MSCHE Steering Committee

*Meeting Notes (Full)*

Thursday, December 7, 2023

AC 252 & Zoom 1pm – 3pm

Host: Catherine Andersen

(*Catherine Andersen*)

MSCHE Metrics are: 10-15% of institutions lose enrollments. Metric is 40% graduation rate. UBalt has reached that goal once with first-year, first-time freshmen.

Paul has figured May’s graduation rate will be 48.7% (highest in 10 years)

***Problem***:

We must respond to this metric in the Self-Study. We are on the “hotlist.” Carnegie is redesigning new metrics and indicators – smaller colleges have lots of research taking place.

Alicia and Fatemeh will provide an update of the meeting with the Data Group.

Ann Cotten has a grad student working on the Strategic Plan for the MSCHE Steering Committee. On January 3rd, their site and the MSCHE site will have shared access. Katie Kaufmann is back, and Paul M. is retiring. For ***six months,*** Katie will serve as Interim Director of Institutional Research at UBalt (location: AC338). She’s shadowing Pual. Nicole Marano will also support Katie due to her previous IRB experience. By January 3rd, the MSCHE Team Site will contain all of the reports that Paul, Katie, and the Grad Student have determined to be useful/helpful. The capacity exists for new reports to be designed.

Assessment – shared governance, leadership. (Leadership Survey, Culture Survey forthcoming.)

Tiwana Barnes is a terrific resource for all of the diversity components and will be invited to join the Steering Committee (shift in interest to DEI – Diversity, Equity, Inclusion).

While membership changes, as people are still being added, the website will be visible to everyone.

Fatemeh has included a document about naming conventions (*please follow these instructions*).

Everyone is urged to view the examples of the old Self-Study – viewing the examples may answer many questions.

(*Llatetra Esters)*

With respect to the definition of equity and inclusion, are we faithful to the mission? Do we honor those commitments? **Strength**: robust suite of policies, policy guide as a tool. Administrative policies exist, communication to avoid conflict occurs, annual review of law specific policies, attention to fix and adjust academic policies. **Weakness:** UBalt does not always follow policies. Promotion of programs at Shady Grove. Changing/updating policies is a drawback. **Two opportunities:** Use of USM policies to guide UBalt efforts. We need to create opportunities and partnerships (new agreements, new roles). **Threats:** Litigation for lack of following policy. Reputation for not following policy – i.e., not doing what we say we do. The vagueness of the USM policy needs to be addressed.

(*Suzanne Tabor)*

Review the standard that we have – Administration is ahead of the academic side. We are in a good spot to move forward. We’re making sure that we have the correct administrators and that we review everything in the next six-nine months.

(*Catherine Andersen*)

Challenges can change into recommendations. Not following policy is a big issue.

(*Llatetra Esters)*

We also have to examine how policy is communicated.

(*Suzanne Tabor*)

There is appreciation for our flexibility in terms of working with students when we can. We try to meet the needs of students and employees.

(*Ron Costanzo*)

UBalt is establishing a formal mentoring program. Standard 3: design to deliver a student learning experience. The Academic Core Assessment Team has not met in several years. Providing uniform syllabi and course descriptions is a need. There is some uniformity. A shortcoming: the lack of faculty of color has been mentioned. A committee was formed previously regarding this (Rob will check to see what was accomplished according to the old Self-Study). First-year students: Changes made to Information Literacy were being assessed. Another previous issue was that double majors were not available. Students enrolled in certificate programs came up in the last report – the argument is that UBalt needs to do more with regard to Workforce Development programs.

***Improvements:***

CELTT disciplinary mentorship program is being created (and will be different than other mentoring programs mentioned previously). A faculty survey of e-Learning is underway.

General Education Structure – not sure what’s being done now, but much was done with regard to assessment. Issues were identified with the Writing Program, and a new portfolio is being put into place; additional changes will be coming to the Writing Program.

Foundational Math – was streamlined before the last Self-Study. More changes have occurred since then, and GenEd courses and Foundational Math courses are taken together.

(*Catherine Andersen*)

We need to look at the last dates for changes and implementations since the last Middle States; i.e., look at the contract with CCBC regarding the foundational courses.

Questions – if we have data, can we follow the next set of students to their math intensive courses? Examining Pell-eligible students is necessary.

(*Jessica*)

We can now add the Prior Learning Course

(*Catherine Andersen)*

Students, regardless of modality (hybrid/F2F/online): are they getting the *same* experience, and how do we measure it? We need to respond to that data and decide how to address it. Is it the student, the teacher, the technology?

(*Nicole Marano*)

**Group 4 – Student Experience and Success.** We reviewed our timeline and standard. DEI was discussed. We were pragmatic and talked about the four priorities as a group. We have 5 to 6 data gatherers on our team and have laid a foundation for what we’re going to do (meeting is next Monday: Dec. 11th). We are going to proceed with a SWOT Analysis and will talk about research questions.

(*Catherine)*

Thanks to everyone for articulating the research questions in advance.

(*Nicole Marano, John Brenner*)

Evidence has been the focus. The Student Success Council and other various reports are helpful and are being used to guarantee alignment; we are making sure that retention plans align with the strategic plan.

(*Alicia Campbell*)

GenEd has been passed to Dan Gerlowski.

(*Dan Gerlowski*)

It looks like we’ve been following a schedule. The interesting thing that caused a delay was a missing or unobserved policy on *creating* academic policies. Policies that are missing – this is a big one; it was not intentional. There were several changes, but they may not be *substantial* changes. Once it has passed, we need to know what it is and how to proceed.

(*Alicia Campbell*)

We’ve done the work, there’s no paper trail.

(*Mike Kiel*)

Standard 7: We talked about how we aligned with priorities. Our SWOT Analysis was a free-flowing discussion. What are we good at/bad at – before we dive into the data? Does the Board of Regents have the power to do their job? Does the President have the appropriate credentials for the University? ***We think we can easily show strengths***. Weaknesses: Periodic effectiveness of Administration. Does the Administration have the appropriate size and represent an appropriate level of experience? Less obvious – There’s language about a structure for governance in terms of clear responsibilities. Whose job is it to decide such things? We are sure we won’t find any unqualified regents, but we need to examine the language as it is being used.

(*Catherine*)

Resume of leadership must be on file. They should be updated for senior leadership, colleges, and divisions. We should also talk about format – something compatible with our new Web Redesign. Hight schoolers will be on site during the Site Visit (it will be an interesting time). Every standard must be examined for effectiveness. How do we spend our resources? Are resources going to the right place? For example, John was able to prove that tutoring works, and secured funds.

(*Alicia Campbell*)

We have data from groups that met and report before COVID.

(*Nicole Marano*)

We have utilization data that can be pulled; we have post-visit career-coaching information.

(*Alicia Campbell*)

Carey Miller and Lakeisha Matthews have assessment data that can be helpful.

(*Llatetra Esters*)

End of the year reports also contain utilization data.

(*Al Gourrier)*

**Standard 6**. We are having conversations about financial stability – crafting the narrative, using the data to shape the narrative. UBalt has done a really good job of maintaining where we are. We continue to be in “the black”; that’s a strength; even in the midst of structural deficits. ***Weaknesses***: Due to loss of revenue, we will have to acknowledge, address, mitigate. ***Opportunities***: we have increased funding sources, the management of the budget/allocation. ***Threats:*** falling below a critical mass perspective, marketing competition, loss of skill, retention – all are threats. We will have to continue to address alongside declining revenue. ***In light of it all, we maintain sufficiency***. It’s a complex tiptoe. Barb Aughenbaugh has done a good job of highlighting what we’ve done well.

(*Catherine Andersen*)

We were challenged by “tightening the belt.” At the end of the day, it has placed us where we want to go. ***Strategic Planning & Budget Council:*** We need to think about how we engage faculty and staff around budgeting.

(*Mike Kiel*)

Shared Governance should have shared budgeting.

(*Roger Hartley*)

Admissions: John and I have had several conversations. We have recently done a draft of the SWOT analysis. Can we recite our mission? Career-focused education, highly educated leaders, values, six goals? This standard asks if “*mission”* drives what we do? Do we reflect on it? Do we analyze, implement policy according to it? Do we collect data on it? Are we assessing our mission in new ways? Strengths/Weaknesses: Do things get updated? Do we assess where we are? The BOR Task Force may be where we can refer to with regard to our direction, strategic plan, our activities. We have intentionally done things related to our goals. There’s been intentional work on engagement. We may not have intentionally addressed our mission with regard to the things that we have done; i.e., evidence that supports mission-based decisions vs. planning or changes to meet institutional priorities. There are lots of places where we may find that goals *are* being reached. We need to align resources to our mission – do we need to reallocate accordingly? At times, we operate in silos. We may need to do that better. We need to tackle *who we want to be*, in terms of Middle States standards. In times of austerity, we reallocate and Middle States will say we need to allocate according to mission; mission has to drive our goals.

(*Catherine Andersen*)

Are we mission driven in terms of how we use our resources?

(*Roger Hartley*)

Does mission drive our thinking? Do we assess that we are operating according to our mission?

(*Catherine Andersen*)

The Strategic Plan comes from our mission. The plan should tell us where we put our resources. Expenditures are going faster. We are always cutting. Engagement jumps out. Community. Students in the workforce. That’s an important part of putting resources into new programs.

(Roger Hartley)

Goal 1: Position UB as a premier, career-focused university. Strengthen student success. It may not be aligned to mission, but these things happen. We are committed to community engagement and stability. We have a lot of things to say. They might ding us from the perspective of mission to how set our policies. ***It may be an improvement moment***.

(*Catherine Andersen)*

We are weak in Standard 6. It encompasses DEI, data. Now we have resources in Suzanne’s office that we know exist. We can gather a lot of info. We won’t worry about next year’s 48.6 freshman graduation rate. We have lost 2/3 of our undergraduate students since the last Self Study.

(*Nicole Marano)*

The branding survey by marketing over the summer screams engagement – we can get more specific results. There’s an opportunity as we proceed with Carnegie. This risk management initiative is documented. That’s half of the battle with Midde States. We have quarterly meetings and have discussed HR; the loss of talent. Al can get that doc from Barb. Communication, enrollment, financial stability, BOR Task Force reports … everything is documented. We can show our work.

(*Catherine Andersen)*

We’ve proposed a lot of things. Risk Management is important, and we need to address having a document to support that. The Self Study is a case study that guides the reader. How do we use HERF funds? We carefully examined things. Alicia has created many other self-study’s that are recent. We may want to think about approaching the Self Study from a compliance approach, with regard to the Standards.

(*Mike Kiel*)

We should be creative about how to write in a way that is both useful and valuable to us.

(*Llatetra Esters*)

The reader must be considered and framing it in a creative way could bode well for us.

(*Pavan Purswani*)

UBalt’s strong sense of identity was expressed previously, but it may be beneficial for us to use that approach again.

(Catherine)

Cross-divisional interest gave a sense of community.

The Provost identified the importance of institutional identity. We need to highlight *what* we are and *how* we do things.

(*Roger Hartley*)

I didn’t like the BOR Task Force, but there was a lot of great work done there. There was a good, sharp discussion as to who we really are in terms of identity. The group tried to go back to our Strategic Plan and tried to solidify who we are, what we want to be. It might be good to refer back to that work.

(*Pavan Purswani*)

UBalt comes alive in terms of speaking about its students (central to the mission). How our mission shows up within our student body? We need to capture that unique essence.

(*Catherine Andersen*)

Think of what in your standard supports the mission. Lines of inquiry don’t have to be thousands of questions.

(*Pavan Purswani*)

There’s a community piece from the Provost’s Office about how we capture the essence of students that we serve. It’s one thing to serve students, but to serve ***our*** students is different. Example – making the decision to keep our Counseling Services.

(*Catherine Andersen*)

Great example. As is supporting our students online.

(*Nicole Marano*)

The hybrid-service model. We have data to support it.

(*Catherine Andersen)*

They were impressed the last time with everyone’s passion for our students; students also expressed that they felt cared for.

(*Nicole Marano*)

We leveraged partnerships for newer students to use in conjunction with this multi-year experience. If you need help (input) from students in your standards, we can get you help. Whether they are in or outside of SGA. Carey Miller has been able to help us identify newer students that we can retain to assist us.

(*Suzanne Tabor)*

We can engage students in various parts of the process. A special concern would be time, commitment, and retention.

SGA students are very interested in assisting and they are getting paid to assist UBalt with moving forward. Students that are interested in giving insight exist, and they are not necessarily those who are seeking a “governmental” seat with SGA.

(*Catherine Andersen*)

We will be assigned a BOR person. Institutional priorities in terms of engagement – is it a strategy or a priority?

(*Nicole Marano*)

It must be a top priority, but it is also a strategy. Service and service-learning are such an incredible focus for our students. They want a different job after graduation.

(*Roger Hartley*)

Goal 3 of our Strategic Plan is engagement. There’s been a lot of work done on advancing engagement. We will have a very cogent story to tell. There’s a lot of there, there to appreciate and goals to come, too.

(*Nicole Marano*)

We go for 2026 Carnegie classification. January 2024 is when the application opens. It is a two-year process. The application is due April of 2025. December 2025 is when we are made aware of an award.

(*Pavan Purswani*)

Our students are engaged despite themselves. We are different by design.

(*Catherine Andersen*)

If UB succeeds, Baltimore succeeds. We give so much back to the community. Lots of wordsmithing goes into this. Roxy says that enrollment felt like recruitment. PBI’s can’t go under 1,000 students.

(*Pavan Purswani*)

We have to document the work that goes into the 60/40.

(*Roger Hartley*)

A colleague indicated that we reached that goal due to losing a lot of undergrads.

(*Mike Kiel)*

Is the goal of 60/40 appropriate? Is it a research question?

(*Room)*

It’s a financial question – more revenue.

(*Catherine Andersen*)

A good, strong undergraduate will stay longer. 1/3 of our grads come from those who were our undergrads.

(*Room*)

If 1,000 undergrads came next year, would that be a problem?

60/40 is favored in terms of numbers. Grad students contribute more to tuition. It’s a guide in terms of where the money is.

(*Catherine Andersen*)

If an undergrad stays for 4 years, that’s better than a grad staying for just two. If the undergrad goes on to pursue grad school, that’s different.

(*Mike Kiel*)

Don’t mention 60/40 in the report.

(*Catherine Andersen*)

Undergrad and graduate enrollment continue to go down.

(*Room*)

Financial stability. Maximizing instructional capabilities. UMGC with a Law School is how they are trying to frame us.

(*Mike Kiel*)

Framing financial stability is a bit peculiar if there’s a $2 million deficit. If priority were an alignment of resources, that may make more sense.

(*Catherine Andersen*)

How we use our resources is a question that continues to surface.

(*Dan Gerlowski*)

If we make it a priority, does it mean we are not doing it now, or well enough? Middle States will ask: What are you doing about it?

(*Room*)

We are making it a priority because of the structural deficit.

(*Dan Gerlowski*)

We build enrollment – things get better. We can build in the direction of external fundraising now.

(*Roger Hartley)*

These are things that we are trying to achieve *and* do better.

(*Catherine Andersen*)

Come up with questions/priorities between now and the 1st meeting in January. Alicia will ensure that you have access to data resources.

(*Alicia Campbell*)

You’ll be able to see the old standards, and the new. You’ll be able to see which work groups worked on previous standards, too.

(*Catherine Andersen*)

There will be a budget around Middle States, we will be hiring a writer to ensure one voice. We will have a budget to attend Middle States next year (in Philadelphia). Kate Demarest is going to review things and do a mock Self Study. I’ll write a draft of the Self Study design, and I’ll ask you all for three or four sentences for each section related to your lines of inquiry. March 28th/April 11th – VP will be on campus at UBalt. I’ll rewrite the priorities to frame them differently.

(*Al Gourier*)

Define financial stability and write it differently.

(*Nicole Marano)*

Enrollment, retention, engagement (Student Experience – Group 4)

(*Catherine Andersen*)

We are on track, and it will be a civil process. We are breaking things down. Thank you everyone.

(*Meeting Concludes)*