

## **Student Success Committee Meeting**

9 AM, May 29, 2014

Koch Hall Conference Room

Present: Jane Dane', Todd Johnson, Terri Mathews, David Metzger, Ellen Neufeldt, Brian Payne, Carol Simpson, Don Stansberry, Rusty Waterfield, Sandy Waters, Johnny Young.

### **Fall '13 Cohort, Retention Efforts, and Goals (83%)**

Ellen reported that the fall freshman cohort retention rate is at 79.6%. In the phone calls and emails going out, students are reminded that in order to register, they must first pay any financial obligations that resulted in a hold. Sandy reported that there were approximately 180 students with holds. Jane and Sandy will explore the various ways to reach students with holds. Brief discussion followed on providing opportunities for students to pay off their financial debts (i.e., work on campus, grants and scholarships; and determining if any of these students qualify for scholarships currently being offered). Sandy noted that TCC had recently instituted a policy whereby incoming students must demonstrate that they are able to pay their bills.

### **EAB Update**

Amanda Wernicke, consultant with the Education Advisory Board, provided an overview of the predictive workbook, which is accessible through Box.com for downloading. The data in the workbook is of students from fall 2000 and ending with the cohort of students who began at ODU in 2009 and is current through 2013. When the workbook is opened, tabs on the left side of the screen indicate the type of data (i.e., summary of top courses, first-year GPA, etc.). Clicking on the link opens the worksheet with the data. Terminology used in the workbook may not be consistent with terminology used at ODU; clicking on underlined words will open the message that provides the EAB definition.

### **Time to Degree**

This initiative was pushed heavily last year to the incoming class, with the average credit load going from 13.4 to 14.1. This initiative must continue to be pushed to students as they register; advisors need to continue this push while assisting students in finding successful ways to meet the 15 credit hour goal.

Sandy reported that providing incentives to take 15 credits are being considered by her subcommittee for the incoming class, similar to the Monarch Bucks program, rewarding students at the end of the semester for certain academic behaviors. Ideas for incentives included priority registration, free parking, food, T-shirt giveaways. The committee may pilot something small with the learning communities. The subcommittee is developing marketing kits that will be given to all advisors and CDAs. Kits contain posters, DVD with major videos, stickers, etc., for advisors to push 15 credits per semester. Sandy will present this to the Deans at Provost Council.

### **Financial Literacy**

Todd reported that this committee recommends a coordinated, integrated financial literacy effort at ODU and has been discussing how to put all the information/offerings under one umbrella.

Suggested financial literacy engagement strategies include:

- iGrad (financial literacy platform for students and parents)
- Entrance and exiting counseling

- Financial management workshop during Freshman Preview
- College 101 course, using peer-to-peer approach with students; using accounting majors to counsel students
- Main Street
- iGrad table during Preview
- Engagement colleges
- Announcements in prospective students' admissions letter
- Street teams (i.e., students engaging students around campus)
- Blackboard/Student Portal Financial Health Meter. Students' financial literacy health meter would be linked to their portal so that each time students log into BlackBoard, their financial literacy health meter would appear.
- Incentives for attending financial literacy course. Team up with the bookstore, dining, tech store for give-aways, such as iPads, t-shirts, food, etc.
- Require financial literacy course for students who have loans.
- Calling prospective students to determine financial literacy

Brief discussion followed on best way to reach students with major announcements. Suggestions included engaging them, peer-to-peer, students talking to students; getting in front of them and talking to them.

Discussion followed on pushing/marketing one specific event/activity during the week, developing a coordinated plan for all such events throughout the year, so that students are not bombarded with numerous events.

Mary Deneen reviewed the freshman cohort data on student accounts:

- As of January 24, 2014 (after tuition deadline), 798 cohort students had outstanding tuition
  - 454 owed less than \$2,500
  - 344 owed \$2,500 – \$20,000, with 20 owing \$10,000-\$20,000
  - 180 of these students had GPA less than 2.0
  - Students with GPA of 1.5 or less had largest average outstanding debt of \$3,223/student
- Student account activities
  - Monthly bills were sent to students with account balances
  - Financial Aid continues to post to student accounts
  - Calling campaign from student accounts began in March
  - Pre-collection letters go out May 1. Brief discussion on offering grants to students who owe less than \$500.
- Monarch Millionaire is currently conducted in fall and spring. For 2015, Mary suggests that it only be conducted in the spring, allowing staff to focus on calling and conducting outreach efforts.
- Begin student financial outreach efforts after tuition deadline.
- Electronic payment plan will go online July 2, 2014.
- Budget initiative, with a permanent part-time position dedicated to reaching out to students in need of assistance in developing a budget.

Discussion ensued regarding setting up one-time payment plans wherein students who have extenuating circumstances or who have the ability to pay but the money just hasn't come in yet and allowing the student to register (by lifting the hold).

Brian mentioned that at a previous institution, an "emergency account" was set up for students in financial need. Faculty, donors, and others contributed money to the account. Don noted that ODU has an emergency grant fund now, that covers all types of emergencies, not just tuition. Mary reminded the committee of the appeals process, for students who enroll and then withdraw due to extenuating or unforeseen circumstances after the drop/add date.