



Update for Steering Committee: November 2021

Subject Line: Strategic Enrollment Planning – Steering Committee Update

Dear Steering Committee,

We hope this finds you doing well. In advance of the upcoming holiday weekend and to help inform our next Steering Committee meeting, we would like to share updates on our strategic enrollment planning progress, outline initial themes from conversations with TAMUC stakeholders, and request your input in identifying emerging priorities for enrollment and student success at TAMUC.

Stakeholder Engagement: To build a robust understanding of perceived strengths, opportunities, vision, and goals aligned to first-time in college, transfer, master's, and continuing students, Huron met with over 75 institutional stakeholders and conducted over 40 interviews over the last month. In doing so, the following high-level themes emerged from conversations that we plan to explore more in depth in our next meeting together:

- a. **Vision & Identity:** Recent strides have been taken to build TAMUC's brand, but TAMUC lacks a cohesive identity and vision for enrollment.
 - *How will TAMUC differentiate itself in an increasingly competitive market?*
- b. **Recruitment & Admissions:** Student enrollment has resulted by happenstance, without a coordinated strategy between Colleges and EM.
 - *Through the SEP process, enrollment goals and key performance metrics will be defined. How will TAMUC set enrollment targets and deploy a coordinated and intentional recruitment strategy?*
- c. **Financial Aid & Affordability:** TAMUC's value proposition is affordability, but there are concerns around student satisfaction of the financial aid process and TAMUC's perceived overall "value."
 - *How can TAMUC enhance the student financial experience to highlight the value of a TAMUC degree?*
- d. **Retention & Student Success:** TAMUC stakeholders share a common view that retention is the biggest challenge on-campus, but student success is not viewed as "everyone's job."
 - *Units on campus are employing successful strategies in supporting student retention, but these strategies are practiced siloes. How can TAMUC incentivize the campus community to prioritize student success?*
- e. **Academic Experience:** Students seek further engagement with faculty and connection to academic programs.
 - *What alternative methods can help TAMUC engage students to feel a connection to the University and their programs?*
- f. **Program Offerings:** TAMUC offers a diverse array of curriculum options, campus settings and program modalities, but opportunities exist to define distinct marketing messaging and target recruitment across these distinct opportunity areas.
 - *How will TAMUC prioritize recruitment goals across these areas and align resources in support?*



Focus Groups: In order to test our understanding of decision-making factors and to ensure the voice of the student is represented in our analysis, we plan to host student focus groups on campus and online the week of 12/6. They will consist of FTF, Transfer and Master's / Specialist students.

Descriptive Data Analysis: Huron has worked closely with Texas A&M Commerce aggregate data from undergraduate and graduate admissions, financial aid, enrollment, and faculty compensation data. This data will inform a comprehensive enrollment and retention data deep-dive to identify factors, such as students who are most likely to apply and enroll at TAMUC and those most at risk of attrition. We look forward to sharing these findings during our next meeting along with a financial aid optimization assessment.

Lastly, please keep your eyes out for the invitation to our next Steering Committee Meeting to be held the week of December 13th. In the meantime, if you have any questions, concerns, or feedback to share please don't hesitate to reach out. We look forward to seeing you in December.

Best,

Nechell Bonds and Dr. Ricky Dobbs
Strategic Enrollment Planning Co-Chairs