

MINUTES

UMR Retention Committee Meeting

August 23, 2007

8:15-9:15 AM

Members Present: Harvest Collier, Kim Frazier, Amy Gillman, Jay Goff, Larry Gragg, Mary Ellen Kirgan, C.R. Thulasi Kumar, F. Scott Miller, Barb Prewett, Steve Raper, Kristi Schulte, Lynn Stichnote, Laura Stoll, Chris Weisbrook

Members Absent: Sunnie Hughes, James Woner

- I. Welcome New Members-** The Committee Co-Chairs, Vice Provost Harvest Collier & Dr. F. Scott Miller, welcomed the committee. The members introduced themselves. Dr. Collier provided new members with background information about the retention committee.

Committee discussion:

- ◆ Dr. Collier indicated approximately 59-60% of the UMR enrollment growth is due to student retention. Dr. Collier mentioned the UMR reaccreditation self study process and explained the Higher Learning Commission's requirements for accreditation are changing and requiring institutions to continually make quality improvements that increase student retention.
- ◆ Dean Jay Goff indicated that since 2001, UMR has implemented 28 different changes initiated by the Retention Committee. He explained that in addition to increased student retention, we are seeing a reduction in the number of students waiting to graduate. Jay referred the committee to collegeresults.org and provided a descriptive summary of information included on the web site.
- ◆ Jay Goff indicated our current (freshman to sophomore) retention rate is 87%. This is currently the highest freshman to sophomore retention rate within the UM System. Our current retention goal is 90%.

II. Priority Issues for the 2007-08 Academic Year

Develop a campus-wide program designed to assist probationary and academically deficient students.

- ◆ The UMR Academic Advising Office is currently developing this program. A full description of the recovery program will be presented at the next meeting.

Develop a mechanism for conveying the university's values, the academic rules and regulations, and the specific course expectations to our first year students early in the semester.

- ◆ Lynn Stichnote asked: What can we do to communicate to our students that all degrees are equally important/credible? This issue is an important one to consider when recruiting in the Arts & Sciences fields, since we want to recruit our high ability students into these fields, and we want them to feel that it's okay to major outside of Engineering.

- ◆ Dr. Larry Gragg stated this is an important issue and that the attitudes of students, faculty staff should reflect “respect for all majors”.
- ◆ Lynn Stichnote suggested possibly addressing the issue during convocation by working the “respect” statement into the speech when the UMR values are read to the students.
- ◆ Dr. Collier suggested the UMR “Success Chain” could possibly be used as a mechanism for communicating with students.
- ◆ Other ideas: Hold discussions with students during Opening Week, and conduct group work with students in Freshman Engineering.

Consider the formal development of a Second Year Experience Program to help UMR sophomores succeed academically and complete their degrees.

- ◆ Dr. Collier suggested we consider establishing a retention goal for second year students. Our current second to third year retention rate is 78%. Faculty engagement is an important part of the second year experience.

III. Scholastic Probation Form Implementation

The new Scholastic Probation Form was implemented and the Department Chairs were notified by Dr. Collier on August 10, 2007. The committee was provided with copies of the new form and the August 10 memorandum.

IV. Course Syllabi Information for Faculty-Fall 2007 (Memo)

Dr. Collier issued a memo to the faculty on August 13, 2007 reminding them to provide students with a course syllabus that emphasizes the expectations that students must meet in order to be successful in the course. In addition, the course syllabus should include information about the Academic Alert System, Disability Support Services and Academic Dishonesty. The committee was provided with a copy of the August 13 memorandum.

V. Academic Alert System-2006-07 Annual Assessment

Amy Gillman provided the committee with a copy of the 2006-07 Academic Alert System assessment report. A verbal summary of the report was provided to the committee.

VI. Undergraduate Advising Office

Due to time constraints, this topic was not addresses. At the next meeting, Kim Frazier and Dr. F. Scott Miller will provide the committee with a full description of the mission and services of the new Undergraduate Advising Office.

VII. Announcements:

A. 2007-08 Academic Advising Luncheon Series: “ *The Academic Alert System: What Does it Tell Us?*”, 9/12/07,

VIII. 12:00 PM, UMR Havener Center

The meeting was adjourned.