Planning Council
Open Forum
May 5, 2011

Opening Remarks – Dr. Jim Rimpau

Discussion

Mission Statement
Current statement is not prescriptive; what we should do? – Use active verbs, present and future tense.
Emphasize learning to think critically
"Integrating" seems to be the powerful word in this statement
Pushing out vs coming in, community involvement.
Lifelong learning for Montanans (Distance Education); replace "students" with "citizens"
Current mission statement leaves a lot to interpretation.
Missing communication piece – communicate knowledge
Engage society – citizenship, students sense obligation to give back
Should be campus specific (NWCCU) – Montana State University – Bozeman

Core Themes
Core #1
Very passive – Providing an environment that offers pathways. We work hard to give are students a quality education and experience.
Traditional v. non-traditional students
Core themes seem to undermine integrative part of the mission by breaking the activities apart
Who is the audience? – NWCCU or constituents? Presents an opportunity to remind the state that they could all be students in some form, but if the primary audience is NWCCU, that's less important
Why the slash for learning/living?
Some language from Core 2.0 Mission might be useful in statement here (general acclaim for this language):

> The mission of CORE 2.0 is to enhance students' use of multiple perspectives in making informed critical and ethical judgments in their personal, public, and professional lives through inquiry and research experiences.

Challenging and welcoming
Need to address diversity within the state. Should address cultural heritage, possibly as its own core theme.

Example: MSU engages in the dynamic nature of cultural diversity within our Montana community. Cultural attunement is constant communication, sensitivity to the dynamics of relationships within a community and respect for the values and beliefs of our cultures. It comes from the active and vigilant practice of maintaining cultural humility and represents active attention and ongoing mindfulness.
- General acclaim for language like this
- Emphasis on cultural attunement vs cultural competence
- Words like humility, active mindfulness were emphasized
- Measurable outcomes possible

Extend diversity to include international/global communities.
Expectation that our students and community will participate
Emphasize interdisciplinary teaching as well as research
Dissemination of knowledge
Transform is a good word to use from an organizational sociology standpoint – we transform inputs into outputs
Growth may serve as a substitute for transform in some way

Core #2
Need to emphasize that we are internationally renowned, that our students are competitive at highest levels, quality
Create and communicate knowledge (did not like disseminate)
Text in the parenthesis is the most important – focus on outputs, especially student growth
  - We grow, nurture, and develop students
  - It’s a partnership or collaboration; students are partners in their growth

Thinking of objectives and indicators might make crafting the statements easier, but must be careful not to value what you can measure rather than measuring what we value.

Core #3
Social Capital – creating synergies; individuals have human capital and communities have social capital
Collaboration sounds weak – need more active language, "active engagement"
Engage communities – two way relationship
Responsive to new needs – ‘adaptive’

Missing integration in the core themes.

Core #4
Assessment is driven by stewardship and is important – don’t neglect stewardship as a core theme
Sense of place is not just what the students and others get here, they take the concept wherever they go
Sustainability might be an overarching theme with branches in stewardship and sense of place
Sense of place important – this is the best environmental science lab in the world
Don’t want to limit place geographically
Geographers think about this in the following ways:
  - Location – Where are we? (absolute location; relative location)
  - What is it like there? (human characteristics; physical characteristics; their interaction)
  - Movement – How do people and things get from place to place
  - Regions – (What makes regions similar to or different from one another?)
  - Human Environment Interaction (How do humans and the environment affect each other.) This is sustainability because if we fail to make our interaction with our place sustainable (whole earth, region, mountain range, city, home) we will cease to exist
Place is an exceptionally important concept here
Perhaps talk about identity to encompass more than geographic location, gets to cultural attunement, etc.
Add Responsive to adaptive, entrepreneurial, list.
For many faculty, this is the least diverse place they have been. For many students, it is the most diverse place. Broadening sense of place to the state helps to remind us of this.
Missing integration piece