

# MINUTES

## Missouri S&T Retention Committee Meeting

February 23rd, 2012

8:15-9:15 AM

**Members Present:** Harvest Collier, Scott Miller, Edna Grover-Bisker, Tyrone Davidson, Cecilia Elmore, Stephanie Fitch, Patty Frisbee, Larry Gragg, Katie Jackson, Rance Larsen, Scott Miller, Rachel Morris, Stephen Raper, Carol Smith, Lynn Stichnote, Laura Stoll, Ramya Thiagarajan, Nangai Yang, Summer Young.

**Members Absent:**, Brooke Durbin, Deanne Jackson, Thulasi Kumar, Will Perkins, Kristi Schulte, Brad Starbuck.

**Guests:** Jennifer Thorpe

### Review and Approval of Minutes

The committee members reviewed the minutes from the February 9th, 2012 meeting. A motion was made (Larry Gragg) and seconded (Rance Larsen) to approve the minutes with one correction.

#### I. Old Business

- a. No old business.

#### II. New Business

##### a. Noel Levitz Final Report- Laura Stoll presenting

According to the Noel Levitz findings (presented by Deb Schreiber of Noel Levitz), S&T is doing many things right. The break points that were discovered when looking at our campus data were ACT and EFC (Estimated Family Contribution). Pell eligible students are struggling to persist at S&T.

We captured fewer students with high ACT/GPA in 2011 than in 2010.

First year retention was 93% (in 2011) by academic level (higher act/income level).

Low persistence level with Pell eligible students.

Recommendations:

- New need based aid, focusing on Pell eligible students. Noel Levitz feels we don't have enough funding to pursue all middle income students.
- Need for greater coordination of faculty/dept awards thru Financial Assistance office to maximize impact of dollars.
- Funnel management for target populations; qualifying and grading
- Utilize NSC (National Student Clearinghouse) information and net price calculator to expand what we know about our competition
- Boost the number of FASFA filers
- Gauge marketplace reaction to financial aid awards (depth sounding)
- Enhance financial assistance communication flow to prospective students and families

Follow up: Enrollment Management is submitting data weekly to Noel Levitz and participate in conference calls every 2 weeks.

S&T needs \$280,000 of need based aid to reach 1<sup>st</sup> year Pell eligible students. Interim Chancellor Wray has set aside \$265,000 since tuition increase.

Larry Gragg asked what was Interim Chancellor Wray's reaction to report?-Deb presented a lot of data to Wray. She gave examples of families with certain incomes. Wray was concerned that it was such a small number that fell into the need based aid. He was told that small numbers represent such a large % change. There was no hesitation to commit to need based aid in a follow up meeting. Laura Stoll feels that once we make a commitment to need based aid that there is no going back. We should as a campus be able to continue offering to the students.

Harvest Collier asked about current students and what we can do, financially, for them. The Financial Assistance Office will assist current students as they contact the office to help with discretionary funds.

Financial Assistance update: The office of Financial Assistance is setting up personalized customer service. Each student will be assigned a specific counselor depending on the first letter of the student's last name. The office has started financial aid literacy and, as a long term plan, would love to attach need based aid to 101 financial assistance seminars.

A goal that the Office of Undergraduate Studies and Financial Assistance are working on is reaching out to students on SAP (Satisfactory Academic Progress) before they leave campus. Get the students the help they need before the end of the current semester. Harvest Collier wants to identify students with financial need before the semester ends (as they are going through pre-registration) and send those students to the Financial Assistance office. Lynn Stichnote stated we could do that with midterm grades. Laura Stoll said that we are submitting data to Noel Levitz once a week and we will be able to match that data with pre-registration.

Positive item brought up by Harvest Collier is the fall semester to spring semester retention. In previous years, when we were at 88% fall to spring retention was 96%. Currently for FS11 to SP12 we are at 96%. Efforts made by 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year managers and academic advisors have had a positive impact.

**III. Next Meeting:** March 8th, 2012. Persistence subcommittee will present.

**IV.** The meeting was adjourned.