

*The following notes are from the AMP Open Forums March 23, 24, and 29, 2010. These notes will be considered along with the focus group notes and included in the AMP discussions as we move toward defining objectives and creating strategies.*

## **Open Forum – 3/23/10**

### **Goal 1**

Current list of Strengths: Should include small class sizes and existence of all graduate programs

Current list of Weaknesses: Phrase about “Americanist” should simply say, “we need diversity in the curriculum.”

Current list of Weaknesses: Line about “Institutional barriers” should be an objective and further fleshed out.

Addition to Weaknesses: Students don’t write enough.

Addition to Weaknesses: Perception that LC is not used enough – students don’t know about all the services.

Threats should more properly refer to Board of Governor’s instead of PASSHE generally.

### **Goal 2**

Weakness: FIS is hard to use for advising

- It would be nice to have a tool which could save notes, etc.
- FIS doesn’t include all students math placement level

Weakness: Not all advising is done by faculty (e.g., graduate students advise undeclared students)

Weakness: Not all faculty receive advising training. (It is not required.)

Weakness: transfer students can cause issue with class size, service learning component, writing requirements, first year experience.

### **Other comments**

Possible strategy for increase resources for Learning Center:

- Hire more peer tutors or graduate assistants
- Look into system (like supplemental instruction) where upper level undergraduates tutor/help as a service project or internship experience. Look at what’s being done by math, English & history, for example

Quality of Students

- Recruiting/marketing to increase applications numbers among highly qualified students

## **Open Forum – 3/24/10**

### **Goal 3**

- Mutual interaction of theory & practice – how else do we do it. Embedded within courses – e.g. data analysis to confirm/refute theories.
- Tutoring for history majors by history majors – reinforces learning and is an example of another type of service learning/field experience with practical application on the part of the tutors.

- Consider some small pots of money, which perhaps are not obvious sources, could help fund low-cost application activities. E.g., human understanding grant to fund students serving as ESL tutors in Chambersburg.
- Can we get better mileage out of our Harrisburg presence, and support it better?
- Can we do a better job at external partnerships and setting up experiential learning sites/placements? Messiah & Dickinson have designated offices that coordinate service learning etc, set up external partnerships & placements, and this is also an active official part of the curriculum.
- Lack of clarity on the criteria for Promotion & Tenure. What's the proper recipe, the proper mix of ingredients? Not clear to many people. Need to investigate strategies to dispel perceptions about ambiguity of the process and criteria. Two potential strategies: a written statement per department of the appropriate mix for faculty in that department, a rubric of Promotion & Tenure criteria.
- 4/4 load impacts many different things, especially when faculty are new. Consider 3/3 load during faculty first year.
- CUR will send to AMP their goals and documents

#### **Goal 4**

Opportunities: Include UG research, writing, capstone in all curriculum/majors.

Weakness: Not enough faculty to have the flexibility to do new and innovative things on-load ... which puts pressure to do new and innovative things as extras (overload through the colleges, or offload through Extended Studies).

Weakness: Student needs and faculty interest to meet those needs cannot be met with the current faculty onload capacity ... so turn to overload and offload mechanisms.

#### **Goal 5**

Strength: There's a wide range of programs in Academic Affairs & Student Affairs that contribute to students' development in this goal and these values

Weakness: There's no coordinated way that this is happening across the curriculum.

Opportunity: Better conversations between Academic Affairs/Student Affairs and town/gown we could do more to formalize the opportunities for students and their integration within the curriculum.

Weakness: Don't see that our current curriculum really does foster global awareness. Could take better advantage of our proximity to urban settings and their rich cultural diversity and global awareness within the US.

Weakness: Very low foreign language requirement.

### **Open Forum – 3/29/10**

Class size – Over the next few years we know there will be a bubble. There are concerns about how this will impact the faculty:student time ratio, climate, faculty scholarship, service learning & other individualized student learning experiences.

Career education and development – add these to goals 1 & 2 – would like to see Ship do more in these areas.

Opportunity – There is an opportunity to be more forthcoming with the public and prospective students and parents, with respect to how we compare with other schools. State more boldly who we serve, how we do it, and show the results (eg - relatively small class size). Also, be more direct about our price differential as compared to other schools.

To attract highly qualified out-of-state students – consider tuition reductions for out of state students of a certain academic level. This is a way to simultaneously diversify and strengthen the student body.

Improve active recruitment activities for prospective students. Need segmented marketing pieces targeting specific audiences. Change the way we market – from print mailings to electronic means that students use.

We are in the secondary schools all the time supervising student teachers. We are missing an opportunity in this personal presence with high school students & guidance counselors. Build better relationships in the high schools. Eg – Big Springs Career Education courses, career days, preparing for college courses. Alumni working in the secondary schools can be recruiters for Ship – sustaining those relationships with those alumni is important for those purposes – eg admissions take teachers to lunch, our faculty are already going into the schools have them connect with teacher alumni in a specific way. Current students going back to their high schools to talk about ship, how they selected the school, etc. this is done most efficiently and effectively on a centralized coordinated basis. Faculty go to high schools to award scholarships to incoming students – but do faculty really have the time to do this?

## AMP Themes

### **1. Student recruitment, institutional image, declining student profile**

- Do a better job highlighting internally & externally our successes – honors students, faculty activities and accomplishments, things we do really well - specialized support services we provide, niche programs, etc. Have some of this in our internal publications, need to get it out to the external regional newspapers, etc – need to target things of most interest to the local community – impact on students, impact of university activity on the local community.

### **2. Improving the academic climate, first year experiences, learning communities, undergraduate research**

- Focus on value added activities – service learning, UG research, internships, study abroad. The more we publicize these value add-ons will attract highly qualified students. The high end of the program can drive the middle to low end of the program. What if each department were to require one of these experiences for their majors? But whose “in charge” of this – who would push such an initiative through? No mechanism for something that cuts across the curriculum – how would such a cross-curriculum initiatives be championed.
- Barriers to creativity & innovation – budget, 4/4 teaching load, processes, policies, inability of students to schedule electives (120 credits; why create them if students can’t take them), curriculum run by resources, faculty load determination doesn’t match what we value,
- General education program reforms needed
- First year/entry year experience class needed

### **3. Community outreach, service learning**

### **4. Improving faculty evaluation:**

- There are different systems in play. The annual evaluations done in departments and colleges – faculty get “up/down” feedback on an individual basis. But the promotion and tenure process is conducted across the university and individuals are compared to one another.
- There is a perceived need to clarify expectations upfront and to provide feedback after the process.