

## **SSAE Workgroup Meeting Minutes**

### **June 2, 2022, on Zoom at 12:00 p.m.**

**SWOT feedback/wrap-up** — Discussion with the whole group on the SWOT that was done last time. Comment about being surprised that we have a larger American Indian population, thought we were having a decline right now, but we are not, it is going up. The “larger” reference was related to our number is larger at this institution compared to other institutions. Clarified that our American Indian numbers are increasing. Noted that IPEDS definition is reported as our official number it looks at students that only identify as American Indian. There is also a category for two or more races, so some students identify as more than one race. IPEDS is what is reported as our official number, so it looks at those that identify as only American Indian. Because of this it looks like we are going down, but we are actually increasing. One other workgroup also provided a document that shows that the population in North Dakota has changed in last 10 years and information about the UND student body – two slides. It will be posted in the folder as well on Teams.

Meeting of other co-chairs this week including academic success beyond the classroom and creativity, discovery and innovation co-chairs met – all discussing the idea of what UND means, or what it means to be a UND student, that type of concept. It will help when we get a little better guidance on RI or if we just continue to do the best we are doing. Acknowledgement that lots of reason you succeed in classroom is tied to factors outside the classroom. Lots of overlap between the groups and the themes that are emerging. How to deliver academic success, how do we get people to use resources that we have, get them to know what resources are available. Also identified other resources that we don’t currently have.

Discussion question about if you look at degrees from analytics and planning, in the registrar’s office and provost office those don’t match up. Discussion was we should be able to easily pull data about majors, minors, what is offered, and there is some conflicting information in terms of being offered. This is in relation to HLC and department of education. That is an issue of PeopleSoft and we are working with CTS to cleanly pull it so we have the master list. The data folks are working on it. Speculated that some of the conflict might be at the department level. Some departments were pushed to add a certificate that nobody is taking. Program decides not to offer, but course might still be on the books so that might lead to confusion. *Note from chat section* - Some of the degree and certificate and degree information is problematic in Power BI too. That has been mentioned in previous meetings of this group. Enrollment numbers specifically.

The last part is about the how piece, biggest discussion about potential threats, event if we know who students are and we know what academic success is, what are the challenges and threats to be able to accomplish that.

Weakness or threat not sure but some discussion that the push to do hyflex is great but not fair if you are teaching two classes then getting credit for one, so if we want to build in flexibility how to do that with appropriate support or how they don’t feel like teaching two classes but getting credit for only one. That is on faculty radar as well.

**Spent time in breakout rooms - Highlights from readings that have been assigned so far (Task Force report, NSSE data, New Pathways report, AAC&U Employer report, etc.)** – Group members asked to talk about ways to frame what is jumping out as important issues as we prioritize as we keep moving through the process.

#### **Discussion after returning from breakout rooms -**

First group report –

New pathways project cited several times. Interesting ideas about what hyflex teaching has taught our new generation of students in terms of flexibility of skills, whether we are equipping out students with agility and adaptability in the current workplace if what we have done and how COVID taught us to adopt our formats and delivery

Employee perspective – need to prepare our next generation of students to be more adaptable. The idea of cross training, otherwise the early career employees may feel like that job may not be what they signed up for. Current reality at all employment places is they need to adapt as employees, think about specializations vs adaptability with degrees and majors

Online learning – different student population want different things. Also differ in level of education from freshmen to seniors. Some want faculty interaction and others don't need that. Creates a challenge to faculty to deliver online courses that meet the needs and desires of our students, because that creates the challenge, then important need for faculty support of how to design good quality online education how to respond to a specific population in their courses.

What we know about currently in other institutions, we don't know what resources we have on our campus and opportunities to share those resources. Divide between faculty and staff, while at same time faculty can draw from expertise of staff to serve on student committees, dissertation, research and other collaborations, not just faculty to faculty or college to college, but really cross campus collaborations. Can utilize all resources and expertise on campus. This could also be done with community partners to create advisory boards for curriculum, serve on student projects, idea of micro internship opportunities within community would be welcome as well.

There are lots of good things happening on campus. For example, TTaDA works with many faculty, they know lots of great things happening and best practices are in place. What is going on with communication between departments, how do we disseminate information to share what has been done and what has been done well.

Second group report – Some struck by how often interdisciplinary work came up and what we have read is it is desired but difficult to do. Some has to do with challenges like Myra model and other challenges, so challenge is how we encourage students to think interdisciplinary and encourage them to do that work when it is difficult to make that happen.

Challenges in teaching students' skills that employers want like teamwork. When we have a lopsided student teacher ratio with no TA support, lack of support there, lack of support for HIPS, can't find them or participate in them, maybe don't know what they are and we have not done a good job articulating them. Many departments, hard time filling faculty positions, and part of that is how we define ourselves, so if going for R1, that may change how we attract at a faculty level.

Need for a unifying theme across Essential Studies in terms of focusing on skills employers are looking for and making the themes and skills clearly applicable toward workforce needs. The issue of data literacy or technology literacy came up because it is something employers are looking for that we don't necessarily require course work in and not an essential studies requirement. The information literacy kind of is, but not necessarily technological literacy.

The Pathways document noted students don't participate in what they don't get credit for. So can we tie credit to experiences. Do some of that in Psychology, because they have an undergraduate director who oversees it, so goes back to the limitation of people power and having resources.

Math pathways – Created a course called mathematics in society. Designed for those who don't need algebra to prep for something else but need a math course that is more applicable to life skills. This could serve as model for information literacy or technology literacy. What are the skills we want them to have when they leave being forward focused?

First year experiences. The degree we could craft that as something where students are tackling a big issue or theme and within that they could collaborate with each other, get teamwork skills, and data literacy skills at the outset of their education and not wait to build that in later. This could prep them for other classes. Example given about being surprised about students not having used Excel before coming to college.

Faculty doing great things to build these skills that employers want, but students don't see the connection between the coursework and their resumes, so try to foster connections either by having faculty point them out or a 1 credit professional development course that is in a major, to see the connection between class, skills, and resumes. Also, what in general we should be teaching. In the new pathways document on Page 10 noted graphic on the skills the employers are looking for – graphic is important as we move forward as we frame the work we are doing here. Clarification given on graphic on page 10 - simply some of the terms you see within the report of what employers are looking for are a few of the terms discussed withing the larger Strategic Planning Committee. Not looked at it specifically but has been some overlap of that based on what was discussed in the group. The graphic is simple so nice because of the four bubbles. The graphic is also helpful in how we want to define excellence and success. There are good points out there if it is a particular set of skills, those are something we need to set as definitions of success, not just graduation and retention.

Holistic growth is part of the package. We don't want faculty and students to think that they are just here to learn course content there are other things they should be learning in college.

### **Discussion on Report structure; comparison to previous strategic plan**

We have this as an agenda item to flip our thinking, reinforce the message about the process that we are allowed too not be afraid to be aspirational. Don't get stuck on ideas of what we have done before, but what we want it to be. We know there are conversations of if we have to be R1, but let's leave that behind us at this point. Some R1 schools are also good at student success initiatives. Our task is what we want to be in terms of academic excellence and how do we want to support our students to achieve what we want them to be. Reason we created the structure for the report is to give example - why so many initiatives on campus, what is going on, keep hearing about great things about HIPs and curricular innovations being in place but why are we not hearing about them and why are they not valued. Reason why is our current strategic plan created those limitations for us. Our goals should be strategies and initiatives not end goals.

Gave example of current goal one - Liberal Arts. Gives goal of participating in HIPs but doesn't explain why and how we are going to measure the effectiveness of that and what does that mean. Feels like we are preserving our mission in strategic plan by justifying liberal arts rather than saying liberal arts is our strength, our ability to get our students to be excellent to be successful in job markets, so flip that and figure out what goals we want to set for us, then we can capitalize that we are the liberal arts institution, and we can connect that to the goal or metric of that success. We can say we have HIP practices, and when we start measuring student participation in HIP practices, we can connect it to goals and outcomes so we see the value of what we are doing. Right now, this goal is lost because it is not connected to anything else, it is HIPs for the sake of HIPs. If you think about the action statement, determine the skills, what do we want and how do we measure, we have not done this. That is why all the great things have not been seen in our strategic initiatives.

Think about other goals – success in graduation rates. Current plan is to increase graduation rates – so don't talk about liberal arts, not saying that because we are a liberal arts institution, or because we have innovative curriculum delivery, or HIPs that is how we get them to graduate and get them prepared for the workforce. Related to graduation and enrollment there is no conversation or understanding that to prepare them for success and graduation we have certain education strategies or innovation, so flip and think about student success.

Clarification is that Liberal Arts should not be a goal, goal is to have academic success, skills development, holistic development, connection to the university. Things like liberal arts or interventions to get us to graduation rates are what gets us to the goal and not the goal itself. Liberal Arts is a strength of the institution, gives us flexibility we can create courses, example of new math course, use expertise of faculty to do this, not vocational, we can say because we use this as a strategy for a set of outcomes and success metrics – not just enrollment and graduation. So flipping this – review the emerging report. Keep talking about and thinking about the populations. There is some consensus that these all are our new and current populations – different types of students. Then talking about outcomes. Will spend more time thinking about what we want our students to be – how do we frame our success. These are going to inform our goals. We will set goals and give them strategies to get us to the goal and come up with a set of initiatives. Talked about lots of strategies and initiatives already, like faculty development and community partners, but need to start thinking backward first, what do we want? So far based on discussion these are things that are emerging:

**Career readiness** – been something that we need to prepare for careers that exist and that do not exist, flexibility and agility.

**Holistic development** – what do we want our students to be in addition to being prepared for the career, could be responsible citizens, civic engagement, or leaders.

These things need to be fleshed out so what do we mean by these things and what else is missing. What else do we want them to show that makes them excellent and successful. When we figure it out, we can talk about what strategies that may exist to support them to get where they are. Talking about onboarding, so how do we let them know what expectations are in their first year for all students. Advising whether it is working or not, first year experiences is a big theme going on and good opportunity will help create strategy for onboarding. Also talking about relevance – when we think about career readiness and relevance in curricular innovation – E-portfolio development, undergraduate research, experiential learning. Need to think broadly about this because they may vary from college to college. Not all will have to do it. We could create an Umbrella strategy, like curriculum innovation,

community partners, micro internships, micro credentialing those kinds of things could all be under that strategy. For the initiative we could recommend something centralized. When we have someone who can do the work/paperwork it is a help with curriculum changes. Support resources will help it work campus wide.

We will get to this type of thinking when we know what we want here. Once we define student success in excellence collectively then set it as a goal, then we want our students to be something else then we will start thinking about goals and seek more information and data understanding what initiatives, HIPs, etc. would be helpful to recommend as strategies and initiatives.

Have to understand what resources and limitations we have, but we can challenge leadership to say this is what we want and leave it up to them to decide. This report needs to be aspirational and create the vision for success. Not writing about the challenges, final report will highlight the key points that have been brought up but didn't feed the recommendations part of the report.

Question - is it an operational vision or a strategic plan – Strategic plan is more used to carry out the operational vision. It is a strategic recommendation; it is a planning process to recommend a set of goals and provide some ideas on how we can achieve goals. Clear about what process entails – we are providing recommendations about goals that will dictate how we can invest strategically. This report is more toward the strategic vision. Task of the workgroup is to provide recommendations; the Strategic Planning Committee will develop the overall plan. What we see as the biggest priorities or what we identify as themes emerging, groups seeing some overlap so it tells leadership that we can get the most for the money. Some ideas may not end up in the final plan proposal. We have our framework in mind otherwise we might just start offering ideas for how the institution can operate - but what for? Need framework of what we want to achieve. Use backward model like with course development so you know what learning outcomes are and then start thinking about what will help to achieve the learning outcome. This is what we are not seeing in the current strategic plan. From constituents or customers point of view, they have no clue why we want to do something. How can we demonstrate that if they participate in a HIP practice, they are going to gain transferrable skills, we can show them why.

### **Defining success discussion and next steps/Homework**

What excellence looks like at UND? In the work we have about defining success people should come to the next meeting with specific document page numbers and site sources – keep simpler themes, can say here is what it means and how we define it. **Career Readiness, Holistic Development, and Civic Engagement and leadership** all separate goals.

Why am I doing it, what does that mean for each goal – that could vary among students and what they are looking for. What does it mean to be a UND student – identity formation stuff, that maybe doesn't fit into other themes. Probably overlapping but like to keep those separate.

**Innovators** suggested as another goal – students who are faced with large problems and how do they innovate with what they have or create something new to solve problems. Not just skill set, not related to any career just lifestyle. There is an implementation step that doesn't occur with the other one's goals.

**Learning and experience** – connecting experience with learning – must stand on its own. We can make it broader and then strategies can be aiding toward that goal.

Keep thinking and do homework and come back with ideas. Next time we will have a guest speaker who has created an assessment model for housing, so want to show through the data how this framework is helpful for us when it comes to the outcomes. How possible to help institution to be able to know how to invest, how to measure investment and to show value for that.

No further reading assignment but if someone comes across something, you can share that. Like for everyone to do is to look at what these themes mean. What would go under that theme. Are there themes that need to be added. Also think about how the theme would be assessed. How do we know if it is happening, but we will hold off on what we can do to foster that theme until we have a good idea of how we define success and metrics for success.

Will send document about what is going on for new students. Please review the focus group data that continues to come in and let things percolate and come prepared to help flesh out those themes of what success looks like.

**Next meeting** – June 16, 2022 at 3:00 p.m.

**In attendance-** Jim Mochoruk, Alfred Wallace, Amanda Moske, Becky Simmons, Chelsea Mellenthin, Jeff VanLooy, Jenny Reichart, Kay Powell, Michael Herbert, Ryan Summers, Tim Burrows, Marlene Miller, Zarrina Azizova, Heather Terrell