

# MINUTES

## Missouri S&T Retention Committee Meeting

May 3rd, 2012

8:15-9:15 AM

**Members Present:** Harvest Collier, Scott Miller, Tyrone Davidson, Stephanie Fitch, Deanne Jackson, Katie Jackson, Rachel Morris, Stephen Raper, Kristi Schulte, Carol Smith, Laura Stoll, Nangai Yang.

**Members Absent:** Edna Grover-Bisker, Brooke Durbin, Cecilia Elmore, Patty Frisbee, Larry Gragg, Thulasi Kumar, Rance Larsen, Brad Starbuck, Lynn Stichnote, Ramya Thiagarajan, Summer Young.

### I. Review and Approval of Minutes

The committee members reviewed the minutes from the April 19th, 2012 meeting. A motion was made (Stephen Raper) and seconded (Tyrone Davidson) to approve the minutes with a correction in wording on page 2, paragraph 2.

### II. Old Business

- a. Non returning student phone calling (As of 4/27/12)
  - FS11 and SP12 FTC enrollees: 109 not yet enrolled for FS12
  - 40/109 not met with advisor
  - 22/109 have financial holds
  - 28/109 advising and financial holds
  - 19/109 no holds
  - 3/109 advising and a C30 hold
  - 40/109 below 2.0
  - 68/109 have not yet been in Calculus (engineering and hard science majors)
  - Responses:
    - 5 Transferring to UMKC, Cornell, Mizzou, Moberly Community College
    - 85/109 were engineering
    - 10 computer science, 5 biological science, 3 physics, 2 math, 1 chemistry, 1 business, 1 English, 1 IST, 1 GL&GPH
    - Of those, 15 are from out of state

This is the earliest we tried contacting the non-returning students. Good step forward.

Lynn forcing the SAP has helped the students that perpetually return and live on their financial aid.

Carol does not call the students with less than a 2.0. She sends those students to Tyrone.

53 of the FTC from fall semester FS11 did not re-enroll for SP12: what should we do with those students? They were contacted last December  
22 financial holds: Carol shared those students with Lynn's office on May 2nd.

2<sup>nd</sup> year:

82 non registered

13/82 deficient

15/82 probationary

54/82 good standing

6 replied to the phone calls

5 transferring

4 still listed in freshmen engineering

5 plan to register for study abroad or co-op

32 advising holds only

6 financial and advising holds

17 financial only holds

24 no holds

### III. New Business

- a. Discussion led by Math subcommittee  
Subcommittee is looking for recommendations from the Retention Committee. Grades in math are a huge factor of whether or not students do well. ACT scores somewhat predict how well they will do in math and what math they will test into once on campus. The biggest issues are in math 2 and math 3. (i.e., Math 2 students have a chip on shoulder-feels they should be in higher in math. Math 3 students come in knowing they are in trouble and are more accepting to do the work it takes to pass the course).

Efforts toward more success in the lower course math classes include:

This semester (Spring 2012): Math 2 instructors have offered extra review sessions before math tests, but are not tracking which students are attending those review sessions. Instructors for math 2/3 are adjuncts. Stephanie Fitch expressed that extra activities around math 2/3 are looked at as burdens. There is no compensation provided for these extra activities. Kim Kinder held lead sessions once a week and reported that no one has been attending. Stephanie Fitch spoke to Ron Bieniek to look for ways to improve lead attendance. Dr. Bieniek stated that students get points to attend physics LEAD sessions. The math department feels that giving points to students is a form of bribery.

It was suggested that the math department could look at the possibility of a required recitation for those math courses. Stephanie stated that there are some new faculty in the math department that have some new ideas to try. The biggest concern right now is for the math 2 course.

Another recommendation for getting students in math 2/3 to attend LEAD sessions is how the information about LEAD as a resource is communicated to the students. --Not "help" but mastery of the course (Dr. Bieniek uses this tactic for physics). Stephanie Fitch is not sure how much interest there is for another LEAD session for next semester.

For the freshmen chemistry class, LEAD is promoted as an opportunity to learn collaboratively. The more lead sessions students go to, the better they do in the course. Small incentives seem to make big differences. If instructors aren't willing to monitor math LEAD sessions, Dr. Collier noted that grad students can be hired to conduct the lead sessions. Swipe cards are used to check attendance at some LEAD sessions and we can use that method for the math LEAD sessions. The more times a student goes to LEAD correlates to how well they do. Students go to work on homework. This approach works well for chemistry per Dr. Collier. Stephanie Fitch says there is a difference between the students in math 2, chemistry and physics. Scott Miller says there is evidence of students doing better with peer help. It is important for all students to go to LEAD so that there can be peer mentoring. Miller says it's great to give points to get students who get the material in the same room as those that don't. That is what promotes peer mentoring. Getting math 2 students to see the value of peer mentoring is key.

We can gain insight before students come to campus by looking at act scores. There seems to be a line at 27. Stephanie is asking if there is something we can do ahead of time. One of the suggestions is, if a student is registered for problem solving workshops (PSW), then S&T can send a letter to them at home asking them to take a math course at a community college or another university before fall.

Carol Smith sees an issue with that:

Only getting  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the students here in time for summer sessions.

Laura Stoll suggested promoting bridge programs like hit the ground running (HGR).

Calling students before the semester started was another suggestion that was brought to the committee. There are approximately 200 in PSW. Issue: students who end up in PSW are the late PRO registrants. Maybe we can look, prior to pro,

at the act math scores and select students to contact. Another option that was brought up was being more selective. We are bound by admissions guidelines. If we are going to be selective, we will have to do that after the admissions process.

Revisiting "University College" programs at other universities was suggested by Stephanie. Students having a time limit to get into a discipline/department. Dr. Collier shared that this proposal was offered back in 2002, but there was no support for the idea. He shared the idea with current provost and it was still not looked at favorably.

Stephanie suggested looking at comparator institutions and see what they are doing.

Dr. Collier wanted ideas from the subcommittee to give to the chancellor. Stephanie doesn't feel there is a serious problem with math 2. Math 2 should be the biggest d/f/wd number in the math department. Dr. Collier asked her how we, as a committee, are going to explain that to the chancellor and/or provost. A high failure rate not being a problem is not the perspective they will latch on to. This is a group of students that are at high risk once they step on campus. They didn't have to work hard in high school. Math 3 is a little different. Math 2 students don't come to campus with a good work ethic but also did not hit the mark on the class they want to be in. Hence those students are the biggest probability of being the ones with the worst grade. Stephanie asked the question if it's a problem worth worrying about.

Dr. Collier stated other ideas that relate. How do we improve classes and student success even though the students may be destined to fail? Data shows there is a general correlation that a student is more likely to graduate in 4-6 years based on their success in the first 2 semesters. If they are not successful in math 2 the first semester, the most likely will not enroll for spring semester. It's a very serious situation that needs to be addressed. These things determine retention rates, revenue and graduation rates.

Another question was brought to the committee: How much time, money and resources are we using to try and save these students. It's been proven that if we throw money at it, it will improve somewhat.

#### **IV. Announcements**

**V. Next Meeting:** Thursday, May 17<sup>th</sup>, 2012 at 8:15 am. The meeting was adjourned.