

## **Task Force Summer Report 2015 Flexible Pathways**

### **How often and for how long did your group meet over the summer? Was this adequate for the work you needed to do?**

The Flexible Pathways Task Force met as a group on May 29 for a five-hour meeting, and at this session subdivided itself into 3 subgroups for work during the summer of 2015.

1. The Two-Year College Subgroup met 5 times, 90 minutes each meeting. This was adequate for the development and presentation of a comprehensive recommendation for a two-year college.
2. The Online Courses Subgroup met three times, 1 hour each meeting. This group reports that it would have benefited from a better alignment with the other initiatives regarding online courses that seem to be happening simultaneously, and was also waiting during this period for the hiring of the new Chief Information Officer, in order to be in step with his charge.
3. Subgroup 3 Focusing on Integration of Academic Services met 5 times for a total of 10 hours and this was adequate for the group to make steady progress.

### **How much work were individual task force members responsible for between meetings?**

Individual task for members had a variable amount of work for which they were responsible, including research concerning two-year college models, examination of models and benchmarks in the area of academic services, and investigation of previous online course development efforts at UST.

### **What did/will the group accomplish this summer?**

1. The Two-Year college subgroup produced a comprehensive recommendation for the development of a two-year college.
2. The online courses subgroup drafted recommendations that are ready to be shared with the task force as a whole.
3. The academic services subgroup identified three possible models for coordination of services to enhance student success, learned about the variety of opportunities for applied learning among colleges and programs at St. Thomas, and explored questions about centralized and decentralized models for applied learning.

### **What are your goals for Fall 2015?**

1. The Two-Year College Subgroup intends to work with the president and provost for possible presentation of a recommendation to the board of trustees if the president decides to pursue this path and will work with the co-chairs of the strategic plan for possible presentation of those components of the two-year college proposal that would require approval from faculty for changes to the faculty handbook. We will also engage in more detailed planning of a curriculum plan for the two-year college if it is determined that the project should advance to the next stage of development.
2. The online courses subgroup plans to have its proposals approved during the fall by the Flexible Pathways Task Force and then for the proposals to advance to the next stage of development as appropriate depending upon the particular nature of each component of the proposals.
3. The academic services subgroup plans to generate criteria for evaluating models that include

benefits, feasibility, and value added to creating support for the mission of the flexible pathways task force; evaluate and propose models for coordination and collaboration among services at the undergraduate and graduate levels, including Career Development, Academic Counseling and Support, Tutoring services, Math Resource Center, Writing Center, and Disability resources. In the area of Applied Learning, the next goals are to explore the possibility of integrating a systematic for-credit opportunity for applied learning, consult with GALE and the Catholic Inspired Community Engagement task force to explore new programs and practices to create pathways into post-graduation opportunities.

4. In addition to the work initiated by the 3 subgroups during the summer of 2015, the Flexible Pathways Task Force will begin planning for new proposals to establish a higher-degree of flexibility for transfer credit meeting core and major field requirements at UST and will begin exploring new plans for a higher degree of coordination with local community colleges.

#### **What are your goals for Spring 2016?**

1. For Spring 2016, the Two-Year College subgroup will continue planning for curriculum, staffing, and facilities and will initiate steps necessary for the accreditation process.
2. The Online Courses subgroup will prepare approved proposals for implementation.
3. The academic services subgroup will consolidate its evaluation of models and propose a model for the improved integration of academic services and will prepare a proposal for the development of Applied Learning opportunities.
4. Proposals for improving flexibility for transfer courses to meet core and major field requirements will be presented to the appropriate governing bodies on campus and proposals for new levels of cooperation with community college will be prepared for consideration by the appropriate governing bodies on campus.

#### **Are there any resources your group feels you need to continue efficiently with your work?**

1. If institutional investment in the development of a two-year college moves forward, it might be necessary to hire a consultant or perhaps even a founding dean to take charge of moving the initiative forward, with the continuing extensive cooperation and support of the Flexible Pathways Task Force and other members of the community.
2. The Online Courses subgroup needs to be able to work in collaboration with other groups on campus that seem to be engaged in similar initiatives.
3. The Academic Services subgroup will need money to cover expense of holding noontime meetings, possible support developing and distributing surveys, and regular conversation and dialogue with other task forces.

#### **Do you plan on any meetings or Brown Bags with the UST community this Fall and/or academic year?**

There are plans for each subgroup to engage in such meetings and the Flexible Pathways Task Force will need to coordinate all of these plans.

#### **What other task force(s) do you feel it is important that you collaborate with going forward?**

The Educating for the Future Task Force, the Catholic Inspired Community Engagement Task Force, the Embracing our Differences and One Human Family Task Force, the Global Connections Task Force, and the Integrated Planning Task Force.