Thoughts Regarding Values

- Values not specific enough to be assessed. Not objective enough. What values are we talking about?
  - Clarification – This is the vision we are working on creating (not what necessarily currently exists)

- Main purpose of college seems buried – where is our educational mission?

- Missing – common belief in educational excellence
  - What is a working definition of educational excellence? How is that translated operationally?

- This is the vision we are trying to create.

Defining the Problem

What is our common definition of communication?

- Giving and receiving of information
- The passing-on of accurate information
- Communication is the dissemination of information
- How accurate is our communication (at LMC?, anywhere?)
- Dealing with our humanness is communication. (The problem of misinformation is big around here)
• LMC was architecturally designed for good communication, but obviously it did not work.
• It took a long time to figure out who did what, where
• The importance of asking questions

Distribution of Information
• Quantity vs. quality
• “I cannot possibly read everything I get in the mail and on e-mail.”
• How do I know what is important?
• Overload! Are we less efficient? Are we trying to over-communicate?
• Too much info
• Choosing specificity over blanket statements (good?)
• College newspaper is increasingly important in getting any info around here

Knowledge of Roles
• Managers / Faculty / Classified
  ➢ We have different issues about our communication
  ➢ We have different perspectives (about what is important) e.g. ¾ day week, productivity.
  ➢ Lack of respect between faculty and management
• Sorting out what each of our jobs are, is key – communication is tied to this understanding of roles
• Roles box us in around here
• Managers oversee and communicate about our schedules, often without understanding specific needs / situations – they need more info (better communication)
  ➢ Issue of 3 – 4 day week (*Note: the issue of managers being concerned and voicing this concern [regarding some faculty members working 2 – 3 day work-weeks] publicly without always fully understanding the specific situation was strongly expressed with intense emotions)
• We need ground rules:
  ➢ What are we here for?
  ➢ Who does what?
  ➢ What are our roles?
  ➢ It is about knowing and understanding our role within the college

Respect
• “There were more people talking about me than to me.”
• “If someone has a problem with me, I want them to talk to me.”
• Respect is key here. There is so much animosity.
• Communications is about respect.
• Communication and respecting that person for who they are is key.
• Respect – some students are respected, some are not (that is difficult to watch)
• Students come first. Lack of respect for this is needs to change to the positive
• How faculty treats classified – interferes with communication.
• New programs (such as Puente) are suspected instead of respected
• Lots of mistrust in all areas
• What do you do when “so and so” don’t talk to each other?
• Respect is not poor here – communication is.
(*Note: There were strong emotions regarding respect, ranging from expressing the need for increased respect on campus / to accepting that LMC is a microcosm of society and we cannot expect everyone to respect all persons in the college community….)

Teamwork
- In the private sector they often work in teams, our roles are so separate here
- We need ways to create teams / communications
- How can I help you to do your job better so that you have time to be nice to me?

How Will We Know When Communications Have Improved at LMC?
- There will be ONE source for all information at work.
- People will know how to fill out existing forms and it will make sense to them.
  (Seminar)
- People will begin to “play” and feel joy at work. Happy people = better work = LMC a better college
- We will validate each other’s work more often. (more activities like the Thanksgiving “thank-you” reception)
- People will know how to self-monitor:
  - Ask themselves “is this seen as a criticism?”
  - Do a perception check: put in the context of “good intention”.
  - Be aware that not everyone will understand and take our communications the way that we would like.
- LMC community ground rules will be established, known and understood (to help understand “communication filters”.
- Roles will be understood within the college community.
- Communications will be more specific, less amorphous (as reported by staff)
- There will be less rumors

Solutions

14 dots Clarify Roles
- Disseminate – a clarification of “who is responsible for what.”
- Develop a clarity about each role within the college
  (This will assist in dealing with quality vs. quantity and with redundancy)
- Be sure that we are on the same page – everyone who is involved should be consulted before final definitions of roles is established.
- Distinguish and define our roles in the classroom and outside of the classroom.

9 dots Establish a Planning Group (CC Denver Model)
- 15 people from different constituencies come to the table and plan for the college. Establish a way for everyone who is going to be involved to be consulted.
8 dots Establish an “Information Clearinghouse”
  ➢ With ground rules about “quality and quantity”
  ➢ Clarify guidelines / need for inclusion of info in clearinghouse

8 dots Host regularly scheduled College Wide Forums for open communication, where everyone can attend, to hear and to be listened to

8 dots Continue this dialogue.
  ➢ Compare jobs / roles, share issues, get to know one another, “Let’s talk!”.

6 dots Hire a marketing person to develop
  ➢ Publications which will clarify info
  ➢ Voice mail filter

6 dots Have the deans / managers get more involved with the faculty:
  ➢ It’s a way to break down a lot of “stuff” (emotion / misunderstanding)
  ➢ Management by “walking around”

1 dot Develop a culture with encourages the “personal touch”.
  ➢ Increase direct communication and acknowledgement

Idea that was expressed at Luncheon, but was not articulated as a Solution:
Conduct workshops on Communication Styles and Techniques and on Team-building.

(Note: was expressed to the facilitator after the luncheon, by a participant, that perhaps we should have been more specific on the definition of “Communication” and had the discussion about the practical side of communication – rather than the emotional side)