

True North Initiative Task Force Meeting

November 14, 2018

Gemmell Student Center, Rm. 246

Meeting Notes

Attendees: Daniel Clark, Josh Domitrovich, Merrilyn Dunlap, Jen Dutkiewicz, Ray Feroz, Lynne Fleisher, Deb Kelly, Anita Lahr, Terry Latour, Jen Mills, Gwen Price, Sam Puleio, Adam Roberts, Matt Shaffer, Chad Smith, Chad Thomas, Tammy Varsek, Tree Zuzzio.

Absent: Brad Wagner

The meeting was called to order at 8:02 a.m.

Dr. Roberts announced that at today's meeting David Dollins will present an overview of Clarion's Strategic Enrollment Plan, followed by Len Cullo, who will present an overview of the University's finances. The November 28th meeting will follow a similar pattern, with Pam Gent and Susan Fenske providing an overview on the topic of student retention, followed by Jim Geiger providing an overview of the University's marketing plan. After the November 28 session we expect to form working groups, with each group focusing their attention on a deeper investigation of their topical areas.

David Dollins introduced the group to the Enrollment Management's website devoted to Clarion University's STEP Up Strategic Enrollment Plan. The publicly accessible portion of the website includes the charge of President Pehrsson and includes a link to the Intranet Site, where an updated version of the plan is available, along with regularly updated data on enrollment efforts and benchmarks. The wealth of data is impressive. It provides insights in a more data informed process for guiding Clarion's recruitment efforts.

Enrollment recruitment goals for the University for fall 2019 have been set and data at the site is updated regularly to track the progress. Additional data is available on peer group institutions and where students that were accepted at Clarion last year, and did not matriculate, actually enrolled, and what their major is if they declared one. As the Strategic Enrollment Plan continues to develop, more detailed information about the individuals being recruited is begin gathered and more sophisticated analysis of the data is resulting in more precise targeting. The plan also includes a student retention component, which is also being informed by enhanced data gathering and analysis. Faculty and staff with a stake in the recruitment and enrollment process are encouraged to consult the Intranet Site.

Len Cullo presented an overview of the University's finances. The first portion of the presentation focused upon the actual results of the Educational and General Budget operations of the previous two years. FY 2016/17 ended the year with a surplus of

\$689,363, while FY 2017/18 ended the year with a deficit of \$361,472, primarily because of a lower retention rate from fall to spring semesters last year and a decision to write-off a portion of the accounts receivable revenues that the University is unlikely to collect. However, the cash position of the University actually improved.

Because of the operational character of the institution, most of the costs are fixed. Not filling, or delaying the filling of open positions, is one of the few means to reduce costs. This was a factor in reducing expenditures below budgeted amounts during the previous two years.

The budget for the current fiscal year, FY2018/19, may result in a situation that requires the use of up to \$4,674,687 in carry forward, or reserve funds, to balance the budget. This is primarily due to lower than expected fall student enrollment and built-in increases in personnel costs. Efforts are in progress to reduce operating budgets throughout the organization and to delay or avoid personnel hiring. Unlike some of the other PASSHE institutions, Clarion's reserve funds have declined to the level that we cannot afford to operate in deficit without making a significant effort to reduce operating costs.

A question was asked about the ability of the University to track Venango Campus revenues and expenses. Mr. Cullo reported that the present financial structure and software does not make that information readily accessible. Most revenues and expenses associated with the Venango Campus are integrated into other operational categories. We must first define what is meant by Venango Campus, then do much of the analysis by individual review of the related accounts and ledgers. He expects Financial Affairs to do this over the next several months.

TNI members having additional questions relating to either enrollment management or University finances are encouraged to send their questions to Drs. Roberts and Latour, who will share the questions with the appropriate individuals and their responses back to all of the task force members.

ACTION ITEM: Pam Gent, Susan Fenske and others will provide an overview on the topic of student retention at the next meeting.

ACTION ITEM: Jim Geiger will provide an overview of the University's marketing plan at the next meeting.

The next meeting be will Wednesday, November 28, 2018, 8-9 a.m., Gemmell Student Center Room 246.

Meeting adjourned at approximately 9:30 a.m.