

**COUNCIL OF
DIRECTORS OF STUDENT ACADEMIC SERVICES**

MINUTES

November 1, 2023

Zoom - <https://zoom.us/j/99545430954>

Passcode - 321037

2:00 to 3:30 p.m.

In attendance: Lindsey Brownlow, Larry Burns, Kyndal Campbell, Aaron Christensen, Brenda Dawes, Jeff Hartman, Karen Hickman, Nick Holmes, Diane Jones, Kelly Kavalier, Randy Kitchens, James Knecht, Aleigha Mariott, Amy Martindale, Marissa McIntyre, Marilyn Middlebrook, Kim Miller, Lance Millis, Linda Millis, Jeremy Minyard, Beverly Morris, Rita Peaster, Libby Reigh, Sky Rogers, Kristi Seuhs, Richard Shepard, Debbie Stump, Candace Thrasher, Betsey Weaver, and Shannon Baker, Chair.

1. Academic Advising Update – Shannon Baker

The Office of Academic Affairs recently submitted two updates regarding the strategic realignment of academic advising. The advising working group is focused on changes to advising that affect the first-year experience. There will be meetings with the directors of advising to discuss the domino effects for sophomore to senior advising and what are some changes they would suggest to create a more cohesive experience across campus. The advising working group, like all six strategy groups, report to the Provost's Council. S. Baker will prepare a monthly summary of activity, share the report with the working group for editing, and share the final version with Directors of Student Academic Services (DSAS) and Instruction Council. A student success email account will be created and D. Stump will manage the account.

OSU is moving to a centralized freshmen advising team under Student Success. This decision was made to address the 40 percent of students who are either undeclared or change their majors. OSU has a decent retention rate at about 84 to 85% but we must address the 15 to 16% of students we are losing.

- Not a good fit for their major?
- Not a good fit for their college?
- Deficit narrative regarding University College?

Students will still receive that higher standard of care, along with a more high touch point advising model that they need.

The advising working group was established to accomplish this significant amount of work. Their first goal is to establish how to manage this team of freshman advisors. Advisors will be divided into meta major groupings. Advisors of like majors will be grouped together with those students and an advisor will oversee each of these meta major groups in Student Success. They will be the liaison to the colleges and programs, so there is no loss of relationship to the colleges and programs. Nick Holmes is leading the meta majors initiative, and he has a deadline of December 1st for determining the groupings. We also have the personnel piece and Marissa McIntyre is leading that group to develop position descriptions and arrange the hiring process. There will be a call for advisors across campus to determine if any advisors wish to be considered part of the Student Success advising team. Deadline for these details is December 20th. Lindsey Brownlow will be in charge of orientation and the details of how orientation will coordinate with Student Success. There will be changes to the way colleges interact at orientation and welcome week. This plan will eliminate University College essentially, rebrand it as Student Success, and create a new experience that is aimed at helping students figure out if they're faltering a bit in their majors, if that's the right major for them, if they need to switch to a different major, and also helping those students that need that extra layer of support. The goal is to have fewer students change majors in this model perhaps just because we will be more designed to have those conversations with them. Details for Student Success such as location have yet to be determined. Once meta majors and personnel have been

established and determine how orientation works, advising practices will be developed. DSAS directors will be included into that conversation, so that the process makes sense, not just for the freshmen, but for all students.

Meta majors / categories have not yet been defined. K. Hickman expressed concerns by OSU Ag faculty advisors and their involvement with meta majors. Institutional Research Analytics (IRA) is providing student data regarding starting majors versus ending majors to see where the students naturally transition to. Advising clusters are being considered, but only if it makes sense to our students. Rough numbers would indicate there will be 6 to 8 teams, with several majors being represented in more than one meta major. Details will be ironed out by the advising working group, along with the assistance of the DSAS directors. N. Holmes explained that a category of undecided and exploratory is needed due to the number of students who apply as undecided or switch to undecided during orientation. S. Baker added that possibly there would be exploratory advisors specifically trained for those students who need extra advising time. Addressing OSU-Tulsa advising may require separate meetings.

A. Martindale explained that College of Arts and Sciences department heads are concerned they will lose students within their majors. Their wish is to be highly connected with the meta majors advising to minimize steering students away from their majors. She clarified that the fundamental philosophy of academic advising is to help students find what they want, not to steer them towards what we think is best for them. Their other fear is that they are going to lose their departmental advisors to the recruitment process for Student Success. CAS is also concerned they will have multiple vacant department advisor positions that need to be filled. CAS wants the advisors to have the promotional opportunities, but the departments are terrified of what destruction is going to befall them. How can we be reassuring? S. Baker mentioned the need to develop a mission statement for advising and to think through personnel issues that would come as a consequence of this change. She will prepare a draft of an implementation plan that DSAS directors can edit throughout the process.

K. Hickman added that her departments are concerned about losing that co-curricular link to students and want assurance of opportunities for departments to be able to have touch points with freshmen so that they are able to connect with them directly. OSU Ag has multiple clubs and co-curricular activities as opportunities for faculty advisors to steer the students in those directions, which has assisted greatly with retention. S. Baker explained that Cynda Clary, Dani Bellmer and Gretchen Mafi are working on a model for faculty mentoring for freshmen. OSU Ag will hopefully be a pilot that will be able to be a model for the rest of campus, and how to have some robust faculty mentoring for freshmen,

Enrollment yield summary - with assistance from the Office of Scholarship and Financial Aid and DSAS - data indicated that 41 students were saved as a result of the efforts to retain our fall students. Considering the data from IRA between the fall of 2018 and the fall of 2022, the average number of students withdrawing from the University in week 0 through 2 was 314.6, and there was no pandemic blip. In fall 2023 for week 0 through 2, only 191 students withdrew. Was that a result of the process or was it that the students might not have ever actually submitted the form. There could have possibly been advisor intervention, financial aid intervention, etc. It would appear that our efforts proved to help more students stay enrolled than we previously thought. A meeting with the Slate team has been scheduled regarding the Slate form, which will hopefully make this process easier moving forward.

S. Baker shared with DSAS the details of a report she has been receiving from Student Affairs. The report consists of a list of students spending an unusual amount in dining on a single day. This could be an indicator of a potential withdrawal and possibly be good for an advisor to connect with the student. Share with your advisors to cross check their students. Not any one advisor would have a significant number of students on this list. A request was made to add student contact information to this list.

2. Withdrawal for Spring 2024 practices – Rita Peaster

The Slate team, David Mariott and Betsy Weaver are making substantial progress on developing an online cancellation withdrawal form within slate, which they demonstrated for the Registrar's Office team recently. Once in place the online form should streamline the withdrawal process and should enable advisor and financial aid intervention to see if there is a way to be able to retain the students. It should also provide greater transparency

into the status of withdrawal requests and hopefully ease the process for students to return to OSU for those who are planning to return. Once we have that form implemented, the plan is to go ahead and change the setting in Self Service registration so that students can no longer drop their last class from Self Service. But until then we have the online process and the plan is to continue the historical practice with the .pdf withdrawal form and allow students to continue to drop their last class for spring 2024 from within Self Service. This is a heavy advising period now through the end of the fall semester for you all. If we are not able to implement the online withdrawal form before the winter holiday, we do not want to prevent students from dropping their last class. The plan is to wait to make that change in Self Service regarding dropping the last class online until the Slate form is up and running. If the online form is not working before we close for the winter break, then we will adjust that setting to prevent them from dropping their last class online when we come back in January. There is an existing eprint report that does include student contact info, and it does include the advisor if one's been assigned. The first tab shows students who have been admitted but they have cancelled their admission. The second tab shows students who have enrolled and formally cancelled their enrollment. The third tab shows the students who have formally withdrawn. So these are the ones who've submitted withdrawal form. The last tab shows students who have just dropped to 0 hours. They enrolled in spring classes, and then they just self drop to 0 hours. This report is refreshed on a daily basis and will hopefully that will meet your needs. If additional edits are desired to that report please let us know. It would be advisable to perhaps check this list once a week at this point. If there seems to be a jump in the number of students, check every other day. You can look at the information IRA sent to see when the pace picks up for withdrawing from the University in advance of the semester.

3. Update on Implementing Approved Changes to UARs 7.1 and 7.8 – Rita Peaster

The University Academic Reg. changes were fully approved. This is the first semester they will be implemented. The only change is to indicate that graduation applications are expected instead of the required language. In regulation 7.1 some additions there are to indicate that OSU will confer degrees and certificates after the end of the term, upon institutional verification that all requirements have been met.

Effective fall 2023, language in [UAR 7.8](#) regarding graduation applications has changed from required to expected.

Additions to [UAR 7.1](#) indicate:

- *Degrees and certificates are conferred after the end of the term upon institutional verification that requirements have been met.*
- *Students who wish to be notified before their credential is conferred must submit a [graduation hold form](#) to the Office of the Registrar before the end of their final term.*

Students are still expected to submit a graduation application before the end of their final semester.

Many processes rely on student completion of a graduation application, including:

- *Inclusion in the Commencement program.*
- *Commencement ceremony planning.*
- *Collect diploma name preference and diploma mailing address.*
- *Trigger for full-time enrollment override for students in their final semester.*
- *Identify degree candidates for colleges to perform graduation checks and resolve issues.*
- *Communicate to students who had expected to graduate but did not meet all requirements upon conclusion of degree conferral period.*

Continue same messaging to students about graduation applications, deadlines, and importance.

The purpose of the change is to simply remove a barrier to graduation for students who complete all requirements but didn't submit a graduation application for their final semester.

[Graduation hold](#) details:

- *Requested by the student only. Registrar will contact the student to ensure they understand what it will and won't do before hold is placed.*
- *Won't enable continued federal financial aid Pell eligibility for students who've met all requirements for their first bachelor's degree.*
- *Won't prohibit participation in later commencement ceremony.*
- *Will be effective for one term only.*

Automated degree clearance process after end of term will prioritize students with an active graduation application (early diploma issuance).

After identifying students are 100% clear with no grad app and receiving approval from the college, we'll contact the students and ask them to submit a grad app or grad hold form by a specified deadline. The purpose of the grad app is to collect diploma name and mailing address (we'll leave the Self-Service graduation application available to ease the submission process).

For students who are clear with no grad app and no grad hold at the end of the degree posting deadline, we'll award the degree and collect the paper diploma in the Registrar's Office.

L. Millis asked if it was possible for RO to review the last 3-5 years for students who would have graduated had they completed the graduation app, but for whatever reason did not, and contact those students in an effort to matriculate them. R. Peaster indicated this was a good idea, however the Registrar's Office (RO) would need to verify that their degree program was still active and eligible. Many of the RO processes depends upon the student being in Degree Works and having active data in Degree Works. We have several students in Degree Works that have an inactive status. L. Brownlow pointed out that on the appointment screens on Slate dashboards there is a column for Grad App term. If there is a value in the grad app term column that indicated the student has an active graduation application in Banner. If the column is blank, the student has not submitted a grad app.

- 4. Other** - Aleigha Mariott, Campus Life has been looking at student engagement and considering the engagement score available in Slate. If students had not hit 4 engagements on their engagement score Campus Life began to look at outreach ways to them to get them involved on campus. As of September 25, there were almost 1,800 students that had not hit the level of 4 engagements on the score. A. Mariott's group then started looking at what are those students' co-curricular interests they identified on their application - student organizations that are not tracked. There was a mass outreach divided amongst a number of folks in Student Affairs. Housing clearly had a lot of students and put in a lot of effort to try and connect with those students that are living in their spaces. As of October 13 the list had decreased to 145 students that have less than 4 engagements. Students with high time commitments (athletes, band, Greek) or student employees were also removed. The goal is to get these students connected and find a sense of belonging so they will stick around for another 4-5 years.

Meeting was adjourned at 3:15pm

Minutes were recorded by K. Campbell