



**Oregon State Board of Higher Education
Student Participation and Completion Committee**

September 22, 2008, 1-3:30 P.M.
Location: Portland State University

MEETING NOTES

Attendance

Committee members, participants, and staff in attendance: Hilda Rosselli, Joanne Sorte, Yvette Webber Davis, Ruth Keele, Karen Edmonds, Gayle Yamasaki, Angela Aguiar, Amas Aguiar, Brian Fox, Dave McDonald, Christina Oliveri, Chris Cronin, Patricia Martinez, Mark Jackson, Tory Campbell, Bridget Burns, Jon Joiner, Bob Tom, Bob Turner, Joe Holliday, Pete Collier, Paulette Watanabe, Jackie Balzar, Alex Sanchez.

Meeting notes: Endi Hartigan

Introductions and Updates

Committee Chair Dalton Miller-Jones welcomed participants. He began by announcing the participation of and welcoming Joe Holliday who is starting a new role here at the university system as assistant vice chancellor for student success initiatives.

Miller-Jones summarized the work-plan for 2008-09. He noted that in October, OUS will be cosponsoring the ORCAN conference and will look at some best practices there. In November, we'll hear from the LGBTQ community. Miller-Jones attended a teacher preparation meeting at Jefferson High School and students made a presentation helping to raise understanding of issues facing students with different gender issues, and it was very poignant. In December, the subject will be adult student learners. With the economic downturn, more people turn to education, so this will be an important topic. In January, we will revisit the agenda and establish hard goals and criteria. The committee will be trying to get funding for the committee policy option package (POP); so will begin to look at criteria for grant reviewing. In February, the committee plans to look at best practices in pre-college programs. Then in March through May the committee will address the development of RFPs related to the POP.

Miller-Jones reported that the Board of Higher Education heard a poignant demonstration from Yvette Webber Davis at the September meeting on diversity across the system. That conversation will be continued in October. David McDonald added that he thought it was the best conversation he has heard from the Board around diversity in many years. Miller-Jones noted that there are several documents in the packet that relate to this and the committee will be revisiting this at the October mtg. Director Francesconi urged the Board to seriously consider making achievement of diversity goals one of the criteria for evaluation for university presidents. Miller-Jones recommended that our committee be the designee for following through on the items that were brought up by Webber-Davis and the panelists.

There was a short update on the ORCAN conference by Karen Edmonds of OSAC. All Committee members are automatically registered.

Retention Presentations

Miller-Jones introduced the main subject of presentations for the meeting, best practices in retention improvement efforts at the campus level. He reviewed that the number of people who go on to higher education in Oregon is alarmingly low, which impacts critical functions for the state. Raising education levels reduces those who end up in incarceration and other social services and raises the economy. The committee has learned that the structure and practices of our system are producing these insufficient systematically. If Oregon is going to change these patterns, then we have to be able to recognize that we need to work at the structural level and impact practices in a structural way. What the committee will be working on the rest of this year are critical strategies to change the way we do business in the state.

Paulette Watanabe, Director, Education Equity Program and Services, PSU

Paulette Watanabe of PSU showed a PowerPoint presentation detailing her remarks around several areas of focus: student support services (SSS), PSU's educational opportunity program (EOP), the diversity scholarship program, and services provided to Native American and Alaskan students. Watanabe summarized the SSS and EOP programs in terms of their target populations, participation process, and key strategies. The SSS and EOP programs have been running for about 30 years, and 2/3 of the students must be first-generation. About 50% of PSU students as a whole are first-generation, so the program does not have the capacity to serve all needs. One strategy is supporting informal group learning and providing a dedicated space that provides a home base or students. The voice of SSS staff plays a larger leadership part in institutional policies surrounding disadvantaged students. In general the retention rates in this program meet or exceed goals; Watanabe can get committee exact numbers later if needed. The funding includes federal TRIO dollars of \$340K per year, which includes direct and indirect support, so ultimately they have about \$298K to work with. This funds one director, two counselors, and one support staff member. Watanabe discussed the diversity scholarship program, noting that students are awarded through graduation (for a specified number of terms). Career planning is key, as students need to focus on what happens after graduation. They also emphasize support from parents and orientation. Orientation gives these students a leg up before start of school. The award agreement lets student know that they have responsibilities in terms of GPA, credit attainment, community service, attendance of orientation, and freshman success class. There is a means by which they can put a diversity scholarship on hold if there is an emergency and they need to stop out. They had a Latino, 1st-generation engineering student who was bound and determined to complete the degree; and so determined that they preserved his scholarship over 7 years while he completed his degree. At orientations, the staff connects students to services on campus, like career services, etc. They provide a study space where students can connect and congregate. Watanabe said she thinks that students who are first generation and not in this program could use these types of services as well. Tuition remission has not kept up with students' needs as they serve fewer students now due to E&G funds being lower. They awarded 15 awards last year, and in the "heyday" awarded more than double that amount, 33. In regards to Native American Student services, their strategy is to increase retention. They have one FTE who is a tribal member and communication with tribal offices is a critical activity. They bring external Native American resources to campus to support students' education; and internships to help them with future careers. The difficulty is that this position performs both outreach and retention, and outreach requires travel, so it is hard to support students on campus is you are out traveling. Overall, they have had success in building a welcoming environment and have about 300 Native American students registered at PSU. Watanabe also briefly discussed the academic support program and summer bridge program, which includes assessment of student preparedness.

Amas Aduviri, Director, College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP), OSU

Aduviri said that the CAMP program is part of the Office of Migrant Ed. Oregon is the 5th largest state for migrant populations. There are about 43 programs in US and we only have 3 programs despite the number of farmworker population in OR. The other two programs are at Chemeketa CC and PCC. Aduviri just finished a week-long orientation program with parents and students. Parental involvement is very important. They have parents visit OSU three times since their child signs up for the program. Parents play a major role in the program by attending OSU' START Bilingue program, the first day of the CAMP Orientation in late summer, and the end of year celebration for completion of the first year. As a federally funded program, the program has goals including a certain number of students to serve. So far, they have served 165 students. Special admits are 31% of their students; these students are not admissible under the standard guidelines, so the CAMP program agrees to work with admissions office to help these students succeed. Many times, these students do better than regular admits. With regards to retention, 21 finished the first year out of 30 students; one student transferred and some dropped out. When looking at GPAs after the first year, the average was about 2.9 and their goal is to get it to 3.0. They recruit students from throughout the state, and about 17-19 high schools are represented. It's important for students get to see students from other parts of state. Seven students in the program participated in study abroad programs in Taiwan, Italy, and Spain and Aduviri wants to get more funds for these opportunities. First year in college retention rate last year was at 98% and for all years is at 89%. If you include those who transfer within OUS, the retention rate is 95% for all years. All are first-generation students, and many students never finished high school. Most parents only speak Spanish. Aduviri mentioned that while the majority of students are Latino/a, eligibility for the program is based on the farmwork status. They also have had students from Ukraine, and some Caucasian students. They have 3.5 full time employees running the program. They look at research on what you need to do to be successful and study that. Retention is very tied to services; they have two advisors in the program, and have the CAMP Orientation class that provides extra support. Students also meet faculty and learn about resources so that they have the capacity to help themselves. They agree to a contract with the student and have a policy of 2.5 GPA. Students have to visit at least two resource hours per week, so they can be familiar with resources at campus. The program provides a stipend so that students do these things. They also follow up with faculty on how students are doing, and meet regularly with students to advise them on tutoring, supplemental instruction or other services like the writing center. In general, they have found students don't go to campus resources unless there are multicultural staff there; the writing center has now hired 3 of their students, and the career center hired one, so the students attend these places more. Financial aid is also a key piece of retention; if students don't have financial means they will not finish school. Aduviri works directly with the director of financial aid. Sometimes, students will decline grants accidentally because they don't know the terminology. He follows up with students to make sure that they get verification forms. Students meet with the financial aid director individually to learn about their aid. He also did a workshop last year about applying for scholarships, and will see how many students got scholarships after taking this seminar. After the first year, students need to take some of the onus for getting their aid. Aduviri also emphasized that there has to be an adequate social environment for students on campus. At OSU they have their Chavez Center, and the Migrant Student Association should be an official club by end of year. It helps them to get involved in cultural activities. They have 5-11 students involved in AmeriCorps who have to do 300 hours of service for the year. The most important thing is the summer orientation program; this brings all students together, where they begin to bond, and meet faculty. It is one of the key things for retention. Recruitment is non-traditional; they work with the Oregon Migrant Office, and they go to school districts working with migrant

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students. They get grants to get laptops for students and work closely with Educational Opportunities Program (EOP) which provides writing classes, math. They also work closely with the SMILE program and some were involved in this program during the summer prior their school year began.

David McDonald asked if the student agreement/contract could be shared with the committee. In regards to their budget costs, Aduviri said they have a \$350K operating budget; students get \$100 stipend a month; and they provide supplemental tuition aid of about \$2500 from CAMP.

Christy Oliveri, CORE 101 Coordinator and Facilitator, Learning Center, EOU

Oliveri is the CORE 101 coordinator and also teaches the class. She said that EOU is gaining more from what other campuses are doing, as EOU has one of the worst retention rates in the system at 29% for the six-year graduation rate. They have about a 30% failure rate in first year classes. They have a huge number of first generation students.

CORE 101 been around for 4 years, and is under enrollment services now. Core 101 was previously more of a student success course, including writing skills, studying, note-taking, reading, etc. and was paired with Writing 115 which is a precollege writing course. The same cohort of students was in both classes. It was not sustainable as it was, and was not funded. Last year EOU received the Rural Access Initiative grant and through that were able to hire a new position to teach all the classes within CORE 101. CORE 101 is more like a freshman experience course with academics combined with extended orientation. Advisers are showing students which courses to take and they now have to actually take the classes into which they test. This is working better. They have a lot of social integration, as they need to join a student club, and to interview faculty. The course could be more generally applied. Right now, EOU requires all new students to take another Freshman Experience course, but it is not the same as CORE. At this point, EOU has more students testing into the lower level classes who should be taking Core 101 but the course is full. For example, many Micronesian students need core 101 but are not able to right now; they tend to register later. They are recommended to take the appropriate classes but can't take this. The new first year experience course, called Eastrek/Humanities 110, is a course is based on the research of Will Keim and his work in student success. Oliveri also spoke on the success of the CORE program. By the 3rd year, of the students who took Core 101, 38% stayed in school, rather than 23% for those who tested into the same writing course but didn't take CORE. EOU is trying to put together more of a qualitative survey to determine what helps retain students in CORE, such as interaction with faculty. Students do pay tuition for CORE and it counts as general education curriculum.

Miller-Jones asked if other campuses have these types of courses. Dave McDonald responded that the WOU freshman year experience course mirrors EOUs in many ways. WOU is reviewing the freshman year experience to make it most effective and data-driven. Joe Holliday added that CORE is distinctive because conditionally admitted are required to take it. At PSU conditionally admitted students are required to take a College Success class.

Angela Aguiar, Director, Center for Learning and Teaching, OIT

Angela Aguiar said she would give an overview of how OIT helps with student success, and would discuss a national STEM access award they have received. She showed a PowerPoint presentation detailing her remarks. OIT is bridging the gap through pre-college programs; about

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20% of their students have earned dual credit, which is a key element to success. One big issue is that students perceive their academic ability to be higher than it is; their perceptions are skewed which makes it harder to seek out help to succeed in classes. OIT has a mandatory placement in math. They found in research related to grades in math that if students earn an A in their first math course they are more likely to succeed and move forward. This works as an early warning and alert program. They have students meet with advising specialists and try to guide students about making decisions about where they are going. All advising is done by faculty. They use SAR to help them in providing advising, such as, asking how confident students are in their advising skills. Financial barriers are a big issue; 73% of their students are concerned about paying for college. More students are borrowing, and transfer students are even more vulnerable. OIT focuses on careers and relationships; they have good graduate placement rates and salaries are very well known by the students. Students generally have a clear goal in mind of what they are looking for in terms of a career. OIT retention rates are in the middle of the pack, just below the OUS average, and lower for females. Their assessment efforts include new student assessment to know students' readiness. This ensures at least one point of significant contact. They look at every student file and identify risk factors and what intervention may be needed. Their TRIO program serves about 160 students per year. They encourage contacting faculty and have a high rate of students doing this. They have a small group mentoring project with faculty and staff. This helps students to bond together, to get to know a faculty member and do something important for community. OIT intervention efforts include a lot of communication with departments, faculty, and staff to identify students who need help. The early alert program helps, since the student success team uses a case-management approach to helping individual students. OIT now has a National Science Foundation award to expand participation in computing, which is a 5-year program. They will serve 30 students per year, and will target student populations. OIT has seen a declining enrollment in these majors, and hopes to involve industry in this effort.

There was some discussion about the pre-emptive supports at WOU and whether they exist at every campus. WOU has some. PSU does not because it takes placement to be able to preempt.

David McDonald, Associate Provost, WOU

David McDonald said he wanted to talk about how to move from pockets of people of excellence to sustainable retention programs across the campuses. The committee would probably find strong points of success at all campuses, but these are not necessarily replicated or spread beyond a department or two. Success is in front of us but Oregon continues to have these conversations. Retention efforts should focus on the three "I's": they have to be an institutional, imperative, and informed. They must focus on the individual student and how much one-on-one time students are receiving in these programs. They also must engage faculty so that it doesn't become a "we and they" situation. The more students we have retained the more students we have, and we can use revenues to make the institution better.

The performance measure system is important, and it's a moral obligation to do this. If a university admits a student they are saying they believe that they are prepared to make them successful, and will provide the means to help them do this. The key thing is leadership. The major theme that President Minahan talked about today is that retention is a key to WOU; they want to ensure that students who enroll do graduate. They focus on the Latino population

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because to ignore them is to their detriment, and they focus on all underserved students. New programs should all have an enrollment and a retention component. Institutions have to be intentional about this to be successful. Retention doesn't begin at orientation; it begins at middle school. Data means everything, yet it has to be shared. At WOU, retention is at 73% and it will go up to 75%; for athletes, it is even higher. WOU has a program with Salem Keizer high schools. They pick low-income diverse students with a 2.0-3.0 high school GPA, and have great success with getting them into college. In their EOP program, they have added \$100K of institutional dollars to the federal dollars. More than 82% of these students have graduated. WOU also has a diversity scholars program, including an on-track scholars program, by which students are required to be in a one credit class each term for their first year as extra support. This is a check-in class that includes pieces like cultural awareness. They hope to expand that to students who didn't get scholarships but were runners up. WOU now also offers a cross cultural communication workshop to faculty and staff and worked with 30 people over a winter terms two times a month on this. Faculty and staff getting trained and they have found the communication piece working across the campus. It has high value to faculty and staff. It is voluntary, but each division had to have someone represented. Then, they spread word among their peers. It received very high evaluations from people involved. They were able to move people from points of doubt to points of value; this money too came out of institutional dollars. New dollars need to go to things which increased retention, and institutions need to step up if the money doesn't come from the state. McDonald also mentioned that at NACADA, 3 people from WOU were selected for national awards. In advising, they have a layered model with staff and students; once students have a major they are moved to a faculty member. The academic center does tutoring and advising, and is pre-emptive with this. Students need to take a learning seminar if they are not doing well. Academic, family, and other issues covered here. They give a lot of individual attention; if students don't pass, they can't come back. Coaches also make sure athletes do well because they are not eligible if they don't have the grades. In general, freshmen have far too much randomness and chance to their schedules and need guidance.

Miller-Jones said he is pleased with their success at WOU. Joanne Sorte asked about follow-up to graduates. McDonalds mentioned that OUS does a follow-up sampling survey, which shows that 96% of graduates are in an activity of choice.

Peter Collier, Director, Students First Mentoring Program, Professor of Sociology, PSU

Dr. Collier said that the Students First effort started with a FIPSE grant to try to improve success for first-generation students. Institutions really need term-by-term retention rates in order to best intervene. They are losing people between fall and winter term. As background, Collier discussed Tinto's model and the problem with it, in regards to how students' culture of origin impacts retention. Whether a student sees him/herself as a college student, and thinks he/she belongs, affects whether he or she stays. Dr. Collier discussed the traditional model and the two-path model. A student's cultural capital matters. The way that students think that higher education works and understand expectations affects their success. New students are less likely to make sound decisions because they don't have the experience; they have a limited grasp on what is possible. Mentoring at Students First does not include advisors or tutors; they target students new to campus who are first generation students that are not accepted into TRIO. Because of their background, first generation students waste a lot of front end time. The Students First program utilizes the expertise of already successful students who help tell people what to do to succeed in college, and get socialized into that reality. They give them specific

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direction, and show insights into the culture of higher education. Mastery and expertise is the language we need to use to go beyond this small population.

Students need to identify adjustment issues, such as when to go to the ombudsman, etc. The program gives students tools to connect with campus support services, and scripts to use that work on campus as a starting point. Collier detailed the program elements. He said that currently, websites are not set up to help students get services; he has a website that gives the steps to get help. They have made videos with successful students on time management and communication. They have group discussions. There are no incentives in the program, but the students see value. These students have an 8.9% higher retention rate, and a GPA of 2.83-2.94. These students generally will complete their degrees in 5 years. Online mentoring helps. Students are randomly assigned to a person and have access to all services; they are invited to discussion groups; meet with a mentor; and have weekly contact. The GPA, credits earned and retention rates are better than they are with other PSU freshman. Collier discussed the need to develop student expertise. He has worked with University Studies to build online support systems to talk about what effort is, how to communicate with professors, how to make sense of a syllabus, how to use office hours, etc. At PSU, the website is a way to spread this support out to a larger population if we don't have enough money to put everyone in TRIO. Video mentors are from diverse backgrounds, and the videos are one minute clips bundled with Flash. The initial idea was to have different universities share videos. Also, this could be customized for certain groups, like the sciences. This gets students away from the idea "It's my fault that I don't know this."

Miller-Jones asked about whether first-generation students have laptops and cell phones. Collier said there is some class bias as there is a correlation between income and whether you have some technologies.

Bob Turner commented that the online video is very attractive; at WOU, he set up a peer mentoring system for first term biology majors. They didn't have enough mentors for students but this would be a solution to that.

Dr. Collier added that they do have some protocols on how to get students to do these videos.

Discussion

Bob Tom commented on the first Committee meeting he attended at PSU. At that meeting, there was discussion of "tweaking the system;" now it seems they know what the system is producing and there is a desire to change it. He appreciates so much common sense in the room. Tom added that we should replicate what is working.

Dave McDonald added that to make the change will not be cheap; but cost will not be just financial. There are well-intentioned efforts; but if we're not willing to say this is about who we are, the institutions will only talk about change, and not make it.

Bob Turner commented that putting students in contact with upper division students who knows how to work within the system is very effective.

Alex Sanchez said that unless we engage faculty in discussion, and reward them for engaging in the change, then these efforts won't be as effective

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Bob Tom said we can't ignore the value of special programs for certain students; such as tribal centers which help the students and families.

Dalton Miller-Jones discussed the 40/40/20 goals for Oregon, noting that this is a huge shift. We will need 20% more students. In order to do this we need to focus on those who are not oriented to college, or who are not academically prepared. The committee is here because they share an interest and a passion. Faculty minds and aspirations are located in an entirely different space than these issues. The point of leverage and action has got to be at the department level with faculty. They need to give faculty credit for this, such as stipends, class reductions, decisions around tenure, etc. This will put us on a head-on collision with department culture; which is about getting scholarship published, getting awards and grants. These goals are oppositional to one another.

Hilda Rosselli said that some can clearly explicate what we mean by scholarship that includes engagement and integration of activities, and the scholarship of teaching. Faculty can align their scholarship around recruitment and retention of students. Miller-Jones said that at PSU they convinced the college of liberal arts & sciences to revisit tenure guidelines but 95% of the faculty didn't do anything about it. The department continued to hold sway with grants, etc.; it has not shifted the culture very far, and sometimes creates a two-tiered faculty culture.

Bob Turner said that as someone who made a conscious choice to do scholarship of teaching, he emphasized it is essential to find a way to engage the faculty on this and enable faculty who are interested to find affirmation in it.

Chris Cronin said that at EOU, awareness amongst faculty that in order to survive things have to be done differently; there is still want of ownership of disciplines, but they have realized that they have to be willing to do online courses, engage with students, etc. to keep afloat; she sees a difference in the way that faculty are engaging with students.

Saunders said that at the recent IA-HERO conference with Irish delegates and Oregon higher education leaders it was emphasized the need to adjoin the issues of quality and access; now there is a false dichotomy out there that the institutions can have one or the other but not both. Miller-Jones added that the system also needs to work with faculty as much as possible to move this forward.

Mark Jackson commented that he had an AP student in high school who didn't feel intelligent until he took Black Studies in college. This student felt that high school didn't prepare him psychologically for college. The student was academically prepared but not psychologically prepared. When there is a barrier of confidence and self-esteem, it is more challenging when they go to college.

Miller-Jones asked Mr. Joiner to talk about the importance of multicultural center. Joiner said that it is a safe place, and students tell things there that they would not share with officials. The staff counsels students, sends them to tutoring, etc. It is also about cultural capital which is critical.

There was a question on what would happen to the new access efforts at OIT after the NSF grant expires. Aguiar answered there is hope that OIT can reapply or show that it can be continued with institutional funds. Dave McDonald cautioned that generally if campuses don't institutionalize the purpose and effectiveness of federal grants then they will go away at some

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point in time. Gayle Yamasaki said there may be an opportunity to partner with the advancement office to begin to build those endowment scholarship funds. Joe Holiday said that student support service grants have to set measures and have to document success of work.

Brian Fox suggested that the committee identify how much the system spends to increase retention incrementally and show that the investment pays. He specifically suggested that the committee look, for example, at increased tuition dollars. Miller-Jones said maybe we should have the committee develop a success index of how much income, savings in other costs you get when you retain underserved students. Alex Sanchez added that one obvious return on investment is that you don't have to recruit more students when you retain them, but that goes against the access goal. Bob Turner added that RAM rewards for upper divisions students so it means more funding.

The meeting was adjourned.