

# PRAIRIE VIEW A&M UNIVERSITY

## Spring 2015 Strategic Planning Summit

Theme: “The Best Is Yet To Come: Reimagining and Reinventing to Provoke  
Greater Growth and Quality”

Willie A. Tempton, Sr., Memorial Student Center  
Ballrooms A&B

Guidance for Thinking and Responding

1:15 p.m. - 2:15 p.m.      Focus Group Conversations A

Groups: 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16 & 18

The best leaders don't set timid and selfish goals that are easy to meet but instead set bold and inclusive goals that are hard to achieve . . . we're all looking for ways to make sense of the world without a center, but we'll only find that in people who lead with authentic humility and reckless generosity.

Timothy Shriver

Author of *Fully Alive: Discovering What Matters Most*

## FOCUS GROUP CONVERSATIONS A—MSC Ballroom

(Groups 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16 & 18)

1:15 p.m.-2:15 p.m. The Federal Influence: PVAMU Facing a Changing Higher Education Paradigm

### CONTEXT

In the book, *Academic Leadership and Governance of Higher Education*, Robert M. Hendrickson and co-authors state rather matter of factly that “the federal government casts a long shadow over higher education. While states retain primary authority over most of the nation’s colleges and universities, the federal government has used its legislative power and purse strings to influence their development” (p.87). The federal government has looked to higher education for solutions to problems in the national defense, nuclear energy, agricultural production and other areas. The latter was addressed by the creation and passage of the Morrill Acts of 1862 and 1890. In the economic downturn of 2008, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act invested in sustaining the system impacting the American socio-economic structure. In short, over 30\$ billion of the nearly \$800 billion invested was directed to improving educational opportunities through PELL grants, loans, and grants.

America has a problem. According the Jamie Merisotis, President and CEO of the Lumina Foundation, the great risk to America is that it will lose its competitive edge in a global economy due to failure to develop the talent in the population. In *A Stronger Nation*, the Lumina Report, it is stated that degree attainment among U.S. residents ages 25-64 is at 20.27 % for Hispanics, 28.14 % for Blacks, 44.47% for Whites, 23.86% for Native Americans, and 60.07 % for Asians. The pending reauthorization of the Higher Education Opportunity Act, is intent upon holding colleges more accountable for the investment made in them to support their delivering on student success goals.

### Instructions

Were the accountability proposals to become law, what existing strategies already in place at PVAMU would respond to the mandate and what additional strategies would be necessary?

| Selected Accountability Proposals  | Existing Strategies | New Strategies |
|--|---------------------|----------------|
| <p><i>Increased Accountability #1</i><br/>           Would require colleges and universities who participate in Title IV Student Financial Aid to establish more intensive one-on-one pre-loan counseling that is beyond clicking of a button to acknowledge receipt of print or electronic information (Student Debt Reduction)</p> |                     |                |
| <p><i>Increased Accountability #2</i><br/>           Would require colleges and universities who participate in Title IV Student Financial Aid to document the extent to which degrees Earned lead graduates to gainful employment (Gainful Employment)</p>  |                     |                |
| <p><i>Increased Accountability #3</i><br/>           Would exact sanctions on institutions that produced teachers whose students in K-12 consistently fail to meet state educational proficiency standards (Educational Quality)</p>   |                     |                |

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The Texas Influence: Our Facing Rising Expectations for Participation, Success, Excellence and Research

(Groups: 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15 & 17)

## CONTEXT

*Closing the Gaps, Texas Higher Education Plan*, was launched in 2000. At the time, on nearly all measures of attainment in higher education, Texas lagged behind the ten most populous states. Texas Commissioner of Higher Education, Dr. Raymund Paredes, presented the update on the plan on November 21, 2014. In a nutshell, he cited improvements made over the past 15 years and included among them the fact that “completion rates for African Americans and Hispanics increased by 118 percent and 180.5 percent respectfully.” He went on to recognize Texas A&M University’s raising its research profile, University of Texas Dallas’ raising its prestige, and Sam Houston State University’s becoming a leader in student success.

In “The Case for Redefining Higher Education Excellence,” Kevin Cary postulates and the Commissioner supports the placing of priority on “affordability, high quality undergraduate education, ethnic and socio-economic diversity” and research. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) is currently updating the state’s strategic plan which will go through 2030. It is expected to be one of the mandates an intentionally strong measurable presence of senior colleges and universities in the K-12 segment and the community colleges through alignment of curriculum, professional development opportunities, and student success initiatives.

Preparing students for college success and ensuring that cost is not a barrier to completion promises to provoke changes in ensuring the readiness of students for college, eliminating duplication in curriculum offerings, and reducing non-essential college related costs of attendance.

## Affordability

Recently, *Money Magazine* featured PVAMU as one of the best values for the student’s money. This is a cost benefit analysis. PVAMU is proud that it is not over pricing quality education. Both the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and the Texas A&M University System have taken steps to make college more affordable. The guaranteed tuition plan has been welcomed by students and parents because it promotes planning and could result in a reduction in the number of hours students’ must work to help meet expenses associated with college, a reduction in the number of semesters a student takes to complete his or her degree, and reduction in default rates on loans.

Even with the guaranteed tuition, the costs of attending college continue to place already financially stressed students at risk of not completing their degrees. Other cost saving measures could be instituted with a view toward shortening time to degree completion and reducing post-college debt.

| Cost Reduction   | Opportunities<br>(Advantages) | Threats<br>(Disadvantages) |
|--|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Shortening Time to Degree                                |                               |                            |
| Discounting Tuition Rates<br>for Selected Populations    |                               |                            |
| Translation of Work<br>Experience into College<br>Credit |                               |                            |
| Others:  |                               |                            |

## High Quality Undergraduate Education

Earning a degree is associated with possessing proficiency that leads to gainful employment and/or advanced study. At PVAMU, both freshmen and seniors rate themselves as being satisfied with their level of proficiency in areas included in the core curriculum. Direct measures such as the Educational Testing Profile (ETS) and the General Education Synthesis Assignment tell a different story. The gains are below the University's desirable targets for its undergraduate degree completers. Gains from the freshman to the senior year are minimal especially in critical thinking. While there are some justifiable concerns about the reliability and validity of findings from data on measures used to evaluate student's critical thinking and/or other gains in knowledge, there is evidence of the need for strengthening of core curriculum knowledge and skills overall but especially in critical thinking. A substantial number of students find themselves on academic probation or suspension. Some graduates complete their advanced courses but do not possess the strong foundation requisite to building greater proficiency required for high level functioning and professional advancement major. The institutional investment in educational support services includes but is not limited to school/college student success centers, summer bridge programs, COMPASS, iREAD and other services. More must be done to accelerate meeting of learning outcomes.

Setting aside cost considerations; imagine practices that might more effectively create an environment in which students might close voids in their general education knowledge and skills.

| Critical Point Impact on Students' Foundation Knowledge and Skills Development | Recommended Strategies |
|--|------------------------|
| During Summer or Semester Before Enrolling at PVAMU                            |                        |
| In the Residential Living/Learning Environment (University College)...         |                        |
| During Initial Semester a PVAMU  |                        |
| During Enrollment in Courses   |                        |
| Other...   |                        |

## Diversity

Texas demographics make patently obvious the increase in the Hispanic population and the dire need of that population for advanced education. It is projected that by 2025, 52% of the state's population will be Hispanic. PVAMU has valued diversity throughout its history. However, deliberate efforts to recruit, enroll, and graduate Hispanic students began with the 1983 Texas Plan and accelerated with the 2000 Texas Priority Plan Commitment, commonly referred to as the OCR Plan. In its effort to remove the vestiges of a previously segregated system of higher education, Texas funded goals to strengthen and enhance Prairie View A&M University in ways that would bring it to greater parity with its parent institution, Texas A&M University and to bring Texas Southern University to greater parity with the University of Houston. The representation of Hispanics at each level of higher education is far below acceptable. Texas colleges and universities must respond to the needs of this population.

The number of Hispanic enrolled at the University and the amount of student educational support programs aimed at retaining their students has increased but the number remains unsatisfactorily small considering the number of Hispanic students who are in the secondary school pipeline.

What are best practice strategies that institutions of higher learning have used successfully in attract and graduate minority students? Of those, which strategies, coupled with others, have the potential to significantly increase the Hispanic student enrollment and retention to graduation?

Objective: To increase to approximately 15-20 % the Hispanic representation in the student population.

| Best Practices in Recruitment of Hispanic Students | Strategies Recommended for Adoption |
|--|-------------------------------------|
|  |                                     |

## Research

As a land grant University, PVAMU is committed to conducting both basic and applied research and to making the research relevant to the larger community. Making more critical the need for research is the need to create an enriching environment for students in the five doctoral degree programs. The Chancellor’s Research Initiative (CRI) is fueling the University’s rapid acceleration of its research agenda by funding recruitment and employment of highly productive researchers around whom centers and institutes can be formed. Outside funding increases during the past five years have been uneven. Given the Chancellor’s Research Initiative (CRI), strengthening of the overall research environment is certain. Consider the research infrastructure and recommend any improvements needed to grow the amount and quality of research.

| Research Infrastructure            | Describe the nature of any improvement needed in applicable areas |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Grant Opportunity Exploration      |   |
| Faculty/Research Scientist Support |   |
| Grant Writing                      |   |
| Awards Processing                  |   |
| Support Personnel                  |   |
| Technology Availability            |   |
| Facilities and Equipment           |   |
| Grants/Contract Management         |   |
| Fiscal/Financial Reporting         |   |

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Ballrooms A&B  
Groups 1, 2, 3, & 4

2:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Shaping Institutional Strategies

(1) Innovations and Transformations: Tables 1-4

U.S. Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, has repeatedly opined that higher education costs are too high, the institutions' graduation rates are too low and the accountability is weak. From the federal level to the state level and among the foundations such as the Lumina Foundation and the Gates Millennium Foundation, there is concern about the need for a redesign of higher education. There is a clarion call for innovation designed to transform the traditional model of the University which owes much of its structure to the American adaptation of the German model of the University.

Below are several of many proposals which we have hinted at in the full version of the 2010 Strategic Plan but have continually placed on the table and then allowed to dissolve without fully addressing by setting a course aimed at leading us to make changes within the framework of our mission, core values, and vision.

What say yea? Go or no go? Cite others, as appropriate.

| Innovation/Change   | Worthy of Pursuit?<br>Yes/No | If Worthy of Pursuit, Cite Crucial first steps |
|---|------------------------------|--|
| Reduce course choices for freshmen, thus prescribing very strictly their academic program pathway |                              |  |
| Add athletic teams in lacrosse, hockey, and equestrienne  |                              |  |

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| Assign every freshman to a five to seven member team of mentor/coaches who will follow a carefully prescribed student success prescription and hold themselves accountable for supporting student success  |  |  |
| Create online versions of virtually all degree programs with a specified target to be implemented by the year 2020   |  |  |
| Establish a University at an international site and offer a set of programs for which that country has great need and agrees to pay PVAMU to deliver   |  |  |
| Eliminate the faculty tenure system and replace with term contracts  |  |  |
| Commission a reputable firm to again provide leadership to conduct a capital fundraising campaign  |  |  |
| Implement a multi-media marketing campaign of a magnitude no less that of Sam Houston State University and approaching that of University of Texas at San Antonio.   |  |  |
| Aggressively pursue a connection to West Harris and to Waller and contiguous counties by instituting in collaboration with area industries a set of certificate programs in highly technical and scientific areas where new companies will need trained employees (PVAMU voluntarily ceased to offer the Associate's Degree in the mid- 80s) |  |  |
| Create attractions such as an annual summer jazz festival and/or country music featuring world class performers who will draw thousands to the campus  |  |  |
| Become an Elderhostel site attracting retirees from around the country to study or pursue other interests in a rural community with close in urban amenities   |  |  |
| Pursue professional degree programs beginning with a medical school (See: Commitment to PVAMU in the 1947 Texas Legislative Session)   |  |  |

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| Outsource additional University operations |  |  |
| Other ( Please Specify)                    |  |  |

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Guidance for Thinking and Responding  
2:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. **Focus Group Conversations B**  
Identified Concerns/Weaknesses/Threats

In October of 2014, President Wright invited Mr. Tyrone Butler with Butler Active Business Solutions, LLC, to campus to conduct Lean Six Sigma sessions with selected administrators, staff and students. In anticipation of the sessions, participants were asked to complete a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis addressing the top three processes/programs they believe “customers” and/or students perceive as requiring improvement. The results of the focus group sessions were shared with selected administrators in March 2015 where further discussion fine-tuned several concerns/weaknesses/threats to address through strategic planning. University data also pointed to these as needing focused attention for improvement. The *Online Resume for Legislators and Other Policymakers* reveals higher enrollment in fall 2009 than in fall 2014; six-year graduation rates of between 35-40% compared with peer group rates of 44-47%; and one-year persistence of first-time full-time degree-seeking undergraduates at 82.7% in Fall 2008 compared with 76.5% for those entering in Fall 2013. While there are considerable strengths in some areas, current graduating senior data from NSSE indicate that PVAMU is behind other Southwest public institutions for “quality of interactions with other administrative staff and offices,” “organized instruction,” and “discussions with...people with political views other than your own.” Furthermore, satisfaction rates gathered on the *Graduation Candidates’ Summary of Experience at PVAMU* by master’s and PhD program completers reveal that customer service is among areas ranked as “unsatisfactory” at 16% and 40% respectively. Undergraduates identified campus dining services and financial aid as the two most pressing university operation areas needing improvement. In terms of academic major experiences, undergraduates rated access to specialized equipment as being unsatisfactory at 8% while master’s degree completers at 6%. The following issues, among others, therefore, are among those to be addressed in the University’s strategic planning initiatives for 2015-2020:

- Enrollment;
- Student Success and Excellence
- Customer Service and Environment
- Communication
- Technology

## Enrollment (Groups 5-7)

PVAMU has not fully met its *Closing the Gaps* targets for enrollment. The lack of undergraduate persistence and the loss of graduate student enrollment following voluntary closure of the Dallas Metroplex site contributed substantially to the dip. Success of many first generation students who arrived at the University with ability but without the requisite academic achievement was due to the University's investment in educational support programs such as tutorial services, school/college student success centers, special programs such as iREAD, and summer bridge programs. Even so, the loss of scores of undergraduates after the second year is a persistent problem.

### Questions:

- What best practices or strategies might be aimed at second-year undergraduates to increase their persistence when that failure to persist is due primarily to (1) poor academic performance and (2) lack of finances sometimes resulting from loss of financial aid eligibility?
- What strategies/recommendations might be utilized to increase the graduate enrollment?
- What strategies/recommendation might be utilized to increase the transfer enrollment?
- How can the University become more appealing to Hispanic students?
- What strategies can the University implement to help K-12 students to become better prepared for college?

## Student Success and Excellence (Groups 8-10)

Measures of student success take many forms: graduation rates, standardized test scores, employment and salary data, licensure rates, among many others.

### Questions:

- Are there student support programs that the University is not providing, that if provided, could substantially improve learning outcomes achievement and success?
- What high impact practices should be adopted in and/or outside the classroom to ensure student success?
- Are there strategies the University should implement to cause students to approach college as though it were a job?

## Customer Service and Environment: Groups 11-13

Focus groups and survey data reveal customer service to be an area on which to improve in the future. Satisfaction rates gathered on the *Graduation Candidates' Summary of Experience at PVAMU* by master's and PhD program completers reveal that customer service is among areas ranked as "unsatisfactory" at 16% and 40% respectively. There are faculty and staff measures that also reveal the need for improvement in customer service.

### Questions:

- If leaders were to develop a primer for good customer service, what would be among the most salient expectations included?
- In interactions among offices, what strategies would improve customer service?
- To what extent during the past five years did the units represented in this focus group keep logs of customer service complaints, including the resolution of them?
- To what extent during the past year did the units represented in this focus group keep logs of customer service complaints, including the resolution of them?
- Are there things we can do to improve the public perception of campus safety on the main campus, Northwest Houston Center, and College of Nursing Clinical Center?

## Communication: Groups 14-16

Communication affects all areas of University life. Focused group conversation has identified it as an area to strengthen moving forward.

### Questions:

- What evidence is there that poor communication can be costly to student success?
- What evidence is there that poor communication can be costly to administrative units?
- What evidence is there that poor communication can be costly to student learning?
- What evidence is there that poor communication can be costly to the University image?

## Technology: Groups 17-18

Technology impacts all areas of University life from functions supporting enrollment, marketing, the website, financial aid, registration, community service and outreach to teaching, research, and lab use. Technology requires training, updating, and specialized knowledge.

### Questions:

- List the areas of intense technology use that are in need of greatest investment.
- Prioritize in rank order, with one being highest, the list above.
- Considering innovations being implemented at other colleges and universities, which ones could make the most difference to transfer student enrollment, distance course delivery, faculty and staff development, and student success?