

Retention and Graduation Council Steering Committee

21 October 2004

UC 3171

Present: Evenbeck, Johnson, Porter, Souch

Minutes for the September 23 Steering Committee and the October 14 Council meetings were reviewed. Let Carrigan or Evenbeck know of any corrections.

Evenbeck asked Porter to update on Enrollment Management (EM). Porter said that the EM Council will meet on Friday; it will be the second meeting of the entire group. The charge that Plater gave the EM council was very detailed and listed a number of priorities. The steering group met to discuss those and flesh them out and prioritize. Those were presented to the entire council at first meeting; they broke the council into small groups and asked them to discuss the priorities and get feedback. Based on those discussions, communication was considered a threat. Two priorities were added regarding communication: thinking about communicating to students, and communicating among ourselves at university.

The meeting on Friday will be composed of Borden doing a presentation related to the concept of EM and the role data plays in this overall process. Another theme is that people willing to buy into idea of doing EM if they were helped in understanding how to do it. That will be the major theme as we walk our way through. How do we do more than pay lip service to this concept? We will also break into small groups and are asking individuals to share best practices within their academic units. Again, communication.

One good thing that happened was people making connections with each other—exchanging business cards. It's good to facilitate that kind of communication. There will be a survey as a follow up to the telephone survey done this summer of students who had not yet registered. We will look at students who didn't enroll and those who did, and it will provide us with better ideas about what may have influenced decisions and what can be done to make things better.

Evenbeck asked how we are doing for spring and the number of new students.

Porter said that at this point, the enrollment isn't certain, but admissions applications and acceptances are down. That is probably reflecting that we kept the application for fall semester open longer; we probably funneled some into fall who would've come in spring. Spring is not a semester you can recruit for. We are looking at what we can do in terms of identifying/contacting individuals who had applied for fall, didn't enroll, but said they wanted to be updated for spring. We will talk to APPC about this.

We also talked with Orientation, and they will begin contacting those who were admitted to try and increase the yield on those. We will also be talking via APPC, which meets November 5, about what academic units can do to bring in more people. This group, working through the Retention and Graduation Council (RGC), or the Steering

Committee working through APPC, will be asking what we should be doing with continuing students to make sure that they continue.

Evenbeck commented that it's tough that the time window gets shorter to make contact between when students register and when they start. We've always had mailings, and will hope to encourage schools to do that, too.

Porter agreed and said that will be a major agenda item for APPC.

Evenbeck expressed concern that some students won't be able to register when they come. Learning Community (LC) students all register together. What about checklisted students?

Porter said that this is a panic topic; we know there are a number of students—but don't know how many—who have a bursar service indicator that blocks them from registering because they owe; they may owe for fall or summer because they had been planning to use fall aid; we are trying to be proactive. We don't want to give them the runaround. We're trying to figure out strategies, figure out who and how many so we can be proactive—hopefully that doesn't involve students individually going to financial aid. We also don't want to have to have a manual intervention, but better that than having it start with the student.

Williams said that Cathy Buyarski has asked all advisors to look at LC students' information so they will know how many are blocked. Porter countered that some are blocked for appropriate reasons; we need to differentiate. I'm not sure if there's coding to determine that. Williams said that Cathy has some sense of that. Porter said we're trying to figure out how to run a report that would identify people.

Williams suggested it might be helpful if you've got 1 advisor with 100 students; whatever percentage of those students with a bursar block—they will call them anyway; if they knew what questions to ask, we could help. Porter agreed that would be a good fallback strategy, and would work for freshmen. But it leaves a number of other students who are not attended to. Williams said they've already begun that process—if they had a question list they can walk students through this.

Evenbeck announced that the Council has a listserv and will send out the minutes that way.

Williams reports out to Nelms about retention initiatives. The last version of her retention initiatives report needs to be updated. Mary Ann wants it December 3. We sent an e-mail out to the course coordinators and got zero responses. This version is likely not an extensive list.

Souch told Williams that she will encourage people to respond. Sometimes chairs can hound the course directors. Williams said she wrote to associate deans and asked for that

info; this version is extensive, but not all. Souch said that the approach is good—even if your e-mail is deleted, it's a further affirmation that this is important.

Johnson commented as a course coordinator, I wouldn't understand well what these things are; could you embed documents as html in email so people can browse it?

Souch believes some programs will start to take ownership of things.

Evenbeck suggested it could be an appendix—the report Mark Minglin does on Gateway courses and the interventions in each Gateway course. Plater asked for initiatives in gateway courses, and SLA is the only school that responded. Gateway courses are so strong, we'd have a stronger report if combined.

Carrigan will send out the CRG URL on the listserv and will ask that the Web site cross link with the EM group.

Evenbeck distributed Priority Areas for RGC. How could we make this a stronger outline of how we do our work? Are these the populations to give special attention to?

Porter said these are not the groups if we're trying to make the big splash. 2004 entering students. If we make things better for the larger groups, there will be some spillover.

Souch suggested transfer students.

Porter said that raises a good question about expending resources; when resources are finite, where to expend them?

Souch said that's why it's important to identify the groups with which we can have an impact. Realistically, what can we do?

Williams said it's going to pick us up and put it in the national conversation. We don't know the income level of our students. That could be the biggest obstacle. I can't get the data. A national predictor is income level. Porter said she doesn't know where that info would be collected. Williams said they fill out FAFSA forms. Porter countered that not everybody does. The people who fill that out are lower income. Williams asked if it should be something we're asking at admission. Porter said we can't; it would look like we're considering it as a basis for admission. Where could you collect it; at what point in the process? Williams suggested statewide information or income taxes.

Evenbeck said we need to keep hammering away; this is consistent with Adelman and others. Ed St. John has done good work in this area. If anybody will figure this out, he will. Porter said there is a way, if other institutions are doing it. Evenbeck suggested setting up a meeting with Ed. Williams said he's not leaving IPAS. Evenbeck thought it would be worth calling and setting up a meeting go to IUB to meet with him and Jeff. Williams said she had e-mailed with Jeff. He said Linda thinks you could get it, but not

till 2005. Williams said okay, but I would like to have 02-03 as baseline, and I got no answer.

Thus far the populations to consider are Fall first time full time and transfers. Are the others okay?

Porter suggested saying upperclassmen rather than seniors. Williams thought the two prongs of population is enough; if you're going to successfully serve the bulk of the students the rest will be okay; if you scatter too much, the bulk won't get service. Johnson agreed that there is little attention paid to upperclass students. She would strongly suggest that focus. Souch said Science and Liberal Arts.

Porter said this is a matter of prioritizing. For the first year or two, have a specific focus. Programming will continue to look at these other areas because there are already groups in existence looking at them.

Evenbeck wouldn't want to take anyone off list, but agreed on needing a focus. Transfer, International, 21st Century Scholars. Given that IN has 21st Century Scholars, and it does serve first-generation students, Bill and Charles want it be a priority for the campus. Souch said she can see that in terms of recruitment—do we have a problem? Also, take international students off the list because they have high retention/graduation. Evenbeck said if we have that recruitment, then it will help our graduation rate.

Johnson said this is basically a resource allocation issue. Are separate moneys allocated, or do we pull monies for existing constituencies from academic units to pool? Evenbeck said he is not part of the conversations about reallocating. Porter said that international students get \$1,000 per year from the academic unit that the student belonged to, plus \$200 to reimburse for new federal fees. Johnson asked if initiatives will still have funding. Porter said yes.

Evenbeck wanted to get a handle on what works and hold it up to schools and help them make decisions. All agree transfers, 21st Century Scholars, and upper division students should be the focus. All the retention stuff has been for Gateway courses for the most part. Advising upper division and others is not there.

Williams asked if 21st Century Scholars is not a subset of first-time, full time. Evenbeck said we have one academic advisor assigned to work with them as they start. At St. Mary of the Woods, students get room and board paid if they're 21st Century Scholars. Lumina gave Purdue and IUPUI a small grant to convene all campuses in state to talk about what they are doing with 21st Century Scholars. The first meeting is November 22 and the second meeting will be here in the spring. Always think of support offices, and those folks have monthly meetings and share best practices, but there is not a parallel effort for institutions to do it.

Williams said if the first three areas were transfers, upper division, and first time, full time freshmen, then the others are subsets.

Souch said she agrees on remaining focused. The counter is keeping schools on track and accountable—there is some basic information schools should have; who are the 21st Century Scholars? There are things we should know that we don't; when we identify populations, it makes schools more accountable. Especially when we have communication. Porter said that speaks to having those IUIE reports that schools can pick up and run.

Williams said if we have three large categories, and if the data comes out with a number of each group. Porter said the idea of EM is if you have good information, you can make more decisions proactively. What kinds of reports should academic units have? Then get those on list to be developed. Williams suggested the Mark report: If you take these groups, and here are each subgroup within, then what kind of programs are in place in this school to serve those populations as they're broken out? Then it's obvious to see gaps. Porter said she can talk to our lead report writer folks and have them come hear about what we need.

Evenbeck asked if this is a major topic for the full council. Porter suggested starting with the steering committee or inviting selected people from the council. This could be a working group, as it could take more than one meeting.

Evenbeck agreed that if we can do that right, it will help our work. We have been trying to do this with transfer students; those who conceptualize how to do the report have not figured it out. If we have these three populations, perhaps Vic and Mary Beth could come and figure it out. Herman Blake had a conception of how world should be described: traditional, returners (over 25, part time), and remedial. The problem was these were not discrete populations; it's always good to have reports over the years, but we don't have that now.

Porter said they have added an ongoing report writer to the registrar's staff. We have a slew of standard reports we're working on replicating in the new system. If this is temporary and we need money, then we need to see if this is something that the campus values, and how to fund it to continue.

Williams said that Vic at the last meeting said he was looking for research questions. There is the sense that the data we're asking for now already exists—it's a matter of looking at it differently.

Porter said we're trying to prepare standard reports that will work for any academic unit formatted in such a way that the unit will do it themselves. The hope is they have sufficient insight to manipulate it to answer their questions. That's the philosophy for IUIE. Johnson asked who that would be. Souch added that this highlights that Liberal Arts needs to reallocate some resources to make that a priority for someone. We want the raw data. But we don't know what we want. Johnson asked what about a CD for each unit? Souch said it would be the raw data.

Porter said look at these two councils; this is not a one-year task. If we're going to talk about making informed decisions, and we know you look at data, how do you get the data? This is how you get it but then you make it meaningful—academic units, that's your bailiwick. Then each unit thinks about how to allocate resources.

Evenbeck asked Porter if she thought a joint meeting of the two steering committees would be appropriate. Porter said sure—or a subcommittee of members. It might be good to involve Vic in the conversation in order to say, here's the idea we generated, now help us flesh it out. Evenbeck said that Vic just put out a huge compendium of reports. He perceives they're useful. Trudy presented the results of reports. Souch said the reports should be used more. It's a wealth of information we're not using effectively; that is characteristic of IUPUI—there is lots of information we're not sure where it is, how to use it, or the relationship to data. We already have other things we're doing.

Johnson said a snapshot would be helpful for allocating front line interventions for students. There needs to be changes within units concerning curricular reform; it's easier not to, but within my department we need to change what students need to do to get out and be more flexible. Porter agreed; we can spend too much time pondering data, but we also know that this summer we asked questions everyone had assumed the answer to. Some things that were taken as universal truths were not; unless we test these hypotheses, we will not do the right thing. Souch added that not every department person is as aware of the problem. Some departments are in denial. Part of the solution is bringing it to the table. Departments will have to make difficult decisions.

Evenbeck summarized the key areas: Best practices—the committee can look to Gayle's report, and we have that online. Another area is What does urban mean, and looking at the campus climate. Porter said that best practices are always something to aspire to, but it's always easy to make excuses in your own individual course. If people don't recognize they have a problem.... What about a worst practices list? Then instructors could self-assess. Souch added that part of the problem is we have no real data—we don't present data saying they are best practices; we self-declare them.

Williams said that for first-time, full-time freshmen, 74% of those who we administratively withdrew from courses had failed. Some departments called us to complain and said we can't take attendance.

Evenbeck clarified the key are to best and worst practices, and how do you tell?

We should strategically hone in on various segments of faculty. Building peer review into P&T is helpful. We need administrative steps.

Best and worst practices for the three groups; maybe faculty would pay more attention if they were divided by group. We have a better handle on best/worst practices for freshmen. We could begin there.

Evenbeck said working centrally could help move things along. Until we looked at DFW rates for Supplemental Instruction (SI), nobody knew what DFW meant. At least now some are paying attention to that. Early warning system: We got hate notes from some faculty; now most are doing early warning and administrative withdrawal.

Williams said we have different treatment of transfer students across campus. Intercampus transfers are dealt with effectively. Others, we don't know who they are. Those are policy issues that schools have handled individually; what if we ask where the intercampus transfers are and how are they doing?

Evenbeck said Chism has a good list of worst practices. There are a lot of helpful tips we've shared with Gateway chairs. That could be on the Web site.

Porter said some faculty think the campus has focused only on entering students; we could revise this so it talks about students in terms of upper division. That would engage some faculty who haven't been involved. If you cast them differently, you could engage that other population of faculty.

Evenbeck distributed the work proposal. We have lots to do other than proclaiming it a disaster. Also departmental assessment of prior learning and credit for concurrent learning.

Capped majors: There are a lot of nursing and dental hygiene students not returning. Porter cautioned that we need to figure out what those numbers are. It's always helpful to understand the magnitude. Evenbeck said there are a lot of capped programs. Is that what General Studies will do? Take care of those who don't make it into the capped programs? Porter restated that there is a need to identify the truly capped program based on numbers. Evenbeck said Miriam Langsam had alternatives to nursing/business. We could pick up that work. Williams wondered if there is a course or courses keeping GPAs down for this group. Anatomy/physiology is the biggest SI program; we have to turn students away. Other courses have thresholds. Are there courses preventing students from hitting that? Porter said then you have to ask if business can accommodate more people in its program.

Evenbeck asked when we have the full council meeting, would it be a good use of time to send this out and try to get to the next level? You can give special attention to the assumptions that underlie our work. Make a longer list of assumptions and find out whether people are bringing the same assumptions to the work.

Next meeting we will divide the bigger group into working groups. Souch said yes—especially if we can get the right mix. Porter said we could subdivide the council.

Evenbeck said by the end of the semester we could have a revision with the end result to be a work plan. That can come from us; it's nebulous what R & G means. We can define it.

Porter agreed that it's true that we assume we can influence retention by changing the classroom, but we need to know other assumptions and other areas we can change. What can/can't we influence?

Johnson said it would help to know what is/isn't feasible. It's hard to jump in on assumptions; members need to understand what all the pieces are. Remind people about TLTF and Double the Numbers; ideas to bridge the gap—prioritize the list. Force us to draw those connections. If some could come from the top down, then our work could move more quickly.

Evenbeck moved on to Key Programming: This is a compilation of programs that are supposed to strengthen undergrad education. Our spending time on how to promote those at IUPUI would be good. Research questions are the ones that we generated at the last meeting; things that we think we need Vic's help or the registrar's help in getting at. It's critical to get all research questions written down there.

Williams said if we took best practices, Vic has done research on working on campus. What if we delivered that information to departments, saying these of your students are working on campus? If we took key programs and plot that across those things; are these programs there for those students?

Johnson said it would be even more helpful to know who students are who are work study eligible. If we could tell who they are, we could proactively recruit them.

Souch said it's the same thing for Liberal Arts—tell use who they are and we'll provide more opportunities to them. Doug Lees has a program for work study incoming students. If we knew that of our 200 students, 110 are work study eligible, that would help. Porter said we should be able to tell who is eligible.

Williams said we already have a best practice. How do we help schools know what to do next?

Porter said do you want to only identify students in a certain major so that the department could contact them, or do we need a better way of making a match between work study students and available jobs? The Career Center is in the middle between financial aid and the departments that want to hire. How would it be most efficient and not put the burden in the wrong place? We should be working our way through that.

Johnson said another conversation is what are things these students could do? If we started with a list of needs and then a list of students, it could be more seamless.

Williams said what if we took the national list and the internal list, and then say what are assumptions keeping these from happening? Johnson said that could be a focus group at the council meeting.

Porter said if we talk about work study, financial aid has no ability to contribute to that conversation until spring semester.

Williams suggested Mark Minglin's list. He took all Gateway courses—all, for freshmen, then asked which ones have interventions of any kind, then marked them.

Evenbeck said it was a big surprise when Zlotkowski came; he said, "I'm amazed you don't have service learning in your Gateway courses." Now we're measuring it and describing where it does and doesn't happen. Souch added that is coupled with is it working. Williams said then there is assessment and sharing the data.

Meeting adjourned.