

Council on Retention and Graduation
Annual Report
2004 - 2005

The Council received its charge from Executive Vice Chancellor Plater August 31, 2004. The Steering Committee met and received the charge on September 23, 2004. The summary charge is as follows:

Provide the campus-wide leadership and coordination necessary (1) to attain a first to second year retention rate of at least 75% for all full-time students entering in fall 2008; (2) to attain a six-year graduation rate of 40% for full-time students entering in fall 2004; and (3) to award at least 4,000 baccalaureate degrees in 2010.

The abysmal retention of African-American and other minority students has also been a concern of the Council, as well as the low graduation rates of seniors. Council members have received copies of *Double the Numbers: Increasing Postsecondary Credentials for Underrepresented Youth*, edited by Kazis, Vargas, and Hoffman; Tinto's *Student Retention and Graduation: Facing the Truth, Living with the Consequences*; and numerous papers and research briefs regarding retention and underrepresented students.

After an iterative process of finding key areas of concern in which we could make a difference, the Council decided on the following actions:

1. Reconvene a task force to consider the impact of current grade forgiveness policies on transfer students;
2. Research the status of financial aid and its impact on students' persistence;
3. Investigate the obstacles to graduation for seniors
4. Take a critical look at the impact of faculty and professional advising
5. Work closely with the Gateway Group on the implementation of the Foundations of Excellence Improvement Plan

Approach

The Steering Committee decided in March 2005 to reconceptualize the way the Council was set up, and decided to create working groups to address the above key areas. The full Council will now meet only once per semester to report on the progress of the following groups:

Transfer Credit: The Transfer Credit Task Force was opened to members of the Council so that the issue may be investigated with an eye to transfer issues as they relate to retention and graduation of our students.

Financial Aid: Karen Whitney is coordinating fact-finding to determine the impact of financial aid issues on retention. Additionally, Gayle Williams has commissioned a report comparing the income status of IUPUI students as they compare to IU Bloomington. National literature suggests that low-income status makes students markedly less likely to graduate with a baccalaureate.

Seniors: Given the concern raised in the charge memo that our seniors are not graduating in a timely manner, the Council has convened a subcommittee to be headed by Catherine Souch and Vic Borden to look for patterns in completion and non-completion of the senior year. The goal of this group is to determine areas of concern and to work to correct those that the university has some control over, whether they be related to course availability, capstones, or advising.

Advising: Kathy Johnson has been working with Stacy Morrone and Cathy Buyarski to examine the various ways schools approach advising their majors. Results could involve faculty development opportunities to increase faculty awareness of the importance of their work with students in this regard.

First-Year Students: The Gateway Group will continue its work on improving student success in the first year, with a focus on implementing the key areas identified in the Foundations of Excellence Improvement Plan.

Results

These activities are currently underway. The Council has been invited to volunteer for the Transfer Credit Task Force, the Faculty/Professional Advising group, and the Senior subcommittee. A roster of the current membership of these groups is below.

Transfer Credit Task Force

Melissa Biddinger
Donna Boland
Vic Borden
Mike Donahue
Scott Evenbeck

Sharon Hamilton
Amanda Helman
Nancy Lamm
Jennifer Pease
Becky Porter

Rick Ward
Amy Conrad Warner
Gayle Williams
Robert Yost

Faculty and Professional Advising

David Bivin
Steve Jones

Erin Killbride
Ingrid Ritchie

Beth Spears

Senior Group

Mary Fisher
Susanmarie Harrington
Sara Hook

Susan Kahn
Ted Mullen
Michelle Verduzco

Kathryn Wilson

Gateway Group

Donna Boland
Vic Borden
Nancy Chism
Lisa Ehrmann
Scott Evenbeck
David Fleischhacker
Alicia Gahimer
Hayward Guenard
Sharon Hamilton
Michele Hansen
Barbara Jackson

Steven Jones
Erin Kissling
Joe Kuczkowski
Doug Lees
Christine Leland
David Malik
Stacy Morrone
Bill Orme
Jim Perry
Becky Porter
Ken Rennels

Frank Ross
Catherine Souch
Kate Thedwall
Richard Turner
Etta Ward
William Watson
Jeff Watt
Ken Wendeln
Gayle Williams