Working Group-The University as a Public Institution

Committee Meeting Minutes: September 14th, 2015
3:00pm-4:30pm RPL 325

Committee Members: Dr. Michael Rogers (Chair), Mayor Randy Horton, Mr. Kelly Davis, Emily Bradley, Kristy Bayer, Melissa Rose, Zachary Swartz, Bailey Taylor, Wendi Pool, Angela Bonds, and Dr. Sandy M. Smith Guests: Brandon Wright and Amanda Johnson (Norman Career Services)

Not Present: Bailey Taylor

Proceedings:

I. Update on two general SPC meetings
   - Retention and student success were key topics.
     o What will help retention?
     o Do we increase standard of admission requirements?
   - How do we increase diversity?
     o What aspect of their culture can minority students contribute to Tech instead of the student conforming to our culture?
     o This year was the first year Tech implemented Transfer Student Orientation. There will be improvements to come.

II. Charge Open Discussion/Questions & Ideas: Evaluating Tech's Identity and Brand
Topic 1: While specifically thinking about ATU and its history and traditions, how would you define its contributions to the "Public Good"?

1. General Comments
   - ATU opens doors for students in cases where Tech may be their only option.
   - We have many 1st generation students.
   - Tech meets standards to fulfill jobs in the community.

2. ATU activities contributing to common good
   - Athletic teams contribute to the community with yearly initiatives (e.g., Fight On initiative this year)
   - Allied Heath visits local schools and helps students who may need extra help in the classroom.
   - Nursing contributes to the community when completing their clinicals.
   - Internships contribute to the community.
   - Campus Life promotes volunteerism.
   - Tech Emergency Management students assist the FBI with mapping projects.

3. Issues

- Where should the structure be to maintain and promote internships? Should departments establish the framework for employer relations?
- Tech needs more Student Services positions to accommodate students.
- Tech could start a recycling program on campus.
- How do we keep and maintain relationships in the community?
- How can we collaborate volunteering and curriculum?

Recommended Action: Tech should open a Community Engagement Office, this could also serve as a volunteer center for students.
Recommended Action: ATU should have a standing Civic and Community Engagement Committee.

Topic 2: What is Tech's special niche in the overall university system and should it be any different than it currently is?

1. Selling points
   - Tech is affordable and accessible.
   - We offer many work study positions.
   - Emergency Management is a unique program at Tech.
   - SGA poll showed that students think that it is easy to get involved at Tech, professors are easy to talk to, and they feel that Tech is student service oriented.

2. Issues
   - Some Departments have the funding for student workers, but not the space.
   - Some feel ATU needs more traditions.
     - Tech could build a group that focuses on Tech history and traditions.
   - ***Tech struggles with its identity.***
     - Who are we as an institution?
     - How do we build and identity and stop comparing Tech to other schools?
     - The community supports UA by wearing and purchasing their apparel; Tech students wear a lot of UA apparel on campus and on Tech game days.
     - How can we improve Tech spirit on campus and in the community?
     - Does the Tech Connection Committee still exist?
     - Multiple mascots may be producing confusion among freshman and may be contributing to Tech's identity struggles.
   - Many students work and many go home on the weekends. How do we change this?
     - Community scavenger hunt may help students get involved with community.

Recommended Action: ATU could educate students on Russellville and what is available to them.
Recommended Action: Tech should work on job placement. This could be a strong contributor to enrollment.

Topic 3: Who are the personnel on campus most responsible for creating, nurturing, and managing the relationships with the community and creating a "brand" that acknowledges ATU's responsibility to contribute to the public good? (Did not have much time to cover this question)

- Student Services plays a role in creating and managing our relationship with the community.
- See also list of "ATU activities contributing to the common good" above.

III.   Next Meeting: September 21st, 2015 from 3:00pm-5:00pm in RPL 325.

Discuss Community Collaborations (Perceptions and Values)
GUESTS: Brandon Wright and Amanda Johnson (Norman Career Services)

- Before the next meeting the committee will consider the following questions:

  ❖ What is the WG's current perception of the relationship with the local community and the state?

  ❖ How can the successful elements of that relationship be leveraged for the benefit of both the University and its surrounding area?

  ❖ In looking back for as many as ten years, have there been major shifts in the character and quality of the relationship between the University and the community?