

STATUS OF CNU ACTION PLANS

JULY 16, 2005

Accomplishments resulting from the efforts of the Retention Planning Teams and needed future actions are listed below. A copy of the original goals, strategies and recommended actions of the RPT are attached.

Team 1-A: Learning Communities Accomplishments

- All recommendations for implementing the Learning Communities have been met or are planned for the F 2005 class.
- On July 5, 405 students (332 regular students and 84 PLP students) are registered for a LC. We held enrollment open through the 3rd orientation session for all students. PLP students were allowed to enter LCs as late as the 4th session.

Future Actions for Learning Communities

- Additional faculty members who will be teaching in a LC should be added to the Learning Communities Team.
- A de-briefing session will be held to discuss the problems that resulted from implementing the LCs. This meeting should include all team members plus the persons whose jobs were most affected by the LCs.
- Training for peer mentors and faculty will be held in the first week of the fall semester.
- Ongoing evaluation of the LC students will be conducted. The Registrar has assigned an LC code and other relevant information to each LC student so we can track them throughout their time here. We also need an evaluation by the students, faculty and peer mentors.
- Plan for the 2006 fall semester. (Two subsections will be created for each section that involves an LC so we will know at all times during registration whether seats are available for non-LC students.)

Team1-B: At-Risk Program Accomplishments

- Students who did not register during the spring registration for the fall semester were contacted by letter signed by the Dean of Students and hand delivered by RAs to campus residents. Ninety-seven students responded out of 387 students contacted: 43 registered for classes; 46 were transferring (total of 22 to VCU, ODU, & VPI).
- The College Student Inventory (CSI) was administered to 795 students during orientation sessions. The students were scheduled to take the CSI after registration, so many left the campus before taking the CSI. In the future, the CSI or comparable survey should probably be given prior to registration to ensure better participation.

Future Actions for At-Risk Program

- The early alert system will be implemented this fall. Faculty will be asked to use the “at-risk” referral form for students who perform poorly on early assignments, who have poor class attendance, who sleep in class repeatedly, and who have other inappropriate behaviors. Faculty will also be asked to do some type of evaluation of students by the 4th week of the semester.
 - The “at-risk” referral form is on schedule to be completed by July 15.
 - Faculty will be given information on criteria for referring a student for assistance.
- Determine if another professional advisor is needed to assist with the at-risk students.

- The Provost will send a letter to all faculty members in early July to give them information about the retention initiatives and to solicit their support for the early alert system and the emphasis on developmental advising.
- The Provost will ensure that all faculty members will submit mid-term grades for first-year students in a timely fashion.
- We need to consider asking faculty to submit D and F grades for all students at mid-semester.
- We need to improve the “follow-up” procedure for students who do not register for the next semester. (RAs on campus? Phone calls to commuter students?)
- The CSI scores will be interpreted prior to the fall semester and faculty advisors will be notified of students identified as high risk.
- Students who did not take the CSI during Orientation will be required to take it during University Academic Orientation (Welcome Week)
- Team members will visit Lynchburg College to gain insights into their “at-risk” program and JMU to discuss the reasons for their high retention rates.
- A comparison of grades at the end of the first semester should be made for students who took the CSI with those who did not take the survey. Failure to take the CSI may be an at-risk indicator.
- We will evaluate other surveys that predict student success prior to the 2006 orientation.
- Success of the at-risk program will be evaluated by comparing the mid-term and final grades and numbers on probation and suspensions with those of the 2004 class.

Team1-C: Academic Advising Accomplishments

- The advising team surveyed seniors regarding their satisfaction with advising prior to May 1. They found that students were more satisfied with major department advising than with first-year advising.
- The Graduate in Four Notebook has been completed and will be given to the first-year students during Welcome Week.
- A mission statement and advising goals have been created.
- The Faculty Senate has approved a standing committee on academic advising.

Future Actions for Academic Advising

- The Provost and Deans will support the change from prescriptive advising to developmental advising.
- For the Fall of 2006, we will consider packaging general education courses so that undecided students can select among three different options to meet general education requirements no matter what major they choose in the future.
- Departments will be asked to hold orientations to their majors in the 5th, 6th, or 8th week of each semester in order to introduce students to faculty in their majors and to help undecided students select a major. We need to consider talking about majors at orientation.
- We will encourage students to declare a major as soon as they are comfortable doing so.
- The Advising Team/Committee will circulate the Mission Statement and Goals for academic advising to the faculty. These will be added to the Advising Office web page.
- The new Academic Advising Committee approved by the Faculty Senate will be asked to develop a plan for evaluation of faculty advising as well as continue to develop advising policies and communicate with the faculty. Jay Paul will chair the committee. The Director of Advising will be *ex officio*.

Team 1-D: Communications Accomplishments

- President Tribble is a vocal, visible and visionary advocate of the institutional change and improvement process.
- The faculty, staff and Board of Visitors have been apprised of the actions related to the Student Success (Retention) initiatives.
- The Team developed a list of ten recommendations to ensure student success. These have been placed on business size cards to be handed to the students at convocation. Student Services staff members plan to have them printed on the back of their business cards.
- The Team is in the process of creating a video of graduating seniors being asked to give new students one piece of advice that will help them succeed at CNU. This video will be shown during Welcome Week.

Future Actions for Communications

- In addition to communicating the importance of the initiatives to the faculty, staff and BOV members, we need to attend meetings of the chairs to solicit support at the departmental level.
- The Communications Team will be asked to help communicate the plans and changes to both external and internal groups.
- Three sessions (Donna E., Vernon Harper and Donna M.) all included messages about faculty expectations of students, but we need to emphasize the differences in high school and college in future sessions.
- The Team needs to identify faculty of different ranks that are known for developing and communicating expectations that result in higher levels of student performance. A set of “best practices” should then be shared with all the faculty members.

Team II Quality Services Accomplishments

- President Tribble has met with all CNU supervisors and stressed the importance of quality service.
 - He announced the CNU service strategy: “Service to our students will be fast friendly, effective and flexible.”
 - He asked supervisors to work with their staff members to develop quality service plans by June 15, 1005. These were submitted to Cindi Perry.
 - He also asked each supervisor to appoint a customer relations coordinator.
 - He has initiated a program to recognize individuals for outstanding quality service. One award has been given.
- Student Aid will be reflected on the tuition and fees bill. PLP, Honors, and others known at the time of billing will be included, also. Other scholarships will not be included.
- Financial holds on student records were changed from \$25-\$100. Parking and library holds were temporarily lifted for spring pre-registration.
- The Business Office has worked with Student Services to streamline access to SGA-approved and other funds for student organizations
- Parking fines no longer double to \$80 after 3 days. Students get a discount if they pay early. They may now appeal before they pay. More parking spaces will be available in F05.
- Resident Hall Damage policy changes: Community Damages will no longer be assessed. There will be a billing process during room check-out. Other changes in procedures such as a roommate signed agreement re responsibility; an appeal process, etc. are underway.

Future Actions for Quality Services

- A key communicators group of frontline staff needs to be created that will meet on a regular basis to identify and discuss problems that involve more than one department. More than one group may be needed. Each unit that services students should be asked to identify the units they interact with. Examples might be
 - housing, residence life, IT and the business office,
 - the registrar, academic advising, counseling and first-year initiatives,
 - business office, student aid and the foundation,
 - IT, the Registrar and the business office
- A letter needs to be sent to staff members asking them to send any ideas they may have for improving the quality of services to Cindi, human resources??
- Human resources needs to design and implement staff orientation, training and development programs focused on quality service.
 - The President's taped inspirational remarks should be used as a kickoff segment for new employee orientation.
 - The human resources department needs to identify a company to provide a "Train the Trainers" workshop
- The Quality Service Standards need to be reviewed and edited. Then they should be reproduced in an attractive format, framed and hung in a visible place in each unit.
- The maximum credit hour surcharge policy needs to be changed to be consistent with competing universities such as VPI and JMU and also with UVA and W&M. The budget committee supports this recommendation, but determined that we could not fund it this year (approx. \$250,000.)
- Review and revise policies, as determined, relating to the provision of IT services.
- Review and revise policies and procedures, as determined, relating to human resources. Two new positions and one part-time position converted to full time should alleviate the backlogs in HR. If they do not, then HR needs a thorough review.

Accomplishments of a General Nature

- Faculty and staff members have become more aware of the need to improve our student success and retention rates.
- Faculty members have become "champions" of the cause.
- Many staff members now believe they can make a difference in the quality of services at CNU.
- A "sense of community" based on a shared goal has developed among most of the faculty and staff members who were involved with the RPT.
 - Faculty members have increased their knowledge of the work and skill level of staff members,
 - Staff members seem more comfortable working with the faculty and
 - Staff members have become more willing to contact other staff members to resolve problems.

Future Actions of a General Nature

- The President, Cabinet members, and Deans must stress the emphasis on the Retention Initiatives continually through personal contact, letters, e-mail and meetings. Special attention should be given to
 - Quality services
 - The early-alert program and
 - Changes in expectations for advising

- The Directors of Assessment and Institutional Effectiveness will be invited to join the Retention Planning Team.
- Maury, Cindi, Bill, Virginia, and David will attend the National Conference on Student Recruitment, Marketing, and Retention July 27-30. They will participate in an Invitational Symposium for Senior Administrators.
- Invite Consultant back for a fall visit?