

President's Advisory Council
Thursday, November 14, 2024
4 p.m.-6 p.m.
Room 1514

Present: Ling Becker, Brenda Burnside, Andrew Collins, Dana Krueger, Matt Lindgren, Tamara Mattison, Gozel Rahymjanova, Mindy Travers, Erica Valliant, Nanette Virnig, Sarah Carrico, Kay Francis Garland, Jennifer Huston, Paula Kinney, Jennie Lewis, Greg Rathert, Wendy Roberson, Tracy Wilson, Scott Wilson, Pepe Wonosikou, Sonya Zuker

Absent: Anika Bowie, Yusef Carrillo, Ryan Caulfield, Sarah Crippen, Adam Evenstad, Karin McCabe, Tom McCarthy, Khaliq Rogers, Austin Calhoun, Raji Geneti, Dee Dee Peaslee

Welcome and Land Acknowledgement

Ms. Lewis commenced the meeting at 4:14 p.m.

Meeting Recap

Ms. Carrico said the Higher Learning Commission site visit occurred on October seventh and eighth. The peer review team has submitted their report with the recommendation that Saint Paul College has met all 18 components of accreditation. The peer review team noted the community partnerships with the College are strong, and the community values Saint Paul College. Ms. Carrico said the report submitted by the peer review team will be reviewed by the Institutional Actions Council, and the College anticipates receiving notification of accreditation status early in the new year. She added that with the recommendation that Saint Paul College has met all 18 components, there will be no requirement for follow up visits or special reports, and the next site visit is anticipated to take place in six years.

Hot Topic Conversation—Skills-based Hiring

Dr. Kinney said at the October President's Advisory Council meeting, the hot topic conversation focused on generative AI. The feedback from that conversation was shared with several areas at the College, including the Academic Effectiveness and Innovation department, who is partnering with faculty on ways to incorporate generative AI into their courses, such as ethics considerations, equipping students with skills, and exploring the future of AI. Ms. Francis Garland added Saint Paul College is partnering with Metro State University and Minneapolis College to participate in a design accelerator group focused on addressing transfer processes. This group will explore how AI can help with course equivalencies and make the transfer process smoother.

Dr. Kinney introduced the meeting's topic on skills-based hiring and had council members discuss in small groups how students can highlight skills learned in their courses and help better position themselves to be competitive in the job market.

Discussion

Ms. Becker said project consulting teams could be developed to provide proposals and solutions to issues an organization is encountering, or address community challenges.

Mr. Lindgren said a shift to skills-based hiring may benefit community colleges, particularly for skills-based programs. He added within the manufacturing industry, organizations are starting to hire and teach the candidate the skills needed for them to be successful in the role.

Dr. Kinney noted a large number of Saint Paul College students graduate with an Associate of Arts degree, and asked how students can market the skills they learned. Mr. Wilson said his table discussed internship and work study opportunities that could be available with various departments within the college, and would provide students the experience and opportunity to apply skills learned in the classroom in a real-world setting. Ms. Burnside added having someone be a reference for how the student utilized those skills will also help when interviewing.

Ms. Travers noted the importance for students to develop a functional resume and identifying transferrable skills, including critical thinking and analytical skills. Ms. Rahymjanova said mentorships and career preparation, such as workshops and networking opportunities, will also help students when entering the workforce.

Dr. Kinney said the feedback provided will help as the College begins the strategic planning process with Education Design Lab.

Workforce Training & Microcredentials

Ms. Huston said microcredentials are short programs focused on a specific area. The programs are designed to be flexible, and save students time and money. Ms. Huston highlighted two programs the Workforce Training and Continuing Education unit offers. The Advanced Manufacturing pathway is a non-credit program that partners with either an employer or community-based organization who bring students in. The program is 440 hours, over a six-month time period, where students learn durable skills and have the option for an industry internship. After earning the Advanced Manufacturing certificate, there are future growth opportunities for students in credit-based programs, including CNC Tool Making or Bachelor of Science in Operations Management.

The Help Desk Certification is a program specifically with the Ramsey County Workforce. The non-credit program is 14 weeks, and four credits can be applied towards a credit-based program. Students participating in the Help Desk Certification program learn Microsoft Office skills, as well as customer service skills. At the end of the program, and upon passing an exam, students then have the credential to begin working as a Help Desk specialist.

Dr. Wilson said participants in the microcredential programs have the opportunity to introduce them to the college experience, and also provides a conduit to Saint Paul College to continue their educational journey. She added the Workforce Training and Continuing Education unit is exploring additional pathway programs for Early Childhood Development and other credit-based programs at the college.

Discussion

Mr. Lindgren asked if the microcredential courses are independent of credit-based programs. Ms. Huston said they are, with microcredential programs focused on being completed in as short amount of time as possible so students can enter the workforce quicker.

Ms. Krueger asked if a potential student is not connected with a partner, how they can get connected with the programs. Ms. Huston said students who are not part of a partner program can pay and enroll in a microcredential program, and noted students participating in non-credit programs are unable to apply financial aid toward the cost of the program. She added the Workforce Training and Continuing Education unit continues to look for partners, and if interested to reach out to her.

Student Success: Guided Learning Pathways & Career Development

Ms. Wonosikou said the Guided Learning Pathways model is a Saint Paul College and Minnesota State system-wide initiative to help students explore, choose, plan, and complete programs aligned with their career and education goals. There are four pillars of Guided Pathways—clarify the path; enter the path; stay on the path; and ensure learning. Saint Paul College operationalized the model by focusing on students' first-semester experience, including mandatory student orientation and first semester advising; providing holistic support; and curricular and

program delivery. As part of Saint Paul College's Guided Learning Pathways project is the "Light the Fire" course, which is offered for students who are planning to obtain an Associate of Arts degree. In the "Light the Fire" course, instructors create an assignment for students to assess their academic and career interests. The survey also helps determine students' confidence in their academic and career goals. Depending on the survey responses, students will be assigned an advisor, as well as be connected with other staff that can help them along their educational journey.

Ms. Wonosikou said key lessons learned from the model include identifying ways to tailor support strategies for students; late registration intervention; providing consistent support throughout a student's education journey; and ongoing cross-training for staff. In continuing the work of the Guided Learning Pathways model, next steps include developing microcredentials and non-credit pathways; re-engaging students who have stopped out before completing their program; and hiring a career navigator.

Discussion

Ms. Valliant asked what students can expect from a "Light the Fire" course. Ms. Wonosikou said instructors teaching "Light the Fire" courses include activities to help students determine whether the program is the right fit for them. Ms. Carrico added Science faculty teaching such courses hold conversations with students on what potential career tracks the program can lead to.

Small Group Activity

Dr. Kinney introduced the activity and had council members break out into small groups to review the resume examples and identify how students can best highlight their skills.

Discussion

Many of the small groups focused on the resume's format. Ms. Zuker noted the need to see the skill identified displayed within the actual format of the resume, and several council members discussed the length of the resumes needing to be one-page. Dr. Kinney asked how applicants can validate their skills. Many council members noted cross-walking the bullet-pointed skill with the experience of what they did in a role. Mr. Collins added having a balance of stated qualifications or keywords and demonstrated achievements in one's role will help provide a clearer picture of the applicant, as well as help the applicant when preparing to interview.

Meeting adjourned at 6:04 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Jennie Lewis