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Scholastic Committee

Campus Governance

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Scholastic minutes 02/23/2016

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**Scholastic Committee
2015-16 Academic Year
February 23, 2016
Meeting Seventeen Approved Minutes**

Present: Steve Gross (chair), Judy Korn, Brenda Boever, Merc Chasman, Jennifer Goodnough, Dan Magner, Leslie Meek, Jennifer Rothchild, Edison Yellick, Madeline Youakim

Absent: Ray Schultz, Emma Kloos, Yujing Song

Guest: Jennifer Zych Herrmann and Melissa Bert

1. Approve minutes of February 16, 2016, meeting

Minutes approved with corrections.

2. Chair's Report

No report.

3. SCEP Report

SCEP has not met.

4. Retention Presentation by Jennifer Zych Herrmann

Jennifer Herrmann presented data on retention rates and information produced by Ruffalo Noel Levitz. Ruffalo Noel Levitz uses predictive modeling in higher education to determine potential risk factors in retention which can provide targets for improvement. Unfortunately, there is no one, single problem to address, but rather a myriad of potential factors.

Morris is currently categorized as a selective university with ACT scores ranging between 22-28. The first-year to second-year retention rate for public 2- and 4-year colleges is an average of 84.4 percent. Morris' five year average retention rate is 81.6 percent with a goal of 90 percent set by the Regents.

Morris has seen a decline in retention/graduation rates and is working to bring the numbers back to those of previous years. Current TRIO success coaches work with approximately 35 underserved freshmen to provide proactive support with the goal of increasing retention rates. However, there are still many students who do not qualify for TRIO that could benefit from interactions with success coaches.

The Ruffalo Noel Levitz model uses UMM student data from historical performance to determine potential retention risk factors. The goal is to take a proactive approach by addressing the risk factors and promoting student success. Being able to predict who might leave will help with financial planning, but determining how we can retain students is the greater goal.

The model established an attrition curve with three distinct areas: less likely to retain, most likely to retain, and influence. Students at the left tail end of the curve are those who will leave the University no matter the circumstances. Students on the right tail end of the curve are those who will likely stay even with little interaction. The goal is to target students who are in the middle "Influence" zone. With additional support, these students can still be motivated to stay.

The predictive model produced the top four factors that are high predictors of retention: high school GPA, ACT English score, number of days as admit, and percent of need met. Students are then given a model score according to how many risk factors apply to them. The students with a model score of 0.00 to 0.29 (38 students) are those who have historically shown to leave no matter the circumstances. Students with a model score of 0.70 to 1.00 (46 students) are on the right tail end of the attrition curve and have high retention rates. The goal is to provide additional support to students in the “Influence” zone with model scores of 0.30 to 0.69 (250).

Looking at outcomes based on the top four risk factors, there does not appear to be a significant difference between persisters and non-persisters.

Jennifer Goodnough would like to know the standard deviation on the number of days as admit because the data could be skewed. Knowing the standard deviation may provide more information about the students and help Admissions prepare/adjust timelines.

Registration date (April vs August) could also be risk factor if students registering in August do not get into an IC or WLA class.

SC would also like to know if the model surveyed the deposit date. Does the deposit date indicate commitment?

The data from percent of need met comes from FAFSA and the retention model at Morris. There are some positive things to be gleaned from the model such as the absence of family income as a risk factor.

Looking at the risk factors, it appears there’s not much Morris can affect, however, there are still many factors and many places to influence.

When students have two risk factors, do we know if they are ACT and GPA? Is there a way to determine which combinations of risk factors are more prominent? If ACT and GPA are a common combination, success coaches can help focus on these areas.

The College Student Inventory (CSI) survey for fall 2014 and fall 2015 identified the same top four student needs and wants:

- Get help in selecting an academic program
- Get information about clubs and social organizations
- Discuss the qualifications for occupations
- Get help in meeting new friends

Students’ responses to the CSI survey can also be used when working with students during advising, but this will require training.

Responses to the CSI survey change in the mid-year review. Students become more realistic about goals and expectations.

Goodnough suggested looking at the timing of when the surveys are taken. She suggested students take the survey at the end of their registration day. If students take the survey at the

beginning of their registration day they might still perceive themselves as prospective students. However, if students take the survey at the end of their registration day they might see things differently, as an admitted student. Herrmann offered to look at surveys from students who had afternoon registration times.

The timing of the surveys and coaching is important. You don't want to talk to students about everything in the beginning. It has to be the right place at the right time.

Edison Yellick asked about making advising meetings before registration mandatory throughout a student's college career and not just in the beginning. Herrmann agreed that was an option, but many are reluctant to implement such a change. Yellick also expressed his desire for wanting to make more things, such as Peer Assisted Learning (PAL), mandatory.

Looking at the CSI receptivity scales, a low percentage of students are receptive to academic assistance. The reason behind the low percentage is unknown.

There is a significant percentage of students who indicate a desire to transfer. The percentage of total attrition for fall 2013 was 45.6 percent (44 out of 97 left). Fall 2014 had 25.5 percent total attrition (26/98). As of February 2, 2016, the fall 2015 class has 27.3 percent total attrition (9/33). Goodnough asked how many of those who stayed were on probation or had low GPAs?

Herrmann was asked if Retention looks at students who do Intra-University transfer. She replied that students have always made the remark that they're going to transfer, but many stay.

Steve Gross asked, "Why are they leaving? Is it because they are transferring, academic trouble, chemical abuse, mental health? What do students say when they leave?"

Herrmann replied that there are not enough resources to explore the reasons for students leaving. Retention would instead like to focus on efforts to retain current students rather than expending resources on those who have already left.

Students who are successful usually have high levels of engagement, connection, and have impacting practices.

The retention predictor showed that of the 33 students who've left, the majority have model scores in the "Influence" zone.

Retention would like to work on retaining students by having a consistent impact on a large number of students, targeting certain populations, improving new student registration, and using A-Plus and Academic Alert.

Respectfully submitted,

Angie Senger
Office of the Registrar

For information presented during the Retention presentation, please contact the Institutional Effectiveness Office.