

Northland Pioneer College  
Strategic Planning and Accreditation Steering Committee (SPASC)  
October 21, 2011

Members in attendance: John Bremer, Brian Burson, Paul Clark, Andrew Hassard, Blaine Hatch, Jeannie McCabe, Debra Myers, Ryan Rademacher

Advisory members in attendance: Trudy Bender, Eric Henderson, Ann Hess, Cindy Hildebrand, Jeanne Swarthout

Guests: Colleen Readel (recorder)

- I. Approval of Minutes from 10/7/11
  - a. Motion to approve by John Bremer; second by Andrew Hassard
    - i. Unanimously approved
- II. Membership Update
  - a. Dr. Swarthout has no progress to report
- III. Scan the Plan – Pillar 1 (Eric Henderson)
  - a. Eric Henderson went over the Presidential initiatives and goals relating to assessment
    - i. Many of them refer to Pillar 1 goals concerning assessment, hybrid learning environments, online courses
  - b. Goals in Pillar 1
    - i. Priority 1:
      1. 1.1.1 – is coming along but may be a little behind
        - a. We're putting in the infrastructure and implementing it. Faculty are working on a number of things
      2. 1.1.2 – Debbie Myers has provided a lot of data for course success and placement testing which should help in the advisement process
      3. 1.1.3 – web-based classes are moving along particularly in hybridization
      4. 1.1.4 – Eric, Mark & Claude will be meeting regarding this with First Things First
      5. 1.1.5 & 1.1.6 – Traditional community college role in dealing with underserved populations, first generation college students, etc. VP Vest and Eric will be working on Fine & Performing Arts Scholarships
        - a. Debbie Myers asked if there will be an effort to collect data regarding the first in the family generation students attending college. She added it would have to be on the enrollment form
          - i. Perhaps when Dr. Wasson joins us we can talk about some of these things on the strategic plan

- ii. Priority 2:
  - 1. 1.2.1 – Seek approval for baccalaureate degrees – Eric doesn't feel there is much interest in this anymore but it should remain on the plan for the time being
  - 2. 1.2.2 – Dr. Swarhout announced the Construction Trades area last week
  - 3. 1.2.3 – short term curriculum – Peggy is working on this
  - 4. 1.2.4 – internship opportunities in certain CTE programs are moving along
- iii. Priority 3
  - 1. 1.3.1 We re-upped for our final year in the Assessment Academy.
  - 2. 1.3.2 We need to do a little more work on program review, it's a little bit stronger in CTE, than Arts & Sciences. We've made a lot of progress here over the last 3 years. Bringing in a couple new departments this year. Working with advisory committees it continues the pace.
- c. Overall assessment of Pillar 1 is incremental progress. Eric would be happy to answer questions on any specific points.
- d. Jeanne asked if anyone saw the new AZ report card on every K-12 school in the state. The C & D schools are almost all in rural counties.
  - i. Mark stated that schools at the high school level in Navajo County received C or D.
  - ii. Jeanne added that almost every school in Apache County received D's.
  - iii. Mark added that some of the middle schools and elementary schools got B's.
  - iv. The rural/urban discrepancy is quite noticeable in that report.
- e. Paul asked Eric about the placement testing and what's been done. There was a discussion regarding placement testing for transfer students. Eric shared data on the screen from Sociology courses
  - i. Mark – This data is for all the courses that are in the arts and humanities, social sciences, and physical and biological sciences categories for transfer students
    - 1. Eric stated that we haven't done a lot of this for CTE courses that don't have placement scores.
      - a. Eric went over the graphs starting with the writing placement scores and feels that in Sociology; scores don't seem to make a lot of difference by year. You see some improvement of success if you include the W's. Each course is slightly different.
      - b. Andrew asked for a short description of what this all means
        - i. Eric responded with for this particular example and it changes from class to class, the placement scores don't seem to make a lot of difference in some classes, they do seem to make a difference in others. Very low placement scores in Sociology make a difference. Even

half of the students are successful if you exclude the W's. You have to look course-by-course to see where the placement scores make a difference in terms of the student outcome in the course as to whether they are successful or not.

2. Andrew asked so for this sample, placement scores don't matter that much
    - a. Debbie – for writing placement for sociology
  3. Mark – Instructional council gave the placement sub-committee a task of looking at all of these and working with all of the departments and making recommendations for changes, deletions or increasing the cut scores in some cases, based on student performance. We looked at if the cut score made a difference and then the placement committee was also given information if the student passed ENL 101 and whether or not that made a difference. Looking at the number of students overall and the minimum cut score of 38 and there is a nonperforming spike for 40 and below so 38 seems to be working, but there are only 12 students involved. It is such a small number that it is hard to know – 5 withdrew, 5 dropped, 1 got a B and 1 got a D, so out of the 12 students who got below the minimum score to get in the class, 11 of the 12 were unsuccessful. One way to look at that is if you score below a 40, we really don't think you have a very good chance to succeed but that doesn't say much about what happens above 40. And as Eric has pointed out once you get above 40, the scores flatten out and performance does seem to be dictated by whether you scored a 50, 60, 70 or 80.
  4. Eric agreed with Mark's interpretation.
  5. Ryan asked what the difference was between a withdrawal and a drop in these graphs.
    - a. Debbie explained that a drop is when a student drops before the posted drop date. After that they have to withdraw and a W grade is usually where they are after the FTSE date and an instructor gives them a W.
- ii. Eric then showed the biology stats
1. Debbie stated you have 1097 students then you only have 608 after the withdrawals and drops
  2. Mark stated you see in Biology a steady student improvement based on their placement score
    - a. Eric showed the scores in writing and reading and math
      - i. Jeanne stated after seeing the graphs that in every area the higher the score the better you do

- b. Eric said to get back to Paul's question, if we were to look at this for students coming into something like the IMO program we would want to placement test them and see what their skill levels were and see which ones were performing better than others. It might make more difference there than something like the quantitative skills or the reading than it does in these classes. But we haven't done those yet.
  - i. Mark said that was step 2 with the CTE folks as we were looking at the courses that we currently have placement scores for, then the placement committee will start next year working with Nursing & Allied Health and CTE to see if they want to implement placement scores and if so what makes sense.
  - ii. Paul asked if the basis of this is to see who should and shouldn't take placement tests
  - iii. Jeanne stated that there are a lot of people who question as to whether placement really works. In some cases placements are a very good indicator of success and in others may not be a good predictor.
  - iv. Debbie stated in some cases it may depend on the instructor
  - v. Mark added it may also depend on grading patterns. Or if an instructor leaves mid-year and another comes in who has a different policy about withdrawals.
- c. Paul asked who takes the placement exams. Mark responded that anyone who wants to take a general education class. The only students who do not have to take these tests are students who have taken college level English or Math at another institution and successfully completed them and transfer them in or if they have a transfer associates degree or bachelor's degree.
  - i. Brian stated that it is possible that they may be taking dual-enrollment classes at the high school and then they come here to NPC to take biology, they have already satisfied the requirement.
    - 1. Mark stated that we placement test the dual-enrollment students
- d. Jeannie stated that reading and writing scores would be beneficial in business and asked if that is in the future.
  - i. Mark said that is up to the department. The placement committee will be working with each department to

determine what they would like to do. We need to look at what we have been doing and see if it has any benefit.

- ii. One of the things Mark asked of the placement committee is to make a recommendation on what is an acceptable pass rate in a course? In other words, if people get a 55 or higher pass at a 70% rate and people get below a 55 pass at a 60% rate, what are we shooting for?
- e. Brian asked if the placement exam was the Compass or the Asset and if there was any discrepancy between those two.
  - i. Mark stated this data looks at the Compass, we give Compass to our students, and we give Asset, because it's pencil and paper, to the high schools. Both are made by ACT. We have a concordance chart that we use between the two of them.
  - ii. Difference between Compass and Asset
    - 1. Compass is computer based and uses a test bank of about 1000 questions.
    - 2. Asset is a pencil and paper test and has the potential of being able to memorize the questions
      - a. The only way to give Compass to the high schools is to install it on their computers and allow them to do the testing themselves. That is what Maricopa does and it's a test security issue and test integrity issue
  - iii. Ryan had a question regarding 1.1.3 Faculty sabbaticals
    - 1. Is there going to be any changes to the requirements for faculty to be eligible for sabbatical.
      - a. Eric stated – not that has been discussed that he knows of.
    - 2. Blaine and Mark said the employee relations committee would be discussing it
      - a. Ryan stated it might be easier if it were promoted and if you had to be here 6 years to be eligible
      - b. Jeanne said the national trend is to cut sabbaticals altogether due to finances. That doesn't mean that NPC would be doing it because we haven't even talked about it. The employee relations committee would have to deal with that question.

## IV. Possible Pathway Project with High Schools

- a. Jeanne briefly discussed at the last meeting the possibility of a project with high schools, NAVIT and the college regarding improving the pipeline of student success

- i. Mark – his initial comment would be after thinking about it and listening to people at the AAAA meeting yesterday, we may need to think in terms of not just a high school but a school district and starting at the middle school level. He spoke with Central’s Academic VP yesterday. They started a project where they go into the middle school and start signing students up for a kid’s college in the summer and build a cohort with that group, called Promise for the Future, have a camp to work with the students to set up a college-prep to go through a middle school and HS curriculum and if they follow it all the way through. The college waives their tuition. They have to successfully complete everything. Their goal is to reach down to the middle school level to begin working the kids. Also, start working with their parents to have the “yes I’m going to college” mentality.

- ii. Eric asked if Jeanne has had any communication with the high schools about this all.

1. Jeanne has talked with Linda Morrow, Navajo County School Superintendent, and has her full support. It will be the principals’ and superintendents’ support that is needed. Again Jeanne’s thought is to go with a north and a south high school. Linda is very supportive - thinks it is a great idea and would sit on an advisory group to help facilitate the conversations and projects.

- iii. Eric stated when he went to the “Move on when ready” presentation, he feels it is an outgrowth of Napolitano’s P-20 council of how you mesh secondary education with post-secondary education. The initiatives that he has seen so far squeeze the community colleges out of that formula. The rhetoric that he hears is that the junior and senior years of high school are really like the equivalent of a freshman and sophomore year at a community college.

1. Jeanne believes that is an underlying thread in the conversation statewide.

2. Eric went on to say that a project like this could be very helpful in blunting that conversation and providing students with a route to college. It was amazing in this Move on When Ready, that students can get the Grand Canyon Diploma at the end of the 10<sup>th</sup> grade. Then they can go on to a community college; or they can stay on at high school and get an accelerated curriculum and go to a good college later on. It ignores the fact that if a student goes to CCC or NPC starting in their junior year of high school, by the time their friends who were still in high school were ready to go to college, they would be juniors at the University of Arizona, assuming they had met the AGEC requirement

and had an associate's degree. So if that's the attitude, you need to find school districts that aren't going to get drawn into that way of thinking.

3. Andrew asked then when does one experience the freshman and sophomore years of college if community college is like junior and senior year of high school?
  - a. Jeanne stated that part of this is to see if we could decrease the number of students who end up going into TLC classes to cut down on the developmental pipeline.
- iv. Jeanne requested that SPASC continue to give feedback. She would like to go to the school districts in November to see if she can get some buy-in and setup some specific goals which she will bring to this group.
  1. Andrew stated he feels this fits with the goal for first time college student in the family. This is true in all rural areas that a lot of high school students are not planning on going to college period or they are trying to get out of the rural area and they're going somewhere else. So if we're focusing on those first-timers, this fits well.
  2. Jeanne stated a lot depends on how interested in improving things the K-12 districts are and what we set as project goals and benchmarks are going to be real critical to see how this works.
    - a. Jeanne will keep bringing this back as she develops it and talks to people and as she looks at project goals and benchmarks. If we benchmark this correctly it could be an Open Pathway project and it could improve our strategic plan baseline data scores.
- V. Completion Initiative for College
  - a. This is linked to the possible Open Pathway project with the school districts
    - i. Jeanne would like to kick this off in January and like this group to start thinking about and change the college culture to student success and completion and retention and away from FTSE
      1. Jeanne wants ideas on how we can change and push this initiative out into the college. Once we get a sense of where HLC is going with their criteria, how we link that completion initiative to the HLC criteria. We may think of this as a short-term initiative but it is going to take a lot – probably a year and a half to get the college to quit thinking that FTSE counts – yes it's important but if we're thinking on the other end, how they complete, student success, they will come in the door.
      2. Jeannie asked if we have had any progress in defining what completion is.
        - a. We have some definitions in the community colleges strategic plan. Based on intent, the community colleges are trying to gather that intent data. But is that sufficient or completely

- appropriate for us is the question we need to work on starting in January.
- b. Jeanne has complete categories for some breakout sessions in January.
    - i. Who is responsible for student success completion?
      1. Most people when they think of student success, point at the faculty.
    - ii. What is the faculty's role?
    - iii. What internal barriers can we identify?
    - iv. What external barriers can we identify?
      1. Which of those do we have control over?
  - c. Jeanne is going to email this thinking piece to Jeannie so she can send it out to the group. The definition is partially crafted for us through the community college strategic plan, but we do have to establish whether there are other categories that we want to talk about as a college – so yes we have some definition, is it adequate, we need to look at it in terms for NPC?
3. Jeannie asked if we currently survey students to find out their intent.
    - a. Mark said we have changed the enrollment form to be more specific about getting student intent
      - i. We've also blocked students from registering once they've reached 32 credits without a degree plan on file
      - ii. The next thing is to do the same thing once they reach 75 credits, except for Nursing students because they are still on path to graduate at 75 credits
        1. Jeanne feels we are off to a really good start with this plan both with some definition and some data collection.
      - iii. Mark stated in talking with people at AAAA, we are one of the few institutions who put any kind of an enrollment block on registration for students who haven't declared a degree intent. We had about 400 students who had to declare a degree in the spring before they could register.
      - iv. Jeannie stated she has her students fill out a questionnaire on the first day of class and it asks questions about what their intent is and what they are wanting from the class and they start out taking one class because they like it and they end up graduating.
  4. Jeanne stated the topics she is thinking about for breakouts at convocation around this completion initiative, Jeannie will get to you so

you can see the direction she is headed. She has talked to the faculty association a little bit, one of the concerns she has in a completion initiative is there is a tendency for the rest of the college to say it's a faculty initiative. So somehow we need to get the whole college knowing that they have a commitment to student completion and success.

- a. Debbie stated there are studies that show students complete more often when they are involved with staff and advisors.
- b. Jeanne stated there is also a tendency on faculty's part to make an initial assumption that means they have to "dumb-down" the courses.
  - i. Mark stated that is something he would like to be very careful about that people don't get the wrong message and think we're asking them to pass everyone through so we have higher completer numbers.
  - ii. Jeanne agreed – we want the bar high and we want them to learn before they leave. There is no underlying assumption on her part that this is about how you grade or what your course content is, it is about identifying other types of barriers to student success and helping to solve those. She asked faculty to help spread the correct message – it is not just a faculty project and it is not about lowering standards or bars.
  - iii. Jeannie feels that going to completion is better than FTSE for the students; they are not just a number anymore.

VI. Other

- a. Motion to adjourn by Andrew Hassard; second by Ryan Rademacher
  - i. Unanimously approved