Strategic Planning Committee Minutes
November 19, 2020

The Strategic Planning Committee met on Thursday, November 19th at 11:00 a.m. in the Athens State Ballroom. Present were Dr. John Berzett (Vaughn proxy); Ms. Pam Clark, Recorder; Ms. Phyllis Claxton; Mr. Richard Collie (guest); Dr. Joe Delap; Ms. Jackie Gooch; Mr. Jeff Guenther; Dr. Diann Hammon; Ms. Laura Beth Horn; Dr. Jim Kerner (guest); Ms. Belinda Krigel; Dr. Kim LaFevor; Ms. Sarah McAbee; Mr. Mike McCoy; Mr. Derrek Smith; Dr. Stephen Spencer (guest); and Dr. Philip Way. Mr. Jamie Adams; Mr. Ronnie Chronister; Dr. Keith Ferguson; Mr. Chris Latham; Mr. Rylan Pendleton, SGA President; Dr. Jackie Smith; and Dr. Darlene Turner-White were absent.

Dr. Way called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m. and welcomed everyone. He asked for any amendments to the October minutes. There were no amendments to the minutes and they were approved on a voice vote.

Dr. Way presented Planning for Themes in Horizon 2030: Diversity, Inclusion and Equity (Attachment 1). Committee members were divided into groups to discuss the development of the diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) plan in alignment with the overall strategic plan.

Group 1 – Academic Programs and Pedagogies (Goals 1 and 2)
Dr. Berzett, Ms. Krigel, Dr. LaFevor and Dr. Spencer

- Teaching:
  - Culturally responsive teaching
  - Asha Kiran cultural sensitivity training: Pre-Covid there was a big event planned on cultural sensitivity for recruiting, administrators and student leaders. There was also a separate workshop for faculty and staff.
  - Accreditation requirements are directly tied to DEI
  - Race and diversity workshops
  - Global education
  - Our mission, vision, learning goals: Need to define how we are integrating it---making DEI systemic
  - # of women, # of minorities in STEM Fields—How do we encourage? Can students see others that look like them?
  - Like to see visiting professors, visiting scholars in diversity
  - ACUE elements to embed in the classroom
  - Use of Post-Doc Minority Fellowships—immersive 1-year experience (see also minoritypostdoc.org—juried selection, research and scholarship, outreach and sharing). This could be done broadly—minorities, veterans, disabled, women, global citizens
  - Colorado University-Chancellor's Post-Doctoral Fellowship
  - Connect DEI initiatives with new faculty mentoring program

- Programs:
  - How can we map out DEI across the curriculum?
  - DEI Assessment/Needs Assessment: How do we fare in recruiting diversity by program/major? Curriculum, programs, recruitment, retention—where is it all happening?
  - Most majors have globalization components
  - Connect DEI to QEP---experiential learning within courses and curriculum

Group 2 – Recruitment and Retention/Student Success (Goal 3)
Mr. Collie, Mr. Guenther, Ms. McAbee and Mr. Smith

Added/new emphasis in italics:

- Recruitment
    - Recruit in more diverse counties, community colleges, and high schools
    - Focus on affordability
    - Develop tuition structure and scholarship criteria to support disadvantaged students
    - Attune marketing and recruitment to targeted demographics
    - *Include Diverse Imagery on web and other media*
    - *Include Diversity Program initiatives on web pages*
    - *Optimize website for searches regarding inclusion initiatives*
    - *Provide highly targeted marketing*

- Retention/Student Success
    - *Continue to deploy Title III initiatives in support of Institutional Goals*
    - Grow Men of Kennis
    - Implement and grow Bonner Leaders Program
    - *Develop a wider range of clubs and organizations targeted to include wider set of student interests*
    - *Move SafeZone to Office of Student Inclusion Initiatives*
    - Increase inclusion of underrepresented students
    - Promote a sense of ally-ship and community on campus
    - Provide inclusion education, including training on micro-aggressions

- Equity in Success
    - Work toward the elimination of differences in graduation rates
    - *Continue to deploy Title III initiatives in support of graduation rates that are comparable for all subsets of students*
    - Ensure marginalized groups can advocate for themselves
    - Enhance mentoring by peers, alumni and others

Group 3 – Human Resources (Goal 4)
Ms. Claxton, Ms. Gooch and Mr. McCoy

- Increase recruiting networks for minority faculty
- Continue to pursue a policy/process for foreign citizens to obtain work visas for employment
- Continue to advertise broadly using different advertising agencies and with the help of Job Elephant
- Establish a Search Advocate Program/training opportunity for employees to help advance DEI and implicit biases thru out the search process
- Create a positive web presence for DEI matters

- Ensure search meetings are run inclusively
- Ensure managers are held accountable for DEI with cultural intelligence training
- Provide diversity trainings for employees
- Identify needs/or areas of concern via an employee diversity survey
- Address policies and practices affecting diversity
- Ensure equity in employment and compensation

Group 4 – Community Engagement (Goal 5)
Dr. Delap, Dr. Hammon and Ms. Horn

- The group found all of the suggestions submitted helpful in connection with our focus on developing a diversity, equity, and inclusion plan aligned with the overall strategic plan.

- In relation to Athens State's role as an anchor institution, closer engagement with the communities in neighborhoods adjacent to campus might include adult learning opportunities in the areas of English Language Learning and basic computer skills. These continuing education activities should take place somewhere welcoming, such as a local community center or church.

- Initiatives such as the Men of Kennis, in which students see role models who look like them, should serve as a model for future outreach. Engagement with Latchkey/ Boys and Girls Club activities are good ideas. Also, connecting more with Drake State students is a positive direction.

- It would also be helpful to extend partnerships, such as coops and internships, into more minority-owned businesses, especially at the Arsenal and in the Research Park.

- When numbers of Hispanic student reach a certain level, a Hispanic Students Organization will provide support, particularly as we hire more faculty/staff role models for these students.

Dr. Way will work with the vice presidents and leaders of the groups in the meeting to firm-up a strategic plan for DEI. The plan will be placed in Blackboard for further comments and the committee will decide whether to include the comments at the next meeting. Dr. Way thanked everyone for their comments and wished them a great Thanksgiving.

The meeting adjourned at 11:56 a.m.

Respectfully submitted: Pamela D. Clark

Attachment 1: Planning for Themes in Horizon 2030: Diversity, Inclusion and Equity

STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE NOVEMBER 2020

Planning for Themes in Horizon 2030: Diversity, Inclusion and Equity

Agenda

- Today's goals
- Horizon 2030 and references to DEI
- Process of soliciting input
- Breakout groups
- Summary of submissions by goal area
- Plenary discussion
- Next steps

Today's Goals

- To focus on developing a diversity, inclusion and equity plan aligned with the overall strategic plan.

- To emulate the process that we used for the overall university strategic plan:
  - Provide a summary of all the input received.
  - Evaluate the suggestions for enhancements to current goals and strategies.
  - Revise DEI goals and strategies as necessary.
  - Later:
    - Aggregate revised university plans.
    - Cascade down to units which should be able to show how their plans align with that of the university.

Horizon 2030

- Athens State University will offer relevant, viable, innovative, and high-quality academic programs for lifelong learning including degrees and credit- and non-credit-bearing certificate and badge programs at the baccalaureate, graduate, and post-college continuing education levels.

- Athens State University will provide quality teaching and engaged learning in modalities that respect student preferences regarding time (schedule and degree of synchronicity) and place (on-ground location at the ACA or on the Athens campus vs. online vs. blended).

- Athens State University will recruit, retain and graduate a growing high-quality, diverse and successful student body.

- Athens State University will increase the quantity, quality and diversity of resources and allocate them efficiently on the basis of ROI to support the effective execution of goal-driven strategies.

- Athens State University will engage with its outside communities as an "anchor institution" resulting in reciprocal benefits.

Process of Soliciting Input

- Existing academic and non-academic unit plans and proposals for diversity
- 9/11/19 Administrative Council meeting focus on DEI
- BlackBoard site for strategic planning input
- Meetings with various employee groups (e.g., MFSA)
- Submissions from various employees

Breakout Group Assignments

- Groups
  - Academic programs and pedagogies (goals 1 and 2)
  - Recruitment and retention/student success (goal 3)
  - Human resources (goal 4)
  - Community engagement (goal 5)

- Topics for discussion:
  - Are these suggestions helpful? Which are and which are not?
  - Are there other suggestions from the breakout group?
  - What are the priorities based on ROI?

Submissions: Goals 1 and 2 - Academics

- Programs and course content
  - Increase academic *programs* relating to diversity broadly defined.
  - Integrate diversity into *courses* to increase international and other types of diversity.
  - Prepare students to work in a diverse world, maybe through diversity across the curriculum.
  - Offer more programs that tend to recruit people of color and other under-represented groups.

- Pedagogies
  - Students need to feel valued in the classroom.
  - Use course materials from diverse sources so students can see themselves in them.
  - Need inclusive learning environments and culturally responsive teaching.

Submissions: Goal 3 – Recruitment and Success

- Recruitment
  - Increase diversity to attain the Title III goals.
    - Grow Men Of Kennis and Bonner Leaders Program.
    - Recruit more intensively in diverse counties, community colleges and even high schools.
    - Focus on affordability – the total cost of going to school.
    - Develop tuition structures and scholarship criteria to help recruit disadvantaged students.
    - Attune marketing and recruitment to particular demographics, e.g., Hispanics.

Submissions: Goal 3 – Recruitment and Success (cont'd)

- Retention/Student Success
  - Increase inclusion of under-represented students.
    - Promote ally-ship and community.
    - Educate people about micro-aggressions.
    - Reduce stigma of using support services, e.g., disabilities.
    - Establish ethnic student associations and clubs that can support transitions from CCs.
    - Increase campus diversity initiatives, e.g, Diversity Day, Campus Climate Lunch and Learns.

  - Equity in success:
    - Work toward elimination of differences in graduation rates.
    - Ensure marginalized groups can advocate for themselves.
    - Enhance mentoring by peers, alumni and others.

Submissions: Goal 4 - HR

- Diversity: Increase diversity among management and student-facing functions.
  - Develop mentoring and recruiting networks for minority faculty.
  - Develop relationships with PhD programs with larger numbers of under-represented grad students, e.g. through the PhD Project in Business.
  - Correct uninformed perceptions of Athens State and Alabama.
  - Be willing to assist foreign citizens in obtaining work visas and green cards.
  - Use Job Elephant data on likely success of obtaining applications from diverse people in different advertising outlets.
  - Have a search advocate sit on every search committee.
  - Educate employees about bias and stereotyping.
  - Have a visiting minority scholar program.

Submissions: Goal 4 – HR (cont'd)

- Inclusion: Under-represented groups need to feel supported.
  - Do not overuse under-represented faculty and staff to push the diversity agenda.
  - Establish a mentoring program for under-represented employees.
  - Establish networking resource groups for employees with similar backgrounds for mutual support and to reduce social isolation.
  - Have a positive web presence for DEI matters.
  - Explore and be transparent about the history of the university, e.g. through USS.
  - Ensure meetings are run inclusively.

- Equity: Ensure equity in employment and compensation outcomes.

- General:
  - Add DEI advisory committee to existing committees such as University Safe Zone Committee.
  - Make managers accountable for DEI.
  - Train managers in cultural intelligence – self-awareness, knowledge, motivation, and behavioral capability.

Submissions: Goal 5 – Community Engagement

- Give back to regional under-represented communities.
- Establish a community engagement center for volunteerism, service learning, social entrepreneurship and social change.
- Ensure that Education students reach out to the schools to be role models.
- Create a lab school – a win-win.
- Need point persons who are able to reach out to community partners and ease involvement by others.

Plenary Report-Out

– Are these suggestions helpful? Which are and which are not?

– Are there other suggestions from the breakout group?

– What are the priorities based on ROI?

Next Steps

- Revise DEI plans in each VP/goal area based on input.
- Aggregate into a university-wide plan.
- Ensure there are goals with strategies, targets, and responsibilities where currently absent.
- Assess priorities based on ROI.
- Create a timetable/project management plan.
- Measure the effect of each strategy to inform resource allocation decisions.