**BIG BEND COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**STUDY SESSION**

May 19, 2009

PRESENT: Mike Blakely

Katherine Kenison

 Angela Pixton

Felix Ramon

Mike Wren

1. **Academic Master Plan Report #2 Review**

Board Vice Chair Felix Ramon began the meeting at 10:06 a.m. President Bonaudi stated the Academic Master Plan (AMP) was presented in the fall of 2008. This AMP included an ambitious plan to distill six reports presented throughout the year to three. Report #1 Access includes activities and plans to increase enrollment and cause students to enroll. Report #2 describes resources, service and instruction programs for prospective and current students. This report will also address issues of the effectiveness of programs. Some strategies outlined in the new AMP are not yet completed as they are extensive. Some of the strategies aren’t due for results for one or two years. Staff will discuss data and plans to gather additional data.

Dean Valerie Kirkwood began the presentation by introducing the Programs report.

She explained that data has been gathered to study student success. Information was provided regarding instruction, student services and administrative support for student success. Dean Kirkwood shared the outcomes desired: students successfully complete courses or workshops, students establish educational plans, and students continue to complete goals according to their educational plan.

Dean Kirkwood explained that the AtD definition of success is passing a class with a 2.0 GPA or better. AtD research has shown students who earn a 2.0 GPA or better are more likely to be successful at the next level. Overall approximately 80 percent of students at BBCC complete their courses with a 2.0 GPA or better. The highest enrolled classes and their student success rates were shared (English Composition I 78%, Elementary Algebra 40%, Intro to Public Speaking 84% and English Composition II 76%). Dean Kirkwood said that in the past the pre-college math student success rate was reported as 52.5 percent. The 52.5 percent referred to all students. The 40 percent refers to the AtD cohort of new students first time in class.

Dean Rachel Anderson explained that the math department identifies success as when a student moves from one class to the next. The final exam assesses if they can move to the next level math. It takes a 65 percent on that final exam to pass and move on to the next level. There were 316 students in MPC95 who took the final placement exam and 112 did not pass. That results in a 64% success rate. Those students who failed the final were allowed to retake it. Of the 112 who retook the final it was estimated that between 25-50 percent would successfully pass the test. Overall success rate of the pre-college math courses as defined by the math department is between 65-68 percent.

Trustee Mike Wren asked for clarification on the success rate. Dean Kirkwood said the success rate is computed by taking the total number of enrollees. The numbers of students who withdraw from the class are added to those with a GPA of less than 2.0. Those students left with a GPA of 2.0 or more is 40 percent. Improving student success in math is one of the AtD goals. The data shows that the pre-college math success rate has increased to 50 percent for the first three quarters of this year. Trustee Ramon stated national data reports that students placed just below college math, have a college success rate of only 16 percent. Students who test just a couple levels down from that have a college success rate of 8 percent. Compared to this data the 40 percent success rate is very good. Dean Kirkwood clarified that those students who start and stop throughout their college career are not consider successful by AtD.

Trustee Mike Blakely asked Dean Anderson if there is a difference in the math student success rate when the high schools hold a BBCC placement test? Dean Anderson replied that the high schools select the classes (groups of students) to take the placement tests. So the high schools test their higher math classes. About 16 percent of the students tested in the high schools place into college level math.

VP Mike Lang said students come to BBCC with goals and ideas. Part of the intake process helps the students develop educational plans. One of the AMP outcomes is that students will establish educational plans and make specific goals. He has talked with advisors and staff and they reported that approximately 1,200 students, including full time and part time, have educational plans. That is about 30 percent. This estimate is based on the following reports. VP Lang said there are approximately 337 students who are developing educational plans through SSS and the Student Achievement/Student Persistence Initiative. There are 70 students developing education plans through the Opportunity Grant. Disabled students services is working with 60 students, and counselors are working with about 400 students to develop education plans per quarter. The professional/technical instructors advise the 575 FTEs who are enrolled in those programs. VP Lang also noted that some of the students may be receiving advising from more than one source. A total of approximately 1,300 students are receiving advising on educational plans.

Director of Big Bend Technology (BBT) Russ Beard explained that an advisor data portal will be available to advisors soon. This is a new tool from Walla Walla Community College. The student information is on a secure web page. The advisor will have the ability to visit with the student and have electronic access to the student’s current schedule, biographical information, and a degree estimator. The degree estimator will work with the degree audit program. The student’s progress along degree tracks can be reviewed. This will give the advisor and the student a snapshot of all degrees the student is getting close to completing. There is also an academic early warning system, which will allow faculty to enter information about students missing classes. Director Beard said it will be helpful to have this information available in one place. The goal is to offer training to faculty and staff during the 2009 fall faculty in-service and then use the new portal during the fall quarter.

Trustee Mike Wren asked if the portal was a front-end module pulling data from BBCC databases. Director Beard advised that the portal is pulling information from BBCC databases and an advisor can have all the information at their fingertips. All Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) guidelines are being maintained.

Trustee Ramon asked if this portal will compare which credits will transfer to four-year institutions? Director Beard indicated that the degree audit will show this. Some students have complained about some of their credits not transferring. Director Beard said he feels confident this will be online in the fall. VP Lang noted that Appendix B contains an academic planning worksheet for arts and science degrees. Appendix C contains a technical/professional program plan. These plans help with developing educational plans.

Dean Kirkwood said Outcome B.3 is regarding students continuing to complete goals according to their education plans. A chart illustrating the graduates, certifications and completion rates for the past five years was exhibited. In 2007-08, 546 BBCC students completed a program, earned a certificate or graduated. Dean Kirkwood said the national normative data indicates it takes 150% of the time shown for degree completion in the catalog for students to actually graduate. She said BBCC students are doing extremely well. She introduced Dean Rachel Anderson to talk about this year’s points of focus: service programs, placement testing, advising/training, advising/availability and quality of services.

Dean Anderson described the current process of placement testing. The tests are offered every Friday and special accommodations can be made to take the test a different day. Placement results from last year were shared. The information reflects all populations coming on campus. She explained that the information is consistent with what was previously reported. There is a high percentage of testers placing into precollege math. There is also an increasing percentage of testers placing in precollege English skills.

Dean Anderson stated College Success Skills (CSS) classes were incorporated to improve student success. The math placement testing in the high schools was arranged primarily with AtD funds as a result of grant research. The high schools select the students who will take the placement tests. Administering the two-hour tests is a large commitment by the school. To date over 300 hundred students have been tested at the high schools. Another 100 students will test in the Moses Lake high school tomorrow. The rough numbers indicated that about 16 percent of the high school test takers are placing in college level math. Dean Anderson stated she hopes the placement testing in the community will continue to be promoted.

Dean Kirkwood introduced Associate VP of Student Services Candy Lacher to discuss advising/training efforts. Ms. Lacher said she learned from the spring student surveys that students feel that academic advising is very important. The 2008 spring enrollment survey revealed 92 percent of the participants were satisfied with their advising. The unsatisfied students cited problems with advisors availability. Associate VP Lacher expressed concern that the results of the arts/science student surveys showed their satisfaction has decreased by 23 percent between 2004 and 2008. The counseling center will focus on determining why the students are not as happy. In contrast, the professional/technical students expressed an 11 percent increase in satisfaction for the same time period. The dissatisfaction expressed may be due to the transfer process. Fifty four percent of the students who indicated they had trouble transferring stated that their credit hours were not accepted. Focus group responses have shown that credits do count but perhaps not toward the correct major.

The above responses led to increased staff development efforts as follows. Associate VP Lacher stated improvement efforts have been implemented. Five faculty and/or staff members, Terry Kinzel, Mandy Mann, Rie Palkovic, Max Heinzmann and Kathleen Duvall attended a two-day National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) Conference. The attendees, who represented different BBCC programs, prepared for the fall faculty in-service. They created a “Who wants to be a millionaire advisor?” game to promote the sharing of student resources and financial aid information. This has been an interesting way to provide information to the faculty who can then share with their students. The same group that attended the NACADA conference has been very active with Title V and AtD. They are serving as mentors and core advisors for students.

MariAnne Zavala-Lopez, Dave Hammond, Candy Lacher and Barbara Whitney attended an AtD Strategies Conference. They attended sessions on teaching developmental education. Associate VP Lacher said the federal government is very interested in AtD. There was a push to use our financial aid data and AtD student initiatives to try to lower default rates.

Another improvement step is offering NACADA and Noel Levitz Webinars to BBCC faculty and staff regarding student motivation and building an academic success center. Title V staff and BBCC counselors developed an online advisor toolkit, on the portal. This puts all the student resource information in one place for anyone advising a student. This is a great tool for new faculty members. The toolkit includes general advising information, a FERPA overview, and several links to experts in different fields. There is also information regarding counseling and CSS 100 requirements, related articles and SBCTC. The toolkit links to program plans and four-year colleges to provide transfer information. This toolkit allows the advisor to review the information with the student.

Trustee Angela Pixton asked if high school counselors have Running Start information that they can share with their students? This toolkit might be helpful to them. Associate VP Lacher responded that currently the high school counselors do not have access to the toolkit but it could be made available on the website. Trustee Ramon commented that the recently purchased Azorus software to help provide “high touch” to our students could be coordinated with the advisor toolkit. He added students try harder when they are encouraged and feel connected to faculty. This “high touch” approach could develop more empathy between faculty/staff and students. Associate VP Lacher stated Azorus is just getting started and maybe the toolkit could be integrated with it. If not, at least there should be a link available to the toolkit.

Trustee Blakely asked about the common course numbering that has been discussed in the past. Associate VP Lacher responded that the four-year colleges didn’t really like it, but it has been instituted at the community college. Trustee Blakely stated he agreed with Trustee Ramon that students need a personal relationship with someone they trust to advance to the next level. He was impressed by a multi-cultural presentation by staff from Spokane Community College at the TACTC conference. He would like for the same staff member to give a presentation on our campus.

Dean Kirkwood introduced Research Analyst Starr Bernhardt to share results from the Survey of Entering Student Engagement (SENSE) for new students. This is a national survey and part of a suite of instruments developed around AtD. Ms. Bernhardt said 250 new students participated. New students are used because many students drop out before their second term. Half of entering students leave between their first fall term and the next fall. Completing the first 12-15 credit hours improves students’ chances of returning and gives the college a chance to have an impact on student adjustment.

Ms. Bernhardt relayed additional SENSE survey data. She said 60 percent of new BBCC students claimed they knew about academic advising services. However, 55 percent had never used academic advising services during their first three weeks at BBCC. Over half of the new students relied on sources other than BBCC for advising during their first three weeks. The students’ main sources of advising were friends, family and/or other students. This relates back to high touch being important for new students. New student registration includes advising but students may not recognize it. Of the students who did participate in advising services 91 percent were pleased and 83 percent agreed that they were able to meet with an academic advisory at convenient times. The students value the service when they use it.

To increase visibility of the advising services a team from Instruction and Student Services will study the advising process and make recommendations about advisor loads and time allotted per advisee. Additional questions regarding advisor availability will be added to the spring enrollment survey.

Dean Kirkwood stated a large component of what has been reviewed is in service programs. VP Mike Lang said one of the AMP goals was to review, assess, and audit student services programs. He recently attended a Washington State student services commission meeting and one of the agenda items was assessing student programs. A tool from South Puget Sound Community College (SPSCC) will be modified for our use. He said the goal is to perform a pilot assessment on one department this summer. The tool can be adjusted if needed. He hopes to audit all departments throughout the next year and report to the Board in May of 2010. The tool includes assessments of mission, facilities, staff, etc.

VP Lang said evaluation of instruction programs will tie in well with preparing for the accreditation visit in 2012. Each time a position is vacated we look at student enrollment, cost, and resources including equipment and instructor availability. He explained that sometimes we can’t find the instructors that we need. The nursing program is currently searching for an instructor. As a result of not having graduate students in our area, we have a limited population of qualified part time teachers.

Dean of Arts & Science, Rachel Anderson, stated that she evaluated FTE generation and class availability. She said there is an obvious decline in evening class enrollment, but BBCC is obligated to offer classes in the evening. She offered a solution to the problem of classes with enrollment that is too low to support and the obligation to offer evening classes. Dean Anderson suggested alternative, linked classes” that could have regular class or an “on the ground section” linked with an online component. This would allow students who would like to attend classes in person to do so and those classes could also be offered online for students who prefer the flexibility.

Dean Anderson stated there are other high demand/low enrolled classes in the sciences i.e., calculus, physics, and biology. These classes will be offered as hybrid classes, which means they are offered both on the ground and online. The labs will require a once-a-week presence on campus. One of the pilot science classes increased from seven to 24 students using this approach.

There is still another group of ground classes, like music, that are decreasing in enrollment Dean Anderson explained. She is evaluating the time slots these courses are offered. Some of these elective classes compete with required classes due to the time they are offered. She is evaluating enrollment trends and the rearrangement of times slots.

Dean Anderson went on to discuss staffing. Per placement test results there has been an increased demand for developmental instruction in math and English and College Survival Skills (CSS). Students who test into both pre-college math and English are also required to take a CSS class. Dean Anderson said the full time and part time instructors are maxed out. If this trend continues, we’ll need more faculty to teach these classes. In response to need and assessment two new math instructors were hired this year. Sonja Farag was hired into a current full time tenure track and Tyler Wallace was hired into a new full time tenure track position.

Dean Clyde Rasmussen said the AMP gives the Professional/Technical area an opportunity to share improvement ideas. He stated that automotive instructors Mike O’Konek and Chuck Cox gave their ASE certification report recently. Working through that process was a good assessment to evaluate if their program is meeting student and community needs.

Dean Rasmussen stated SBCTC requires periodic audits of all professional/technical programs. He said beginning this year he will be conducting audits of each program with assistance from the Institutional Research Department (IR). IR will collect data to help make changes as needed. Advisory committees will be used in this process. He said an audit involving an outside consultant was conducted on the computer science department. Dean Rasmussen said he will begin working with the Advisory Committee during the fall banquet to work with staff and committee to develop a model to collect information. He plans to collect data to answer the following questions: Are our students working in our communities in their fields of study? Staffing needs? Change directions in programs? Does BBCC serve students and employers?

Dean Kara Garrett shared that there are external audits in her area. The nursing department will be evaluated by the National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission in February of 2010. Accreditation provides an avenue to compare the BBCC nursing program nationally.

Dean Garrett explained that the basic skills program is also compared nationally and statewide. The grants written annually include outcome reports. There is incentive money for good outcomes. The SBCTC recently developed the momentum and student achievements points incentive program. In 2007-08 basic skills earned 1,553 points, that’s the highest in any single category. She compared it to the snake swallowing the apple. As basic skills students grow and transition, the bulge continues through and the pathways are strengthened.

Dean Garrett said there are two initiatives that have been active as basic skills has moved through the “Mission is Transition” theme. The Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training (IBEST) is an effective model for transition. The 18-month Basic Skills staff mentor, Enedelia Nicholson, is a BBCC graduate who worked for BBCC to help students move from basic skills to college level classes successfully. They weren’t finding their way and engaging as robustly as necessary to be successful. Ms. Nicholson impacted the students very positively. This funding is not going to be there next year and Dean Garrett hopes to fund this same type of position from another source.

Director of Basic Skills Sandy Cheek said helping basic skills students transition to college and persist to complete 45 credits and receive a vocational certificate has become the mission of the basic skills program. Research shows that reaching this point makes it possible to earn a living wage.

IBEST programs are effective tools for students’ success. Two instructors teach the students, one from the basic skills area and one from the professional/technical program. They are together in the classroom at least 50 percent of the time. CDL IBEST has been a BBCC program since 2004 and 100 students have received college credit and a commercial drivers license through this program. The IBEST Welding program started in 2006 and the original cohort who have been taking part time evening classes will be receiving their certificates of accomplishment. They also plan to continue their studies to earn AA degrees. Director Cheek said if basic skills students are given enough support they thrive in college.

Director Cheek described the progress of IBEST at BBCC. In 2004 there was one program, six students, one instructor and one funding source for tuition. In 2009 there are four programs: CDL, Welding, Medical Assistant and Child and Family Education. There are 90 students, 12 faculty members, one student staff mentor and multiple funding sources. Dean Garrett and Director Cheek are working on developing an IBEST Nursing Assistant Program.

Director Cheek stated that IBEST students are five times more likely to succeed compared to the basic skills students. The college earns momentum points based on student success. Director Cheek quoted a recent CDL IBEST graduate who said, “In the last four months I’ve earned $19,000 and it used to take me a year to earn $15,000.” This success takes a lot of work from students and staff.

Director Cheek introduced Staff Student mentor Enedelia Nicholson. Ms. Nicholson stated she promotes postsecondary education at BBCC. She plans events i.e. the GED to College Transition night, talks about college culture, provides a personal connection for students and leads a mini-tour of the administration building. She also helps students enroll in an education interview class if they are interested in transitioning to college classes. Ms. Nicholson facilitates goal-setting workshops, teaches students how to navigate matriculation, and helps students understand the course catalog and schedule. She has assisted 70 students transitioning to college.

Ms. Nicholson relayed a student success story about a young lady who was unsure about college because she didn’t speak English. The student initially left Ms. Nicholson messages in Spanish written on sticky notes. The student was very motivated to learn English and earn her GED concurrently. Together they worked on goal setting. She completed her GED and enrolled in BBCC in April 2008. Her transition from basic skills was smooth and recently she was on the President’s list. Now she communicates with Ms. Nicholson in English via email.

Trustee Mike Blakely asked if Ms. Nicholson made contacts at the local high schools? Ms. Nicholson responded that she commutes four days a week to the GED ESL and basic skills programs in Othello, Mattawa, Royal City and Grand Coulee. Trustee Blakely stated he sees a need to attract Running Start students. He commented she would be a good contact person to help them with that. He also said he is bringing a student from Quincy to campus on Thursday.

President Bonaudi said Ms. Nicholson’s information is good evidence of the importance of outreach. Trustee Angela Pixton stated while she was assisting Warden High School with the senior outreach interviews, one College bound student stated he was going to CBC for the automotive program. The student said he didn’t know BBCC had an automotive program. Important to take College bound students to the programs on campus. Ms. Nicholson said she takes students all around campus.

Director Cheek clarified that Ms. Nicholson worked only with basic skills students. This model represents the “high touch” advising and that is effective. President Bonaudi asked if we have the data for how many potential students she contacted who have not enrolled and why they chose not to enroll. Ms. Nicholson responded that this population usually has families and jobs to juggle along with college. Providing the guidance and support is very helpful to the students.

Trustee Blakely stated the high school seniors' presentations are important. He said the potential student from Quincy that he will bring to BBCC is a great student. She’s volunteered a lot in the medical field, and is a role model for her brothers and sisters. She doesn’t know how to get registered, etc. Ms. Nicholson said it is overwhelming as a new student. Ms. Nicholson experienced attending college as a first generation student. She invested in her own education and now she encourages students to do the same.

Dean Kirkwood stated the report presentation was concluded. The next report on outcomes will be shared with the Board during the August Board meeting. The outcomes report will contain a summary of data obtained for all of the Board’s Ends Statements and AMP outcomes with analysis, appraisal, and recommendation.

Trustee Felix Ramon stated he read through the AMP report and listened closed to the presentation. He compiled a list of things for BBCC to work on. He said BBCC should continue 24/7 tutoring advising and make it even better. He suggested a question and answer format online between students and faculty. Trustee Ramon also recommended all classes be recorded and used online to help the cost ratios. This results in more students per class and decreases the cost to the colleges. He went on to say BBCC needs changes in diversity and financial aid. Some of that was shown in the IBEST programs, which have developed several funding sources. The Intervention scholarships, and new scholarships should continue to be improved. There should be a different way to evaluate learning. If students take online classes, give them credit even if not on campus. He also said faculty should be encouraged to work across discipline lines. A math instructor could advise or have two instructors in one class to share differing points of view. BBCC needs to teach critical thinking including ethics and decision making, and teach students how to evaluate. On the Internet all kinds of things can be found. Students need to know how to evaluate the information they’re receiving.

Trustee Mike Blakely stated he is personally interested in BBCC outreach. He said BBCC has improved in this area very much. It will take more time to prove results that have been generated as a result of outreach. He said the Trustees are interested in facilitating outreach and offer their personal contact to assist.

President Bonaudi said the Trustees would be joining the Washington Library Council in Masto C & D. They’ll also make a presentation at 1:30 pm.

The study session adjourned at 11:47 a.m.

Mike Blakely, Chair

ATTEST:

William C. Bonaudi, Secretary