

Athens State University  
Enrollment/Student Affairs Committee  
January 19, 2018

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The Enrollment/Student Affairs Committee held a meeting on Friday, January 19, 2018 in the conference room of Sanders Hall.

**PRESIDING: Mr. Macke Mauldin for Mrs. Cathy Dickens**

The meeting was called to order at 1:12 p.m. by Mr. Mauldin.

**ROLL CALL**

The following committee members were present:

Dr. Bob Glenn  
Dr. Darlene Turner-White  
Ms. Sarah McAbee

Macke Mauldin, Crystal Creekmore, Chris Latham, and Mrs. Laurie Glenn and Kim Braden (recording) were also present. Cathy Dickens, Jimmy Baker, Ronnie Smith, Sheila Davis, and Cathy Brett were absent.

The agenda was approved by all committee members (Glenn/White).

The minutes from October 20, 2017 were approved as written by all committee members (Glenn/McAbee).

**OLD BUSINESS**

NONE

**NEW BUSINESS**

**1. Marketing Update (handout included):**

- a. Chris Latham attended to present the Strategic Marketing and Communications Plan to the committee.
  - i. Purpose of the plan is to gain understanding, take action and measure success.
  - ii. Our Institution:
    1. Strengths:
      - a. Better with age—oldest continuously-operated institution in the State.
      - b. Easy on the pocketbook--affordability

- c. Your University Your Way—flexibility through course delivery formats; high-quality instruction; undergraduate and graduate program options; small class size.
  - 2. Weaknesses:
    - a. Lack of awareness and name recognition; misunderstanding about upper-level institution.
    - b. Somewhat disengaged student base—lack of campus life, sports teams and on-campus housing.
  - 3. Opportunities:
    - a. Partnerships: strengthened partnerships with community colleges and Industries
    - b. Completion college: encourage those with college credit to finish school. Expand position as Alabama’s “completion college”.
    - c. Expansion: develop new programs based on market demands and trends.
  - 4. Threats:
    - a. Trends in Higher Education—especially for working adults and are taking fewer credit hours per semester.
    - b. Competitive Market—for example colleges that offer a flat tuition rate and those that can afford national marketing. Southern New Hampshire markets nationally, they probably have a marketing budget that is 20-30% of their total budget. Our marketing budget is 5% of our total budget.
- iii. Our Students:
1. Average Student enrolled Fall 2017 (undergraduate):
    - a. 30.6 average age
    - b. 40.8% full-time/59.2% part-time
    - c. 67.3% female/32.7% male
    - d. 76.6% Caucasian/13.3% African American/2.6% Hispanic
    - e. 60.9% all DL/89.4% some DL/10.6% no DL
  2. Average Student enrolled Fall 2017 (graduate):
    - a. 38.4 average age
    - b. 19% full-time/81% part-time
    - c. 50.3% female/49.7% male
    - d. 66% Caucasian/25.9% African American
  3. Top Geographic Area = Madison County
  4. Comments:
    - a. Retention research indicates our students are at risk: attend part-time, work full-time jobs. We have to work harder to make sure students completed but they are worth it. 70% of our students are full-time working moms.
    - b. Why is African American percentages almost double for graduate students? Master’s Degree in Career Tech Education

is a real gateway for these students. It is also offered completely online.

- iv. Our Collaborators—Top 10 Feeder Schools:
    1. Calhoun Community College: 30.8% of new students
    2. Wallace State Community College: 9.4% of new students
    3. Snead State Community College: 5.5% of new students
    4. Northwest Shoals Community College: 5.0% of new students
    5. Northeast AL State Community College: 4.6% of new students
    6. University of Alabama in Huntsville: 2.7% of new students
    7. Beville State Community College: 2.1% of new students
    8. University of North Alabama: 1.9% of new students
    9. J.F. Drake Technical College: 1.5% of new students
    10. University of Alabama at Birmingham: 1.5% of new students
    11. Comment:
      - a. Top 5 feeder schools are very much community colleges
      - b. Top 10—University of AL students come to us once they are focused.
      - c. We are here for difference reasons that other Alabama institutions.
  - v. Our Competitors: Hard to define—our numbers are all Jr/Sr. information and competitors include all 4 years.
    1. University of N. Alabama
    2. University of Alabama in Huntsville
    3. Alabama A&M University
- b. Marketing Strategies and Goals:
- i. Goal #1: Increase Enrollment
    1. Advertising through digital media (Google search, Social Media, email and web).
    2. Advertising through radio: 104.3, 102.1, 96.9, 103.1, 100.3, 102.7
    3. Advertise through Print Media: occasional newspaper and magazine
    4. Outdoor Billboards: static and digital
    5. Targeted Marketing and Communications:
      - a. Email and text messages are planned messages as part of our communications plan.
      - b. Direct marketing: coordinate print communications with electronic communications.
    6. Comments:
      - a. One of our students that attended the BOT lunch (Antonio) was deciding between us and UAH. He chose us because we responded within one week, it took UAH over a month to respond.
      - b. 3-5 impacts per person for them to take of the information.

- c. Schedule for summer/fall 2018 will begin 2 months before due to limited budget.
    - d. Working in conjunction with what Enrollment is doing. Marketing is everyone's job.
  - ii. Goal #2: Increase Awareness and name recognition
    - 1. Branding campaign
    - 2. Completion College initiative—reinforce Athens State as a “completion college” (Alabama's Completion College)
    - 3. “Athenian Success” stories—create return on Education portion of the website. Include testimonials from alumni, student, faculty and staff.
    - 4. Website Communications: accessibility, revise web to provide a better user experience.
    - 5. Social Media Strategy
  - iii. Goal #3: Increase Alumni Engagement
    - 1. The Column Newsletter
    - 2. University Advancement Campaigns
  - iv. Goal #4: Program Specific Marketing
    - 1. College level marketing: partner with each college to promote new programs and top-performing programs to gain the most traction possible for enrollment.
    - 2. Certificate/Non-Degree Programs
    - 3. Alabama Center for the Arts:
      - a. Capitalize on the partnership with Calhoun and the state-of-the-art facilities.
- c. Metrics for Success Measurement:
  - i. Monitoring digital ad performance and response rates—measure on a monthly basis.
    - 1. Last time completion college was the most popular.
  - ii. Market Research and shifting trends—research, monitor and adjust.
    - 1. MP&F is our marketing agency/Publications firm

## 2. Minority Enrollment Ideas (handout included from Dr. Turner-White):

- a. African American males
  - i. 4% of our Fall 2017 enrollment
  - ii. 26% of Alabama college system
  - iii. 11% of community college system
- b. Is there coursework that is more appealing to African American male students? What are they taking at the community colleges?
- c. College of Education is starting a conversation about how to increase minority enrollment:
  - i. Lots of good ideas to share with campus—start with in colleges and expand to entire campus.

- ii. Director of Admissions will work with the College of Education to add events to recruiting calendar where there are minority students.
  - iii. Multi-cultural club can also support minority recruiting.
- d. Start with focus groups—include the campus. Discuss what we offer vs. what they want to take.
- e. Great success with new program in College of Education.
- f. Make sure minority and all students understand it is an affordable goal to attend college.
- g. Start early to let them know there are resources to help with the cost of attending college. Show them it can be done.
- h. TRIO programs: purpose is to help low income students and help them understand.
- i. There is a way for a good student to complete college without mounting debt.
- j. Cannot afford not to more than they can't afford to.

**3. Other Discussion:**

- a. Next Committee Meeting will be held in May; we will discuss:
  - i. Scholarship awards under new program
  - ii. Spring and Summer final enrollment numbers
  - iii. Hear an update from Necedah and Dr. Turner-White on minority recruiting
- b. Education every generation that comes through—ours are in the 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> year not in rite of passage progression.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:07.