

Meeting Minutes

Date: November 13, 2025

Time: 1:15 PM

Attendees: Sammie Petitt, Jennifer Clayton, Melissa Rodriguez, Nick Velluzzi, Lori Peterson, Christy Doyle, Colleen Vandenboom, Lindsey Williams, Tessa Kimball, Vince Ruzicka, Josh Selpin

Facilitator: Lisa Chamberlin

Location: Main Building D102

1. General Updates & Conference Takeaways

Overview:

- Members attended several sessions focused on **financial aid communication, transparency, and student access**.
- Discussions highlighted the importance of **timely financial aid information** and how delays impact students' ability to make informed decisions.
- Many institutions struggle with **clear, digestible communication** regarding cost of attendance and financial aid language.

Key Takeaways:

- **Transparency over legalese:** Present information in formats students can easily understand (e.g., simplified cost of attendance explanations).
- **AI in student support:** 48% of AI chatbot interactions occurred between 5 PM and 8 AM, showing strong demand for 24/7 services.
- **External data and partnerships:** Massachusetts' higher education model uses high school data and needs assessments to improve college transition outcomes.
- **Online learning retention:** Many institutions lack targeted goals and tracking mechanisms for online student retention and success.

2. Problem & Solution Discussions

Goal 1: Expanding Access

Problem Statement:

Traditional 8×5 schedules and centralized campus locations limit access for students with work, family, or geographic constraints.

Proposed Solutions:

- Increase programs that can be completed **fully online and asynchronously**.
- Ensure all **first-year distribution requirements** are available in online or hybrid formats.
- Consider **phasing out “bypass” schedules** to improve accessibility.

Goal 2: Increasing Entry Points for Students

Problem Statement:

Current program scheduling restricts flexibility for part-time students and those waiting for limited start dates.

Proposed Solutions:

- Conduct a **program and course-level scheduling review** to identify additional entry points throughout the year.
- Explore **multiple start times** for Workforce and Academic programs.
- Create opportunities for **part-time and nontraditional students** to start without delay.

Goal 3: Data-Informed Retention Strategies

Problem Statement:

Lack of coordinated data infrastructure limits understanding of student retention and progression.

Proposed Steps:

1. **Inventory existing data sources** (e.g., dashboards, reports) and identify gaps.
2. **Collaborate with data leads (Sammy, Josh, etc.)** to compile relevant retention data.
3. Use findings to develop a **comprehensive college-wide retention plan**.
4. Investigate **factors affecting retention**, including funding barriers, work demands, and sense of community.
5. Improve **communication and internal marketing** so students are aware of available resources.

Goal 4: Increasing FTE and Weighted Programming

Focus Areas:

- Develop **new certificate programs** that can be scaled as hybrid (part online, part in-person).
- Explore converting **under-enrolled programs** to hybrid delivery.
- Consider **weather and childcare impacts** for regional students (e.g., Tri-Cities, Dayton, Pomeroy).
- Investigate **stackable and pivot opportunities** for students—e.g., pathways between medical assisting and nursing programs.
- Examine **entry-level and pre-college opportunities** in partnership with WorkSource and high schools.

Goal 5: Strengthening Employer and Industry Partnerships

Discussion Points:

- Identify **key regional employers** and their workforce needs using comprehensive needs assessments and labor market projections.
- Develop **targeted programs** aligned with regional industry demand (e.g., managerial manufacturing or applied engineering).
- Pursue **public-private partnerships** for startup funding, paid internships, and scholarships.

- Explore **articulation agreements** with regional universities (e.g., Central Washington University) for seamless transfer pathways, including BAS to master's progression.
- Continue emphasizing **BAS programs** and their role in workforce alignment.

6. Program Viability & Future Planning

- There is a need for a **formal program viability review process** to evaluate sustainability and eliminate low-performing programs.
- Markets shift rapidly—data-driven reviews will help the college remain responsive and fiscally responsible.

7. External Factors & Emerging Considerations

- Ongoing discussions across **Oregon, Idaho, and Washington** about transitioning K–12 systems to a **four-day school week** may significantly impact college scheduling, childcare needs, and workforce development.
- Monitoring this policy trend will be critical for anticipating student availability and program adjustments.

8. Next Steps

1. Gather and synthesize existing retention and enrollment data.
2. Prioritize strategies that support **accessibility, flexibility, and retention**.
3. Identify **potential hybrid or online certificate programs** for pilot development.
4. Begin mapping **regional employer needs** and possible partnership opportunities.
5. Revisit **communication strategies** for both internal resource awareness and external marketing.
6. Develop a **program viability framework** to guide strategic decisions.

Adjournment

Meeting concluded with agreement to continue refining strategy drafts and align proposed actions with institutional goals at the next meeting.

Next Meeting: 12/11/2025 at 1:15 pm to 2:30 pm