

## **STRATEGIC PLANNING TASK FORCE MEETING**

**February 23, 2015**

**Charles Hunter Room**

Participants: Marvin Dodge (Co-Chair), Emily Dean (Co-Chair), Mitch Bealer, Mindy Benson, Keith Bradshaw, Sheri Butler, Tina Calamity, Danielle Dubrasky, Briget Eastep, Tiger Funk, Bill Heyborne, Eric Kirby, David Lunt, Johnny MacLean, Shauna Mendini, Mary Pearson, James Sage, Jared Wilcken, Terri Day, Jennifer Oberhelman (Recorder)

Co-Chair Emily called the meeting to order at 7:40 and welcomed attendees. She started by reiterating what today's goals are – to identify core themes. She shared that many participants felt that the themes identified at the last meeting were bland, “vanilla” and didn't define SUU.

She then asked people to write on the board their thoughts/ideas for themes that more clearly define SUU. She reminded all that she requested they come to this meeting with “words” to share with the team. The following were words/phrases that were shared (grouped by individual):

- Limitless academic exploration
- Customized attention
- Unbounded discovery of self, community and the world
  
- Innovative
- Individualized
- Integrated
- Inclusive
  
- Staff contribution to academic excellence
  
- Engage – Individual (and lifelong?) learning
- Excel – Academic rigor and innovation
- Explore – Community with global perspective
  
- Prepare students to deal with complexity, diversity and change
- Responsible citizenship
- Prepare for Global Economy
  
- Location
- Connection
- Engagement
  
- Engagement

- Creativity
- Integration
- Focus on the individual (individual achievement, individual discovery, individual growth)
- Engagement – making education relevant and meaningful
- Exploration – Exploring knowledge and the world
- Community – Building communities of practice

Shauna M. shared that she really likes the core themes we currently have and feels it's o.k. to repeat them but deal with the disenfranchised silos we have on campus (staff, community, academic, etc.). We can keep what we have but include what we heard from the groups.

Emily said many felt the core themes weren't as inspiring as they should, and can be.

Danielle D. said these core themes should identify what is unique about SUU.

Mary P. said we have to make sure these are measurable.

Bill H. said the core themes should be the heart of the university, something everyone knows and embrace. Emily asked if he means something punchy and memorable. Yes, something easily remembered, maybe one word that people can remember. Emily asked the group how many thought a one word theme would be good. Most people agreed with this idea.

David L. really liked the idea of using the word integrated; that was something that was heard at the various sessions. Johnny agreed and added that when people in different fields get together discovery happens. Should we combined integrated with innovative?

It was again stressed that outcomes are critical and must be identified.

Emily suggested that the Liberal Arts designation be encoded within the themes. Mitch and Mary reminded the group that many people in this area have a problem with that designation and it is very difficult to educate them on the real meaning of a liberal arts education, even though we have been doing it for a very long time. This concept is important to many people, both pro and con, and it is used for recruiting faculty. President Wyatt stated we can put whatever we want in the Core Themes.

Terri D. suggested broad themes that can be built upon. Sheri B. said this is just the start and things could change during the process. Terri asked if we are totally redoing the Mission Statement as Core Themes normally come from the Mission Statement, not the other way around. Emily said it will be closely looked at as the current mission Statement is very word and not memorable. Core Themes can influence the Mission Statement. Keith B. agreed that we can use broader Core Themes and specify goals and outcomes. We can link the Liberal Arts theme though out without actually using the "liberal" term. It can also be termed holistic, all encompassing.

Emily stressed that they Core Themes need to be more memorable. Bill suggested using the same type of word, all verbs or nouns would be beneficial. Jared shared that he has a hard time getting excited about what has been suggested so far.

Emily suggested devising some type of acronym to better help people remember the Core Themes or using the same letter to start, like the group of "E's", like Engage, Excel, Explore. Tiger F. suggested we add "we" to each of these words, or "you." People might be able to remember them better. Action words are good. It was also suggested that the word rigor be replaced with excel or distinction. Rigor has a negative connotation to many.

The suggested themes are:

We Engage – individual and Lifelong Learning

We Excel – academic distinction

We Explore – community experience with global perspective.

It was then suggested that the order be engage, explore, and excel.

Keith said the words don't need to be directly tied to the words on the right, they will all cross over to the various themes. Goals do need to be under the two work theme. Shauna stressed that the goals and objectives must stay true to what the Task Force heard at the various meetings on campus. President said that academic excellence can easily fit under all three goals.

The final suggested themes are:

We engage, we explore, we excel.

- In academic distinction
- In community
- In personalized learning

Everything we do will be covered under the three "E's" and KPI's can be determined using the input from the meetings previously held.

Shauna said she is concerned that these may be too broad. Terri said she may have a challenge fitting in the working she needs for her 1<sup>st</sup> year report. President Wyatt said everything identified can fit and being general isn't a negative. Shauna feels strongly that civic engagement/mindedness is very important to incorporate.

Terry said she would be submitting the 1<sup>st</sup> year report by the end of the week but we aren't tied to the themes, they can change throughout the process to a point.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 a.m.

The next session will be held Thursday, February 23 at 3:00 a.m. in the Charles Hunter Room.