Black Hills State University Working Group Focus Area (Draft)

The following suggestions are reflective of the visit one SEP conversations. The BHSU Admin Team and SEP Steering Committee should develop a focus charge for each of the working groups that aligns with the institutional direction.

The working groups will meet in visit two of the SEP process to develop the situational analysis that will evolve into action plans. The working groups should include eight to ten members with a chair. The chair also is a member of the SEP Steering Committee. Generally, the admin team and other SEP Steering Committee members would not be appointed to the working group to ensure fresh perspectives for ideation.

Equipping each of the working groups with a member of the data team will help in developing data informed situation analysis.

Working Groups Identified During SEP Visit One

Academics

The discussion at visit one was that the Academics working group should focus on innovation of program offerings and delivery. The Provost indicated that academic affairs had engaged in the first steps of program prioritization and that additional work is in process for this area.

Understanding the relationship between program demand, target audiences and the BHSU program portfolio is critical to the SEP process.

The working group should examine and generate concepts relative to programs and course schedule that attract traditional students to Spearfish, programs that serve the place-bound Rapid City higher education needs, programs that meet demand, 2+2 programs with South Dakota technical institutes, articulation agreements with Wyoming, and opportunities to expand online programs for a broader audience.

BHSU should determine the focus of graduate and undergraduate program offerings for the purpose of the SEP plan. The employer surveys and workforce demand data should inform the academic working group relative to graduate, undergraduate and non-credit program level focus.

Student Success

The BHSU retention task force identified individuals to continue as a member of the student success working group. This working group will build on the work that was completed by the retention task force.

Focus areas for this group might include: advising; a retention plan; improved data and tracking, expanding early interventions; pro-actively addressing students’ needs and differentiating from student wants; examine the registration process with student success focus; determining ways to add value and increase orientation participation; understand and address gaps in student transitions (GS 100 – 1CC); set expectations for students and resell the decision to enroll at BHSU; support career readiness and outcomes; examine and strengthen centralize academic support for writing and math; add supplemental instruction; define the student experience at BHSU; strengthen counseling services; ensure student centric customer service; enhance intervention and best practices; preparing for student needs relative to demographic changes; returning student results on retention.

Additional items that may contribute to student success and retention:

Providing students with information regarding on-campus student labor/work study opportunities & identifying those with potential financial need or providing work within an area or department of interest. BHSU currently offers “job fair” type opportunities, but not all students may feel comfortable or assertive enough to attend. Advisors could follow up on student interests/needs and get them in direct contact with personnel on campus.

(To expand on students’ areas of interest, BH could also provide incoming students with contact information regarding on campus student organizations or clubs in which to participate)

Admission and Recruitment

Clarify the BHSU target student and identify how to reach them; improve in-state recruiting; understand and expand out-of-state recruiting; capture greater share of the technical institute transfer market; examine the funnel data and determine avenues to improve conversion and yield at each touch point; review and improve the campus visit and cross train with financial aid; review processes related to recruitment and pre-enrollment student processes, and review best practices in the industry. Consider admission/recruitment approaches for the main campus, Rapid City campus as well as online offerings.

Fiscal and Financial Aid

Find more and better ways to allocate financial aid. Build on the enrollment aligned revenue generation ideas that were developed with the budget reduction plan (12/18) including: , alignment of grant opportunities with target enrollment groups, examine online infrastructure needed to meet growth goals, and collaborate with student success working group regarding housing initiatives.

Examine the scholarship process including yield, the FA self-service portal, and student communication; understand financial need and leveraging; look at scholarship best practices,; understand and be intentional about the waiver versus scholarship approaches and look at the scholarship process from a holistic institutional perspective.

Explore the possibility of a publicly funded scholarship program [possibly involving Spearfish and Rapid City councils and/or various Clubs like Rotary, Lions etc] for students in the local communities [I-90 corridor from WY border to Rapid City]. This may have an effect on recruiting students and retaining them for future workforce development. Moreover, this can be integrated into experiential learning or service learning in various sectors of the local business or city government.

Understand the financial impact relative to diverse revenue streams (new freshman, Rapid City, online, dual enrollment and graduate, summer enrollment and it's implications on revenue in the Fall/Spring).

Packaging awards & financial aid offers to students allows them to compare apples to apples with other institutions, and BHSU should be able to provide an offer that is confirmed for 15-30 days so that students can make decisions based on what they KNOW they will receive rather than making decisions on what they MAY receive financially.

Marketing and Communication

Identify and articulate the BHSU story; work on recognitions that align with mission / vision of BHSU; establish ROI metrics for marketing initiatives; improve employee morale (best place to work) and ensure employees know and articulate the BHSU story; collect outcomes for promotion communication; engage employers and economic developers for community and corporate outreach; capture positive alumni testimonials; determine avenues for aligning the geography of BHSU with academic programs for promotion. Build on the employer forums held during the fall semester and integrate external perspectives and needs for workforce development into BHSU culture and SEP planning. Marketing and communication approaches should be considered for the main campus, Rapid City campus as well as online offerings.

Alums hiring Alums program – providing recent grads opportunities to meet local, area, or regional Alums of Businesses/Management in Corporations

BHSU could also continue to provide Career Development and Placement opportunities for our current students and recent graduates.

Identify budget for marketing initiatives.