

Enrollment Working Group Minutes
October 16, 2019
Bresnahan Training Room

Present: Berardini, Cossentino, Davis, Herman, Howard, Morrone, Myers, Ruse, Sherman, Smith, Tirone

Welcome & Announcements

Vice President for Student Affairs, Eddie Howard, welcomed everyone. He said to remain consistent with the Board of Trustees Resolution, “Taking Charge of Our Future,” this group of key individuals has been brought together to discuss enrollment and create an enrollment framework. Provost Brien Smith said the group will assist with constructing guiding principles and establishing priorities. Our institution needs to be collaborative in order to meet enrollment expectations.

National Enrollment Forecast

There has been a major decline in overall enrollment nationally. Another major drop is predicted between the years of 2027 and 2029. Graphs were presented to the group showing what parts of the country will be most affected. Ohio is one of the states with the highest anticipated decline in enrollment during this period.

Taskforce Objectives

Per the Enrollment Working Group document, several key objectives were listed:

- To form a group of stakeholders to construct a comprehensive institutional enrollment strategy for undergraduate, graduate, international, and distance education students.
- To improve communication between Enrollment Services, Academic Affairs, Student Success, Marketing and Communications, and the seven academic colleges to address critical enrollment challenges we face as an institution.
- To deliver a comprehensive institutional enrollment plan to the Board of Trustees.
- To conduct a comprehensive audit of all institutional high school visits, programs, and initiatives.
- To conduct an analysis to determine the optimal size and shape of overall institutional enrollment.
- To develop a comprehensive international student enrollment plan.
- To develop a comprehensive graduate student enrollment plan.
- To develop a comprehensive distance education and academic partner enrollment plan.

Key Priorities

EAB Partnership

There are a variety of approaches used to draw individuals’ interest toward attending college. Strategically, purchasing students’ names is the current best practice. However, a better way may be to think of enrollment as a funnel for current, suspected, prospective, and transfer

students. The first step is to know the conversion rate. This is very important in establishing if we are meeting expectations. If not, we need to assess what we and EAB can do to help. Provost Smith said EAB now has dashboards that show triggered issues. Groups will be assigned to follow up on these triggers to solve issues to improve numbers. We need to be proactive.

One task, per today's meeting, is to form the framework. The institution's partnership with EAB is critical and they are visiting the campus on November 14 and 15. An agenda regarding their visit will be distributed at a later time. Mr. Howard informed the group that he and EAB have bi-weekly conversations regarding enrollment. He stated that we should not be spending valuable time visiting high schools. Beginning in January, we will be able to see how our incoming class is shaping up in terms of enrollment.

Listed below are key priorities that will be addressed by the taskforce. This list only represents a sample of the items that will be explored.

- **EAB/Marketing & Communications Collaboration-** Create a comprehensive strategic plan that combines the efforts of both units to capture students. The goal of collaboration is to share our brand and EAB's messaging with prospective students, tweaking the 7 EAB touch points to include our brand message(s). Should we develop a social media campaign around scheduled high school visits?
- **Internal Admission Review** – The Office of Admissions evaluates the process used to “seal the deal” after EAB secures applicant interest. This review will explain the recruitment process to applicants within and beyond the five county area. What happens on the admissions application processing side? Do we have recruitment and communication plans? If so, are they documented?
- **Conditional Admit Program-** Conduct a comprehensive review of the procedures and criteria used to approve conditionally admitted applicants. Identify the optimal number of admits to yield success. Using data analysis, identify possible correlations and develop a formula to predict student success. Establish interventions using services provided by the CSP and others. Investigate the feasibility of a partnership program with Eastern Gateway Community College.
- **Transfer Student Recruitment-** Develop strategies to increase the yield of transfer students. Expand our partnerships with other institutions to meet specific enrollment targets.
- **College Recruitment Efforts-** Collaborate with the six academic colleges and the Honors College to align recruitment events, programs, and marketing materials to ensure that all recruitment, enrollment, and scholarship funding maximizes the institution's yield. Should we create college or major-specific brochures to help recruit students during high school visits?
- **Admission Criteria Analysis-** Conduct a review of the admission criteria for regularly-admitted students to ensure that current institutional goals are appropriate.
- **CCP Yield Rate-** Conduct an analysis of the current CCP reporting structure to ensure appropriate placement and optimize yield and participation.

- **Enrollment Partnerships-** Investigate opportunities to expand our relationship with outside groups to yield students from special populations (i.e., Say Yes to Cleveland, YEC, and the Bridges Program (Foster Care)).
- **Undecided Populations-** With the increased number of students declaring their major as Exploring Undecided, conduct an analysis of the appropriate advising structure for these students.
- **Business Practices Related to Enrollment -** Conduct a review of business-related procedures that might contribute the obstacles students face during registration.
- **Competition for Students from Diverse Backgrounds –** Collaborate with key institutional leaders to improve the enrollment and persistence of students from diverse backgrounds by providing services to Trailblazer Scholarship recipients that promote the use of the CSP.

Shannon Tirone, Associate Vice Provost for University Relations, said it is good to know “who is doing what when,” and to have knowledge of available budgets. Smart spending and collaboration are essential to advancement. Brien Smith said that we are close to being able to chart a student’s course from the beginning to end of their college career.

International and Graduate Enrollment Efforts

Things “are happening” within International and Graduate enrollment programs. However, there needs to be more group discussion to see how they affect overall enrollment and to make their processes more streamlined.

Other Items

As for transfer students, we need to create a funnel uniquely for them, as well as for other specific student populations.

Claire Berardini, Associate Provost for Student Success, informed the group that they are working on a TRiO Grant and if successful, she would like it added to the list. The grant covers three programs: Upward Bound, McNair Scholarship Program, and Student Support Services. She said we are the only 4-year institution in Ohio that does not have this.

Eddie Howard said the best way to proceed is to prioritize. Marketing is very important and needs to be made a priority. Currently, the Marketing and Communications Department is working with EAB regarding enrollment pieces, but has also set aside funds for additional projects in going forward. Ross Morrone, Director of Marketing, said they will need to work on branding and understanding EAB’s process so they can prioritize the order in which projects need to be completed.

It was determined that a breakoff group would be formed to address marketing and that Ross Morrone and Sue Davis, Director of Admissions, would be included in this group. There should be at least one group representative from all auxiliaries as well. Marketing to current students is just as important as marketing to potential students. We need to think about communication going out next year and what our talking points and narrative(s) should be. Amy Cossentino, Dean of the Honors College, told the group that the Honors Program already had an open house and has received 50 applications to date.

The group was informed that Penguin Preview Days were coming up and the institution needs to capitalize on them. Christine Hubert oversees Penguin Preview Day programs. Sue Davis said EAB sends out messages regarding these programs. Admissions also sends out postcards, emails, and online social messaging to students. We need to add value while these students are on campus.

Our job is not only to get students here, but to work at keeping them here. We need to share this information across campus and get “all hands on deck.” We need to map out a plan from start to finish, acknowledging that branding may vary per area. A chart that identifies steps for successful departmental/staff marketing was suggested.

Programs needing addressed immediately are Penguin Preview Day, Guidance Counselor Day, Financial Aid Night, and possibly two new programs: Accepted Student Day and a Scholarship Recipient Dinner. Claire Berardini said these two new programs would elevate the institution to another level. Currently, each college does their own programming and there appears to be little consistency.

Mike Sherman, Vice President for Institutional Effectiveness and Board Professional, reported that the Office of Institutional Research and Policy Analysis is researching why students left the university last year, where they were from, and reviewing their academic information. We now have the capability to track where we are missing student needs and hopefully will create a strategy to correct these issues and improve retention.

Tasks to be addressed at the next meeting:

- How can we improve Admissions marketing?
- Map out strategies for Admissions/Registrar
- Review student intake processes, EAB engagement, and transfer students.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:15 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by Donna Greenaway, recorder