ACADEMIC PROGRAMS COMMITTEE
Minutes of December 6, 2005

Present: Paul Alberto, Al Baumstark, Faye Borthick, Joan Carson, Dean Dabney, Denise Donnelly, Crawford Elliott, Sally Fowler, Shelby Frost, Cecelia Grindel, Yu-Sheng Hsu, Philo Hutcheson, Susan Laury, Adam Lyons, Carrie Manning, Tom Netzel, Bruce Pilling, George Pullman, Don Reitzes, Tim Renick, Mary Shoffner.

Guests: Catherine Brack, George Rainbolt

Call to Order
The Chair, Tim Renick, called the meeting to order at 3:11 p.m. in Room 718, General Classroom Building.

Approval of Minutes
Dr. Baumstark motioned that the minutes of the October 18, 2005 be approved.
Dr. Reitzes seconded the motion.

AGENDA ITEMS

The chair explained that the purpose of the December meeting is:

1. **Approval of acting chair in lieu of Dr. Renick’s Spring 2006 leaving of absence.**
   Dr. Renick opened the floor for nominations. He also indicated that Dr. Weigle agreed to assume the responsibility.
   Dr. Dabney motioned to close the nominations.
   Dr. Laury seconded the motion.

2. **Discussion of a draft of a report by the Retention Subcommittee of Admissions & Standards, which outlines recommendations for increasing university retention rates (attached).** George Rainbolt, chair of the sub-committee, will join us.

Dr. Rainbolt has been working on a Senate sub-committee from the Admissions and Standards Committee to address low retention rates with low cost proposals. He opened the discussion of GSU’s poor retention rates and the impact on the academic programs.

- Identified twenty institutions with higher than predicted retention rates.
  - Considered high school GPA’s and Freshman Index
  - Socio-economic factors, i.e.: Pell Grants awarded.
  - Five percent or more than there predicted graduation rates.

GSU’s predicted graduation rate is 55 percent. Our graduation rate is 40 percent.
Dr. Rainbolt: We looked at these institutions, as well as books and articles for cheap solutions, which are consistent with our culture. We found that these schools had several factors in common. They are very centralized in their curriculums. For example, the junior and senior years were very structured.

Potential Solutions:
- Departments generate own retention plan for their students.
- Give departments mega data about their majors.
  - Created listserv by major for departments
  - Standardized data packets for students currently registered, but not yet registered for the next term.
  - Provide retention rates of their students.
- Change the names of the graduate directors to be consistent across colleges.
- List “at risk” students
  - Those loosing HOPE or other scholarships.
  - Students who have not finished Area F.
  - Students not at GSU any longer who are close to graduating.
  (There are 450 seniors who have nine or less hours to graduate but do not register every year.)

A new term dashboard indicators that Dr. Fritz and others are using to describe compiled student data is available to help us analyze our progress. We will have a different set of student data, which will include student identification numbers.

Departments are not going to be penalized for low retention rates. For example, Religious Studies is not usually a first choice as a major. This will only be used to help departments help retain their students. This data should help departments discern where and why students are dropping their program. Are students receiving enough advisement at the beginning and at the end?

Dr. Rainbolt:
Goal: This should be a faculty-controlled process. The members of the sub-committee contain only one staff person as well as one faculty member from each college.

Current Debate: Declaration of Major:
Dr. Rainbolt: At this time you must declare a major when you have accumulated 42 credit hours or else your registration is blocked. It is easy to enforce. Dean Adamson and the Provost want to require students to declare a major at application. The sub-committee is not of that opinion. They feel it is too early. We do not want students to declare a major too early or too late. The compromise credit hour limit is 30 hours or one calendar year after they enroll. It would be too difficult to monitor differing rules prescribed by the colleges/departments. If it is declared too late then it pumps your retention rates.

Problem: Transfer Retention Issues:
Most schools do not consider transfer students when looking at retention issues. We must because we have such a large transfer population. They are not leaving because the are flunking. It is a “U” shaped graph. Both good and bad students are leaving. The criterion of good and bad is based on their current grades, and the freshman index. Some good students loose HOPE and then leave. We are twice as expensive as Clayton State and Kennesaw. We are three times as pricey as Georgia Perimeter. Most white students transfer north and African-American students transfer to schools in the south.

Potential Solution:
- Track First-Time full-time freshman for six years.
- Track Transfer students for four years.
- Support students by requiring them to declare a major so that they now have a home department to get them connected. Drawback: Students will switch majors more often.

Dr. Baumstark: Students need to take some major courses at the beginning to be Chemistry major. Chemistry majors are lost because they must attend another year to if they have not taken the proper courses in the beginning.

Data Issues:
Dr. Shelby: The reports on the majors are incorrect. The president of the Economics Club was not listed as a major because he has a double major.

Charles Gilbreath was able to pull the accurate names from banner. It is not available on Crystal reports yet. With the corrected data the RELS major count went up by 30 percent. Premedical majors were also not reported as chemistry majors.

Solution:
- Address programming issues to the Data Warehouse Group and the Statware Steering committee.
- The BIS degree needs to be added in somewhere and distinguish between them.
(Note to John Bandy.)

Dr. Rainbolt: Students who live on campus are much more likely to be retained. The data is bad regarding why and which students are retained. Variables such as race and income are not known. If we require them to live in dorms for the first two years the Provost believes they will stay. We do not have enough dorms to require on campus housing for the first year. There is also not enough community involvement such as a film society, dining experiences, etc... We need simple, easy and cheap solutions. Anything more would require cuts in programs.

The new dorms are too nice and expensive. It will costs $825 a month to live in the new dorms in a four-bedroom suite. The Village costs $625 a month. There is a freshman waiting list for the Village.

Dr. Dabney: The departments will have to do considerably more work. We need to think about the workload that retention reports, action plans not to mention the yearly follow up will create.
Dr. Rainbolt: There are no new resources. Adding more resources means eliminating departments. Some proposed solutions will not work. There is no correction for selection rates. There is no consideration for changes in financial rules. There is no control group. The mix of student data quality is poor. Ordinary squares of regression may help. There is no other outside published data or studies available on this issue. A list of the successful universities will be sent to the committee.

Solutions:

- Add it to the dean’s workload.

Dr. Alberto: Recap of information shared: More retention data will be a cost to the students. We are $150 more than Georgia Tech and UGA. The Provost said the fees may be too high. Students are leaving when they lose the HOPE because we are too expensive.

At the last FACP all faculty voted “no” on fee increases. It was recognized that our fees are too high. They considered a lower fee if you register for 1-6 credit hours. At the next FACP meeting the athletics fee went up by $40 and the technology fee by $25, for a total of $65. These are non-HOPE fees. HOPE was frozen three years ago. Students voted unanimously to approve the fee increase. The elasticity of demand is too great. The consensus is that we need to minimize fee and tuition increases.

Every year there is a five percent tuition increase across the board, but we are increasing fees and tuition from a much higher base. Some years we had higher percentage increases because we are classified as a research university.

Dr. Rainbolt: There are a thousand little problems. Another issue is white males leaving. We have more than financial problems. Internal surveys show that students lie about why they leave. For example, if they have a 1.7 GPA and they were expelled they may say their girlfriend broke up with them.

Dr. Brack is on a committee to design a study to get around these problems. In the process we may also find out why white men leave. Institutional Research spent a great deal of money and resources on these surveys. It is hard to track students down after they leave. There is no commitment to complete surveys.

There are huge data files of people leaving. Everyone is aware of the scope of the problem. There is a Provost retention report the gives a synopsis of who is leaving. It will be forwarded to the committee members. Dr. Fritz is collecting data in hour increments and operating curves regarding this issue.

Potential Solutions:

- Make bricks available for purchase for all undergraduates who graduate to be placed around campus with the student’s name on it. (On the campus of New Jersey they have a “Get Your Brick” program.) The Dean’s conference did not like this idea.
-Record counseling sessions with students.
-Survey students when they visit an advisor. We can use the same system as we do for student evaluations. Either use Banner or Excel.
-Require exit interviews for students and faculty.

3. Termination of Degree Program:
Proposal from the College Of Education to terminate the Ed.S. In Rehabilitation Counseling.

This degree has been deactivated for almost two years and has no students enrolled. Under APC's expedited review policy for considering non-controversial degree program terminations can be automatically voted on for approval by APC.

Dr. Laury motioned to terminate it. Dr. Rietzes seconded the motion.

It was approved unanimously.

4. Consideration of a proposal from the Assessment subcommittee on "General Education Learning Outcomes Assessment Review of Core Curriculum Courses" (attached).
Dr. Reitzes proposed the following.

The Instrument of outcomes assessment should be in the departments that offer core curriculum related to the assessment outcome goal. An example is Contemporary Problems is located in the social sciences departments.

This proposal takes the sub-committee responsibility of developing an assessment instrument (for two years now) from a department representative on the committee to the department itself. A sub-committee is now doing the work.

The department will pick up the workload of the sub-committee to assess the learning goal. The general education outcomes coordinating committee would stay in place. They will review the reports provided by the departments.

Instead of reporting their report to the committee they would now report to the department chairs. The department would pick up the work of developing an assessment mechanism related to learning goals. One of the intended outcomes is to encourage departments to have more of a stake hold in the process. This will also add to the department chair’s workload. Perspectives courses taught by various departments are not being assessed now.

Since the motion came from subcommittee no second is needed. The motion was approved unanimously.

Dr. Baumstark motioned to adjourn.

The meeting adjourned at 4:23 pm.