

# **EMPLOYEE ENROLLMENT, RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION FOCUS GROUPS REPORT November 5, 2006**

## **Introduction**

The Enrollment, Recruitment and Retention Task Force requested, with President Bottenfield's approval, that Kathie France, Director of Institutional Research, conduct employee and outreach coordinator focus groups to gather information and ideas related to increasing EWC's enrollment to 2012 students by the year 2012. Members of the task force are Tami Afdahl, Ann Beaulieu, Mell Cooper and Marilyn Cotant. The Director of Institutional Research worked with the task force to develop strategies and guidelines for the meetings. See attachment. Confidentiality of what specific individuals said will be maintained and not released by the IR office. The first focus group meetings were held during in-service week. During the process of completing the focus groups, Kathie France received an email from President Bottenfield indicating a number of people felt that comments were being filtered to exclude negative comments from this report. He also indicated that he wants the positive and negative reported. See attachment. Both positive and negative comments were always intended to be in this report and are included within.

A total of 95 employees and outreach coordinators participated. Each meeting lasted approximately one hour. There were eleven general group meetings, one meeting for new employees, and one compressed video meeting with the outreach coordinators and outreach employees. The president and all other members of the President's Advisory Council (PAC) were interviewed individually. A few who were unable to attend the meetings were also interviewed individually, and others submitted emails. Some people stopped by the Institutional Research Office after the meetings to share thoughts they had later. Others didn't participate, because they thought nothing would be done with the information as in the past; consequently, it would be a waste of their time. Approximately 22 hours were spent gathering information. The sessions were open discussions. People were very open and honest with their comments.

This was a very healthy exercise for EWC. It allowed people to say precisely what was on their minds without fear of retribution. It was viewed as a safe way to share their thoughts with the board. However, people wanted to know if I *really* thought this would have any impact and make a difference, or if I thought the information would be ignored and the leadership would do whatever they wanted anyway as in the past. This question was asked in nearly every meeting. I was also stopped several times in the hall to be asked the same question. They also wanted to know if all employees would be allowed to see the full report. Everyone is saying, "Do something with this information." If this information is ignored by the administration and the board, employees will be extremely angry and unwilling to waste their time on any information gathering activity in the future. EWC employees and outreach coordinators have a lot of great ideas and comments. People are genuinely interested and concerned about the future of EWC. They want to be a part of the solution and see EWC move forward and not continue to stay status quo. Again, do something with this information and make a difference in EWC's future.

As a brief summary, everything we do affects enrollment, recruitment, retention and our image in the community. Morale impacts these as well. The declining enrollment is everyone's

problem, and it will take all of us working together to improve the situation and ensure the future of EWC. This situation has occurred over time and there is no one individual to blame. The college lacks effective leadership and vision and is suffering from the worst morale in years. We need to improve our image and better sell ourselves. The building interiors need a face-lift. EWC needs to allocate more money for instructional programs and things that impact students which appears not be a priority for those making allocation of funds decisions. EWC needs steady funding sources and more money. We need new programs that students want, and we need to update some of our existing programs. Capitalize on workforce development opportunities. EWC needs an additional athletic program and to expand other student activities. Some areas of support services need improvement and to better serve the needs of students. We need to treat students as adults, give them a quality college experience and provide a professional service.

It is extremely important that we understand the new generation of young adults. They are idealistic and their needs, wants and values are very different than earlier generations. They learn and work differently. They prefer to work in groups and want instant gratification for their efforts. They want activities organized for them and are easily bored. They multitask and are very comfortable chatting online, listening to music and doing something else all at the same time. They are very high tech and rely heavily on technology for communication and as a form of entertainment.

President Bottenfield forwarded a PowerPoint Presentation by Dr. Ginny Barnes entitled “Guess Who is Coming to College” to all employees. Dr. Barnes defines “Generation Y” in these 12 words: impatient, entitled, wary/cautious, skeptical, poor planner, cynical, stressed, disengaged, lack civility, adaptable, consumers and relational. Dr. Barnes suggests that colleges must assess, evaluate and upgrade: administrative leadership and policies, student services, admissions processes, recruiting and marketing service, classroom teaching/management, faculty and staff support/training, technology services and campus philosophy.

The remainder of this report summarizes the ideas and comments of employees and the outreach coordinators. In some cases actual quotes are used, but they have not been indicated as such to maintain confidentiality. The report is divided into 18 major categories. They are intended to be topics and not departmental or individual offices. Many of the comments and ideas could have been included in multiple categories but are listed only once in the category with the best fit. The categories and items within categories with the most discussion and/or considered critical issues in several of the meetings are identified with arrows with the exception of outreach. Only those involved in outreach can really address issues related to outreach. Therefore, the outreach category was not identified with an arrow, but some of the main items discussed by those involved in outreach were identified with arrows. Neither the categories nor the items within categories are listed in priority order. The items within categories, except those identified with arrows, were the opinion of one person in some cases and multiple individuals in others. The term “traditional students” refers to students less than age 25, and the term “non-traditional students” refers to students age 25 and older.

## Focus Groups Summary

### ➤ Leadership

- ⇒ Lack of leadership at both the administrative and board levels
- ⇒ Do something with this information. Don't ignore it. People want feedback.
- ⇒ Give things time to work.

Lack of respect and trust

Scared to death of a lawsuit at the top, so we make ridiculous rules for everything, and as a result people are suspicious of their co-workers

Employees should have greater access to the board to discuss ideas similar to what we are doing with the focus groups.

Leadership needs to be willing to make decisions. Decisions need to be more research based and not just what a few people think is a good idea.

No one is an expert or knows everything about all areas of the college. Administrators should allow the people in charge of areas outside their responsibilities to speak on behalf of those areas and not interfere with decision-making and operations within those areas. The board should ask questions of the appropriate administrators and/or directors.

We are at the crossroads with so many opportunities, but we are hampered by a lack of vision. Need more enthusiasm and forward thinking from the top. Need strong leadership and board support to move EWC forward and ensure its stability.

Look at the whole picture.

We have employees with the expertise to manage the institution. The board should spend more time looking at the college vision and future and not micro-manage the institution from the top.

Administrators shouldn't micro-manage their departments. This is an ineffective use of everyone's time and drags the institution down. Empower employees do the job for which they were hired. Staff talent has been suppressed which works against recruitment and retention. Allow staff to be productive and acknowledge their talent and skills. There are too many hoops to jump through.

There are divisions/struggles between areas. Administrators aren't working together toward a common goal. Some administrators are disjointed from Instruction. The Business Office needs to be supportive of Instruction and Student Services. Some administrators are not student oriented and are more interested in spending money on non-student projects.

The Presidents Advisory Council (PAC) is dysfunctional and ineffective. Everything goes thru PAC and is secretive. Other employees aren't invited or welcome to attend PAC meetings even when items of interest are on the agenda. The majority of the items

on their agenda could be handled outside of PAC. That's why we have a dean and/or vice president for each area of the college. PAC is controlled by specific individuals, and others are just there to give the appearance of appropriate representation.

Talk to the people affected before making a decision.

Don't hire Clarus Corporation a second time for consulting. The suggestions they provided last time haven't worked. Employees aren't in favor of hiring any consultant at this time, but if the board is insistent on hiring a consultant consider Noel-Levitz or Theresa Farmum of T F & Associates. Use employee input from the focus groups before hiring a consultant.

The strategic planning process is restricting items from coming forward. Each administrator provides a summary with their top priorities, and only those are considered by SPLT for going forward in the process. Instead each department's operational plan should have a brief summary/introduction which are all reviewed by SPLT for consideration. Most people don't know this is happening as it was a change in last year's process.

SPLT serves no real purpose, so there is no need for this committee. SPLT is just there to give the impression that EWC is doing strategic planning and that everyone in the college is involved. The reality is that the strategic plan and what goes forward to PAC and the board is tightly controlled. EWC's strategic plan is just a wish list and doesn't provide vision and/or goals. Our strategic planning process needs to look into the future and define "what we want to be." EWC spends too much money on big ticket items that aren't in the plan.

Need to have discussions as a whole throughout the year to generate ideas. The ideas need to be used and not just ignored.

EWC is located in the same region as WNCC, and their enrollment has increased significantly while EWC is losing enrollment. They did add athletic programs which helped, but according to one individual they had a small impact compared to other factors. Others said the additional athletic programs were the main strategy WNCC used to grow enrollment. Their coursework is well done and conducive to education. They market themselves as an academic institution. They have an enthusiastic welcome on the first day. Their campus is dead during the day but comes alive at night with non-traditional students taking classes after 5 or 6 p.m. Designate a study group to evaluate what WNCC is doing to grow enrollment, and evaluate the potential and benefit of EWC using some of the same strategies.

Get over the attitude that we are "poor little old Eastern," and using that as an excuse for not getting things accomplished. We have to do some of it on our own. If the state doesn't provide what we need, we feel like we can't do it. The state can't do everything for us, we have to help ourselves. If you think small then that is what you are going to get. Don't be "penny wise and pound foolish." It doesn't pay to do it cheaply.

The board wants a simplistic answer to why enrollment has been declining. There isn't a simplistic answer. Enrollment is impacted by numerous interrelated factors. The Enrollment, Recruitment and Retention Task Force needs to be allowed sufficient time to

effectively complete their assignment, and then they need to come forward with recommendations on how we reach the goal of “2012 by 2012.”

Tend to give up on new ideas after one year if it doesn't appear to be working. EWC needs to allow more resources and time to let things work. It takes time to see the benefit of new initiatives. Give things time to work.

Get on-campus enrollment up.

Focus more on the students. That's why we're here.

Allow people to fail, and don't penalize them if something doesn't work. Just try something else. Consider the calculated risk of success/failure when trying something new. We can't move forward if people aren't allowed to fail. If we keep doing the same thing, we will get the same results. Applaud and encourage people to try something new.

Have a good balance. Don't compromise one thing for another.

Need new people who will work to get more students and not more administrators.

Look at current practices to determine what works and what doesn't. Evaluate where and what publications are distributed and where and what marketing methods are used.

Capitalize on the proposed 150% of in-state tuition for all out-of-state students. Will this be an opportunity or an obstacle for EWC?

The AACC has a Small Rural College Commission. This could be a valuable resource for EWC. They provide overviews of programs in small rural colleges and other information on these colleges. Look at the practices, programs and marketing strategies of those colleges most like EWC.

## ➤ **Vision and Focus**

⇒ Lack of vision and focus for the future

⇒ Find our niche, and be the “best” at it

⇒ Do we want academic transfer program? If we do, then make it happen.

Become a “Center of Excellence in...” We need to decide what we want to excel in and put money into it. Use this extensively in marketing.

Target our best academic transfer program, and market it as the “best”.

EWC needs to be a comprehensive community college and not just a vocational school. Restore EWC as a full service community college – have a good balance, don’t compromise one thing for another. Don’t stereotype EWC as a vocational school.

Expect everybody to wear many hats and do everything. What is our goal? What are we working toward? We try to be too many things for too many people. If we want to be an academic transfer college then put the needed money into it; otherwise, just become a vocational school.

Give more thought to where we want to be in 2012 by 2012.

Need more on-campus students.

Not getting quality students. Better students help challenge other students.

There are opportunities for growth of out-of-state students, non-traditional students and students taking online courses.

People need to think beyond their own area of responsibility.

Times have changed, so we need to change.

Get away from what other schools have. We need to be different. Find our niche, and use it in marketing and advertising.

Need more classroom space to expand to 2012 students. This is where we do our educating and should have been a priority over student living space.

We need students now! We need to focus on the now and spend our money to get more students.

Our purpose is to train people for a career. We are not just training people for jobs in Wyoming.

Is bigger better? Do we want to grow? Do individuals departments want to grow? Will quality suffer? Quality brings more students. In order to grow enrollment, we need agreement and enthusiasm.

Do we want to have a summer academic program? If we want a summer program, then we need to offer general education and remedial courses and dorm availability, and run the summer courses no matter how many enroll.

## ➤ **Morale**

- ⇒ Morale is the worst it has ever been
- ⇒ Just do something. It's what you do that counts.
- ⇒ People are ready for change
- ⇒ Campus wide recognition emails are out of control and very irritating

Morale makes or breaks an organization. The morale at EWC is the worst it has been in 20+ years and continues to spread. There is false friendliness. It isn't just about money.

Morale starts at the top. People at the top need to be involved in the institution. If the people at the top don't care, then nobody cares. Morale carries over to students and impacts retention.

Administrators, faculty, professional staff and classified staff need to meld together.

Emails for recognition and praise are sent campus wide for some factions and not others. This has caused a lot of problems and wastes valuable resources. The overload of these emails has gotten on peoples nerves. Need to look at how we are doing this and set some guidelines. One-on-one verbal and handwritten thank yous are far more affective and give real appreciation. Sending campus wide thank yous has become standard procedure and has no real meaning. It was suggested that we have a news board for acknowledging employee and student accomplishments and not use email for this purpose.

People at EWC are ready for change – even radical change. It's what you do that counts – not what you say.

People at EWC need to be open to change. Be more progressive, and don't have the attitude that we don't do that in Goshen County. New employees may help with this. Some people fight ideas just for the sake of fighting and are anti-this and anti-that. Need motivators who don't put down suggestions.

People are excited about having so many new employees this year. This should bring new energy to the institution.

In-service day should be positive and upbeat with a good pep talk and excitement about the year. The goal "2012 by 2012" was the only positive topic at this year's in-service. Forget the boring stuff.

Employees are interested in the institution but aren't vested,

Don't burnout employees by having them pulled in so many directions. We all wear a lot of different hats and as a result are forced into a level of mediocrity. EWC requires too much of our time and unfairly takes from our personal lives. Employees need more support and help.

Retribution from the top is demoralizing; however, most people do their best in spite of this problem. It isn't effective to place blame on others. Understand and appreciate what other people do. Successful organizations communicate and work and learn together. They are led by leaders who choose the direction and are in the front making it happen.

Committees do a lot of work, and then those at the top do whatever they want anyway.

Personnel Office needs to be supportive and an advocate for employees.

Comments from administrative staff which appeared in the Torrington Telegram and implied that instructors are paid enough and they aren't on campus unless they are in class was damaging to the institution and morale. This simply is not true! These types of comments leave the impression that we don't have our house in order, so why would parents want to send their kids to EWC?

Academics and vocational programs need to come together and not see it as them versus us.

## ➤ Image

⇒ Need an image to separate EWC from the rest of the colleges

⇒ First impression impacts recruitment and enrollment

Our first impression needs to be top notch. First impressions of students, their parents, and patrons are important, and factor greatly into their decision-making process of determining which college to attend.

Academics are more important than our looks.

Employee offices and desks, particularly those where students have their first contact, need to be relatively neat and orderly. Disorganization gives the appearance of a lack of professionalism. Employees need to dress appropriately for their responsibilities when working and participating in activities and pre-registration days. We need to look professional.

Develop an “image” for use in marketing and recruiting.

Vocational programs give EWC national recognition

Need a more positive image as we go into area high schools. Get rid of the attitude in the community that EWC is the “high school on the hill.”

EWC no longer has the respect from other institutions of higher education that it had in the past. We need to be an equal member where other institutions want to work with us in serving their students when we have something they don’t offer. EWC has a bad academic reputation which spreads through word of mouth.

The leadership of EWC needs to be engrained in the community. EWC lacks a presence in the community which is a fundamental requirement of effective public relations. The president needs to be more visible in the community. Someone at EWC should be involved in all community gatherings and meetings to keep the college in the public eye. One person can’t be at everything, so everyone or at least a core group of people need to help.

Quit putting off the persona that because we are in education, we are above other people in the community.

Outsiders see the division between groups of people who work here.

Avoid stereotyping EWC as a vocational school. This gives the impression to local businesses that we have low academic quality.

If constituents in our other service district counties paid taxes to support EWC, they would take ownership and be more supportive of EWC.

## ➤ Marketing

- ⇒ Importance of articles on student accomplishments in the Telegram and hometown newspapers.
- ⇒ Word of mouth is our best advertising.
- ⇒ People need to know EWC and what we have to offer. Sell ourselves.
- ⇒ Need more marketing for instructional programs
- ⇒ Market EWC as the “best ....

Sell ourselves better. Word of mouth is our best advertising. Advertising is about awareness. People need to know EWC. Our best sales persons are our students.

The community needs to know more about what we do. Have a regular newspaper blog on what happens to our graduates.

Take literature to local businesses. Use more TV commercials. Attend other county fairs. This could be particularly helpful in our other service area counties

Need to let people, including high school students, know we have the “best” ....

Use the phrases “academically challenging” and “we want you to come here” in recruiting brochures and marketing materials.

Recognize our students more. Capitalize on good news, and submit items weekly to local newspapers in our service district and to student hometown newspapers. Include items such as athletics, club activities, student accomplishments with photos, etc. Sometimes this is more affective than fancy fliers. People need to let the marketing office know, so they can get it out within one week.

Market and promote some of our best instructors. For example, Leland Vetter provides the “best training for the mining industry.” Send news releases on faculty special recognitions to all newspapers in our service district.

Write more effective press releases. Reexamine who should write press releases. Must it all come from Marketing?

Moorcroft has requested to be on the mailing list for news releases from the Marketing Department. The outreach center has their own heading in the local newspaper. They work with the newspaper to get the EWC news articles which would be of most interest to people in Moorcroft printed in the newspaper. This has worked well.

We have good marketing brochures which are also being used for recruiting. The vocational program sheets are well done. District area principals and counselors should be sent several copies.

Everybody wants more marketing for their program, but resources are limited. We need more marketing for pre-professional programs.

The increases in the marketing budget haven't resulted in the results we had anticipated. There isn't enough money in the marketing budget to make and sustain a marketing/advertising campaign or to generate the results we need. Advertising doesn't bring students. It just raises awareness. The Telegram raised this year's contract 8%. We are trying ads in the high school newspapers. EWC has only done marketing for the institution as a whole and hasn't done any target marketing.

We need to begin using target marketing. Target market populations such as part-time, non-traditional, outreach and distance learning students, and target market specific programs. Direct mailing to special interest groups would be helpful. People appreciate personal letters. One example would be a direct mailing to day care providers for our Introduction to Early Childhood Education course.

Do a big marketing campaign to send the message "This is YOUR community college" for our local community. Follow-up with informal sessions regularly to get this message out to the community. Our word of mouth message is not the best at this time.

Need more mailings to prospective local students. They are getting more information from the other colleges.

Establish a relationship with the Military to provide an exit option to those leaving military service. Do direct mailings to those exiting from the military. Tap into the National Guard.

Need more nice logo materials for Financial Aid and money to purchase EWC stationary for more communications.

Need more academic transfer program brochures. Some were written last year but still haven't come out of the Marketing Department. Others have been produced but haven't been posted on the website. These brochures could emphasize that instructors not graduate assistants teach our academic courses.

The Director of Marketing and Public Relations is willing to use different marketing strategies, and the Recruiting Coordinator has helped. Marketing has developed a better working relationship institutionally and particularly with the faculty.

Traditional age students don't read newspapers.

Why are private Vet Tech schools full, and EWC is declining? People have the perception that you get what you pay for. We should raise fees in Vet Tech. Place Vet Tech ads in national Vet Tech Magazines and brag on our certification test scores. Market to animal owners and on the east coast.

Having a booth at activities and conferences isn't as effective as having instructors at program specific conferences to judge events and be presenters. Take our students to high school fairs and conferences like Vet Tech is currently doing. Marketing and the recruiter don't need to attend the event. If we don't make a presence, then we may be giving the impression that "EWC is too good to come to this." Send people to high school FBLA, FFA, etc. conferences, and highlight what is relevant. Sponsor something at high school athletic events.

Look at marketing research for what brings students.

Promote non-traditional female programs such as welding and construction technology with high paying jobs.

## ➤ Recruiting

- ⇒ The Recruitment Coordinator is doing a great job, but one person can't do it all alone. Recruiting is everyone's responsibility.
- ⇒ Need a second recruiter to cover more territory, but this isn't the whole solution. One individual indicated a 9 or 10 month contract would meet our needs.
- ⇒ Need more academic transfer and vocational students
- ⇒ Students come because of programs and activities

In order to successfully recruit new students, we need to understand why they choose a particular college. Do they have the program I want, do I feel good about the college, and does anybody care if I am here? We need to answer the question, "Why would I come to EWC" for ourselves.

Instructional programs are what bring students to EWC. Tell prospects what we have to offer. Students don't come for just general education requirements. They can get that anywhere. They come because of activities, scholarships or specific vocational programs. Recruit students who will stay – not just activity people.

Student success recruits students. Negative student experiences spread and negatively impact recruiting efforts.

Effective recruiting requires a personal touch.

EWC is understaffed in recruiting, but we need money for new programs.

The Director of Marketing & Public Relations could get out more to help with recruiting. The Student Service's Specialist could also help with recruiting, particularly with non-traditional and ethnic minority students. Administrators could help with recruiting. However, we would need to choose who should help. Train other employees to recruit, and have them go out and help with the recruiting. If the board approves a second recruiter, one should focus on academic transfer programs, and the other recruiter should focus on vocational programs. Don't use the same recruiter for both.

Need another pool of students. Look at other geographic areas where there is a higher concentration of younger people. Send recruiter out of our area. This year we are physically recruiting in Colorado and Montana. Recruit students in the city who want to escape from the city.

Cost of education at EWC is relatively inexpensive compared to other colleges.

Instructors need to help build their programs. They are our best ambassadors. However, we can't ask them to help with recruiting and not provide them with support. Substitute instructors might help them find the time to visit high school classrooms. Faculty can assist with recruiting by serving as guest lecturers at schools. Many instructors communicate with prospective students. This enhances what the recruiting office does and gives an extra touch.

EWC should have a car for the recruiter with a special paint job in Lancer colors and EWC advertising on the side.

Create an Enrollment Services Department within Student Services. The Director should report to the Dean of Students. All of the admissions staff including the secretary would report to the director. Functions of the department would be admissions, COMPASS testing, and advising for students with undeclared majors.

Recruit more students for outreach enrollment.

Pre-professional will only come if we have something else to offer them. This is particularly true of Wyoming graduates with the Hathaway Scholarship assistance.

Would the students who qualified for the Hathaway scholarship have come anyway? Did we lose students to UW, because the Hathaway dollars made it more affordable? To play the Hathaway game, we need to market and target our vocational programs, because UW doesn't have these to offer.

Other colleges mailed a brochure on the Hathaway Scholarship. Why didn't EWC?

Financial Aid is really important for outreach and non-traditional age students. We need to reach out to them more.

EWC Honor Scholarships aren't being fully utilized. Offer scholarships for top SkillsUSA students.

Meet with local high school counselors and get to know the students by going to the high schools. Need to visit more high schools.

The recruiting and student service areas need to get rid of their attitude that academic transfer students won't come to EWC.

Past turnover and inconsistencies in the recruiting position has been a problem.

Are there too many cross-over programs for contacting and introducing higher education opportunities to K-12 students? Could some of these programs be combined (e.g. Adelante Ninos and Gear-Up)? Forget programs not being utilized, and use that money for other marketing activities. Gear-Up should be under the Dean of Students and not the Dean of Instruction for Outreach and Life Long Learning.

Outreach coordinators could be more involved in recruiting in their communities. They could help with recruiting high school students for on-campus enrollment after graduation. We would need to work with the coordinators to be more informed about what we are doing on-campus. They have a lot of contacts. The outreach coordinators want to help increase the awareness of EWC in their communities and encourage high school graduates to attend EWC.

Work with currently enrolled high school students to encourage them to attend EWC after high school graduation.

Everybody needs to get involved in Technology Day recruiting. We need to do more of these types of activities to get people on campus. This is a wonderful recruiting tool. Have a Career Conference every year.

Need to enroll more recent Goshen County high school graduates. How much do we recruit locally? This can be a challenge, because students want to get away from home after high school.

EWC's website is a powerful recruiting tool. It's important that we keep it current and it has what is appealing and relevant to the younger generation. Advertise on the Internet. EWC is testing Internet Google advertising for Vet Tech this fall to determine if this would be an effective advertising tool for EWC.

Have an in house wiki with public access and more active blogs.

Last year 20% of our scholarships went unused. The unused scholarships could have been used to get top high school student graduates. Do more advertising for scholarships, and display more brochures on campus.

Get prospective students to campus and have them visit classes.

Do more follow-up with prospects. It would be helpful if the faculty had more information on prospective students from the recruiting office prior to doing follow-up contacting and writing personal letters. The recruiting office may have very little information on prospects.

After campus tours, there should be more time for prospective students and their parents to visit with instructors in their area of interest. Have our students who are majoring in the prospective student's program of interest give the campus tours. Take time on campus tours to introduce employees as you see them on the tour. This shows that we take pride in our staff. If students are conducting the tours, they may not know a lot of the staff they see on the tour, so they won't be able to introduce them.

Students not accepted into Ivy League Schools are going to community colleges.

Need more academically prepared students. In the past, EWC would get the top two or three students from some schools. What are we doing to get these students? EWC provides a quality learning experience.

Send letters to outreach concurrent students to encourage them to attend EWC after graduation.

Many northern high school students have the perception that there's nothing to do in Torrington. What they probably do in Sheridan when they've made the choice to go there is drink too much beer. Nevertheless, recruiting literature might highlight EWC student activities or things students could do in nearby towns like Scottsbluff.

Your guidance counselor seminars could be good recruiting tools since gc's do refer students to schools they think would be compatible with student interests. Could they be broadcast by compressed video to northern sites since our counselors evidently haven't shown much inclination to drive to Torrington?

## ➤ Curriculum and Workforce Development

- ⇒ Need new, innovative programs. Employees from all areas of the college had a lot of suggestions: medical transcription, paralegal, court reporter, massage therapy, culinary arts and serving, computer technician, health sciences, pharmacy technician, chemical technician, forensics, medical technology, physical therapy technician, auto mechanics, nursing, occupational therapy, dental hygienist, instructional technology, diesel mechanics, air conditioning and refrigeration, electrician, plumbing, cement work, vet tech assistant, library technician, wildlife tech, truck driving, travel and tourism, and recreation.
- ⇒ Rework and update some of the existing programs. Suggestions included: agriculture; computer science; graphic design, 3D animation, and digital imaging courses in Art
- ⇒ Students won't come if we don't have the right programs. Find out what they want.
- ⇒ Assess workforce development options.
- ⇒ Need more vocational programs.
- ⇒ Capitalize on opportunities in law enforcement and the correctional facilities

Need new programs which are pertinent to today's world. Stay on the cutting edge with classroom computer technologies and program curriculum. Look at what's coming for future professions, and teach what is needed.

Look at program capacities before adding new programs. Alter programs to be responsive to student needs both for workforce and transfer programs. First fix what we have, so we don't hurt resources for new programs. Expand the programs we already have, and help those that are suffering. Decide what to do about programs with a pattern of low enrollment, and address the problem. Fix programs not bringing in students and not meeting their needs

We are a rural community and need to respond to the needs of farmers and ranchers. We should have the "best" Ag Program in the state and should be able to triple the enrollment in this program. This program needs quality improvement.

Expand the fields of study we offer, focusing on keeping the existing fields and adding new related major options within these fields. For example, Veterinary Technology is fairly comprehensive, but there is likely a group of students who would want a narrower program on large animals or horse management only. Create a new option. Veterinary Technology is a very rigorous program. Create a Veterinary Technician Assistant option for students who want a less rigorous program. Under Welding and Joining Technology we have machine tooling. Another possibility, as an example, is computer-aided drafting. We offer music education and music applied, but if a student wanted a more focused program on guitar performance, it is not available at EWC, even though this is a major strength of our music instructor.

We have a wonderful cadre of existing programs, and the appeal of these to students could be easily enhanced within the resources we already have by carefully looking at the universe of available programs in the marketplace, and use this knowledge to increase the breadth of our own educational options with those that may more closely match the desires of our particular group of students. Repackage what we have.

EWC has good quality academic programs. The academic transfer programs are stagnant.

More emphasis on AA programs, and more online degrees.

Develop unique vocational programs with high interest. We have the only cosmetology program in the state with an AAS degree which is very marketable.

Add pre-engineering courses. We get engineering students, but we can't serve their transfer needs.

Courses for a nursing program and other health service programs could be taught online. Internships could then be supervised by service providers in other areas. Rotations could be done at different hospitals. The online health courses would be an educational option for health provider professionals who want to switch to careers within health services.

People still call about our air conditioning and refrigeration program.

Make sure students can get financial aid for new programs during the process of approving a new program.

Need to have something different to offer. Status quo isn't working. Research what other colleges are offering, and look for gaps. Research highest paying careers and top career tracks.

New construction technology program was a good idea.

It is too expensive to keep bringing in new programs for only five students. Need to allow time for programs to grow.

A massage therapy program tied into cosmetology would be good for EWC, because a lot of the cosmetology graduates plan to go to a massage school for further education.

A forensics program could be tied into our existing criminal justice program; however, we may need to modify the lab.

Create new programs that students want and eliminate others.

The medium security correctional facility coming to Goshen County should be an opportunity for course offerings and workforce development. We have a lot of potential in working with the correctional systems through our Criminal Justice program.

Enrollment will increase when we increase the number of programs.

Some of our programs such as the computer networking are not adding value for current high school graduates. However, other programs such as welding are top notch.

Need more vocational two-year certificates and AAS programs. This will better serve the Hathaway Scholarship Career Program.

Increase the number of certificate programs that articulate into associate degrees like we do in welding. This allows students to step into the next level.

Offer credit for lifetime learning experience. Be more flexible in course content when students have experience in the subject.

More tie in with local businesses and agencies to provide more service learning/internship opportunities. Incorporate these opportunities within regular credit courses, so students have an opportunity to see what a job entails.

Supplement the police academy offerings for our local law enforcement and police departments. Provide offerings on new issues in law enforcement.

Provide learning opportunities for the jail inmates. Tuition and fees may be a problem for them, since they don't qualify for federal aid.

Offer fast-track programs, so students can get in and out quickly and enter the workforce.

Need language classes other than Spanish. A language course should be required for a associate degrees. Consider offering language courses via compressed video and perhaps from other sites if we have qualified instructors in the outreach areas. This could also help provide language courses for UW outreach students.

Recommend more programs without consideration of the money or cost. Let that be a consideration of the board.

We are cancelling too many classes. Are we offering the right classes? Don't cancel courses in new programs for low enrollment, or you ruin the chances of a successful new program. Don't cancel courses on Aug 11. Wait until classes start to cancel classes. Students come at the last minute, and some may want to take the cancelled courses. Cancelling classes too early sends the message that their schedules are fragile, which could cause them to not show.

Bring back the arts. Studies show arts improve academics. When we cut back on the music and theatre/drama programs enrollment dropped. Where are the scholarships we had for these programs? EWC should have a quality music program where students perform in local high schools. This was very effective in the past. These students were some of our best ambassadors.

Add a sociology/psychology lab for field study lab work.

Douglas has a 5-year associates degree program with the local high school which allows students to transfer to a 4-year college earlier. EWC should consider this for Goshen County students.

Assess workforce development training needs. EWC doesn't do that well.

Workforce development offerings may serve as a stepping stone for some participants to pursue a college degree or certificate. Offer workforce development certificates.

Talk to the Department of Family Services and the Department of Workforce Services to determine what jobs are available in the area and what type of training EWC could provide to help prepare people for these jobs.

Look at what jobs are in Goshen County for new programs and workforce development opportunities. Can we work with the railroad or the ethanol plant on potential course offerings and certificates and associate degrees?

Work with St. Josephs employees to get associate degrees. They have money for professional development.

## ➤ Instruction and Scheduling of Courses

- ⇒ Low enrollment in 2<sup>nd</sup> year academic transfer program courses
- ⇒ Full-time, on-campus students are forced into online and evening courses
- ⇒ Some courses don't work well via distance education
- ⇒ Look at course scheduling and consider course delivery methods, meeting times, and flexibility

EWC has dedicated faculty. Hiring and retention of faculty is a problem. The workload is more of a problem than the salaries; however, we need to have competitive salaries. Faculty are undervalued and underappreciated. Isn't it an oxymoron when we preach that with more education you earn more money and yet the local high school requires less education for their teachers, and they make more money than EWC instructors.

Allowing students to start classes through the drop/add period limits their chances of being successful. However, the flexibility is good.

EWC has just graduated our second student with distance education offerings only. However, Casper Colleges is taking a lot of our students in our outreach sites by providing distance education classes we can't offer.

What extent of what is feasible to offer online?

Concurrent enrollment is good, but it shouldn't be forced on the school districts. EWC should help the school districts get Masters degrees for their teachers, so they can be approved to teach EWC concurrent enrollment courses.

Night classes complement distance education offerings, which is good for adults who have a lot going on in their lives. Blended classes use more than one delivery method such as online and weekend sessions, and are a good option for non-traditional students. It would be more effective if night, distance education and blended course schedules were marketed together. Online courses should be listed on a separated class schedule and not the class schedule with the on-site courses.

Hybrid courses such as online and some face-to-face meetings provide more flexibility for people in the workforce. This type of course delivery would better serve the needs of railroad employees. Hybrid courses facilitate more communication and better individual course retention.

Some programs need night and summer classes.

Give instructors sufficient time to develop distance education courses and do it right. Don't push instructors to teach these classes before they are well developed and credible.

Need more life and excitement in academic transfer programs. There is low enrollment in many of the 2<sup>nd</sup> year academic transfer courses. These courses often become independent study courses which is not effective for many students. If we want to have

academic transfer programs then we can't cancel 2<sup>nd</sup> year courses just because of low enrollment. We have to live with very small numbers until we get more students.

Expand the Bridge program and other options for incoming freshmen. Allow anyone to come a week early to complete College Studies that first week or make that week an extended orientation.

Why are we offering fewer English 1010 course sections? Is it due to changes in vocational program English requirements? Concurrent enrollment? Competition with online courses?

Workforce development offerings must meet the scheduling needs of the workforce. Not all offerings should be scheduled 8 – 5 when businesses are open. Schedule some offerings at times where it would be like a shift change for business.

Schedule more classes to meet two days per week versus meeting three days per week. This gives students more flexibility to work.

Offer more self-paced classes with flexible enrollment.

Have students with some of the same or similar majors take some of their classes such as the general education requirements at the same time. Grouping of students in similar programs builds a good support system and engages students.

Look at strategies to encourage learning communities and interest groups. This helps students make friends with similar interests.

Develop course combinations that share students and faculty, such as a writing course linked with a social science course (English 1010 linked with Political Science 1000, for example) where the same students are enrolled in both courses and both instructors team-teach both courses. Another possibility might be an Art course linked with a history course. The idea is to help students see applicability of what they are learning across disciplines.

It isn't just about offering content. Our role is to help them learn in different ways. Help faculty learn additional approaches to helping students be successful. Today's traditional age students have a very short attention span, like to work in groups, and need course materials presented with a variety of instructional methods. Students get frustrated and drop classes when instructors don't work thru problems step by step in class. The Learning Skills Lab Coordinator could help with this.

Some Vet Tech students have difficulties completing the program in the normal timeframe. Consider offering some of the courses online to help with this problem.

Distance education courses don't work well for vocational programs.

When we only offer a particular course in the evening, then the full-time day students are forced into a night class. Night classes for full-time students should be a secondary option. Students who came to EWC for face-to-face courses shouldn't be forced into online or night courses. Offer both a night and day section of the same course, and see what the demand is.

Add an online component to on-site courses to free up some classrooms.

EWC doesn't have enough faculty to offer classes both online and face-to-face. We are taking our best teachers to teach online.

There is a problem with the availability of general education courses, because the good instructors' courses fill fast.

On-campus instructors are opposed to online math classes, because they don't think they work. Some outreach people have suggested teaching Math 0920 and 0930 online. Look at the retention of math classes online compared to those taught on-site.

Need better developmental math courses, so students and particularly non-traditional students can make it thru their program of study. Students drop programs because of math. Need more flexibility for math requirements in some programs.

Problems identified on student evaluations aren't being dealt with. These evaluations should be used for improvement. Have a remediation track for instructors who need to improve.

Instructors, particularly vocational instructors, need more presentation on workplace expectations.

There can be a problem when one faculty member holds the key to graduation in any program. It becomes a major problem when this occurs with institutional general education course requirements. This impacts our retention and graduation rates when students refuse to take a required course and choose not to complete their program and in some cases transfer to a 4-year institution without completing an EWC degree. In some situations, students got around a course they refused to take for graduation. This becomes a problem, because other students know this has happened.

Overlapping science courses has been a problem for some students.

Concurrent students don't do as well when they enroll after high school graduation.

Need to give recent high school graduates individualized attention to help them make the transition from high school teaching methods to traditional college teaching methods.

Students should take the Study Skills course immediately following their College Studies course. Since these courses aren't full semester courses, students could take College Studies in the first block and Study Skills the second block. Encourage parents to also enroll in College Studies, so they have a better understanding of the college environment and expectations.

## ➤ Student Support and Services

- ⇒ Treat students as adults and college students.
- ⇒ Students want more food options and variety in meals. Meal tickets should allow students to eat in either the cafeteria or the Student Center.
- ⇒ Relax the rules in the dormitory, and treat them like adults
- ⇒ Student Center needs to be more vibrant and student oriented.

There are major problems in housing. That is why we can't keep students in the dorm. We treat them like they are children and overreact to situations. The housing problem has nothing to do with capacity. The rules are too strict. We need to keep them safe but not jailed. Students don't want to live under stricter rules than at home. They want to be treated like adults. The restrictive and controlling rules and not treating them like adults is causing major retention problems. This is not the college life they envisioned or their friends at other colleges are having. Housing was too tight last year.

Student Center isn't vibrant or "student centered." We studied it and made recommendations, but very little has changed. It should be open when students want to use it. The Student Center should stay open until 11 or 12 p.m. and be open on the weekends. They shouldn't advertise malts if they don't want to make them. Technology is a form of entertainment for the traditional students. Moving the computers to the TV room was a good idea. Put more computers in the Student Center.

Some felt the meals provided by Food Services are fine for cafeteria food, but others thought there could be some improvements. They serve too much fried food particularly for the athletes. Students get tired of eating the same thing. Give them more options like a food court. Too many prepared foods are served. Provide more healthy options than just the salad bar like low fat and low carb meals. Food Services should be under the Dean of Students and not the VP of Financial Affairs.

Serve more meals on the weekend. Offer flexible meal plans with at least 10 per week.

We really hold our students hands. Is this good or bad? Are they prepared for this not to happen at 4-year schools?

Admission requirements are limiting recruiting and retention. Placement exams are thrown at them prior to the first day of classes. Some students decide not to come, because they tested into developmental classes. We lose them before we get them into the classroom. Have students take the placement exams on the first day of classes. They are already here, and we can work with them even if they test into developmental classes. Developmental classes for international students should be free.

Pre-registration days need to be redesigned. Everything on those days happens too fast. Students blow off the COMPASS test, because they don't realize the impact it has on their required courses and time to complete their program of study. Offer a subject review and provide instructions on how to take the COMPASS test, so they have the right mind set and are more mentally prepared. Provide more orientation on pre-registration

days and less on Orientation Day. Have different sessions on pre-registration days for non-traditional students. Change the scheduling so there is only one group per day or a morning and an afternoon session for pre-registration days. Having the first group start at 8:00 and the second group start at 9:30 doesn't work well. Give greater value to advisors for participating in pre-registration day such as giving extra pay.

Changes need to be made in the Student Orientation at the beginning of the fall term. This year's skit didn't serve its purpose. The sessions were geared for traditional age students and don't serve the needs of non-traditional age students. Need to have sessions appropriate for non-traditional students too.

The Bridge Program and a full-time person in the Learning Skills Lab was a good idea. Did the Bridge Program really bring in the type of students we want? Were we treating them like children? Why did we provide the Bridge Program students with free snacks three times a day? Will they continue to expect this?

Why are we always concerned with grabbing students with the lowest abilities? We may have done them a favor by just getting them to the next level with the Bridge Program, but they may not really have the abilities to be successful at that course level. Some people have the attitude that we don't want students who are too much trouble and have problems academically, but we need to help these students.

Need newer and better computers in the Testing Center.

We need to help students succeed, but we also need to make them responsible and treat them as adults in class.

More integration of students.

Create a full-time advisor position to serve both on-campus and outreach. This person would also work with our currently enrolled high school students to increase the potential of their enrollment after high school graduation.

Good advising is important to direct students into the right curriculum. Provide vocational counseling to help students decide on a career.

When advising pre-professional students, advise them out of the college catalog where they plan to transfer

Student Services needs to be more professional and not just focus on the "warm, fuzzy stuff." They can still provide services in a warm and caring environment without the "warm, fuzzy stuff."

Don't let certain students put others in danger.

Provide more placement services which include advertising and job interview and resume writing assistance for students. Tie college placement services in with the local Job Services Department. Have job fairs other than just welding.

An Instructional Support Areas (ISA) subcommittee, which is a subcommittee of the Instructional Advisory Council (IAC), has been formed this year to collaborate on how they are supporting students and what else they can do. The subcommittee includes computer services staff, library staff, Director of Learning Resources, instructional technology staff, ABE/GED lead instructor, health technology instructor, Audio Visual &

Media Services Manager, Dean of Instruction, and Dean of Instruction for Outreach & Life Long Learning.

The library is too restrictive. Students can't do anything in the library. They should be allowed to use the computers in the Library to type papers and access the Internet. Students may not start studying until 9 p.m. The library should be open from 7:30 a.m. until 11:00 p.m. on week days to meet students' needs.

Computer labs should be open on Sunday nights.

We are falling behind with computer access. We should have hotspots on-campus for network access and Kiosk self-service information systems which provide students direct access to their student records. Help students with their own laptops, and provide wireless access.

When students have difficulty completing all of the requirements for their chosen program of study, having them switch to interdisciplinary students isn't a solution. It's a cop out.

There needs to be more planning and consideration of what scholarships will be needed in the future. We need more substantial scholarships like full-ride scholarships. Take advantage of the Hathaway Scholarship program to offset other scholarships.

Consider a new financial aid policy where students aren't put on suspension after their first semester.

## ➤ Activities

- ⇒ Add athletic program(s) such as women's basketball, baseball, softball or soccer. Participants in athletic programs bring some of our best students. The athletic programs bring students with a variety of programs of study who probably wouldn't have come.
- ⇒ Need a more vibrant, innovative and enthusiastic activities program.
- ⇒ Increase the number of student clubs and student activities

Programs and activities go hand-in-hand. Activities bring more diverse students.

Athletic teams and activities are important. Athletics bring some of our best students as will livestock judging. The athletes serve as good role models for other students.

We should have something going every night of the week and on weekends for our students. This generation wants their entertainment organized for them. Have movie nights on-campus. Don't cater every activity to the dorm students. Talk about weekend activities at orientation. Have an activities suggestion box. Market activities better.

College dances should go later.

Co-host activities with WNCC. That would allow our students to interact with WNCC students.

Other colleges really want EWC to have a women's basketball team, because the men and women's teams travel together. This would be a relatively low cost athletic program.

Softball would be a good fit for EWC, because it is big in this community.

Fix golf or get rid of it before we get another sport. We need more students, both men and women, to make a team. If we want to support a golf team, we need a coach who is a full-time, on-campus employee and may have teaching or other responsibilities and an appropriate budget for travel, etc.

Add forensics club, outing club (hunting, hiking, etc.), hockey, more dances, and student oriented bus trips (at least one each semester).

Add speech and debate teams and theatre. They bring more academic transfer students, attract different types of students and bring diversity to a student population. Need more than one program to bring enough like students to campus. This makes students feel more comfortable at EWC. Offer enough scholarships, resources and staff to support these types of activities.

Goshen County has good resource people in the community to support our performing arts/theatre program, but we should let EWC students be the actors.

Ask community people to get involved with our students. Maybe some of our students could be involved in the Two Shot.

## ➤ Retention

⇒ Retention is everybody's responsibility

⇒ Everything we do impacts retention

Create a real retention program which starts the first day of class and has a first year experience component. College Studies course sections based on majors would be a great first step.

Contact past students who need only a few classes to complete a degree. Someone will need to check the student records to identify these students.

The Retention Task Force needs to focus on academics and not just activities. Listen to what other people are saying about retention.

Why aren't students registering for the spring semester until the last minute? Do we need a more extensive campaign to encourage them to register earlier? This may be impacting our spring enrollment.

More second block courses would help students needing to drop courses and still remain full-time.

We only worry about students with two deficiencies. We should also see what we can do to help students with only one deficiency.

Concurrent enrollment is only a short term solution to declining enrollment. After high school graduation, many students go to other colleges, but they may not have come to EWC anyway. It would be better if high school students took courses on-campus.

Study groups started by faculty have been very helpful. Faculty have used these for review sessions before exams.

What we do and how we serve students is effective for the majority of our students; however, there are others who we haven't helped. With a different approach, maybe some students wouldn't transfer without completing a degree, and some who don't care about completing a degree would complete a degree or certificate program.

Financial Aid Office is doing great things for retention by the changes they have made.

Look at retention by class and by instructor. Identify problems, and deal with them.

Students must do their homework to be successful. A lot of students expect college to be like high school. This is particularly a problem with students who were previous concurrently enrolled students.

Retention in online courses is low. Make sure students know these courses are harder and what to expect.

One-year certificate programs decrease the number of semesters students in those programs attend EWC. Two-year programs increase the chances that a degree-seeking student will stay for two years.

## ➤ Facilities

⇒ The campus needs to give a good first impression

⇒ The building interiors need updated and need to look modern

The campus needs a face-lift. The paint, carpet and furniture need to be updated. It is really bad. The college needs to look newer. The halls and the orange carpet look like something from the 70's. Do prospective students think the same of our faculty? The student gateways to the institution such as the entrances and hallways, Testing Center and Student Services areas need updated. The Testing Center definitely needs painted and needs new computers for placement testing. The college has put too much into the outside appearance of the college and not enough on the inside. Need to develop a 5-year plan for updating entire areas of the campus at one time.

The college facilities need renewed. Emphasize the appearance of exterior and interior campus spaces in terms of updated wall, ceiling, and floor finishes, the correct decorative touches, and functionality. The classrooms need to be updated and more attractive. Building facades and interior corridors should scream higher academic achievement and should foster a visualization of a future filled with promise.

Pay more attention to our "curbside" appeal to draw students in, and rely on the strength of our program offerings and talented faculty to keep them here. The main entry drives and parking lots are our first opportunity to make a good impression, and even though we think that nobody should really care about this, it sets the stage for influencing the mood of potential students. Address the hard water deposits on the exterior of the buildings, improve the main entryways to buildings, and continue to work your way through the interiors of each of the buildings.

Academics are more important than our looks.

Students are influenced by their classroom environment. The other Wyoming colleges have much more updated classrooms. They are newer, better and have more classrooms with computers on each desk. Our desks are 50 years old. We need new desks with more workspace and new chairs. The curtains are really, really bad. They have holes in them, are dirty, etc.

Although the signage at EWC has a nice standard consistency, it needs to better indicate where to go. Provide uniform campus building signage, both exterior and interior. Purchase a message sign for the campus gateway.

Need more space for the new Construction Technology program.

Finish the Vet Tech building, because it is needed to grow the program.

New dorm parking lot doesn't have enough parking spots and isn't student friendly.

Need more parking and proper signage for the CTC.

## ➤ **Funding and Allocation of Money**

⇒ Make a financial commitment to instructional programs. That's our purpose.

⇒ Spend money on things that impact students.

Do away with things that aren't important and use our money wisely on things that impact students. Move money where it would be more effective. We are reluctant to spend money on instruction and new programs. Why? We are an educational institution and that is our purpose.

Make a financial commitment to the programs we want. Need a reliable source of money for new programs. Don't put all your money in one or two programs.

Ensure there are ways to provide resources for new programs or innovative ideas through growing the endowment program and/or budgeting sufficient funds for a measured response to training demands.

Future funding is in flux. EWC is now at the top of the funding formula and has the largest dollars/FTE. EWC has reached the pinnacle of this particular formula. We are the most needy community college in the state and have the lowest capital income tax base. Now the funding formula is going to be reviewed. A new formula may change the factors that affect the distribution of state appropriations.

We need to look at the whole picture. The number one board priority of Enrollment, Recruitment and Retention can't be done in isolation. All of the priorities are linked. Money isn't the whole answer. Need a pay scale that gets and keeps people. New programs don't do us any good if we can't hire instructors.

There isn't enough money to do all the things we need or want to do. We need steady funding sources. There is a huge discrepancy with Goshen County's assessed evaluation and those of the other colleges.

We haven't made a real commitment of providing the necessary resources for the board's #1 priority of Enrollment, Recruitment and Retention. It has only been given lip service.

Need a grant writer to help EWC grow. Failure to get recruitment and retention grants has affected enrollment.

Departmental budgets have not increased in years. Increase everyone's office and supply budgets.

The cost/benefit of our programs and services is important to consider when allocating financial resources.

The marketing budget was doubled. Maybe it needs more.

If we think the new dorm is going to increase enrollment, then what additional resources are available for additional instructors and other instructional resources? The administration and board need to make a commitment to provide adequate instructional resources to provide a quality education for our students.

Eliminate EWC positions if services can be covered by positions funded with federal money.

The budgeting process is unfair and tightly controlled by specific individuals.

Students should pay more for technical programs. The lab fees for these programs should be at least \$200 and used to get new stuff that works. This will increase enrollment. You get what you pay for.

## ➤ Customer Service

- ⇒ Students are different than previous generations
- ⇒ Students are our customers and should be our first priority
- ⇒ Treat students as adults

Treat students as our customers. They aren't the same as they were 20 years ago. They have different needs. We need to remember why we are here and what our students want and need. Recognize that we are a service organization. Customer's needs come first not what employees want.

Give comprehensive care to our students, both now and later.

Be positive, warm and friendly. Make everyone feel welcome and treat them as individuals. Learn students' names, and greet them in the hall. Ask students how their day is going. Encourage students to get involved with activities and clubs, which help them feel connected to the campus.

Student Services should designate someone who immediately acknowledges everyone who walks in the door. People who are unfamiliar with the campus don't know who to talk to and where to go. They could simply say, "Hi, how can we help you?" Students don't know how to look for what they need – they need help.

There is a lack of cross-training in support services. This is especially a problem with the responsibilities assigned to the Administrative Assistant for Records and Registration. There are too many critical functions assigned to this position for serving students to not have a backup person. Students shouldn't have to come back later or another day to get what they need or questions answered.

A live person should be in all public/student service offices from 8 – 4 every working day. Offices shouldn't put up signs saying they are closed. Someone always needs to be available to register students. The switchboard/information desk should be manned at all times. That means someone should physically be at the desk or window. Putting up a sign on a regular basis with an arrow telling people to proceed to the Copy Center is really bad customer service.

It takes too long for someone to pickup incoming phone calls. Sometimes they aren't picked up at all. Need more staff at the switchboard. More contact and less voice mail.

There is a lack of production in the Copy Center for faculty and staff.

Bookstore should be open before 8:00 a.m., so it is open before most classes start. It was good to see the Bookstore was open until 5:00 p.m. when faculty returned for the fall semester.

Advisor alerts for students shouldn't go to the Information Center and have the names of students who need to pick them up on the message board. Some students know that is probably the reason for their name on the message board, so they intentionally don't pick them up. This is not a good procedure and should be done more confidentially such as

mailing them. It can be embarrassing for students when they have a friend with them who then sees they received an advisor alert.

Suspension and dismissal letters sent to students are too threatening and unfriendly. These letters need to be reviewed

Look at simplifying and streamlining the concurrent enrollment process.

Make sure students get what they paid for.

Adjust to students' culture, but still provide professional services and hold them accountable. Impress upon our students that coming here is a business, and you are here to learn. Students have the right to fail – failure is a part of life.

Don't let the use of technology make us lose our personal touch. Students have had problems registering online. One student was getting the run around and was in tears. It would be helpful to have a 24 – 7 help desk for online registration. We could make it easier by having step-by-step instructions which tell them what to do and then what to do next.

## Non-Traditional Students and Ethnic Minorities

- ⇒ Number of high school graduates is declining, so we need more non-traditional students
- ⇒ People don't really know how to recruit non-traditional students
- ⇒ More flexible scheduling and fast track course offerings

Older students are good role models and push the class. They do their homework, etc. They also encourage more discussion and communication in the classroom.

EWC must have more non-traditional students, because the number of 18 year olds in Wyoming is decreasing. The 18 year old population base is not large enough to sustain EWC's enrollment. EWC focuses too much on traditional age students and not enough on non-traditional age students. Increase our penetration rates of non-traditional residents within our service district. Increase the number of non-traditional male students.

Make sure the non-traditional population knows we are here. Spend advertising dollars to attract non-traditional students. Non-traditional age students are difficult to recruit. Mostly we need to be at the right place at the right time and have the right courses at the right time.

We're missing the mark on non-traditional students. Are we marketing in the right places? Can we justify running a large number of programs in the evening for so few non-traditional students?

More scheduling flexibility for non-traditional students through distance education, evening, weekend, combination online/weekends and fast track credit courses which don't follow the traditional semester schedule. Also, offer more concentrated, condensed programs to meet the needs of non-traditional students.

Non-traditional students want to be paid to go to school. Look at grants for job skills needed by businesses. Advertise part-time financial aid scholarships and no tuition charged for senior citizens. Students must be enrolled in at least 6 credit hours to qualify for financial aid. Peoples lives are so fast paced that 6 credit hours is too much of a load, and consequently they don't successfully pass.

Goshen County is a retirement community. How do we capitalize on credit offerings for senior citizens?

We should have more Hispanic students. We need to make them feel important and not inferior, and we need to make them feel wanted. Need Hispanic employees in key areas. Our marketing needs to show that we have something here for them. The Hispanic Recruitment Plan was torn down by PAC.

Use non-traditional and minority student faces in marketing.

More scholarships for Hispanic and non-traditional students.

A focused comprehensive center provides access and retention of adult students. Implement the same concept for student development that we had with the Adult Re-Entry Center which provided ongoing support services. Non-traditional students need a

concrete visible sign that we welcome the whole community. They need a special space where their needs, barriers and obstacles are understood. Older students feel isolated, because there are so few of them. They need to be greeted as well as the young, white students.

One of the outreach sites shared how they have been successful in working with non-traditional students. They find these students just walk-in. One of the keys is to make sure they keep coming in. Look at each student's individual situation and talk about other demands on their time. Make sure their class schedule along with other obligations don't overload the student. They fit at least one class with their interest into the student's first semester schedule. After the student is enrolled, they give each student individual attention, encouragement, and hold their hand for part of the semester. They don't give up on their students. If a student isn't coming to class they may call them at home or find them at work or where ever. Their students have commented that "you make us feel like we are wanted."

Transition to college is difficult for non-traditional students. A good program in College Studies is important.

Women who can't work outside the home due to other obligations and responsibilities are interested in home based careers. Even people who can work outside the home choose to work from home. This could be an opportunity for EWC.

## Outreach

- ⇒ Need help with advertising
- ⇒ Encourage local high school graduates to attend EWC
- ⇒ Workforce development opportunities
- ⇒ Number of approved instructors for credit courses is limited
- ⇒ Offer more credit courses

Bring outreach to the forefront on-campus.

Barbeques in the outreach communities have been good.

EWC is the only Wyoming community college that doesn't have a full-time Workforce Development Office Director without other responsibilities. EWC needs a Workforce Development Officer in both Douglas and Newcastle. The Outreach Coordinators can't do everything. They have the "old philosophy" of only focusing on community education. Outreach Centers use non-credit courses as an in road to credit courses.

Not offering enough credit courses. Three of the campuses are doing a lot of credit courses, but the others are doing more non-credit offerings. They need help with advertising.

Outreach advertising is just "fluff". Need to target each center as the main focus and not just goodwill advertising. Need to develop marketing plans for outreach in coordination with the Outreach Coordinators. This would help the coordinators be more focused. Outreach needs more marketing to high school juniors and seniors.

Gillette is going to be a threat. We need to get ahead of this. Need to get people from the northern part of our service district familiar with EWC. Most of them now go to Gillette and Sheridan. Have EWC graduates visit the outreach areas to share their experiences at EWC. Continue to take groups of people to visit the campus in Torrington.

There are energy industry workforce development opportunities. Capitalize on the oil, gas and coal industries in outreach. They need industrial construction, electrical, and engineering training for their employees.

Need a stronger presence in Douglas.

Douglas has a mini-boom starting with their new business park. The Converse Area New Development Organization (CANDO) has been instrumental in the development of new businesses. There is a new business located in the business park which builds small airplanes and propellers for small airplanes.

Add a welding program with all the courses required for degree completion on-site in Douglas. Purchase a welding trailer for on-site training in outreach.

Capitalize on workforce development opportunities in Douglas such as construction technology, nursing and mining related jobs. Develop a Workforce Development Center in Douglas. We have more workforce development opportunities in Douglas compared

to Torrington. We already have a building in Douglas. Workforce development in Douglas could bring in additional monies.

There are educational opportunities for single moms, so they are employable at the Lusk hospital and Women's Training Center.

Outreach Pell and loan checks should be picked up at the outreach offices and not mailed to the students. This would give the students more personal contact with our outreach coordinators and/or staff. This gives them an opportunity to ask the students how things are going.

Concurrent enrollment courses help outreach enrollment. The outreach sites service far more non-traditional students. Recruit more GED graduates and work with Gear-Up in outreach. Difficult to get senior citizens involved.

Growing enrollment in small communities is difficult. The population base for students is one problem, but the other problem is the lack of qualified adjunct instructors. The adjunct instructors have to be approved by the Torrington campus, but many potential instructors aren't approved. Some individuals who weren't approved to teach EWC credit courses were angered. Need to be more flexible on approving instructors such as individuals who are currently taking college classes towards a higher degree. Enrollment in outreach would increase if more instructors were approved. The outreach sites are too far away to use instructors from the Torrington campus for the different courses they need. Distance learning is often the only option for these communities.

Approving more instructors in outreach just to increase course offerings is a two-edged sword. During the years when instructors were more easily approved, EWC's image suffered from the perception of lack of quality instruction. Since North Central's standards need to be met, it may not be possible to approve more outreach instructors. We need to maintain quality before quantity.

The outreach centers experience a variety of school district and in some cases state rules which make it difficult to offer non-credit courses and trips in a timely manner. They can no longer use their district's school buses for trips. Some coordinators have found a way around this but others have not. It appears that this is a state issue. Some but not all of the districts require our non-credit instructors to be fingerprinted and have a criminal check done and approved before they are allowed to use their facilities to teach classes even if they are in the evening. The approval process takes too much time. The outreach coordinators requested that someone from the Torrington campus check into these issues on both statewide and district regulations.

## **External Factors Impacting Enrollment**

When unemployment is down, enrollment declines.

Lack of industry in Goshen County and some of our outreach areas.

Local businesses don't reward employees for education and don't provide tuition incentives.

Low population in our service area is a problem in regard to increasing enrollment.

Competition for college students.

EWC will not grow enrollment until Torrington provides more viable activities and services for our traditional age student population. There isn't enough for students to do at night. More popular eating establishments such as Applebees, a good steak house and a good sports bar would help. We need to let the local business people know we need their help in this area.

In the next 10 years, 70% of jobs in Wyoming will not require a college education. Graduates with vocational skills will be more employable than those with an academic degree. These statements have not been verified by the IR Office.

People can make more money working in the mines without a degree than graduates from most of our programs working in their field of study.

## **Other**

EWC is in a state of flux with so many new employees. Although this is good and we won't be living in the past there are some drawbacks such as diminishing reflective history and not remembering our past mistakes.

EWC needs to support the local community. We should be purchasing supplies for Food Services locally. If we don't support the local community, then why should we expect them to support EWC.

Too many employees just don't like to work. We need to get back to people who want to work. This will get more students.

Need a faculty senate.

Scholarship Selection committee needs better cross-section of the institution.

Conduct student focus groups on enrollment, recruitment and retention. Talk to new employees about what has worked at other colleges where they have worked.

Study our market segment: (1) high school students, (2) traditional students, (3) non-traditional students and (4) under prepared students. Meet the needs of different segments. Traditional and non-traditional students need to be treated differently.

Need a quicker way to get new programs approved and through the WCCC approval process.

There is a shortage of teachers and nurses.

# ENROLLMENT FOCUS GROUPS

## **Introduction**

The purpose of the focus groups is to gather ideas and suggestions on how EWC can reach the goal set by PAC of “2012 by 2012”. The Enrollment Task Force is looking for constructive ideas related to both recruitment and retention. I will not disclose the names of individuals who have brought forward specific ideas and suggestions, and I would ask that each of you maintain the same confidentiality to encourage an honest and open discussion. If you have ideas you would be more comfortable discussing with me individually, please feel free to stop by my office. Are there any questions before we begin?

## **Questions**

1. Where do you see the highest growth potential for EWC enrollment, i.e. age groups, programs, workforce development, student activities?
2. What are the greatest obstacles EWC will encounter while growing enrollment, and what are some possible solutions?
3. How do we increase enrollment?

From: Jack Bottenfield [jbottenf@ewc.wy.edu]  
Sent: Friday, September 22, 2006 11:51 AM  
To: Kathie France  
Subject: Concern.

Kathie, it has come to my attention that a number of people have expressed the view that you are filtering their comments in the focus interviews and not putting down both the positive and negative comments. I have not been provided with information as to the specific items which have been expressed by those interviewed but then subsequently deleted by you.

I, of course, have not been present during the focus groups and therefore, do not know what has occurred.

As President of the College, I want for the Board and I to know both the positive and negative comments expressed by the people whom you are interviewing in the focus groups.

Thank you.  
Jack

Jack L. Bottenfield, President  
Eastern Wyoming College  
3200 West C Street  
Torrington, WY 82240  
307.532-8202  
jbottenf@ewc.wy.edu