



## Memorandum

DATE: August 8, 2013  
TO: Dr. Hector Gonzales, President *H*  
FROM: Dick Whipple, Associate Vice President of Institutional Advancement *DW.*  
SUBJECT: Mission Statement Review 2012-13

Attached is the Mission Statement Report to the Board and the Mission Statement Survey Report prepared by the Office of Planning and Research. The former includes the recommended changes that were suggested at the President's Cabinet meeting today.

I will be prepared to present the Board report next Thursday.

Respectfully submitted.

# Southwest Texas Junior College Mission Statement Review 2012-13

## Report to the SWTJC Board of Trustees - August 15, 2013

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The college periodically reviews its mission statement to remain current in identifying and providing for the needs of the community it serves.

The proposed revised mission statement is the result of input collected from SWTJC alumni, faculty, staff, students, community and board members. An on-line survey was conducted during June and July 2013. Invitations and announcements to participate in the mission statement review were sent via SWTJC e-mail and in articles appearing in the Uvalde Leader News, Eagle Pass News Gram, Del Rio News Herald and the Zavala County Sentinel. A total of 207 responses were submitted and the majority of respondents indicated no change was needed to the mission statement. Of those who suggested change, many pertained to wording choice, the assumed prioritization indicated by the listing of items 1, 2 & 3, or the College's programs and services that are not only "post-secondary" education.

Review of the survey results and further consideration by SWTJC's President's Cabinet resulted in the proposed changes that clarify the mission statement language without altering its content or meaning. In particular, the following items were changed:

1. The word "two-year" was removed as the College's programs cover a range of a few weeks to two years.
2. The words "post-secondary education" were change to simply "education" to reflect that the College's mission extends to other educational levels, specifically Adult Basic Education.
3. The word "community" was replaced with "region" to reflect a broader commitment to our entire service area.
4. Numbers used in the list of areas of preparation were deleted to remove the idea that the College was ranking them in importance. All are equally important, especially from a student's point-of-view.
5. Added the word "successfully" to emphasize the College's commitment to student success.
6. Much of the last sentence was considered repetitive except for the College's role in economic development. The sentence was removed and "economic growth" was incorporated in the second sentence.

Below is the original Mission Statement followed by the recommended revised statement.

### **Current SWTJC Statement of Mission:**

*Southwest Texas Junior College is a comprehensive, public, two-year college serving eleven counties in southwest Texas. College programs and services provide accessible, affordable, high-quality post-secondary education that prepares students to: 1) enter the job market, 2) transfer to senior colleges and universities, 3) pursue their professional and personal goals. Through its programs and services, the college equitably provides higher education opportunities and supports the economic growth of the community.*

### **Proposed revised Statement of Mission:**

*Southwest Texas Junior College is a comprehensive, public college serving eleven counties in Southwest Texas. The College provides accessible, affordable, high-quality education that prepares students to successfully transfer to senior colleges and universities; enter the job market; pursue their professional and personal goals; and contribute to the economic growth of the region.*

# Southwest Texas Junior College Mission Statement Review Survey 2013

## **SOUTHWEST TEXAS JUNIOR COLLEGE STATEMENT OF MISSION**

Southwest Texas Junior College is a comprehensive, public, two-year college serving eleven counties in southwest Texas. College programs and services provide accessible, affordable, high-quality post-secondary education that prepares students to: 1) enter the job market, 2) transfer to senior colleges and universities, 3) pursue their professional and personal goals. Through its programs and services, the college equitably provides higher education opportunities and supports the economic growth of the community.

## **Objectives**

This summary presents the results of the 2013 SWTJC Mission Statement Review Survey conducted by the SWTJC Office of Institutional Planning & Research. This survey was designed to collect input from the college's constituents about the current mission statement and solicit suggestions for any changes.

The college periodically reviews its mission statement to remain current in identifying and providing for the needs of the community it serves.

## **Methods**

The SWTJC Mission Statement Review survey was conducted on-line in June 2013. All faculty, staff, and administrators were sent an email via Associate Vice President of Institutional Advancement, Dick Whipple, announcing the survey and asking for participation. A link to the survey was contained in the body of the email message. In addition, notice and link to the survey was imbedded on the SWTJC website homepage and remained for an extended period of time to allow for input from alumni, board members, and the community. Articles announcing the survey and inviting participation appeared in local newspapers on multiple dates throughout July in the Uvalde Leader News, Eagle Pass News Gram, Del Rio News Herald and the Zavala County Sentinel.

## **Results**

A total of 207 responses were received.

	<i>Total</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Alumni	6	3%
Student	124	61%
SWTJC Faculty	30	14%
SWTJC Staff	38	18%
Community Member	3	1%
Missing	6	3%
Total	207	100%

Nearly 85% of respondents indicated they do not believe any changes are needed to the mission statement. Of those who indicated change is needed, 41 provided comments, information and/or suggestions. The comments have been categorized into 6 areas (not all addressing the mission statement) including: 1) wording considerations, 2) broadening of statement, 3) academic issues, 4) services suggested, 5) customer service, and 6) miscellaneous. A few themes repeated in the comments include: prioritization of mission statement items 1, 2, 3; streamlining the mission statement/addressing redundancy; and including information about ABE and dual credit. Many comments do not pertain to the mission statement but are included in this summary.

The following are the comments submitted by category.

#### Wording Considerations:

I think it should be less specific - maybe by leaving out geographical locations, etc. I think Blinn College has a good Mission Statement but it also has a Vision Statement.

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I think that is what we do. This part of the last sentence seems a little awkward but it is ok "and supports the economic growth of the community."

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I think there should be something about student success.

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I'd like to see it streamlined, possibly down to one sentence. For example, the numbered list is redundant, as #3 could include both #1 and #2. I realize this is to reflect technical programs, academic programs, and personal enrichment/PD, but I think it could be worded more concisely.

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Just a thought, "1) Enter the job market" - with marketable skills in their chosen field/s. "2) transfer to senior colleges and universities" - with the skills and foundation necessary to succeed. How about adding something along the lines of "Provide personal enrichment opportunities for the community we serve." #3 includes personal goals, maybe that covers it.

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Maybe a clarification of what "community" is supported in economic growth.

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Minor change: Should the statement end with the word communities since we are in various locations? Otherwise, I think it represents who we are.

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More of a question: does the order of items in 1-3 above imply a priority? If so, is #1 really #1, and so forth? Otherwise, I'm good with the statement.

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Second word: Southwest (caps) Also, works with local High Schools in dual credit advancement. Encourage students to engage in Community Service activities.

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The ideas are good, of course, but could it be warmed up a little? Being an English teacher, it's hard for me to be clinical. If it were just a little longer and in paragraph form, for example, see the following. I'm probably writing out of turn because I don't understand what needs to be included, but I'd like to see just a small adjustment. With changing economic times, SWTJC must change as well. With that in mind, it offers, and continues to expand, extensive vocational programs designed to equip students to be competitive in the job market, while for other students' goals, SWTJC is a perfect transition on to a senior college, preparing students to be well equipped to succeed at any senior college or university. For students, a strong educational foundation is critical to a successful future. Helping all students meet their goals, both professional and personal is the cornerstone of SWTJC. Through the efforts of SWTJC, not only are students' personal and professional goals met, but in this process, the growth and economic success of the community is also greatly enhanced.

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Because the college offers educational programs at other than the post-secondary level (ABE for instance), then you may want to consider two wording changes: (1) Remove the word "post-secondary" from the second sentence. (2) Change "higher education" in the third sentence to "educational".

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Check out St. Phillip's statement.

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You can take out number 1. Number 3 covers it.

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THANK YOU for asking for comments. I recommended a rewrite that avoids vague terms like "comprehensive, accessible, affordable, high-quality and "equitably". We are getting foreign students, and teachers from other countries who are coming here because of the location of our campuses, and the quality of our teaching staff, as well as the sort of outstanding graduates many of our alumni are. We have an EXCELLENT reputation in the state because of our PTK sponsors and the students who represent SWTJC at regional and district events. MISSION STATEMENTS should be concrete and specific so policies can be built on them that are consistent with the goals and objectives of our teaching staff.

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Southwest Texas Junior College provides post-secondary and college-preparatory programs for an eleven-county region near the Mexico border. Its vocational programs prepare students to enter the job market with the necessary academic and technical qualifications essential to their success. An Associate's Degree, earned in two years, enables students to transfer to four-year colleges and universities prepared to focus on their professional and personal goals. ELIMINATE politically-loaded, vague and obscure terms like "comprehensive", accessible, affordable, high-quality and "equitably". A good "MISSION STATEMENT" should be specific and concrete, so that the policies, goals and objectives premised on the mission statement are easy to understand, measure, and communicate to prospective students.

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This may seem trivial, but are the mission statement bullets in order of priority/importance or just randomly listed? While the technical programs have a greater graduation ceremony turnout, do they make up the majority of our students? Not to discount their specific job-related education, but shouldn't we first emphasize this is an academic institution offering higher education first that also offers training in skills the local job market currently demands. 2. The second sentence and closing comment hints that we are more of a job-training center for anyone with a high school diploma/GED. This reads like a statement from the Middle Rio Grande Economic Development Council. Again, I think we need a stronger emphasis identifying us as an academic entity.

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1) enter the job market with marketable skills, 2) be prepared for success when they transfer to four-year colleges and universities

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#### Broadening of Statement:

I feel that technology is now a big part of our mission. I think it should be incorporated into the mission. I'll talk to you later. Might consider adding a statement about learning. Maybe: 4) continue the pursuit of life-long learning

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The statement "post-secondary education" does not address all of the dual and high school opportunities that SWTJC affords to area young people. In fact, parents and high school students are looking for a way to address their college costs and complete some of these courses before graduation from high school.

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#### Academic Concerns:

The only concern for this college is after completing your basics students want to transfer to a university. The problem is you're ready to go and some classes aren't even counted for in other places. That just wastes time and money, provide the classes needed that will transfer.

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I think that there should be more variety of programs in this college. There are some students who try their best in passing their classes and have eligibility to transfer to another school but don't have the money for it, and sometimes Financial aid isn't enough to cover it all, and they want to be close to home but what they're majoring in they're not needing because they don't offer classes for it. Which in my opinion it would be much better if there were at least more classes but for different majors so it would be easier on the student than having to spend double or maybe even triple the amount of the money that they don't have at a college/university for just one class. I hope my opinion changes your views one of these days.

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Need to review the focus on all degree programs instead of the popular. Example: The Computer Information Systems program is not up to date and not "popular". I believe the CIS program is a must have at this institution because the world is a computer world. The world cannot function without computers at this point. The "IT Department" cannot function without student workers, in which all are in the CIS program. The majority of the staff in registration do their job excellent and most are CIS graduates from this institution. The oil field industry plays a major role in this part of the country, and I can say most of the technical jobs are computer based, besides the labor. Our distance learning services is made of 2 parts. The distance learning side, which makes the schedule and sets up equipment; and the network and computers side, which is serviced and maintained by IT student workers. The CIS program has not diminished, yet. The Distance Learning Program is an excellent program reaching out to students everywhere. Yet the students are not learning the full potential of computers with the DL service. I see the Health Services Program skyrocketing at the Witt building everyday. Yet I see empty classrooms in the Wagner Computer Center Building, in which most rooms are used for other than CIS instruction. The equipment for the CIS program is obsolete! PC's and Servers used for instruction are more than 10 years old. Working at the IT Department, I see many new PC's for staff and faculty. But what about the students? Sometimes the CIS instructors even asks if we can use our personal laptops for instructional use because the equipment cannot handle the software requirements. Example: Virtualization, in which most of the instruction is about. Rooms with obsolete PC's: Maths 1, Maths 2, Wagner 3, Wagner 6 I am not asking for millions, just please review the future of the Computer Information Systems program and utilities, and maybe some funding.

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### Services Suggested:

Bigger student lounge a running track

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I would like the campus to have a place where I can drop off my child for childcare while im in class.

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There should be an expansion to the cafeteria/eating area. There is not enough room for the students to sit and enjoy eating or relaxing before going back to class.

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Need to add more career opportunities in the Del Rio campus because they are extremely limited.

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### Customer Service:

Just that the staff needs to understand that if it wasn't for the students we wouldn't have a job and the people at the front desk need to be more closely supervised and somehow understand that they are the first impression of our college. How they treat the student is the impression that they take with them. I have gotten a lot of complaints and I have addressed them with their immediate supervisor but some people are just not made for customer service and they shouldn't be up in the front if they don't like their job or they need to deal with their problems and not bring them with them to work if that is the situation. I know this not just because the students themselves have told me but I myself have seen it first hand and my own kids have told me, that the ladies in the front don't like them because of the way they are treated when they go register for a class or ask them a question. And the people in the front don't know they are my kids till afterwards. And this problem is in Del Rio I can't speak for other places, but all I know is that it needs to be addressed. Thank you and I would appreciate any action that can be taken to improve the situation and if you want I can tell the students to start taking it up with the Dean or Vice President so that they can see that it is just not hearsay.

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### Miscellaneous:

Although SWTJC provides a great start for your future. There is always room for changes to improve.

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As a student and returning for another year at SWTJC I do not believe any changes are needed. This community college is wonderful and would encourage for many students to attend.

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Everything is fine!

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I would like to suggest more scheduled hours for a class. I think there are not many choices to choose the hour to take one class.

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It is complete and precisely why we are here.

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Maybe the administration can hire more staff or different staff in the front office. Some of us would like to get hired, but seems that not everyone is given a chance.

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So far you are doing an excellent job.

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This will be my first year attending SWTJC in Uvalde for a one yr course and im confident and I agree with the mission statement. And achieving my goals by furthering my education is my mission statement.

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Yes but not sure if this reason counts as one: I what to know why we have to pay off campus fee's to register for classes?

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A more professional and helpful staff in the Crystal City campus. They have the whole family at their office and won't prioritize students.

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Bigger Administration building

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