

Title III Retention Subcommittee Meeting Minutes

March 14th, 2017

Thomas Lounge at 11:00 a.m.

Attendance: Michael Allbright, Mei Mei Burr, Jennifer Cornell, Brook Edwards, Cheryl Louallen, Dennis Kelly, Kazi McDowell, Chip Murdock, LeighAnn Oettinger, Tara Rhinehart, Terry Rupert, Sigrid Solomon, and Nina Talley.

A moment of silence was held.

Mei Mei Burr

Academic Coaching: Student Success Coaches melding proactive and responsive strategies

- Jena Frommeyer and Tammy Fraser are the Student Success Coaches in RCC 114.
- RCC 114 has been renovated. Please come out and visit if you haven't already.
 - We are currently waiting on furniture for the student space. Many students are already using it to hang out/gather for study groups.
 - We are also using it for programming. The SSCs have already held 3-4 events this semester.
- Working with students on academic probation
 - SSCs attended the Academic Appeals and Standards meeting in December.
 - They communicated with suspension and probation students.
 - SSCs met individually with probation students in January to sign probation contracts and discuss why they were on probation and developed plans to ensure success for the semester.
 - SSCs will meet with students on probation at least three times during the semester.
 - SSCs will also reach out to suspended students to facilitate plans to assist the students in returning to Wilmington if they wish.
- SSCs are managing the referral and academic progress report process. They are following up with faculty and connecting students to campus resources.
- SSCs are having in-depth interviews with students requesting to take WD/LOA
 - This will hopefully enhance survey completion.
- SSCs have been integrated in the SRC team to prevent duplication of services and enhance collaboration.

- Outreach programming
 - 3–4 events for students so far. Time management, etc.
- SSCs redesigned the ID100 course in conjunction with Brook Edwards
 - Course will include self–authoring and self–awareness exercises
 - Before the course was for students on probation (reactive).
 - Will now be an abbreviated session course
 - It is possible that students placed in remedial courses will be placed in the abbreviated session I course.
 - Abbreviated session II will be for students that are exhibiting behaviors that indicate they need extra support
 - SSCs will be teaching these courses
- Collaboration with Career Service–Strengthfinders
 - Will be supporting strengthfinders and other tools
 - GL125 and career courses possibly changing
 - Nina–need to meet to align plans
 - Strengthfinders 2.0
 - Will be used during internship prep course
 - Students will be measured throughout whole internship
 - Will have mentors for different disciplines
 - Many seniors leaving without experiential learning/purpose

Mental Health Support

- Jennifer Cornell, Lindsey Wilson College (practicum student)
 - Jennifer is currently our MHI for spring. She will be at the intern level next semester and will be with us for a while
- Second intern has been selected and will start in the fall
- Collaborating with Kazi
- Vicky DeSensi is currently working on a Mental Health Action Plan on her sabbatical this semester
 - Will allow us to be proactive not just responsive
- Interns will be working on identifying an appropriate motivation scale for students
- Presentation done for psychology class
- Jennifer will be able to start seeing students soon
- Kazi: Looking into screening at freshman orientation. Also problems of students disclosing preexisting condition in a timely manner.
 - Brook: Inquired into possibility of training for employees to understand warning signs/indicators for students struggling with mental health.

Data

- A retention database is being constructed by Whitney Kessinger and Katie Bontrager. It is a long term project, but one that will improve our ability to look at validated data when looking for trends, etc. with our students.
- We have contracted with Fireproof to digitize student academic files. This means that FERPA will also be easily accessible to multiple people now.

Future Directions

- Academic Advising
 - We currently have a faculty advising model. Efforts were made by Mei Mei and Tara to equalize the advising loads before, but it was not embraced by the faculty
 - Looking at possibilities of compensation/incentives as well as training and stipends
 - Possibility of a master advisor program
- Strategies to engage parents
 - Parents are important to retaining students
 - Tammy is working on possible webpage for parents and a parent newsletter.
- Sigrid stated that Student Affairs is also looking into ways to involve parents, possibly through a Parent Council
- Possibility of mini grants for retention efforts
 - Cannot supplant/help existing programs with budget cuts
- Textbooks
 - Looking into possibility of purchasing some textbooks for reserve in the library.
 - Sigrid: possibility of helping students rent textbooks through Follett?

Discussion

Dennis: Default rates on loans from student who are suspended or take a leave of absence. If students are suspended for a full semester (especially if suspended for their fall semester performance) then their loans can mature and go into repayment.

- Possibility of going to community college during suspension to avoid loan repayment?
 - Student will have to pay out of pocket for this which is often a barrier.
- Leave of absence students
 - Is there no way to keep them engaged? Six hours is "half-time".
- Brook: At Southern State, those students who had academic difficulties and lost aid were given 3 or 4 courses that they could retake and improve their GPAs (no financial aid). They would also meet with an employee much like SSC and make a plan.
- WC tries to align its policies for suspension and probation with financial aid
 - We can look into a way to improve the form to inform students of financial aid consequences. However, we often send those students to Cheryl/financial aid to discuss possible repayment, etc. now.

- Readmission—Cheryl works with Sandy to notify students coming back that they will need to work with Mei Mei for SAP plan or if it isn't possible for them to come back yet due to financial aid concerns.
- Cheryl: SAP—there is leeway on institutional money, but state and federal guidelines are strict.
 - One of the biggest problems is usually the 2.0 GPA requirement
 - GPA can only be improved by taking courses at WC
 - If the problem is hours, the student can take classes elsewhere to improve those numbers.
 - There is also the problem of a first time student earning a GPA below a 1.0 in their first semester. This is difficult to overcome.

Terry: How many students do we lose when put on probation or they have to take a semester off due to suspension? How many do not come back for their second semester? Many of our sister institutions do not put students on probation their first semester (not talking about students who earn below a 1.0 in the semester, but rather the 1.0–1.8)

- For NCAA, freshmen are not suspended from play unless they do not meet the requirements after a year. At Wilmington, they can fail one course in the fall, be put on probation and then never play their spring sport.
- With a large first generation population, should we give the students a longer chance than 15 weeks to succeed?

The meeting was adjourned at 12:05 p.m.