

## Work Team 4 Report

### 1. Summary of the Process:

Work team 4 was comprised of the following members:

- Maria Kohnke
- Bill Rosser
- Jennifer Charrett
- Heidi Granger
- Joan Griffin
- Wyant Morton
- Susan Murphy
- Angela Naginey
- Dru Pagliassotti
- Chris Paul

The team met on: March 4, 22, April 11, 19, 28 and May 10.

The team was charged with investigating the following outcomes:

1. Determine parameters for growth. What capacity is necessary to support our enrollment/future enrollment?
2. Determine how we want to shape the student population over the next five years.
3. What initiatives would assist us in improving retention and graduation rates?

The team began by reviewing enrollment data, residence life data and retention data and capacity data. Chris Paul and Bill Rosser provided the residence life data. The primary source for the enrollment and retention data was the 2010-2011 Student Retention Report prepared by Angela Naginey and Cathy Alexander. The capacity study was used as the source for the capacity data.

In addition to reviewing data, the team also sought input from faculty and administrative areas. To solicit input, the team developed three general questions. Members of the work team met with Undergraduate Admission, Financial Aid, and Student Life. At those meetings the charge of the work team was discussed and the three questions from the committee were discussed. The responses from each group were summarized and report to the work team.

Faculty input was sought from the School of Management and the College of Arts and Science. The School of Management allowed time at one of their monthly faculty meetings for a discussion of the questions from Work Team 4. The attending members of the work team began by presenting the capacity data and presenting the charge of the team. The three questions were then presented and discussed by

the School of Management faculty. The responses were summarized and reported back to the work team.

Joan Griffin coordinated obtaining input from the College faculty. The capacity study data and the three questions were given to the four division chairs. The division chairs met with the faculty in their divisions to discuss the questions. An expanded version of the capacity data was presented at a College faculty meeting and the division chairs presented a summary of the discussions from their respective divisions. Notes were taken of the division chair presentations and some of the division chairs provided the minutes from their meetings. All of this information was given to the work team.

## **2. Summary of the Observations and Findings**

A number of major themes arose from the data and input reviewed by the work team. The first theme observed by the team, surrounded concerns related to the amount of growth the undergraduate population has experienced in recent years. The data demonstrates that the undergraduate student population has grown significantly over the last few years. However, the input received by the committee also indicates that both faculty and staff believe that there has not been a commensurate growth in faculty and support services to accommodate that growth. A clear message was sent to the committee that the faculty and some staff believe that the University has gone past its capacity to adequately serve our current number of undergraduate students. With the exception of the percent of courses taught by adjunct faculty, this belief that the University has reached its academic capacity does not appear to be supported by the capacity study data reviewed by the committee.

Input from both faculty and staff indicated that if the next strategic plan includes specific plans to continue growth of the undergraduate student body, it is important for the University to preserve the small college feel of the campus as it is now. In addition, the team received input that the faculty in particular feels that the recent growth in undergraduate enrollment was done at the expense of quality. The faculty strongly expressed the opinion that it would be better for undergraduate enrollment to stay flat and focus on increasing quality. Unfortunately, none of the input received by the committee defined either “small college feel” or “quality”. The data reviewed by the committee indicates that the quality of students has increased as the enrollment has increased.

The data reviewed by the committee indicates that the enrollment growth experienced in the undergraduate population was not evenly distributed among the majors. It appears that incoming students are focusing on those majors that they know have a clear path to employment after graduation. Consequently, some departments may be at capacity for their major(s) even though other departments or the University as whole are not.

One area where the University does appear to be close to capacity is in residence life. Strong support was expressed for preserving the University’s residential culture for undergraduate students. However concern was raised about

the possible consequences of further growth on the University's ability to accommodate additional numbers of students living on campus.

Finally concerns were raised regarding the role of advising in retention and graduation and the effects that recent growth has had on effective advising by faculty. There was also a commensurate concern regarding the trends related to the four and six year graduation rates.

### **3. Issues that arose that CLU needs to consider in the next strategic plan.**

The data and input revealed the following issues:

- There appears to be a lack of a generally accepted definition of enrollment capacity. Consequently, the recent undergraduate enrollment growth seems to lack a capacity context amongst the University community. This lack of a capacity context is complicated by a previous plan that set the maximum undergraduate enrollment size of 2200 students. Undergraduate enrollment did grow at a pace faster than what was set in the current strategic plan. Both have resulted in a perception that CLU cannot adequately meet its educational mission with an enrollment above 2200 students.
- The current strategic plan placed a priority on increasing salaries. However that decision compromised the ability to add faculty and staff at the rate necessary when the enrollment grew faster than planned. Even without a clear definition of capacity, it appears that there is a deficit in the faculty and support services needed to adequately support current or future undergraduate enrollment growth.
- Incoming students are choosing majors that have a clearly defined career path. While this decision is understandable, it has both practical and educational ramifications. Enrollment growth appears to disproportionately affect some academic departments more than others. In addition, students may not be choosing majors that more closely fit their vocation and passion because they want to ensure employment after graduation.
- Even modest growth in undergraduate enrollment can push the residence halls past capacity. If the University wishes to preserve its residential culture, capacity in the residence halls will need to be addressed.
- The four and six year graduation rates are a concern. The rates raise questions about the role of advising, the handling of undeclared students and transitioning transfer students into the academic life of the institution were also raised.

### **4. Areas that were not covered that still need to be addressed and why.**

The work team did not fully address only one area. Definitions of capacity, "small college feel" and quality all need to be clearly defined. The scope of these definitions requires a longer and broader discussion than the scope of this work team allowed.

## **5. Recommendations:**

3. Determine parameters for growth. What capacity is necessary to support our enrollment/future enrollment?

### **Recommendations:**

- Any future growth should be done in a way that preserves the small college feel of the campus as it is now. As such, future growth should be based on the University's current and anticipated future capacity. A task force or committee should be formed to establish the metrics necessary to determine that capacity. The metrics should include such items as the following:
  - Academic capacity measures such as those included in the capacity study completed earlier this year
  - Capacity in Residence Life
  - Support services
- Based on the input received by the committee, the University's faculty and support services have not increased at the rate necessary to meet the needs of the increased number of students the university has experienced the last few years. Faculty and support services indicate that they are challenged to provide the same level of service to increased numbers of students.. Therefore, the work team recommends that correcting this inadequacy should be a focus of the first few years of the next strategic plan.
- The work team recommends developing strategies to increase day-time classroom capacity. Specifically, reserving the 10:00 am hour on Wednesday prevents classes from being offered at that hour three days a week (MWF), a difference of about 40 classes and additional science labs. While the work team strongly supports the University's practice of having a dedicated time for Chapel, it is recommended that the possibility of adjusting the time for Chapel should be explored. It should be noted that the work team is not suggesting that the time for Chapel be shortened, but that the time be adjusted to one that is more convenient for students and faculty.

2. Determine how we want to shape the student population over the next 5 years.

### **Recommendations:**

- In its wide ranging highly inclusive conversations regarding the desired future direction for shaping the traditional undergraduate student populations of California Lutheran University, no significant demographic changes are recommended. Conversations with faculty and staff indicate general satisfaction with current student demographics. Current ratios of

gender, religious, racial, and ethnic diversity are deemed to be at appropriate and desirable levels. There was no expressed desire to become more national or international in our future traditional undergraduate student populations.

- It was the consensus of the groups and individuals contributing to this report that it is important to preserve the current residential culture of the traditional undergraduate (TUG) student population with a majority of TUG student residing on campus. The residence halls are currently very close to capacity while TUG continues to increase in enrollment. Currently, in addition to requiring all full time TUG students to reside on campus through their junior year, the University also has a long tradition of providing a room to every student who so requests. It may be necessary to consider eliminating the implied guarantee of the ability to live on campus.

It is recommended that the strategic plan include consideration of:

- Expanding residential capacity,
- Modifying residential policies and practices to reflect the intended outcome of providing a positive residential living learning environment,
- Continuing to efficiently operate the residential resources of the University at or near our operational capacities.
- The current growth in TUG student enrollment has not distributed evenly across the majors offered. The data reviewed seems to indicate that incoming students are choosing majors that have a clear connection to a job after graduation. It is recommended that every major should be linked to a career path. A marketing strategy that educates students of that link should be developed. In addition, the University should explore increasing internships and experiential learning that can help connect any major to an ultimate career path. The work team believes that this recommendation will help drive students to under populated majors regardless of growth in student enrollment.

3. What initiatives would assist us in improving retention and graduation rates?

#### **Recommendations:**

- The role of advising in retention and graduation should be explored further and methods of improvement determined. Guidelines should be established for the number of advisees per faculty and how those students should be assigned to advisors.
- Undeclared majors need a program and area where they receive help exploring majors. They also need to receive advising from Faculty who enjoy serving and helping students who are exploring. We should

consider whiter students should be required to declare a major by a certain time in their academic career.

- While CLU has a strong transfer orientation program focused, work still needs to be done to better transition transfer students into the academic culture of the institution (i.e. transfer student registration and advising).
- Improvements have been made in the first to second year retention rate. CLU now needs to explore a more concerted campus wide effort on graduation rates. Closer examination should be given to help students who retain, graduate in four years. A campus wide plan should be established to help students who leave CLU in their senior year finish their degrees.

## **6. Appendices:**

### **A. Discussion Questions developed by the work team:**

1. What should be the boundaries or guidelines for managing the growth of the undergraduate student population? Since the current enrollment growth has affected some majors more than others, should the boundaries/guidelines be different by major?
2. Currently CLU requires all full-time UG students to reside on campus through their junior year. Additionally, CLU enjoys a long tradition of providing a bed in the residence halls to every student who would like to live in the residence halls. The residence halls are currently very close to capacity. One option to accommodate future enrollment growth is to drop the guarantee to live in the residence halls. What are the pros and cons of such a decision?
3. What initiatives would assist us in improving retention and graduation rates?

### **B. 2010-2011 Student Retention Report: located at**

<http://www.callutheran.edu/assessment/dw/StudentRetentionReport.php>