

Curry College



Faculty Retreat
May 20, 2014
Advisory Board Panel

Strategic Planning Undertaking

Direction 1 Initiative E: Increase alumni engagement and business and civic partnerships to enhance academic programs and co-curricular experiences.

Undertaking 1: Establish program advisory boards that include internal and external stakeholders.

Initial work began at the beginning of June 2013 with a discussion of what programs should be chosen as part of the initial pilot program – Management, Communications and Career Development were picked in part because of strength in alumni relations in those areas

Establishing Goals

- The initial goals for the Advisory Boards were established through consensus among the Dean's Office, the Academic Units and Institutional Advancement – initially the following potential benefits for the College were identified:
 1. An understanding of what employers want and expect from Curry graduates
 2. Trend Analysis
 3. Connections for Internships/Employment
 4. Analysis of current academic offerings
 5. Idea generation for new academic and co-curricular programs
 6. Fundraising/Friendraising opportunities
 7. Equipment donations

Makeup of the Boards

The make up of the Boards were established through consensus of the Dean's Office, the Academic Units and Institutional Advancement. Some considerations:

1. Size of the Boards – approximately 10-12 members initially
2. Composition – at least 50% of the Boards would be comprised of alumni so it would be in line with the Strategic Planning undertaking
3. The rest of the Board would be made up of business and civic leaders with a faculty representative and student representative
4. Emphasis would include a wide range of disciplines within the major – An example is Communication (radio, television, gaming, public relations etc)
5. Emphasis on diversity of alumni (different eras, graduate/undergraduate)
6. The charge of staffing, convening and planning meetings resides in the Academic Units with input from the Dean's Office

Other Considerations

- Frequency of Meetings – currently once a year but that might change
- Meeting follow up and activity after the initial meeting
- Terms for the members (currently established at 3 years)
- Changing the faculty and student representative annually
- Continuing the recruitment of members after the initial meeting
- Setting the agenda. The original agendas for the pilot programs included:
 1. Mission of the Advisory Boards
 2. College Update
 3. Program Update
 4. Program SWOT
 5. Industry Trends
 6. Partnership Opportunities (Guest Speakers, Internships etc)
 7. Follow Up (Communication Plan after the Meeting)

What Did We Learn

- Composition Matters – putting together a well-rounded, diverse advisory board takes a great deal of time and effort (give yourself a good 3 months for identification and recruitment)
- Make sure you communicate explicitly the goals of the Boards to potential members
- Different approaches (timing of meetings, agendas and follow up approach might be different for each academic unit)
- Consider some social time with the Boards as well
- Be honest in your self-analysis
- Trust the talent in the room and the composition of your Board
- Have an effective post-meeting communication plan