

Citizens League
Higher Education Committee Notes
Friday May 21, 2004

I. Outcomes and Introductions

II. Higher Education Services Office

i. Presentation

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- I. Overview – see handouts, available on the web
 - a. Fairly decentralized higher ed system in MN
 - b. Enrollment is growing (across public and private)– women and students of color
 - c. 22,000 MN students go to WI schools through reciprocity system
 - d. Consistently a high-performing state
- II. Funding
 - a. Students facing higher tuitions, but also higher aid
 - b. Higher Education has fallen as compared to other areas (healthcare, etc.)
 - c. Fairly small part of overall budget
- III. Financial Aid programs
 - a. Grants (state)/ Pell Grants (federal)
 - b. Loans (state/federal)
 - c. Tax Credits (federal)
- IV. Role of HESO
 - a. In mid-90's staff was reduced by 1/3, oversight responsibilities cut
 - b. New opportunity with appointed cabinet level agency
 - c. Would like this committee to consider what role HESO should play
 - d. Currently:
 - i. Administration of loans and grants
 - ii. Approve, license financial aid programs
 - iii. Collect enrollment and aid data
 - iv. Oversee library services
 - v. Oversee telecommunications council (currently has sunsetted)

ii. Discussion/Questions

- I. Lacking formal or informal interaction between different higher ed institutions – this is a role that someone needs to play,
 - a. Higher Education Advisory Council (HEAC) has met over the years – head of all these groups are members of the council
- II. Do institutions that charge more get more aid?
- III. Decline in state funding is in absolute dollars?
- IV. What about students that cannot meet their minimum requirement?
 - a. Can be made up through work or work study, loans, or past savings
- V. Are there students that just can't make minimum – are we losing students?

- a. Sticker price can be shocking, but loan system does let you meet the minimum requirements

III. For-Profit Private Institutions

i. Minnesota Career Colleges (see handout/powerpoint on web)

ii. Capella University (see handout/powerpoint on the web)

- I. 11,000 enrolled, around 1,000 Minnesotans enrolled
- II. Online learning
 - a. Significant number of students are in the military (and submariners)
- III. Most students are over 25
- IV. Financial Aid
 - a. Participate in Fed. Pell Grant program
 - b. Just now ramping up undergrad level
 - c. Stafford loans in excess of \$100 million
 - d. People are funding their educations through loans
 - e. Veterans using veterans benefit
 - f. Military tuition assistance
 - g. MN SELF Loan
 - h. Corporate reimbursement
- V. Graduation stats
 - a. A little over 1,000 grads this year
- VI. “What we are”
 - a. Structured learning experience
 - b. Continually reinventing the learning experience
 - c. Because most students are working adults, most activity happens between 9pm and midnight
 - d. Expected growth to 1,000,000 students in online learning by 2010
- VII. Growing

Discussion

- I. Who are the for profit competitors?
 - a. University of Phoenix, Corinthian College – other for profit online schools
- II. How many students not in the United States?
 - a. Not a large contingent of international students (no infrastructure for international lending to pay tuition). Mainly from Canada.
 - b. US nationals living abroad
- III. How do you deal with library access?
 - a. Online library service. Research library at Duke University.
- IV. Who is faculty?
 - a. Vast majority are adjunct professors – teaching at other universities and contract with Capella to teach online
 - b. Developing a core faculty
 - c. Year of training for new faculty on teaching online
- V. Is there a time limit for graduation?
 - a. 7 year limit for doctoral degree

- i. Adult learners tend to move in and out of their learning experience
 - ii. Going to have to rethink the idea of time to completion limits
- VI. Success rate for completion?
 - a. Just starting to track this.
- VII. What percentage of students/graduates are Minnesotans?
 - a. 1,000 currently enrolled, about 10%
- VIII. What is the competitiveness of Capella degrees?
 - a. Anecdotal evidence that there is a difference – mission to correct this
- IX. Stereotypes against for-profit education by employers?
 - a. Bias directed more towards online degrees, not for-profit degree
- X. What is being done to work with the digital divide?
 - a. Difficult to participate without access to net
 - b. Assumed at first that everyone was working with high-speed Internet – had to address this by telling students what they need to have to participate
 - c. Not a lot of people that don't enroll because they can't get online
- XI. Keep in mind that one of the great advantages of college is being on campus and being around other students
 - a. This is not for everybody – some people can not learn online
 - b. Proactive assessment to determine whether the program is right for individuals
 - c. Significant group where this is the only option
- XII. What's the source of course material?
 - a. Developed at Capella by curriculum designers
- XIII. How transferable are credits to 4 year universities
 - a. Once you're online, tend to stay online – not much moving to traditional colleges
- XIV. What do we need to think about when considering the potential of online learning?
 - a. MCCA is limited by US Dept of Education to 50% online learning
- XV. What is cost to a student to get an online degree?
 - a. Comparable to a brick and mortar institution
- XVI. Certain kinds of learning that involves innovation and entrepreneurial thinking does require human interaction – is there a distinction or way of defining the extent of online learning?
 - a. Sense of community can be developed in an online course room
- XVII. What opportunities exist for direct interaction?
 - a. Mostly asynchronous interaction
- XVIII. What access is there to general learning?
 - a. For bachelors degrees 1/3 of learning is general learning
 - b. None for certificate degrees

Other Capella Information

--Slightly over 11,000 students, 26% ethnic minority, 60% women, serve military. 97% are over the age of 25. 1,000 students are in Minnesota.

--About 250,000 students enrolled in on-line now (nationally? internationally?), about 1 million estimated by 2010. Employee base is 660 people in DT Minneapolis, another 600 in adjunct faculty.

--Online learning is for everyone. It is not to replace on-campus experience. It is to give access to those who don't have it through traditional means.

--How transferable are credits? Haven't had a lot of pushback

--What is the cost to get degree on-line? It is comparable to a brick & mortar.

IV. Discussion and Next Steps

- i. Draft Outline of Final Report**
- ii. Subcommittees**
- iii. Next Meeting and Overall Process**

V. Evaluation

- I. More about the MN Learning Network and electronic library system
- II. Candace Campbell
- III. More info from "customer" rather than from the provider
 - a. Go to various student associations (MSUSA) or a panel of random students
- IV. More info on to what extent people are not going to college because of cost, or is it because they are unprepared coming out of high school
 - a. Bruce Vandal has good ideas for finding these studies
 - b. Just giving more money to these students may not be solving the problem
- V. Studies as to why students go online? Large numbers of non-traditional students that go online – what are the deciding factors?
 - a. MnSCU more students are actually supplementing with online learning
- VI. How much of non-traditional learning is re-tooling versus fulfilling first time degree?
 - a. MnSCU data
- VII. Credibility of group – worthwhile to give some thought to how we can add credibility to our report
- VIII. Don't forget to look at what's working and how that can be enhanced
- IX. U.S. is losing lead in terms of innovation and development. We do well in terms of mass marketplace if we just look at cost/benefit question, but lost out in terms of innovation. What is the real value of the different institutions/systems and differentiate between them.