



Institutional Strategic Planning Committee Meeting
4th Thursday Meeting
Student Union Center – ASU West Campus
June 22, 2017

Facilitator: Dr. Kimberly Holmes

Present:

Colonel James Carroll	Dr. Kim Lee	Mr. Kenneth Cutts	Ms. Tracy St. Amant
Dr. Vicki Phillips	Dr. B. Donta Truss	Ms. Cynthia Hoke	Mr. Ken Boler
Ms. Latoya Cutts	Dr. Rhonda Porter	Dr. Michael Rogers	

Review of Minutes from May 25th Meeting:

Minutes from prior meeting reviewed. No changes or additions/corrections. Motion to approve by Dr. Rogers with no oppositions. Seconded by Dr. Lee. Motion carried.

Mr. Cutts, Assistant to Congressman Sanford Bishop and Latoya Cutts, Downtown Manager, City of Albany joined this meeting. Mr. Cutts gave a brief overview of his experiences gained from attendance at a regional Chamber of Commerce, State of the Region event held earlier on the same day at ASU East campus. He stated that he enjoyed listening to the guest speaker and gave a brief overview of key takeaways related to relationships between business, government, the K-12 school system and higher educational institutions. He reiterated a key point made at the event that positive messages must be engrained into children at very early ages. He also suggested that mentors are needed in our school systems.

Dr. Holmes shared other key points from the Chamber event related to challenges articulated by major local employers, such as Procter and Gamble and Pfizer, Inc. Company leaders indicated that a major barrier to hiring more local talent is the inability of potential employees to successfully pass drug screening and/or background checks.

One committee member stated that, as an employer, they find themselves being more lenient than they used to be when it comes to hiring and what is an acceptable infraction listed on the background check.

Dr. Holmes: A large volume of jobs available now don't require a bachelor's degree. Also, soft skills are of great importance and are apparently still is an issue for many employers. How do we, as the city's university, address those issues?

St Amant: Several of our job descriptions don't list having an associate's or bachelor's; just one to two years of experience.

Dr. Holmes: Growing up with struggling parents could also be an issue. Is that something to which we should pay attention?

Mr. Boler: We have a two-part problem.

Dr. Lee: Based on barriers, we have to think differently about how we approach students. In one county, ninety-percent of students who are promoted from middle school are not ready for high school work. How do they bridge the gap from middle school to high school then? These are issues that we need to think about. One strategy might be to re-engage the faith-based community. What about what students say they need? How do we collaboratively address this?

St. Amant: We have a significant shortage of CNAs. We found ourselves not having enough CNAs in the candidate pool to pull from. We partnered with Albany Tech. This partnership has been great but the students struggle to complete the program. In one cycle, we started out with 15 students and now we are down to six because of the previously discussed barriers. Partnering is one small piece. Breaking down those walls of environmental barriers is another piece, but we have to have those partnerships.

Dr. Holmes: Do we need a new entity to spearhead the work of reducing environmental barriers?

Colonel Carroll: I think the faith-based approach is very useful. You will definitely get the help you need from that group.

St. Amant: Do you (ASU) build your own pipeline of students from local schools?

Dr. Truss: We have many different approaches to that. There are schools with which we work. I do believe we can get better in this regard.

Dr. Lee: Move on When Ready is the most far-reaching area to make strong connections and develop pipelines. We just need to continue to keep the students engaged.

Dr. Truss: This discussion brings to mind the *Upward Bound Program*. It is important to get those programs back in the region. They focus on low income families and help them with college-preparation processes. We must also find programs that will be able to go out in the community. Then, write a grant proposal and be progressive with it.

Mr. Cutts: With regard to federal funding of Upward Bound programs, several HBCU's who had these programs previously didn't get funded this year. That is the environment now.

Dr. Holmes: Upward Bound was one of the programs that was reported to be cut. This was discussed at the national Title III Conference held recently in Atlanta. We have to diversify as much as possible because funding sources are not as reliable as they used to be.

Mr. Boler: We know we have a problem. Real life and death for some folk.

Review of Listening Session Inputs

Dr. Holmes: We have held approximately 35 community-based listening sessions with the initial meetings starting at ASU and then branched out to the communities.

Dr. Porter then gave a brief update on how one subcommittee charged with input analysis and synthesis categorized results of the information gathered from responses provided at each listening session. A handout was distributed at the meeting.

Dr. Holmes: There are common themes that arose in each session. Is there anything you see that needs to be highlighted or causes a concern?

Dr. Rogers: Attract youth early.

Ms. Cutts: One phrase that is unclear is "Improve economic status of community". What does that mean?

Dr. Holmes: One example could be to build up downtown to attract more students who will patronize local businesses.

St. Amant: Is that something similar to what Columbus did?

Dr. Holmes: Yes.

Ms. Cutts: We want to be able to encourage students to come downtown but there is no year round presence of ASU downtown. We put the banners out at Homecoming but as soon as Homecoming ends, we take them down. What is that saying to the students of ASU and the community? What kind of business do we need to bring downtown to attract the students?

Dr. Holmes: We do appreciate the city for revising the bus route to include a stops on both campuses for the students of ASU. The buses are even named by to the students to be “Ram Rush”.

Ms. Cutts: Yes, we included the students in that process.

Dr. Holmes: Are there any more questions regarding Dr. Porter’s handout?

Development of Strategic Priorities:

St. Amant: One strategic priority must be to build pipelines for enrollment.

Dr. Truss: We have quite a bit of that going on. Development of enrollment pipelines is definitely a priority.

Dr. Rogers: Pipeline of partnerships with external stakeholders.

Mr. Boler: If you do that, you have got to add alums. If you are looking at a 5 year strategic plan, alums are important.

Dr. Rogers: Focus on improving retention, enrollment, progression, and success.

Ms. Cutts: Has ASU done assessments of the degree programs to demonstrate strong enrollment in these programs? Starting salaries? Where the institution ranks in that program? What does enrollment look like in that program?

Dr. Holmes: Yes, we track those numbers regularly and report to the USG on a periodic basis.

St. Amant: When selecting programs to see if people are hiring in those areas, select programs that will feed the available jobs in the local area and region.

Colonel Carroll: I think a roundtable with connections to community liaisons will work well.

Mr. Boler: In 3-5 years, it would be great for a parent to say, “My student is working their field and making a great salary”. There are a lot of graduates that are underemployed. The institution should have ongoing contact with graduates to help them gain employment.

Ms. Cutts: Does the career placement area need to be strengthened?

Dr. Truss: Yes. But we need students to get more involved with the Career Services team and get engaged on campus.

Ms. Cutts: Can that be mandatory?

Dr. Truss: We do not want to make it a burden for the students, but build it as an incentive when taking classes. If you want to raise the graduation rates, raise the admissions requirements. Keep in mind, however, that we are an access institution.

Dr. Porter: Freshman orientation did discuss requiring student to complete a career services project.

Dr. Truss: We are re-vamping. We connected academics with the Summer Bridge Program. This does not help much with career services, however, because students attend classes less when they go out for job searches.

Dr. Philips: Can we move some strategies back to 9th grade? We need to be mentoring early in terms of professional counseling and career counseling.

Dr. Truss: Enhance pre-college programs. Put programs in high school and middle school.

St. Amant: We will take effective communication over high GPAs. Examples are showing up to work on time and showing compassion. Communication is so important to my job and staff.

Dr. Truss: Promotion of excellent customer service needs to be strengthened across both campuses and put at the top of the list.

Mr. Boler: We must also pay attention to the fact that the way we do business today will not work in the future.

Dr. Holmes: Okay, so what should ASU look like in the future and how do we prioritize?

Dr. Rogers: We have effective internal operations.

Dr. Holmes: How did we get there?

Dr. Rogers: Step by step instructions have to be implemented.

Dr. Holmes: Feedback and training are essential to the process as well. We will discuss how this will be integrated across the campuses.

Mr. Boler: Who's ahead of us so that we do not have to reinvent the wheel?

Dr. Holmes: We have peer institutions who can be models for us. What else are we missing in terms of possible categories of priorities? We have not discussed any suggestions related to international education, diversity or research.

Dr. Lee: I think we have answered what ASU looks like in 5 years to professionals. If I'm a 9th grader, what will ASU look like to me? We need to answer that.

Dr. Holmes: Great insight, Dr. Lee. Thank you. I will send a series of questions to think about between now and next meeting.

Meeting adjourned: 3:25pm.

Minutes recorded by: Monica C. Reed