

Academic Affairs Futures Planning Team

Report to Steering Committee

December 1, 2008

The Academic Affairs Futures Planning Team resumed the Shawnee 20/20 Planning Process during the fall semester of 2008. The Team met twice to consider The Chancellor of the Ohio Board of Regent's *Strategic Plan for Higher Education 2008 -2017* (<http://www.uso.edu/strategicplan/>), the creation of the University System of Ohio (USO) and the impact these statewide plans will have on Shawnee State University. Several elements of the Chancellor's plan were discussed in detail because of their impact on planning at Shawnee State:

- “develop distinctive missions and **Centers of Excellence** that are recognized by students, faculty and business leaders” (p.38);
- Shawnee's “role in the development of talent through **new bachelor's and graduate degree programming in applied research** is vital in one of Ohio's slowest growth regions” (p. 48); and
- Implied moving of associate degrees to the community college network (p.55).

In addition, the Academic Affairs Futures Team considered the revised charge from President Rita Rice Morris as we restarted the 20/20 planning process:

- Participate in idea generation phase of Shawnee 20/20 – key factors, trends, opportunities, and goals
- Identify “what we know/what we need to know”
- Use other sources (peer institutions, state and federal employment projections, regional business/industry needs, etc.) to gather program ideas
- Engage larger SSU community and constituent groups in idea generation concerning future direction for academic programs and initiatives at SSU
- Prepare a report identifying 20/20 academic program goals

Members of the original 20/20 Academic Affairs Futures Team (Michael Field, Ann Marie Short, Cindy Hopkins, Krista Maxson, Jeff Bauer, Bob Trusz, Scott Douthat, and Janna Gallaher) were joined by Dave Todt, Tim Scheurer, Jim Kadel, and Xuemei Yang to address the preceding elements of the Team's charge.

Center of Excellence

A call for Center of Excellence ideas was issued to the campus community. A number of characteristics deemed important for a Center of Excellence at Shawnee State were discussed. The Center of Excellence should:

- involve departments and programs from across campus
- have the potential to attract external funding
- bring new students to campus and add to the growth of Shawnee State

- have an economic impact on the southern Ohio region
- have measurable outcomes
- be connected to life-long learning initiatives

The ideas proposed for Centers of Excellence were discussed and refined by the Academic Affairs Futures Team. Several of the proposals have been submitted in written form and can be found in the appendix to this report. These proposals are submitted to the other Futures Teams and the university community for further discussion, refinement, and prioritization. A summary of each of the Center of Excellence ideas received and discussed at this point include:

- **Center for Excellence in Game Design and Practice** - The center would offer programs, workshops, professional meetings devoted to all aspects of game design and practice. With the Motion Capture facility the center would also serve as a resource for research into gaming and other digital video applications.
- **Center for Small Town Revitalization or Center for Rust Belt Renaissance** - The center would offer courses, training workshops, research assistance both on site and via distance learning to individuals seeking to revitalize their communities. The emphasis would be on smaller towns that have been affected by declines in the manufacturing or farming sectors of the economy.
- **Center of Excellence for Pre-Medical Preparation** - The proposed center of excellence will consist of four major areas as follows:
 1. Undergraduate Program in Biomedical Science (existing)
 2. M.S. in Medical Science (proposed)
 3. Organized Shadowing Program (partially in place)
 4. Organized Research Program
- **Center of Excellence in the Applied Health Sciences** - Shawnee has a long-standing tradition of preparing high quality nurses and allied health professionals. Because this field of study is very much in demand, SSU has single-handedly kept regional hospitals from having to take some of the drastic measures that other medical centers in the nation have had to take as a result of the national nursing shortage.
- **Center of Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching or Center of Excellence in Learning and Teaching** – Shawnee State is recognized for high quality teaching and individual attention given to students at the undergraduate level. Preparing highly qualified P-12 teachers is already a characteristic of the teacher licensure programs, and our Teaching/Learning Center has been an active presence on campus for several years, and has assumed a leadership role regionally in training faculty to take full advantage of computer-mediated instruction. A focus on teaching and learning would engage the entire campus in the scholarship of teaching.
- **Center of Excellence for International Programs and Activities** – The Center current Center for International Program and Activities provides Shawnee State University's students and its community with opportunities to appreciate different values and cultures around the world. These experiences prepare our students for the increasingly global nature of society, encourage their understanding of other

people, and enable them to contribute to the well being of our world community. Existing initiatives include recruiting and serving international students, managing exchange programs with international universities and assisting SSU students to study abroad, and linking international activities with SSU's International Relations Degree.

- **Center of Excellence for Environmental Science** – Environmental programs exist in both the College of Arts and Sciences (Certificate in Environmental Science and related concentrations in biology and geology) and the College of Professional Studies (Environmental Engineering Technology). These programs can link with the abundant natural resources of our region to lead to a Center that focuses on clean energy initiatives and environmental sustainability.
- **Center of Excellence for Appalachian and Ohio River Studies** - Shawnee State's location in the heart of Appalachian Ohio on the banks of the Ohio River, make for an ideal location for an interdisciplinary center that focuses on the history, culture, geography, and science of the region.

Both the Clark Memorial Library and the SSU Women's Center have submitted supportive documents indicating the role they can plan in Shawnee's Center of Excellence. These documents are included in the appendix after copies of the Center for Excellence proposals.

New Programs and Degrees

Three **high priority** proposals of the original Team were recommended for immediate development and submission. The three initiatives and their current status are:

1. Master's degree in Education
2. Bachelor of Health Science
3. Associate of Technical Studies with Tech Prep connections

The Master's of Education preliminary proposal was submitted to the Ohio Board of Regents and reviewed by the Regents Advisory Committee on Graduate Studies (RACGS). The feedback from that review is being incorporated into the development of a full degree proposal by the Department of Teacher Education. The goal is to submit the proposal for approval at Shawnee State early in spring semester and take it to RACGS before the end of the semester.

The Bachelor of Health Science was discussed by faculty from Allied Health and a preliminary curriculum was developed. Review by the Provost's Office and Deans led to a change in direction to a Bachelor of General Studies proposal. The Bachelor of Health Science, while still a viable idea that should be pursued, did not meet the needs of the numerous and diverse student group as well as a Bachelor of General Studies.

The Associate of Technical Studies degree was submitted to the Ohio Board of Regents and approved by the Chancellor. In his transmittal letter approving the degree, the Chancellor noted that this would be the last associate degree approved at Shawnee State.

Exploration of a bachelor's degree in nursing has begun during the halt in the strategic planning process. The Nursing Department received the green light from the Ohio Board of Nursing to propose a Baccalaureate Degree Program in Nursing. The Future's Team supports this initiative and adds it to the list of high priority program development efforts. It has been acknowledged that expansion of programs in the Health Sciences will create a need for additional classroom, laboratory, clinical and office space.

Four other **priority** ideas were further examined by the Academic Affairs Futures Team. Two of these ideas, associate degrees in Criminal Justice and General/Liberal Studies have been dropped after the change in associate degree support at the state universities. The other two ideas are put forth as important initiatives to pursue:

1. Bachelor of Political Science
2. Immediate review and substantial redesign of some of the Business programs

The redesign of Business has begun under the leadership of the Dean of the College of Professional Studies. The Dean has asked all three faculty groups in his college, Engineering Technology, Business, and Allied Health, to begin planning a transition from the present associate degree programs to baccalaureate degrees.

While the recommendations above are being implemented we recommend careful consideration of some very promising **longer term** initiatives, described below.

1. After successful implementation of the Master's in Teacher Education, we recommend consideration of other master's degrees:
 - i. Master's degree in Social Work,
 - ii. MBA degree in Business, possibly with multiple tracks
 - iii. MS degree in Biomedical Science could be designed to allow graduates from any discipline to transition into medical school;
 - iv. MS degree in Physician Assistant Studies. This is a very popular program nationally; not many schools have it. We have many of the essentials in place (including cadaver lab). We would need highly qualified Physician Assistant faculty (permanent full-time) and an MD supervisor, who could be SOMC person)
2. The successful implementation of a new major in Political Science might lead to creation of an interdisciplinary institute in Appalachian Public Policy, with a focus on Appalachian Ohio. Such an institute could draw on faculty expertise in the social sciences, the natural sciences, business, the humanities, and philosophy. It could offer occasional courses and seminars on current public issues, conduct polling in Appalachia and issue press releases. Such an institute may be part of a future Center of Excellence.
3. The Mathematics Department should consider an academic minor, in Computational Science.

4. With the addition of one faculty position (a biochemist), we could develop a new academic major or concentration in Biotechnology. This is worth considering, but requires careful analysis before a recommendation can be made. It is not clear that many new students could be recruited for such a specialized program. If students who enter such a program are students who would otherwise simply have majored in biology there is no real strategic benefit for the University. Furthermore, any new program in the natural sciences will immediately create problems in terms of adequate space and facilities.

Infrastructure Implications

As the Academic Affairs Futures Team discussed ideas for new degrees and programs, the implications for the infrastructure at Shawnee State were also considered. At the final meeting of the Team, the Accountability Goals submitted by Shawnee State to the Chancellor of the Ohio Board of Regents were shared. The goals for the 20 USO Accountability categories are attached- in the appendix to this report. The goals to grow enrollment (1), increase STEM degrees (2), serve more first generation college students (4), increase the average student ACT score (7), acquire Federally financed research funding (10), serve more students with college credit earned during high school (14), serve more community college transfer students (15), increase industrially financed research (16), increase the number of international students and the number of Shawnee students studying abroad (17), and increase the number of students engaged in internships (20) are very consistent with the recommendations of the Futures Team.

The growth goals, in particular, will require space for new students and new programs. Growth will also require expanded infrastructure (space and personnel) for student support services such as enrollment management; student life and housing services; technology and library services; and finance and administration related services such as security, accounting, print services, and facilities management. The research funding goals will require increased infrastructure to support grant writing, project management, and grants accounting and reporting. Increased numbers of international students and programs will require more support for the Center of International Programs and Activities.

The following recommendations emerged from the discussion:

1. Begin planning for a new classroom/laboratory building to house expanded programs in the STEM areas.
2. Use the experience in the MOT program to expand graduate program infrastructure to support more graduate assistantships, increased graduate recruiting and admissions, expansion of graduate faculty status, and more graduate level research.

3. Increase opportunities for study abroad with more exchange and sister institution agreements with international universities while also expanding Shawnee's network of international recruiters and agents.
4. Expand the support for seeking, implementing, and managing federally and industrially funded applied regional research.