MINUTES
Strategic Planning Committee
August 27, 2021
2-4 PM, BAB 201 (PCR) or Virtual

Members present: Ryan Luna (Chair), Rosemary Briseño, Ismail Gunes, Eric Busby, Laura Payne, Kevin Urbanczyk, April Aultman Becker, Bonnie Albright, Dominick Percoco, Betsy Evans (Secretary), Jesse Salazar, Juan Garza, Bianca Vela, Jeanne Qvarnstrom (Ex Officio), Eric Funasaki (Ex Officio)

Members not present: Benito Telesca, Amanda Workman, Ed Moura

I. Introductions

Chair RL welcomed those present. Introductions made. Members not present were excused.

II. Message for the Committee – Pete P. Gallego, SRSU President

President Gallego thanked the committee membership, offered encouragement, and said that his office would assist where needed to ensure successful completion of the committee's charge.

III. Brief Orientation

a. Dr. Ryan Luna, Chair

RL outlined the agenda and the proposed timeline for the new strategic plan. Conversation took place about scheduling. RL added that the Student Government Association would later be tapped as a resource to connect our work with student voices. Additionally, subcommittees will tackle different areas of the process. It is imperative that we as committee members work to include all voices from all areas of the university.

b. Dr. Eric Funasaki, 2017-2022 Coordinator

EF provided counsel based on his work on the current plan. He recommended a more distributed approach in the new plan. Discussion took place in agreement that we build cohesion. The example was shared that previously administrative coordinators did not base their reporting outcomes on the strategic plan, but that this should be encouraged moving forward.

c. Dr. Jeanne Qvarnstrom, Institutional Effectiveness

JQ identified documents for review by committee membership, specifically identifying the importance of a Mission Statement for accreditation purposes. Other guiding documents made available include the Administrative Units by Outcomes reports (2020-21), the 2021 SRSU Values Survey, TSUS 2025 Performance Indicators (2021), the 2021 APC Recommendation Report, SRSU (ALP + RGC) Campus Environment Survey results

(2021), and Karen E. Hinton's *A Practical Guide to Strategic Planning in Higher Education* from the Society for College and University Planning.

JQ concluded with the statement that this committee's work be visible and invitational. Minutes of this committee will be posted to SR INFO at: https://srinfo.sulross.edu/university-governance/strategic-planning-committee/. Additionally, any documents shared by the committee will be made available on the site.

Committee membership will be asked to evaluate meetings and can use the evaluation to make requests for data, speakers, etc. that will inform our work.

IV. SWOT Analysis activity

Members present broke into four groups and spent 5-7 minutes brainstorming each quadrant of the SWOT analysis diagram: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats for the university. Thoughts were recorded on large pads (see pictures at end of document) and discussion for each quarant took place following the activity. RL moderated the discussion.

STRENGTHS

- The group discussed "remoteness" as a strength (noting it also showed up as a weakness), emphasizing the programs that thrive at SRSU because of our location
- Size is considered an agreed-upon strength, including that our we know our students and they know each other, we are accessible and available to our students, and that we have a strong alumni network
- That we are an HSI is a strength
- For many, our "attitude is right"
- Students have "intention to stay in the community" (specifically mentioned at RGC but noted in Alpine as well)
- Many echoed "private school education at a public school cost"
    - This was contrasted with the idea that some students "want to go here" and some students "wound up here"

WEAKNESSES

- "poor visibility" is a big weakness for SRSU – it was noted that membership sees advertisement for other universities but not for us
    - As well, it was noted that people are aware of SRSU but without a good opinion of the university (and that we could change this with marketing)
- The retention of seniors is mind-boggling; people asked if it is because of course offerings? Because of something that changed after COVID? "maybe life happens" and maybe our seniors are stuck at home, can't get back for F2F, but can't finish based on web offered coursework

- "Slow Ross" and being viewed as a junior college; open enrollment combined with a low graduation rate doesn't help
- Campuses behind in technology offerings ("tied to budget")
- Hard to communicate with juniors and seniors who don't pick up their phones or email (they text!)
- The name – Sul Ross State University – in terms of what and who it represents historically (discussion took place on this) and in terms of Sul Ross being a name people don't want on their diploma (reputation-related). Many agreed that a common name could be unifying across the four campuses.

OPPORTUNITIES

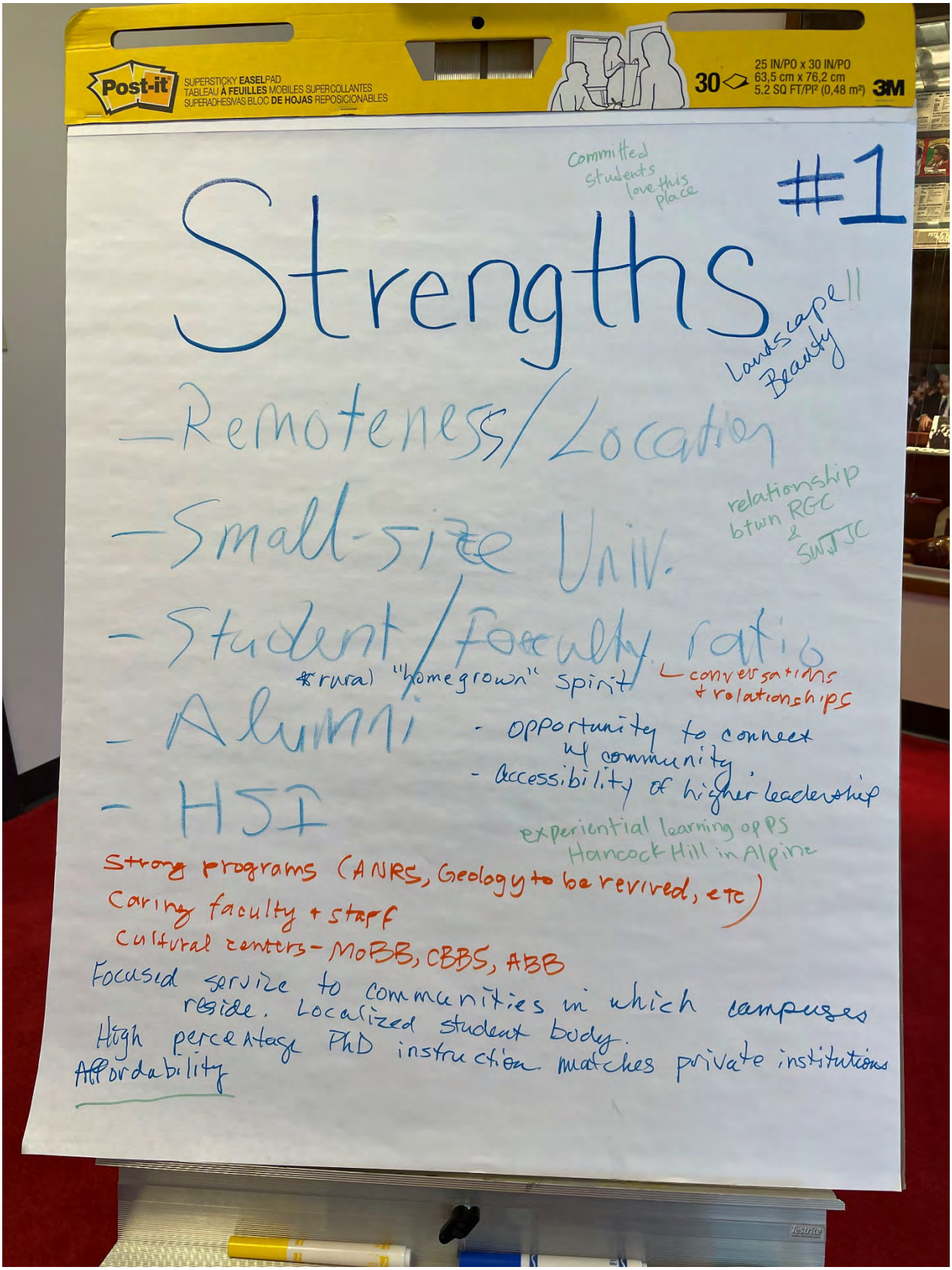
- Field research and experiential learning for many programs specific to this area is a big opportunity (embracing the remoteness of all campuses)
- Realizing engagement with students with better/fancier/more efficient technological offerings
- Building two-year programs, certifications – again this relates to bolstering programs specific to the area such as sustainable technology
- The new nursing program is an opportunity
- There's an opportunity to recruit faculty and staff who look like our student body (a BIPOC+F SRSU), BIPOC+F = black, indigenous, people of color + female
    - *"Founders of 'The BIPOC Project' use the term to 'highlight the unique relationship to Whiteness that Indigenous and Black (African Americans) people have, which shapes the experiences of and relationship to white supremacy for all people of color within a U.S. context.'"*

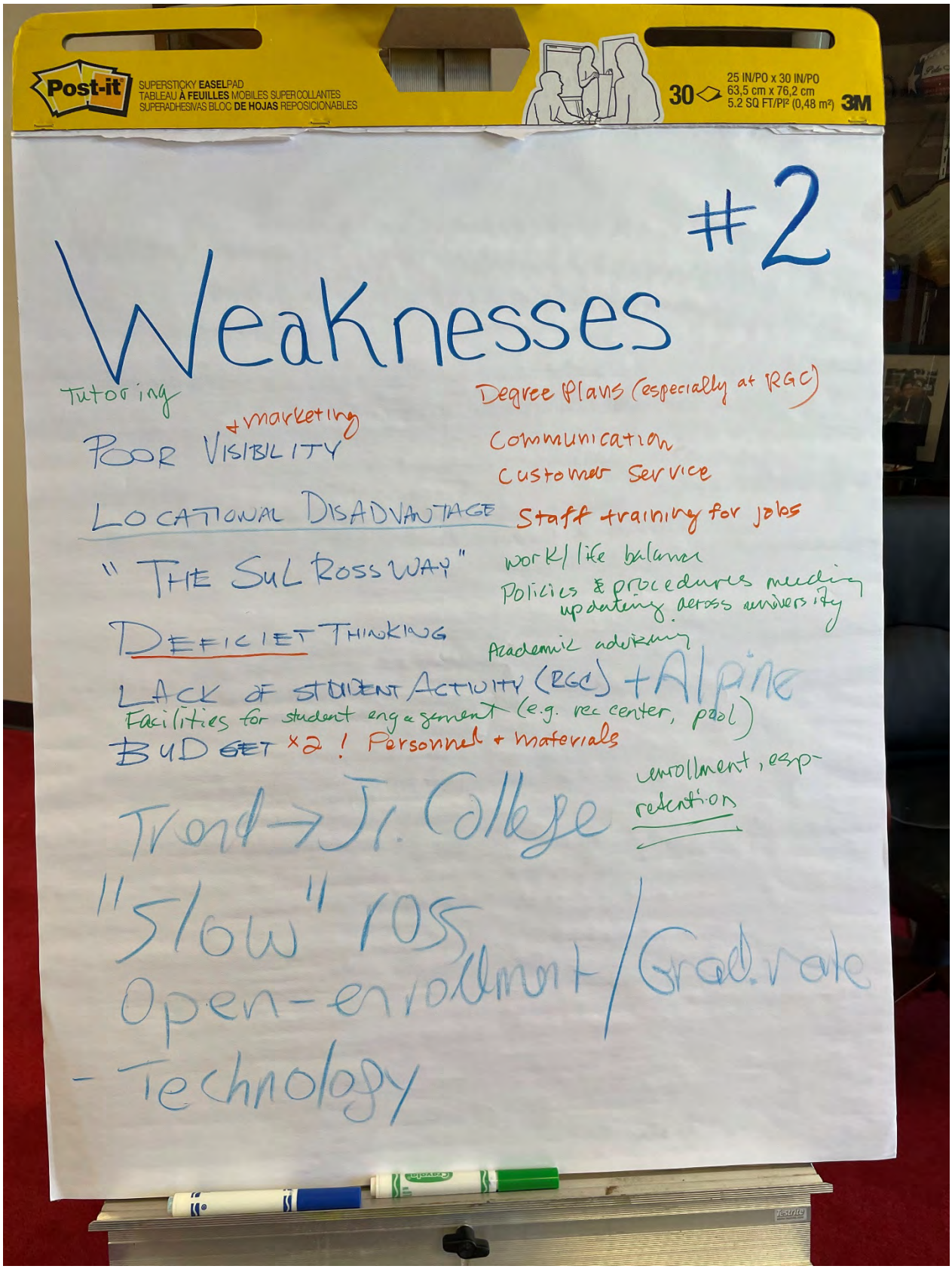
THREATS

- SRSU may be competing with junior college/community college bachelor degrees (already or in the future) "I came here to start" is a common refrain, but how do we get them to realize they can finish here?
- Lower salaries compared to other institutions mean loss of qualified and committed faculty and staff, mean openings that we cannot fill, mean lots of need for the university
- Tutoring at the university: many had questions even about the current state of tutoring at Lobo Den, for example (though writing centers will be available at each campus)
- There's a finite number of strong students and every department/area wants them

V. Assignments for Next Meeting

RL asked for volunteers for the first two subcommittees. RB, KU, LP, and EM will serve on the Mission Statement SubCommittee. IG, AAB, and JS will serve on the Values SubCommittee. They will plan to meet and make a report at the next meeting, Friday, September 17, 2-4 PM, in the PCR or online.


Post-it
SUPERSTICKY EASEL PAD
TABLEAU À FEUILLES MOBILES SUPERCOLLANTES
SUPERADHESIVAS BLOC DE HOJAS REPOSICIONABLES
30
25 IN/PO x 30 IN/PO
63,5 cm x 76,2 cm
5.2 SQ FT/PI² (0,48 m²)
3M
#1
Strengths
committed students love this place
Landscape / Beauty
- Remoteness / Location
- Small-size Univ.
relationship btwn RGC & SWTJC
- Student / faculty ratio
- Alumni
- HSI
* rural "homegrown" spirit
- opportunity to connect w/ community
- accessibility of higher leadership
└ conversations + relationships
experiential learning opps
Hancock Hill in Alpine
Strong programs (ANRS, Geology to be revived, etc)
Caring faculty + staff
Cultural centers - MoBB, CBBS, ABB
Focused service to communities in which campuses reside. Localized student body.
High percentage PhD instruction matches private institutions
Affordability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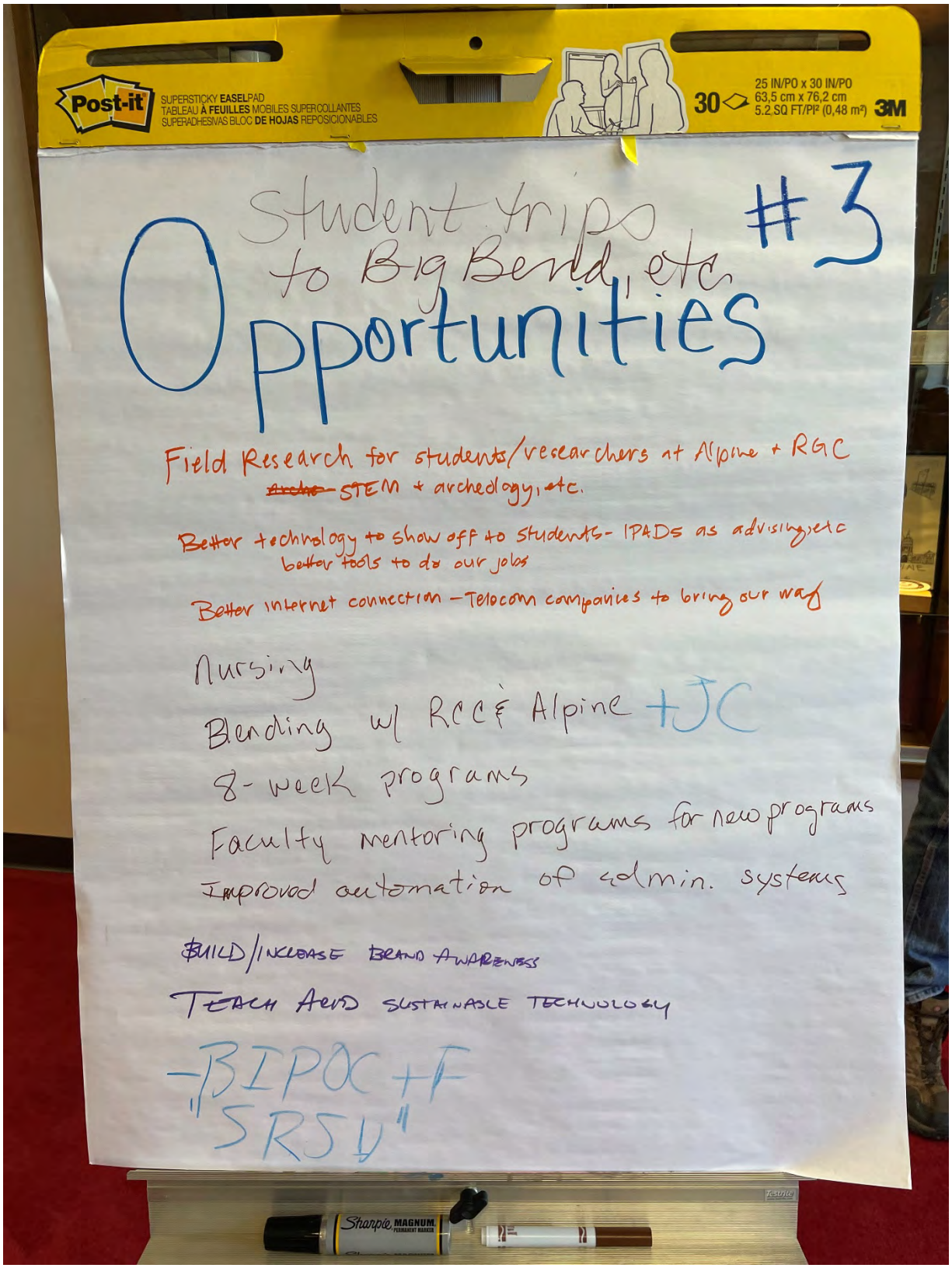
#2
Weaknesses
Tutoring
Poor Visibility + marketing
Locational Disadvantage
"The Sul Ross Way"
Deficiet Thinking
Lack of student Activity (RGC) + Alpine
Facilities for student engagement (e.g. rec center, pool)
Budget x2 ! Personnel + materials
Trend → Jr. College
"Slow" ross
Open-enrollment / Grad. rate
- Technology
Degree Plans (especially at RGC)
Communication
Customer Service
Staff training for jobs
work/life balance
Policies & procedures needing updating across university
Academic advising
enrollment, esp- retention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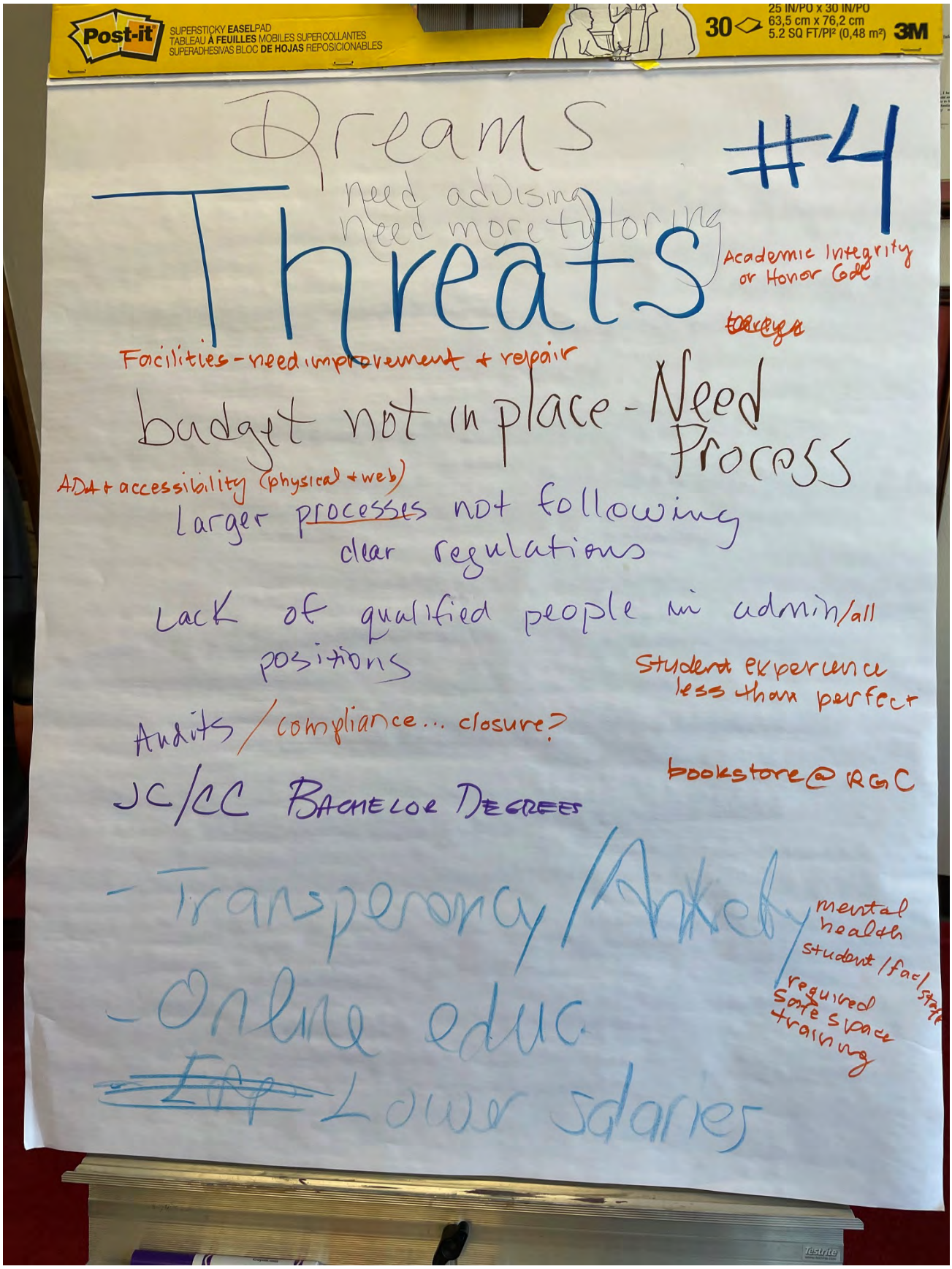
#3
Student trips to Big Bend, etc.
Opportunities
Field Research for students/researchers at Alpine + RGC
~~Archeo~~ STEM + archeology, etc.
Better technology to show off to students - IPADS as advising, etc
better tools to do our jobs
Better internet connection - Telecom companies to bring our way
Nursing
Blending w/ RGC & Alpine + JC
8-week programs
Faculty mentoring programs for new programs
Improved automation of admin. systems
BUILD/INCREASE BRAND AWARENESS
TEACH AND SUSTAINABLE TECHNOLOGY
- BIPOC + F
"SRSU"
Sharpie MAGNUM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Dreams
#4
need advising
need more tutoring
Threats
Academic Integrity or Honor Code
Facilities - need improvement + repair
budget not in place - Need Process
ADA + accessibility (physical + web)
Larger processes not following clear regulations
Lack of qualified people in admin/all positions
Student experience less than perfect
Audits / compliance... closure?
bookstore @ RGC
JC/CC BACHELOR DEGREES
- Transperency / Ankety
mental health
student / fac / staff
required safe space training
- Online educ.
Lower salaries