Minutes of September 9, 2009 were approved as distributed.

Center for the Economic Analysis of Risk (CEAR)

Dr. Huss presented CEAR for formal approval as a center based in the Department of Risk Management & Insurance with formal ties to the Department of Finance, the School of Accountancy, the Andrew Young School of Policy Studies, and the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta. Dr. Huss noted CEAR was a funded proposal in the Areas of Focus II cycle.

Dr. Huss made a motion to approve CEAR as a center. Dr. Hildreth seconded the motion.

Dr. Phillips explained the governance of the center would include the chairs of the participating departments as well as officers of the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta. Dr. Seamans asked about additional library resources needed for the center. Dr. Phillips responded current library resources were sufficient, but there would be the need to acquire new data sets, which would be primarily a technology issue. Dr. Becker noted the timeliness of the creation of the center.

The motion passed.

Student Recruitment Strategies

Dr. Renick distributed charts showing progress in retention and graduation rates. He noted records for one-year retention (83.3%) and six-year graduation (49.6%), which placed Georgia State above the national average for four-year institutions and in the top 40% of peer institutions, respectively. He added most services offering institutional comparisons round rates, so the six-year graduation rate would appear as 50%.

Dr. Huss asked about the six-year graduation rates of Georgia Tech and the University of Georgia. Dr. Renick quoted rates of 77% and 78%, respectively. He commented that Georgia Tech and the University of Georgia admit students with significantly higher SAT scores, which accounts for much of the difference.

Dr. Becker stated Chancellor Davis and Regent Hatcher would be immediately informed of the 6-percentage point improvement in one year in graduation rates, and thanked all who had contributed to this remarkable success. Dr. Renick added this was a collective accomplishment of the whole university. Dr. Palm commented on the significance of the RPG grant program in achieving these gains.

Dr. Renick cited three goals for improvement in student recruitment and retention: (1) to increase the size of the pool of highly qualified applicants; (2) to increase the yield rate from the pool of highly qualified applicants; and (3) to reduce attrition of highly qualified students. Dr. Renick distributed charts showing attrition rates by freshman cohorts and freshman index (FI) groups.

Dr. Becker pointed out retention through the sophomore year was nationally a strong indicator of retention through graduation. Dr. Adamson suggested closer examination of the effect of how slowly students are progressing toward graduation on their retention. Dr. Renick noted the retention information provided on the handouts only pertained to cohorts. Dr. Becker suggested a parallel study by student classification year. Dr. Adamson reiterated the importance of looking at retention and progression together.

Dr. Hildreth commented students leaving engineering and Georgia Tech might be a productive source of well-qualified transfers. Dr. Becker responded that these students would not show in the statistics, which track freshman-year cohorts. Dr. Renick added the best indicator of how well students will do at Georgia State is their performance at similar
Ms. Levick asked about the current split of males and females in the student enrollments. Dr. Renick answered the split continued to be 40% male, 60% female. He added that moving closer to a 50-50 split would result in a loss of quality. Ms. Levick noted the implications for Title IX compliance, including a savings of $1M in related costs for a 5-percentage point increase in males.

Dr. Renick called attention to the results shown for freshmen applicants with FI’s 3100 and higher receiving University Assistantships/Presidential Scholarships versus those who did not. He noted the yield rates were 55% and 16%, respectively. Dr. Becker asked about HOPE Scholarship eligibility for these applicants. Dr. Renick replied those who are out-of-state students do not qualify for HOPE Scholarships.

Dr. Renick noted on-going concern about the number of enrolled freshmen, who are at risk for losing HOPE Scholarships, even those with high FI’s.

Dr. Renick highlighted some of the initiatives underway to meet the three goals (see above) for recruitment and retention. He pointed to the following efforts to increase the size of the applicant pool: purchasing names of prospects in a more targeted manner than in the past; addressing prospect management issues with the assistance of a consulting firm (Royal & Company) and implementation of a new prospect management software system; moving toward hiring a marketing manager for student recruitment; increased participation in high school visitation programs; honors student-targeted high school visits by admissions counselors and Honors Program faculty members; a meeting with high school guidance counselors featuring President Becker and Coach Curry; and addressing campus/downtown safety issues, especially with parents.

Dr. Renick cited the following efforts to increase the yield of enrolled students from applicants: telecounseling of high ability prospects by high ability current students; housing preview with overnight visit for honors students; and increase scholarships.

Dr. Renick mentioned the following efforts to reduce attrition: GSU 1010 for high risk freshmen the week before classes begin (for one credit hour); summer initial enrollment for higher risk freshmen (also removes from fall cohort for statistical purposes); reduce the semester credit hour load of the Freshman Learning Community set of courses to 12-13 credit hours; establish virtual Freshman Learning Communities; use peer counselors for groups of 25 students through blogs, emails, etc.; and intervention early in first semester for those students having trouble in more than one class (Grades First Early Warning System).

Dr. Kaminshine asked about one-on-one meetings with academic advisers prior to enrollment. Dr. Renick responded there were opportunities to do so, but most do not. He noted the student/adviser ratio was approximately 600 to 1. Dr. Renick pointed out the Board of Regents has mandated mandatory freshman advisement starting Fall Semester 2010. Dr. Becker commented students do not want to meet with advisers, especially faculty advisers whom they do not know well, but are more responsive to student peer advisers at that stage.

Investiture

Ms. Hines announced registration for the investiture on October 19 had drawn approximately 115 delegates from other institutions and learned societies and approximately 150 faculty from Georgia State. She expressed thanks for support from various units across the university toward preparations for the event.

President's Remarks

Dr. Becker outlined University System emphases communicated by Board of Regents Chair Hatcher and Chancellor Davis in recent meetings with the presidents. Dr. Becker noted Chancellor Davis had focused on retention/graduation rates, international education, fund-raising goals, and diversity (students, faculty, staff, and minority business participation). Dr. Becker noted Mr. Hatcher had focused on enterprise risk management, auditing of system health insurance programs and benefits, institutional academic missions (branding of smaller institutions for certain specialties), accountability, and performance of the Chancellor. Dr. Becker added that Regent Potts would be heading a task force focusing on graduation rates.
Dr. Becker reported he and Georgia Tech President Peterson had met with legislators to discuss campus safety issues, in particular how to make both campuses safer between midnight and 2:00 a.m., the time period when most of the recent hold-up incidents had occurred. Dr. Becker observed this issue was important to the recruitment of high ability students. He noted most of the incidents were near the Georgia Tech campus, but a number of Georgia State students had apartments in that vicinity.