Strategic Plan Implementation Steering Committee
February 7, 2011
Wishcamper Center, room 211, Portland Campus

Attendance
Bill Wells, Scott Steinberg, Rose Cleary, Jerry LaSala, John Voyer, Susan Campbell, Nathan Grant, Mary Sloan, Beth Higgins, David Nutty, Janet Warnert, Katherine Kuhn, Ross Hickey, Roxie Black, Rob Sanford, Monique LaRocque, Bob Bertram, Judy Ryan, Dahlia Lynn

Welcome and Review of Meeting Objectives – Dahlia Lynn, Chair
The work of this committee will connect back to Goal #2, enrollment management. WMPG wants to tape some of the task teams in action. One Hour, One Conversation will be reviewed.

Overview of Enrollment Management Activities – Susan Campbell
Susan Campbell provided handouts on student enrollment. The Noel Levitz report on enrollment will help the University project enrollments as part of the strategic planning process.

- USM will get a report on the use of financial aid from Noel Levitz.
  - The report recommends that enrollment efforts focus on attracting students from out of state. Efforts at the university level will go through the President’s Office and up to the system level enrollment planning council.
- USM has experienced student enrollment declines, especially in non-degree categories. USM needs to enroll more non-degree students. Non-degree credit hour enrollments have declined from the peak in 2005.
- The age distribution of USM has is now leaning heavily toward younger traditional age students.
- Student retention rates at USM have gone up over the past few years.
- There is no magic bullet for retention.
  - If there were a magic bullet then it would be at the department level. (Sanford)
- Susan Campbell continued with a presentation showing an increase in the 6-year graduation rate. A decline in the traditional student demographic is an issue. Lower state appropriations have made USM more tuition and fee dependant.
  - Do the numbers project alumni donations and gifts? (Steinberg)
    - No. Auxiliary funds are not included. (Campbell)
- Strengths include being in a populous region, having strong support from the community. Learning assessment and learning communities are strong.
- Threats come from traditional age market declining, financial insecurity, and competition from other institutions. Students want to go to college and find a job after graduation.
- Due to the decline in the traditional age population, there will be more effort needed to attract non-traditional adult learners, transfer students, and graduate students.
- USM needs to work on undergrad recruitment and retention, especially reducing second to third year attrition rates.
• Strategic Enrollment Management is moving forward with information commons and other strategic investment proposals.
  o Why is the math program going away for the high school students? (LaSala)
    ▪ The return on investment was very low. (Campbell)
  o If there is a way to provide discounts to groups and make price reasonable, it should attract people. (LaSala)
    ▪ We need to identify the market segment that will not go to the Community College. (Campbell)
• Is there a way that the strategic planning can help with recruitment and retention? (Lynn)
• The departments should integrate into the strategic plan objectives. (Sanford)
  o How do we create the synergies to provide those integrations? (LaRocque)
• Has this information been shared with the Senates? Many do not know about this information. (Lynn)
• How do we encourage more students to attend? (Black)
  o We need to stabilize the student population to prevent enrollment declines. (Campbell)
• Why are we unable to recruit diverse students at USM and can the diversity committee help? (Cleary)
• If the task teams focus on what they can do to improve the recruitment and retention of diverse students, then we could create a matrix like Rob previously suggested to figure out how we can meet the overall goal of enrollment management. (Lynn)
• Should we try to ask for money to do a study? (Voyer)
  o The President is reviewing the information and we can find out if it is possible to release information from the enrollment studies. (Campbell)
    ▪ It would be good to know if we are losing good students or losing students that we perhaps do not want. (Voyer)
• To what extent do physical plant limitations drive out older students? (LaSala)
• Evening classes often start at 4:00 p.m. even though it is not an ideal time for non-traditional adult learners. (Campbell)
  o Enrollment declines among non-traditional students correlates with the implementation of MaineStreet for class enrollments. (LaSala)
  o Evening classes are no robust enough for most people to complete their degrees through evening classes. (Black)
    ▪ Advisors cannot guarantee that USM will provide the classes for students to graduate with evening classes. (Higgins)
    • Incentives for programs that will allow a student to complete a degree program may help with creating robust evening classes, although it will require resources. (Lynn)

The Chair thanked Susan Campbell for her presentation

WMPG Opportunity – Dahlia Lynn, Chair
Josh Gates was unable to attend the meeting. USM Minutes will be a taped segment for each of the task teams. Students from Media Studies should be contacting the task teams regarding this project. The WMPG segments are a great opportunity for the Strategic Planning task teams to reach out to the community. We hope to have this done by April.

One Hour, One Conversation Update – Dahlia Lynn, Chair

One Hour, One Conversation notes are now compiled. The themes that emerged from this are in the report. How can we use the information in the overview to enhance the work of the task teams and strategic planning?

- The strategic plan should be an ongoing process of getting feedback. (Sanford)
- Task team one have received the contents of the report. One Hour, One Conversation show areas of distinction that appear to be more organic, cultural and institutional rather than disciplinary. Participants clearly indicated that before we engage in more conversations, we need to come up with something from the material gathered. What do we do with the report to make it value added? The information contains themes that include many institutional needs. (Lynn)
- Some of the information from Convocation has just been on the web. It would be nice if we could use this information. (Sanford)
- If this was reported out as a wordle and combined with the work of the enrollment council, then it would be much more powerful than as a single document. (Campbell)
  - Who would like to work on this? (Lynn)
    - LaRocque volunteered to help.
  - Task team one was charged with coming up with areas of distinction. I would prefer that areas of distinction emerge from this work rather than just from task team one. (Sanford)
- We are trying to strengthen liberal arts education in a time when the Carnegie report shows that college does not necessarily make students smarter. Revision of general education came from a need to recruit and retain students. (Cleary)
- Should we wait on sending this report out? People may be getting report fatigue. (Lynn)
  - Wait until March. (LaSala)
  - We need to maintain momentum. The committee can present this so that it does not come off as adding to their plates. (Sanford)
- Are there any other comments on this report? (Lynn)
  - Why do we have an enrollment problem? Students tend to leave when there is without a value added component that attracts them. (Campbell)
  - Students like faculty who are engaged and excited. (Cleary)
- We have not done a good job conveying the importance of a Baccalaureate degree. Costs are up and our financial aid deposits are down. We have a very financially needy student body. (Steinberg)
- Graduate assistantships are critical to degree completion but our awards are not competitive with other institutions trying to attract a strong cadre of graduate applicants.
Kaplan and Southern NH University are much more expensive, yet people are willing to pay. We need to keep pushing our lower cost programming. (Campbell)

People do not understand that USM is a good university. (Black)

If we have a degree completion program, that might tap into more adult learners. (Voyer)

I am not sure I would like this institution as a parent. As a department head, I feel like I am in a position that I am fighting for the existence of my department. Kaplan is very responsive to their students. It may take a couple years to recover from this restructuring. (Sanford)

The Chair handed out strategic planning proposals and recommendations. The Chair thanked the committee for attending

Meeting adjourned at 11:50 a.m.