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2025 Conversation - 4/24/2013

The College at Brockport

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College of 2025 Conversation

April 24, 2013

Host/Note Taker: Betty García Mathewson

Attendees: Pamela Haibach and John Keiser

Increased geographic diversity would enrich the campus

- I would like to see more diversity – geographical regions seem to be where we lack diversity. There are many western NY's – we need more diversity from throughout US and other countries
- I agree broader base of students – also a trend across the state

Increased student opportunities to travel would be beneficial

- We do a poor job sending students abroad or out of state for part of their study.
- Restrictive curriculum is the cause in Exercise Science – the course requirements are so restrictive that it is virtually impossible for students to get credit from other institutions.
- Student's views are so limited. Many have never left the area and don't want to leave.

The physical aspects of the campus need beautification.

- Physically a lot can be done to beautify the campus; benches here or there
- Building wise, adding SERC and the academic building is good – seems to be going well. They are designing the buildings to create collision zones. Zones that encourage people to connect when they run into each other.
- I'm facility committee – big focus collision spaces, run into someone and comfortable to have a conversation – new building a lot of inviting spaces – not just in building outside as well – so feels like facility committee going in right direction

The campus trying to be all things to all people is an issue that will ultimately end up with not being enough for anyone

- I see campus trying to be all things to all people – something to be said to reaching out to different populations
- Like to focus on fewer – I understand that I am saying this as the population is decreasing
- As long as there are 18 year olds that are graduating from college – the campus based school will have a market – we've had campus based campuses for 600 years – its not going to disappear because of technology

The high number of transfer students is an issue.

- There are days I think we are just a community college for juniors and seniors
- There is a difference between native students that come as freshman and transfer students who come from a community college. Transfer students are not bringing themselves in – They just want to fly through. They don't ever feel like Brockport students; many stand out as lazier students to us.
- Our department (KSSPE) has so many transfers

- 2/3 of students are transfers in the business department
- some wonderful and typically

If we can't change broader dynamic, what do we need to put in place to help those student succeed

- We've tried to do different things to bring them in and they see it as burden – they just want in and out. We don't have the infrastructure to accommodate commuter students
- I was on task force for advisement - Pushing the Penn State model – have one person in the larger department always available for advisement– students are scrambling they can't find their faculty person – certain people advising – secretary ends up advising quite few people

Online Learning

- I know that some people embracing on line learning – I think online campuses and traditional campuses are going to weed each other out – some trying to be both
- Possibly place for online courses at graduate level and place for campus based
- Only certain course can be taught real well online, not the entire degree. How do you teach public speaking on line?
- Don't think only one or other – I think blend – I don't think all online will work, look at Phoenix.
- Skype could be good as an outreach function – It could be used for a unique course that does not have high enrollment and take people from other campuses
- College should be more than the sum of its parts

What is unique and wonderful to maintain moving forward?

- good student focus – not all professors, but many
- Most people teaching what we really know, good division of teaching and scholarship – and certainly things that could improve – not enough support for meeting the scholarship requirements
- We have an advantage – we have a college town – could exploit more in our promotion.
- There is a trend where college town are where people like to retire. Campuses have actually supported the development of retirement communities. There could be a niche in Brockport for that. They will spend money on campus buy meals in dining hall, etc.
- Economically I think we have the great lakes going for us 20% of the world's fresh water is in our back yard. Countries will go to war for water in the next generation – we need to be good stewards of what we have: environmental science, business, recreation and leisure
- Oswego on water – buffalo is one water – I think we need more campuses studying and managing this very limited resource
- We should continue to be liberal arts – I don't want this campus to be known for 5 big departments criminal justice, health, business, . . .

- The students who have gotten the most in the years I've been here are the Presidential Scholarship Awards – they came from across the state, they did well, and they got a free ride. I think those folks got the most and gave most back to the college.

The college should think about positioning itself strategically within the SUNY system. Some schools will probably be closed down in coming years.

- We've been getting squeezed and squeezed by the state. I think next level of squeeze will close campuses.
- I think we are the second largest comprehensive college in the system.
- We need to be too valuable to be considered as an option for closing
- Would like to see a better distribution of students into the other schools
- Our Campus could downsize a bit instead of 8000 maybe 6500. That would require huge cuts, but could possibly save. When you are trying to be all things to all people you spend a lot of money

What is the impact of the liberal arts on the big five?

- We rely on them for general writing critical thinking well rounded individual understanding the world around them and their place in the world; without it we are a tech school we could be RIT
- With liberal arts you understand your place in the world, its humbling. Unfortunately so much of our general education courses are taught by adjuncts. They are trying to patch courses together to make a job from multiple schools
- We are trying to put part-time student in a full-time role – we have students that have children at home. They are not going to an evening lecture, football game, etc. – And they add value to the class. Student affairs get a lot of resources that are not core to what the campus is about – sometimes I think we've lost our focus

Career Services is very important and we are not doing that well.

- Career placement is going to be very, very important. We are fortunate in business because we created our own. One reason we created is that the Colleges is so bad. I don't see people networking in Rochester with firms.
- It's not so much that we have to give students marketable skills – businesses will say I hire for attitude I can teach skills
- A history major is marketable if they are appreciated in the market – we are the underdog in the area for schools.
- We have more to sell than we are selling – we need more people to sell across the region. People will hire graduates that have collegiate level skills who want to work, regardless of the major
- A lot of employers like Brockport student's work ethic. It is seen as better; many are first generation college students

- Trend is accountability – is more of a metric – ACSB – we have to show results, not assessment of knowledge – how do we impact student lives – outcomes/impact on student lives

Student Affairs

- Something is happening that what used to be volunteers are now professionals if they were part of little league, now people expect to get paid for things like that, now we have a lot of people who get paid, it has become rather expensive
- Student affairs is taking more and more of the money and I'm not sure what they are doing is worth the investment

A big issue for employers is people knowing how to work across difference? How do we support the development of those skills?

- Extracurricular activities do that.

Technology is a tool, it is not a panacea; it has not transformed our world

- Technology – the life span of any new technology is shrinking, a couple of years ago you tube, then everything Facebook and it will be replaced by something else. We can't ignore. If we put all our eggs in the tech basket, it is a horrible way of becoming obsolete
- People still need to write to use a computer, need know basic accounting skills to use excel, still need know about a good presentation use power point effectively
- There is fundamental knowledge on anything

What will graduating students need?

- Know how to learn
- Challenge teaches people how to work
- Some people would say that college should be challenging. If you don't make it. then you know what you are doing isn't working
- Retention has become so important. I struggle with early warning systems, students know they are missing class, sometimes a little dose failure is good for you
- I know the owner of a big air conditioning outfit in Rochester. He tells me that if you have a failure at the university, send them to me. We need are not looking for scholars and we are looking for good people.
- So much inflation in education, a bachelor degree is not worth what it was. Maybe in 2025 one of our goals should also be placement in graduate degrees
- I was looking at stats, 7% of the population has a master's degree
- Maybe besides all the good things, it is 4 years of prep for graduate school
- I think we have weakened the graduate school to. when we get kids accepted to good MBA programs and do well, it is some of the most satisfying feedback we can get – different measuring
- I believe college is a place to take risks, screw up change your mind, you find your place unfortunately the stakes are so high especially in the private schools – the financial stakes have gotten so high you don't have the fudge factor

- A middle class kid will have a difficult time even affording a public school, if outcomes of college doesn't improve and cost doesn't not improve will see more kids opt out

Organization of the college – should it change?

- Less shared governance – we drive things forever – the amount of time spent in service and the number of meetings to get things done is too much
- We were department – now school – we have 2 deans more admin and more people asking for more things not related to the core of teaching.