

Helena College Non-Academic Program Review

Year: 2022-23

Review: Retail Services 2022-23

Author: Schwen, Cari

Status: Published

Section 1: Mission, Goals, Objectives

Narrative:

Retail services provides supplies, apparel, full service coffee, and light food during the academic year. Right now the store is still in recovery following the pandemic and a drastic redesign of space and offerings.

Mission:

Enhance the Helena College experience for students, staff, and faculty by operating a fiscally solvent (appropriate profit margin) operation that provides excellent customer service and an engaging atmosphere.

Recommendations:

Retail Services has not been through a review so there are no prior recommendations.

Strategic Goals:

The last 3 years have been difficult for the retail environment. We have faced complete turnover of management twice, a push to reduce the student cost of textbooks by switching to OER or more rental options, a 60% reduction in store space, and a pandemic. Many of our goals remain ongoing as a result of the pandemic and turnover. We were able to outsource textbooks and bring that to completion.

Strengths:

The campus store is a place where employees can go to get away from their desk for a few minutes, have casual conversation with the barista or their peers, and recharge before going back to work. During the pandemic people didn't leave their offices and there was a lot of tension. When the store reopened we saw an increase in people who just needed a minute coming back to the store and now it back to being a place we can gather, Our strength is giving people a place to breathe and grab a cup of coffee or a snack.

Another strength has been our adaptability. During the pandemic we transitioned to fully online book sales. We also streamlined the book adoption process by taking it fully online rather than using elaborate spreadsheets.

We also setup a portable retail system that allows us to sell supplies the students at the APC.

Successes:

Coffee sales have increased dramatically, even surpassing pre-pandemic levels. The addition of Red Bull infusions was very successful! We sold more than 800 of them this past academic year. We transitioned to an online bookstore, which included a switch to faculty led book adoptions.

Challenges:

Finding the correct offerings and price points. HC clientele are very price sensitive making it quite challenging to balance an appropriate mark up for both customers and the store. With current inflation rates that has been quite difficult.

With only one employee it has been challenging to increase hours of operation and food offerings.

Employees have access to free snacks, brewed coffee, and tea which cuts into store sales. There is a hospitality cart in the breakroom that offers all of these things to employees.

Apparel is still very limited due to supply chain shortages. We have struggled to bring in new product lines due to shortages, price increases, and natural disasters.

Section 2: Procedure for Operation

Procedures:

Campus store procedures exist on the shared drive. They are updated annually if necessary.

Section 3: Staff Profile

Staff:

Name	Title	FTE	Years	Highest Education
Cari Schwen	Director of Business and Retail Services /Conroller	1.00	3.00	Bachelors
Virginia Fontaine	Lead Barista	0.75	1.50	Some Coll
Kelley Turner	Executive Director of Operations	0	0	

Changes in Staffing Needs:

The store has seen complete turnover in the past 3 years. Management has turned over twice. I would like to add another part time position in the next 3 years.

Staff Professional Development:

Cari Schwen
 Kognito 01.25.2023
 Statewide Procurement Symposium 10.17-18.2022
 Gracious Spaces Training part 1 06.17.2022
 Gracious Spaces Training part 2 10.04.2022
 Creating a Culture of Inclusion 10.12.2022

Virginia Fontaine
 Serve Safe Management Certification.

Kelley Turner

Section 4: Organization context and Impact

Collaborations & Dependencies:

We are dependent on the campus community. Without our staff, faculty, and students we would not exist. I would like to see increased partnerships with departments to supply hospitality for their events. At this time many departments look to outside organizations for refreshments.

New Collaboration:

Collaborating with the upcoming cosmetology program could be very beneficial. I would like to see the store selling the student kits and supplies.

Section 5: Stakeholders, Data, and Assessment

Primary customers/stakeholders:

All students, staff, faculty, administrators, guests to campus and supply vendors.

Service to stakeholders/customers:

Sales reports, customer feedback (what are they looking for, like to see..) service staff takes note of requests and we make product decisions based on their feedback. We often run surveys when sampling new products to see if it would be worth carrying in the store.

At this time we do not use a formal survey tool.

Decision Making Support:

We often run surveys when sampling new products to see if it would be worth carrying in the store. Sales reports also help inform our decisions.

Section 6: Budget and Efficiencies

Changes in revenue and expenses:

The campus store has experienced significant changes to both revenues and expenses. In FY21 all book sales were removed from the store and outsourced to a third party vendor. The changes to our on-campus population due to Covid also had a significant impact on sales to the store. We were forced to close the airport location due to lack of revenues

Improved Efficiency:

With only one employee we have to be as efficient as possible. It is difficult to achieve all of our goals this way though. The transition to an online store for book sales and faculty adoptions has increased our efficiency. There have been some hiccups along the way but the online store is working pretty smoothly now.

Resource Needs:

We need storage space. There are large items that we need to keep in addition to our inventory and we need a place to store them. We have a back office that is over run with product because we continue to lose our storage space. In order to increase sales through hospitality offering I need to maintain an inventory of catering equipment. I also need these if we are to look at renting our kitchen space. I will need storage areas to move some of my inventory items out of the kitchen.

Section 7: Recommendations and Preliminary Implementation Plan

Rec #	Title	Recommendations
1	Staffing	<p>Recommendation: Add staffing. At least 1 part-time staff.</p> <p>Rationale: It is difficult to increase business with only one employee. At this time the director is responsible for covering breaks, lunches, and time off or we have to close the store. Work study support has been spotty at best. We advertise but get little response. The employee market is also tough right now.</p> <p>Success Target: Increased sales, efficiency, and organization.</p> <p>Success Strategy: At this time we rely on work study to help run the store. As the staffing situation in Helena is still changing I am hopeful that I can find a part time worker, possibly from the High School, that wants to work a couple of hours a day assisting with kitchen prep.</p> <p>Success Resource: Since the store must be self-sufficient this is difficult. I need another employee to increase sales but I need increased sales to support another employee. I need campus support of the store in the form of increased sales and support. I have to be able to have a markup in order to continue paying my employees yet I am often asked to forgo any markup for campus functions. We are looking into a pricing structure that would include a charge rate for larger campus functions and a markup for general retail.</p> <p>Resp. Party: Retail Services</p> <p>Cabinet Feedback: We agree this is an important step to expanding service in the campus store. Currently, profits are limited due in part to limited hours. We support working to make this happen.</p>

<p>2</p>		<p>Recommendation: Develop a mutually beneficial relationship between the campus store and cosmetology.</p> <p>Rationale: This program could help the store while the store also helps cosmetology. Perhaps a shared store front with revenues from product sales going to cosmetology. This could increase snack/drink/swag sales in the store and help provide coverage. The store could sell the kits to cosmetology students as well as needed supplies to help generate revenues.</p> <p>Success Target: Increased revenues for the store and the program as well as the possibility of a shared position that would keep costs down for both departments.</p> <p>Success Strategy: Additional hours of operation for the store to accommodate salon clients who would like snacks/drinks.</p> <p>Success Resource: Staff to keep the store open during cosmetology hours. Willingness to partner for the betterment of both.</p> <p>Resp. Party: Retail Services</p> <p>Cabinet Feedback: There is great potential to increase profit in the retail space as the cosmetology program reaches full implementation. There is a connection to Recommendation 1 as the expansion of personnel could support extended hours, including summer. Additionally, there will be required supplies, uniforms, and kits that should be discussed to be sold through retail services.</p>
<p>3</p>	<p>APC Retail Plan</p>	<p>Recommendation: Provide a small inventory of items for sale at the airport campus. Maintain a locked cabinet in the reception where items can be purchased with a mobile card reader.</p> <p>Rationale: Maintain accessibility to minor supplies, apparel, and swag to APC students.</p> <p>Success Target: Retail cabinet in place with sales available to students by beginning to middle of fall term.</p> <p>Success Strategy: Identify space in the reception area to keep an locked cabinet and train personnel how to use the mobile reader and run settlement reports.</p> <p>Success Resource: A medium sized cabinet and wall space in reception.</p> <p>Resp. Party: Retail Services</p> <p>Cabinet Feedback: This provides a good opportunity to both increase revenue and serve students at the APC.</p>

Cabinet

Cabinet Overall Feedback:

Good review of the challenges and needs to create a viable retail service. The staff are to be commended for their work to create a profitable model which can be built upon to provide even more options for serving our community.

File Attachments

Attachment #	Attachment Title	Attachment URL
55	3 yr op stmt RS.pdf	http://hc-curriculum.helenacollege.edu/ViewAttachment.aspx?id=55
56	AWP 3-Year Summary Retail Services.xlsx	http://hc-curriculum.helenacollege.edu/ViewAttachment.aspx?id=56

Area: Retail Services

Years: AY 2019-20, AY 2020-21, AY 2021-22

Plan Developer	Year	Goal #	SGO	Goal Status	Action Item	Indicator	Results	Future Actions
Bauman, Sandra	2019-20	1	SG1.1	Not Completed	Provide instructor approved reference materials and other supplies	Reference materials and supplies are available for sale to students	This goal was not achieved, but will not be moved forward as a goal for retail services.	The bookstore services will be going through a major revision in the upcoming year.
Bauman, Sandra	2019-20	2	SG1.1	Not Completed	Update Point of sale system to allow rental sales, website sales, and online book adoptions	Point of sale system has been updated and required staff training provided	This did not happen, and will not in the future.	Helena College will be working with a vendor to provide books.
Bauman, Sandra	2019-20	3	SG1.1	Not Completed	Assess viability of expanding food selection at both campuses	More food options explored and priced out along with necessary equipment costs.	This did not happen.	Retail services will be going through a major revision in the next year.
Iverson, Terrie	2020-21	1	SG1.2	In Progress	Transition to a third party vendor to provide an online storefront for students to acquire necessary textbooks and course materials.	1. Textbooks and course materials will be fully available online 2. The storefront will be fully operational and promoted broadly across the institution.	Nearly completed. Working through transition issues and construction of new Campus Store on DON campus.	Re-evaluate how the retail operations are operating and determine if more options can be added that would be self supporting. Work with vendors using the kitchen to provide meals for faculty, staff, and students.
Iverson, Terrie	2020-21	2	SG5.2	Completed	Relocate and open for business the Coffee Cart to provide retail beverage services to the Donaldson Campus.	1. Coffee Cart will be open for operation 2. Coffee Cart will be self-supported and generate appropriate revenue to further support the institution.	Barista hired and should be open for Summer/Fall	none
Iverson, Terrie	2020-21	3	SG5.2	In Progress	Reassess and fully stock merchandise in the two bookstore locations that meet the demands of the campus community	1. Store sales increase over each quarter demonstrating product demand and profitability 2. Inventory turnover rates will be established to ensure high demand products	Still working through organizational structure and desired outcomes of this concept.	Re-evaluate the success of the merchandise sales and add merchandise that will make a profit for the store.
Schwen, Cari	2021-22	1	SG1.3	Completed	Monitor and evaluate the third party vendor that is providing an online storefront for students to acquire necessary textbooks and course materials.	1. Textbooks and course materials will be fully available online 2. The storefront will be fully operational and promoted broadly across the institution.	This year we saw the complete roll out of the online bookstore. The majority of course materials were made available to students online only. We also rolled out AIS for spring term. This allowed faculty to take ownership of the book adoptions for their own classes. As a result we saw a reduction in errors and better turn around times. It has also allowed us to open the storefront earlier with more materials readily available for our students. There were some hiccups when we first made the change but things are smoothing out.	We will continue to monitor and work with the online store. As issues arise we will address them.
Schwen, Cari	2021-22	2	SG5.2	Ongoing	Reassess merchandise carried in the two bookstore locations that meet the demands of the campus community while ensuring the stores are self supporting.	1. Store sales increase over each quarter demonstrating product demand and profitability 2. Inventory turnover rates will be established to ensure high demand products	Supply chain issues have created many barriers to achieving this goal. We had multiple orders cancelled and product availability has been slim. Prices have also been higher than normal.	We will continue working on this goal going into 22-23. I am hopeful that supply chain issues will ease up and we will be able to increase our product lines in the next year. We were able to increase our product offerings at the coffee counter and saw a marked increase in sales.

Area: Retail Services **Years: AY 2019-20, AY 2020-21, AY 2021-22**

Plan Developer	Year	Goal #	SGO	Goal Status	Action Item	Indicator	Results	Future Actions
Schwen, Cari	2021-22	3	SG1.3	Ongoing	Begin to add products to Donaldson Campus Store that are good selling products to ensure the Campus Store is self supporting	This will be measured by the balance in the Campus Store account.	We saw a modest increase in product offerings at the Donaldson campus store. My spring order was cancelled due to product shortages which hurt graduation sales. We were still able to bring in several new lower ticket items and new hoodies. We had a few of our new products sell out by end of term, which was very encouraging. We are working on our fall line now and should have new apparel for the 22-23 academic year.	As product shortages ease up we will continue to bring in new, marketable items and expand our offerings to students.
Schwen, Cari	2021-22	4	SG1.3	Ongoing	Begin the process of renting out the commercial kitchen to different vendors. Work with these vendors to provide food options for students, faculty, and staff.	Vendors will be appreciative of having access to a commercial kitchen and will be more supportive of Helena College. Student, faculty, and staff satisfaction will increase with food options. A new revenue stream will be developed to help support the Campus Store.	We finally fixed the gas leak in the kitchen but identified additional work that must be completed to pass inspection. We had an initial inspection done by the health department in early July. The kitchen floor has to be refinished and the plumbing lines mapped prior to final inspection. I am hoping we are fully certified by early fall and can begin offering kitchen space rental.	Resurface the floor and map plumbing. Once certified advertise the kitchen availability.

Count of SGO	Column Labels				Grand Total	
	Row Labels	Not Completed	In Progress	Ongoing		Completed
SG1.1		3			3	
SG1.2			1		1	
SG1.3				2	1	3
SG5.2			1	1	1	3
Grand Total		3	2	3	2	10

