Minutes of QEP Committee – 3/20/17 meeting

      I.   Presentations of three QEP proposals

Dr. Mann opened the session by emphasizing that the three proposals submitted for review to the Committee were only quick outlines of potential programs that the university could develop into a QEP. Dr. Mann informed the Committee that after the three presentations, each member would be requested to provide information and suggestions on how to refine and develop the proposed sketches.

- **Rethinking Information for Student Engagement (RISE)** - Presented by Mrs. Ravey.
  RISE focuses on technology in the classroom with interaction built into it, attempting to hold the attention of students and making the classes more universal. The proposal is two-fold. Part of RISE is to rethink our coursework and its delivery, as well as, to implement a video library.
    - The principle behind RISE stems from a trend of thought in current Higher Ed that advocates moving from a lecture infrastructure to a learning infrastructure to better retain and educate our students. To sustain this effort, Lamar Educational Opportunities (LEO), would offer the services of universal design instructors in all departments.
    - The second prong of RISE would be to create a Network for Engaging Students through Technology (NEST), a sustainable database of centralized workshops (comparable to Khan Academy), embedded in Blackboard. NEST would supplement courses by offering short interactive videos. NEST stems from the concept to "press pause button and rewind on learning" (flipped classroom model). On the same token, the library could centralize some of the information for instructors as well.
- **Mainstreaming/Pathways** - Presented by Dr. Bartlett.
  This proposal is based on university data which reveals that a large number of our students are underprepared. It also coincides with a nationwide momentum.
  According to our IRR snapshot for the Fall 16 cohort, 500 of the first time freshmen were not college level ready in math, and 250 students were reading or writing restricted. 44% of the students that were restricted in math placed in mid-level remediation courses (CRMA0371). The university offers three different levels of pre-college math courses.
  Based on our snapshot, focus is on math in the proposal, but mainstreaming should also be implemented in other Texas Success Initiative (TSI) areas of deficiency (reading and writing). This Fall, the English department will offer mainstream Composition I options to students that did not meet the TSI standard by embedding CWRT0371 foundations in the curriculum. Each class will be capped at 25. 15 students will be TSI complete and 10 students will be TSI restricted in writing. Mixing at-risk students to exposure with students that are better prepared is one of the mainstreaming best principles. Our Math department is currently running a pilot of mainstream courses this spring by offering an additional hour lab component to MATH1314.
  Mainstreaming has the potential to impact directly a large percentage of student body by reducing time to graduation as well as cost of studies, and would also by default improve our retention.
  Our institution is built on a model of college algebra as the default gateway math course, remediation is built to that end, and degree plans are mostly based on that. Fine Arts students should have better alternatives, a math course that would be more suitable to their degree. The program should define appropriate math pathways for the incoming students accordingly to

their majors. Pathways would enable the university to build a more sustainable and effective support system offering a mainstream option to each track.

- **Cardinal Communities** – Presented by Dr. Mann
  Learning Community (LC) has strong history in retention intervention. It is one of the high impact practices in higher education, facilitating learning outside of the classroom and encouraging interactions with faculty and students. LU is a particularly good target for LC: low income students, large population of first generation students and commuter students.
  The LC program has been implemented on campus since 2003 but its impact was limited due to the budget. Additionally, in Fall 2015, the Freshman Interest Group (FIG) was launched. However none of the programs were fully implemented. According to Tinto, the LC is one of the most effective tools that can be used toward retention if fully implemented (i.e. LC connected courses with an integrative curriculum).
  At LU, students are currently scheduled together in classes and attend their LC meetings outside of class. This model deviates from best practices that suggest that LCs integrate learning across courses and to involve student with related co-curricular activities. The goal is to support a deeper learning by reinforcing communication and interactions between professors and students.
  The proposal would phase in this traditional model in several stages on campus. To implement the CCs in a sustainable fashion it would require that faculty get release-time to participate in the program. The CCs would also be researched focused and faculty will have the opportunity to write articles.

  II.   Feedback

Dr. Mann provided the Committee with feedback sheets requesting information on five different aspects inspired by the QEP scoring matrix (student impact – change LU – student engagement – degree completion – mission statement).