

SEM Meeting Minutes

Date: January 22, 2026

Time: 1:15 PM – 2:26 PM

Attendees: Sammie Pettitt, Melissa Rodriguez, Nick Velluzzi, Lori Peterson, Colleen Vandenoorn, Lindsey Williams, Tessa Kimball, Josh Slepkin, Rebecca Thorpe, Heather Markwalter, Allen Sutton

Absentees: Vince Ruzicka, Jennifer Clayton, Jenn Lopez, Christy Doyle

Facilitator: Lisa Chamberlin

Admin Support: Itzel Davison

Location: Main Building D102

Purpose of Meeting

The meeting focused on reviewing enrollment-related data tools, forecasting methodology, long-range enrollment and retention goals, and discussion of draft SEM strategies. The group also reviewed feedback on planning documents and identified areas for further exploration, refinement, and alignment with system-level allocation models.

Key Topics & Discussion

1. Enrollment Data & Address Methodology

- A preview was shared of an enrollment data tool that visualizes student geographic distribution.
- The tool is intended for long-range analysis rather than operational decision-making.
- A long-term goal is to identify late-starting students and analyze their success rates to better understand persistence and completion trends.
- Data updates flow from the central system and update automatically based on effective dates; previously stamped data in the warehouse remains unchanged.
- Distinction was clarified between operational data use and reporting/analysis functions.

2. Enrollment Forecasting Process

- The enrollment forecast used for budgeting follows a multi-stage process:

1. **Trend Analysis:** Historical enrollment trends are analyzed across multiple terms.
 2. **Distribution Review:** Forecasts are checked against traditional enrollment distribution patterns.
 3. **Preliminary Projection:** A baseline projection is generated.
 4. **Contextual Adjustment:** Leadership discusses external factors (state context, system trends, institutional conditions) to finalize the forecast.
- Early-term enrollment data may be incorporated to refine projections before finalization.
 - Supplemental spreadsheets are used to document anticipated changes, eliminations, and additions that may impact overall enrollment.
 - Past examples were referenced to illustrate how program changes can affect enrollment trends, emphasizing the need to distinguish between net growth and redistribution.

3. Allocation Model & System Context

- Enrollment planning must align closely with the system allocation model and state budget assumptions.
- Weekly enrollment monitoring occurs internally, though comparable real-time data from other institutions is not always available.
- Even when system-wide outcomes are shared, continued local enrollment growth remains beneficial.

4. Enrollment Trends & Recovery

- Enrollment continues to recover gradually from pandemic-era declines but has not yet returned to pre-pandemic levels.
- Recovery has been slower due to institutional context and regional demographics.
- Large, rapid enrollment increases are not expected; steady incremental growth is more realistic.

5. Draft SEM Goals & Aspirational Targets

- A draft aspirational growth target was included to prompt discussion rather than serve as a fixed decision.
- The group discussed balancing ambition with realism, ensuring goals are challenging yet achievable.
- Aspirational targets are intended to guide strategic conversations rather than dictate outcomes.

6. Academic Planning & Timeline

- A request was made for updated academic projections by the end of February.
- These projections will inform subsequent discussions and support budget-related decision-making.

7. Feedback on Draft SEM Document

- Feedback received from participants has been incorporated into the working draft.
- The document includes expandable sections to improve readability and usability.
- Goals are structured across multi-year phases: planning, implementation, review, and refinement.
- The intent is to acknowledge both new initiatives and existing work that aligns with SEM goals.

8. Scheduling, Entry Points & Student Progression

- Discussion highlighted how limited entry points can delay student progression and completion.
- These delays can negatively affect both student outcomes and funding metrics.
- Exploration of alternative scheduling models and earlier entry points was encouraged.

9. Modality, Access & Student Services

- Growth opportunities were identified in flexible modalities and scheduling.
- The group emphasized the importance of aligning student services availability with non-traditional and online student needs.
- Accessibility of advising, support services, and resources beyond standard hours was noted as a priority area.

10. Retention Strategy & Data Gaps

- Retention goals apply to the overall student population, not only new students.
- Improving retention may reduce the need for higher new enrollment targets.
- There is a need to strengthen retention-focused data, particularly beyond high-level dashboards.

11. Student Connectedness & Sense of Belonging

- Data from recent student feedback indicates that online students experience lower levels of connection and support.

- The concern centers on advising, guidance, and feeling supported rather than social engagement.
- While national data is limited, the issue is considered significant enough to warrant action.
- Pilot initiatives and exploratory approaches were recommended.

12. Infrastructure & External Factors

- Broader infrastructure considerations were raised, including housing and regional constraints.
- Notes were intentionally left open-ended to capture the concept for future refinement.

13. Emerging Opportunities & Market Signals

- Discussion included monitoring interest areas reflected through third-party online offerings.
- These data points may help identify emerging student demand and inform future program exploration.

Next Steps & Action Items

- Request updated academic projections by end of February.
- Continue refining SEM draft language based on feedback.
- Explore retention data enhancements and potential working group structure.
- Identify pilot opportunities related to scheduling flexibility, student services access, and student connectedness.
- Align SEM strategies with allocation model considerations and system-level planning.

Notes

- Program-specific references were intentionally omitted to maintain a strategic, institution-wide focus.
- Draft strategies remain open for discussion and refinement; no final decisions were made during this meeting.