

Engagement and Data Gathering Sessions

Group: Faculty and Staff

SPT Partners: Dr. Adam Peck and Dr. Robbie Steward

Date: October 27—29th

Design: Carousel with Standard Questions, w/follow-up individual conversations

Attendees: 22

1) FA special and/or unique in higher educational institutions right now?

- This institution was started as a teachers' college with such a rich history in teaching. This fact should be honored, recognized, show-cased. (2)
- We are a small independent state university that is unique.
- Setting is unique. Emphasize positives about the Nacogdoches area.
- Lack of Planning: too much focus on traditional college students; no housing on campus for non-traditional students; no off-site campus options for this student population
- D2L: What a mess! Inaccessible to blind students. (5)
- We have resisted the pressure to create many fully online programs and value face to face relationships with students.
- On-campus clinics and laboratories for supervised hands-on experience prior to graduation
- Heightened attention to 1st generation student population—great pride in recruitment and retention of such

2) What major accomplishments or noteworthy points of recognition have occurred at SFA within the last 5 years?

- NCAA tournament (2)
- Band & Choir Invitations (London, Macy's, etc.)
- Lawsuits—guess it gets our name out there (2)
- Embarrassing Marketing blunder (3)
- #32 out of 33 in the state for faculty pay.
- Maintaining national accreditation of programs and support from administration for doing so.
- Adding new training and service delivery clinic (SPAC) and upgrading Neuroscience laboratory
- Increased number of program advisory councils that include non-program, campus and community-wide member
- Movement to a TRUE merit position in honoring performance—not just everyone benefits from available funds
- Development of new Core Curriculum with full representation campus-wide

- Joining the national commitment to Assessment! Assessment! Assessment! Effective use of TracDat is clarified and LiveText introduced!
- College and Departmental Convocations---much more personalized welcoming of students than the open university-wide convocation—also helps that these are required and allows students closer interaction with program faculty and understanding of the university infrastructure (College-Department-program differences)
- Movement toward a stable rolling course schedule—makes the start of semester easier--more to do on this

3) What practices/policies, if adopted at this time, would enhance SFA's reputation and positive visibility?

- Better widespread advertising
- Prospective student materials and tours (2)
- Less of a party atmosphere (Alumni need to feel comfortable bringing their kids to football games)
- Elimination of Draconian Drop policies (3)
- Lack of communication: we need more transparency in policy operations and decision-making in upper administration
- Return to previous summer pay rather than basically adjunct pay (3)
- Focus on student friendly schedules rather than 1 size fits all (2)
- Policy-faculty ability to apply for travel reimbursement from admissions (2)
- To speak to out-of-town high school groups and community colleges regarding their discipline—person to person contact (2)
- Consistency in scheduling
- Better working relationships between student affairs and academic affairs, student affairs offices and faculty in the case of student emergencies
- Better working alliances in distribution of same information for academic advisement...sometimes different messages from advisors and faculty result in students' confusion about degree plans
- Technology upgrades needed
- Publicizing in a BIG way faculty accomplishments/achievements...now that we have highlighted our students' GREATNESS', we must highlight the 'GREATNESS' among our faculty. We really do have known leaders among us, but the public may not realize this without our intentional publicity

4) What are changes that you believe that university will have to make to be viable and relevant in higher education within the next 10 years?

- Greater recognition of various programs (2)
- Higher Student standards (5)
- More focus on Academics (5)
- Preparing students for the world of work
- Support for research (e.g., faculty load, pay to bring in research faculty) (5)

- Determine a true identity and vision for what we ARE rather than aspiring to be R-1 w/or being part of a system (TTV, UT); on-line vs. face-to-face priority—how do we decide?; target prospective student population?
- Improve faculty morale by monetary & material support—quite asking for more without real \$ support (3)
- SFA policy changes to support faculty recruitment of students (travel).
- We need to join a system.
- Fix the pool; heating was not working last Spring
- Support for adding new faculty lines in programs with increasing enrollments
- Better relationships/contacts with alumni—e.g., maintaining e-mail addresses for life—for recruitment alliances and for donations
- Develop a consistent structure for assessment at least at the department level---too many different agencies to please at too many points of time—a very heavy load for faculty to assume and maintain teaching and mentoring effectiveness with productivity in scholarship.
- Implementing empirically-based decision-making in developing practices, policies, and service delivery to have clear rationale for doing what we do (i.e., educational outcomes, faculty morale, students' experiences in training environment).