

MINUTES

Missouri S&T Retention Committee Meeting

September 25, 2008

8:15-9:15 AM

Members Present: Harvest Collier, Kim Frazier, C.R. Thulasi Kumar, Rachel Morris, Barb Prewett, Stephen Raper, Suzanne Schroer, Kristi Schulte, Carol Smith, Lynn Stichnote, Laura Stoll

Members Absent: Amy Gillman, Jay Goff, Larry Gragg, Sunnie Hughes, Mary Ellen Kirgan, F. Scott Miller, Brad Starbuck, Summer Young

- I. **Review and Approve Minutes** The committee reviewed the minutes from the 9/11/08 meeting. A motion was made to approve the minutes. The committee voted to approve the minutes as written.
- II. **First & Second Year Retention Strategies-** Carol Smith and Summer Young of the Office of Undergraduate Studies continued their presentation from the previous meeting.

The following proposed first and second year retention strategies were discussed:

A. Success Chain- Send periodic emails to new students to help them become aware of the resources available on campus. Target second-year students with emails that describe resources/events to help combat the "sophomore slump."

B. On-Track Academic Success Program- On-Track is a personal and academic success course designed to increase student's self-management, motivation and study skills. This program incorporates seminars, campus resources, success workshops, advising conferences and peer mentors to empower students to become self-directed and motivated learners.

Kim Frazier commented that students who attend four or more On Track sessions do better academically than students who attend fewer than four seminars. This year, more *On-Course* principles are being used. The student surveys indicate the students do not enjoy the participatory activities, however, the Undergraduate Advising Office is hopeful that this approach will result in improved academic performance. The survey also indicates the mentoring program is making a positive contribution.

C. Department Focused Retention- Work one on one with department chairs to develop retention strategies unique to departments.

D. Sophomore Dinner Series- Establish monthly or bi-monthly small dinners at the

Havener Center with representatives of academic departments. Invite sophomores to attend. Ask department faculty members, graduate students, and senior undergraduate students to serve as hosts.

E. Letters to Parents & Second-Year Students- Send letters to parents and second-year students (during the summer after their first year). Describe SYE programming, increase awareness of second-year issues, invite to returning student programming at beginning of fall semester.

F. Welcome Back Reception/Programming- During the fall semester, hold a welcome reception and informational program targeted at second-year students.

G. Major Planning Form- Require second-year students to complete a major planning worksheet/booklet.

H. "Sophomore Surge" Conference - Programming to help second-year students with career planning, leadership/work style evaluation, self-management. Possibly include service project and opportunities fair.

III. Retention Rates versus Graduation Rates - Dr. Kumar distributed a chart, titled "Retention Rates versus Graduation Rates". He indicated we should be more concerned with increasing the graduation rate than the first year retention rate. It is hurting us on national surveys. With our 1st year retention rate, we should be graduating 73%, but we are at 61%. If you are under, you don't get points in the US News and World report. Peer institutions are all around 87-88%. Georgia Tech is at the top. We are in the middle of our peers.

IV. Non-Returning Freshman Report - Amy Cracraft presented the attached Non-Returning Freshmen Report.

Next Meeting: October 9, 2008: 8:15-9:15 AM, Silver & Gold, Havener Ctr.