Attendees:

Core Team: Dr. Beck, Kemba Chambers, Heather Congo, Valerie Cox, Brian Gann, Debi Hendershot (Core & Data), Odessa Jordan, Tammy Kerby, Janet Kincherlow-Martin, Michael Kinney, Necia Nicholas, Jannett Spencer, Carla Swinney, Alicia Taylor, Jennie Walts (Recorder)

Data Team: Rodney Alford, Latosha Baldwin, Derek Berry, Gina Briscoe, Donna Estill, Linda Graves, Bryan Helms, Sherry Stancil, Cynthia Stephenson, Felisha Taylor, Nathan Tyler

Coaches: Dr. Mary Fifield, Mr. Douit

Absent: Bobbi Jo Carter (Data), Vickie Hale-Brown (Core)

Ms. Taylor opened the meeting and stated that the number one thing employees want to know is more about the college and the areas related to what students need to go through to be admitted and attend classes.

Ms. Taylor gave a brief overview of the top barriers identified as impacting a student’s ability to succeed at Calhoun. She also outlined the top five things identified that Calhoun does well.

Ms. Taylor and Ms. Martin had an opportunity to meet with student representatives from our clubs and organizations. Ms. Taylor asked the question, "Why did you choose Calhoun?", and their response was that the faculty care about the students and their success.

Ms. Pauletta Burns, Director of Admissions and Records provided a brief overview of how a student applies for admissions and the process that staff utilizes to get a student admitted and ready to register for classes. She also outlined the process for students staying in good academic standing and what can be done through the appeal process if they are placed on academic probation and/or suspension. Areas that need improvement include: Dual Enrollment/Accelerated students - current process is on paper, needs to be electronic, Students are receiving an email address within hours of application, need to automate the process so that students receive admissions information in a more timely manner, working on improving services to students to include transcript evaluation and graduation information - need to communicate more effectively and in a manner that students respond to.

Next, Ms. Burns discussed financial aid policies and procedures. How do students apply for financial aid to help finance their education? The steps for application for financial aid were outlined. There are many other sources of aid such as grants, loans and scholarships. The different types of aid were overviewed as well as the repayment process. There are also satisfactory academic progress requirements on the financial aid side. If the required academic progress is not met, financial aid is rescinded. There are also improvements needed in the financial aid process. There needs to be better communication to students related to how to view and accept their financial aid awards. One thing that faculty are not aware of is how important the
dates are related to when students withdraw from classes. Financial Aid is currently asking students to review how the information is being presented on the website to see if it is clear and how it might be improved. The federal regulations change every year so the financial aid process is continually evolving.

Next, Brian Gann and Latosha Baldwin provided an overview of the Advising process. The recruiting process was discussed. Materials were discussed such as the 7 simple steps for first time students. Advising also assists students with the registration process and placement testing. Working hard on our recruiting efforts to get students to come to Calhoun. DegreeWorks was discussed and the college is real close to going live for students. The Advising Office has started an online advising pilot program. There are many resources being tried to find alternative ways to reach students. Improvement initiatives include assigning an advisor for each first time freshman - meeting with them will not be mandatory but the Advising office will be monitoring how much traffic they get. Faculty as advisors is also being considered. The topic related to individual advising may need a sub-group to dive into the issue to develop it further. Looking "wholesale" into how Calhoun does advising and how it can be improved for the students of today. There will be some discussion groups beginning in November 2014.

Next, Dr. Kermit Carter provided an overview of the past and present features of the ROADS program and the Starfish implementation. ROADS was implemented in 2008. Analysis was done in 2010 to see if the program was helping students be more successful. Dr. Carter discussed how the tutoring program has been moved to the developmental Math and writing labs. He also discussed the new Starfish program and how the college will use it to monitor at-risk students and their success.

Next, Ms. Pamela Little discussed the Emerging Scholars program and how this has helped at-risk students be successful.

Next, Mr. Nathan Tyler overviewed IT services and what the problems have been. Moving forward, we are working on getting MS Office available for students for free. Current students can use a web version and store documents in their free SkyDrive account. We are also in the process of implementing WebEx for faculty and staff. The goal is to tie this into our portal for single sign on.

Next, Dr. Debi Hendershot shared some data points that are currently being submitted to Achieving the Dream for analysis and comparison purposes.

Next, Dr. Kemba Chambers, Dr. Donna Estill and Ms. Valerie Cox shared information related to our developmental course and proposed changes to improve student success.

Next, Janet Kincherlow-Martin discussed thoughts on a communication plan related to Achieving the Dream. It's important to get the word out to students, faculty and staff - what is it and what does it mean to each of us. We are currently in the planning stages. That is what the first year is all about. The kick-off/implementation phase will begin in fall 2015. In the student focus groups, it is said over and over again that the college cannot communicate with them too much.

Next our coaches weighed in on the information presented. What are the next steps? Calhoun employees know Calhoun best. The coaches can provide observations but don't know us like we do. Dr. Fifield went back to the readiness assessment and looked at areas that were not moving forward. The readiness assessment said that there needs to be more disaggregated data. It also said that we needed more adjunct faculty participation. During the English presentation it was apparent that the process is beginning. Another
problem identified was that Calhoun needed more outside stakeholders. Another issue could be that faculty and staff are afraid of setting broad, college-wide goals because of the risk of failure. Another observation was that today's events were a great learning experience for all those that attended. A sense of urgency needs to be established but there's a fine line between putting something in place that we are unsure if the evidence supports the initiative. The institutions that have the most success are conveying the message consistently and often. What will Calhoun's message be related to Achieving the Dream?

Douit stated that communication should be both internal and external. Achieving the Dream uses share point for that purpose. Data is both quantitative and qualitative. We need more qualitative data. With all of the programs and enhancements that Calhoun offers, how do we know those programs and enhancements are successful? Douit’s role is to look at new ways of improving data collection.

Dr. Fifield feels we are on the right track at this point in the process. Ms. Taylor asked Dr. Fifield to address the responsibilities for the core and data teams. Dr. Fifield feels that the Core team sets the tone and sends the message. The Data team helps ensure that the underpinning is in place to support the initiative. Once we set the priorities, we will be able to quantify it. Participate in a reform effort - put forth strategies and spend money on those. Not sure what those are yet but the college will want to choose the 2 - 3 priorities that will have the greatest impact on student success.

Our next step is to send the survey out to students with the same questions that were asked of faculty and staff at in-service. The survey will either be sent tomorrow or on Monday. The survey will be administered online or face to face in class depending on the class format. We should get student feedback often to help validate the initiatives and the progress.

In November, Douit is coming back to campus for a data summit. We need to understand our student population and then come up with the types of interventions used to prompt student success.

It was suggested that we move Technology Day by one week to hold the data summit. This would help with our data analysis for putting our plan together in April. We will survey faculty and staff to see if it is feasible to move it. The key stakeholders should be at the Achieving the Dream conference so it is in our best interest to move Technology Day.

Meetings for Achieving the Dream need to happen on a monthly basis at the very least. We may also want to open the meetings up to anyone who wants to come. This will help the Achieving the Dream initiative become collaborative and not some type of "secret" society or group. More people will feel a part of the process.

The meeting was adjourned at 3 pm.

The meeting was adjourned.

Submitted by:

Jennie Walts
Recorder