

Council on Retention and Graduation Steering Committee
Meeting Minutes
November 20, 2008—UC 3171
Presiding: Scott Evenbeck

Present: Sarah Baker, Bob Bringle, Cathy Buyarski, Scott Evenbeck, Mary Fisher, Michele Hansen, Kathy Johnson, Susan Montgomery, Becky Porter, David Sabol, Gayle Williams, Marianne Wokeck

Regrets: John Gosney, Gary Pike, Frank Ross, Uday Sukhatme, Pratibha Varma-Nelson, Rick Ward

Guest: Kathy Burton

1. Evenbeck welcomed committee members to the meeting.
2. Task Force Reports:
Sophomores: Ross is out of the office today, but he gave a report at the last full council meeting.

Seniors: Johnson gave an update at the full council meeting as well. This task force is working on a senior focus group.

Transfer Students: Buyarski gave an update on this task force. They are still meeting and have decided to focus on Ivy Tech since many of our transfer students come from that institution. Buyarski told about an audio conference that took place the previous day. The task force will probably send a team to the national conference on transfer students.

Metrics: Pike is ill today, but he sent two documents. One document is something this group has given feedback on previously. The other document lists metrics related to the academic plan. Everyone should look at these documents and give Pike feedback. Porter mentioned the UITS strategic plan. The plan mentions purchasing software. After explaining how the software would help the campus, Porter asked committee members to provide input on this point if they give feedback on the strategic plan.

3. Data on Seniors and Financial Aid:
Porter explained that the premise of this research was to try to explore if there is a lack of financial aid eligibility impacting IUPUI seniors. She distributed a handout. The largest reason why seniors are not getting financial aid has to do with making satisfactory academic progress. She reviewed the information on her handout. When asked if this problem is concentrated in certain schools, Porter replied that her office did not break down the information that way, but they can give someone that information if it is needed. There was discussion about financial aid and students making satisfactory progress. Porter noted that of the total number of seniors requesting financial aid, 5,349 did not graduate. This is an area to investigate. It appears the financial aspect is not part of the reason why seniors did not graduate. There is a low number of students who borrowed all that they could. Fisher said the

inadequate completion could be linked to working too many hours. A large number of students who appealed to get financial aid did receive aid. There was additional discussion about the data Porter presented. Porter believes that the lack of financial aid eligibility is not a pervasive problem. Porter updated the committee about what her office is doing, such as augmenting their Web site with information about financial literacy. She will send this to Evenbeck when it is finished. There is a lot of information going around right now about student loans. Federal loans are not an issue; the whole system will function. There is no indication that the private loans have dried up for our students. Porter said her office is putting together a document that will go out to the bursar's staff that addresses confusion about what is available such as short-term loans, etc. Evenbeck asked how students will find out about this document. Porter said she is still working on this project. Evenbeck believes first-generation and low-income students need this information. Wokeck said she would like to see this as an item in the campus campaign that donors can contribute to. Williams told about a small loan program (connected to the University College tenth anniversary celebration) that will be available to students. There was discussion about a financial literacy center on campus.

4. Report on Graduation Rates for Students Who Completed 20 Credit Hours in the First Year: Burton explained that she had been asked to look at six-year graduation rates for students who completed 20 credit hours in the first year. She distributed a handout. Students who do not complete 20 credit hours in the first year are those who drop courses, etc. Of those students with 20 credit hours or more, virtually everyone enrolled in the second year. Those students with 20 credit hours or more in the first year have a much higher six-year graduation rate than those who do not, but this is still not high enough. If we move more students into 20 credit hours in the first year, it will increase the graduation rate. There was discussion about students who graduate with more than the required credit hours and why students are staying instead of graduating. Buyarski said they are trying to get the schools to put their curriculum checksheets into a four-year model. However, most advisors will tell students who are struggling with classes and working to take fewer hours. This advice is intended to help the student. The personal development plan will help students to see the numbers and when they will graduate. There was more discussion about this. Evenbeck noted that the campus is pushing for students to have more summer hours. Wokeck said the School of Liberal Arts (SLA) would like the summer to be like a "regular" third semester. SLA is supporting campus-wide efforts in this regard. There was additional discussion about informing parents about the 20 credit hours in the first year, AP credits, IUB students, and giving our students an incentive to graduate.
5. Hansen Data Report:
Hansen distributed a handout and gave a PowerPoint presentation. She explained where her information came from, including institutional data and student surveys. Hansen reviewed information such as one-year retention rates, graduation rates, and assessment of first-year programs. Our one-year retention rate is improving, but we are still below our peers. Hansen explained her approach to assessing first-year programs. She talked about focusing on accountability and a future that includes performance-based funding. She discussed items such as things that affect retention, learning communities, NSSE, themed learning communities, the Summer Academy Bridge Program, Critical Inquiry program, cohort

diversity, and how much IUPUI students are reading. Williams noted that the Critical Inquiry program addresses the issue of students not reading (or their inability to think critically). The faculty often report that students are not reading material that helps them to think analytically at the college level. There was a discussion about how much students are reading, and what they are reading.

6. Other Business:

Montgomery told about something that is happening in her area at the high school level. The Seymour Chamber of Commerce is helping to provide financial literacy information for students preparing for college.

Porter told about a news item she saw on Channel 13. There is a company that is providing “help” to students and their families in filling out the FAFSA. People have to have \$1,500 for this service. Students and families do not have to pay someone to fill out the FAFSA. There is a lot of miscommunication out there about this process. There was discussion about this.

7. Adjournment.

Submitted by:
A. Snyder