

Provost's Council, April 13, 2011

Present: S. Westbrooks, D. Jefferson, C. Sidney, C. Green, J. Akujeze, J. Balogun, N. Maynard, S. Gist, L. Osika (for Darga), F. Diaz, R. Lindsey, M. Mobley-Smith, D. Collins, Y. Harris, T. Hope

Minutes for April 6 approved.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Technology Updates (Dillon): Dillon not present.
2. Freshman Updates (Green): Freshman updates--Block scheduling is done for fall 2011. There is discussion about a different model for new student orientation. Green proposes a series of "mini orientations" – for example, one per college over next four months. Ideally these will be smaller, provide more one-on-one attention for students, and be more productive. CAS is a challenge, because it is so big. We must also orient transfer students. During mini orientations over the summer, tests would be taken and students registered. Then one big orientation will be held on Aug. 18 for those who missed the mini orientations. The focus of the big Orientation would be fun. Transfer student Orientation would be Aug. 19 and would be like past orientations. Green also proposes evening academic open house events for students as another chance to engage. Green asked for Dean to support the idea of mini orientations.

The ERG Retention Committee has proposed that once freshmen declare majors, they then have an interview with a representative of the appropriate college before the end of their first year, which would educate students about what each major involves. Lindsey and Balogun suggest that students be interviewed during summer. All agree that this summer is too soon to implement this proposal. Doing interviews in summer would require earlier deadlines for application and admission. If interviews are implemented for next year, we need to have very clear criteria and allowable questions for interviews and a full understanding of their bearing on admissions. If part of the purpose of the interview is to be more selective in admission decisions, it would be prudent to see if increased selectivity will have a positive effect on enrollment and retention.

Another proposal to aid retention is to limit UC students to 9 hours for first semester, but this would perhaps have grave financial implications because these students would not be paying full-time tuition. Milo suggests that any decisions made should be data driven. Green suggests that we could use the College Student Inventory (CSI) for all students. CSI could be administered in place of interviews, because of the kind of information it makes available. Or, the CSI could form the basis for the interview. More information regarding the proposals for mini orientations will be forthcoming.

3. Enrollment updates...tabled

NEW BUSINESS

4. Recommendations for Committee to be Established to Review the Curricula for Senior Thesis/Research Projects: Deans are asked to forward names of people who will serve on this committee.

5. Graduate Theses: Current Semester Update (Akujjeze): The concept of requiring theses from all graduate students has been accepted by the Graduate Committee. The concept of requiring comprehensive exam requirements has also been accepted. The optional thesis has been phased out. A resolution will be forwarded to Provost by the end of the academic year. Balogun asks about GRE and other outside exams. Various departments that don't currently require the GRE are discussing whether or not GRE regular or subject tests are appropriate to their programs. Akujjeze suggests that each program look at other Graduate programs in the area and align CSU practices with those of others in the area. For example, in Nursing, the literature indicates that the GRE requirement does little to predict success for graduate students in nursing.

Jefferson commented that professors are not distinguishing adequately between graduate and undergraduate levels of courses that meet together. A significant number of these courses have no distinction between the two levels in the course syllabus. HLC may have questions about this practice. Chairs and Deans must remind faculty that they must have two separate syllabi if teaching a 4xxx/5xxx course.

6. University College (Green): There is a proposal to require UC students to take only nine credit hours along with three hours of an off-campus course. The proposal is acceptable to the UC staff, but the 8 hour math course is a concern. A four-hour math for sixteen weeks is preferred is, plus a freshman seminar, plus English. Lindsey suggests that whether a student takes the four-hour or eight-hour math should depend on placement exams. Data indicate that barriers to graduation often have to do with outside factors (number of children, working hours, etc.) and that we need to look at these issues more carefully. Jefferson reports that the IBHE Underrepresented Groups Report team contacted at-risk students, but failed to contact any students at Chicago State and Northeastern Universities, the schools who serve the majority of students from underrepresented groups.

7. Other Matters: Jefferson reports that the state is moving rapidly towards "Outcomes" budget building. Jefferson shared information about the many areas that will be examined for consideration under performance-based funding, including but not limited to projections on enrollment and graduation. CSU may do better than other state institutions under the new, proposed criteria for performance based evaluations. This proposal comes from the legislature and reflects the IBHE's response.

Announcements:

Two emails have gone out about SPSS training. Liz Osika suggests that we don't need outside training but can provide training in-house.

Chicago State University placed 13th at the Honda Challenge; the CUS team is going to the finals. Nicolas Tosoni, an English Professional and Technical Writing major, was named the top scorer. The participating students brought back about 7000 dollars in scholarships.

Tiffany Hope thanks all for support for study abroad.