

Missouri S&T Retention Committee Meeting

October 6, 2011

8:15-9:15 AM

Members Present: Harvest Collier, Cecilia Elmore, Stephanie Fitch, Anna Gaw, Larry Gragg, Edna Grover-Bisker, Deanne Jackson, Katie Jackson, Scott Miller, Stephen Raper, Kristi Schulte, Lynn Stichnote, Laura Stoll, Nangai Yang (for Institutional Research Office).

Members Absent: Tyrone Davidson, Brooke Durbin, Thulasi Kumar, Rance Larsen, Rachel Morris, Will Perkins, Carol Smith, Brad Starbuck, Ramya Thiagarajan, Summer Young

Review and Approval of Minutes

The committee members reviewed the minutes from the September 22, 2011 meeting. A motion was made (Larry Gragg) and seconded (Cecilia Elmore) to approve the minutes as submitted.

I. Old Business

- a. **Intrusive Intervention Update:** Larry Gragg provided a brief summary of the “Intrusive Intervention Lite” project he is conducting with students in his introductory History course. His strategy has been to proactively engage his students to conduct the LASSI and consider their learning styles. His students were encouraged to take advantage of the effective practices for academic skills development relative to their LASSI outcomes. He described how he engaged his students at the beginning of the semester with interviews seeking to determine each student’s learning style and also promote a level of student comfort by meeting with the professor in his office. He indicated that his first attempt with this approach was a failure, but he persisted and he has had more response from students in seeking help for the first exam. He indicated that ultimate success is still to be determined. Most students report they learn not by doing, but they report by listening and taking notes. Larry noted that Kellie Grassman reports the opposite student outcome. It was suggested that there is perhaps a perception that that is what is expected in a History class.

Larry also asks his students what their most enjoyable learning experience is, and they report a wide range of activities, not all doing. 80-85% are first semester freshmen.

Lynn Stichnote asked what year the students are in Kellie’s class, wanted to know if we were comparing the same students, or are they learners?

- b. Harvest Collier provided a brief update on the on-going chem 1 intrusive intervention project. He shared that a new approach to promoting students to learning chemical nomenclature was instituted this semester. The tool was designed as a game strategy with four levels of nomenclature quizzes organized with increasing levels of difficulty. This strategy was piloted with the HGR students this summer and proved to be effective in improving student learning. Collier related that the strategy was used with the Chem 1 students this fall and resulted in a significant improvement in student learning based on the nomenclature exam outcomes.

He related that academic alerts had been issued for approximately 200 of the nearly 800 students taking the course this semester. The students were encouraged to take advantage of the effective practices for academic skills development relative to their LASSI outcomes. The students were also encouraged to participate in more LEAD sessions, online discussion board, and to visit with their instructor or GTA for additional assistance.

Lynn Stichnote asked if Katie Jackson could put a note in the Parents Newsletter announcing that academic alerts are being issued, and how students should respond.

Collier related that the English and Technical Communication department has developed a diagnostic tool for students taking the English 20 course. Initially, the outcomes from application of the diagnostic tool support the observed poor student reading and writing skills. An aspect of the diagnostic outcome correlates positively with the “selecting main ideas (SMI) factor found in the LASSI.

Laura Stoll asked Harvest Collier to report on the changes to Chem1 for Spring 2012. Harvest related that the Chemistry department was engaged in the development of a restructured, blended Chem 1 course. This effort is in response to the State of Missouri’s call to increase electronic instruction. Please visit the following web site for additional details (http://www.thencat.org/States/MO/Abstracts/MUST%20Chemistry_Abstract.html).

Katie Jackson reported from the CERTI elearners group that results show that the lowest results (learning outcomes) were in blended courses compared to face-to-face and totally online courses.

Harvest related a concern that freshmen students may not be prepared for this blended learning approach as it is presently described.

Larry related that the incredible lead up time to develop a blended course is worth the payoff and he is looking forward to the reports that show the effectiveness or not of the approach.

Deanne expressed concern as to how we will market this new course at PRO.

II. New Business

a. Discussion of AY 2011/2012 Retention Committee Subcommittees

The committee discussed possible subcommittees each member might serve on in order to pursue insight for increased student success. The subcommittees include Alternate Majors Promotion, Financial Aid, Fit in the S&T Environment, Access to Success Commitment, Academic Performance in Math, and Student Persistence

b. Questions for the Next Round of Chancellor Interviews

As chair of the chancellor search committee, Larry Gragg requested suggested questions from the retention committee that may be used in the next round of chancellor search interviews. Larry related that common question posed in the initial round of interviews was what the university will look like in 5, 10 years. He indicated that common responses included assess and affordability (and accountability).

For possible questions/concerns:

Steve Raper suggested addressing student graduation (4, 5 or 6-year) rate.

Anna reported that at NACADA discussion the focus was around shifting retention discussion from freshmen to transfer or students who stop out, or students who change majors and go to other schools. Stress needs to be on student success, not just one schools retention rate.

Harvest suggested affordability and costs of online versus face-to-face; how do we address the unique nature of this campus versus a comprehensive institution?

III. Next Meeting: Thursday, October 20, 2011 in Silver & Gold.

IV. The meeting was adjourned.