

PHILOSOPHY OF ENROLLMENT

The Board of Regents is being asked to review this Philosophy of Enrollment statement in the context of the multi-year enrollment models that also are included here. This Board review in February 2016 will serve as a prelude to a wider campus conversation in Spring semester, and the intention is to ask the Board in May 2016 to adopt a final draft of a Philosophy of Enrollment statement with enrollment targets.

This report, like its predecessor in May 2014, comes to the Board from the Strategic Enrollment Management Advisory Committee (SEMACE). That earlier report was written after campus discussions in 2013-14 and is available on the Board website. It was presented to the Board in May 2014, but the Board took no formal action on it.

Philosophy of Enrollment Statement

Purpose

The purpose of this Philosophy of Enrollment statement is to serve as a set of guiding principles as the University sets enrollment goals and develops strategies to achieve them.

Philosophy of Enrollment

The University should set enrollment goals that allow for the long-term fiscal sustainability of the institution so as to better provide a consistently high-quality educational program for our students and a stable and vibrant work environment for our employees. Stability of enrollment and an optimal student/faculty ratio from one year to the next are high priorities, and growth to a higher level of enrollment should be sought only if it is believed to be sustainable at that higher level.

This implies: (1) the University should set targets for the number of entering freshman and transfer students each year that are reasonable and repeatable; (2) goals for the graduate and continuing education student population should be set in the context of those programs that meet a discernible market demand, are consistent with our mission, and which the University is prepared to support so long as they generate sufficient net revenue.

In setting goals for undergraduate student enrollment:

- We recognize that the cost of attendance and the prospect for timely graduation are primary considerations to students and their families, and that our tuition policy, financial aid policies, and our capacity for generating net revenue from sources other than student tuition and fees should be consistent with our enrollment goals and with each other while adhering to the principle of long-term fiscal sustainability;
- We aspire to the day when our student population reflects the diverse population of the communities and regions from which our students are drawn;
- We recognize that international students provide an important cultural benefit to the university. Their presence on our campus enlivens one of the University's points of distinction and enhances the diversity of the student population. We therefore seek to increase international student enrollment.

In setting goals for graduate and continuing education student enrollment:

- We acknowledge that prospective graduate and continuing education students most often seek advanced degrees or certifications that provide personal enrichment and which are directly transferable to employment opportunities;
- We recognize that program costs should be set in the context of the cost of similar programs at competitor institutions;

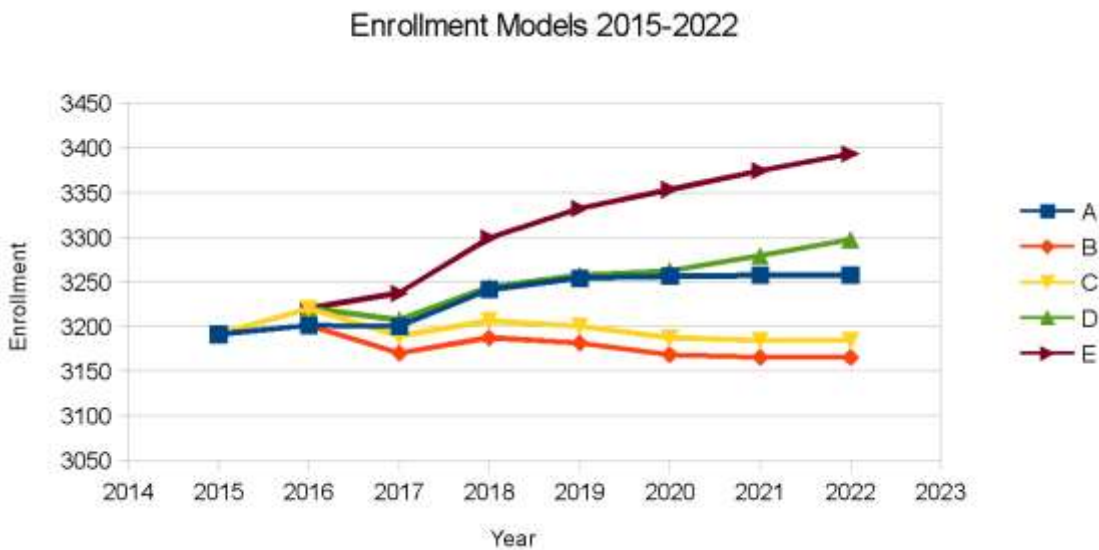
- We have an opportunity to engage alumni, regents, and members of the local community who are employers to help shape our programs and encourage their employees to enroll.

In guiding our policies and strategies on recruitment, admission and financial aid:

- We apply, without bias, our experience as to who among the many prospective students seeking to enter college are most likely to be successful at PLU, and that principally among them are those students who seek an authentic, challenging and inclusive university environment in which to pursue their aspirations;
- We recognize that some prospective students who would be very successful at PLU might be inclined to overlook us without knowing the distinctive, challenging and supportive environment we offer and our high priority on student success. Strategies to make ourselves known to these students should be created, evaluated and refreshed continuously;
- We recognize that many successful PLU students are those who are “other-directed” and community-focused – those who cultivate knowledge while harboring and nurturing a vision for how that knowledge can serve others in their community and profession;
- We have learned that identifying, recruiting and enrolling prospective students is a shared responsibility among all members of the PLU community. Faculty, staff, administrators, regents and alumni all play coincident and collaborative roles alongside our professional admission staff in recruiting students.

Enrollment Forecasts

The following is a brief account of 7-year enrollment forecasts made under various sets of assumptions. This information provides important context in setting enrollment goals for which the Philosophy of Enrollment is intended to serve as a guide. In the chart and table below, the number of graduate students is held constant at 335 in all models throughout the 7 years.



<u>Year</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>E</u>
2015	3191	3191	3191	3191	3191
2016	3201	3201	3220	3220	3220
2017	3200	3170	3189	3207	3237
2018	3241	3187	3206	3244	3299
2019	3254	3181	3200	3257	3332
2020	3256	3168	3187	3262	3353
2021	3257	3165	3184	3279	3374
2022	3257	3165	3184	3297	3393

Parameters Held Constant in All Five Models

- Number of students who enter as Spring Freshmen (10) and Spring Transfers (60)
- Persistence patterns for students who enter as Spring Freshmen and Spring Transfers
- Persistence patterns for students who enter as Fall Transfers
- Number of non-matriculated undergraduate students (55)
- Number of graduate students (at 335, starting in 2016)
- Continuing Education enrollment is not included here (nor in official headcounts)

Parameters That Vary Among the Five Models Starting in 2016

Model A

- Fall Freshmen/Transfers = 650/210 each year for 2016-2022;
- Persistence patterns for students who enter as Fall Freshmen are held constant for all three levels (Soph = 82%; Jr = 73%; Sr = 67%).

Model B

- Fall Freshmen/Transfers = 650/210 for 2016, then decreases to 630/200 for the remainder of 2017-2022;
- Persistence patterns for students who enter as Fall Freshmen are held constant for all three levels (Soph = 82%; Jr = 73%; Sr = 67%).

Model C

- Fall Freshmen/Transfers = 650/210 for 2016, then decreases to 630/200 for the remainder of 2017-2022;
- Persistence patterns for students who enter as Fall Freshmen are increased by 1% at all 3 levels in 2016 and then held constant at that higher level (Soph = 83%; Jr = 74%; Sr = 68%) for the remainder of 2017-22.

Model D

- Fall Freshmen/Transfers = 650/210 for 2016, then decreases to 630/200 for the remainder of 2017-22;
- Persistence patterns for students who enter as Fall Freshmen are increased by 1% at all 3 levels starting in 2016 and then continue to increase at 1% per year through 2022 (so that by 2022, the persistence rates are Soph = 89%; Jr = 80%; Sr = 74%).

Model E

- Fall Freshmen/Transfers = 650/210 each year for 2016-2022;
- Persistence patterns for students who enter as Fall Freshmen are increased by 1% at all 3 levels starting in 2016 and then continue to increase at 1% per year through 2022 (so that by 2022, the persistence rates are Soph = 89%; Jr = 80%; Sr = 74%).

Comments on the Models

Model A - The baseline persistence pattern used in Model A is based on the 5-year historical average;

Model B – This may be thought of as a “minimalist model” where persistence patterns stay unchanged and the first year classes drop to 630/200, although we have seen worse;

Model C – Compared to Model B, this shows the effect of the one-time bump in persistence rates across all three levels – a bump that persists for the remainder of the 2017-22 period;

Model D – Compared to Model A, this shows how a steady growth in persistence can overcome smaller entering classes;

Model E – A rosy scenario, with steady growth in persistence rates and entering classes of 650/210 throughout the 7-year period;

All Models – In 2018, some of the increase is the effect of the small Fall 2014 class graduating, having been replaced by a sequence of larger entering classes.

Discussion Questions

- How does a Philosophy of Enrollment affect the operational side of the admission process?
- What impact might a Philosophy of Enrollment have on current academic or student life programs?
- How realistic are the various models; are some more likely than others?
- How does this Philosophy of Enrollment statement differ from the report that was presented to the Board in May 2014, and why?