

SEM Summit 2009

“Partnering to Harmonize Enrolment Management”

The Sutton Place Hotel

Vancouver, BC

May 13 to 15, 2009

Strategic Enrolment Management in Canada

Thursday, May 14, 2009

8:30 am – 9:15 am Introductions and Framing our Summit Discussions

Susan Gottheil, Associate Vice-President, Enrolment Management, Mount Royal College

Clayton Smith, Vice-Provost, Students & Registrar, University of Windsor

Notes

- Opening and introductions
- Encouraged active participation, discussion, engagement and contributions
- Definition of SEM as a concept and process that is clear, purposeful, efficient and continuous
- SEM enables the fulfillment of institutional mission and student’s educational goals
- SEM flows from a sound strategic plan; flows from the budget in a data rich environment to inform and produce action
- The notion of institutional differentiation is the heart of SEM; ranking in Canadian post-secondary institutions do not necessarily play out in the same way
- SEM perspective: focus throughout the life cycle of students; data included in an institutional infrastructure and grounded in the institution’s mission
- Enrolment funnel described as not just one funnel, rather there is a different funnel for every type of student
- Outlined major SEM components
- History and emergence of SEM in Canada
- Stressed the importance of partnering
- What do we really know? The literature states that SEM is great but is it really true?
- How do we massage the funnel to meet the needs of a diverse student population?
- Participation and integration is the most important factor at both 4 year and 2 year public institutions in sustaining long-term success.
- Noted the significance of both horizontal and vertical integration; pay attention to integration and collaboration.
- To be truly competitive we must go beyond and engage in collaborative dialogue; need to get out of our comfort zone and go beyond; move beyond silos
- Guiding principles – SEM ethos is shared, integrated; focused on services to students, faculty and all employees; accountability; research and evaluation; long term planning; minimum of a 5 year plan is strongly recommended; research in advanced

Discussions and Questions

Tom Steele, University of Saskatchewan

- What is the role of faculty? What is the role of students?

Clayton Smith, University of Windsor

- There is a need to impact the culture of the institution. To impact you need to infiltrate the departments, faculty, student population and administration.
- We found what was most effective was to establish and build trust and partnerships in person 'on the ground'. The role of mentoring students and reaching students is much more complicated. What worked were dialogue with instructors and in the classrooms. It is about student engagement, not retention; not persistence but ways to engage students to reach them.

Susan Gottheil, Mount Royal College

- Train students to interview students
- Action oriented
- The framework adopted at Mount Royal was to engage and talk to students to change their experiences
- Recommended reading – Making the Most of College: Students Speak Their Minds, Richard J. Light
- Raised the question, How do we engage students?

Thursday, May 14, 2009

9:15 am – 10:30 am Tying SEM to Institutional Strategic & Budget Planning (partnerships with administration)

Bob Bontrager, Director, AACRAO Consulting/ SEM Conference

Ernie Barber, Vice-Provost, Teaching and Learning, University of Saskatchewan

Notes

Bob Bontrager

- SEM Plan: 'the holy grail' a plan that somewhat guides everything; however, in reality there are many challenges
- SEM plan can be comprehensive to a fault
- Individuals on the peripherals will get lost
- Focus becomes on creating the plan rather than actually doing something and getting it done
- Changing the paradigm by focusing on what really matters
- Extending the planning horizon away from short-term focus to a long term plan; proactive
- Necessary to do our 'homework' and take a detailed approach
- Hold ourselves accountable
- Creating a SEM decision package is an alternate to a traditional SEM plan
- Identify specific enrolment goals; have the conversations
- Identify enrolment measurements and measureable outcomes; examine recruitment and retention; consider the infrastructure (ie Banner upgrades); go beyond enrolment service units; need a recruitment strategy and a recruiter who can relate to senior management
- Include areas not necessarily within the department but understand the importance of including other areas as allies
- Enrolment outcomes: understand along the way as a decision maker what it would take to get you there; understand the full implications over time with specific dollar outcomes and enrolment outcomes

- Create reinvestment strategies
- Enrolment, gross revenue, net revenue
- Be disciplined about how you invest and reinvest
- It was helpful that the budget director was beside Bob Bontrager as the lead presenter driving the whole process

Ernie Barber

- Mature, robust planning functions
- There are existing challenges, but believes a good SEM framework is in place
- Enrolment goals must be clear; foundation documents reviewed
- Goals at the institutional level also need to be owned by the individual units
- More work is needed to talk to individual faculty
- Believes that there is a need to implement a comprehensive set of academic policies and procedures
- Policies and procedures need to be readily accessible and available
- More work related to implementation
- Often an integrated plan is written as if they were commitments requiring several efforts
- Commitment leaders led progress; co-commitment leaders working with leaders
- An institution should always fund its own priorities including prioritization with individual units or 'learning communities'
- The Provost at the institution asked Eric and a team to lead a SEM plan: establish priorities, identify gaps and coordinate a continued focus and commitment
- Administration units need to recognize that there are leaders and co leaders
- Faculty need to recognize the function of leaders: a) serve b) stewardship c) leadership

Discussion and Questions

- What about the 'right' sizing? How big do we really want to be?
- Attention to the 'right size' and the 'right shape'
- When do you make decisions about programs that are not performing?
- Discussion about making those decisions within the institutional mandate
- Pay attention to the programs that are vital to the institution

Dalhousie University

- It can be a tricky as there is a diverse range of academic programs. The institution offers a range with the exception of veterinary medicine and optometry. It is important to focus on depth and quality.

Susan Gottheil, Mount Royal College

- Colleges have traditionally been more successful at eliminating programs than universities.
- University of Saskatchewan: How important is it for faculty to realize that there is a connection?
- University of British Columbia: Enrolment management involves looking at the enrolment figures and budget over three years and adjustments are made on the margins.
- Thompson Rivers University: from a Dean's perspective one goal is to look at an interdisciplinary approach and trying to untangle how to manage SEM effectively. Most institutions take the big picture or global but not emphasize one department or faculty (ie. School of Business)
- There is a need to balance the programs and look at the budget planning process
- Clayton Smith, University of Windsor: introducing scholarship programs in the departments that are undersubscribed courses which ensured greater chances of success.

- Coupled with a work opportunity within the department and supervision by a faculty member resulted in a demographic mix of students and changed how the faculty felt
- Shifting resources also shifted the 'culture' of the department

Dalhousie University: What are we doing at the front end with hiring faculty? How is it integrated?

Susan Gottheil, Mount Royal College

- Believes that most younger faculty do want to participate in scholarly research and engage students in their classrooms; there is a slow shift

Thursday, May 14, 2009

10:45 am to 12:00 pm - Partnering with Faculty

Johanne Morneau, Adjointe au Vice-Recteur, Université de Laval

Blaine Jensen, Vice-President Educational Services, Douglas College

Notes

Johanne:

- Introduction and History of Université de Laval
- Findings and Issues: enrolment will rise until 2011 then decline ten years later; lots of existing data, but little strategic vision
- A New Vision: SEM training day at the university included faculty, management and deans
- Explained SEM concept and process
- VREAL – merger between two vice rectorships; recruitment, international and placement studies

Initiatives – December 2008

- improve university image; improve attractiveness of programs; focus on monitoring and innovation; recruitment for specific regions; set up activities in partnership countries; data and monitoring tool; simplify and shorten admission application process; provide various support initiatives (note-taking, time management, stress management, critical reading); improve information about available financial support and bursaries; student mentorship, internships and alumni development

Initiatives – February to March 2009

- Faculty tour led by university management
- Faculty ties present priority projects to management
- Outline faculty niches' of excellence
- Opportunity for discussion

Initiatives – April to May 2009 (next steps)

- Bolster SEM capacity of the university and its faculties based on the university action plan
- Create a SEM committee
- Change the 'talk about' SEM not as recruitment but comprehensive
- Analyze continuation and graduation data
- Support success assistance initiatives
- Conclusion: raise awareness of SEM approach; more influence on student enrolments
- Evaluation and diagnosis phase ongoing

Discussions and Questions

Thread of Engaging faculty members

Blaine Jensen, Douglas College

- Enrolment management plan traditionally culturally sensitive, targets, structure, purposeful; most engage faculty members
- Small information sessions with faculty and undecided students effective
- Invited outside organizations and professionals to information sessions
- Collaboration successful as more students have signed up for information sessions
- Necessary to engage faculty to SEM process
- Barriers that exist were because faculty were not engaged in the process

Susan Gottheil, Mount Royal College

- Traditionally SEM is a top to bottom approach, but there is a definite shift (ie faculty demanded Senate to increase the grade point average requirement)
- Previously at many institutions they are not able to answer what is the 1st and 2nd year retention rates; now we are able to quantify, track and pay more attention to data

Thread of first year 'slaughter'

Carlton University

- Academic improvement plan; early warning triggers are pilot projects that are now university wide
- It takes 2 to 3 years to bring faculty members on board with initiatives

Robert Buller, Douglas College

- It takes a while to turn faculty around from weeding students out to engaging students
- Their job is now to turn them on to looking at grade distributions and pairing data with withdrawal rates

Clayton Smith, University of Windsor

- Retention to some faculty is a negative connotation
- How successful were we with the students we had?
- We need to measure their successes not just because they're here
- Be careful and mindful of the vocabulary we use
- Find out what is important to younger faculty
- We need to help faculty to get their research record on track and invest in our own people
- Find ways to engage in human talent

Asa Kachan, Dalhousie University

- Introduced early warning systems – grade book; email automatically generated; phone calls made

Discussion about centralized marketing and communications

- Marketing and communications specialists assigned to work collaboratively to market and promote faculty and departments
- Engage faculty early in the process; demonstrate the increase in numbers
- Establish and build relationships

Thursday, May 14, 2009

1:00 pm to 2:30 pm – Partnering with the Student Affairs Community

Jody Gordon, Associate Vice-President, Student Services & registrar, Kwantlen Polytechnic University

Asa Kachan, Assistant Vice-President, Enrolment Management, Dalhousie University

Challenges and opportunities

All encouraged to discuss the questions posed

- a) Have the methods and processes for service delivery changed in the last 10 years?
- b) Are the staff tasks aligned with any department goals?

- c) Is the division experiencing low morale, burnout and fear of change?
- d) Is the institution meeting its enrolment objective?

Table 1 –

- Discussed collaboration and structures that are challenging to define
- What is the likelihood of stressing individuals out?
- “I’ll collaborate until I win”

Table 2 –

- Unless all enrolment pieces and units are under one umbrella then they can’t share the same mission
- Collaboration and competitive challenge to find a common ground
- A common language is necessary

Table 3 –

- Connections across departments; both horizontally and vertically
- Communication and relationships
- Organizational structure: less reliance, but more about collaborative model
- Relationships: relationship building; providing opportunities for discussion needed

Table 4 –

Communication theme

- Discussion about the computer system; the uses and reliance on technology takes away from the human perspective
- Changing the culture for developing trust and building relationships

Jody Gordon, Kwantlen Polytechnic University

- Support the institution being more successful at doing what they are suppose to do
- Outcome improvement for the entire life cycle
- Broaden our definition of what makes a student ‘successful’ (ie for one student it may be about being able to afford a textbook for the semester; for another student it may be about completing their academic semester successfully and for another it may be about completing their program)
- Retention overview
- Discussed targeted intervention initiatives (ie Academic Boost Camp, Early Alert Systems, Supplemental Instruction)

Asa Kachan, Dalhousie University

- Cyclical nature of recruitment
- Recruitment efforts may already have key people at the institution; they need to step in at the right point
- Engaging where and when it is appropriate
- The right ‘fit’ or person

Discussion

Table 1 –

- Senior level support to build synergy and build relationships
- Organizational structures that is grouping clusters together
- Help to build synergy

Table 2 –

- Same concepts discussed by Jody Gordon have been adopted at their institution
- It is not necessary to introduce it to all as a new concept
- Consider the advantages and disadvantages of introducing SEM initiatives

Table 3 –

- Informal structures that connect an academic department and student services

Table 4 –

- Breaking down the silos

Thursday, May 14, 2009

2:25 pm to 4:15 pm – Partnering with Under-served/ Under-represented Student Population Service Providers

David Hannah, Associate Vice-President, Student & Enrolment Services, University of Saskatchewan

Susan Gottheil, Associate Vice-President, Enrolment Management, Mount Royal College

Clayton Smith, Vice-Provost, Students & Registrar, University of Windsor

Notes

- History and overview of the aboriginal population
- Barriers include financial, lack of academic preparation, low secondary school grades, gaps in training, geographical, lack of role models, unrealistic or lack of aspirations
- Attrition factors discussed
- A lesson learned is that access and success should not be targeted in isolation
- Each group has unique needs
- Many of the same access barriers are the same success barriers
- Engagement in student life and a connection to the institution

David Hannah and Tom, University of Saskatchewan

- University administrators do not have all the answers nor do they profess to have the magic bullet answer to challenges
- Issues related to aboriginals is one of top three agenda items for the University
- Moral and ethical obligation to serve the aboriginal population as there is an increase of 10% of the undergraduate population
- Retention rates lag behind other student population
- Demographic shift
- Campus wide focus on retention and providing support services
- New Aboriginal Centre developed on paper but waiting for funding
- Temporary space is visually appealing which is an improvement over the past
- Some institutional barriers starting to break down (i.e. partnership with the Faculty of Arts/ Science)
- Infusion of new resources (both internal and external) means that there are more faculty and staff dedicated to the Aboriginal student population
- University President supports initiatives resulting in top to bottom approach
- New resources enable proactive planning
- Aboriginal Student Achievement Model: principles and goals (refer to power point slides/ diagram)
- Model informed by Tinto's theory
- Sense of belonging and information sharing between institutional and bands is essential because they hold the funding for band members
- In weekly contact with approximately 1/3 of the bands in the region
- Specialized orientation program for Aboriginals
- University President holds a reception in his home in addition to a banquet at the University
- Dedicated Aboriginal Advisor and Aboriginal Recruiter

- Student support services include: life skills coaching, elder services, soup/ bannock served weekly, cultural camp, elder and spiritual component honoured

Academic Component

- Three components of the strategy beginning with the Summer Transition Program before the Fall semester; small classes of approximately 25 students
- Similar services are provided in the main academic semesters; however, do not want to undermine their goals during the summer semester
- Next phase was to introduce the Math/ Science enrichment program emphasizing a small cohort based courses and training
- Focus on Math/ Chemistry and Biology as pathways to professional sciences
- Split credit load of science courses over two semesters were more manageable
- Funding provided by the Crown Investment Corporation (CIC) for initiatives

Lessons Learned

- Summer transition/enrichment program has grown with support and partnerships with the Student Enrolment division, faculty, Aboriginal Centre and the Aboriginal bands in the region
- Challenges with communication and recruitment
- Communicating the value of the summer enrichment program
- Recruitment and retention challenges persist but there is more movement towards providing professional services

Discussion and Questions

- Approximately 70% of Aboriginal population do not reside in bands
- Some Aboriginal population difficult to identify
- Working with Elders is a good approach
- Building relationships through scholarship programs
- Secondary program camps with emphasis on post-secondary transition (i.e. Super Saturday and Summer Experience)
- Pathways to Education started in Ontario targeted low income students in middle school
- Funding provided by a private organization was successful; role models present
- Evaluation and assessment to measure 'success'
- Replicated in approximately five different areas in Canada

University of Fraser Valley

- Certificate program in Carving offers both cultural and spiritual component has been successful
- Program is connected to the Fine Arts department
- Graduation ceremony capped the end of the program
- Successful family focused event

Vancouver Community College

- Recognizes that the University of Saskatchewan initiatives is grounded in solid academic theory

University of Manitoba

- Described the Aboriginal House (tag line 'Join the Circle'); non Aboriginals invited and encouraged
- Share some of the same issues, challenges and needs for their Aboriginal student population

University of Saskatchewan

- What works is bringing some of the student support services to the Aboriginal Centre
- Aboriginal faculty is important to the equation

University of Windsor

- Many of the post-secondary institutions started with Native Studies
- Today there is more recognition of developing new programs and services

Douglas College

- How does the SEM fit within the University of Saskatchewan model?
- Conceptually, how does it connect to SEM?

Response to the question addressed from the group

Many connections to SEM with some work in progress

Friday, May 15, 2009

8:30 am to 10:00 am – Partnering with our Institutional Research/Analysis Colleagues

David Johnston, Associate Vice-President, (Enrolment) & Registrar, University of Calgary

Warren Stokes, Director, Enrolment Support and Retention, Kwantlen Polytechnic University

Notes

- Formative/ operational reporting versus summative/ analytical reporting
- Duality and dependency
- Who requests data? Which version is correct? How is the information used?
- Maintaining the relationships
- Regular meetings between the stakeholders
- Getting our minds around that data should not really match
- Operationalizing the data
- Snapshot at anytime telling a correct 'story'
- Not all data was in Banner
- Staff wanting to maintain their Excel spreadsheet
- Goal is to get data into one centralized location

A windshield view of data

A rearview mirror – what happened; counting the past to inform the present; static; counts activity

A windshield view – what will happen

The idea of moving the institution towards a windshield model

Looking forward by looking back

Looking forward by predicting

Changing infrastructure and operational business process to an 'instant' reporting model

How many institutions have a dynamic 'dashboard'?

David Johnston, University of Calgary

- Usually we have large amounts of data; often little usable information
- Can we partner with the institutional research office?
- Institutional research offices – analytical, data focused, data rich, technical knowledge, university perspective, looking for new challenges
- Strategic key institutional asset to be shared and used, not hoarded and hidden
- Need to overcome silos and perceptions of ownership
- Most understand demographic data

- Need to plan enrolment around current and future external environment
- Historical data can be useful
- Future perspective is invaluable
- Information for forecasting and predicting –
- Need the ability to forecast for admission to meet institutional enrolment objectives
- Need to predict modeling for retention, institutional and programs
- Need to understand optimal size
- Using information to support communication
- Develop segmented information to create targeted strategic communication
- Still a role for mass email, but communication more closely related to personal interests is more effective
- Students don't like to get mass emails unless it is relevant and it is of personal interest
- Internal and external reporting –
- Internal reporting to customers
- External reporting to funding sources
- We need to be the ones that set the definitions
- Issues –
- Competitive environment
- Cost of tools
- Need for technical assistance
- Insatiable demand
- What is on the horizon?
- Table exercise for discussion –
- Discuss data and information support structures and report back on good or interesting practices
- What kind of structure are working and what are not?
- Is there a way to bring together common definitions?

Jody Gordon, Kwantlen Polytechnic University

Raised the point that it took 1.5 years to define 'applicant' and 'qualified applicant' (i.e. Nursing/ Carpentry)

Discussions

- Discussion about Excel spreadsheets tend not to be shared; data handled from a spreadsheet compiled by one individual can also be misinterpreted and miscommunicated
- Excel spreadsheets are not a poor way of collecting information; rather it is the user that might not share, interpret and communicate the information accurately

Table 1 -

- The challenge of 1 to 2 individuals at many institutions handling data
- It can take a while to get the information
- Recommend looking at data institution wide
- Training – the knowledge is held by a few key individuals; often institutions do not have the time and/or resources to spread the information in systematic ways and disperse knowledge

Table 2 –

- Who decides the priorities of what information should be the priority for the institution?
- Few institutions have the Institutional Research within the Registrar's Office

Table 3 –

- Who sets the priorities if you don't have control over those priorities?
- Collaboration and partnerships set by a committee that meets regularly
- Data and information is the key and core of SEM

Table 4 –

- What is the data really going to be used for?
- Do they really take the information to change behaviours?
- It can be a tricky balance
- How will it better their practice?
- Let us look at the data and be strategic
- Departments and faculty members might not always know what they would like to do with the information

Table 5 –

- The definition of 'access'
- Data should not be in silos or protected
- When people want data sometimes they go directly to the systems folks; however, technical individuals without background information may pull the incorrect information

University of Calgary

- Data warehouse team providing a dashboard approach; web based where some historical data is stored

Douglas College

- How often do you refresh? It's not possible to work with live data
- Ask the questions
- Tell me what you are trying to do
- There needs to be some rules about who is allowed to ask or what information they need
- We need to partner and develop capacity

Table 6 –

- Who should have access to admission data?
- Perhaps it should be summary data
- Transparency is great, but the responsible use is important and getting the job done

Carlton University

- Setting controls and letting data collection know who and what should be accessed
- Set protocols

Friday, May 15, 2009

10:30 am to 11:15 am – Putting it Together: Implementing Collaborative Dialogue on our Campuses

Stefanie Ivan, Registrar, Grant MacEwan College

Jody Gordon, Associate Vice-President, Student Services & Registrar, Kwantlen Polytechnic University

Notes

Examine what your institution is committed to sustaining

Optimize chances for student success

Questions for table discussion

What works at your institution and what doesn't that furthers the SEM structure?

Are you including the right individuals?

Are you influencing the right individuals?

What resources put forward by the institution have made it successful/ unsuccessful (human, structural, financial...)

What is an example of best practice from your group?

University of the Fraser Valley

- Enrolment management committee comprise of academic deans; faculty and directors
- Do they manage numbers or just monitor?
- Reducing and examining
- Raising issues

University of British Columbia

- Discussion versus questions
- Ability to make decisions

Douglas College

- A model borrowed from Seneca College
- Five different goal groups handle targeted areas
- Goal groups feed into the SEM plan

Discussion

University of Saskatchewan

- Matrix model
- Identify key themes they want to move forward
- Complex tasks
- Planning process identified
- Challenge is how to coordinate initiatives
- Organic movements beginning at the front line or 'touch' base level

Jody Gordon, Kwantlen Polytechnic University

- Change and synergy that happens is a movement towards a bigger group
- Sometimes changing organizational structures allow for partnerships and collaboration
- Increase in expertise to draw upon
- Institutional and student gains or benefits

Table 1 –

- Resources available in the background
- Importance of composition of working teams and their good will
- Volunteer aspect – some are giving their time towards initiatives
- Identified the problem of constantly drawing on the same individuals
- Having a good blend of individuals may help to increase the level of commitment
- Some trends at institutions would be that more funding and planning is readily available
- Need the structure to drive SEM home
- Need financial support

Table 2 –

- Pay attention to the cultures or subgroups
- How do we reach them?
- How do we organize ourselves from a power perspective towards a more 'move' culture?
- Institutions are moving beyond traditional models

Table 3 –

People have a range of responsibilities in their portfolio

We are in a state of flux and that's exciting

Table 4 –

- Emph
- What are the advantages? What are the disadvantages?

Clayton Smith, University of Windsor

- At our institution we make efforts to predict who is likely to leave before they even arrive.

University of British Columbia

- Perhaps we need to change our mind set and not compete for the same students but let them grow and complete four years at their regional college before entering graduate school
- Look at the mobility issues to allow them to carry on from one institution to another
- Let's not grow but manage the right numbers, the right student population and the right mix of programs

British Columbia Institute of Technology

- Theme of 'growing'
- Why do we want to continue to grow?
- Perhaps it's a time to shift and look at our models and do it well rather than spread resources too thin

Theme of sustainability at our institutions discussed

Social responsibility to generate knowledge to help us

Dual role and multiple tensions

Friday, May 15, 2009

11:15 am to 12:00 pm – Partnering with Each Other Across the Country

Susan Gottheil, Associate Vice-President, Enrolment Management, Mount Royal College

Clayton Smith, Vice-Provost, Students & Registrar, University of Windsor

Notes

- It was noted that the last twenty minutes of the previous discussion relates to the first part of the last session
- Clayton Smith and Susan Gottheil asked about the likelihood of institutions travelling to Halifax for the next Summit
- Recognition of the interdisciplinary group representing several areas
- Summit is not considered to be a traditional 'conference' rather an opportunity for SEM discussions
- Many see the value in having discussions despite the infancy stage of the Summit

