

Town Hall Meeting- Last Call

November 6, 2019

Notetaker #1

- The 5 goals don't answer who we are or who we want to be. There is an overall statement that is missing.
- We need to take resources and empower kids in local areas and show them that education matters. There are kids struggling and in dire needs and they do not see the importance of an education. We need to go out into the community and find them, not wait for them to find us.
- We need to identify and recognize the problems and find ways to provide solutions for local students (social issues).
- Want to see an increase in programs reaching out into the community and sharing resources.
- There is a lack of motivation to make a difference.
- It is one thing to be recruited, another to stay. Need to advertise how college can build on their high school education. There are students that didn't attend college and are doing better than the ones that did. After graduation students aren't getting a job in their major and don't feel they are making what they should. Focus on cross functional skills.
- Offer in-state tuition to more students and at longer distances. Could focus on students within inner cities with high in-state tuition. Doesn't want the focus to only be on regional areas.
- Memphis and TN residents are a good area to focus and offer opportunity for recruitment.
- What are we marketing? An education, a degree, or a job? Students can go anywhere for a degree, why should they come to ASU? Could focus marketing on if you come to ASU you will get "x" job in "x" field when you graduate or you walk out of ASU with a job and money.
- Delta all consists of close knit communities and trust people they know. Alumni, faculty/staff should recruit from these areas.
- Farming communities are more focused on vocational areas, need to focus on what we can offer them.
- Is there any kind of incentive for alumni to recruit? (cost break?) (legacy student?)
- This generation is different and they want to see results, need to market why they need to come here
- Do not think trying to pick what degrees will be good 5 years from is a good idea, still value in a liberal arts degree. What happens when we increase resources in certain fields we think will be valuable in 5 years, have several tenured professors, and the program loses interest? What happens to resources? What areas will be forgotten when we actively invest in others?
- Should focus on adaptability and critical thinking skills
- Need to match resources with strengths, metrics should respond to changing programs
- Relationships with 2 year institutions more important now than before
- There should be more advisory programs
- Really like the idea of more signature programs
- Need a focus on buildings and facilities
- Need to take "preview days" to schools
- If the community and region are more livable, we will recruit more students. What can we do to make it more of a college town?

- More trails (biking and walking)
- A way to get downtown from the college without difficulty
- More arts
- Enhance culture
- Should reach out to the region more, how can we help less fortunate communities
- The arts are underserved in this region, need more of a focus on programs that enhance culture, relationship between ASU, local schools, and the community
- Build connections with local teachers and administrators
- Like the latest Goal 4
- Should we have a center focused on the rural communities/delta?
- Think there should only be one goal discussing the economy
- Feel Goal 5 is already working
- Should have more study, sitting, and learning areas within the individual colleges; focus on creating a general culture of learning campus wide
- Sports do help change the atmosphere on the campus (gave other school football example; entire campus changed because team was playing really well)
- We need to define what learning is to our students
 - No retention of information; must redefine that
 - All students should have a certain level of competency on basic information
 - Show students they are capable of research and working

Notetaker #2

Is something missing?

- We haven't answered the question of who we are or who we want to be. We don't have an overarching statement.

Are there things that you'd suggest?

- I'd say who we are should be determined by the needs of the communities around us.
- How am I going to leave here feeling fulfilled?

What are your thoughts on goal one?

- There are states that have high in-state tuition. Can there be ways to offer lower tuition in cities where the in-state tuition is really high? I feel like there are opportunities outside of Arkansas.
- The Memphis area could be a good opportunity for recruitment.
- Are we marketing education, a degree, or getting a job? Are we marketing the college life, a piece of paper, or the end product?
- I'm looking at Poinsett County right to the south. These communities are close knit. Are there local alumni who could talk to people in these counties? I think it takes someone they know to reach them.
- Is there any sort of incentive for an alum to send their kids here? Like legacy tuition?
- The term legacy student is something I didn't hear until I talked with people elsewhere.
- Are we able to offer in-state tuition for more students?

- What I've noticed about this generation coming up is that they're...different. They want to see results.
- When you survey students, what do they expect from college?
- These days a college degree is not guaranteed to get you a job. I came here for convenience. If someone can get the training they need in 9 months, instead of 4 years, why should they come to college?

What are your thoughts on goal two?

- Trying to predict the needs of the future is a bad idea. The data still shows that a liberal arts education is very important.
- What do we do if demand changes and we have 19 extra tenured engineering professors?
- Who are we calling our consumers? It seems like we would have to actively divest in programs to invest in others. Divesting in things is a big risk.
- I think it's dangerous for programs where you can't make a direct link to the workforce.
- What are "programs?" The word future puts too much of a gap there. Maybe use the word emerging.
- There's a risk since we have workforce development in this state. We have programs that have more faculty than students. We need more linkage with our two year campuses.
- Are there other departments that have local advisory boards?
- I don't like how it's written. It seems very vague. Also, you already have signature programs, but the buildings are collapsing around them, is there a plan for that?
- What can we do for students who can't actively attend things like PAC preview days? What about taking it to them?

What are your thoughts on goal three?

- If the community and region is more livable, you'd increase goal one.
- Is Jonesboro a college town? What do we do to make it more of one?
- I've been here 21 years and it's much more of a college town than it used to be.
- I think Jonesboro really loves ASU. I think we need to do a better job of stepping out a little more.
- What does improve the community mean?
- I'd say if I was a student, I'd want an easier way to get downtown. You shouldn't have to drive to get there.
- We give unique experiences for an arts underserved region. There are all kinds of benefits to reaching out to the community.
- How do we get the community to come in?
- I reached out to a classical guitar student at a local high school and invited him to the classroom to immerse them in the college experience. We have to reach out to them.
- We don't need to limit it to Jonesboro.

Thoughts on goal four?

- I don't understand why you need 4 when you have 2.
- Instead of academic research maybe change it to innovation and discovery. That's what R1's do for us. I love the centers of excellence concept. We are already creating these things at a grass roots level.
- I don't know why industry and business is repeated so many times.

Thoughts on goal five?

- I think it's already working.
- The synergism of a new mascot changed everything.
- I think getting everybody's input on this process has started us on goal 5.
- I think that a couple of the goals are carried over from the old plan.
- There's one aspect of this which is branding, but the other aspect is have buildings that encourage it.
- I will defend sports, the football team at Boise State changed the whole campus.
- Let's define what learning is for these students because they don't know. Create@State is a great example of that.

Notetaker #3

Do you all think there is anything missing within the goals? Any suggestions?

- Even though we have these goals, we still haven't answered the question of who we are and who we want to be.
- We have a mission statement (e3), but we have lacked a vision. This is something a lot of groups have said: We need a clearer vision. As a product of the feedback, there is a plan for a vision to go along with the goals that are in the works.
- How we define who we are is based on the problems we see in the communities around us. Using whatever university resources we can, we need to be in our community's schools, as well. Perhaps an incentive program would be worth funding and resources.
- It is one thing to recruit a person, but what are we doing to enrich student experience once they are actually here? What can A-State do to keep students here and make the cost of a degree worthwhile?

Thoughts about recruitment as a goal?

- Could we look into giving more students in-state tuition as a recruitment tool? Many students do not want to go to schools in their home states because their in-state tuition is very high.
- That 2025 "cliff" of the birthrate is going to be nationwide, not specific to Arkansas.
- There has been a decline in Memphis-area students coming to school to A-State because Tennessee has become more generous with their scholarship opportunities.
- If we have alumni who are from the counties who have low percentages of degree-holding people go to schools and talk to students, it would be more compelling to hear from others like them to say that a college degree is worth it.

Is there any kind of incentive for legacy children?

- We have a lot of private scholarships for certain counties or communities, but sometimes they are very narrowly-defined. If we are passing out discounts, that can look irresponsible on our part.

- This upcoming generation is different. This group wants to see results.

Are we marketing education, a degree, or a job? How are we fulfilling what we are marketing? When you survey students, what are they wanting?

- How much aid/scholarships can I get, can I major in what I want, and what is campus like?
- We have to first find enough students to make that demand of wanting a job.
- A college degree doesn't guarantee a job these days. Why do I need to go?
- Predicting things that may happen seems like a bad idea. If it is a strategic plan, we need to be more specific and have less guesswork.
- The wording of goal two seems up in the air, because the demands of the workforce are always changing. Additionally, it sounds a bit closed-off and like we are "de-investing" in certain programs.
- What are "programs" in goal 2? Makes it seem like we just want to invest in programs we subjectively think are "good." Maybe consider changing "future" in goal 2 to "emerging" to make it sound more like something that is coming soon rather than something that is far-off. Would like to see there be more opportunities for students to have hands-on experience so that they are well-equipped for the workforce.
- Goal 2 sounds vague. We've got signature programs now, but the buildings are falling apart.
- We need to do a better job of taking "us" to "there." This is a great recruitment tool.

What do you think about goal 3? How do we achieve the goal of strengthening the university's role in the community?

- Having a nicer place to live and spend four years of college will greatly help in recruiting students. Jonesboro has become more of a "college town." But, there is still room for growth and room to become more of a college town.
- Jonesboro businesses promote A-State a lot. We know Jonesboro loves A-State. But it would be worthwhile to spend more time in surrounding communities that aren't so much in the Jonesboro scene.
- Would love to see more walking/biking trails and more places to park. Our current situation makes it more difficult to go out and enjoy Jonesboro.
- The kids in our community get a lot of opportunities from the school (ex. Juilliard musicians are coming in a few weeks to perform for Visual Performing Arts students). There are all kinds of benefits that will come when we invest in the community.

How can we get the community to come to us?

- There are certain students who feel out of place in their high schools. We can have these students come to campus as an "immersion" experience so they can see where they will fit in once they are out of school.
- We don't have a metric to credit the effort it takes to make things run on campus.

If we have goal 2, why do we need goal 4?

- Goal 4 serves a different idea.
- Academic "research" could be changed to "discovery." We absolutely need to invest in research and the concept of research centers is a great one.
- What if there was a center for some type of rural resources? This could really get us out into the Delta.

Improve A-State Spirit and Campus Culture...is this important?

- The mascot change already has worked wonders.
- The strategic planning has really brought A-State's community together and really does help our campus culture.
- Would love to see a campus culture of **learning**. Let's define to the students what learning is.