All Hands Meeting – Survey Response Analysis

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After the university All Hands meeting the university community was asked for feedback on seven questions:

1. What questions do you have based on the information and data provided? What additional data would be helpful to inform your specific role at the University and our collective next steps?
2. As you consider our enrollment trends, PASSHE expectations, and need for financial sustainability, what recommendations do you have for Shippensburg University to forge a successful path forward?
3. What concerns do you have that the University needs to consider as strategies are implemented to stabilize enrollment and ensure financial sustainability?
4. During the All Hands Meeting, we discussed the impact of staffing reductions on staff and faculty well-being. What recommendations do you have to ensure our faculty and staff are supported and valued as we navigate this upcoming year of ongoing attention to financial sustainability?
5. We concluded the All Hands Meeting with a call to action focused on the four steps we must take as a campus to stabilize our enrollment, create fiscal sustainability, and advance our academic mission as a University. From your perspective and role, what would be the most effective way for us to tackle these as a campus community?
   a. Step 1 - We must expand our recruitment strategy beyond high school graduates and traditional students. We must ALL embrace our role in recruitment as we are Shippensburg University - our actions and mindset shapes our campus.
   b. Step 2 - We need to boldly complexify how we deliver our academic courses and services that will ensure students across the career and life-stage see our institution as providing opportunities for their academic and career growth.
   c. Step 3 - We must solve our retention challenges and create concrete and purposeful strategies to address them. We must tackle, authentically and directly, the ways in which we do not create a sense of inclusion and belonging for all of our students.
   d. Step 4 - We must intentionally update our program array to respond to student demand, better align with regional workforce needs, meet PASSHE metrics for sustainability, and address faculty well-being.
6. What other strategies do you suggest that can be implemented to attain our financial benchmarks?
7. Please provide any additional feedback that you would like to share or questions you would like addressed.

Responses to the questions were provide by 104 unique respondents, in all, 341 comments were provide. The committee asked to analyze the qualitative feedback from the university’s All Hands meeting categorized the responses into six categories:

- Enrollment & Retention
- Student Support Services
- Resource Allocation - Program Array, Modality, and Advising
- Administrative Policies
- Informational Deficit
- Morale
Some feedback was tagged with two or more of the above categories, analysis was conducted according to each category, no cross-categorization analysis was conducted. Each member of the committee was assigned one or more of these categories for further analysis and provide findings.

**Enrollment & Retention**

Enrollment and retention of students at Shippensburg University appeared significantly in the data collected following the *All Hands On Deck* meeting. Of the 341 total responses, 57 responses (16.7%) connected directly to enrollment & retention. These responses could then be categorized into different thematic areas. Data related to recruitment, institutional reputation, and retention accounted for 40.4% of responses (23 total), while developing stronger regional partnerships was 31.6% (18 total), and outreach to new audiences was 17.5% (10 total). An additional 10.5% (6 total) were not categorized but will be addressed. While academic advising, academic program array, and course modality were not the focus of this section, they do come up frequently given the implications each topic has to enrollment and retention. More information on these topics can be found in other areas of this report.

**Recruitment, Reputation, and Retention**

Significant amounts of the data could be grouped to themes related to the recruitment of new students, retention of existing students, and institutional reputation connected to enrollment management. Feedback in this area ranged from recruitment strategy to admissions practices and acceptance rate as well as touched on retention strategies and institutional reputation (especially in the region of south central Pennsylvania). A sample of the responses are included here.

*Get back to recruiting in our back yard. Stop trying to recruit so hard from big cities - too much competition in those areas.*

*We need to address the preparedness of our students. Not to exclude them but to ensure that once we accept them and their tuition, we provide them with the resources they need to succeed.*

*With declining enrollment across PASSHE, retention of our students is going to be the best way to continue to be financially stable. However, our current retention efforts, specifically within the Office of Student Retention, have not shown to be effective given the resource distribution.*

*Anecdotally, I can relate that since the SSC alert system has been implemented, I have consistently put out alerts on failing students. In the vast majority of cases, there has not been effective intervention to save the student from failing the class.*

*Better quality students. I keep hearing things about that from enrollment management, but when they auto-reject people under a 1.8 HS GPA, that means they are allowing HS students in with a 1.9, 2.0, 2.1, etc. What do [sic] the data show about their ability to actually finish at Ship?*

*They [local students] thus see SU as a failing institution. My own kids grew up in Shippensburg, and the high-achieving kids they knew in the school district as well as in*
surrounding districts thought of SU as the school for losers. The recruiters who visit area schools are terrible ambassadors of SU, and the university rarely promotes all the great work faculty do here. When I first started here many years ago, SU was considered at or just a notch below the best in PASSHE. Now we’re at the bottom. The fact that our enrollments have plummeted, even though the college-age population in the [Cumberland] valley has risen shows that we have missed out on a golden opportunity to recruit the best and brightest in the region.

Regional Partnerships

The development of strong regional partnerships and regional recruitment practices was also a significant theme in the data. Responses mentioned developing partnerships with regional employees related to workforce needs. Additional responses focused on having partnerships with community colleges and school districts in the region to promote student recruitment from within this area (i.e., south central Pennsylvania, western Maryland, etc.).

*Focus on what we do well and consider modest expansion in these spaces (business, teacher ed, etc.) and develop stronger relationships with regional schools and businesses.*

*More considerations for partnering with local employers on what additional certifications their employees need. Maybe collaborations with companies that help pay for their employees to go to college (FedEx offers $5,000)- this could help close the gap for some students.*

*Get faculty involved in recruiting instead of the territorial nature of admissions. The idea is the [sic] improve our knowledge, skills, and abilities in recruiting in our market. Is it true that admissions from Dauphin County are down by 80%? Then why go to Philadelphia? Focus on our back yard! Improve our "game" in admissions.*

*Significantly increase efforts to recruit students from surrounding counties. Identify programs of high potential demand and invest resources in growing them and recruiting students for these programs.*

Outreach to New Audiences

Responses also discussed a need for the institution to conduct outreach to new audiences. Suggestions to accomplish this reflected in the data include a variety of things such as changes in course modality, recruitment practices, focus on serving Hispanic & Latino/a populations, and attracting more adult-learners. Survey responses also discuss the creation of new degree programs, degree completion programs, establishing post-bachelors and post-masters certificates, and workforce development through credentialing or non-credit training opportunities.

*Flexibility in modality and delivery of programs. We need to cater to the adult and working students no matter their age or needs to be more accessible and help stabilize enrollment with different student types, i.e. adults, or working students. We saw a lot of students choose to work not attend college full time, and now those companies are*
providing tuition benefits but we can’t support the students with evening and online formats.

You are asking us to recruit or sell the same product to new audiences but the product hasn’t changed in 20+ years. How do we sell academic programs to an audience that does not want to buy it due to lack of change or innovation? How do we recruit individuals from new markets (adult learners, students who wish to finish degrees, etc.) when we expect them to take classes face to face from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.?

Invest in and develop credential and degree completion programs to attract additional student populations.

I think it is important to revitalize our majors and consider/offe...
Streamlined Services & Staffing Needs

The need to streamline student support services as well as to create a sustainable support structure accessible to students was mentioned repeatedly.

*Streamline the student success and retention areas. We are overwhelming students and exhausting resources without a clear return on that investment.*

*If you are concerned about academic dismissal being the #1 reason for students leaving Ship, you have to look no further than the last couple of years of incoming first-year students. They are ill-prepared for college level work, both academically and in terms of emotional maturity, and we have thrown dozens of student support initiatives at them with no real strategy or coherence. If you want to be an open enrollment university, if you want to be CCNY, or HACC, or whatever, fine, but that requires an entirely different student support structure, and it requires a willingness to have the truly abysmal graduation rates typical of those institutions. If you don’t want that, you have to focus on attracting students who have the potential to graduate in 4-6 years, and you have to have enough faculty to teach them well, and you have to have an organized, coherent student success structure that students and their parents can easily understand and traverse.*

Additionally, the topic of staffing structures designed with student support services the adequately meet student needs was brought up a dozen times in the responses.

*There are offices that are bleeding staff that offer essential services for university functions (financial aid, student accounts) that do not have enough employees which impacts student experience. They need help. Student Affairs and the Counseling Center needs help to support students who are coming to college with significant mental health problems.*

*Areas of student support (student affairs, counseling, wellness) are woefully understaffed. Proper staffing in these areas can provide the mental, emotional, and physical health support that our students need to be successful.*

*I think the folks in Student Affairs, Student Success, Admissions and other offices (FYE/Veterans/International/Athletics/Department Secretaries/Financial Aid/Student Accounts/Marketing/Career) are all working very hard. There has been a tremendous amount of turnover in these areas, too. Most of these offices are down to bare bones in terms of what they are being asked to do and their staffing levels. Please thank these people and mention their mental health and wellbeing in the next all campus meeting. The last meeting only mentioned the faculty wellbeing.*

Specific Support Areas

Many of the responses outline a variety of specific topics related to student support. Of these responses, those related to the need for mental health resources were brought up in varying contexts.
Post pandemic students do not have the soft skill [sic] nor mental health to be successful and retain until we have adequate staffing to support them. The more that we can work to stabilize our student’s health and skillset, the more likely they are to retain.

We need more people working directly with students. The students are looking even more wiped out than the faculty. My area is barely covering students now.

Resources to support parents on-campus – which includes undergraduate and graduate students with children, families of students, and employees – was also discussed repeatedly.

The three biggest concerns for a person like myself to go back to school would be childcare, time, and money:
1. There’s no childcare open after 6pm at night. So, if I didn’t have support at home, there would be no one to watch my children at all. Even a non-structured here’s an adult that can watch 5 kids at a time so the parents can focus on getting school work done, go to class, and earn a degree
2. School is expensive and add childcare is also expensive, $200 a week per kid, so if there was childcare open late it would need to be affordable
3. Flexibility in days, times, or how to attend classes. Example: My evenings are my time with my kids, from 4:30pm to 8pm; having classes that offer flexibility in the time and day you can attend them or attend online. We don’t have Saturday/Sunday classes, but some people would love to have them or be able to attend classes just after 8pm or just online.

We have a map of gender-neutral bathrooms on campus, which as a Mom with two sons who occasionally come to work with me, that’s amazing. It would be amazing if some of these bathrooms had changing tables, especially in locations where parents of potential college students who also have young children will be for orientation or students who are parents themselves and might be waiting for a support person to pick up their kid so they can go to class.

We have an amazing library, what an amazing place. However, if I had to use the resources with my 4 and/or 7 year old there, I would never use it, because there’s no place where I could sit and do work while my kid plays (hopefully quietly) in the corner.

The cost of daycare on campus is very expensive. It could be subsidized as a part of the GA benefit.

The design of our campus infrastructure not supporting accessibility to those with varying abilities was pointed out.

Accessibility to buildings for all; just looking at MCT/Dauphin building as an example:
1. There are three entrances labeled as handicap accessible entrances. MCT/Dauphin 000 level quad side entrance – Is the only one of the entrances has a button to open the door. Once you’re in there, if the elevator isn’t working, you can’t really get into Dauphin at all
2. Doors at the top 100 level of Dauphin to get in the building [are heavy] my 7 year struggles to open the doors to get into the building and into the main hallway
3. The door on the side facing Wright Hall that is Handicapped accessible is locked half the time
4. **No Bathrooms have buttons to open the doors for you**
5. **Bathrooms on 000 level in Dauphin, are super heavy compared to all other bathroom doors**

Supporting unique populations such as military-affiliated learners or international students within the campus community was mentioned through the survey responses. For context, military-affiliated learners include: veterans, active duty-military, reservists, national guard members, as well as spouses & dependents using GI Bill benefits.

*Fund veteran services – and increase collaboration to bring in more vets. PA has the fourth highest veteran population.*

*How can international students or veterans be supported without adequate staffing for their unique needs.*

Other responses spoke to the need for learning and career services that meet student needs through academic support and career readiness.

*Provide more support to workforce-ready initiatives and high-impact experiential learning practices so students can secure jobs that are relevant to their field of study when they graduate.*

*What parts of the workforce are seeking college graduates and how is Ship filling this gap? Does the career center have enough staff to support students who are preparing to go out into the work force.*

*Please provide academic support for students. I do not want to blame COVID for all the academic challenges students are facing. For years, academic support has been underrecognized and supported on campus.*

*The Learning Center provides professional academic support. The Learning Center staff are highly-qualified people who have the education, knowledge, skills, and ability to help students help themselves to be academically successful. For example, many students have anxiety, but not at the level that they need the services of the Counseling Center. The anxiety is often caused by a lack of time management skills, a roommate issue, homesick concerns, family issues, or a general lack of study skills. What students need are the services of a Learning Specialist in the Learning Center. Learning Specialists do intake assessments and provide the student with the strategies and skills to be academically successful. At this time in the semester (after early warning grades), it takes weeks to get an appointment with a Learning Specialist because they are so booked up. We (i.e. Shippensburg University) wait until a student is on academic probation and/or academically dismissed before being highly encouraged or mandated to attend meetings with a Learning Specialist or Learning Center staff member. Why not help students before they are on academic probation by providing more Learning Specialist support??*

**Quality of Services**
The third group of survey responses focused on student support services relates to the quality of the student experience.

*Where are our students coming from and what are their challenges? I understand that high school grades, etc. do not tell the whole story, and getting a better picture of students' challenges is difficult before they enter the university. Has there been a survey to determine after semester 1, 2, 3 ... what are the students' challenges and how we can help.*

*Everyone on campus needs a refresher on customer service. While students do need to follow our academic and student life policies, it would not hurt for everyone to be reminded that treating others well is a good practice if we are trying to improve retention.*

*All be on board! WE have many folx and departments who say it is not my problem and or do not get on board for thinking about the student. We have faculty telling students they won’t be successful day 2 of the term rather than helping them find support. Enrollment management made major shifts to bring in a better student, we now need to meet them where they are with the issues in k-12. We are here for our students and that needs to be our focus! In every department!*

**Resource Allocation – Program Array, Modality, and Advising**

**Feedback in Support of Program Array Adjustments**

There are 18 of the 30 comments regarding program array adjustments that support the notion that we should have an “appropriate program array to best support our region, shared course with our universities to support that array, and to streamline processes and application on campus.” Some comments were direct, such as “Eliminate degree programs that are under-enrolled and costing resources” and some were strategic “I am glad the university is hoping to pivot parts of our program array to better serve a changing market.” The need to serve non-traditional students, have better modality flexibility, and create associates degrees and credentials were also found in several comments.

**Representative Quotes:**

*Cut the majors that have less than 15 students in it - why are we wasting our money?*

*Look at programs - low enrollment majors, and especially minors, need to be considered to be dropped. I think Faculty cuts need to be made. What are our average class sizes with less students? We need to fill classrooms so that less offerings are made reducing faculty numbers. Faculty won’t like it, but they usually get whatever they want, time for them to sacrifice a little bit...*

*I don’t have specific questions, just would like to continue to be updated on the progress with the program array. We are wasting resources with some majors/minors and concentrations when we could super focus on our niche and priorities at Ship.*
Make the academic program array smaller, stronger and relevant.

Introduce Associate degree programs to more easily attract non-traditional students.

Offer more condensed sessions (half term) so students can take more classes at an accelerated pace or choose to spread out their 12 credits over 2 courses at a time consecutively.

Change programs and courses to continuously keep up with what is needed for academic and career growth, which may result in making hard decisions like eliminating low enrolled courses/faculty/staffing and moving them to other areas that are in higher demand.

Invest in and develop credential and degree completion programs to attract additional students populations. Eliminate degree programs that are under-enrolled and costing resources.

The already being discussed appropriate program array to best support our region, shared course with our universities to support that array, and to streamline processes and application on campus.

Why are we not investigating/implementing associate degree programs? If the intent of the PASSHE schools is to make affordable post secondary education available, would that not include associate degree programs? In this day and age, asking a non-traditional student (age 24+) to work though a four year program is a daunting task to think about at the onset, and is very off-putting. Perhaps having associate’s programs with the option to then continue onto a bachelor's if they so wish would help to bring more students to campus.

I recommend we develop a general studies degree (we need to workshop a better name that is attractive to both potential students and employers) that takes the credits from an associate degree or 60 credits of undergraduate coursework plus a 2.0 GPA toward a bachelor’s degree. This major would be desirable for adults in the region who need a bachelors degree in order to earn promotions in their current career path as well as undergrads who have struggled to find their math pathway at SU or other institutions. Coursework can be delivered in-person, live-via Zoom, and asynchronously through D2L.

Feedback Against Program Array Adjustments

There are 5 of the 30 comments regarding program array adjustments that are against cutting. “We do not need to update our program array” was expressed in the longest comments related to resource allocation. The harm to enrollment was expressed: “....a student’s major courses only make up at most 30% of the total 120 credits needed to graduate. The remaining 70% comes from General Education, minor programs, and free electives. How will this university attract prospective Biology, Psychology, or Business majors who also have an interest in Philosophy, Theatre, or Music if these smaller programs are eliminated in the interest of financial sustainability?” Resources were also a concern, as expressed here: “How can we respond to student demand when the administration is driving that demand by proposing to reduce small programs in favor of the larger programs. How can there be an increase in student demand for smaller programs if the resources to grow and improve those programs are never provided?”
Representative Quotes:

Discussion seems mostly focusing on academic program, accompanied by limited data availability. That's not right. Cutting academic programs to the point that affect their capability to deliver quality education and growth is short-sighted.

First, it would seem that this new administration’s strategy is backwards and will certainly reduce student enrollment and retention further if they continue with this focus on rewarding larger programs that have the resources to meet one more arbitrary benchmark of 15 completers per year and penalize and further erode the efforts of smaller programs with fewer faculty. Why should 15 completers apply equally to large major programs with 20 faculty and to smaller programs with less than 10 faculty? Surely some kind of metric like number of completers per faculty member would be a fairer measure of program performance. If smaller programs are not supported with the resources necessary to meet this benchmark, then how will they ever be able to meet this expectation? The more important question to be asking is how can we offer a program array that will attract more students to the university not less? Reducing choices by eliminating smaller programs will not attract more students, rather it will repel more students who are looking for a wide range of options to consider for their major. Moreover, a student’s major courses only make up at most 30% of the total 120 credits needed to graduate. The remaining 70% comes from General Education, minor programs, and free electives. How will this university attract prospective Biology, Psychology, or Business majors who also have an interest in Philosophy, Theatre, or Music if these smaller programs are eliminated in the interest of financial sustainability? In the past 5 years, Shippensburg has graduated over 700 students across these 29 low performing major programs. If these programs were to be eliminated because they did not meet this performance benchmark of 15 (which was set at 5 only a few years ago and now is suddenly unexplainably been tripled), then what will happen to recruitment of students like these? Won’t that further reduce our enrollment when fewer students are interested in coming to Shippensburg because our curriculum options are so limited? I would argue that just the opposite strategy needs to be taken to achieve financial sustainability.

We do not need to update our program array. We need YOU to talk about what we do in language that reflects that you know and understand what we do. Look at any list of attributes employers are seeking in college graduates -- oral communication, written communication, group and teamwork, critical thinking. If a university administration can’t make an argument that we (ESPECIALLY THOSE OF US IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES, good god why are English, Communication Studies, etc. not turning away majors? Why isn’t the university marketing what we do in these areas? Why isn’t anyone other than overloaded, exhausted faculty recruiting and directing students to those programs?) are already doing that, then we don’t need a new program array, we need a new university administration.

Why is the focus on cutting the core of what we do? It is ridiculous that faculty numbers have already been cut to around the level of enrollment drop, while admin remain at 91% of their high water mark and faculty lines rather than admin are being cut.

Why would anyone think that an institution of HIGHER EDUCATION should determine its programs by what students “want”? Should 18-year olds tell us what and how to teach? If so,
why are they even here? Just give them their degrees. They don't need to waste 4 years and thousands of dollars if what they "want" is a degree--just give it to them.

Faculty well-being will never be met as long as an unworkable, unexplained PASSHE completer metric is applied to reduce smaller programs and in turn reduce student choices for their courses. How can we respond to student demand when the administration is driving that demand by proposing to reduce small programs in favor of the larger programs. How can there be an increase in student demand for smaller programs if the resources to grow and improve those programs are never provided? Don't insult the faculty with this question when you know that controlling the purse strings effectively gives you as administrators the power to create and suppress demand depending on which programs you choose to provide the necessary resources.

Feedback Generally About Program Array Adjustments

There were 7 of 30 comments about program array adjustments that expressed concern or ideas, or that were general comments. These include comments like: “[It is] dangerous to only focus on number of graduates in a program” and questions like: “What does changing a program array look like? Is each program redesigned from the bottom up? (not sure people are going to move quickly enough or even in the right direction) With guidance from the top down? Will it be guidance? Or data? what does that look like and again how are faculty going to be persuaded to buy into this?”

Representative Comments:

...we already do this, many programs are constantly updating their curriculum for this reason. For metrics of sustainability see notes in previous questions for details, but dangerous to only focus on number of graduates in a program. Also, if you do want us to actively change our areas of knowledge then being able to go on a sabbatical to retool and not leave your department in a crunch is key (my last one was almost 14 years ago and I'm dreading what workload affect it will have when I finally go on one).

1. Will the university make investments where necessary? 2. What will that look like for areas where resources have to be shifted to make those investments? 3. Will we get those specifics? Will we get the specifics and the data from the institution to help make the necessary changes? I understand that the all-hands meeting wasn't designed to do so, nor would it have been that helpful to give us those specifics at the meeting but they have to come eventually. 4. What does changing a program array look like? Is each program redesigned from the bottom up? (not sure people are going to move quickly enough or even in the right direction) With guidance from the top down? Will it be guidance? Or data? what does that look like and again how are faculty going to be persuaded to buy into this?

I am concerned that cuts will be made across the board without regard for departments/areas that have already been working hard to address declining enrollment.

Feedback in Support of Modality Adjustments

Comments about the need to provide program flexibility were abundant, comprising 35 total comments. Suggestions include expanding distance education, creating online intro courses,
hiring another instructional designer, and targeting more student populations. “I also would like
the university to work towards flexibility with modalities and access to further reach different
demographics as we know the traditional high school freshman will continue to decline.”
Consider also the call for leadership: “President needs to just come out and say whether or not
we will offer online programs. Plain and simple…”

Representative Quotes:

I also would like the university to work towards flexibility with modalities and access to further
reach different demographics as we know the traditional high school freshman will continue to
decline.

Introduce remote/online courses as a de facto standard, especially for intro courses.

Offer more flexible and online options during the fall and spring semesters.

To implement an online course delivery plan including an integrative system of FTF, blended, and
ONL courses for UG students. A haphazard pilot attempt will fail because it will be unstructured
and have no plan for post-pilot directions. Hire another instructional designer yesterday, and
require that they personally meet with every instructor teaching ONL at least once every 2 years,
the standard way most successful ONL delivery systems are structured. Our lack of ONL delivery
at the UG level, lack of leadership in that direction, and union blocking of it is unacceptable.

Flexibility in program offerings, certificates, workforce development. The traditional freshman
will be there but won’t help us grow. We need to attend to adults that work, graduate offerings
and being able to provide that flexibility to even an 18 year old that wants to work vs. full time in
college. We need to think outside of the box that these students do not want to take out
thousands of dollars in debt but yet work and go part time.

You are asking us to recruit or sell the same product to new audiences but the product hasn’t
changed in 20+ years. How do we sell academic programs to an audience that does not want to
buy it due to lack of change or innovation? How do we recruit individuals from new markets
(adult learners, students who wish to finish degrees, etc.) when we expect them to take classes
face to face from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.? We need online classes and hybrid programs especially at
the graduate level and gen eds. We should still keep F2F classes for our traditional residential
and commuter aged students, but some of the classes/disciplines must adapt and offer courses
online.

Feedback Concerned about Modality Adjustments

Some of the comments about modality also expressed concerns with the correct pathway
forward. These include concerns about program matching “some of our key growth areas (like
engineering) have a hands on component that doesn't translate [online].” and “We can't simply
throw a few UG classes online for 15 weeks at a time and call that a DE strategy.” Our ability to
support online programs included our inability market them: “we have done a TERRIBLE job of
marketing programs -- especially since who pays or does marketing got seriously subdivided in
the previous administration. It is my understanding that Social Work and Psychology have done the yeoman's work of marketing and recruitment”

Representative Quotes:

*We can't simply throw a few UG classes online for 15 weeks at a time and call that a DE strategy. That's stupid and will waste money. If we're going to do distance ed, in a way that competes with either the reputable (PSU World, Arizona) or the disreputable (SNHU, Phoenix, whatever), we need to actually have a full curriculum, a schedule that makes sense, etc. An online class here or there may be fine, but it's (1) not going to change enrollment at all, and (2) will have no impact on the budget.*

*Administrators are obsessed with the elusive and magical "online audience" except: (1) we only have one instructional designer and he spends a lot of time managing D2L and not being able to do the design part; (2) we have done a TERRIBLE job of marketing programs -- especially since who pays or does marketing got seriously subdivided in the previous administration. It is my understanding that Social Work and Psychology have done the yeoman's work of marketing and recruitment; (3) some of our key growth areas (like engineering) have a hands on component that doesn't translate.*

*Have we ever just asked APSCUF what it would take to open up programs and/or courses to different modalities? Maybe we can “bargain” with them, especially if nothing changes in the next contract, maybe create a timeline, really go into it working together...*

Feedback in Support of Academic Advising Reform

There were 11 comments that directly connected our retention woes to student support, and specifically academic advising. Comments called for “Evaluat[ing] the quality and effectiveness of faculty advising” and “improv[ing] academic advising.” Comments also addressed how to actual affect change, including faculty workload “Balance advising and faculty responsibilities because that's where retention actually happens and we can't do it as effectively as we're able when we have semester after semester of overloads, increased service responsibilities because there are fewer and fewer of us, etc.,” training “Train or re-train the advisors that receive poor evaluations. They have a direct negative impact on student success.” and incentives “Incentivize faculty members to implement student-centric and student-supportive measures. Evaluate the quality of their advising and make this a component of tenure/promotion evaluation.”

Representative Quotes:

*We have to improve academic advising and consider allowing talented staff and managers to guide students.*

*Academic advising is not consistent.*

*Students across our campus and across majors all deserve quality advising. Unfortunately, only some of our students [do not] experience quality advising, mentoring and development. We need to develop ways to put the best faculty advisors in front of the students who need their support. Relationships retain students!*
Evaluate the quality and effectiveness of faculty advising. Find a way to reward good quality, caring advisors. Train or re-train the advisors that receive poor evaluations. They have a direct negative impact on student success.

Balance advising and faculty responsibilities because that's where retention actually happens and we can't do it as effectively as we're able when we have semester after semester of overloads, increased service responsibilities because there are fewer and fewer of us, etc.

We are losing a lot of students due to poor advising from faculty: Incentivize faculty members to implement student-centric and student-supportive measures. Evaluate the quality of their advising and make this a component of tenure/promotion evaluation. Send student evaluations not just for courses but for every other aspect of students' lives with a priority on advising and student-focused behaviors in and out of the classroom.

Administrative Policies

Of the 342 comments, 54 were classified as Administrative Policies. Analyzing further, the category of Administrative Policies can be broken out by:

- Faculty/Student Ratio
- Criticism of University Leadership
- Online Education
- Low Enrolled Programs
- Remote Work
- High Cost of Attendance

Faculty/Student Ratio

Respondents strongly felt that the faculty to student ratio set by the State System Office was unrealistic and detrimental to the university. Many felt that hiring adjunct faculty would be more cost effective for the university, provide for better quality of work life for faculty, and increase faculty to student engagement. Some responses seemed to indicate that campus stakeholders are unaware that the ratio is set by the State System office and university leadership does not have the authority to change this requirement. A few comments infer that ignoring the ratio and increasing faculty will result in better student experiences and higher enrollments. Suggestions were made to reduce non-teaching employees and employees that do not have regular direct contact with students.

Representative Quotes

Why is raising our student/teacher ratio to 19.1 such a significant benchmark when prospective students and their parents would prefer a lower student to faculty ratio to ensure more meaningful interactions their professors in the classroom? Raising this ratio seems counterproductive to recruitment goals to stabilize enrollment. This will only further reduce enrollment if students can go somewhere else with a lower student/teacher ratio. Also, what is the reasoning behind including non-teaching faculty like that of librarians in this calculated ratio figure. When these non-teaching faculty are not included our current student to teacher ratio is around 24:1 well above the benchmark set by PASSHE. Increasing this ratio in the classroom will only make us less attractive for prospective students who want small class sizes.

Push back against PASSHE's draconian policies. Stop pushing faculty and staff out of the university. In order to improve the impact of reduction on morale, you need to stop the reductions.
Need more flexibility to bring back at least a few experienced adjuncts, on some sort of regular basis; also need to reduce some classes to reduce overload teaching.

I am concerned that the 2011 faculty/student ratio is not sustainable and cannot be met in the short term; also concerned that academic standards may be weakened over time.

Criticism of University Leadership

This category was very broad and was generally used to classify responses where criticism of past or current decisions were made by university leadership. Comments classified as criticism of leadership could include criticism of cost of attendance, hiring practices, prioritization, desire to offer online education, lack of offering online course/programs, compensation, etc. While most feedback can be assigned actions, communication, etc., this category will probably result in actions.

Representative Quotes:

I believe that the most important thing we could do to change enrollment trends and capitalize on the unique population growth we are experiencing in the Cumberland Valley region is to invest in EDUCATION. Students in the local community associate SU with cutting faculty lines, closing programs, closing courses, raising course caps. They thus see SU as a failing institution. My own kids grew up in Shippensburg, and the high-achieving kids they knew in the school district as well as in surrounding districts thought of SU as the school for losers. The recruiters who visit area schools are terrible ambassadors of SU, and the university rarely promotes all the great work faculty do here. When I first started here many years ago, SU was considered at or just a notch below the best in PASSHE. Now we’re at the bottom. The fact that our enrollments have plummeted, even though the college-age population in the valley has risen shows that we have missed out on a golden opportunity to recruit the best and brightest in the region. The best way to recapture our status in the state is by INVESTING IN EDUCATION. SU keeps promoting the CoB, but successful business people know that you have to invest money to make money. Companies that cut to the bone are the companies that eventually fail. This is exactly the path SU seems to be on. We will never achieve financial sustainability by cutting away the one thing we do well--the only reason for the existence of SU. If PASSHE "expectations" don't allow for a better alternative to cutting staff, courses, and programs, then it is incumbent upon the president and all PASSHE presidents to stand up to the chancellor and the BoG and oppose such wrongheaded and myopic management.

Eliminating staff can negatively impact the student experience. Response times to email communications, services, etc. is greatly affected when there are not enough people sharing the workload.

My major concern is that the persistence of poor management thinking will ultimately bankrupt this institution and scuttle SU's proud tradition of providing an affordable quality college degree for its students. In particular, I worry that by chasing the next shiny thing on the horizon (certificate programs, "workforce training," online ed, etc.) SU will irreparably damage its brand, turning it into a Dollar-General version of higher ed. I also worry that if administration continues to ignore its highly skilled and capable faculty as it tries to make decisions about the path forward that SU will continue to devolve and become little more than a Vo-Tech.
The university would not function without faculty and staff directly involved in running the academic programs. Yet discussion seems to just focus on cutting instructional-related faculty and staff, to the point that it hurts academic programs' capability to offer quality education and grow. That's very short-sighted.

I don't know if you are reading these comments all together from the same person or broken out by question but to summarize my short novel I have written in this survey. Here is what Ship needs to do:
1. Redesign programs with data to have programs and modalities that students want and help students achieve long-term career goals.
2. Invest heavily in growing the programs that can be grown. Show us that achieving my first point results in action and reinvestment.
3. Show us that the light is at the end of the tunnel and we can achieve the goals we have set out to achieve as educators. Show us that this is worth it to our students and it will continue to be worth it to our students.
4. Support us in supporting our students.
5. Invest intelligently not using metrics that don't make sense but metrics that are actually financially responsible. If we are already doing this then make it clear to us and show us exactly what needs to be accomplished at different levels.

If you can't do all of the above then buy-in is going to be very difficult and if the above can't be done without support and clear information then it might not happen in the timeframe it needs to or all in the same direction (we can't all be going in different directions).

This is no longer a cost-cutting path. That has happened. When businesses have to cut budgets to survey this is generally temporary. If a business doesn't reinvest and go down the path of increasing revenue that business will eventually die. We have been on the cost-cutting path for about a decade at this point and there is a floor as to how far you can go and still 1. have enough revenue to cover costs that are not on a per-student basis (static overhead), 2. Have a campus that doesn't look like a ghost town and 3. Have a diverse enough program array that students don't see transferring to another institution as the only option for them given their goals. We have to focus on increasing revenue (probably though outcompeting our competition) but in every form.

Online Education
While course and program modality were addressed in different categories, some responses were directed toward administrative policies.

Representative Quotes:

Deliver ONL courses to high school students who do not have access to AP courses. This was discussed several years ago and as usual, it ended nowhere because administration did not think it was a good idea because there are other competing universities already attempting it. So rather than try, it was decided to not even attempt it. That SU's SOP.
Another option is to figure out how to adjust the all important ratio and utilize adjuncts rather than paying faculty 2-3X to delivery the same course as an overload.
A STRUCTURED ONL delivery plan inclusive of blended modalities to accommodate our students. Bring back the adjuncts; figure out a way to attain the ratios you need by using adjuncts which is typically cheaper compared to paying a full professor on overload. Eliminate low enrolled programs at the GR and UG level; define low enrolled and start hacking away, providing those resources to build programs and departments with potential for growth.

These responses highlight the linkage between the need and desire to offer online courses and programs and criticism of leadership to not take advantage of opportunities to further the educational mission and financial stability of the institution. The topic of online education and different modalities are addressed in additional areas of the report.

Low Enrolled Programs

Similar to online education, comments directed toward low enrolled programs are covered in other areas of this report, however some comments were categorized as administrative policies. Comments tagged as administrative policy were mixed, one calling for programs that are low enrolled to be addressed and presumably discontinued and attributing the reduction of faculty and the student to faculty ratio as the driving force behind low enrollment in some programs. The intent is that if we hire more faculty and reduce the ratio, low enrolled programs will have higher enrollments because of the increase in quality.

Representative Quotes:

Eliminate low enrolled programs at the GR and UG level; define low enrolled and start hacking away, providing those resources to build programs and departments with potential for growth.

It is difficult to expand our recruitment strategy when faculty lines are being cut, enabling our programs to offer a lesser variety of courses. We could offer online degree programs for non-traditional students who do not live on or near campus. These online courses cannot be made available to our traditional on campus students or else we would merely be cannibalizing our own face to face courses with online courses. Online programs for these non-traditional students can increase our student enrollment without compromising the quality of the education we can offer in face to face on campus courses.

One reason that students leave is because they can’t get the courses they want or the major they would prefer because Shippensburg University has been actively reducing faculty lines through retirement attrition leading to fewer course offerings once taught, but no longer offered. Once again these administrative decisions not to renew lines due to retirements impact smaller programs much more than the programs with larger faculty numbers. The larger programs can still offer the same courses, because other faculty would still be left to teach each of these courses. In smaller programs, when someone retires and they are not replaced, then that course cannot necessarily be
taught by the few remaining faculty. Once again, this leads to less choice for students and more reasons for them to leave Shippensburg and go somewhere else to finish their degree where they have more course and program choices.

Remote Work

There was a single comment about remote work, the committee is unsure if this is a reflection of current attitude toward administrative priorities or if not much attention was given at the meeting for this topic. Online education and remote working remote work are linked issues, it would be difficult to develop more online courses and require faculty to be on campus to prepare and teach the course. Related, Shippensburg University has lost some talented employees to the lack of remote work policy, the respondent is directing their comment toward the latter.

Representative Quote:

Right now - the University has lost a lot of really key and valuable employees due to not being flexible with remote work and salary increases. I fear Ship will continue to lose great workers because of increased job responsibilities without compensation and flexibility that other fields are offering and promising.

High Cost of Attendance

As with remote work, the high cost of attendance can be found in related comments/analysis in other areas of this report. One respondent summed up other tangential comments into one comment directly related to the high cost of attendance.

Representative Quote:

We need to figure out why students in good standing are leaving. Our 'pilot' credit tuition model has made us the MOST expensive choice in PASSHE. With Millersville dropping this ridiculous model we are the only one left. Our fees are TOO high.

Information Deficit

Of the 342 comments, 47 were classified as informational deficit. A comment/response received this attribute when the committee felt the respondent did not have available information that would/could have addressed their concern. In many cases, had the respondent already had the information, the response might not have been needed or the respondent would have focused their concerns more directly. Comments/responses in this category could indicate the need for additional awareness training/communication about the information that is available and/or the need to become more transparent across the university. Content areas are very broad, they include: academic program array,
student to faculty ratio, budgeting, low enrolled programs, hiring practices, admissions, marketing, and several more. While some of the comments/responses in this category could have been placed in another area of the analysis, the committee felt the root of the comments/responses tagged as information deficit had a root cause of lack of information or lack of understanding.

Representative Quotes:

I don’t know what some of the definitions of terms were. For example, I have heard that “completer” refers to everyone who graduates with a credential, but heard elsewhere that it is only those who had that credential declared when they started. I also don’t know how concentrations are being tracked or how contributions to other programs, such as general education, are weighed.

Data on the effectiveness of various reminders/nudges we send out for actions student need to take. We lean heavily on email but it’s unclear just how effective these are. For anything being sent out via another channel (e.g., texting), how effective is that? If this could then be tied to clear retention metrics such that we could say something like “sending reminders out via text saved 10 additional students from dropping because of X issue” it might help to but any potential costs in the context of clear benefits. I am unsure how to collect this sort of data at the moment, just a thought.

Data must be provided in a more holistic and transparent manner. For example, where do our expenses come from? direct instructional cost? indirect instructional cost? noninstructional cost? expenses need to be broken down and examined in more detail for a better strategy to curtail expenses.

Let’s look at the data in a big picture - for example, if we look at the past 5-7 years, where did we lose students and where did we gain. We need to adjust the staffing in that area. I know that over time the business college has lost 500 students, so they should have to reallocate their staff - there are other areas that have seen an increase and need more support A listing of all the student’s majors and what they graduate with - if we only have 2 French majors, why do we have that major?

As a Department Chair, knowing which metrics are going to be used to determine which programs are going to be cut would be helpful. It will allow us to either prepare appropriate data to defend our program or prepare our resumes for the job market.

Do we know what courses / programs have the highest DFW rates, and what resources, if any, can we supply to those programs?

We need to know more about where our revenue comes from and how that revenue could be increased. Not all revenue comes from tuition and fees. What is in our reserves? Where did all of the COVID money go? How much do we owe on the "new" residence halls? Who is monitoring SUSSI? It is hard to suggest strategies without enough money about how the budget works right now.

Now I might be wrong but it is my understanding that the magic ratio is set so that a single faculty member can’t count as more than 1 faculty member in the ratio even when they are
increasing their salary for taking an overload. If this is the case this is not a financial benchmark. So why are we using it as one? If I am wrong and this isn't how the ratio works then why hasn't this been made clear? Why don't we as faculty know what number of students I need in a class to make it profitable? Why don't we know the ratio for graduate students? We can make these things happen but we don't know!

**Morale**

“Campus morale is very, very low,” is the response which is most representative of the current state of morale at our university. 73 of the 341 (21%) responses explicitly addressed the morale of the faculty, staff and administration of Shippensburg University. For this summary, the responses cited below were selected for being most representative. These responses were organized into seven subcategories, and listed in order from highest to lowest frequency in contributing to this low morale:

1. Criticism of Leadership (Management/Upper Administration) 45%
2. Lack of Recognition 16%
3. Lack of Resources/Exhaustion 15%
4. Criticism of Faculty 14%
5. Potential Loss of Job 7%
6. Criticism of Staff 3%
7. Criticism of Union(s) 1%
Criticism of Leadership (Management/Upper Administration)

Criticism of Leadership, the term being defined as management and upper administration, was found in 45% of the responses in this category, by far the highest percentage of all the subcategories.

One repeated criticism is the constant turnover in leadership positions which is perceived by respondents to limit both how institutional memory can inform their decisions and a shared understanding of the mission of the university. Representative for this is the response that, “We're watching our programs shrink, our colleagues leave, and management turn over (again and again)…I do not have faith in our management because I don't know them--at all.” Another respondent commented on the consequences they have seen that resulted from this turnover:

“I have devoted a sizeable chunk of my life to working at SU--almost 30 years. I have helped literally thousands (somewhere around 7200) students learn and grow as young adults. When I first started here, the president, provost, and deans all seemed to understand the value of the academic mission. But over the years, at least since Jody Harpster's administration, it has become increasingly evident that the academic mission is of only tertiary concern while "financial sustainability" understood in the most narrow-minded sense of balanced budgets has become the primary concern. Since Harpster, increasingly senior administrators were pushed aside for new blood and a new array of positions that ballooned the administrative budget while faculty lines have been relentlessly cut.”

Another response spoke to the same topic in the following terms: “There is zero evidence that career administrators add any value to Higher ed. In fact, we began having problems in higher ed, not long after the proliferation and the EdD’s in higher ed administration emerged and after the creation of a class of administrators who spent little or no time in the classroom.”

The increase of administrative positions and the concurrent reduction of faculty and staff positions was another repeated criticism of leadership. Many responders felt that especially at the senior/executive level, “administrative bloat” was consuming more resources than sustainable given the financial constraints of the university. One respondent criticized the "High Need Positions" presented at the All Hands on Deck meeting, which listed, “only 2 faculty positions--and 6 administrative positions. It is well known that SU has the highest ratio of administrative positions to students in PASSHE. It is also well known that almost 60% of costs at SU go toward administrative salaries, not faculty or staff salaries.” Added another respondent: “I believe that faculty would be more supportive of proposed cuts to their side if they saw transparency from the administrative side showing a willingness to share the sacrifice by proposing a reduction of administrative staff [and] not an increase as we were told was happening at the "All Hands on Deck" meeting.” Multiple responders were interested to know whether senior leadership was considering a pay cut in order to not lose any more lower-level employees.

One specific issue that was repeatedly mentioned as an example of poor stewardship of university resources was the paying of overloads to faculty rather than the hiring of adjunct faculty to teach necessary courses. “The current administration has lost the trust of faculty with the arbitrary imposition of the 20-1 student-faculty ratio, and the preference to pay overloads to regular faculty rather than hire adjuncts. These policies are driving up the university’s debt and would never be tolerated in the private sector.” To wit, the faculty-to-student ratio issue was explicitly criticized by 34 of the 341 respondents (10%), as also seen in the following response: “Morale is very low, and I don't see any hope of improving
morale unless the administration stops imposing seemingly irrational PASSHE policies such as the 20-1 student faculty ratio that has driven up the university's budgetary deficit. Faculty feel that they have gone down the rabbit hole into Wonderland where conventional [cost-benefit] logic does not apply. It's unsettling and bad for morale because administrators come across as insincere.”

Multiple responders also cited treatment by leadership as a reason for the low state of morale on campus. One respondent remarked that secretaries and staff were treated by leadership, “shamefully, moved around unexpectedly and without consultations.” The perceived arbitrary approving of raises, overtime and remote work was another topic repeatedly criticized by respondents. Said one respondent: “Why is it OK for some people to get raises, but others do not? Why is it that some facilities department are allowed to get unlimited overtime, but other departments can’t hire a truly needed position?” The above response illustrates the perception among respondents of a system of preferential treatment, which is also tied into issues of transparency. Representative for this is the following response that, “At one point we were told a hybrid remote work policy was being created. After the initial discussion we have had no further updates on this. We have higher ranking members on our team that are granted this benefit. It would be nice if this is extended to all members where it is applicable.” This response shared the criticism found in many other responses over the sharing, or lack thereof, of data and information crucial to transparency and rational decision-making.

Another problem repeatedly cited by respondents was the lack of communication from some in leadership positions. One respondent commented on a lack of willingness by administration to partner with faculty to address university challenges, adding, “that rather than doing that they would prefer to attack the faculty members, lay off faculty members (or cut their releases), blame faculty members for problems admin[istration] have created, and expect that will solve the problems.” The loss of some lower-level leadership and staff can, according to another respondent, be attributed to such messaging as well: “Leaders talking poorly about people with other leaders is very common. They just don't realize what they say does get back to the person.” Added another: “I should never hear the excitement people have over the resignation of another person from the leader level. That is horrible behavior from management.”

Given the above, it is perhaps not surprising that even positive feedback from leadership to faculty and staff was criticized by one respondent in the following terms: “Our dean likes to congratulate us on our hard work meeting sustainability metrics, but it falls a bit flat because we are feeling coerced into meeting metrics we don’t believe in.”

Lack of Recognition

Lack of recognition was a major criticism in 16% of the responses in this category. “A lot of people are doing necessary but thankless and unrecognized work that makes a vital difference in students' quality of life at the institution and directly impacts their retention and persistence,” summarized one respondent. While this sentiment is representative of most of the comments in this subcategory, most responders mentioned staff as suffering the greatest lack of recognition. Typical of this is the feeling among many staff that they, “are not recognized for their contributions or achievements like faculty are,” and, “feel we are at the very bottom of the totem pole and our feedback/opinions/wants/needs don't matter.” Another responder took issue with the job description for department secretaries, which, “states only an 8th grade education is needed. Talk about a slap in the face! They need to know a lot of things, including MANY different programs, handle budgets, travel, events, and keep the department
running smoothly. This is only a handful of examples of things they do.” Comments concerning the lack of recognition of faculty were also not lacking, with one responder positing that, “I don't think I'm exaggerating when I say that literally no one in administration makes an effort to acknowledge faculty.”

**Lack of Resources / Exhaustion**

Lack of resources and the resultant exhaustion was cited in 15% of the responses in this category. Said one respondent, “What I want to know is does the university realize that I can't do the job they hired me for if I'm filling in for positions they refuse to fill?” Multiple responders mentioned the “serious risk of burnout,” which threatens the retention of productive employees. The following response exemplifies the Hobson’s choice many responders feel themselves confronted with which will compromise either themselves or the continued success of the university: “I know that the next few years will be difficult and difficult decisions need to be made...My only ask is that as an institution we not overload the staff to unrealistic expectations. I love Ship and want to remain, but the current workload is unsustainable.”

**Criticism of Faculty**

Criticism of faculty was found in 14% of the responses in this category. A repeated criticism was that faculty, “must start being nicer to students and staff.” A few responses charged faculty with ignoring students’ needs and/or being unwilling to attend to students’ increasing needs, and concern that “with tenure and a union as a factor how will they be held accountable?” Representative of this is the response: “So many students complain that their faculty members don't care about them and just tell them to leave...Students believe that faculty are never held accountable on the grounds of academic freedom.” Additionally, one respondent harbored, “serious concerns,” that faculty, “do not understand the budget picture.” A couple responders questioned the academic advising students were receiving from faculty, citing it as “not consistent.”

**Potential Loss of Job**

Potential loss of job was explicitly mentioned in 7% of the responses in this category as hurting morale. Most responses (4/5) referenced the proposed cutting of 20 positions shared at the All Hands on Deck meeting, and were concerned not just about these job cuts, but the likelihood of further job cuts. Shared one respondent: “The numbers vs atmosphere didn’t match. Everyone felt happy go lucky, but cutting an additional 10 staff positions (and 16 faculty FTE) is a huge thing. So I felt like I was misunderstanding the data. My understanding of the data was that if we don’t at a minimum stabilize our enrollment, we’ll be out of business in five years?” Added another: “I see the faculty have to give up 20 positions, plus 10 more from the rest of the university. How are they going to cover all their classes, many of them already look wiped out and it’s not even November. What areas will the 10 come from? Where I am we can't cover our responsibilities now, cutting here will make things worse.”

**Criticism of Staff**

Criticism of staff was found in 3% of the responses in this category. One responder commented that, “I felt like faculty had a next step to take to support the university through their program array discussions. But there was not a next steps for staff/admin.” The only other criticism in this category was a suggestion to take a “tough look” at customer service, opining, “So many offices like financial aid and facilities think they are untouchable because they are so short staffed.”
Criticism of Union(s)

A criticism of an unnamed union was found in one response in this category. One responder noted that, “Our lack of ONL delivery at the UG level, lack of leadership in that direction, and union blocking of it is unacceptable.”

Criticism of the Content of “All Hands” Meeting & Survey

There were twelve responses (3.5%) that explicitly mentioned the content of the “All Hands” Meeting & Survey, all critical. Some criticisms took issue with the time and day of the “All Hands” meeting, which limited participation. Other criticisms concerned the length of the slide presentation and its content, which one responder found to be lacking focus in education and another found to be like “a corporate board meeting where only profit margins were considered.” Added another: “I know that most people walked out of the all-hands meeting still not knowing what they were being asked to do.”

The main criticism, however, was with the wording of the survey questions themselves, which one responder found “poorly designed,” and that asked, “huge, macro questions that require a complex set of considerations to answer.” Multiple responders found the survey questions too vague, with the phrase, “boldly complexify” especially disliked for its ambiguity (13 responders remarked negatively on this phrase in their answers). Some responders registered disappointment in and questioned the sincerity of the survey. Representative of this viewpoint is the following quote: “This survey is a one-way device that seeks information without having to answer questions directly to a live audience, which shows an unwillingness to engage with stakeholders on such a major issue that demanded the presence of "All Hands" faculty.

Suggestions for Improving Morale:

Interspersed with the above criticisms were often suggestions for improving the morale at our university.

Many of these suggestions concerned how future reductions to faculty and staff as outlined in the “All Hands on Deck” meeting will impact the university. Representative of this is the following request to, “push back against PASSHE's draconian policies. Stop pushing faculty and staff out of the university. In order to improve the impact of reduction on morale, you need to stop the reductions.” Another responder advocated for the hiring of faculty and staff on the following terms: “By hiring faculty and staff, we make it possible for all faculty and staff to do a better job for our STUDENTS (not the chancellor or BoG). Instead by constantly cutting faculty and staff positions we convey the message that their work is expendable and unnecessary, that only administrative work is necessary.” Along these lines was the suggestion to adopt, “a ‘student-facing’ litmus test to guide any involuntary terminations if those become necessary and conserve the positions that interact the most with students.”

Other suggestions concerned the reduction of administrative positions and the expenditures associated with them. Representative of these suggestions were calls for a restructuring of the administration, with greater faculty participation and input: “Until the admin of this University and system look to the real experts [faculty] to gain an understanding of what is broken in this system and at our University, we will have no chance to solve the problems we face.” Other responses suggested salary caps and/or a voluntary decline of merit increases for administrative positions as temporary cost-cutting measures,
and the end of perceived “back door deals” which have resulted in higher starting salaries for some positions.

There were also general suggestions regarding how the administration can more effectively recognize the efforts of current faculty and staff without the incentive of monetary rewards. One responder suggested: “Recognize the faculty and staff members who go above and beyond for the students. Implement a Presidential Circle of Excellence for people who receive students' commendations and kudos.” Another respondent encouraged administration to ask employees, “what they need to feel valued-other than money.” Another responder spoke to the same theme of non-monetary recognition in the following terms: “I am not saying don't pay us more (because that would be great) but make it clear that we are achieving our other goals. The goals of helping our students and building something here at Ship.”

Finally, there were more general suggestions regarding how administration can act to improve campus morale in the area of communication. Multiple responders advocated for, “effectively articulating expectations and holding people accountable for those expectations.” Another response suggested that decision-making on campus needed to, “[i]ntegrate voices from the lowest levels of the organization to hear what needs to be changed without fear of repercussion or loss of employment.” A fitting last quote regarding communication is the following, which also reflects the importance responders continue to place in the messaging of the administration: “Show us how this is not forever. Show us the light at the end of the tunnel.”