

**COUNCIL OF
DIRECTORS OF STUDENT ACADEMIC SERVICES**

January 21, 2015
204 WH
10:30 – 12:00

Present: Celeste Campbell, Christie Crenshaw, Steve Damron, Jovette Dew, Leslie Evans, Chris Francisco, Jeff Hartman, James Knecht, Rae Ann Kruse, Amy Martindale, Marissa McIntyre, Marilyn Middlebrook, Lance Millis, Rita Peaster, Jessica Roark, Kristi Seuhs, Richard Shepard, Susan Tolbart, Keila Whitaker, Missy Wikle, Karen Chen, Margaret Betts, Gary Sandefur, and Pamela Fry.

1. Gary Sandefur

Dr. Sandefur noted that he was asked to give a presentation at the NACADA conference and asked members to share ideas on topics which would be relevant to advisors. Dr. Sandefur said that the presentation could address how the Provost views advising as part of the overall picture for the University and student service in relation to student outcome or the Provost's perspective in regards to retention and graduation. Members noted that it would be positive for advisors to hear how to increase awareness of administration and faculty about the functionality of advisors today. Presently there is a perception that advisors are just schedulers, and advisors have much larger roles to include teaching and motivating students to succeed. Members are to share ideas or suggestions and Dr. Sandefur welcomes stories of experiences with students.

2. Banner Update – Rita Peaster

Rita noted that she wanted to give some brief updates regarding the Banner implementation. Efforts are currently focusing on the technical aspects for all the A&M institutions and all eight of the institutions should be converting in unison with an effective term of Fall of 2016. Efforts to migrate student and personnel information has initiated. Rita noted that there are going to be some upcoming discussion points in which units will need to make decisions within a short timeframe. It is the assumption from the Registrar's Office that the associate deans would be making decisions related to the colleges. It was noted that there will be some upcoming demo sessions for Degree Works and Banner Registration.

3. Fall Break Survey Results – Celeste Campbell

Dr. Campbell noted that the Registrar's Office sent an online Fall Break Survey to approximately 2500 students and 1700 faculty/staff members and with the help of University Assessment and Testing (UAT) and the response rate was 38.7%. The survey was assessing the importance of Fall Break and the best dates to have Fall break. Students view Fall Break as more important than faculty and staff. Students preferred to have Fall Break on a Friday with no home game and faculty/staff preferred to have Fall Break on the Friday of homecoming. Other suggestions were to combine Fall Break with Thanksgiving, coordinate Fall Break with the public schools, add a Monday to Fall Break, keep Fall Break separate from Homecoming, and extend Fall Break beyond one day. Members asked if there is a plan and Dr. Campbell noted that for now Fall Break has been scheduled on a non-football Friday.

4. Displaying Cumulative GPA on Transcript – Celeste Campbell

Dr. Campbell is returning to discussions on the idea of removing the cumulative GPA on transcripts as Banner does not provide this option. Dr. Campbell referred to the updated handout regarding processes at other institutions. Dr. Campbell proposes using the retention GPA on the transcripts and putting the cumulative GPA in a separate accessible area. Members expressed that the cumulative GPA doesn't need to be present on the transcripts but that it is critical for it to be accessible somewhere.

5. ALEKS Update – Chris Francisco

Dr. Francisco noted that the Mathematics Department learned that there will be a new version of the ALEKS math placement test and the current version is only valid through the end of 2015; therefore, some changes are necessary. The new version, ALEKS PPL, has some helpful features, including lengthening access to free learning modules to six months. Because the test is designed to place students into developmental as well as college-level classes, the scale is different, which will necessitate changing cut-off scores for the math classes (without altering standards). The switch will require changing the current cut-off scores. ALEKS' recommendation is to set 46 as the minimum score for College Algebra instead of our current 30 because the PPL test has a larger range for developmental math. The transition will require excellent communication with advisors and students, combating the perception that this is a tightening of requirements and ensuring students understand for which course they qualify. It is suggested to use multiples of 5 in the scoring. The best time to implement this change would be after the first few weeks of the semester and before the start of enrollment for the next semester. A switch will impose additional work for the University Assessment and Testing Center, the Registrar's Office, and Institutional Research and Information Systems as they work to make scores on both versions available. February 2016 would be the expected conversion date for Fall 2016 enrollment.

6. STAR Update – James Knecht

James noted that the Educational Advisory Board (EAB) company has purchased GradesFirst. The analytics from both companies will be merged. James will send DSAS a current spreadsheet of advisors and asked that members check the list and advise of changes. There are new search fields in the STAR system. James will modify the advisory request form for STAR if you want your advisor to get access to placement scores. Members asked if the advisor log-in function could be more visible and easier to find and James noted that they are working on this.

7. "University College" Update – Pamela Fry

Dr. Fry noted that Missy is working on transitioning the messaging of LASSO Advising vs. University College Advising (UCA). Missy noted that Saturday is Senior Day and for those students, the current LASSO program will remain the same. Included with the confirmations to students involved in New Student Orientation (NSO) will be communications referencing the new University College. The LASSO name will remain with the tutoring and resource services for University-wide purposes. April 2015 will be the time for the transformation. Dr. Fry noted that space has been identified, in the basement of the Student Union, for several of the University College offices; Transfer, Veterans, and Concurrent Student Services, and P-12 Academic Services.

Scholar Development will also be a part of the University College. Dr. Fry will finalize the position descriptions for these positions and share with members.

8. Update on Advising and Orientation Classes Working Groups – Pamela Fry

Dr. Fry noted that members of the Advising and Orientation Classes Working Groups are working on documents to present to members of Directors of Student Academic Services (DSAS) and Instruction Council (IC) which would address aspects of advisor evaluation, recognition, and compensation. Dr. Fry noted that tied to the advisor evaluations are the advisor surveys sent to students. Everyone agrees that we should systematically collect evaluation information on advisors and IC was interested in using the general advisor evaluation form if there was a drop down box with secure advisor identification. This would probably not be finalized until Spring break. James noted that University Assessment and Testing (UAT) is trying to come up with a method of making sure that the students are choosing the correct advisor by major. The orientation group will be discussing key concepts and creating a unified message for the orientation process. Members asked if they could have access to the students ID photos and it was noted that legal would have to be consulted.

9. Other

Dr. Middlebrook noted that it is time to have a collaborative meeting with the Directors of Academic Services and others for an update for advisors regarding the functions of Academic Services for Student Athletes (ASSA). ASSA also has some concerns as they are hearing from students that with some online classes, the required course evaluations go back to the faculty. It was noted that the Department Head and/or the Associate Dean should be notified of the situation.

Adjourn: 11:54