

**Minutes  
Academic Council  
September 6, 2016**

**Present:** Barrios, Cwick (for Bratberg), Gathman, Glackin, Hinkle, Jenkins, Kendrick, Kunkel, McAllister, McDougall, McGowan, Ortiz, Rogers-Adkinson, Ruediger, Schmidt, Wang, Weller-Stilson, and Winters

**Guests:** Sophia Scott

**A. MINUTES:**

Upon a motion by Gathman; seconded by Jenkins, the minutes of May 3, 2016, were unanimously approved.

**B. ACTION ITEMS:**

**1. AA/AAT Articulation Proposal**

Kunkel explained that he had received a proposal from Debbie Below and Sandy Hinkle to change the policy for out-of-state transfer students with an AA/AAT degree. The current policy for students who transfer from a Missouri institution with an AA/AAT degree is that they are considered as having met the lower division University Students requirements, whereas those transferring from out-of-state institutions have their transfer courses looked at individually. The proposal would change the policy for students transferring from out-of-state institutions with an AA/AAT degree that is nationally accredited to be the same for those transferring from in-state – they will be considered as having met the lower division University Studies requirements. Kunkel noted that if a student still needs prerequisites, though, that he/she would have to complete those. The proposal has been vetted by the Council of Deans and the University Studies Council. McDougall moved approval of support of the proposal by the Council; seconded by McGowan. Motion passed unanimously.

Hinkle brought up a question later in the meeting: she and Below had talked about going back and grandfathering in those students who transferred in Summer or Fall 2016. This would be between 20-30 students. Those who transferred in prior to Summer/Fall 2016 could use an appeals process. The Council seemed to support this, but had concerns about whether refunds would be given for classes that were no longer needed being dropped, etc. McDougall suggested stating it to students that in light of changes to the policy, we are exempting them from courses that they no longer have to take.

**C. INFORMATION ITEMS:**

**1. BS Technology Management: Facilities Management and Sustainability Option – Curriculum Revisions**

Scott explained that the changes to the BS Technology Management: Facilities Management and Sustainability Option will make it easier for students to get the class they need. Courses have been moved/added to give more flexibility. Schmidt questioned the wording on the SLO that says “student will be able to understand,” as direction had been given to steer away from such wording since it is not measureable for assessment. Scott replied that the SLO’s were not set in stone yet.

**D. DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

**1.** Kunkel explained that he intends to meet with all departments in the coming weeks to discuss retention initiatives and make them aware of retention goals. Currently, we retain 73% of our full-time freshmen coming back as sophomores. President Vargas wants to get this number up to 80%. Kunkel and Below have been charged to reach the goal of 80% retention. As part of the meetings he is having with departments, Kunkel is sharing individual program retention and completion information. He approaches

the meetings as a brainstorming session, asking faculty to write down 3 things – 1) retention efforts they are currently doing; 2) retention efforts they would like to see happen; and 3) what resources they feel are needed to meet retention goals. Kunkel also explained that the six-year graduation rate is 49%. President Vargas would like to see this number up to 60% in three to five years. Kunkel also noted that he has been stressing innovative curriculum during the meetings with departments. There are currently 37 programs that are over 120 credit hours. He wants departments to think about what they can do to get those programs down to 120 credit hours.

Kunkel also shared his Academic Affairs Initiatives.

- a. Vincent Tinto will be on campus on October 19. Tinto is a national guru on retention. The day's schedule will be provided soon by Below's office, and everyone is encouraged to attend some of the activities/sessions.
- b. Master Advisor Program - Kunkel is working with the Advising Center to move to a Master Advisor Program. This would be structured, voluntary professional development for faculty for advising. It's an effort to make advising more prominent in reviews/promotion.
- c. First Year Advising - Kunkel is also working with the Advising Center on enhancement of First Year Advising. Some programs want/need to keep freshman advising in their areas, but some centralized freshman advising would be beneficial.
- d. Meta Majors – Kunkel explained that there are some areas, such as science, that students know they want to be in, but aren't sure exactly what major they want. Meta majors are major paths that students follow in choosing a major. If a student is interested in science, he/she would take certain courses in the first year to guide them into the right major path.
- e. UI100 Task Force – Kunkel has formed a task force to look at what, if any, contributions UI100 makes to freshman retention, and report findings to him by November 1.
- f. Regression Model – Before Dr. Bai left the University, he worked on a regression model that took 30-40 factors and looked at how they influence retention. There are categories 1 to 10, with 1 being most likely to stay and 10 being least likely to stay. Kunkel intends to focus on categories 6, 7, and 8, as those students at the top of the range are going to stay regardless, and those at the very bottom of the range likely have too many factors against them to stay. He wants to look at intrusive advising, where advisors reach out to students, rather than waiting for the students to come to them. Something the model has shown is that we retain Greek Life students very well, but do not retain Veterans well.

Winters questioned whether there would be funding for such initiatives. Kunkel advised that there needs to be some prioritization before figuring out funding.

Kunkel also noted that we do not want to tether students to a major, and don't want to punish departments for losing students to another major. We don't want to have students have such a bad experience with Department X that we lose them altogether. He also advised that we are not looking to change rigor – we still want competitive graduates – we just need to help our students achieve at the level we need them to be.

Ortiz questioned whether the regression model takes into account that Greek Life students are not usually first generation and generally not from families with financial hardship.

Kunkel further explained that 58% of the budget comes from students, and we have to, at the very least, hit that number every year.

McDougall asked McAllister if the deans could expect updated data after the 4<sup>th</sup> week; McAllister replied yes.

Schmidt suggested a blanket email be sent out to faculty reminding them about the Academic Alert for at-risk students that is located in the portal.