Strategic Goal 2: Cultivate and strengthen the educational, economic, and cultural well-being of our region.

Action Step 1: Improve accessibility and increase communication

1.A.1. Appoint a committee to oversee the development and/or enhancement of publicizing campus events and accomplishments to the greater community, to include a variety of media.

A publicity committee has been established and is meeting to discuss various approaches to the media and the activities that need to be done.

1.A.2. Increase community participation on the main campus and at the National Aerospace Education Center (NACE), the Center for Workforce Education (CWE), the Caperton Center, the Lewis County Center, the Braxton County Center and other centers.

Before a targeted plan can be developed the committee needs to know the goals for each location and what the capabilities are at each of the locations. This discussion has not been started.

Student Affairs is now sponsoring:
- Family Movie Nights and Family Carnivals geared toward the community
- Speakers Series
- Traveling Theatrical Company events
- The Locals Only Music Series
- World Aids Day
- Homecoming Activities

The office of Public Relations needs to increase the advertising/publications budgets for off campus locations and increasing the budget to support institutional advertising costs. See appendix A.1 for more detailed information on amounts spent and recommendation for hiring a Director of Marketing.

Off campus programs need more advertising throughout the year. A web page for Off Campus offerings is in development. Additional support staff need to be considered at off campus locations to keep offices open longer.

Athletics has established base line data for student participation at various athletic events. Please see appendix A.1 for data. To increase student participation the following activities have been introduced this year:
- Half time promotions
- Increased the distribution of athletic schedules throughout the campus and in the community
- Recommendation of putting up a sign at the Parking Garage saying “Game Today”
• The student-athlete advisory committee is established and trying to become more involved on campus

1.A.3. Increase community awareness of Fairmont State opportunities

Fine Arts:  See Appendix A.1. for more detailed information
• Publishes five issues of The Fine Arts Tatler along with ten postcards that are distributed via a mailing list of 1,640 names
• A season brochure is also sent to 10,000 names once a year
• Free publicity in local newspapers, Fairmont, Clarksburg, and Morgantown
• Paid advertisements are used for the Town & Gown Productions and the performances of the WV Symphony

Public Relations:
• Multiple media requests are handled daily by this office
• Press releases are sent to various distribution lists throughout the 13 county service region and statewide

Athletics:
• Excellent coverage of our teams in the Times West Virginian
• Good coverage of game dates and times based on pre-game coverage in most instances.

1.A.4. Increase Student Awareness of off-campus activities

Student Affairs:  Students are emailed and fliers are sent to club mailboxes about requests for volunteering.

1.A.5. Announce awards, honors, etc., through a variety of media to increase community awareness of achievement.

Public Relations:
• Press releases and web site recognizes students, faculty, and staff honors
• Deans’ and Presidents’ Lists are printed regularly in local newspapers
• Increased funding would be needed to increase the amount of coverage we can get for recognition of awards
1.A.6. Expand special events into all centers throughout the year (link up with Student Life)
   Fine Arts:
   • The play, Greater Tuna will be offered at both the Caperton Center and the Braxton County Center this summer.

1.A.7. Improve parking access for the public
   • Parking garage, visitors level is now left open during evening events on campus; e.g., concerts, plays, etc.

1.A.8. Place Lighted maps/directions/informational kiosks on the main campus and at all sites
   • Kiosks are designed and ready for installation at 7 sites around the campus. All kiosks will be placed in areas where existing lighting will illuminate them.

1.A.9. Improve directions to all institutional facilities by the use of detailed signage to include names of buildings and lists of functions in key buildings, and the use of directional and informational signs to improve access.
   • See A.8.

1.A.10. Reorganize Fairmont State’s web pages to improve access and information sharing for various identifiable groups
   • A calendaring system has been purchased and is ready for installation on the web site for the institution. There will be multiple calendars that are enabled for overlaying one another in order for people to get information on multiple types of activities in one location.

1.B.1. Assess handicapped accessibility to all facilities at all sites and develop an implementation schedule and budget for completion of facility improvements.
   • The Fairmont State Master Plan addresses access issues for people with disabilities. All identified access problems have been addressed in the Master Plan; however, we will continue to improve accessibility based on need and design.
   • The new parking garage has increased parking numbers and access to the central campus area.
1.C.1. Design strategies to assess and improve accessibility, awareness of the institution’s presence, and eliminate physical barriers at institutional sites.

- See B.1 regarding access issues
- New signage is on Interstate 79 indicating the presence of Pierpont C&TC of FSU.
- New signage is scheduled to be put on I-79 indicating the presence of the Lewis County and of the Braxton County Centers.

1.D.1. Develop and implement a plan to improve parking access for the public and for placing directional kiosks on the sites for improved access.

- See 1.B.1 regarding parking access
- See 1.A.8. regarding kiosks

1.E.1. Coordinate with community education and student life on the reorganization of the Fairmont State web site to improve access and information sharing for various identifiable user groups.

- See 1.A.10 regarding calendaring system

1.F.1. Coordinate with community education and student life to plan expansion of special events to all centers.

- Each semester a schedule of community education events is published and distributed throughout the campus and the community.
- Community Education events have expanded to the Caperton Center with plans to take events to other centers in the Fall 2007.

Action Step 2: Foster quality community partnerships.

2.A.1. Identify current partnerships and work with partners and advisory groups to identify criteria for effective partnerships.

- The information is currently being gathered and compiled from across campus from Academic Colleges and Schools, Gear-Up, Career Services, Workforce Development, and Community Service Learning in an effort to catalog in one central location (Career Services) all the various partnerships and advisory groups in which the institution participates.
2.B.1. Develop and conduct a needs analysis for businesses and industry.

- Sessions have been developed for the machinist industry and for biometrics industry and will be delivered in March 2007
- Statewide data already collected by the Council for WV Community & Technical Colleges are being analyzed in the CWE.

2.C.1. Set up advisory councils for community input and assessment of institutional efforts relating to business and industry, public education (K-12) community development, and human services, and begin regular meetings.

- Advisory Councils exist for all Associate Degree programs offered by FSU and Pierpont Community & Technical College. They meet at least once per year with recommendations to meet each semester.
- There are advisory councils for the baccalaureate programs in Business and Engineering Technology that meet at least annually and some biannually.

2.D.1. Plan for the continued expansion of Fairmont State’s philanthropic gifts, grants, and contracts.

- Spring 2007 saw the kick-off for the Faculty Giving Program
- A consultant was brought to campus to discuss the giving program and how faculty and staff could be included.

2.E.1. Work with community partners to design and implement a plan that will provide research venues that enhance the skills of faculty and facilitate the education of students.

FSU has been engaged with a number of community businesses and entities with the purpose of providing avenues for interested faculty members to enhance their research capabilities and skills, grow out a partners/mentors pool, and provide internship/research opportunities for students that will enable us to learn from our regional community colleagues as well as utilize the discipline-specific expertise of our faculty. These developing partnerships include:

- Two NSF program development grant proposals submitted by Pierpont Community & Technical College in partnership with the Virtual Medical College at WVU. The proposed projects would have enabled a number of faculty members to utilize present skills and enhance others.
• A Department of Labor work force development grant proposal submitted by Pierpont Community & Technical College in partnership with the WV Department of Highways and the Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL) that would have enabled us to expand educational opportunities in Civil Engineering Technology.

• FSU submitted two NSF curriculum development grant proposals to NSF this year in partnership with the West Virginia High Tech Consortium Foundation (ISR) that would build upon previously funded NSF grants for Information Technology Education. These projects have involved a number of faculty members and students from a number of academic units.

• FSU has provided the opportunity for faculty members and students to apply for academic year/summer internships with the NASA IV & V Center. To date one faculty member and four students have participated in these exceptional learning experiences. Two of our students have been employed at the IV and V facility as a result of their internship experiences.

• FSU has been pro-active in cultivating a very productive partnership with the NASA IV & V facility enabling four faculty members to receive seed grants funding foundational, independent research projects. Their projects also provided opportunities for at least seven students to engage in independent research as well. The funding was purposefully meant to help the faculty members to establish longer term associations with NASA IV & V.

• We have an ongoing partnership with Backbone Software Company which has provided funding to support research in the area of computer security, enabling over ten students in the past several years to conduct independent research under the mentoring of a FSU Computer Science faculty member.

• FSU has cultivated and reestablished a strong partnership with the NASA/WV Space Grant Consortium. This association provides significant scholarship monies for our students and funding for a wide array of programs from community outreach, curriculum development, student internships/research, and STEM related research for which our faculty and students can compete with other consortium members.

• We have implemented a formal Undergraduate Research Program coordinated by the Office of Research and guided by the Undergraduate Research Advisory Council. The primary goal of the program is to provide quality independent research experiences for our students that are supported by the University and mentored by our faculty members. These type of student/faculty
collaborations are exceptionally strong learning opportunities for students to experience doing the scholarship of their chosen disciplines.

Action Step 3: Support Economic Growth

3.A.1. Develop plans and begin implementation of the expansion of the institution’s research capacity

FSU has begun a number of activities to expand not only our institutional research capacity, but our capacity to provide our expertise to deliver sets of services through contractual arrangements with external agencies, state government and private companies.

- The University has established the Office of Research to directly support the faculty members in locating appropriate sources of external funding, develop grant proposals and administering the successful grant budgets. Essential to the growth of research capacity is a working knowledge of where to find funding.
- The Office of Research has sponsored a number of grant writing workshops on campus for faculty members and appropriate administrative staff with the goal of expanding the external funding of research and program development. Additionally, the Office of Research has sent individual faculty members to a number of events that would improve their capabilities to write successful grant proposals.
- We continue to grow out the yearly contract that FSU has, through our Transportation Academy (affiliated with the Civil Engineering Technology Program), with the WV Department of Highways (DOH) to develop and deliver professional develop courses for DOH highway technicians, review professional credentials and the creation of FSU credit-bearing online courses in highway engineering technology.
- We are presently exploring avenues to market a number of the educational products created by our Transportation Academy to other states and private industry as well as expanding our contract with the DOH to include the development of training/educational opportunities for additional members of its workforce.
- The number of grant proposals submitted has increased significantly as has the number of grant awards. This is especially true for smaller start-up grants for individual faculty members as well as instrumentation equipment grants (FSU faculty members were awarded three NSF/WV EPSCoR grants for a total of almost $90,000. These funds will enable various programs to purchase
• instrumentation that will enhance the research capacities of their faculty.
• The Office of Research has developed a very positive partnership with the FS Foundation and Office of Institutional Advancement. Working together, the two offices are educating faculty members about the opportunities for private foundation support for their research and program development projects. The expertise of the FS Foundation is critical to the success of private foundation funding requests.
• FSU was recently awarded a large NASA grant for STEM education which includes monies for a state-of-the-art flight simulator that will allow for significant expansion of a number of aerospace programs at the Robert C. Byrd National Aerospace Education Center, student internships and research, faculty research and internships and physics online curriculum development.
• The Vice President of Research is reaching out to regional community agencies with the goal of developing long term partnerships that will enable FSU to expand its research capacity while at the same time contributing to the economic well-being of our regional community. To date, we have development meaningful, productive relationships with the WVHTC Foundation, NASA IV & V, NASA/WV Space Grant Consortium, NIH INBRE, WV EPSCoR, Backbone Software, the WV DOH and the Virtual Medical College at WVU.

3.B.1. Set up a process whereby institutional representatives are paired with economic and business agencies, organizations, and trade associations throughout the region.

• The CWE has a full time Director of Economic Development who maintains contact with the WV High Technology Consortium and the Workforce Investment Board (WIB).
• Pierpont Community & Technical College in association with the local WIB has developed a “One Stop Shop” for potential employees looking for training throughout the service region.
• Technical Studies programs in Pierpont C&TC are partnered with local businesses and union operations in the delivery of these programs.
• The Central and North Central WV Tech Prep Consortia have merged this year and Pierpont C&TC is an active member working with high school programs throughout the region to ensure seamless transfer from technical programs to PC&TC.
3.C.1. Increase by five percent the professional development opportunities in their field of study for faculty.

- Professional development funds were increased by $4500 for this school year for faculty desiring professional development in their fields.

3.D.1. Create a fully staffed Office of Institutional Research that has annual environmental scanning as part of its mission.

- A full time institutional research position was initiated for the 2006-2007 school year. At present this office does not have secretarial support.

3.E.1. Design and implement an internal communications process to ensure that information on outreach activities is gathered and shared with the entire campus community, and that these opportunities cover the service region of Fairmont State.

- See Action Step 1 A.10.

Action Step 4: Expand Community Outreach activities

4.A.1. Seek input from community organizations on potential student involvement through internships, service learning and outreach.

- In the Fall semester of 2006 Career Services began using a program called College Central, an online program that connects employers with students for full-time positions, part-time positions, internships and volunteer opportunities. A brochure is under development to send to area community organizations describing this resource and encouraging them to actively advertise and recruit our students for these opportunities. Students can find out about this on the Career Services webpage.

Action Step 5: Enhance and capitalize upon the intellectual and cultural environment of the region.
5.A.1. Develop a five-year plan to expand the cultural offerings that Fairmont State will deliver to the community and implement year one.

- A five year plan is being developed to expand the School of Fine Arts cultural offerings to the community.
- Summer Theatre production season will be entirely community targeted for the summer of 2007. Greater Tuna will be performed on three successive weekends at the Fairmont Elks Club, the Caperton Center, and the Braxton County Center. Fiddler on the Roof will be performed on three successive weekends at Prickett’s Fort.
- The FSU/Community Band will perform throughout the summer at Prickett’s Fort.
- The FSU/Community Orchestra continues to perform two concerts. Seek input from community organizations on potential student involvement through internships, service learning and outreach a year on campus.
- The FSU/Community Choir performs approximately every other year.
- A grant is being prepared from the NEA that would fund the establishment of on-line exhibits from the Brooks Gallery available via the internet through a program called Virtual Art Gallery.
- A grant is being prepared from the NEA for the continuation of the Chamber Orchestra Festival during the summer of 2007.

5.B.1. Incorporate the Community Music Program into the Fairmont State Conservatory for the Arts, including instruction in theatre and art.

- A grant is being prepared for submission this year to the National Endowment for the Arts for the development and implementation of a Community Conservatory of the Arts that will incorporate the current offerings of the Community Music Program with new courses of instruction in theatre and art.
Appendix A.1

Strategic Plan Goal 2

Action Step 1:

- Appoint a committee to oversee the development and/or enhancement of publicizing campus events and accomplishments to the greater community, to include a variety of media.

This has been done. Amy Baker is serving as chair of the committee comprised of Lyla Grandstaff, Marian Hollinger, Laurie Johnston, Adam Zundell, Shane Livingston and Kelly Barth.

The group has met twice and has corresponded through e-mail to provide information for this report.

For this report, members addressed the following under Action Step One:

Action Step One: Improve accessibility and increase communication.

2. Increase community participation on the main campus and at the Center for Workforce Education, the Caperton Center, and the National Aerospace Education Center, Lewis County Center, Braxton County Center, and other centers.

3. Increase community awareness of Fairmont State opportunities.

4. Increase student awareness of off-campus activities.

5. Announce awards, honors, etc., through a variety of media to increase community awareness of achievement.

6. Expand special events into all centers throughout the year (link up with Student Life).

10. Reorganize Fairmont State’s web pages to improve access and information sharing for various identifiable user groups.

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2. Increase community participation on the main campus and at the Center for Workforce Education, the Caperton Center, and the National Aerospace Education Center, Lewis County Center, Braxton County Center, and other centers.

More information needed:
What specific goals are we trying to meet? We need to know what the goals are for each location to create a targeted plan.
Is this academic participation or participation in special events?
How is this step different than the fourth one to “increase awareness of off-campus activities”?

STUDENT AFFAIRS: The community is a large part of who we target for events on the main campus, which is our responsibility. As to the other campuses, they should be included in being asked to complete these same steps. We are sponsoring Family Movie Nights and Family Carnivals again this year that are completely for the community. We consider it a perk if any faculty, staff or students attend. The speaker series, plays and music events are sometimes attended more by community than our own students, faculty and staff. The Locals Only Music Series this year targeted community based bands. We have had great participation, attendance and interest from the community. The World AIDS Day event was attended well by the community, plus many other events already planned, such as Homecoming events.

PUBLIC RELATIONS: We need to look at increasing the advertising/publications budgets for our off campus locations or increasing the Public Relations budget to support institutional advertising costs. Attached are charts of our campus-wide advertising spending for the past three years.

In calendar years 2002 and 2004, we spent about 40,000 each year on advertising campus-wide. Based on recommendations from Noel-Levitz and other factors, Dan funded a $100,000 campaign in 2004 to boost fall enrollment. For the entire year of 2004, we spent $149,000. We also did an institutional campaign in 2005, but this time it was on a smaller scale. For the entire year of 2005, we spent $128,000. Total spending for 2006 increased to $235,000; the increase was mostly generated by advertising placed on behalf of the Center for Workforce Education. The spending total for 2007 as of the end of February is $75,000. As with other departments, the budget has been cut 10 percent.

We desperately need an institutional marketing plan to more efficiently use the advertising dollars we have. My hope is that based on the image study being conducted, we will have information necessary to accomplish this. One concern is that as we are increasing our efforts to recruit out of state students, we are going to need to increase our funding to market to these students to be able to compete. Other institutions in West Virginia appear to have larger budgets for advertising than we do, including West Virginia Junior College and West Virginia Wesleyan College, among others.
By hiring a Director of Marketing to work under Sarah Hensley and closely with me and the Office of Web and Graphics Communications, we could have at least one position entirely focused on planning and executing an institutional marketing plan. With my duties split between media relations, publications and marketing and other projects that arise, there is not enough time in the day to focus on any one area.

OFF CAMPUS: We need more Off Campus advertising throughout the year: radio, TV, newspaper. There could be more knowledge across campus of Off Campus offerings through campus mail. Keep the schedule of Off Campus classes separated from the main campus schedule online. A web page for Off Campus programs is in the works. There needs to be more signage and support staff at off campus locations. There should be locations and office hours throughout the service area. Our Lewis County Center has a current enrollment of 500 including dual enrollment. Off Campus Programs-North have about 447 students, not including dual enrollment.

ATHLETICS: The challenge for me so far has been communicating and reaching the Fairmont State students. It’s no secret that our student attendance is poor at all athletic events. The following are average attendance numbers for events:
Football 2006: 839
Volleyball 2006: 51
Men’s Basketball 2006-07: 626
Women’s Basketball 2006-07: 347.

The steps I’ve taken so far have been to increase signage on campus. I have a few students that either play for the football, men’s or women’s basketball teams that have taken schedule cards/posters to prominent places on campus. (Since I’m new, I left this task up to them.) We’ve also incorporated several half time promotions for men’s basketball, including a $10,000 shoot-out at every home men’s basketball. This is a significant prize that is unprecedented (to my knowledge) in the WVIAC. The lure is still in its infancy, and hopefully as we move into the second semester when basketball is more on people’s minds, it will generate more of an on-campus buzz.

What can we do better in this area? If I were to make a specific recommendation, it would be to have a sign that we could put on the entrance that simply says “Game Today.” We would use it for football and basketball. I think that the expense is minimal, and the only maintenance would be taking it up and put it down on game days. This is something that is done at some other schools. I think we could get some fringe people in the community, as well as letting our students who drive on-and-off campus aware of an athletic event.
Another recommendation would be to have synergy with other groups on campus. For example, I think a fraternity or sorority night where they collect canned food (or something of that nature) at a game would be good for both parties. Our student-athlete advisory committee (SAAC) is looking to be involved on campus and could possibly provide a similar type of service at another campus event. “Cross-promotion” from various groups on campus, I think, would help benefit the campus awareness. Crucial in this scenario are identifying the people that would be able to make that happen. To use the example above, if a group wanted to collect canned food at a game, they would need to contact me so that I could make the proper arrangements and make the announcement to the media and on our website.

To be honest, athletics does not share some of the same issues as the rest of the campus, and my brief time here limits my knowledge to some of the issues that we may share. Since I am the primary editor of fightingfalcons.com, we don’t have many issues with making sure it’s updated and that the information is current because we don’t depend on a third party who is dealing with the entire campus. One of the major issues was the phone, and while we get our fair share of strange calls, we don’t get a lot of disgruntled people because most of our calls are directed to a specific extension (even though that might not be the appropriate person, it’s pretty easy to direct them to the correct person).

3. Increase community awareness of Fairmont State opportunities.

FINE ARTS: In the School of Fine arts, we publish five issues of The Fine Arts Tatler each year and at least ten postcards for our events are sent to the mailing list. The Tatler gives background information about the faculty and the individual events of the season. It is an illustrated publication. Both the cards and the Tatler are sent to our regular mailing list, which numbers 1,640. There is also an online version of The Tatler, for those who can access that method. At least once each year, we send cards and the Season Brochure to an expanded mailing list. The Season brochure has gone to a list of about 10,000 (additional names provided by the Alumni Association). That is a one-time mailing per year. Because the season brochure also covers the fine arts events sponsored by Student Government, we send to their mailing list as well.

We rely to an extent upon the free publicity available to us from the local newspapers--Fairmont, Clarksburg and Morgantown -- and we place business builders for advertising for the Masquers and Town & Gown productions and the West Virginia Symphony performances. A 2”x2” advertisement runs around $600; a 4”x4” around $900, plus commissions for the contracted marketing representative.

As with most of the units which make up this Strategic Plan Goal, we look forward to the advent of the integrated web calendar. We do have concerns about the person and office which will maintain the calendar and the spaces where we regularly schedule events. These are unknowns now.
We would very much like to be able to buy more business builders and other ads in the newspapers and, perhaps, some select broadcast media, as well. These, of course, are currently outside our publicity budget. As well, an enhanced budget for postage and printing would allow us to reach a larger audience.

Attached to this file are charts of attendance numbers for theatre offerings. Numbers are only officially kept on ticketed events.

Following are yearly attendance figures for music and art events:
Music: 400 for Collegiate Singers, 300 for Wind Ensemble, 150 for Stage Band, 290 for West Virginia Symphony Orchestra in 2005-2006, 310 for West Virginia Symphony Orchestra for 2006-2007. The WVSO numbers are probably higher because of a number of free tickets given to Friends of the Symphony and members of the Fine Arts Guild. 

PUBLIC RELATIONS: Again, I think we would need to know what kind of opportunities we are talking about to be able to create specific and measurable goals. My office handles multiple media requests every day from print and broadcast media. Press releases on campus events and accomplishments are regularly sent to various distribution lists: Marion and surrounding counties, our 13-county service region (14 for GEAR UP) and statewide. My office supports institutional advertising such as billboards, mall displays, radio and newspaper. The Carnegie Communications image study will provide us with much-needed information on who we should be targeting for recruitment and how to best reach them.

ATHLETICS: We are fortunate to have such good game coverage for our athletic teams in the Times West Virginian. People know when we play and who we play based on pre-game coverage in most instances.

4. Increase student awareness of off-campus activities.

STUDENT AFFAIRS: We do e-mail students and send fliers to club mailboxes about requests for volunteering. A lot of this should be coming from the Service Learning Coordinator’s office. We need to know more specifically about what this means. We don’t want to promote too many off campus activities if they are going to compete with our own events on campus.
5. Announce awards, honors, etc., through a variety of media to increase community awareness of achievement.

STUDENT AFFAIRS: It is easy enough to send out more information about our student achievement. At the last commencement ceremony, we took steps to recognize the student speaker. We cannot control what the local media choose to run. And we cannot justify money for ads of that sort.

PUBLIC RELATIONS: Through press releases and our web site, we do market our achievements. We have press releases about grants, awards, presentations, conferences folks attend and more. We have press releases on the Dean’s List’s and President’s Lists in all county newspapers. We have press releases to county newspapers of students who win academic awards in the spring. With more funding, we could do a series of ads featuring outstanding faculty and students. This has been talked about for a couple years, but there has been no money. We could do ads to congratulate students on making the Dean’s Lists and President’s Lists. Blair had mentioned coming up with a way to let the Fairmont community know when a major achievement is made. This would be a clearly visible sign, like a light pointing up to the sky or a tie or ball cap on the statue in front of the One Room Schoolhouse.

6. Expand special events into all centers throughout the year (link up with Student Life).

STUDENT AFFAIRS: Student Affairs has been asking all departments to get involved in our events consistently. We do have several successful co-sponsorships with Residence Life, Student Health, Dining Services, academic areas such as Design and Culinary Arts, Fine Arts and numerous clubs. The faculty and staff and PC need to get involved.

10. Reorganize Fairmont State’s web pages to improve access and information sharing for various identifiable user groups.

ATHLETICS: I am working hard to have a web site that is functional and informative, and the challenge for me is trying to get people to rely on it extensively (because updating it has been hit-or-miss in the past, I don’t think people (students, alumni) view fightingfalcons.com as “the place” to get their information about our athletic teams. The first thing we’ve done to help remedy this is to make sure it is always current. Game recaps are posted the night of an event, statistics are updated by the next morning, etc. Secondly, we are putting the web address on almost all of our publications (media guides, schedule cards, posters, game day programs, etc.) The combination of these things are laying the groundwork for making our athletic web site the
exclusive place to read about Fairmont State athletics.

We’ve already seen some results in this area. In comparing a recap of last year’s men’s basketball recap against Ohio State-Newark to this year’s men’s basketball recap against the same opponent, readership on our website was up nearly 150%. The games are comparable because they were the season-opener in both instances.

What can we do better in this area? We will continue to build our web site, and once people view it as a consistent and valuable resource, I believe our views and visits will increase. The branding with the web site will continue to help reinforce these ideas.

I’m on the verge of creating an online component for basketball games. An example would be a trivia question which can be found only on fightingfalcons.com, and then an answer is submitted electronically. To receive your prize, the person needs to be in attendance at the next home game. Connecting live events with the web site I think will drive people to the web site.

Other issues:

The following are items the group discussed during their meetings:

1. Funding is an issue – Should we give suggestions for what we can do with our existing resources or can we ask for additional resources? Most offices are one person deep. We know what we need to do but we don’t have the resources to do it.

2. Much work is being done already – Student Activities, Athletics, Fine Arts and Public Relations are working together to produce publicity and generate awareness of campus events. If the perception is that we do not have a presence in the community, it is because we have exhausted all the media resources we can count on for free. We need to be able to fund targeted advertising campaigns to accomplish more.

3. Marketing position – We agree that creating a new full-time Director of Marketing position on campus would greatly enhance what we are able to do.

4. Web calendar – We agree that a unified campus-wide event calendar will be a great asset to communications, but we are concerned about who will maintain this calendar and its components and who will decide which groups receive priority in scheduling requests. Would it be possible to hire a campus-wide events coordinator? How does WVU handle these issues?

5. Telephone system – Our telephone system needs to be improved. The directory of names has a lot of people missing and kicks callers out of the system. We need an operator after 4 p.m. We need folks who can answer questions answering the phones. We need a phone bank of people answering calls. Could we have faculty and staff volunteer to answer phones for an hour or two a week (sort of how people volunteer in the Advising Center)?
Could we change the on-hold message from music to a calendar of campus events?

6. Box office – We have come a long way on our box office service, but we need the booth to have weekend and evening hours.

7. Web site – We understand that the web site was designed for the use of prospective students, but the site is difficult for the general community to navigate.

8. Video screens – Michael Belmear has the new graphics screen in the Falcon Center that can be used for announcements, but it is not functional right now. Could we look into purchasing more of these, maybe something for the parking garage?

9. Parking – We agree that adding parking directions to press releases and advertising for events would help educate the public.