

**COUNCIL OF
DIRECTORS OF STUDENT ACADEMIC SERVICES**

MINUTES

February 19, 2014

126 Institute for Teaching and Learning Excellence (ITLE)

10:30 – 12:00

Present: Barbara Bremer, Celeste Campbell, Steve Damron, Cheryl Devuyt, Jovette Dew, Jeff Hartman, Susan Johnson, James Knecht, Amy Martindale, Brenda Masters, Marilyn Middlebrook, Lance Millis, Mckenzie Mohler, Rita Peaster, Libby Reigh, Kristi Seuhs, Richard Shepard, Missy Wikle, Sarah Gordon, Matt Short, Laurie Beets, Christie Hawkins, and Shiretta Ownbey.

1. Block Tuition – Christie Hawkins

Dr. Hawkins noted that OSU is considering moving to block tuition and Academic Affairs is developing a finish in four initiative and messaging. By moving to block tuition, this allows students to accomplish completing their degree in four years. Students taking 15 credit hours per semester can finish their degree in four year eliminating additional costs in housing, food, transportation, etc. allowing student to enter the work force earlier. Administration and Finance is proposing a block rate of 12-16 hours. This proposal is scheduled to go to the A&M Board on March 7th. The proposal includes no increases in tuition and mandatory fee rates for the 2014-2015 year. Under the broad model students taking 12-16 hours would basically pay one block rate for their tuition and university-wide fees. For an in-state student this would be about \$3,700 per semester and for an out-of-state student it would be around \$10,000 per semester under the blocked rate. Students taking 12–14 hours would see an increase in what they are currently paying encouraging students to take a minimum of 15 credit hours. Students taking 15 hours would see no change in their tuition and students taking 16 hours would not have to pay for one credit hour. Students taking over 16 hours would receive a discount. The block tuition rate would not apply to undergraduate students taking less than 12 hours or graduate students. The idea was to encourage students to take 15 hours but not to encourage students to enroll in hours that they do not plan to complete. The University of Oklahoma (OU) has a policy that students can only have five withdrawals throughout their college career but OSU has opted not to do this. The Student Government Association (SGA) does have concerns regarding how block tuition will affect working students. SGA liked the idea of banking credit hours for the summer but this is not feasible at this time. It was noted that OU allowed students to bank hours due the rapid implementation of the program but that OSU will not opt to offer banking hours. Dr. Martindale asked why this could not be an option for OSU and it was noted that it would be too difficult to manage administratively. Dr. Damron noted that banking would be beneficial to students that work and a great utilization of the campus during the summer. Dr. Martindale is concerned about first semester freshman and how this will affect them. Dr. Hawkins noted that there are still ongoing discussions regarding which courses will be included in the block tuition and it was noted that certainly it will include OSU-Stillwater and Tulsa classes. It will also include the outreach 500 sections but the 600 section group classes will not be included as those courses have different tuition rates, in this case students would be exempt or exemptions allowed if students take these courses. Other courses could fall into this category as well. Dr. Hawkins went on to say that currently the average full-time student takes between 14.3 and 14.5 credit hours a semester. Right now OSU is not proposing tuition increases for the 2014 and 2015 academic year for in-

state or out-of-state students. Dr. Martindale noted that we are encouraging students to take 15 credit hours but what if it isn't advisable for a certain student to take 15 the hours. Dr. Masters noted that there was an article from the Education Advisory Board (EAB) that addresses banded tuition and student success. Once a student is fully academically engaged it is more likely that the student would be successful. Dr. Campbell noted that this would be an incentive not a requirement. Dr. Damron was at a conference last summer where there were discussions of an institution took their "academic at risk" students and required them to take 18 credit hours the next semester and it was successful. Dr. Damron also noted that in the many years of advising he has never encouraged students to take few hours. Christy Crenshaw commented that it is known through student aid and student activity research that students taking 15 to 16 hours and working less than 20 hours a week tend to be more successful than students working excessively or students barely and taking less than a 15 hour course load. Many other institutions require students to take a minimum 15 hour course load. Dr. Martindale asked if there would be an increase in excessive hours petitions due to students wanting to receive a discount for hours taken in a semester of over 19 (excessive hours petitions for a regular semester are required for students taking 19 or more hours) and members noted the discount cut-off is 19 hours and Dr. Hawkins noted that she would have to check on this. Dr. Johnson express that OSU-Tulsa is a commuter institution and are also concerned about their students as their average hours taken in a semester is under 15 hours. Then there are those students that are taking half their courses at TCC and half the hours at OSU-Tulsa and Dr. Hawkins noted that these students could be considered an exception. Dr. Hawkins noted that other institutions using the block tuition rate have not experienced declined in retention and increased their graduation rates. It was noted that marketing will be an important part of the plan and the messaging needs to be sent in a positive manner. It was noted that tuition waiver will be offered to current students. Dr. Hawkins said that this is pending A&M Board approval.

2. STAR Update – James Knecht

James Knecht noted that there is now a "note reasons" box in STAR to tag notes regarding, for example, graduation checks. If other reasons are needed, let James know. Missy Wikle asked if the "note reasons" will be language the same throughout campus. Missy noted that it would be helpful for some of the units to meet and agree on some common language for this. The Note function is searchable. The advisors can now also enter drop-in times so students can see them displayed the student scheduler. Advisors have to initiate the drop-in function. Non-advisors who need to meet with students can also request a setup to allow them to use the online scheduler to be available to all students. GradesFirst will also be deploying some additional "analytics" features by the beginning of the summer. These features will display such info as "heat zones" depicting busy times at particular centers and can display changes in GPA as connected to appointments. James will discuss access and demo the new changes when they are made available.

3. Potential Advising Council - Missy Wikle

Missy Wikle went to an advisor's conference and discussions focused on the benefits of advisor councils to create deeper ties between units. This group would be separate from the Directors of Student Academic Services (DSAS). Units would discuss and share processes. Dr. Middlebrook noted that DSAS was created for this purpose but now the direction of discussions in DSAS is geared toward university-wide issues rather than strictly the advising focus. Dr. Devuyst noted that perhaps this could be offered as a brown bag meeting. Dr. Martindale noted that advisors

really don't know each other and it was suggested to hold a social event for advisors. It was noted that perhaps it should be up to the advisors to decide how to proceed. Dr. Damron noted that sharing information and best practices would be very useful. Missy will have future discussions on the subject and Dr. Johnson noted that it will be important to include the Tulsa advisors in this endeavor. Dr. Johnson noted that Tulsa hosted an advisor meeting recently with the Spears School of Business and the discussions proved to be very productive.

4. Repeat Course Override Exception Process – Celeste Campbell

Dr. Campbell said this is not something that affects a great deal of students. Once in a while students will retake courses when the original grade is A, B, C, or P, and they fail the course the second time. Although the repeat policy does not apply (because the original grade was not D or F), SIS is programmed to count only the second instance of the course for the credit hours. Both grades count toward the GPA. A "Repeated Course Override Form" was created to be used as a justification document in the event that SIS indicates that a certain student has completed 117 hours when actually the student has completed 120 hours and SIS is not recognizing that. It also allows students to use the first instance of the course to meet degree requirements. It was noted that this is not an exception to the repeat policy. Dr. Campbell asked that members take a look at the form and share any feedback.

5. Adjustment to Academic Regulation 3.4: 30+10 General Education Standardization Between Colleges – Brenda Masters

Dr. Masters distributed a handout of the proposed revisions to Academic Regulation 3.4 and two sample degree sheets including the adjustments that would be required with the change. She asked members if they had any comments or suggestions. Lance Millis noted that many of the College of Education degrees will need to be exempt from this policy due to teacher certificate requirements. For those degrees in the College of Education that will fit this model, they will have a specified required total hours of 11 not 10. Dr. Damron noted that this is in part due to the "N" courses of which many are 4 credit hours. Lance asked if the implementation time frame would be 2015-16, and it was noted yes. The proposal will have to go through all of the approval processes. Dr. Martindale spoke with the A&S department heads and for the most part A&S support the changes, although concerns were voiced about the decrease of required courses with A and S General Education designations.

Members approved.

6. Other

Missy Wikle wants to make individuals aware that the IRIM dashboard appeared to be inflated in year-to-date comparisons from years past. The biggest increase is in the **UAUN** (truly undecided) category. Libby Reigh noted that under the Undergraduate Admissions review process they typically waited to admit the alternative admit and holistic students until receipt of students' 7th semester high school transcripts, requiring the first semester senior grades before making any admission decisions. Upon a year-end review and while making strategic plans for the coming year, Undergraduate Admission was receiving feedback from competitors, University of Oklahoma and Oklahoma Central University, that it is standard industry practice to make alternative admission decisions on a 6th semester transcript. This consequently inflated 2014 IRIM year-to-date admit numbers. Jeff Hartman noted that Undergraduate Admissions sent out a list to all of the undecided students asking them if they had decided on a major for scholarship purposes.

Undergraduate Admissions also sent out the same list to the perspective student coordinators of the colleges noting that the list contained the names of the students that are undecided and the students' main interests. If members did not get that list, let Jeff know. Prior to 2014, the application for undergraduate admission required students select from two drop down boxes when choosing a major. The first drop-down box included a list of the academic colleges. The second drop-down box included a list of majors within the academic college selected from the previous drop-down. This format caused confusion as students wouldn't know what academic college their major fell under. Undergraduate Admissions has since listed every major alphabetically and listed the undecided option last. These two changes have resulted in an increase of numbers for the undecided category that does not fall under an academic college. There are plans to use the Undergraduate Admissions Call Center to try to reach the majority of the 600 students to inquire if the student intended to choose "undecided" for their major. Dr. Damron asked how the colleges will know when the students have been contacted and it was noted that Undergraduate Admissions will notify the colleges. Jeff will resend the list that was sent to the prospective student coordinators to the DSAS group including the message that was sent.

Adjourn: 12:00