

Associate and Assistant VP's Meeting Notes

October 9, 2014: 11 am

Number of Attendees: 11

Question 1: What is really good about CSUSB?

- New sense of energy with new shift in leadership. Many have taken on new responsibilities, so there's a shift in the direction of institution.
- The WASC team mentioned we are doing well in the value added. We serve our students and bring them to a greater height than other universities; is a very good model that can be used by others. Have an emphasis on serving students and we're doing a good job at that.
- Sense of community: we have a common purpose of a sense of community and that we're here for our students, despite our varying perspectives on our jobs and functions.
- Our campus has the highest number of alums that are employees. Many employees are long-term, 15 - 20 years, which is a strength with the institutional knowledge.
- Have exceptional potential and it is exciting, but also connected to the mission.
- What we can be is our strength, especially with regards to freshmen, programs. Need more students living on campus.
- Very collaborative and we work well together. When it comes to getting something done, we do it. We are also student-oriented and are people of service to our students.
- Staff re-energized because of our new ideas. Community is small and close-knit, but our messages aren't going outside the community, which could be a potential for us as the Inland Empire is huge.
- Telling our story is a huge problem. We have potential and strive for excellence like being the first 4-year university in the Coachella Valley. What is unique is that we have foundational excellence for what we need to produce extraordinary graduates. Have core strengths in academic programs - with some amazing things happening already. We wouldn't be able to have all that potential if we didn't have a strong foundation. Need more emphasis on our future and why we're positioned to get to that future.
- Historically, we have a tradition of accomplishing many things; we grew our student population to almost 20K, and CSUSB was one of the early Hispanic Serving Institutions. Our challenges for leadership and in looking forward: it is an important milestone to set next goals for this community that is close knit and committed. Give them a target to run to.
- A strength is our position in this area; this area has so much need and we're inspirational to those who work there and we want to make this region flourish.

Question 2: What holds the institution back because of its cracks and crevices?

- Depends on the perspective: we have long time employees that many times are accustomed to doing things one way, so when new things arise, there is resistance.

People's knowledge has made us what we are today, but change is difficult and opportunities aren't always seen as opportunities.

- Dependency that boxes people in; need to try something new and break out of the mold.
- Campus has always been more of a follower, but now we have 20K enrolled, and we need to step up to provide the change we all desire. We need policy/procedures to campaign for state resources. There is a great potential for this campus, but we're not there yet.
- Increase university's willingness to be more entrepreneurial in our thinking. We must be more entrepreneurial to thrive, including with funding and programmatically as well. These are huge areas of opportunities. Culturally, we need to think of ourselves as a leader and not have the mentality of feeling bad for ourselves.
- VP's or AVP's are very new typically, with 6 people having been here less than 1-1/2 years. Longstanding employee belief that if they stay here long enough, they'll get a higher position. Leadership has shifted, though, and this isn't necessarily the case anymore. Long-term employees no longer see opportunities for themselves. Everyone comes from different campuses and experiences and there's an infusion of different experiences that complement each other.
- We don't make ourselves get noticed. Anecdotally: UCLA is leading an Inland Empire economic forum soon; we have the best grad schools in the Inland Empire, so why are we not leading this?
- We reflect behaviors that we see in first-generation students like self-efficacy until we're encouraged to do something. We don't know what to ask for. We need to give ourselves permission to try new things, fail, and grow again.
- Budget and resources: We have not been able to attract and retain faculty and our President is intent on improving conditions for faculty. This campus is on the bottom of funding for FTE's, which affects our ability to provide programs that students deserve. Our students are diverse and need special help, but our funding formula has not been able to hire what we need.
- Funding is a challenge and collective dialogue is needed. Funding challenges aren't the same across campus, though. Campus leaders need to look and see the opportunities; we get \$24M in grant funding, but have one funded grant writer. There is nobody holding us accountable to double our grant funding. Faculty are bringing in the grants, but nobody is holding them back but themselves.
- We do a lot of things, but we don't stand out. We need to focus on something and not do too many things just nominally. Take a step back, prioritize, and go out with all our effort to be successful and we won't fail.
- We don't communicate what we're doing. We act like a small campus and communicate by word of mouth, but we need a communications person. We push a lot of information out to our students, but there is no plan around it and we have overlap. Programs overlap and we should be synergizing.

- We have branding issues. Good high school students aren't even talked to about CSUSB. Campus used to have more sweatshirts with logos of other campuses than CSUSB logos, but now we're seeing more pride.
- CSUSB is a back-up school.

Question 3: Choose one area for a strategic goal that is most critical to this university's next five years.

- Aspire to be the best campus in the country.
- Position ourselves within our own community.
- Need the infrastructure students deserve like residential spaces, honors program, union rec space, and healthy and reasonable dining options for the whole community.
- Be more of a residential and less of a commuter campus.
- Branding has to be the entire institution's commitment and is not currently focused. We have Facebook/Twitter, bring potential students to spend the night, etc., but it can't be just one program - it needs to be the entire campus.
- Local students' perception that our campus is a last choice isn't going to allow us to expand, but we can do better branding to become a campus of choice.
- We want students to have gone through experiences such as attending the HACU conference, taking an airplane trip, doing internships, and being exposed to what professional meals are like. We need those other pieces. Should have more students in leadership positions, have the ability to speak their mind and be strong.
- Branding issue: we're tied to San Bernardino, which has the worst school districts in the nation, is bankrupt, has gangs, etc. That is nothing like our campus, but we need to find positive ways to overcome that. MOU's with school districts could help, but things may be insurmountable to overcome until the city of San Bernardino has recovered.
- Marketing isn't a priority with us and no resources devoted internally (ex. search for AVP for Strategic Communications). If we have sought after graduates, we'd be the main school for companies to go to for the best/brightest in the field. Students are our best asset.

Question 4: Is there anything else that Dr. Koester should know in order to best advise the Strategic Planning Advisory Committee?

- We have a lot to be done. This institution needs to be elevated to break out of the small campus mold and it needs to happen at the system-wide level.
- Need more accountability. Empowerment is the way to go, provided they're accountable, and we could use more of that.
- It is time to think about operationalizing goals, emphasize collaboration between divisions to get where we need to go and model student experience. Language could be very specific to see how well we're collaborating. Priorities should be cross-divisional, even if the goal is highly linked to one division.

- When drafting the goals, think about each and every employee. Those not involved in these conversations may not find themselves in the goals and language is necessary, but not sufficient. We want to avoid a goal sounding only academic.
- Need a rollout plan: how do we get to there? We have to make sure everyone knows of, and has an opportunity for, feedback/comments and once it is rolled out, all know about it.
- It needs to be inspirational. If we are not thinking big, then we're not accomplishing big things and that will be a challenge.