FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION

Organizational Review

Division of Student Affairs – Enrollment Management
University of North Dakota
Grand Forks, North Dakota

Report prepared by
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Scope and Purpose

“The future is not a result of choices among alternative paths offered by the present, but a place that is created-created first in the mind and will, created next in activity. The future is not some place we are going to, but one we are creating. The paths are not to be found, but made, and the activity of making them, changes both the maker and the destination.”

John Scharr
Futurist

Kent Hopkins conducted an Organizational Review in partnership with the University of North Dakota, Division of Student Affairs – for the various enrollment management offices. The Organizational Review (OR) campus visit occurred on Friday, October 7, 2011.

The purpose of the OR is to provide an external assessment of the university’s current offices primarily responsible for the enrollment of undergraduate students. This Review was commissioned by the University of North Dakota and was overseen by Dr. Lori Reesor, Vice President for Student Affairs.

The scope of the Organizational Review encompasses five areas:

1. Review organizational structure of current offices/areas below and provide recommendations including recommendations for names of offices and primary leadership positions:

   a. Admissions Office
b. Enrollment Services  
c. Financial Aid  
d. Former Associate Vice President for Enrollment Management  
e. On-Line Enrollment Management/Continuing Education (transfer students and on-line students)  
f. TheLINK program  
g. Recruiter in American Indian Student Services  
h. Parent/family programs  

2. Provide feedback on other recruitment/enrollment areas outside of Student Affairs as it relates to organizational structure and improving efficiencies, effectiveness, and collaboration:

   a. Graduate School  
b. International Programs  
c. Registrar’s Office  

3. Provide feedback on organizational structure as it relates to the areas of emphasis for recruitment:

   a. High-ability students  
b. Multicultural students  
c. Transfer students  
d. On-line students  
e. Scholarships  
f. Parent/family programs  
g. Getting Started (new student orientation)  
h. Welcome Weekend  
i. Other  

4. Provide feedback on space considerations as it relates to organizational structure and efficiencies especially with the following buildings:

   a. Carnegie Hall  
b. Twamley Hall  
c. New Alumni Center (1st floor as potential Welcome Center area)  
d. Others (Gustafson, Harrington, Robertson and Sayer, Memorial Union)
5. Provide feedback on organizational structure related to retention services including but not limited to Career Services, Disability Services for Students, TRIO Programs, Student Success Center.

Further, the Review is intended to identify areas that may be streamlined or improved to ensure that, wherever possible, marketing and recruitment efforts complement the enrollment management objectives identified by the university’s leadership.

This written report, the fourth and final step in the Organizational Review, is intended to document the purpose and scope of the services to be performed – through external, objective feedback. The report expands upon those items discussed during the division of student affairs cabinet briefing on Friday, October 7. This written document is intended to aid and abet the university’s efforts to develop a best practices enrollment management program.

Organizational Review Steps

Step One: Pre-visit Preparation

Dr. Reesor and her staff compiled a wealth of materials to share with me for review prior to the site visit. Thank you to the staff that assembled these advance materials, as they were very helpful in preparing for our on-campus meetings.

Some of the advance materials included:

- A copy of the offices of admission and enrollment services annual report for 2010-2011
- Office of Enrollment Services and Office of Admissions organizational charts;
- The Office of Admissions Comparative Report of Prospective Students, Fall 2011;
- Student Financial Aid office Annual Report (FY11), duties by team chart, organizational chart and team chart
- Previous and current UND student affairs organizational chart
- Communications/The link position descriptions and a copy of the Communications FY11 comparisons annual report
- Online & Distance Enrollment Management historical overview, organizational chart and enrollment reports
In addition, Dr. Reesor and I conducted three phone meetings in advance of the on-campus focus groups and interviews.

**Step Two: On-campus Focus Groups and Interviews**

My time on the UND campus allowed for individual interviews and administrator and staff focus groups. These face-to-face interactions were helpful in continuing to build an understanding of the current situation and the university’s desired movement to adopting national best practices in enrollment management.

The Review schedule, prepared in advance with Dr. Reesor, is outlined below.

**October 7, 2011**

7:30-8:30 am Breakfast with Lisa Burger at the Hilton Garden Inn

8:45-9:15 am Meeting with Debi Melby, Director of Admissions – Twamley, Room 404

9:20-9:50 am Meeting with Robin Holden, Director of Student Financial Aid, Twamley, Room 404

9:55-10:25 am Meeting with Phillip Parnell, Director of On-Line Enrollment Management, Twamley, Room 404

10:30-11:00 am Meeting with Jennifer Aamodt, Director of Communications for On-Line, Twamley, Room 404

11:00-noon Open meeting for Financial Aid, Admissions, On-Line Enrollment Management, and/or Communications staff, Twamley Room 404

Noon-1:00 pm Box lunch in the Carnegie Building, Conference Room with Enrollment Services Staff:

- Sue Sholes - Assistant Director Enrollment Services
- Ashley Miller - Enrollment Services Representative
- Casey Koop - Enrollment Services Representative
- Joyce Zak – Tour Guide Coordinator
- Kristi Okerlund – Family and Student Program Coordinator
- Michele Carroll – Office Manager
- Patsy Nies – Special Projects Assistant
- Phil Irwin - Enrollment Services Representative
- Shannon Dahl - Enrollment Services Representative
- Tara Nelson – Administrative Assistant
- Tommy Van Norman - Enrollment Services Representative
• Seinquis Slater – Coordinator recruitment/retention of students of color

1:15-2:00 pm Open Meeting with Campus Partners – invited guest included:
• Registrar’s Office: Suzanne Anderson, Registrar
• Graduate School: Evan Nelson, Director Graduate Admissions
• International Programs: Ray Lagasse, Program Director
• Alumni: DeAnna Carlson-Zink, Associate Executive Vice President and Chief Development Officer
• Athletics: Daniella Isle, Senior Associate Athletics Director/Senior Woman Administrator
• Academic areas:
  o Mathew Cavalli-Mechanical Engineering
  o Cheryl Osowski-Engineering/Deans Office
  o Marlys Escobar-Nursing
  o Roxanne Hurley-Nursing
  o Linda Duckstad- Business and Public Administration
  o Steven Moser- Business and Public Administration
  o Eric Tweton-Education
  o Kayla Hotvedt-Education
  o Tom Rand- Arts & Science
  o Harmon Abrahamson-Chemistry
  o Ken Polovitz-Aviation
  o Kent Lovelace-Aviation

2:15-3:00 pm Open Meeting for Other Student Affairs Staff-Memorial Union, Badlands Room

3:10-3:30 pm Second meeting with Robin Holden

3:30-3:45 pm Prep Time

3:45-5:15 pm Exit Briefing with the Student Affairs Cabinet- Memorial Union, Badlands Room
  o Lori Reesor, Vice President for Student Affairs
  o Laurie Betting, Associate Vice President for Health & Wellness
  o Lisa Burger, Interim Executive Director of Enrollment Services
  o Cara Halgren, Associate Vice President for Student Services & Dean of Students
  o Jill Novotny, Administrative Officer, Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs
  o Judy Sargent, Director of Residence Services

5:15-6:00 pm Individual time with Dr. Reesor
Step Three: Student Affairs Cabinet Briefing and Preliminary Recommendations

At the conclusion of the Organizational Review, I met with Dr. Reesor and her cabinet to present an executive briefing of preliminary findings and recommendations. In the executive briefing, the major themes contained in this written report were shared with Dr. Reesor and her senior cabinet.

Step Four: Provide a Written Summary of Findings and Recommendations

Now, following the advance preparation and the on-campus focus groups and interviews, this written report documents and expands upon those discussions from our student affairs cabinet briefing on Friday, October 7 for the Organizational Review.

It is important to note a one day Organizational Review is not adequate to understand fully all of the complexities and nuances of the new student enrollment marketing and recruitment enterprises at the University of North Dakota. However, I believe I was able to accurately assess the current state and provide recommendations to Dr. Reesor and her senior cabinet during the exit briefing – and now through this written report.

Thank you for the opportunity to collaborate with you in this Organizational Review. To note, any errors in interpretation or omissions are the responsibility of the consultant.
Organizational Review Observations and Recommendations

My face-to-face and phone meetings with institutional leaders, faculty and staff of the University of North Dakota were marked by candid comments and considerable good will. There was great energy and enthusiasm behind this endeavor – nearly 100 administrators, faculty and staff participated in the on-campus focus groups and interviews.

Much fine work is being done to recruit and retain students and to ensure a quality educational experience. And thank you for sharing that strength, with me, in forwarding advance materials and explaining current work during our time together. It was evident that UND faculty and staff want to build upon the foundation of strength in recruiting and retaining students. This foundation of strength creates opportunities to move UND to the next level of enrollment management.

The following recommendations focus on the areas of opportunity within the Organizational Review.

Organizational Structure

Current Enrollment Offices

Enrollment Management

Reconstruct the university enrollment manager position and its core responsibilities. The position should have overall responsibility for developing and coordinating university enrollment initiatives. In partnership with the Vice President for Student Affairs, the position must work with academic affairs, finance and operations, information technology, and alumni – in additional to the other units within student affairs – to devise appropriate plans and associated strategies designed to meet university enrollment objectives. The position would have supervisory responsibility for new student enrollment planning offices.

The university enrollment manager, in partnership with the director of financial aid, should be responsible for developing scholarship programs that maximize new student enrollment and revenue for the university. It will also be important to align the university’s scholarship investment with new student enrollment objectives. To that end:

- The scholarship investment and revenue/expenditure plan should be reviewed with and approved by the vice president for student affairs. Revenue and expenditure critical issues should be discussed with finance and operations.
- Administrative functions for scholarship can remain in financial aid;
- General scholarship recruitment should be the primary responsibility of the recruitment staff and be cascaded down into every recruitment position.
Undergraduate Admissions

Create an office of undergraduate admissions – merge the current enrollment services and admissions offices into one office. There would be two primary areas within the undergraduate admissions organizational structure – recruitment and operations/systems.

The recruitment unit within the proposed office of undergraduate admissions should have three primary student population responsibilities – freshman, transfer and international. Determine appropriate staffing for international recruitment.

Create goals (and crystallize definition) for high ability student enrollment. Determine scholarship funds available to impact first-time freshman enrolling as Presidential Scholars (and/or high ability definition) for fall 2012.

The programming and student involvement responsibilities for parent/family programs, Getting Started (new student orientation), and Welcome Weekend) – are more aligned with the continuing student population, thus a realignment within the division is appropriate.

Develop a written diversity recruitment and marketing plan, as part of the undergraduate new student enrollment plan, that becomes the roadmap for the recruitment of multicultural students. Convene a diversity enrollment planning team to ensure success in recruitment and retention of multicultural students. As noted by the athletics representatives in the open meeting with campus partners, UND athletics would be interested in participating on this planning team.

Maintain current recruiter staff position within American Indian Student Services and new staff position in Undergraduate Admissions (current office of enrollment services) devoted to diversity enrollment.

Finally, the consultant supports the decision of moving the office of undergraduate admissions (with the current offices of enrollment services and admissions) to the new Alumni Center.

Financial Aid

Change the name of the Student Financial Aid Office to the Office of Student Financial Assistance. Focus organizational structure and associated plans on improving student retention and graduation rates.

Charge the director, in eventual partnership with the new university enrollment manager, with devising financial assistance packaging – merit and need-based – strategies that maximize new student enrollment and impact retention and persistence rates.
Determine how the current organizational structure can shift to work more closely with students who receive financial assistance. The current organizational structure is more than adequately staffed in its current iteration to shift existing personnel into more proactive positions to work with financial aid and/or scholarship recipients.

**UND Online**

Maintain a separate UND Online division – and either house that division within academic affairs or student affairs. Online should maintain a separate focus as part of the university’s overall academic and enrollment objectives.

Determine an appropriate university funding model for UND Online. Part of the funding model should be used to fund UND Online personnel and operating expenses. For example, the West Virginia University Extended Learning funding model provides 83% funding to the school/college responsible for the academic delivery – and 17% remains within WVU Extended Learning.

The various enrollment operations areas – admissions processing, student financial assistance – and the university registrar office should be the administrative backbone for UND Online pre-enrollment, enrollment and continuing student needs. Consider how best to assess how the responsibilities of TheLink Student Records Manager and Specialists positions would align with a more centralized enrollment operations area.
Marketing

I realize the university is undergoing changes to its marketing enterprise. Based on these university-wide changes, I would recommend the development of a division of student affairs marketing unit. Dr. Reesor will need to determine appropriate staffing for this unit. The marketing unit would be responsible for planning and implementing marketing and communication plans for new and continuing student populations, aligned with university enrollment objectives.

Areas Outside of Student Affairs

Work with graduate school to align marketing and recruitment lead messaging and strategies with the undergraduate enterprise.

Consider shifting International Programs into the division of student affairs. Place recruitment responsibilities within the office of undergraduate admissions. Place continuing student programming and service responsibilities within the appropriate unit within student affairs.

Retention Services

Although the majority of my on-campus and preparation time was devoted to new student enrollment initiatives – and related organizational and strategy schema – it is important to align service offices to strengthen the retention, persistence, progression, graduation and satisfaction of our continuing student population.
Additional University Enrollment Management Observations and Recommendations

Observations

It is clear that the university community is yearning for a more holistic, participatory approach to enrollment management. The consultant met with nearly 100 administrators, faculty and staff during the Friday, October 7 site visit. Those staff within the enrollment offices that are part of the division of student affairs discussed the importance of improving communication within the enrollment areas on university enrollment initiatives. In my brief time in the open meeting with campus partners, the academic community representatives look for stronger partnership and involvement in new and continuing student enrollment initiatives.

During the various on-campus interviews and focus groups, there were concerns expressed regarding the lack of university enrollment goals and objectives. It will be important for Dr. Reesor to work with senior administration and map out short- and long-term enrollment goals and objectives for on-campus and Online undergraduate and graduate enrollment enterprises.

Recommendations

In addition to the Services to be Performed that were part of this work agreement, the consultant offers the following 21 university enrollment management recommendations.

Plan Development

1. Develop a short-term strategic enrollment plan outline. UND senior administration should spend quality time, over the next three to six months, to outline university enrollment goals and objectives for on-campus and Online enrollment. From developing Key Performance Indicators to constructing appropriate enrollment and related market research and analyses on the new and continuing student populations, the senior administration has the opportunity to paint the landscape for future university enrollment plan development.

Goal Establishment

2. Set enrolled student goals and objectives for new undergraduate enrollment – both on-campus and Online – as quickly as possible (in October-early November). From total new student enrollment targets to specified targets for college/school, academic quality, territory/geographic, diversity, etc., it will be important for the recruitment staff to have specific targets from which to work during the 2012 recruitment cycle.

3. Once enrolled goals are established, then various enrollment stage goals can be set – and include the confirmed/deposited enrollment stage in your planning efforts. Count students
who submit housing applications, make a reservation for Getting Started/new student orientation, or any other pre-enrollment indicators as a confirmed/deposited student.

4. Eventually set new student goals for all entry terms, not just fall.

5. Begin to analyze challenges and opportunities in retention, persistence, progression and graduation rates – and start to discuss ways of establishing goals/Key Performance Indicators in these areas. For example, UND’s first-time full-time retention rate decreased from 79% with the 2009 cohort to 77% with the 2010 cohort. What were the primary causes for the 2% decrease? What were the retention rate differences for in-state versus MN versus contiguous state versus other states versus international students? By residential living area? By college or school?

What are the opportunities to increase the retention rate of the 2011 first-time full-time cohort to 80%? What can be done during the fall 2011 semester to begin to influence increases?

Similar analyses and planning discussions must occur regarding persistence, progression (by each cohort to the next class level), and graduation rates.

**Enrollment and Revenue Management Level Setting**

6. Unearth revenue and expenditure needs and expectations for the undergraduate enrollment enterprise as quickly as possible. The consultant discussed the idea of setting-aside a certain percentage of tuition revenue to assist with financial assistance or scholarship appropriations – either through a system-wide initiative or at the university level.

7. Establish a funding model for the UND Online enterprise that also allows for self-sufficiency for the Online administrative unit.

8. Determine how financial assistance packaging can be modified, in its current state, to increase student retention/persistence or maximize new student enrollment.

**Systems and Analysis**

9. Work with the University System office to make appropriate PeopleSoft modifications so that on-campus and Online enrollments can be separated. It is problematic to monitor progress toward goals for both these important enrollment areas if there are system limitations in separating (exclusive) Online enrollment from campus-based degree completion enrollment.

10. Strengthen the use of data to make informed enrollment decisions. Dr. Reesor may need to identify an analyst staff position within the division to assist the various areas in strengthening the use of data in planning, evaluation and effectiveness measures. It will
also be important to share meaningful enrollment data with the colleges and schools, in order to strengthen buy-in and partnership.

11. Consider allowing only admitted students to apply for university housing. Currently, interested students can apply for housing before being admitted to the university. Most universities only allow admitted students to apply for university housing.

12. Consider convening a campus PeopleSoft working group. There were many issues identified regarding PeopleSoft and its limitations in serving students. From automation to billing limitations, can the University devise appropriate business practices to streamline services – even if system-wide PeopleSoft modifications cannot be made?

**Management**

13. Set annual performance expectations for the directors of each enrollment department. Directors must direct and be accountable for meeting expectations in meeting university enrollment objectives.

14. Directors should be challenged with establishing annual plans – and associated personnel and operating budgets for those plans. The consultant recommends following a zero-based budgeting process for the fiscal year 2013 annual planning process. These plans should be submitted to Dr. Reesor no later than March 1, 2012.

15. Beginning within four weeks of this site visit, have the interim executive director of enrollment services conduct monthly all staff meetings, in order to improve communication and involvement from all staff levels.

16. Focus directors on how primary work and responsibilities for their mid-managers should be designed to impact student success.

17. Distribute continuing student financial aid awards as quickly as possible in the spring semester. Modify awards, if needed, at the completion of the spring term – but contact those students who are impacted by modifications to explain reasons and to maintain their enrollment to the new academic year.

18. Assess how the university evaluation of transfer credit can be streamlined to admitted transfer students in order to impact enrollment rates in on-campus and Online enrollments. The current business practices must be modified, in partnership with the academic community, to ensure more timely responses to on-campus and Online admitted transfer students.

19. Get currently enrolled students more involved in new student recruitment initiatives.
20. Continue to strengthen the involvement of alumni in recruitment. I commend the alumni and foundation/development staff for devising the new practice of participating in college fairs when representing the university in other endeavors away from the campus.

21. TheLink is a great addition to communicating efficiently with new and continuing students. Strike a balance between the central communication service and what each enrollment office should be doing in outreach to new and continuing students.