

Walla Walla Community College Community Survey Report

As part of its strategic planning process, Walla Walla Community College conducted a community survey to assess levels of engagement and satisfaction and identify major issues, priorities, and concerns. The online survey was a more open-ended version of an internal survey of current students and employees (faculty and staff) during the winter 2021 term.

The community survey was conducted online from Jan. 22 to 31, 2021. It was advertised via the college's social media pages and in local media outlets, including the *Union-Bulletin*, the *Waitsburg Times*, the *Eastern Washingtonian*, the *Lewiston Tribune*, *La Voz*, and the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation's social media page. It was available in English and Spanish.

Participation:

A total of 224 people responded to the survey, including 93 former students, 23 former employees, 19 members of affiliated groups (e.g., the Board of Trustees, workforce advisory groups), and 80 without formal associations with the college. An additional 9 respondents were current students or employees. Overall, respondents were more female, White, and older than what is presumed for the larger population; however, given the means of deployment for the survey, it is unclear what portion of the community, and which communities, had access.

Common themes expressed by survey respondents:

- Cost of attendance and affordability.
- Sustainable allocation of financial resources.
- Enrollment management, including marketing, retention through student supports, and availability, scheduling, and modality of class offerings.
- Promotion of the trades, and to a lesser extent other workforce programs.
- The mix or relevancy of educational offerings, and the process by which the college determines those offerings.

Other noteworthy themes:

- The importance of communication, community partnerships, and community activities—the latter especially in relation to the performing arts.
- Recognition of the college from national authorities and other indicators of prestige were an important source of pride, especially among those with no direct connection to the college.

Negative/critical responses:

Some respondents shared their negative views of the recent cancellation of a few programs. They perceived the cancellations as a shift in the college's focus away from workforce programming, which they considered to be vital to the health and prosperity of the community.

Next steps/How this information will be incorporated:

The results from this survey have been incorporated into the strategic planning process and informing the creation of priorities and goals that will guide the College over the next few years. As a draft strategic plan comes to fruition, President Chad Hickox will schedule and host a community meeting to review the draft.