

SPC-Student Services-Thursday, July 17, 2104 1:00pm/Miller Oval

Chair: Christine Shane

In attendance: C. Shane, R. Diakite, M. Krell, H. Parkinson, K. Valeri, C. Cratsley, L. Croteau, E. Estifanos, J. Fiske, R. Hynes, K. Murphy, K Polk, T. Rousseau, P. Weizer

Meeting started: 1:00pm

Christine Shane opened the meeting discussing the scheduled focus group meetings. Chris will be facilitating the group asked for a co-leader for each group. She also asked the group to give remarks on the readings and post them on Blackboard.

Chris Cratsley presented assessment information, specifically, a subset of data from the NSSE report, a survey administered every three years to FSU freshman and seniors. Chris gave the group information from seniors only as they would have a better sense of student services. Sample size was approx. 200.

- high marks in helping cope with non-academic responsibilities
- overall quality of advising lower than other New England institutions. Rala Diakite- It seems disastrous that they feel this way considering the amount of energy that is being put into advising. Paul Weizer – the perception is there. It should improve when DegreeWorks replaces CAPP. As long as the students follow the DegreeWorks plan they should not have these issues. It is “advisor proof”. Other ideas were the *Guide for Pathway to Success*, *Starfish Retention Solutions* and default registrations.
- students work outside less than other New England institutions. Rala – would like to see a breakdown of how many hours our students work.
- commute is shorter than most college students – may be due to the small size of Massachusetts. Hank Parkinson- we are 49% commuter, 25% live in streets nearby (walkers), 20% drive in from home. We have commuter conversation meetings every month. Approx. 100 commuters attend. The University administered a survey two years ago with 500 commuter responses. The University created a commuter program based on the responses..

Stan Bucholc-commuters tend to “pack their day” with classes, family, work, etc. while residents are “forced” to make friends and become acclimated in order to survive the college experience. We try to identify the transition process but it is difficult to do for commuters.

Paul W – we are probably looking at lower enrollment numbers for a while. Last fall we had 809 new students; this year 721. We need to know what makes us unique or distinctive. How can we lower the amount we spend on a student without lowering the quality of education?

Chris C – we will need to compete for students that are working more and are parents and/or caregivers. The largest growing population is Latino-Hispanic. Fitchburg/Leominster public schools are 30% Latino. Chris S – do we have a moral imperative to become more of a minority university? Hank – we need to have the services to compete, e.g., Game Design has attracted students with Asperger’s Syndrome. Stan – we have a State mandate to service our community whatever that may be. Tom Rousseau – are these students qualified? Latino students have a higher dropout rate and lower academic scores. Chris S – what about transition programs? Jane Fiske-We have a Summer Bridge program that may be utilized more. We have 27 students in the program this year. Perhaps it needs to expand. The University is working with Worcester State, MWCC and Quinsigamond CC to improve transfer pathways. We are 30% transfer.

Paul W – we should look into “competency based” programs similar to that used by SNHU. Kristin Murphy – the theme is access –we tend to dilute services. Chris C – we need to identify the market we are going for. Paul W – we need to define what we do best. Jane Fiske – we do not want to compete with sister institutions – where is there a need? Hank – getting students to visit the campus is the problem. Paul W - we need to find out where 75% of students who are accepted but do not attend went. Chris S suggested calling centers. Kristin – we need to focus on students who do not think they can come here. Rala – family scenarios affect dropout rates; day care, expanded hours could help.

Jane F – the goal is Getting – Retaining – Graduating

Focus Groups: 7/30 – co-leader: Rala Diakite

Diversity and the Underserved population

7/31 – co-leader: Megan Krell

The changing needs of the modern student

8/20 –co-leader: Hank Parkinson

Administration Organization/Coordination of Student Services

Hank will send an SGA blast about focus group participation in the fall. Karen Valeri suggested that the “all campus” timeslot may be a good time to get students together.

Meeting adjourned at 2:30PM

Respectfully submitted,

Gail Feckley