



Opportunities and Challenges Subcommittee

February 25, 2022

Meeting Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 1pm by Dr. Brian Payne. Present were: Dr. Melva Grant, Mr. John Hasher, Dr. David Bowles, Dr. Teresa Kouri Kissel, Dr. Qiu Hailstork, Dr. Tancy Vandecar-Burdin, Ms. Annamarie Ginder, Dr. Christopher Fleming, Dr. Jessica Whitehead, Mr. Rob Wells, Dr. John Nunnery, Mr. Harry Smithson, Dr. Vicki Carnegie, Dr. Khan Iftekharuddin, Dr. Anil Nair, Dr. Deborah Krzyzaniak, Ms. Rachel Asare, and Dr. Krzyeztof Rechowicz.

Minutes from the previous two meetings were approved. Dr. Payne reviewed the agenda and the Assumptions.

The Student Success subgroup made the first presentation. Dr. Carnegie spoke on behalf of the subgroup and thanked the members of the committee for their contributions. We wanted to think broadly to incorporate all students – undergraduate, graduate, and distance learning students. We addressed the present domains that were given to us and tried to always keep all areas of student levels in mind. As a summary our greatest area that we found for opportunities as well as challenges was in enrollment management. She shared the opportunities and challenges for each domain.

The University of Georgia and the double dawgs concept was discussed – bachelor’s degree in 4 years, taking master-level courses during senior year, and receiving master’s degree in 1 year – Joint programs for undergraduate students (4+1).

Dr. Nunnery asked for more information on the alternative payment paradigm that wasn’t based on credit hours. Dr. Carnegie handed this over to Dr. Fleming for further discussion. What is being proposed is a flat rate that students would pay to take between 12 and 18 credit hours. Currently students pay per credit hour. This would support and encourage students to go full time and help in their persistence and allow them to hopefully graduate in four years. Right now, students only take what they can afford which negates their retention and the full-time enrollment. There are some things that the university could consider in making it more affordable for students to enroll at ODU and graduate on time.

Dr. Nair asked a question on acceptance rates, reducing acceptance rates, increasing standards and how does this impact the investments we make in supporting students to succeed. Dr. Fleming thanked Dr. Nair for the question and said it points back to our recommendation both challenges and opportunities to optimize our enrollment. He’s not sure if the University has looked at the infrastructure of the institution, our financial resources and compared that to what is the optimal size of the institution. I then think that points back to your question about okay,



how large of a class do we want and who needs to be coming in and of those students what type of resources they need to assist them in their journey.

Dr. Grant said it was an interesting presentation and conversation and mentioned moving on to the Research subgroup. Dr. Nunnery spoke for the Research subgroup and mentioned last time they solicited input from the subcommittee. He went back through to code things and reduce the number of challenges and opportunities. Workforce development and economic development are areas that ODU is well positioned to respond to. And in the current political climate, we are again well positioned to respond to some of the federal priorities around climate change, green energy, environment, health disparities and things like that. Virginia has changed so we will have to see how that plays out.

Dr. Nunnery went through the domains and provided approximately one or two challenges and opportunities for each that the committee had completed discussion for. There were also items that the subgroup was not sure where to place and are still working on them. Dr. Nunnery said they will go back through and keep doing content coding and populate the rest of the dimensions.

Dr. Grant stated she thinks that this strategic plan will be different from other strategic plans in the past and she hopes some of the mission and values that come through and some of these opportunities and challenges we present to the committee will impact them in ways that help us to think differently around these key ideas.

Dr. Grant asked if Finance was ready and Dr. Iftexharuddin spoke for the subgroup. He said the subgroup had meetings and also were able to meet with Nina Gonser and others and based on these discussions he shared their report. He reported on the domains and challenges and opportunities for each.

Discussion was held on demographic and diversity specification grading opportunity. Dr. Kissel said college math is big, it can be a problematic course for a lot of our undergrads looking to work in the STEM fields. One of the reasons for that is not because they're not prepared, but because we are not prepared for them. We could investigate teaching math differently or using something called specification grading but basically just changing it up to make it more student friendly and to make it more passable.

Dr. Nair had a question on the Memphis example and on why math is such a problem for students. Dr. Grant said as a math educator, the issue is quite complex, but the way we teach mathematics typically is really aligned for maybe 10% of the population. The rest of the people just don't understand it that way, and we haven't been teaching mathematics for understanding. So as you progress up the mathematical pipeline, if you don't really understand what you're doing it's hard to continue to apply it. Because the STEM fields you need to apply the



mathematics that you've learned and if you don't really understand that you can't apply so that's a simple answer.

Dr. Grant said earlier we talked about subgroup reports, so the challenge that we're under is that we need to provide the strategic planning subcommittees with some challenges and opportunities and when we've been looking at the work the subgroups have done it is phenomenal. Dr. Payne and I agree, however we've got to provide a targeted final report and try to come up with a handful of opportunities and challenges. So, what we are asking each subgroup to do by next week is to see if you can identify six to ten max opportunities or challenges. You don't have to have five opportunities and five challenges, you can have whatever mix of those that you need, but we need the top ten max.

The purpose is so Brian and I can create a final report with just ten opportunities and ten challenges. That's what we are going to shoot for to have for you all to review by the 11th. So, by the 4th we need each subcommittee to come up with their top ten and we need you to come up with the things that these strategic planning subcommittees need to focus on. We have created a template for you all to use, and I believe that Dr Payne has posted that in the teams folder.

The other thing I would ask is that our meeting on the 11th may run over and if at all possible, you could clean a little space off of your calendar that would be awesome.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:41pm.