**Retention Committee Minutes**

2:30 September 13, 2021

Zoom

1. **Attending:** LaChelle Bryant, Dee Cooper, Tammy Davis, Lynn Demuth, Peggy Emde, Todd Ging, Jeremy Hise, Sandy Jensen, Leslie Johns, Jenifer Lancaster, Alicia Sharp, Don Stinson, Pam Stinson, Kathleen Swain, Diana Watkins, Emily Witherspoon, Gene Young
2. **Reminder of committee’s purpose:** To recommend policies and procedures designed to improve retention and graduation rates in support of the institutional mission and regional and state goals for degree completion.  This committee will review practices related to enrollment, academic advisement, and student support services that have been identified as instrumental in improving retention.

**2019-2025 Strategic Plan Charge:** Review Goal 2 Strategic Plan initiatives and make recommendations for improved advising model, including improved advisor training, creation of online videos, and expansion of articulation agreements for more guided pathways.

A subcommittee on First Generation will be relaunched in 2021-2022.

1. **First Generation Programming & Mentorship Discussion**

* Data collected from surveys in Freshman Orientation indicate that we have approximately 360 students who identified as first-generation across the three campuses and at the UC. We had 21 individuals volunteer to mentor first-generation students, so we may need to do another push for volunteers depending on how many of those who identified as first-gen sign up for a mentorship program.
* We discussed the need to move forward with this program and what a kickoff might look like on each campus, establishing the need to form sub-committees on each campus to spearhead these efforts. The general thoughts seemed to be we need to find a large, open space on each campus to host an early/mid afternoon kickoff with snacks. Concern was expressed that this timeslot could interfere with athletic practices, but it was pointed out that those students have a built-in support system and while we want to serve them they might not really be the focus for this kickoff.

1. **Early Alert System**

* Several said they had used the system successfully and some challenges were identified. Not everyone was receiving notifications when an alert they’d submitted had been closed and when a retention specialist is responding to the alerts, the advisors aren’t necessarily being notified. We may need to check with Jenzabar on this.
* We discussed the need to add information about the new early alert system to the advisor handbook. Pam asked for feedback concerning what to include, not only with early alerts, but also anything else J1 related.
* Some discussion was had concerning when an Early Alert should be closed.
* Questions were asked regarding what students see when Early Alerts are submitted and we discussed the use of “non-academic concerns” as the means to communicate confidential information that would not go to the student. It was suggested that an email should be sent to faculty and staff reminding them that their comments are seen by the students unless using “non-academic concerns”. There we some questions regarding how Early Alerts are being handled for online students.

1. **Other items:**

* Broken links on the website: Alicia Sharp volunteered to form a subcommittee to take a look at the website and find ways it can better serve our students. Emily Witherspoon, Kathleen Swain and Jenifer Lancaster all offered to assist her.
* J1 issues following the recent update. Individuals should contact Linn Laughery and copy Pam if they are experiencing challenges with logging in to J1.

1. **Review of Action Items:**

* Each campus will have a sub-committee to plan a kick off for first generation students. Diana will email those who indicated interest in championing this a list of those who volunteered who volunteered to work with first-gen students.
* Several items were identified as issues with the early alert system. Some Diana can fix, others will need to be addressed with Jenzabar. Everyone was asked to contact Diana with other challenges they run into with Early Alerts.
* It was determined that a meeting of retention specialists should be set to talk about work flow of Early Alerts and when to close them.
* Sub-committee to look on website. Alicia Sharp will organize in communication with Sheri Snyder’s office.