Council on Retention and Graduation Meeting  
January 14, 2016  
UC 104  
Presiding: Stephen Hundley

Present: Sara Allaei, Alison Bell, Andrea Engler, Gary Felsten, Margaret Ferguson, Gina Sanchez Gibau, John Gosney, Steve Graunke, Michele Hansen, Stephen Hundley, Susan Kahn, Howard Mzumara, Matt Pistilli, Matt Rust, Kristina Sheeler, Jennifer Thorington Springer, Kate Thedwall, Regina Turner, Matt Wade, Jeff Watt, and Eric Williams

Regrets: Rebecca Porter, Terri Talbert-Hatch, Pratibha Varma-Nelson, and Debra Winikates

Guest: Eric Sickels (Division of Undergraduate Education)

1. Hundley opened the meeting and welcomed council members.

2. The minutes from the December meeting were approved.

3. Sickels used a PowerPoint presentation to share information about an upcoming communication strategy to encourage students to take advantage of their banded tuition. The following points were discussed:
   - The purpose of the communication effort on banded tuition is to give students and advisors tangible opportunities to maximize students’ class schedules and tuition dollars. Another purpose is to continue the expectation of on-time graduation and 15 credits per semester (or 30 credits per year).
   - The focus areas of the communications will be: taking classes that students are interested in or personal enrichment, preparing for employment, preparing for graduate or professional school, finishing faster, and taking advantage of the downtown location.
   - Students can achieve the focus areas by using minors, certificates, electives, career planning courses, internship courses, and research through independent study. For example, if we tell students to prepare for employment, they could do that by taking a career course offered by their schools.
   - The communications will reach students through digital signage, paid social media (targeting IUPUI students), printed handouts for advisors, and messaging language for advisors. Sickels distributed a handout with sample messages. He would like feedback and suggestions from council members.

4. Ferguson was introduced in her new role as interim senior associate vice chancellor for academic affairs, and introductions were made.

5. Thedwall used a PowerPoint presentation to give an update on the Gateway to Graduation program. The following points were discussed:
   - Mission of the program: The Gateway to Graduation program is a faculty-led effort to improve student learning and retention in courses with high enrollments of first-year students.
• Of the undergraduates enrolled in gateway courses in fall 2014, 74.4% were retained in fall 2015. The overall DFW rate for gateway courses for fall 2015 was 22%.
• In 2007, there were 50 gateway courses. In 2015, there were 93 courses and 604 faculty (an 86% increase).
• Of the gateway faculty offered an opportunity to participate in the Gateway Teaching Academy in the first year, about half accepted. The first step to being in the academy is writing a teaching philosophy statement, which some faculty find challenging. Thedwall said they are developing support such as online workshops to help with this step.
• In the Gateway Teaching Academy, faculty can work up to different levels: bronze, silver, and gold. In 2014, 10 bronze awards were given.
• The Gateway to Graduation program provides resources to faculty, such as workshops, research fellowships, and helping new faculty to know what to do when they first arrive on campus. There is also a tableau website for data about gateway courses.
• The gateway coordinators help with curriculum development, faculty hiring, assessment, retention initiatives, and collaborations. Coordinators meet regularly and share information.
• The Gateway to Graduation program has several communities of practice, including information literacy, critical thinking, academic integrity, civility, intercultural learning, technology, and bring your own device.
• Some of the benefits of the program for faculty include recognition of teaching achievements, opportunities for professional development, fellowships, and funding for communities of practice. Some of the benefits for schools include recognition for undergraduate programs, attention for gateway courses, lower DFW rates, increased retention, and professional development for faculty without cost to the school.

6. Hansen gave a brief recap of some of the data she presented about retention and graduation in December. The following points were reviewed:
• IUPUI’s one-year retention rate has increased by about 3%. There have also been improvements in the four-year and six-year graduation rates. However, we are still below our peers in retention and graduate rates.
• About 43% of IUPUI students receive a Federal Pell Grant. The only other peer institution with a higher rate is Wayne State University at 55%.
• Students who were retained had an average unmet need of $3,000, but those not retained had an average unmet need of $6,000. Some students in the first-time, full-time cohort have over $7,000 in unmet need.
• IUPUI students have a sense of belongingness according to the Entering Student Survey, which students take at the end of orientation.
• There has been an opportunity gap for some students, especially for African American students. African American students also have higher levels of unmet need.
• The more credits transfer students bring with them, the better they tend to do.

7. Council members broke into small groups to discuss questions about the data presented by Hansen. Full notes are in the appendix, but some of the comments made during the report-out session include the following:
• One of the most surprising things in the data is that 43% of IUPUI students receive a Federal Pell Grant.
• Another surprise in the data is the number of students IUPUI loses. Hansen said we lose about 12% of our students.
• Many first-generation students come to IUPUI seeking a professional degree. They do not understand the value of arts and science degrees.
• Many students do not have a Plan B if they do not get accepted into their chosen majors.
• IUPUI needs mandatory advising. This is a moderate resource with a huge return. There should be mandatory advising at least during the first and second years.
• Students also need mentors.
• IUPUI needs to cross-train advisors. Many advisors are trained for one department only.
• When Hansen asked for final highlights from the discussions, the groups responded:
  o Williams said they talked about financial literacy and the importance of students managing what they have. They also discussed IUPUI creating more work-study jobs and making it a learning experience.
  o Gosney said their group discussed broader communications, especially thinking about the socioeconomic status of students.
  o Gibau said they discussed practices that should be developed. Their discussion focused on addressing unmet need, such as job opportunities and students living on campus. How can the university accommodate students from different socioeconomic backgrounds? Can living/learning TLCs be created in campus housing? Should students be forced into TLCs because of their living arrangements? We need to think about designing interventions for target groups.

8. The meeting was adjourned.

Next Meeting: February 4, 8:30–10:00 a.m., University Hall 1006

Submitted by:
A. Snyder
University College
Appendix to the Minutes

Responses to Group Discussion about Retention and Graduation

1. What are the most surprising or intriguing insights you have concerning the data from this presentation, and why?
   Group A:
   - Percentage of students with more than $7,000 of unmet need.
   - 43% of IUPUI students are Federal Pell Grant recipients.
   Group B:
   - Level of unmet need.
   - 43% of IUPUI students are Federal Pell Grant recipients.
   Group C:
   - Financial characteristics are fairly constant from year to year, but student [?] [?] from 10 years ago.
   Group D:
   - Drop in retention after the second and third years. Why? There is so much support. Is it all about the money?
   Group E:
   - 43% of IUPUI students are Federal Pell Grant recipients.
   - Reduction of DFW rates in gateway courses.

2. Based on the data, what practices should we continue doing, and why?
   Group A:
   - Continue serving students with high unmet need (we don’t need to change our population).
   Group B:
   - What can we do to reach out and help students (we want to help)?
   - What are our peers doing?
   - Continue serving Federal Pell Grant students.
   - Use small, targeted initiatives (including short-term, targeted ones).
   Group C: no response.
   Group D:
   - Mentoring, an affordable extension of the faculty.
   - Support services (there is such need).
   Group E:
   - Concern over possible disconnect between banded tuition and unmet financial need (how to take more courses if a student is struggling to eat).
3. Based on the data, what practices should we improve, change, or discontinue, and why?
   Group A:
   - Look closely at the population that is so at risk; find short-term targeted solutions that address the barriers/issues that profoundly affect these students. Follow the problem-solving method of George State University.
   Group B:
   - Leverage InsideTrack.
   Group C:
   - Better educate students about scholarship opportunities.
   - Financial literacy.
   Group D:
   - Better training for first-year seminar instructors.
   - Align the curriculum in the first-year seminars more.
   - Financial education—increase implementation of the good work done.
   - More Summer Bridge participation, perhaps for all.
   Group E:
   - Broader communication.
   - Broader consideration (in communications) of range of socioeconomic backgrounds (e.g., don’t assume students are aware of the information).

4. Based on the data, what practices should we develop, and why?
   Group A:
   - Opportunities to get students with greater unmet need into campus housing (perhaps a sliding scale?).
   - Living/learning building for the TLCs.
   - 15 credit hour success is promising.
   - More interventions (e.g., InsideTrack) that are data driven; increase the impact, but maximize efficiency of these interventions; target interventions.
   Group B:
   - Use a sliding scale for housing.
   - Pass rates.
   - Do two-year comparisons of banded tuition students compared to those not in banded tuition.
   Group C: no response.
   Group D:
   - Partner Summer Bridge with New Student Orientation.
   - Hire more advisors with significant cross training.
   Group E:
   - Develop strategies for building student resilience to common barriers and frustrations felt by students.
5. What additional specific strategies, programs, and policies can we implement or enhance to improve student success, and how do we move to action on these items?

Group A:
- Use a health sciences major as an entry major for pre-radiology, pre-nursing, etc., that creates an alternative opportunity for students who don’t get into their intended majors (Kokomo and South Bend just did this).

Group B:
- Make advising/coaching and assessment more efficient.
- Use living/learning TLCs and target low-income students.

Group C: no response.

Group D:
- How should we do the handoffs? A plan is needed at the junior/senior year.
- Require advising at each year with certain GPAs (put resources here).
- Also see group’s response to #3.

Group E:
- More extensive student mentoring (e.g., variety of formats and approaches to mentoring students).