
Lycoming College AAEB Meeting Fall 2023

Call to order at 1:25 pm by AAEB President Phil Levesque

A meeting of the AAEB was held in person on October 5, 2023. Attendees included Holly Andrews, Sarah Balduino, Andy Bucke, Joe Ciccone, Reb Donohue, Sandi Gackenbach, Mindy Gunn, Len Hahn, Nancy Hoerner, Kerri Kearney, Donald (DC) Keys, Phil Levesque, Sherry Macpherson, Chuck McCall, Brad Myhre, Mary-Louise Paucke, Michael Ruddy, Tara Shaffer, Brenda Soder, Beckie Sweet, Nathan Tatro, Erica Vargo, Lillian Weekes, & Patrick Welteroth

Welcome

President Phil Levesque announced that the meeting would immediately move forward with remarks from President Trachte.

State of the College - President Kent C. Trachte

Rankings & Reputation

- Inching our way to Top 100 from 111 to 107
- Performing more like a top 100 institution
- Validity of *US News* rankings have been challenged or boycotted but not joined completely, however; it does make an impact on the market, college lists, professions, etc.
- Factors driving us in a positive direction vs factors holding us back

US News Analysis Student Measures

Overview

- 2016 to 2024 moved from 164 to 107
- Most movement or 2nd most among all the national liberal arts college
- 200 or so institutions in this prestigious liberal arts category (institutions without meaningful numbers of graduate programs, or liberal arts majors vs comprehensive majors) Williams, Amherst, Swarthmore, & Haverford, etc., at the top
- We outperform our predicted graduation rates by 11%. 5th best among 200 some liberal arts colleges
- Four categories: Graduation & Retention, Graduation Performance, Student Excellence, & Social Mobility
 - ✓ Graduation & Retention - 21%

- ✓ Grad Performance – 10%
- ✓ Student Excellence 5% (reduced from 7% to 5% & top 10% eliminated). Improved significantly this year & got into Top 100
- ✓ Social Mobility – 5% to 11%. Compared how many Pell-Eligible to Non-Pell-Eligible student graduation rates, & we are 5th best!

US News Analysis Resource Measures

Overview

- Four categories: Peer Assessment, Faculty Resources, Fiscal Resources, & Post Graduation Outcome
 - ✓ Peer Assessment – 20%. Gives us the most difficulty. 200 schools are ranked 1-5 scale by various college liberal arts roles, & need to rely on everyone knowing us. Working with Leadership Council & through The Annapolis Group to work on tactics or strategies to influence our rankings
 - ✓ Faculty Resources – 20% to 15% & several variables were eliminated. We've made our salaries more competitive
 - ✓ Fiscal Resources - from 10% to 8%. We are doing better at spending on academic programs & supporting our existing ones
 - ✓ Post Graduation Outcome – from 5% to 10%. Through our new career model, we are making some nice upward movement

US News Faculty Resource Breakdown

Overview

- Faculty Resources with Sub Components: Student Faculty Ratio, Percent FT Faculty, & Faculty Salaries
 - ✓ Faculty Resources – 15% total
 - ✓ Student Faculty Ratio – 4%. We've lowered our student to faculty ratio from 14 to 1 to 10.6 to 1. Just outside the Top 100
 - ✓ Percent FT Faculty – 3%
 - ✓ Faculty Salaries – 8%. Our salaries put us into the Top 100

Higher Education & The Demographic Cliff Looming

- ✓ Hit in 2026 or 2027 – means fewer college age students than there are right now. Between 8 to 10 fewer, & data 2023 shows no meaningful bounceback
- ✓ Domestic college age students – 10% lower
- ✓ College going rate – went down, & we experienced this during the pandemic

Enrollment Changes NE Liberal Arts Colleges (2019-2022)

Different impact on liberal schools:

- Top 50 not bad
- 51-100 will lose some
- 101 + catastrophic
- Northwest & Midwest demographics being the worst

- Enrollment liberal arts
 - ✓ Top 50 enrollment grew slightly; about 2.9%
 - ✓ 50-100; declined 5%
 - ✓ 101 +; 18% decline
 - ✓ Good news is we effectively perform more like a 51-100 during the pandemic in terms of sustaining our enrollment
 - ✓ We have to continue to gain market share. We should be smart & strategic about investing in the quality of our product
 - ✓ We are fortunate that our endowment is \$185M
 - ✓ Our debit ratio allows us to have some flexibility

Enrollment Trends PA Liberal Arts Colleges (2019-2022)

PA has a strong group of National Liberal Arts Colleges with some significant overlaps (2019-2022):

- ✓ Allegheny, Albright, Juniata 16% – 24% loss in enrollment. Allegheny announced swiping cuts & lost their president
- ✓ International student enrollment impact on schools such as Franklin & Marshall. Hopeful for a bounce back now that the pandemic is over

Q&A (each summarized)

Andy: What's the impact with competing against so many Top 100?

Trachte: It's why we have to be really good at what we do. Invest smart, add some new programs in demand, improve the quality of our facilities, & invest in things that are going to retain students. It's very difficult, plus there's 90 independent or private colleges, including the Penn State system to compete against. There's Pitt & its branches too; very saturated market in PA. We have to be able to recruit out of state. We also have to get our international recruits back up. Went from 20 students before the pandemic to 5 or 6 international students.

Diversifying Our Student Population In Past 10 Years

White student enrollment:

- 2015; 207 – went up a bit
- 2017; very bad enrollment year
- Currently, we are basically flat but doing better than some of our other Northeast liberal arts counterparts

Students of color enrollment:

- While the college population is declining, the Hispanic/ Latino population is growing as well as the Asian American population
- The African American population is relatively flat, slightly down
- We need to be attending to markets of students that historically we didn't do a great job recruiting
- Monitoring our peers, what occurred during the pandemic, & make wise business, educational, & ethical decisions to recruit populations

Warrior Stadium/ Park Update (no official name yet)

- Successfully concluded our negotiations with the City
- Building collegiate baseball field in Brandon Park
- Own field & leasing the land
- 20 year lease that renews automatically every 10 years
- Youth leagues & summer camps will use it when we aren't

Old City Update

- No action
- No development going on per Trustees & real estate developer Stan Slaughter. Evaluations are down, construction costs are up, & cost to borrow capital is up significantly
- \$3.5M to \$4M valued commercial building will likely cost \$7M to build, if not more currently
- Developing a Plan B to share with Trustees at our October meeting
- Had some success with Pine Ridge with strategizing, get public funding, & helping to bridge some of the capital costs gaps but a lot depends on Congress getting spending authorization bills with \$2.6M congressionally directed
- Funding grant, HUD (Housing & Urban Development), once approved, will help the developer's balance sheet & reduce the amount that is needed to borrow
- Another 18 months to a year before it gets going
- Planting grass so it looks nicer in the interim
- Blue house not solved yet

Broader Part Of Our 2021 Strategic Plan Update

- Bring more diversity to our faculty & staff pool. We've had some modest progress
- We need to do more of a comprehensive review on how we advertise, our hiring practices; how do we select, & how do we interview to make sure we are expanding our talent
- Recruiting from populations that are historically under represented so we don't miss talent
- Connected to excellence is being able to recruit a diverse student body

Intro of New AAEB Members

- Joe Ciccone, Sherry Macpherson, Rebekah "Beckie" Sweet, Nate Tatro, & Patrick Welteroth

Advancement Update - EVP Chip Edmonds

Last 5 Years Comparison (2019,20,21,22,23) & 3 Measures in Fiscal Year

- Annual fund - dollars spent immediately on the institution. Support of our student retention fund, warrior athlete programs, research, & internships
- LF (Lycoming Fund) dollars - support other areas that are not part of the normal operations (not part of the tuition) such as gifting a new building, new scholarships, new professorships, etc., for the growth & expansion of the College
- LF Unrestricted - full amount gifts raised such as estates, insurance policies, etc., but make a distinct impact on the College
- How these dollars land year in & year out, are very important to us. The longevity & forward commitment to the institution & funds raised is very important to us

- Capital Projects – didn't launch any new but we have the baseball field underway
- Life vehicle – 4% (small but mighty), tax benefit while being charitable are life income gifts such as setting up a vehicle with us, & we pay you a predetermined income annually; you get a tax deduction on income & initial gift. Can be very attractive depending on the interest rate environment
- With the demographic cliff looming, we are trying to deepen the level of support for unrestricted gifts. Often the first entry for giving is based on having an affinity for a sport, music, Greek organization, etc. Knowing where your money is going is important

Q&A

Andy: In the church, we have trouble with people designating so much that it ties our hands otherwise. Do you feel that?

Chip: In building the budget, we need to keep increasing that unrestricted support every year in order to meet our budget. We've not built it or designed it that way historically so we haven't created that pressure for ourselves. Churches are still trying to grow & expand major gifts. It's the space that higher education is good at.

Reb: What areas are we focused on; gaps?

Chip: Really prioritizing areas that we know are of interest and that are priorities for students so you'll see some of the new areas like the Student Emergency Fund, Mental Health & Wellness Fund; what students are thinking about. The College is prioritizing increased general unrestricted support and supporting the endowment. We have a new Endowment Match Scholarship Program that will encourage & build support.

5 Years Overall Participation

- We have more people that want to make commitments each year to a little over \$1.8M & we are only realizing about \$760K a year so we are filling faster than depleting that long term support

Day of Giving & Scholarship Week & Giving Tuesday

- Continue robust Days of Giving on April 9th & 10th
- Scholarships are the lifeline of this institution, & our capacity & commitment to students enrolling here. Scholarship Week is November 13th-17th
- Collectively getting a group together in support of a scholarship might be a way for multiple people to support something that is meaningful to them. Giving Tuesday is on November 28th

Endowed Scholarship Match Initiative

- ✓ 100% up to \$500K. 50% for each additional dollar up to \$1M
- ✓ Minimum commitment \$25K
- ✓ Match available until June 30,2025 or until pool of matching funds is exhausted
- ✓ Gifts may be made outright or pledged over a period of time but must be fulfilled by June 30,2025

Endowed Results to Date

- ✓ 18 commitments
- ✓ \$1,089,705 pledged; \$772,705 received
- ✓ 7 new endowed scholarships
- ✓ Additions to 10 existing endowed
- ✓ 1 scholarship intended to be funded with bequest funded now

Baseball Update

2 pieces of the project: \$5.5M with \$2.5M to 3M for the core aspects of the field

- ✓ Core aspects by Spring 2024 – site work, prep grounds, new materials, turf, dugout? Bullpens, & infrastructure for lighting
- ✓ With other half coming from State funding to help with press box, stands, & more lighting
- ✓ The City has invested by refurbishing the 2 league field houses right by the tennis courts (feels more like an extension of our campus)
- ✓ College's goal is raising \$2.5 for the project
- ✓ At \$500-\$600K, & we are in some conversations for leadership naming gifts for either the field or stadium
- ✓ Community impacts so we are looking for people that appreciate the College, really like baseball, & love the idea of an asset that benefits the entire community

Q&A

Reb: Talks for partnerships with The Little League?

Chip: It's larger than the league's size so they won't necessarily use it for games, etc., but partnerships in terms of community impacts, & we are hopeful that they will lend their voice to advocate as well.

Enrollment & the 4 Pillars

Product offering, lead generation, price setting/merit scholarship strategy, & enrollment team/ ground game

- 1) Product Offerings – what we have such as academics, athletics, music, & investing in buildings like adding the music building, updating Lamade/ Keiper Rec Center
- 2) Lead Generation & Search – buy \$225M names that funnel down into inquiries & prospects. Did a RFP for a consulting group to help. Awarded to Huron Consulting Group Inc
- 3) Price Setting - in this market, we look at what other institutions costs like PSU, Susquehanna, etc., while looking at academic strengths, athletics participation, fantastic musical performers, & so on to gather our whole pricing model
- 4) Ground Game/ Territory Management - high schools, college fairs, boutique events, & getting alumni involved in events

Q&A

Cookie: What's the total amount of students enrolled?

Chip: Right now, total students enrolled is just under 1089. 320 new students; including not just freshman but transfer. "Melt" or choosing /switching schools at last minute; we only lost 4 students.

Nate: Both you & the president mentioned the shift in demographics but you didn't mention gender. There's data to suggest that men nationally are enrolling less & graduating at lower rates.

Chip: Where are they if they aren't in athletics or some sort of affinity like music or theater? Hasn't shifted dramatically for us, but it has changed on where they are coming from. Coming from other states vs PA.

Cookie: Gender shifts like more men going into nursing & teaching; probably good for liberal arts?

Chip: Job roles are more fluid, but enrollment for males is still at a lower rate than women.

Becky: I know for affordability a lot of college age kids are going to community colleges & then looking to transfer. Are we doing any intentional community college recruitment?

Chip: There's a particular challenge; students enroll in a community school only miles away from a 4 year institution that they ultimately enroll in. For us one is about 50 miles away. So yes we establish relationships/ agreements so students know that most of their credits will transfer. Institutions having the most success are the ones though with community colleges in their backyard.

Mary-Louise: Forgiveness Loans & the amount of interest they are charging; how is that affecting us?

Chip: We see it as a larger market challenge. Just take what you need. The Federal Stafford Loan is regulated & you get reasonable payback. We respect that students want to payoff loans before giving back.

Reb: Adding graduate programs?

Chip: We do need more pathways but we aren't seeing a real significant increase in students that aren't professionals seeking their own graduate degrees.

Forrest Hall Tour – Farewell!!

Committee Meetings

Student Panel

The AAEB had a chance to hear about student experiences & ask them about their perceptions of the institution, education, facilities, pathways, & resources, & how they'd appreciate alumni support & engagement.

- Having time for social experiences is important
- Grateful for the small school size & opportunities it offers
- Hard to find connections on where to go next for certain majors or components of them
- Some majors & classes teach students how to use resources like LinkedIn, but if not, it's advertised that there's a workshop. Workshop times aren't always accessible to all
- More resources vs throwing students in to figure things out is desirable
- Hiring more people we can relate too is helpful
- Have more events that connect us to more students in order to discuss & learn about what others are doing in their majors, internships, campus organizations, etc., is necessary
- Classes should talk more about connecting with alumni & networking
- Market all resources to everyone before junior & senior years

- Struggle to get “the pandemic” students to interact; even leave their rooms
- Traditions are important to maintain, & some have been lost during the pandemic & with staff & student transitions
- Having a space, acceptance, & feeling safe on campus for everyone is very important, & we need to talk about it as a community
- Rethinking Freshman Seminar to include DEI may benefit
- Staff reaction time frames, & communication on action steps & plans presented by student leadership is critical
- Advisors’ time with students & organizations is increasingly valuable to help address issues & make the institution aware of concerns

October 6 Meeting Continued

Phil Levesque resumed the meeting on October 6, 2023 at 9:26 am.

Housekeeping

Approval of Minutes – Motion by Len Hahn; Sandi Gackenbach seconded. Minutes approved.

Treasurer Report – Erica Vargo reported that there were no transactions since our last meeting. Motion by Len Hahn; seconded by Mary-Louise Paucke. Report approved.

New Business – AVP of Alumni Engagement Amy Reyes reported on alumni plaques

- ✓ 4 award plaques will be updated & moved from Long Hall to The Krapf Gateway Center in a more prominent location on the 3rd floor
- ✓ Laura Seddelmeyer from our history department & Caroline Payne from our political science department are taking a 10 day trip July 4th-14th to Australia. Our Common Hour in October will be about the history & mysteries of the county. About \$2400 (not including airfare) & is a good opportunity to travel with alumni & friends, & celebrate Phil’s birthday!!

Admissions – EVP Chip Edmonds & Associate VP of Enrollment Management & Chief Enrollment Officer Chip Hinton

- Introduction, background, & vision from Chip Hinton. “Lycoming is an opportunity for these students to really learn their foundation of their character & to develop that into who we think they ought to be.”
- Attended the NACAC (National Conference for Admissions Counselors) with the team
- **Areas to approve on:**
 - 1). International Recruitment – working on a strategy to pull in more students over the next 2-3 years
 - 2). Transfer Recruitment - we do a great job blending traditional with the new on campus. We are improving so let’s get students back here to take another look at all the great change
 - 3). Alumni Outreach Recruitment – getting alumni more involved in recruitment such as note writing, use technology like text messaging when appropriate, tracking it, & see how it makes a difference

Back to our 4 Pillars – EVP Chip Edmonds

- ✓ Application Stage – seniors & once they apply. 3300 applications; 2100 admits & 350 enrolled for the fall semester
- ✓ Students apply to 8-10 schools now. There's a common application vs applications fees for each school so it has been made easier to apply
- ✓ 25 years ago, we had a 34% yield. We have a much lower yield today with impacts such as the pandemic & a global shift in international students
- ✓ Recruit differently such as athletes vs non-athletes
- ✓ Find high performance students from under represented areas
- ✓ Application shifts – increase & decrease due to “noise” impacts so we need to build more relationships, partner with students already here from other countries, & utilize our staff members that speak other languages

Q&A

Reb: Are there countries that have grad partnerships, scholarships, opportunities available, or ways to continue studies?

Chip E: Yes, & we need this to grow. We actually use to have relationships through the Methodist Church. Not so much anymore, plus we had an UN ambassador from Angola that was a graduate.

Chip H: These people may fall under a few categories too. Current population of international students is 26, & our goal is 75 & beyond that in a few years. They may be international, athletes, & transfers so we need to look at everything, & because of these numbers cast a large net by looking at countries we haven't consider. We have Marleni Feinstein to help support this.

Chuck: Does Huron play a role in this international piece?

Chip H: Not yet. We really want them to focus on the competitive market this first year.

Mary-Louise: How about utilizing local exchange student programs to grow international students?

Chip H: That's a great point & I'll take a look at.

Chip E: It's a really great point. We've had some history. We had some soccer players, & there are some private independent high schools that have kids that want to stay.

Tara: What trends are you seeing in retention? Partnerships? Lining with our goals? And in looking at international transfer students?

Chip E: The data between our lowest & highest retaining group is not very significant. It's about 5%. Sophomore class this year was 82.6%. Of the groups, the lowest income group, continue to struggle the most. Student athletes generally retain at higher levels. The hierarchy has been female athletes, non-female athletes, male athletes, than non-male athletes. International students usually retain very well like 98%. Since the pandemic, it has become more of a goal to get into the country, & then they end up at a certain flagship schools so we have to be careful about that & make sure that we are a good fit. Partnerships are about a 5% difference.

Nate: So we saw we were tops in social mobility but what percentage of admits were Pell-eligible recipients?

Chip E: Reached a high of about 48% to 38%, in our cohort such as Susquehanna which is about 23%, we have made a relatively large Pell-eligible commitment. Some of it is geography like being near a larger city with higher incomes.

Chip H: Some of it is our brand too. Other small schools would love to have our Pell Grant numbers.

Chip E: We need to welcome change, & educate effectively based on the demographics.

Cookie: What are we doing for students that can't go home when the school is closed; they don't live close or are international students? Provide gift cards? Could be a good retention point.

Chip E: We do have programs while staying on campus. We found students weren't taking us up the opportunity to go to a staff member's for Thanksgiving. We have to strike a balance, & it is fundamentally about the relationships that we develop.

Brad: Seems like there may be a lack of continuity on campus per our student panel that we met with yesterday.

Chip E: Definitely something that we need to look at further.

Reb: Do students know where to go for help beyond their first year?

Chip E: We have the resources & programs but need to make sure that we are marketing & communicating it effectively.

Composition of the Class (Funnel)

- ✓ Looking at our 1st year athletes, we've been fairly consistent. The preliminary Fall 2023 indicates the highest number of athletes in the past 4 years
- ✓ 1st year non-athletes yield increased slightly this year resulting in 3 more enrolled students despite 10 fewer admits
- ✓ We pay attention to the behaviors of our various groups when we have fewer students. We look at what programs are they looking for, & what are the things that we need to do to amplify us so that we get back to a return
- ✓ International is our lowest yield rate so it's why we need to be more accurate, & with our partnerships as well
- ✓ Be strategic with our enrollment team, what we communicate, what we ask our coaches to communicate, on the role our faculty could play, etc.

Committee Reports

Communications & Career Services – Lara Breon

- Common Hours Suggestion – Hurricane Specialist Brian McNoldy
- Brunch on Homecoming Saturday with a fundraising element to it & it keeps people on campus
- Selling t-shirts to help fund our scholarship
- Limited alumni options in the bookstore
- Alumni to serve as student mentors as they go through the interview process, etc.
- Offering meetings for substance issues especially before or during the Homecoming demands

Recruitment & Recognition – Holly Andrews

Nominees:

Dr. James E. Douthat Outstanding Achievement Award: Herbert Wolfe 1993

Angela R. Kyte Outstanding Alumni Award: Robert Martin 1995

Taunia Oechslein Young Alumni Award: Jordan S.F. Hollander 2010

Dave V. Bower Service Award: Frank Kindler 1977

Brenda Soder motioned to accept & Mary-Louise seconded. Committee nominees' approved.

Phil encouraged the AAEB to reach out to friends & networks that meet the criteria for these awards rather than being proposed by college staff & administrators.

Amy recapped the marketing & acceptance of nominees throughout the year including how to get to the criteria for each award. Staff members research nominees.

Holly mentioned that next meeting will be new members' nominations & mentioned that we are looking for members in the 80s. Nancy!!?

Alumni & Engagment – Mike Ruddy

- Would like to have more events at The Pub
- Warriorthon; no results yet
- Giving Tuesday is on November 28th
- Become an advocate to promote events through social media, etc.
- Days of Giving on April 9th & 10th
- Baseball opportunities, & Associate Head Football Coach Steve Wiser celebrates 50 years/ donations in his name
- Discussed too many challenges during fundraisers so narrowing them down would benefit
- 1812 stickers – fundraiser
- Donor honor rolls posted on campus TVs throughout the weekend
- Some upcoming events include – The Barnyard & Carriage House, Mission Washington DC, New York City bus trip, & Santa Express Williamsport
- Another baseball event would be great

Adjournment

Phil L. motioned to adjourn meeting. DC motioned & Mike seconded, & the meeting was officially adjourned at 10:32.

Erica D. Vargo
Secretary

Date of approval

