

Student Affairs

What was gained?

- Creation of the Multicultural Center (MC) and a coordinator of it within Student Affairs. The focus of "multicultural affairs" became more inclusive. Student utilization of the MC increased.
- The concept of creating an enrollment services model was aimed at helping EOU focus on enrollment.
- The concept of integrating DDE into the campus so that it wasn't a separate entity was helpful in service provision and fiscally helpful. However, there is still work to do with integration.
- A positive result was having one Student Relations Director to focus on the needs of both on-campus and online students and serving all student needs. The challenge is that before BART two people (DDE and on-campus) were doing this work and now only one person is and enrollment has increased.
- The concept of developing a centralized advising program was a good one.
- Stronger connections between the University and the community were built as the community realized the impact of not having EOU and the need to keep it viable.

Were efficiencies created/What was lost?

- Artificial or pseudo-centers were created (i.e., Student Life Center, Student Success Center, and Student Access Center) which created silos of communication and led to confusion about where these centers were and what they included. Many people thought the Division of Student Affairs did not exist anymore and was replaced by a Student Life Center. The goal of creating these "centers" was to "improve the depth and level of support services for students" (see p. 4 of BART document) which did not seem to be achieved.
- The reorganization of Student Affairs and elimination of positions created obstacles and led to an environment where there is more emphasis on the quantity of students served vs. quality of service.
- Facilities lost the position to address risk management issues and with it the expertise to do so.
- The physical move of the VPSA from Inlow (where all other Cabinet members resided) to Hoke and the downgrading of the VPSA to a dean sent the message, real or perceived, that Student Affairs was not as valued as other areas and also lessened its importance in relation to the other vice presidential areas who were all housed in Inlow.
- DDE does not appear to have been completely incorporated into the campus infrastructure because of the way faculty are paid (often overload) to teach online courses.
- Integrating DDE seemed to result in a lack of training for faculty who teach on-line classes to ensure quality instruction using the online modality.
- Initially EOU was at the forefront of online education, but it now seems we have fallen behind, i.e., technology, ability to serve the population effectively, etc.
- Many students are choosing to take their courses via multiple modalities, thus creating situations where a student who lives on-campus or locally may be taking most of their courses on-line, not paying fees, but accessing services covered by fees (e.g., theatre and musical performances, athletic events, club participation). Consequently, their access to services/activities is paid for by fee paying students only. Tuition costs are variable across modalities which is confusing for students and depending on the mix, costly.

- The "Student is a Student is a Student" does not work well because the needs of "true" online students are unique and different from on-campus students.
- Having one person (Director of Student Relations) deal with all students (4000) who have issues or concerns when two people were doing this before BART has resulted in a strain on human resources at the risk of quality service.
- The .75 FTE, nine-month assistant to the Dean/VP SA was to "back up" the .5 FTE office specialist in Residence Life. The Assistant to the VP SA was doing the Office Specialist's job and her own job five hours a day, but the Res Life Office Specialist was not providing assistance to the Dean/VP SA because she was busy doing Residence Life work. Someone needed to provide reception to Residence Life from 8 am to 1 pm and that fell to the Assistant to the Dean/VP SA.
- Mountaineer Family Network focus changed due to elimination of student pay in Student Affairs where the program was housed and coordinated. University Advancement coordinates this now but coming from a different perspective.
- International Student Program – the International Student Advisor's position was in Admissions and recruited international students as well. Prior to BART it was relatively easy for this position to work collaboratively with multicultural initiatives and programming because they both fell under the same reporting line. This position has been significantly reduced so that it is difficult for the person in this position to fully focus on supporting students as her time is limited (.6 FTE, 9 or 10 mth) and is spread between assisting students, working on F1 visas and SEVIS regulations, Study Abroad, and National Student Exchange (NSE). The Multicultural Center Coordinator is working with more international students to backfill the International Student Advisor position not being available to students (particularly during the summer months). There is much more that could be done to stimulate student involvement in Study Abroad and NSE were this position full-time. Not sure if this should be housed in Academic and Career Advising. Regardless of where it is located, this position needs trained back up assistance so students are well served continuously. There seems to be a disconnect between Admissions and International Student Programs about which international students are coming to EOU so it is difficult to intervene with these students until they have been admitted.
- Communication between Student Affairs and Enrollment Services has not been effective. There is often a feeling of being chastised or restricted when Student Affairs staff made an effort to communicate with some staff in Enrollment Services. Also communication within the units of Enrollment Services appears to be limited. Better data sharing across areas would also be helpful.
- Job search services and other career assistance for students have declined since the Career Center was merged with Academic Advising and the Director position was eliminated. Students/alumni often say they are not aware of these services or think that EOU no longer provides them. Student Affairs has not been asked to participate in programming like they used to (e.g., Etiquette Dinner, mock interviews).
- Integrated advising (on-line/on-campus) is difficult to achieve when some of the advisors are not full-time.
- With Disability Services moving out of Student Affairs, it has been more difficult to collaborate effectively.
- EOU states that all freshmen have to be advised but they appear to be able to drop/add without permission from their advisor.

What is needed now?

- Enrollment Services needs to be restructured so that the areas under ES may be more effectively managed by the dean. It should also be called Enrollment Management to steer away from the idea that they are just providing services.
- Increased collaboration, communication, and connection between Student Affairs and Enrollment Services staff.
- To better connect the Multicultural Center and International Student advisor, the ISP Advisor could be moved to Student Affairs
- Disability Services could be moved to Student Affairs to better strengthen the connection between Student Relations and Disability Services.
- Move the Office of the VPSA back to Inlow to create more administrative inclusivity (in progress).
- Review efficiencies in Accounts Payable and Student Accounts due to the reduction in positions.
- Review funding/staffing for Information Technology to determine if it has adequate human and fiscal resources to serve the University's growing technology needs.
- Reinstate more of the diversity funding to be allocated for programming across campus or find other ways to offer campus programming on diversity.
- Look at providing support assistance to the Director of Student Relations to be able to better serve all EOU students in a timely fashion.
- With BART, more work was added to the Center for Student Involvement (e.g., leadership activities and programs) without additional staffing. Thus, more staffing in The Center is need to serve students in a quality fashion.
- Explore how best to provide risk management services.

Finance & Administration

The BART January 2008 document summarized Finance and Administration changes as "reorganization and repositioning . . . that streamlines, consolidates, and reduces the total number of administrators and administrative assistants to maintain a model necessary to insure the success of the University."

What Worked?

Finance and Administration played a key role in EOU successful repositioning through budget reductions by elimination of staff members and through institution-wide budget and investment leadership. Among the positions eliminated were two director positions for which responsibilities were assimilated into other positions. The Director of Budget took on the responsibilities and title of Director of Budget and Business Operations. The Director of Environmental Health and Safety was eliminated and that staff and all related responsibilities were assumed by the Facilities and Planning department.

As Finance and Administration has lost staff through natural attrition and institutional needs have evolved, we have been restructured, eliminating and adding positions with cabinet support, as needed to serve student needs and maintain essential compliance structures. The restructuring has occurred primarily in Business Affairs where there has been the most employee turnover and changes in demands.

What Didn't Work?

One of Finance and Administration's primary concerns is whether or not end-users of Environmental Health and Safety services have experienced problems of which Finance and Administration is not aware. To facilitate a fuller understanding of the campus-wide impact of the elimination of the department of environmental health and safety, Finance and Administration would like to survey faculty and staff regarding lost services, current services levels and needed services.

Since there has been significant restructuring in business services and budget, it is appropriate to also solicit input for each major function in those areas to proactively solicit suggestions. A modest undesirable impact was that BART eliminated the Motor Pool Mechanic position which resulted in a modest annual expense increase of about \$1,000 per year in additional contracted services and estimated lost productivity.

Where do we go from here?

Finance and Administration will continue to provide exceptional customer service to students and other customers. With the assistance of Academic Affairs we will solicit suggestions for how we can ensure that environmental health and safety issues are adequately addressed in addition to overall quality of services.

University Advancement

Over the past three years, Eastern Oregon University has experienced change unprecedented in its history. While belt-tightening through budget reductions and reallocations are an almost biannual activity, the already-lean institution was forced to find new and innovative ways to deal with a budget crisis that was not looming on the horizon, but already taking place. Eastern was sailing through the storm, making course-corrections at the same time.

Looking back, the Budget and Repositioning Team (BART) Plan was successful. The University was able to recover from a devastating series of events: declining enrollment, damaging public relations, poor retention, decreased giving and deteriorating reserves. The institution worked its way out of over \$4 million in shortfalls and recovered to see all-time enrollment highs, a resurgence of community support, retention rebounds and a dramatic increase in fund balances. The true success of BART can be credited to the classified and administrative staff, who absorbed the vast majority of cuts to retain faculty lines and yet worked exceptionally hard during an incredibly difficult situation – and continue to do so today.

A review of the BART Plan and its effects on EOU and University Advancement should be viewed with the knowledge of the issues that precipitated the "perfect storm" and of the work that took place during and after BART took effect. Discussion with Advancement staff indicates a desire never to replicate this type of crisis again, and urgency for leadership to learn from the past, lest history be repeated.

There are a number of items that can be identified as to what worked, what did not work, and what we must do to move forward. These items are identified and outlined here, presented in bulleted, detailed lists. Upon review of the original BART Plan, we were pleased to find that Advancement fulfilled its share of the plan, plus some. Further, the unit has made significant

progress in several areas identified as key components of EOU's recovery: branding, fundraising and public relations.

What was gained for the unit (what worked)

Crisis always helps to remove the clutter and identify specific needs and issues. For University Advancement, the crisis at hand lent itself to clarity of mission across division lines. The University returned to its roots and students were once again the focal point of all our efforts.

- **Focus on brand:** For several years, Advancement had presented the case for developing an institutional brand – one that all sectors of the University would use. Consulting reports backed up the need and working with Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) Works, the brand promise “The University that Works with You” was developed and is now being implemented.
- **Focus on enrollment as key driver:** Recruitment *and* retention finally became the most important elements of our work. All arguments and assumptions not directly focused on enrollment as a whole were able to be set aside. This enabled us to shift the focus of our work, and the work we jointly produce or support with every other unit, back to students and institutional mission. As a result, the messages being sent out to external audiences were much more clear and concise.
- **Merger of marketing efforts between Distance Education and University Advancement:** When Distance Education was fully “folded” into the institution, marketing of online and on-site programs merged with University Advancement. By centralizing efforts, our brand promise was fully developed, resulting in an added level of scrutiny on where and how the University was promoting its programs.
- **Recognition of need for lead-time:** As staffing levels decreased and workloads increased, staff, faculty and students all worked to manage multiple projects and programs. In those efforts they learned that everyone was working on mission-critical efforts. Communication ahead of time has helped projects to be accomplished on time and within budget.
- **Cooperation from faculty increased:** Changes in leadership gave way to changes in approach and an easing of “us versus them” mentalities. Although the BART Plan called for more work to be accomplished, new University leadership modeled working together with transparency. This created a new understanding and respect between faculty and staff.
- **Support from EOU's communities:** The EOU Foundation, Alumni Association, Boosters, and the local and regional communities all have a renewed sense of connection to the University. Threatened with huge budget cuts affecting Eastern, the passion and energy of all the University's constituents was brought to bear on the legislature and new relationships were forged. Local downtown redevelopment efforts now focus on EOU, corporate business partners connect with the university, alumni and friends want to reconnect, and a major fundraising campaign (with support staff) is underway.

Overall, what succeeded was a plan that was transparent, leadership that worked just as hard as every employee, and the willingness of everyone to work together to fulfill our mission.

What was lost for the Unit (what didn't work)

The single largest component lost during the past several years is people. An interesting item to note is that while we reduced staff in Advancement (and every other unit), no workloads, projects or programs were reduced. In fact, workloads were increased and demands grew in all facets of this unit: we needed to advertise and promote more, increase fundraising, improve alumni relations, expand public affairs and build new government relations efforts. While it is important to recognize the impacts in other areas, much of the "legwork" to resurrect Eastern had to do with Advancement work.

- **Loss of momentum in development:** Over the years preceding the BART Plan, development efforts had grown with the addition of a major gifts director and an alumni coordinator. Although a grants position essentially failed, the effort was well placed. Through the BART Plan, as one member of the Advancement team put it, "we hit the 'reset' button." Momentum underway to create development programs was lost with the elimination of all three of the aforementioned positions. The vast majority of major gift prospects had to be set aside, alumni activities and events curtailed and granting opportunities were eliminated. Recently, with support from the EOU Foundation and EOU have we been able to begin to recover to pre-2008 staffing levels.
- **Reputation:** Budget reductions are exceedingly difficult times and often lead to rumors, misunderstandings and miscommunications that lead to a loss of reputation. In EOU's case, the years leading up to and through the BART Plan saw many community members, both internal and external, dealing with hearsay and gossip that became increasingly tricky to manage. One can spend days tracking down unfounded comments only to learn that simply by responding, the University is substantiating the unconfirmed information and spawning more idle talk. Throughout the region, students asked, "why should I attend a sinking university?" and supporters asked similar questions. The reputation damage stemming from past arguing and eventual dissolution of any relationship between the former President and faculty and staff led to most external audiences feeling a genuine distrust of the University.
- **Marketing support for Centers:** One gain – combining marketing efforts between Distance Education and University Advancement – was lost when increased demands in advising eventually pulled the position completely from marketing. The role of this staff member helped greatly as we worked to increase our visibility within the higher education marketplace. Daily calls and contacts to and from each of Eastern's 16 Centers and Sites regarding public relations, advertising and development efforts were handled through this partial position. Once eliminated, it has been increasingly difficult to manage the demands without additional staff.
- **Stress levels moved to very high points (unit and institution):** Institutionally, the overall stress levels for all employees increased. Concerns over job safety, workload and

- **Personnel:** Classified and administrative staff throughout the University felt the impact of the BART Plan first and for the longest period of time. Much of this concern is being addressed now as we continue to evaluate positions and hire new staff to support institutional needs. New hires should be made in conjunction with strategic priorities and connected with success factors. In Advancement, the hiring plan is directly related to a major fundraising campaign and moving the university priorities forward. Adding staff to the unit focuses on development and marketing efforts: gift officers, a communications and marketing director and support staff are on the short list for personnel additions.
- **Customer service:** Whether we refer to it as customer service, student service or something else, it is more important now than ever that we strive to promote and support a positive experience for every interaction associated with EOU. It is well documented that today's students are discerning consumers and expect a high level of support during their educational experience. Parents, alumni, donors and community members also need to have successful dealings with the university – it does not take much for a negative encounter to become a major complaint. At the same time, it is important to discern between “rolling over” on an issue or devoting extraordinary amounts of time and resources to a single individual.
- **Professional development and training:** Barring the ability to hire numerous new staff, one way to retain and develop current staff is to help them improve professionally. Everyone needs to be trained on the basics, from the bargaining agreement to professional expectations and behavior management. Resources for webinars travel to conferences and trainings are excellent investments to make in staff and show that their work and contributions to the University are valued.
- **Build community outreach:** Additional funding for advertising, promotion and sponsorships is a key feature of enhancing regional relations. Examples are staff time to host and coordinate efforts such as the Eastern Oregon Rural Alliance; funding to increase visibility through the Eastern Oregon Film Festival; Chamber memberships in Center communities; and national ad placements in *Newsweek* magazine. We are also working to invest in local businesses. The EOU Foundation has invested over \$500,000 in local banks, and we strive to bring business to local and area companies including Cold Coffee Media, Palmer Printing, Taylinn Signs and Geiser Grand. Targeted efforts are expected to be part of the Advancement planning process as enrollment management plans detail primary recruitment locations.

This is an exciting era for Eastern Oregon University. For the first time in many years, there is an almost universal feeling that the institution is headed in the right direction. We are focused on our regional mission, have internal and external support, and are managing our strategic goals. The next steps are in front of us – all we have to do is take them.

salary cuts led to internal conflicts between employees and employees and their supervisors. Poor management in some units exacerbated existing performance levels and actually reversed gains made in previous years. Within Advancement, stress levels culminated with increased workloads and dealing with fallout from other units. At points along the continuum it became of paramount importance to encourage and in some cases require staff to take vacation time, knowing that projects would be delayed.

- **Grant opportunities:** With the loss of support funding from the Foundation for a director of grants and sponsored programs, the institution could not justify continuation of the position. Unfortunately, this meant that what little engine we had for grants management and production was lost. Eastern occupies a unique niche in the world of grants as a small, public, underfunded, rural university. Yet while we have these key elements that many granting agencies wish to support, we do not have the human resources to apply for the funds that may, in turn, help support our sustainable future and certainly would help in fundraising and development activities.

What is lost is the groundwork upon which most of our eventual success is planned: high visibility, solid government relations, and fundraising and positive community relations. We must learn from BART that pressing all budget reductions upon the staff affects the entire institution – withholding staff from already resource-starved units while asking for more is an unsustainable practice for the business as a whole.

What are the new challenges (what do we need to move forward)

The events leading up to and taking us through the BART Plan provide a chance of renewal for Eastern. Establishing clear goals and priorities in a manner where transparency, professionalism, critical thought and long-term strategic thinking from the President on down is the theme every day and enables the University to move beyond personal politics and succeed. Paramount to our success is management of the “three levers”: enrollment management, resource development and state relations. Each of these components has emerged as the drivers behind our future challenges, and each delivers on the themes of access, affordability and engagement.

- **Enrollment management:** It must be clear to everyone involved that recruitment and retention are by far the most critical aspect of the University. Our mission is education and students are the people we serve. The management, coordination and engagement of this work cannot be ignored or left to its own devices. Specifically, Advancement must be an active leader and partner in the recruitment process. As we recently shifted direction and efforts in development to a much more active role by the Foundation Board, so must our internal efforts all be focused on answering the question of “how does this activity help to drive student recruitment and retention?” Fortunately, the Foundation and Alumni Boards are well engaged in these efforts, from development of a major campaign to connecting with alumni educators in schools throughout Oregon, Idaho and Washington. The community has connected as well, and is more supportive now than ever. Rarely is the comment heard that there is a “disconnect” between the town and gown or that Eastern might be closed by the state. Encouraging these positive efforts will lead to staff who are enthusiastic, faculty who care, and students who are attracted to learn at EOU.

Athletics

As requested, our group reviewed the decisions related to intercollegiate athletics in 2004 and 2006.

2004

- Sought and achieved single affiliation with NAIA and football membership in Frontier Conference
- Began a systematic process of adding athletic aid for recruitment and retention of quality student athletes
- Established a Tier 1 and Tier 2 level for sport programs (Tier 1 Football, Men's and women's basketball) Tier 2(Remaining programs). Aid amounts based on Tiering philosophy and Title IX Law. Philosophy is to fund Tier 1 sports at a higher athletic aid percentage.

2006

- Given the significant budget cuts in general fund, student fee allocations and the increase in expenses it was recommended by the department of athletics and the division of student affairs under which athletics reported to at the time that:
EOU would eliminate programs in order to provide a stronger department, a higher quality experience for our student athletes, coaches, fans and support staff and a more reasonable chance at conference, regional and national success for the remaining programs.
- These recommendations were supported by ASEOU, The Mountaineer Booster Club the EOU Foundation and the President's Cabinet.

We fully support and reaffirm the decisions that were made. As a committee we recommend that:

- A) The University publicly affirms its commitment to the existing intercollegiate programs with no expansion of offerings. We encourage direct communication with advocates/alumni of baseball, wrestling and rodeo expressing this commitment.

Furthermore, continue to address resource issues including:

- B) Athletic Aid- the 2009 EADA report identified EOU next to last in athletic aid in both the CCC and Frontier Conferences.
- C) Facility deferred maintenance and needed upgrades
- D) Staffing in athletic training services to better serve student athletes and move closer to NATA recommended guidelines
- E) Increase Head Volleyball position from .85 FTE to 1.0 FTE
- F) Access to assistant coaches for female student athletes
- G) Increase funding for Assistant Coaches overall