

Open Meeting

September 25, 2008

This reason that I'm doing this is to make sure that there are as many opportunities as possible for folks to understand the consequences of this new mission statement. And as we were talking back before, I understand this is sort of like a third strike kind of deal. In 2002 everyone hurried up and got ready because Kathleen Holcomb came through and we did all this stuff and it went away, and then Andy Dane came in and there was all this stuff about assessment that didn't get done and so now 5 ½ almost 6 years have passed. We now have to do a SACS mid-year review and Dr. Logan has been courageously swimming upstream trying to get this stuff implemented and I will give her all the credit that's due to get you all where you are at right now. But the fact that things are completely different are partially indicated by my position. There are not a lot of positions like this in the country and that's a credit to Dr. Rallo's insight that institutions are existing in such a time of turmoil that somebody has to more or less be keeping a eye on what is going on in the world around. Because I understand having been married to a member of the art faculty in my former institution, I have seen what her day is like. She does her class prep, she stays engaged with her discipline, she deals with student issues and the inevitable intrigue of the department, (and you can't tell me that that does not happen) grades papers, she goes home and she starts over again. So I understand that you have a great full and vibrant life in your discipline and profession. What happens is somebody has to step back and keep an eye on this and the fact that the world is so different now makes our discussion about a mission statement even more important. So the whole reason for today is to give your additional input, comment, and suggestions about the mission statement. What we are doing is recording all of it, transcribing it, and posting all the comments we have received over the last two weeks on the web, so that you will have a chance to see the raw data of what everyone has been saying. If you saw the e-mail I put out earlier today, there is a list of people that created the first set of mission, vision, and etc. I made the decision that for consistency sake since that group got together before hand it made sense to build on top of their expertise and I would have the accumulated knowledge of how we got to that point in the first place rather than starting over again. So if you have concerns about that, call me back privately. With that in mind the agenda is now yours. Ultimately we have to create a mission, vision and set of value statements to present to the Texas Tech Board of Regents. Then we have to do it.

Question: My concern is with the mission statement. My concern is the global perspective. In one of the e-mails you sent out it said, Every program we have, a new incurrence will be assessed based on its ability to have a global perspective. Is that right?

Dr. Limbaugh: There is a medium answer to that. If you go to what our new accreditation requirements say, it says the institutions often decrees programs in a body of coherent course of study compatible with its stated mission. If you look at the mission statement as written, what it says is that every student that comes to ASU will be given a course of study (because you as faculty have decided that globalism and a focus on collaborative leadership is important). With that end, curriculum will have to be changed. That doesn't mean that every course does it. What it ultimately means is that, cumulatively the curriculum is adjusted enough, for example in the core. The core is completely Eurocentric. There are no studies on culture, no studies on race,

gender, class, power, that kind of thing. The decisions will have to be made there. There may be places where ultimately you study “international plant systems” or something, but...

Group Comment: And that’s my point here. What we do in Biology is good at a regional and state level. We don’t have the resources to go to Mongolia to study native Venus fly traps. And health care for an example is a global issue but the courses that we teach are here and Angelo State is set up as regional institution and it is my concern that we are reaching beyond that.

Dr, Limbaugh: And the other issue is how do you define global perspective. Is it a social political definition, or is it a cultural definition. And that adds another layer to this discussion. Because if this mission statement is accepted, then we have to define what it means before we go any farther. If you look at the rest of the things like economic literacy, scientific literacy, what in fact does that mean? What does it mean to do collaborative leadership? And then how do you measure this stuff? I’ll use a story from Physical Therapy where they in their mission statement originally that they would create leaders in the field of physical education. When their accrediting team came in, they were asked quite simply, show me. How do you define leadership and how can you prove that their experience at ASU created leadership in their field. And they couldn’t. They ended up taking it out. If that one is kept for us, then first we would have to define it, but the broader issue is, is the Mission Statement appropriate for the resources and combination of faculty and the history of ASU and the direction you want to go. That is the larger question. The reason I keep saying you all, I exist to serve faculty/student interaction. We exist because of what you do. So ultimately that is why the bull’s eye thing that I drew has the mission statement in the middle and the strategic plan is actually out here, we can’t really do anything until after you all make a decision what the curricular focus is going to be. That drives the kind of publications and the kind of materials that the library collects, it drives how we set up information technology, and how facilities set it up. That is why I keep saying what do you all think that you as scholars are best suited to teach now and in the future. And then I will do whatever. I have accused of being brought in to push through the president’s mission statement. That is not true. I will do whatever you all decide. I was accused of writing it behind closed doors. That did not happen, because a couple of the members are here. So my job is to implement what you all think. Ultimately new initiatives are going to be based primarily on resources. Resource allocations are going to be based on support. If we are going to grow, we have to grow in a very smart and coordinated strategic manner. And we can’t do that until we decide as an institution and as a faculty member what is best.

Comment: I have drafted a mission statement, because I felt that my area was left out. We are a liberal arts institution. That’s what we do. Humanities and Social Sciences are left off. Professional studies appear in all departments, not just the business, and I feel that we are heavy on the business end and not liberal arts.

Dr. Limbaugh: I think the big difference between this one and the one written is that a mission statement is “what is” “what we are right now”, and what is being recommended here has merit. The question I have to faculty now is, “How do you prove all this?” Because an accreditation team will look at a mission statement and say “How”

Comment: The team will say, “show me in your course work how a student builds this mission statement, how you complete your mission statement and when that student graduates show me how that student acquired these skills. It is not that every course we teach has to do this, but the confidence/experience that student gains in five, six, seven years, however long it takes them to get through, have they accumulated and can you show me how they have been changed. Then you have fulfilled your mission statement. SACS will ask, show me how you did it.

Question: What about every department? Does every department have to do every part of it?

Comment: No, You just have to do your part of it. How will your department contribute to what the mission statement says. We have courses in every major that is for that major only. It may not fulfill a global perspective, but it has to have that basic information in order to be able to say they have acquired that body of knowledge that qualifies them. Where in the course work is it. It can be a single unit in that course that fulfills a global perspective, not an entire course that is doing it.

Question: Science is the same no matter where you go in the world. That is why I have a problem with global perspective.

Comment: The global perspective goes back to how you define it. You can approach it as an additive, you can just plug in a couple of cultural or global awareness courses or you can require it in every course in that capstone. And then in that capstone you have to prove how every student got that. Ultimately it's the accumulative education of the student. And as a faculty we have to watch and make sure that the students holistically will get this in their core and some departments are better (suited) than others. Students may get most of their globalism in their core, while you do the hard sciences. Not everybody has to do this all the time but just giving them the opportunity is a cop out. What happens if a student does not want to do it, and the faculty did not offer the opportunity in the first place. So we are back at square one.

Comment: Am I going to be able to call on you in two years, are you going to be here to say, “no you don't really have to teach global perspective in your chemistry class”. This global perspective scares me. We really don't have the resource in our department to do this.

Dr. Limbaugh: I plan on being here for awhile.

It will look at how you define globalism. It is what the students get at the end that is important. There is no expectation. I understand about the sciences. It depends on how you mix and match the curriculum as faculty to get to that global emphasis.

Discussion continued among all about how some departments are better equipped to handle parts of the draft mission statement than others. And about how something learned in one class could be used in another.

Dr. Limbaugh: The goal is that as as faculty if you want emphasis, there have to be adjustments. It doesn't mean you have to change your discipline to do it. You get at it as a combination of experiences.

Comment: My concern is that a very small percentage of students are going to have the opportunity to take advantage of the global perspective. A lot of money will go into a program that is going to serve a very small amount of students. I would much rather see that money go to a larger group of students. We are a regional teaching institution, we are good at that.

Dr. Limbaugh: The list of priorities was established before I got here. Our retention rate is one of the lowest in the state. My job is to make a more cohesive border out of that in the future.

Programs will be evaluated on a concept based on four decisions:

1. Am I going to grow it.?
2. Am I going to retain it?
3. Am I going to reduce it?
4. Am I going to get rid of it.?

That puts the academic plan squarely in the middle.

Discussion continued regarding different mission statements by different schools.

If we keep the current mission statement do you know what we would have to do? The curriculum would have to be retooled, assessed and fully in place in four years in order to meet SACS accreditation.

I think that if we as an institution have a passion about something and agree that it is important for our mission statement, we should implement it.