with transfer.
- Some faculty have upper level students with goals who easily get in.
- Faculty job is to create the best educational environment, creating a community in the classroom. All I want to do is be a teacher to get the students going. All of this jargon doesn't help students in the classroom. If we don't actually do the classroom, everything else is basically window-dressing.
- Exciting the students is the key. Internships and externships are essential to this. Relationships with instructors are motivating.
- Need to account for the student's plan/goal & adjust accordingly. To better understand why they are at ACC will help us to adjust & provide them w/the experiences to get them to their end goal.
- Need to understand the student's goal & customize the student experience for them to reach their goal.
- Need to be flexible & teach in a way that the student's will be able to learn, since everyone learns differently. Make sure to provide professional development on different teaching strategies, techniques and best practices for specific subject areas.
- Need to work on soft skills w/students & a skill set so they are prepared to enter the work force.
- Starfish and iTeach great resources for faculty.
- Having things like internships and immersive learning experiences being a part of the learning process.
- Continuing Ed-Many programs have a mandatory externship so students are required to work in their field and it often leads to employment. It's good because it shows them what their skills are and any areas they might need to improve.
- Examples were given of students and programs who have utilized internships and experiential learning. Human Services was mentioned as being especially good at this as well as Manufacturing.
- Need funding set aside for a person that only focuses developing external employment/career opportunities for students.

2. **What is the level of understanding among the college community in knowing and supporting current efforts ensure excellence as a learner/graduate? What initiatives at the college are especially effective? Any recent success stories?**
- This is now fundamentally different. Now we have to focus on getting students and faculty connected online.
- Advising is critical and is currently not required for any students.
- Manufacturing has a more informal process that guides students to either a job (through career awareness classes) or to their Associates degree.
- Resume building provided by the career advisor. Great resource, but not used by all students.
- Transfer advisor provides assistance to help students, but again, not used by all students.
- In manufacturing students are able to get internships that lead to job placement.

3. The following capacity areas at ACC need strengthening: **"Policies & Practices"** and **"Data & Technology"**. In particular, under "Policies & Practices", *"Policy Review, Development & Implementation"* reported as 2.3 and *"Culture of Evidence"* reported as 2.5. Under "Data & Technology", *"Data Dissemination"* was reported as 2.2 and *"Talent Development"* was reported as 2.4.

   How does the current state of these capacities impact the student's preparedness to enter further education or the workplace?
   - The data piece is important. Not having data & knowing where students are transferring to or working can impact future student success.
   - Need to understand past data to inform student opportunities. When we have the data, we can better understand, develop, and promote employment and transfer opportunities.
   - We are compartmentalized- the data comes to the department or one person but doesn't go to the campus community
   - Sometimes we are siloed, and we don't know what the policies or procedures are in a given situation so it's hard to know what to do. Are we duplicating efforts or completely contradicting what another office is doing.
   - It is an obstacle to share best practices if we don't know what other offices are doing.
   - We make a lot of exceptions for students but where do we draw the line?
   - Are there weaknesses that we can generalize across the board for students? Can we imbed supports in courses? Can we make sure the data is getting to instructors about students strengths and weaknesses. How will the new placement policy look in regard to student success in math and English?
   - Whenever we create new programs (including allied health) we make sure to review labor statistics/data to ensure we creating an economically viable program. Who is reviewing this information on a regular basis?
   - What happens with graduation survey? Are we fully using?

4. **The following capacity areas have high numbers of "don't know" responses: "Data & Technology", "Strategy & Planning", and "Equity". If there are high numbers of "don't know" responses with these capacity areas, what does that mean and how does this impact the college's effort to focus ensuring students are fully prepared to succeed when they move on to work or higher education opportunities?**

   - Communication, communication, communication.
   - We need to use starfish for referrals. Faculty give students incorrect information. Faculty need to send students to staff, and vice versa. Students need to be kept from running in circles.
   - New Faculty Seminar is incredibly important in educating us about different areas of the college. We understand how it relates to us.
   - A small group setting with organized topics related to functional area would be an effective replacement for all college.
   - If we don't know what the info is due to lack of communication (data, equity statistics, strategic plan), then we can't address issues and certain populations may fall through the cracks.
   - If we don't have set strategic goals that everyone is aware of or an overarching vision, we won't be focused on these goals. We do not consistently measure how we are doing with data. Data holds people accountable.

- Need stronger communication among different areas of the college in regards to data from initiative, programs, and assessment. For example how does Starfish impact students retention? How do assessment efforts at the course and program level inform curriculum changes and students success?
- Monitoring progress in achieving elements of the Strategic Plan should be ongoing and results clearly communicated to the ACC community
- Development of the Strategic Plan should involve all
- Not everyone knows how to interpret data that is provided. Needs to be presented in an understandable and relevant way. There may be data collected and analyzed, but we may not know about it or be able to use it.
- Need to be careful about information overload. Students, faculty and staff may be experiencing this especially in this new situation with Covid-19. So, make sure information is necessary, timely, relevant, easy to understand.
- More internal communication. Have trainings to understand policies.
- We make a lot of exceptions for students but what does that mean for equity with policies?
- Are there weaknesses that we can generalize across the board for students? (things like basic math skills) Can we make sure the data is getting to instructors about students' strengths and weaknesses in their programs?
- Identify the policies where we make exceptions and evaluate. (things like charging fees, financial aid) This can be an equity issue.
- Will PACT money have a positive effect on this? Maybe it can be used for technology and promote equity.
- Need to evaluate the strategic plan and make sure Strategic plan is aligned with our needs. Plans to action with clear plan to evaluate.
- Using data to measure success rates in courses and measure if students are achieving program outcomes.
- We don't have anything in place in terms of Equity. There is no plan, no policy, no goals. How can you implement if there is no structure? We should be looking at diversity in faculty/staff, diversity in courses offered, have their been changes in the make up of the community that we should be adjusting to, etc?
- We don't have ESL classes or even track ESL (maybe in Accuplacer?)
- Again, we discussed communication. How can information be shared/communicated so that everyone on campus is in a position to have the information they need to help students succeed?

5. **How can the college do to improve its capacity to support excellence in the learning outcomes and preparation for what is next for all students? What actions are recommended? What actions should be given top priority?**

- Need support from the college to have resources and staffing including faculty, advisors, etc.
- Do not have any alumni coordination efforts. One Exec. Director of Foundation for two colleges. Need to have coordinated effort to track students to develop connections.
- Lacking process to collect data that is necessary for gathering employment and transfer information for each program
- Marketing is lacking in helping promote success stories, alumni highlights, to help to educate students about programs and outcomes
- Need to regularly share data on student success, transfer, or employment outcomes to the faculty, staff, and offices that can utilize the data to better inform college practices

- Internships benefit students. Hands-on field experience help students to identify their goals. They can witness changes happening in their field of study. Consider requiring in more programs.
- Workforce development programs are very hands on. Instructors are in the field, they are aware of market's demands.
- In Math and Science we are not fully connecting with the industry/ workforce.
- We need to add programs such as Computer Science. Graphic Design, more health related programs. Revisiting programs we offer. Making sure we are creating programs based on work-force demands, especially now.
- Host speakers from different fields, careers or programs. Discussion Panels with Professionals from different industries. Hold networking nights in some degrees to have alumna meet with current students.
- Review current program offerings. Evaluate job market and implement programs accordingly.
- Strengthening leadership initiatives and programs to help students develop "real-world" skills.
- It would be great to have more guest speakers, experts in field, practicums, etc.
- Diversity in the curriculum? There used to be more courses offered in more diverse areas – a class on Holocaust, Native Americans, etc. There were more opportunities to explore and perhaps discover something that is a passion. For many students, college is the only opportunity these students have to experience these things.
- Have a plan relating to Diversity, Equity to support students and also to prepare them for life beyond college.
- Need regular data for each program on where students are employed, where they transfer, and more of a focus on student success stories.
- We have an opportunity to expand the strategies useful to reaching alumni, a wall of fame, job shadowing, or guess speakers to cover the expectations in the workforce.

TAKEAWAYS:

Strengths:
- Advisory boards for credit, non-credit, manufacturing are strong and help inform curriculum.
- Connections with transfer institutions are strong; access to several transfer colleges and universities throughout the academic year.
- PTK – acknowledging and recognizing students.
- Developmental education reform has helped students through quicker so they can identify a degree or path.
- Dual enrollment programs work well to help high school students become acquainted with college and identify goals for attending college (High School Partnership, College Connections, etc.)
- First Year Experience, Orientation, New Student Workshops help students start strong.
- Starfish is a great retention tool and helps with communicating with students.
- Student activities help students stay connected and engaged.
- We have great resources: Tutoring, Transfer Advising, Career Advising (but not all students take advantage).
- Marketing does a good job with social media.

Areas of Improvement/Action Items:
- Strategic plan is not widely known. Needs to be communicated, reviewed, and measured on a regular basis. Should be completed by each department or area to make it more relevant to different functions. ***Need to review Strategic Plan, understand it, and make it guide our goals and decision making.***
- Policy development, review, assessment is not a process we currently have in place. Often policy development does not involve internal and external stakeholders and policies are not being reviewed regularly to ensure that they are leading to student success. Often policy is looked at in terms of supporting enrollment versus supporting student success. ***Need to develop a policy review and assessment plan that is focused on student success.***
- Leadership lacks vision; seem to react to whatever comes from system/BOR. ***Need to have more local vision and support in changing times.***
- Communication continues to be an issue; often feeling that departments work in silos. All College not seen as an effective communication tool. ***Need to figure out a way to communicate effectively across campus where everyone is provided with helpful, relevant information for their roles so that they can perform jobs effectively and positively impact the student experience.***
- Data is unknown, not widely available, or made meaningful. ***Needs to be more accessible and understandable as well as relevant to specific functions, timely, and useful.***
  - ***Need certain data points provided on a regular basis during the year when available and sent to appropriate areas/roles.***
  - ***Faculty need data that is easily accessible to better understand student success outcomes in their programs.***
  - ***Data needed to clearly show who is most at-risk so as to focus outreach efforts.***
  - Only certain data points are focused on such as headcount and FTE. Retention and success rates are not often the focus or communicated widely. ***Need to consistently communicate retention and success rates with enrollment data to change the dialogue.***
  - Data not regularly made available regarding workforce needs. ***Need to have a regular conversation about economic forecast and workforce needs to inform programs and curriculum. Need to be responsive to region's needs.***

- Advising process is not clear to many students. ***Need clear case management advising and appropriate staffing.***
- Communication with students continues to be challenging. ***Need to create a communication plan so that we are reaching out to all students (day, evening, online) effectively.***
- Orientation, FYE, New Student Workshops are all believed to help students start strong. ***Need to gather data to see if students who engage in these activities are truly more likely to persist – if so, need to make mandatory.***
- Lacking an intake process with students that may help connect them with customized resources. ***Need systematic way to gather holistic needs of students in form of an intake, and an organized approach to proactively provide resources to students.***
- Students do not have often have curricular program plan from start to finish. ***Need to review programs to ensure accurate sequence of courses. Need technology that can easily create customized plan and be used to monitor progress by both student and advisor.*** (Currently not using degree works for this feature – cumbersome and not easy to use)
- Students may not have access to technology or training required to be successful. ***Need to look at access to technology (especially now) and required training of technology for all students.***
- Internships only available in certain programs. ***Need to evaluate programs and assess how students are developing skills and experience to not only explore career options but to build necessary skills for their sought profession.***
- Communication of all student success/retention-based programs is lacking. ***Need an inventory of student success initiatives and programs available for all to review, understand, and use when working with* students***.***
- Success stories are not regularly gathered and marketing for each program to help show outcomes. Additionally, alumni connections need to be harnessed for career development of current students. ***Need staffing to focus on collecting success stories and develop alumni database for career development.***
- Lack of mental health resources. ***Need to have mental health resources on campus to help with myriad of mental health issues facing our students.***
- Equity may not be understood by all. *Need clear definition of equity and understand which student populations are experiencing inequity in terms of student success.* ***Need to establish measurable equity goals so that certain populations are monitored and don't fall through the cracks.***
- Support from management, budget, and appropriate staffing prevents us from making changes we need to in order to positively affect student success. ***Need more staff including faculty, advisors, retention staff, alumni coordinator, marketing staff, etc. to help coordinate recommended student success efforts***

Other notable thoughts/feedback:
- What would happen if we took this now, in quarantine? Results may be different post Covid-19.
- Covid-19 is revealing larger equity issue of access to technology
- How many of our online students are from Asnuntuck? Do we have this data? Might see an increase in four-year school students taking online classes at Asnuntuck (gap year) to reduce cost.
- This instrument was not easily understood and did not like using it.
- The way the questions were worded made it difficult to answer in the ICAT. Often answered "Don't Know" because of the way questions were worded.
- What about retention? This current scenario during Covid-19 is making students disappear. Are we tracking what is working well and what isn't right now? What kind of data are we gathering about this time so that we can learn how to adapt better to the needs of our students, faculty and staff?
- Interaction with students (by faculty and staff) is critical and how are we interacting with students right now?