

**Statement Paper**

Winifred Jumbo

College of Education, Northern Arizona University

CCHE 690 Master's Seminar

Dr. Maureen King

April 28, 2023

Higher educational institutions strive for student success to produce well-rounded graduates who can contribute to society in a positive manner. Colleges and universities often face many obstacles, but more recently they were challenged due to a global pandemic to become innovative in their approaches to deliver student success. There are some factors like social forces, which drift higher education institutions from serving the public good, such as, changes in tuition costs and monitoring accountability in various capacities (Weber, 2022). In addition, the global pandemic highlighted disparities that exist within the lower-income population and students of color (Gardner, 2020). Working toward a holistic approach to accomplish student success at colleges and universities requires transformation and buy-in from all sectors of the institution to create a positive culture and atmosphere.

I would like to highlight and focus on four areas to create a better campus work culture, which includes shared governance, innovation, cross departmental collaboration, and mental health prioritization. The mission of an institution will assist in “enabling good work in the time of change where redefining priorities might occur” (Berg et al., 2003). This idea of change occurred rapidly during the global pandemic. A clear mission will help gatekeepers, stakeholders, employees, and students of an institution become producers of good work. If an institution aligns its mission to the social and cultural forces through clear values, models and expectations between external and external stakeholders, there is a chance for meaningful conversations to occur to develop and maintain the needs and wants of the public good. In addition, a mission can help guide the creation of a strategic plan which can be accomplished by shared governance, cross collaboration, and innovation.

It’s often assumed college or university presidents, or governing boards hold the most power or oversee all decision-making processes within an institution. It is important to develop

representation of accountability in higher education through the practice of shared governance. According to Renshaw, there are 5 steps to develop a sense of shared governance. “The first and second steps are identifying committees with clear charges and compositions and prioritizing important parameters and considerations. The third step is generating possible solutions. The fourth and fifth steps include evaluating solutions and choosing the best ones and establishing a method of evaluation” (Renshaw, 2023). All faculty, administrators, students, staff, and governing boards need to be at the table to lead an institution towards a better holistic campus work culture. The global pandemic is one aspect that called for rapid change, but other factors like change in status from a community college to a university challenge everyone to adapt to a new environment and culture.

The role and responsibilities increase for faculty if the institution is transitioning from a community college to a baccalaureate degree granting institution. As the article by Martinez mentioned, “faculty teaching within baccalaureate-granting programs were expected to hold a terminal degree, engage in research or scholarly activities, and conduct service” (Martinez, 2019). There are obstacles and barriers to college completion, which included one categorization of “teaching and learning” (McPhail, 2011). From the “faculty” section, there were factors such as, “faculty workload issues, lack of understanding about the meaning of college-ready, inadequate involvement of adjunct faculty, and outdated pedagogical practices” to name a few barriers (McPhail, 2011). These factors can be addressed if the leadership of the colleges include faculty in the larger discussion of major changes and shifts to meet the overall goal of the “completion agenda.” Teaching plays such a vital role in any college, so it is important to always include faculty at all levels of discussion. The faculty were expected to increase their time and commitment in various capacities, so it’s very important for faculty to be at the table while new

transitions are made at any higher educational institutions because they bring forth important factors, such as, how updated policies and procedural manuals will impact their teaching and workload schedules. For example, at Diné College the institution is slowly transitioning from a community college to university status. Shifting the mindsets and habits of the institution's community can be a difficult task, but there are plenty of practices to test and follow.

One key aspect to streamlining cross collaboration is developing a sense of innovation and putting ideas into practice. For instance, Brown University's administration developed an education innovation committee after the global pandemic. The purpose of the committee was to explore lessons learned from the global pandemic. The committee had to identify ways to enhance the model of how the university was providing education. More specifically the committee was tasked with, "increasing pedagogical attention to access, flexibility and equitable assessment; promoting access and academic excellence for generations to come; and ensuring Brown's reach, impact and capacity to contribute at the very highest levels locally and globally" (Brown University, 2023). The committee established 3 working groups and principles to help guide the process of accomplishing the tasks at hand. In addition, the committee was comprised of faculty, administrators, students, and staff. The working groups focused on 5 areas and one example is, "redesigning and modernizing University policies and practices to support more flexible models of teaching and learning" (Brown University, 2023). In terms of creating a better campus work culture, sometimes it's best practice to explore current policies and practices to see if they are benefiting the institution properly or if they are deemed as barriers. Good ideas come from mingling and swapping with an incubation period, which may take a long time to evolve (RiverheadBooks, 2010). Assessing what is in place is a great start to redesign how a campus creates positive changes.

Enhancing cross collaboration among two major divisions of “academics” and “student affairs” is very important to creating a positive environment at an institution to support students intellectually, emotionally, and socially. There is a strong emphasis for collaboration across departments at colleges and universities to promote student success (Killam & Degges-White, 2017). Institutions of higher education will need to focus on developing critical thinking, insights, analysis capabilities, collaboration abilities, responsiveness to adaptabilities and developing knowledge within a range of subjects for students, so they can grow as a versatile individual (Davies et al., 2011). Institutions are reimagining access and equity by addressing a student’s doubts, misconceptions, and fears (Lerner & Sanford, 2019). Cross collaboration means so much more these days because students need so much emotional and mental support.

Since the global pandemic, there has been a focus on the mental health and well-being of the entire college community. \$40 billion was given to colleges as part of President Biden’s American Rescue Plan, along with roughly \$36 billion being awarded in prior relief packages to recover from the pandemic (Bellows, 2022). Studies show that family support is significant to college success and the demand for college counseling is consistently on the rise (Killam & Degges-White, 2017). Currently, all members of the college community are encouraged to know the basics of helping students in crisis through establishing a relationship, knowing the basics, being a good listener, showing empathy, and practicing self-care (Schulze & Kenny, 2023). Institutions are strongly encouraged to provide mental-health services because it shapes how a student feels comfortable within the campus environment.

Community colleges enroll some of our most disadvantaged students yet receive the fewest resources. Some of the disadvantages include lack of access to preparation, food insecurity and no investments. “Community colleges are located in many more state legislative

districts than four-year institutions and could build strong alliances between businesses that employ community college graduates, civil rights groups, and unions” (Habash et al., 2018). Graduates of community colleges can add to the economic growth and produce more tax revenue at the local and state levels. For instance, Diné College is working to boost the local economy in an area without many industry partners or employment opportunities for graduates in rural Arizona (Gonzalez, 2023). “Undergraduates at private nonprofit 4-year institutions had the highest average total price of attendance (\$43,500)” (Radwin, 2015). Colleges are trying to improve access to support student success. It is very important to note how an institution must understand their student population to provide accurate or aligned resources to their background and needs so it can contribute to creating a positive atmosphere and community.

In conclusions, the leadership of an institution drives how a college grows and flourishes. A college president needs to, “figure out which of their leadership or management experiences need to be cultivated over time” (Whitney, 2022). In addition, it’s important for leaders to seek what type of institution fits their leadership style along with how they relate to the culture and history of the institution. In current settings, many employees are experiencing burnout because they are pressured to meet enrollment numbers (Boeckenstedt, 2023). In admissions, “71 % of coordinators and counselors have been in their jobs for just three years or less” (Zahneis, 2023). It’s important to note, 40.4 million, adults in the U.S. have some college but no degree (Williams, 2023). We need to stabilize shared governance, innovation, cross departmental collaboration, and mental health prioritization during these uncertain times to maintain or improve a positive atmosphere at higher educational institutions.

## References

- Bellows, K. H. (2022). *Colleges should spend covid-relief funds on mental-health support, education department says*. The Chronicle of Higher Education. [https://www.chronicle.com/article/colleges-should-spend-covid-relief-funds-on-mental-health-support-education-department-says?bc\\_nonce=tbw2ufn0ymsmrv4opvc8ii&cid=reg\\_wall\\_signup](https://www.chronicle.com/article/colleges-should-spend-covid-relief-funds-on-mental-health-support-education-department-says?bc_nonce=tbw2ufn0ymsmrv4opvc8ii&cid=reg_wall_signup)
- Berg, G. A., Csikszentmihalyi, M., & Nakamura, J. (2003, September/October). *A mission possible? enabling good work in higher education*. *Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning*, 35(5), 41-47.
- Boeckenstedt, J. (2023, April). *I've worked in admissions for 40 years. It's more stressful than ever*. The Chronicle of Higher Education. <https://www-chronicle-com.libproxy.nau.edu/article/ive-worked-in-admissions-for-40-years-its-more-stressful-than-ever>
- Brown University. (2023, April). *Program on innovation and financial stability*. Education Innovation Committee. <https://pifs.brown.edu/about/education-innovation-committee>
- Davies, A., Fidler, D., & Gorbis, M. (2011). *Future work skills 2020*. Institute for the Future for the University of Phoenix Research Institute.
- Gardner, L. (2020). *What higher ed has learned from covid-19 so far*. The chronicle of higher education. <https://www.chronicle.com/article/what-higher-ed-has-learned-from-covid-19-so-far>.
- Gonzalez, A. (2023, April). *Rural, tribal az college works to support, community needs*. Public News Service. <https://www.publicnewsservice.org/2023-04-27/education/rural-tribal-az-college-works-to-support-student-community-needs/a84207-1>

Habash, T., Kahlenberg, R.D., Quick, K., & Shireman, R. (2018, October 25). *Policy strategies for pursuing adequate funding of community colleges*. The Century Foundation.

<https://tcf.org/content/report/policy-strategies-pursuing-adequate-funding-community-colleges/>.

Killam, W. K., & Degges-White, S. (2017, May). *College Student Development: Applying Theory to Practice on the Diverse Campus*. Springer Publishing Company. Retrieved June 4, 2022, from <https://connect.springerpub.com/content/book/978-0-8261-1816-5/part/part01/chapter/ch01>

Lerner, C. & Sanford, K. (2019). *Awareness, access, and equity rethinking student services*.

Brightspot. <https://www.brightstypstrategy.com/student-support-services-design-equity/>

Martinez, E. (2019, April). *The rules change: exploring faculty experiences and work exceptions within a drifting community college context*. Community College Review, 47(2).

McPhail, C. J. (2011, April). *The completion agenda: a call to action*. American Association of Community Colleges.

Radwin, D. & Wei, C.C. (2015, March). *What Is the Price of College? Total, Net, and Out-of-Pocket Prices by Type of Institution in 2011–12*. Stats in Brief, U.S. Department of Education. National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences.

Renshaw, K.D. (2023, February). *5 steps for successful shared governance*. Inside Higher Education. <https://www.insidehighered.com/advice/2023/02/20/practical-model-implementing-strong-shared-governance-opinion>

RiverheadBooks. (2010, September 17). *Where good ideas come from by Steven Johnson [Video]*. Youtube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NugRZGDbPFU>



Schulze, R. F. & Kenny, M. C. (2023, April). *My student is in crisis, but I'm not a counselor.*

*How can I possibly help? Higher Education Today.* American Council on Education.

<https://www.higheredtoday.org/2023/04/21/my-student-is-in-crisis-but-im-not-a-counselor-how-can-i-possibly-help/>

Weber, H. (2022). CCHE680 PPT Charter and Public Good Based on Kezar's Article

[PowerPoint presentation]. Blackboard@NAU.

Whitney, K. (2022, August 24). *The 4 states of a presidential life cycle.* The Chronicle of Higher

Education. <https://www-chronicle-com.libproxy.nau.edu/article/the-4-stages-of-a-presidential-life-cycle>

Williams, A.J. (2023, April). *The number of u.s. adults with some college but no degree keeps*

*going.* The Chronicle of Higher Education. <https://www-chronicle-com.libproxy.nau.edu/article/the-number-of-u-s-adults-with-some-college-but-no-degree-keeps-growing>

Zahneis, M. (2023, April). Turnover is bad across higher ed. it's even worse in admissions. The

Chronicle of Higher Education. <https://www-chronicle-com.libproxy.nau.edu/article/turnover-is-bad-across-higher-ed-its-even-worse-in-admissions>