



Strategic Enrollment Planning and Initiative

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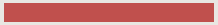
UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING

STRATEGIC ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT PLANNING

- The Strategic Enrollment Management Plan was developed by a task-force of 46 members in consultation with Huron Consulting.
- The plan is based on primary research, undergraduate student enrollment data, 125+ interviews with students, faculty, staff, and stakeholders across campus and the state, intensive analysis of all input and data, and multiple working meetings between November 2016 and January 2017.
- Our process has done much to help understand and identify our place in the market, and ways to improve and invest in recruitment and retention of our students.



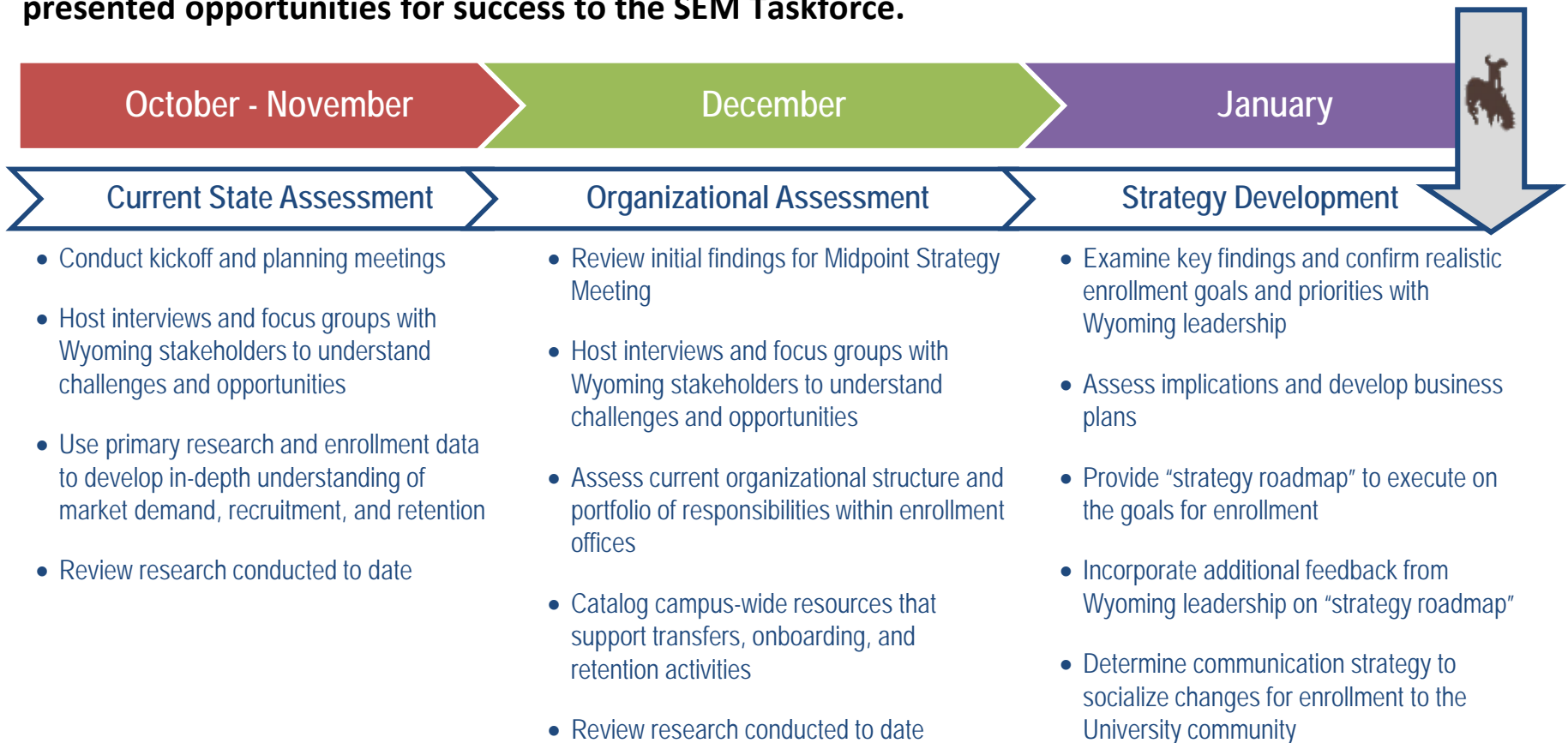
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Project Overview

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Over a 12-week period, Huron conducted 125+ interviews with key stakeholders, analyzed data to understand undergraduate enrollment strategies and key factors predicting student success, and presented opportunities for success to the SEM Taskforce.



WHAT DID WE LEARN?

- We need to more closely align student recruitment, financial aid, and instructional capacity with the work of faculty and academic administration to significantly increase enrollment, retention and graduation rates.
- We need to approach this as a coordinated partnership promoting student success.
- This will be best done as we think of ourselves as a multi-disciplinary team that integrates and manages academic preparation, financial wellness, physical and mental wellness, and a sense of belonging, seamlessly for all students.

Collaborative case management will benefit not only the students, but our staff and faculty.



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ADAPTING TO A NEW ENVIRONMENT

New economic and student realities require a refined approach to enrollment management:

- In the face of declining state support, UW needs to **find opportunities to grow net tuition revenue** through increased new student enrollment and improved retention rates.
- Intensifying competition for students among institutions of higher education in the region requires a **strategic and targeted recruitment approach**.
- UW needs to **strengthen its position in the regional student marketplace** with a relevant and defensible value proposition in order to appeal to a broader, more diverse student audience.
- UW must **align college level recruiting and support resources** with undergraduate enrollment growth expectations.
- Shifting demographics and academic preparedness among incoming UW students will require that available **support services are resourced and aligned with changing student needs**.



FRESHMEN ENROLLMENT: UPSHOT

- UW is almost entirely **dependent on the state of Wyoming and Colorado's Front Range** for first-time, full time students.
- UW is **yielding a lower percentage of admitted applicants**, indicating increased competition and a less defined market position.
- There are **increasing numbers of less academically prepared** Wyoming students enrolling.
- Residents and nonresidents are **highly dependent on financial aid**.
- Yield across colleges is fairly consistent.
- Colleges who have developed recruiting strategies have seen **increases in their academic profiles**.



FRESHMEN RECRUITING: SUMMARY

What we have learned:

- UW's market position among prospective freshmen is unclear. UW competes for students on several fronts, both in-state (regional) and out-of-state (key feeder states).
- Increasing market share within current catchment areas and expanding into new markets will be critical to UW's ability to meet future enrollment goals.
- UW needs to conduct a "deep dive" into the factors that attract high-achieving resident students.
- The Office of Admissions needs to learn how to leverage data to discern true prospective student interest and focus efforts on those students most likely to apply and enroll.
- The Office of Admissions must work closely with their recruiting partners in the Colleges to develop an integrated recruiting plan.



WHY UW: STUDENT VOICES

What we have learned – student focus groups

Why did you choose UW?

- Friendly, accessible, accommodating recruiters
- Guidance counselor and family/alumni connections, caring and supportive
- Low student debt/affordability, small class sizes, study abroad opportunities
- Sense of pride, involvement, student life balance
- Ability to transfer credit
- Specific academic majors/programs/ opportunities

What would you change about UW?

- Registration and advising (frustrating, stressful)
- Orientation (confusing, overwhelming)
- Academic experience (course and academic predictability, lack of clear deadlines and guidance)
- Communications, residential experiences

What keeps you at UW?

- Expanded horizons, outdoor activities, not competitive to get involved
- Supportive, comfortable, second home, hidden gem, safe
- Great value education
- Faculty relationships, research opportunities, academic support, sense of belonging
- Culture; events bring community together.



FRESHMEN: STUDENT SUCCESS UPSHOT

UW's first-to-second year retention rate has improved, but is lowest among its peer group.

- The level of **academic preparation is a significant factor** in the likelihood to return after the first year
 - + On average, retained students entered UW with a GPA of 3.5 and ACT of 25, while non-retained entered with a GPA of 3.2 or less and an ACT of 23 or less
- Regardless of residency, **first-generation students are less likely to retain**
 - + Average WY resident retention rate is **79%**, but for **first-gen WY students, it is 73%**
 - + Average nonresident retention rate is **76%**, but for **first-gen nonresidents, it is 70%**
 - + Average nonresident Colorado retention rate is **76%**, but for **first gen, it is 58%**



FRESHMEN: STUDENT SUCCESS UPSHOT

- Students who **receive a D, F, or W** are far less likely to retain.
- The fewer number of credits attempted and earned by a student, the less likely they are to retain.
 - + Those who earn **12 or fewer credit hours** are **< 74%** likely to retain. Those who earn 13+ are **> 83%** likely to retain.
- Ability to pay and **level of unmet need** is a factor in retention
 - + For those retained, on average, their calculated unmet need is \$0, and their average family contribution to their college costs is nearly \$16,000.
 - + For those not retained, their estimated family contribution to their college costs is a little over \$11,000, and their average unmet need is over \$5,000.
- A majority of freshmen who do not return to UW **transfer to a Community College**



FRESHMEN: STUDENT SUCCESS SUMMARY

What we have learned:

- A student's **academic preparation is highly predictive of a student's performance** in the first year. UW needs to leverage information gathered during the enrollment process to inform student support efforts.
- A student's **credit progression in the first year is a significant factor** in their success at UW. Strong advising and course planning is necessary to improve the chances of students returning their second year.
- Targeted and coordinated **support services are needed for those students most at risk** – first-generation students and students admitted with support.
- The **level of unmet financial need has a negative impact on the retention of non-residents**. The availability of need-based aid to lower current gaps will be necessary as UW looks to increase non-resident enrollments.
- With such a significant number of students leaving UW to enroll in Community Colleges, there is an opportunity to maintain a relationship with these students in an effort bring them back to UW.



TRANSFER: RECRUITING UPSHOT

- Application from Transfer students are fluctuating. UW has been able to offset fluctuations with increasing acceptance rates and maintaining yield.
- While UW's relationship with the Wyoming Community Colleges is critical, as 75% + of transfer enrollments come from Wyoming. Non-resident transfers are sourced primarily from the same markets as non-resident freshmen.
- Transfer students demonstrate a high level of financial need and the availability of scholarships is a key factor in enrolling.
 - + The majority of incoming transfer students have an estimated family contribution to costs of \$0, so their need is very high.
 - + When an incoming student receives \$0 in institutional aid from UW, average yield is around 49-54%. However, when they are offered \$1,000 +, their yield rises to 75%+. When institutional aid is \$8,000+, their yield rate is 100%.
- While Transfer enrollment is declining on average, interest in Health Professions and Engineering are experiencing high levels of interest.



TRANSFER: RECRUITING SUMMARY

What we have learned:

- Recruiting transfer students is **currently under-resourced**. There is little capacity to guide students through the recruitment process and provide credit evaluations in a timely fashion.
- **Cultivating the resident transfer population** must be a top priority for UW.
- There is **potential to extend UW's reach** with transfer students to the Front Range.
- **Coordinated support services are needed** to onboard the diverse transfer student population.
- Access to **scholarships and financial aid have a significant impact** on a transfer student's decision to enroll at UW (an issue the University is currently addressing).



TRANSFER: STUDENT SUCCESS UPSHOT

- Around 79% of transfer students remain after their first year at UW.
- Transfer students have fairly **significant unmet need** and very low family ability to financially pay for college.
- The most predictive **positive drivers of retention** for Transfer students are
 - +Being a nonresident child of an alumni or relative of a graduate.
 - +Their **prior college cumulative GPA**, with those entering with a 3.0 GPA + having the highest likelihood.
 - +The **number of credits transferred** from their previous college. Those who transferred in 63 prior credits retained at 84%+, while those who transferred in less than 60 hours retained < 75%. Those who achieved an associates before transferring retain at 81% - 88% rates, versus those who did not, who retain at 71%
- The most likely **negative driver** for retention for Transfer students was being a **first-generation student**.



TRANSFER: STUDENT SUCCESS SUMMARY

What we have learned:

- A transfer student's **academic preparation is highly predictive of a student's performance**. UW should design robust onboarding programs for at-risk students to develop the necessary skills for success.
- **Credit progression in the first semester/year is equally significant for transfer students**. In addition to strong advising and course planning at UW, proactive collaboration with UW Community College partners on academic planning and 4 year degree plans can improve credit production.
- Early engagement and **targeted support services will help reduce attrition among non-resident and first-generation** transfer students.
- The **level of unmet financial need is a significant factor for all transfer students**. The availability of need-based aid to lower current gaps will be necessary as UW looks to increase transfer enrollments.



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5-Year SEM Plan

5-YEAR SEM PLAN

Purpose:

- To provide the University of Wyoming with an **action plan** to guide the sequence of steps over the next 5 years to increase undergraduate enrollment.

Assumptions

- The following assumptions were made in the creation of this plan based on our understanding of the market and the University's feasibility for growth:
 1. The greatest potential to increase headcount in the short-term is in the areas of **student success** and **transfer student enrollment**.
 2. **First-time, full-time enrollment is seen as a long-term growth opportunity** that reflects the multi-year prospect development timeline for traditional age students.
 3. UW will finalize and operationalize a **university-wide strategic plan** that defines its educational mission, aligns the student educational experience with market demands, and **differentiates itself from in-state partners as well as out-of-state competitors**.



ENROLLMENT GROWTH PROJECTIONS

Growth Considerations

- The University of Wyoming will need to **effectively support the needs of students currently enrolled** prior to any major growth to avoid exacerbating current retention issues that could harm the UW brand.
- To successfully grow the UW student body in a stepwise fashion that ensures success, **UW should execute its strategic enrollment plan intentionally, monitor progression metrics regularly**, and adjust the plan as needed. UW will also remain committed to growing the community in a way that promotes inclusivity and diversity.
- **Effective growth requires an investment** in new (or repurposing of existing) resources, so appropriate ratios of student support (faculty, student support staff, etc. to student) are maintained.
- UW should assess its true **capacity with regards to course availability by school (particularly key gateway courses), and absolute physical constraints** (classroom space, housing) to ensure a reasonable, sustainable growth rate.
- For the purpose of this plan, we conservatively anticipate a **2% annual growth rate for all freshmen**, a **5% annual growth rate among transfer students**, and an annual 0.5% gain in cohort retention rates.



5-YEAR GROWTH PROJECTIONS

A sequenced growth plan, with goals for headcount and geographic diversity at each step, will provide UW with a strong foundation to invest in shaping its future class*

Demographic	Student Type	Baseline	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
In-State Wyoming	Freshmen	824	10	20	30	40	50
	Transfer	487	30	60	75	85	100
Out-Of-State Colorado	Freshmen	362	10	30	45	55	60
	Transfer	60	40	55	65	75	90
Out-Of-State Other	Freshmen	330	0	10	15	25	30
	Transfer	200	30	50	70	80	100
0.5 % Annual Retention Lift	Freshmen	0	7	15	23	31	40
0.5% Transfer Retention Lift	Transfer	0	4	8	12	17	22
Total New Headcount		0	131	248	335	408	492
Total Enrollment	Undergraduate	8,480	8,611	8,728	8,815	8,888	8,972



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STUDENT SUCCESS INITIATIVES

Immediate:

- Hire AVP for Enrollment to enhance Recruiting, Admission, and Onboarding operations
- Establish a SEM Governance Committee
- Establish UW Student Success Action Sub-Committee (Monitors At Risk Students)
- Establish an Orientation / Onboarding Team; Link Cowboy Connect to Orientation

Short-term

- Implement Peer-to-Peer Advising Model within the Colleges
- Connect data collected during enrollment to SIS for advising and student support
- Leverage historical course enrollment data to inform future needs and planning
- Roll-out an advisor communication plan to promote consistency in approach
- Enhance financial aid communications and promote financial literacy
- Centralize the withdrawal process; Understand why students leave to re-engage

Mid- to Long-term:

- Enhance WyoWeb Portal; Turn on degree planning tools
- Expanded adoption of CRM to support retention efforts (Case Management Tool)
- Create block tuition rates to incentivize students to take higher course loads
- Expand course offerings outside of current clustering (10am-2pm)
- Create centralized oversight of each College's course offerings



TRANSFER INITIATIVES

Immediate:

- Establish Transfer Center support and structure
- Leverage existing Outreach Coordinators and personnel on WYCC campuses
- Work with existing Wyoming Transfer Council to create WYCC Advisory Board
- Make Transfer orientation mandatory; reserve seats in courses for transfer registration
- Establish Transfer Student Peer-Mentor Program
- Enhance Transfer student website; Aggregate important resources in a central place

Short-term

- Link to Transfer evaluations on WYCC websites; Post articulations and 2+2 agreements
- Make Transfer orientation mandatory; reserve seats in courses for transfer registration
- Host accepted Transfer student programming, both on campus and regionally
- Automate credit evaluation process to best extent possible (Link TreQ to Banner)

Mid- to Long-term:

- Establish a transfer liaison within each college
- Identify and cultivate out-of-state CC relationships with coordinators (CO & NE)
- Establish Transfer Advising Days in collaboration with UWC/WYCC
- Create a dual admission program with WYCCs



FRESHMEN RECRUITMENT INITIATIVES

Immediate:

- Enhance brand platform, prospective student website, and social media presence
- Examine effectiveness of current prospect development campaigns
- Rethink admission application user experience and content; Remove major declaration
- Create a prospective student score and academic preparedness index
- Develop a “yield” and “summer melt” strategy; maintain touchpoints to build excitement

Short-term

- Identify and collect key data points for data warehouse; Share with Student Support staff
- Examine the frequency, content, and recipients of College-level recruiting reports
- Optimize current recruitment territories
- Create distinct calls to action in recruiting materials; Establish expectations and deadlines
- Enforce 7/1 application deadline; Provide a single admission decision to students

Mid- to Long-term:

- Consider membership with the Common Application to increase awareness
- Implement pre-registration prior to Orientation; Consider block scheduling
- Enhance WyoWeb Portal (Admitted Student Portal); Link to important resources
- Develop admitted student engagement and yield plans by College
- Create targeted high school student fly-in programs (resident and non-resident)
- Consider admission deferral option; Admitted to UW upon completion at a WYCC



STRATEGIC ENROLLMENT ROADMAP

Some very simple concepts have emerged from the planning process.

- In the short term, growth in the student body will come from a **focus on improving retention and outcomes for the students we already have** and on **growing the number of transfer students** we enroll.
- Long term opportunities exist in recruiting more first-time full-time students.
- All of this **will require much more coordination and collaboration** across our Office of Admissions, colleges and departments, our marketing and institutional communications group, and our faculty.



SEM – IMMEDIATE NEXT STEPS

- Shared governance structure – volunteer response remarkable
 - Undergrad Enrollment Governance Group
 - Student Success Action Group
 - Advising Redesign Action Group
 - Transfer Success Advisory Group
 - Student Data Advisory Group
 - Orientation and Onboarding Advisory Group
 - Marketing and Communications Advisory Group



SEM – NEAR TERM STEPS

- Enrollment management functions transfer from Student to Academic Affairs.
- Search to hire AVP Enrollment Management, plan for Transfer Success Center, and coordinated advising model implementation.





Thank you!



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