

University Strategic Planning Committee Steering Committee
Working Group Notes from Discussion Session on Four Strategic Planning Categories

Purpose: Vision and Mission

Major Purpose related to student access, success, and excellence

1. Rethinking Recruitment, and what we have to offer
 - Internship, hands-on, local business partnerships
 - Incentives for recruitment: laptops, scholarships, prior learning experience credit
 - Identify who needs access and match students to the programs that we offer.
 - Match the student with the need.
 - Identify the student and what they need.
 - Target nontraditional students' ex. Women in welding. Ex. Stem programs
 - PLA Prior Learning Experience Expansion

2. Retention incentives
 - Returning students scholarships
 - Broader mentorship program to include all students
 - Diversity in recruitment staff and faculty/staff
 - Multicultural Center would be very beneficial to keep up with upcoming diversity changes.
 - Artificial intelligence as a tool, geo-fencing connects with students before issues of grades, withdrawal, or dropping of classes begins.

3. Innovation for student success
 - More internships through programs of study with local business partners
 - Use of artificial intelligence for operational procedures and possible within academic programs

Product: Programs and Delivery

1. Turn minors into certificates.
 - This gives students a degree and a certificate.

2. Targeted program development (focus on ROI)
 - Identify specific degree programs for both marketing and resource allocation.
 - Focus on ROI to help create pipelines
 - E.g., where could we make significant expansions by adding one more faculty member?
 - Where could we add a graduate degree, for example,
 - E.g., In A&H, things like Rehab Science, Criminal Justice, Emergency Management, Engineering Computer Science, professional programs)

3. Create a “flipped degree” (where major is “on the bottom”; we use “the top” to satisfy gen ed)
 - Most Ozark degrees are 70 hours, but only 15 are gen ed; the problem with transferring to ATU is that ADHE requires 35 hours of gen ed (and a certain proportion are an upper level)
 - Identify specific # of upper-level classes at ATU Russellville and allow them to count them for lower-level gen ed.
 - Map this so it is clear what courses could be involved in "upper-level gen ed" and be clear what counts for what and how it is assessed
 - Also, carve out 15 hours for a certificate of their choice—then they will get the lower level major, a certificate, and a 4-year degree.
 - Allows for excellent access AND accessibility

4. Make online and virtual experiences excellent.
 - Motivate faculty to online/virtual teaching excellence
 - Centralize authority related to online implementation
 - Focus on systems, delivery, design, and implementation (not course content)
 - Have funds to help compensate faculty for training and course design/redesign to make classes more accessible online
 - Clarify what hi-flex is and how it is beneficial for students AND faculty (for these classes, faculty may see it as basically having to set up BOTH an asynchronous online course AND a face-to-face)

5. Recruitment
 - Actively recruit more diverse students (especially with regard to African American and Latino students)
 - Bilingual recruiters (because of students’ families)
 - More recruiters in other areas
 - Create a summer bridge program and early arrival programs for these students; help create a cohort environment; give course credit for this!
 - If we increase access, we have to increase support services.

6. Expand prior learning assessment (PLA), especially for military
 - Evaluate transcripts from the military to corresponding courses in the university curricula
 - Example—'Credit for Heroes' program at Central Texas College
 - This may depend on the major; it could be especially helpful for gen-ed

7. Teaching Support and Enhancement (something like Faculty Teaching Fellows)
 - Train faculty to help give other faculty feedback on teaching best practices (both online and in-person)
 - This loops back to making the online and virtual experience excellence

- It must be a personal growth tool, not a hire-fire tool
- Demise of e-Tech was faculty perception that training/feedback was going to be used against them
- Can't look like an arm of the administration
- Culture change where we lean on this type of feedback in addition to student course evaluations
- Incentivize it with funding

Partnerships: External and Internal

Report from Ted Abernathy on workforce development.

- Initiated by local industry through the Russellville Area Chamber of Commerce.
- Develop employees who can support industry needs.
- Tech on board with workforce development committee.
- Develop a program with various K-12 schools to create mentorship programs between industry and local students.
- ATU and Gov. Hutchinson have developed a career coaching program that complements the above effort. Career coaches learn students' aptitudes and interests and help them understand the educational options that best fit their goals.
- Create an opportunity to stack those initial credentials into further education for career advancement.
- Fill an advising gap that exists for K-12 students who are not on a traditional, four-year college track.
- Industry mentors for K-12 students, internships, and job shadowing are cited as important steps in achieving objectives.

Must be sensitive to the fact it is an industry-led initiative, and Arkansas Tech best serves the whole by participating as a partner in that effort.

- ANO hiring ATU engineering graduates and finding the benefits of that cited as an example.
- Key to listen to industry needs and inform industry of existing programs or willingness to develop new programs.

How is ATU influencing and interacting with the communities it serves?

- There is a great deal of talent on campus. Is it playing a role in our communities?
- Importance of ATU faculty and staff advocating within their sphere of influence to positively affect recruitment, etc. (internal pride → outreach)
- Encourage faculty and staff to build upon their existing network to drive recruitment.

Programming Partnerships

- Rockline Industries

- Bank OZK
- Green Pay Packaging
- What are the similar partnerships we might be missing?

Mexican Consulate

- Are there other nations with whom we could build similar partnerships?
- Increase outreach with international recruitment agencies.
- Build meaningful partnerships that exist on an interpersonal basis with key influencers.

Partnerships with Other Universities

- Be strategically positioned for mutually beneficial partnerships with independent colleges and vocational institutions.
- Programs that are offered here, not at other schools, that we can offer to their students through a memorandum of understanding.

Community-Based Research

- Serving community partners with classes that solve real-world problems and provide authentic experiences to students.

Profitability: Institutional Support

1. We need to realize there has been a shift in focus regarding higher education to focus on the workforce. Specifically, people are trying to find a way to get to the workforce faster and with limited debt.

Examples:

- Arizona State: 1 million new students by 2030 by micro-credentials in various formats
 - Nursing/Training and offering these services to the community/Saint Mary's Hospital*
 - We have more academic programs that could be utilized to offer training to industry*
 - We need to increase advertising the possibilities and help to increase visibility*
2. Research is indicating there is an overreliance on tuition. Where can we encourage corporate/private partnerships? Eliminate duplication.

Examples:

- Businesses who are willing to invest in the students in order to guarantee a job for them when they graduate.
- Saint Mary's used to offer to students who will come work with them after graduation.
- What are we doing in house, which other companies are already doing?
Outsourcing/partnerships
 - Mental health

- Utilize more grant opportunities
 - Fundraising
 - Even though we cannot depend on tuition, people expect more now from higher education. They expect us to offer A – Z services, but at a reasonable price.
 - RE-evaluate existing funds and how they are allocated
 - We are on track with our current expenses due in part to the recent restructure.
3. Facilities/Equipment
- The survey results shown today indicated UCA was a preferred choice because of their facilities and what they had to offer for student life. We need to showcase our assets and facilities to potential students.
 - We need to identify the student population as we move forward. Example: Are they Latino? Are they living at home with a need of a location to "hang out" on campus?
 - Need lockers or places to store things for those who do not live on campus.
 - Campus living room – how do we get the buy-in? How do we make the campus a place they want to hang out?
 - Incorporate popular restaurants/franchises/commerce on campus
 - Master plan review. Where are we? Where do we want to go next?
 - STEM Building
4. Honoring tuition price from two-year institutions?
5. Communication of plans/events on campus needs improvement.
- ATU apps
 - Unified calendar
 - Notifications/pushes from Apps/Social Media(Instagram/TikTok)
6. Need commerce development that surrounds the campus
- Need opportunities that are close by for students without transportation
7. Change the stigma of the quality of ATU's education
- Showcase/advertise more of our state-of-the-art activities
8. Hosting external events
- Show off our campus to those who may never otherwise experience it.
 - Hull Student Union Conferences
9. People
- Tuition waivers/benefits to employees (invest in people)
 - Professional Development – funds for faculty and staff to attend professional development
 - Compensation improvement
 - Mental Health Counseling Access
 - Diversity