**Affordability Subcommittee Meeting**

**November 23, 2015**

Meeting Notes

**Attendance:** Julie Bates, Chair; Russ Hannah, ASUJ; Bobby Jones, HSU; Callie Dunavin, ASUMS; Lisa Willenberg, UACCM; David See, COTO; Tara Smith, ADHE; Jake Eddington, ADHE

**Which goals of the plan will be addressed by identified strategies?**

* Reduced time to degree
* Allocate 25% of state scholarship funds to need-based programs
* Re-allocate institutional spending to maximize efficiency and effectiveness
* Increase core expense ratio.
* Administrative Positions
* Raise Faculty Salaries to Regional Average
* Short Term Goals should be ready by April 30.
* Short term goals could include fiscal session recommendations
* More substantive changes would have to be made during the general session (long-term goals).
* Efficiency and Personnel policy changes could be short-term.
* Affordability Policy Audit (Suggested by Dr. Powell)
* Tuition & Fees
* State Appropriations
* Financial Aid

**What changes are necessary to achieve progress toward the goals?**

* Reduced time to degree
* Degree Plans for first two years
* Summer bridge program (including financial aid)
* Effective Advising for both scheduling and financial aid
* Has the enrollment/financial aid process become to complicated?
* Allocate 25% of state scholarship funds to need-based programs
* Will need to look at current scholarship and grant programs
* Harold will provide data on success of current programs.
* Re-allocate institutional spending to maximize efficiency and effectiveness
* Discover which degrees the state needs, and how to draw students to those degree programs
* Institutions should spend more wisely; spend money in ways that will save money in the future.
* Important to have a consolidated and united message for all of the institutions can get behind.
* Increase core expense ratio/Administrative Positions
* How can we understand the cost of administrative positions?
* Can we add more personnel data to the series 17 report?
* Can we use SACUBO as a common benchmark for Arkansas Institutions?
* Raise Faculty Salaries to Regional Average
* Could we also consider salaries of student support/other staff?
* What do other states due in regard to legislative oversight/personnel
* Can this be achieved with current funding?

**What barriers, if any, exist that make adoption of the identified strategies difficult?**

* Financial Literacy
* Students who do not understand student loans take on excess debt.
* Can K-12 help with this issue?
* Could a First Year Experience course help with this?
* Student Loan Debt
* Students consider all student loan debt when thinking of the cost of college (not just tuition and fees)
* We need to develop a unified understanding of student loan debt – how much of the states debt is coming from public/private/proprietary schools?
* Consider debt by category. Is median a better measure of debt than average?
* Tuition Increases
* We need to understand why tuition is increasing and be able to present it in a way that is clear and easy to follow.
* Some reasons include utilities, mandatory wage increases.
* Legislative Oversight
* How can we help legislators understand the importance/benefits of higher education?
* Could be helpful to show them benefits on a district level
  + Colleges and universities are usually one of the largest employers.
  + Higher Education produces good professional employees who give back to the communities they work in.
* Could we compare allocations to higher education in Arkansas to other states?

**What partners, external to higher education, will be important to the identified strategies?**

* K-12 could help educate students about fiscal responsibility.
* Legislators will be very important to allocating more money that could make higher education more affordable.

**What resources (technological, human, physical, financial) are necessary to implement identified strategies?**