

Minnesota State University, Mankato

Enrollment Management Plan

2012-2017 *Results*



MINNESOTA STATE
UNIVERSITY
M A N K A T O

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11/20/2017

I. Introduction

The purpose of enrollment management is to identify, recruit, and retain students in order for Minnesota State University, Mankato to fulfill its mission and goals. The following enrollment management plan owed much of its success to the institution's ability to refine current recruitment and retention practices, while developing new strategies to achieve our goals. In short, the focus of the enrollment plan was to improve our ability to identify potential students and to improve our student retention.

To record our progress and the success of this strategic enrollment management plan, updates are infused into the document along with the final measurements for our goals.

II. Reason for a Minnesota State University, Mankato Plan

In Fall 2011, President Richard Davenport charged the campus with developing an enrollment management plan to improve our four-year graduation rate, improve our first year student to sophomore student retention rate, and grow the University to 20,000 students. The development of this enrollment management plan not only aligned campus resources to tackle President Davenport's three measurable goals, but it also focused us on necessary future planning and budgeting. This enrollment management plan provided concrete goals and strategies for the past five years (2012-2017).

III. Five-Year Enrollment Trends at Minnesota State University, Mankato

Minnesota State Mankato was experiencing a growth period, unlike other institutions in the MnSCU system. Since 2007, Minnesota State Mankato grew by 7.6% in total headcount and 4.7% in Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) undergraduate and graduate enrollment. More specifically, overall unduplicated undergraduate enrollment grew by 6.6% and overall unduplicated graduate enrollment 14.6%. First-Year Students and Transfer Students grew by 6.3% and 4.1% respectively. During this same time, enrollment of Ethnic Minorities grew from 7.3% to 9.6%, International Student enrollment grew from 3.4% to 4.1%, and the percentage of Caucasian students decreased from 82.6% to 82.2%. The total number of students who have enrolled in online and off-campus coursework has increased by 14.3% during this same period.

Since 2007, retention rates have also remained rather steady. During this time period, Minnesota State Mankato averaged a First-Year Student to Sophomore year retention rate of 76.5%. While this rate often leads the MnSCU Universities, there is a retention gap between various ethnicities. The retention rate for the Full-Time, First-Year to the Sophomore year for Fall 2010, International Students

^aRefers to unduplicated headcount for Fall terms

achieved a 92.5% retention rate, Caucasian Students a 77.1% retention rate, and Ethnic Minorities a 70.5% retention rate. Full-time graduate students had an 86.5% retention rate for the second fall.

Recognizing the importance of retention as a part of our overall persistence goals, the University made its first change in its undergraduate admission policy since its inception. By looking at our student performance, characteristics, and goals, we refined the policy for the selection process. This change has reduced our incoming first-year student class size, but has had the positive impact on first- to second-year retention that we were targeting. The University also changed its policy for Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAPS) for Undergraduate Students to mirror the federal aid eligibility policy. The immediate impact was a reduction of our first- to second-year retention rate, which was being artificially boosted by the delay in enforcing SAPS, and a corresponding increase in our sophomore to junior retention rate. The retention rate for the Full-Time, First-Year to the Sophomore year for Fall 2017, International Students achieved a 71.3% retention rate, Caucasian Students a 75.9%, and Ethnic Minorities a 68.8% retention rate. Full-time graduate students had an 80.7% retention rate for the second fall.

IV. Changes and Opportunities

The State of Minnesota is also going through changes in its citizenry that will have an impact on our enrollment management plan. According to the Minnesota Office of Higher Education, 2010 represents the beginning of a 10% decline in the number of high school graduates until 2017. A total drop of 5,346 students is expected from the 65,073 who graduated in 2010. This same period is expected to also correspond with a growth in High School Graduates of Color by 3%. To help us understand this decline, for Fall 2010, 51% of Minnesota high school graduates went to a post-secondary institution, of which 14% enrolled in a state university.

The following five-years coincided with a recovery of the United States' economy, which corresponded with more job opportunities. There are 6% less college students across the country than five years ago. At the same time, the population of high school graduates in the state of Minnesota declined to the lowest number in the past decade culminating in the Spring 2017 high school senior cohort being over 2,000 less than the Spring 2012 cohort. Additionally, the percentage of Minnesota high school students who pursued higher education dropped 1%, which was compounded by the 3% increase of Minnesota high school students enrolled at an out-of-state higher education institution. Minnesota's two-year colleges felt this population pinch first, which trickled to the Universities with a smaller available transfer student population. In short, the past five years were unlike the growth period of the previous five, resulting in greater competition for a smaller population of prospective students.

During the past five-year period, non-traditional student growth has occurred across the state. Representing a 3.8% increase over this period ending in 2010, non-traditional students in the 25-34 age range grew by 3.1%. For FY2010, this 25-34 age range represented 21.7% of all MnSCU students, which was only second to the 21-24 age range at 23.3%. Most of the 25-34 age students are place bound for their education.

^aRefers to unduplicated headcount for Fall terms

For Fall 2014, the largest undergraduate age group was 20- to 24-year olds representing 40% of all college student enrollments in Minnesota. Even with this shift, 12% of Minnesotans ages 25-34 report actively pursuing higher education, while 38% of this age group possess at least a bachelor's degree, which is a historical high for Minnesota.

Border States

Most of our neighboring states will also experience a decline in high school graduates. South Dakota and North Dakota are expected to see decreases greater than 10% through 2015. Wisconsin should experience a decline just below 10%. Iowa is the lone border state expected to remain steady with its number of high school graduates.

The Border States projected declines remained true for the past five years.

Minnesota State University, Mankato Strategic Plan 2010-2015

In 2010, Minnesota State Mankato put forth five strategic action steps to transform our University. These are:

- Change the world by collaboratively addressing our planet's most challenging problems.
- Foster the thriving and robust academic culture of a university with applied doctoral programs.
- Greatly expand the reach of our extended learning programs.
- Reinvigorate our physical home and build the campus of the future.
- Measure and continuously improve our work to ensure excellence in all that we do.

Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) Strategic Framework

Chancellor Rosenstone has crafted a new Strategic Framework that provides further definition and demand of our enrollment management plan. The three parts of the new Strategic Framework are:

- Ensure access to an extraordinary education for all Minnesotans
- Be the partner of choice to meet Minnesota's workforce and community needs
- Deliver to students, employers, communities, and taxpayers the highest value / most affordable option

Summary of Changes and Opportunities

The environment in which we recruit and retain students is changing. The number of high school graduates is declining, this declining population is growing more diverse, and our traditional out-of-state markets are experiencing the same. The enrollment figures and demographic shifts shared above will be significant factors in enrollment management planning.

The past five years reflected declines in overall enrollment at Minnesota State Mankato, although there were punctuations of success during this period. Most noticeably, we grew our market share for each of the past five years across all Minnesota State System colleges and universities. We teach the most students and the most credits. The profile of our full-time, first-time new undergraduate students has begun to improve slightly. We enroll more students who score 30 or better on the ACT. Our international student population has more than doubled to over 1,300 students.

V. Elements of an Enrollment Management Plan

Goals

Goals are the overall conclusion or accomplishment that the plan is hoping to achieve. Goals should be specific, quantifiable, and measurable.

^aRefers to unduplicated headcount for Fall terms

Strategies

Strategies are the overall methods that we will use to accomplish the goals.

Action Plans

Action Plans describe how the strategies will be accomplished. Action Plans include who is responsible, what the action is, a cost for the action, a timeline for the action, and a measurable outcome.

VI. Enrollment Management Goals and Strategies

Minnesota State University, Mankato has identified the following four goals based on our Strategic Plan, MnSCU Strategic Framework, shifting state demographics, historical trend data, and our aspirations. The following goals and measures are based on 2010 graduation, retention, persistence, and enrollment rates reported in FY2011.

Goal One – Increase the first- to second-year retention rate incrementally to 85% by 2017

1.1 Increase first-year student retention incrementally by 2% annually.

While we did not achieve the five-year growth goal we had set, we did see an improvement over this period. First-year student retention to the second year improved from 70.1% in 2012 to 74.3% in 2017.

1.2 Develop campus tools and systems to assist in the retention of first-year students.

During this past five-year period the campus has written an Academic Master Plan to include a new vision for advising, created undergraduate and graduate degree maps, participated in AASCU's Reimagining the First Year of College project, and replaced our retention software with Starfish retention software.

Goal Two – Increase our four-year graduation rate by 15% by 2017

2.1 Increase First-Time First-Year Full-Time Student four-year completion rate incrementally by 3% annually.

FTFYFT Student four-year completion rate improved from 17.7% for the Fall 2009 entering cohort to 22.9% for the Fall 2013 entering cohort.

2.2 Increase First-Time Full-Time Transfer Student two-year completion rate incrementally by 2% annually.

FTFT Transfer Student two-year completion rate improved from 49.4% for the Fall 2009 entering cohort to 50.7% for the Fall 2013 entering cohort.

2.3 Develop campus tools and systems to promote 4-year graduation.

The single biggest effort during the past five years was the creation of four-year degree maps for all undergraduate programs and degree maps for graduate programs.

Goal Three – Increase our six-year undergraduate graduation rate for all populations to 65% by 2017

3.1 Increase six-year completion rate incrementally by 3% annually.

We did not achieve the five-year growth goal we had set and we did see a decline over this period. The six-year undergraduate completion rate declined from 54.0% for the Fall 2006 entering cohort to 52.3% for the Fall 2011 entering cohort. This undergraduate population includes all Full-Time and Part-Time Undergraduate First-Time, Non-Degree, and Transfer students.

3.2 Develop campus tools and systems to assist in the retention of first-year students.

The aforementioned creation of the degree maps and the purchase of AcademicWorks scholarship software, titled Scholarship Finder for campus, are two campus tools, which should impact student retention.

^aRefers to unduplicated headcount for Fall terms

Goal Four – Increase total student enrollment through recruitment and retention to 17,000 by 2017^a

4.1 Increase new undergraduate student enrollment incrementally by 1.5% each year.

Overall, new undergraduate student enrollment declined by 6.5% over the five-year period. Most of this decline is attributable to a large single year decline for Fall 2017 because of our University response to the Higher Learning Commission's change in Concurrent Enrollment instructor standards and a drop in Full-Time First-Time new students. Removing Fall 2017 (-6.1% from the previous year), the decline is less than 1% since Fall 2013.

4.2 Increase new graduate student enrollment incrementally by 2% each year.

Overall, new graduate student enrollment declined by 6.6% over the five-year period. Most of decline is attributable to a large single year decline for Fall 2017. Removing Fall 2017 (-10.5% from the previous year), there was actual growth of over 4% since Fall 2013.

4.3 Increase current undergraduate student retention incrementally by 2% each year.

As stated, this goal proves too difficult to measure. However, Goal 1.1 is the best measure to show progress.

4.4 Develop campus tools and systems to assist in the recruitment and retention of students.

The launch of the degree maps, Starfish retention software, Scholarship Finder website, comprehensive online learning initiative, consolidation of graduate and undergraduate admissions processing, and the creation of a Director of Advising are all campus tools to improve our recruitment and retention of students.

^aRefers to unduplicated headcount for Fall terms