

UPDATE ON RETENTION TASK FORCE
02/10/2009

RECOMMENDATIONS	PROGRESS MADE/NEXT STEPS
An additional staff person in the office of Academic Advising and Support Services to counsel, lead workshops and provide other types of assistance necessary for early alert as well as probationary students; this individual could also serve as a faculty member to teach intermediate level classes for the increasing number of students with low ACT scores	Maria Dunser was hired as early alert coordinator.
A list of indicators to facilitate the early identification of at-risk students in the major	An online reporting system has been developed with a list of performance indicators. The form is available at https://publicdocs.maxient.com/academicreport.php?MississippiUnivforWomen
A list of performance indicators or triggers indicating poor performance to be compiled by the core curriculum committee	
Follow-up contact with identified students and referral to appropriate services by the early alert coordinator	
An online reporting form with indicators described above to be used by instructors to notify the early alert coordinator about students who have at-risk behaviors/grades	
A review of the entire first year experience at MUW should be conducted to determine if the UN 101 course as well as other programs related to the first year experience need to be restructured.	Dr. Eric Daffron is leading the UN 101 faculty in an evaluation of the UN 101 classes. This group will meet regularly to discuss ways to improve the course.
Each semester, the student's college hosts a reception for the recipients of awards/honor roll based on majors. At that time, the certificates can be given to the students. With student permission, an "honor roll" could be displayed within the college.	Many colleges host an awards ceremony at the end of each semester. It is recommended that deans, department heads and the President be made aware of this recommendation and determine the feasibility of implementing the recommendation.
Each month (September-April for 8 total), a department would recognize an outstanding student for each major and minor.	
Hold a President's List reception for the recipients and their family member(s)	
Create a more flexible core	A core committee co-chaired by Ross Whitwam and Janice Giallourakis presented a proposal to the faculty in February. The faculty voted and passed the new core which will become affective in August of 2009.
Develop a General Baccalaureate a degree.	The retention committee submitted a proposed general studies degree program to Academic Council which has been approved. The program information can be found on the MUW website under the link for Academic Programs. Dr. Mark Bean is the Coordinator for this program.

Begin using the National Survey of Student Engagement or a similar tool that could be used by the University to gather much needed information regarding relationship between specific factors and retention rates as well as student engagement which supports retention.	The National Survey of Student Engagement has been put into place for use in gathering data.
Create a standing retention committee with campus wide representation to ensure that retention efforts are sustained.	The Provost appointed Academic Council as the standing retention committee.
A required significant grade opportunity for core courses before the last day to drop a course without a grade	While specific action has not been taken on this recommendation faculty are currently required to post mid-term grades for every student. Having to post mid-term grades likely requires a significant grading opportunity before the last to drop a course. Faculty could be reminded of the importance of such a grading opportunity.
Work with the IHL to develop more flexibility in scheduling and reporting for class offerings to include shortened or condensed sessions, delayed start dates, intersessions, etc.	Progress is being made as new course offerings are available to students. Current discussion is taking place concerning days when enrollment should be reported.
Increase caps to allow transfer, non-traditional, and part-time students time to enroll	Progress is being made in the effort to increase caps on courses throughout campus.
Employ professional advising staff for programs with very large numbers of advisees; this staff member could also coordinate retention efforts for the department	Action has not been taken. Upon approval to hire advising staff by the provost's office, Deans from colleges that have large numbers of advisees will recommend search committee members. It is also recommended that someone from Academic Advising be included on the search committee.
Publish a 2-year course rotation	Action has not been taken. It is recommended that Department Heads be encouraged to publish a 2-year course rotation when possible.
A statement on each syllabus indicating at-risk behaviors for that course and strategies for improvement or information about University services for assistance	Action has not been taken. It is recommended that Department Heads, faculty from each college, and Academic Support develop a statement that will be included on each syllabus and submit it for approval to the UCC.
Syllabi statements informing students of the at-risk indicators and assistance information	
Departmental guidelines for assisting the identified students	Action has not been taken. It is recommended that each department create the guidelines and the retention plan with input from the Early Alert
A retention plan for the department – some	

<p>departments already have retention plans; such efforts targeting majors could increase retention in other departments as well.</p>	<p>Coordinator, committee of faculty from each department, and the dean or department head</p>
<p>Develop a teaching and learning center that would provide a full curriculum of faculty development to include topics such as the use of instructional technology, service learning and other methodologies, and the challenges of teaching students across the spectrum from millennium generation to baby boomers could be addressed and the following:</p>	<p>Action has not been taken. Should the Provost determine that a teaching and learning center is appropriate for the campus at this time, it is recommended that a committee of faculty from the Advising Center, financial aid, the Director of Institutional Technology, the Provost's office, Academic Support, and experts on various generations be convened to determine the best approach for developing the center and for topics for inclusion.</p>
<p>Create a full curriculum of advisor professional development that would prepare advisors to assist students at all levels including financial aid information</p>	
<p>Additional faculty development for those who teach 100 and 200 level classes</p>	
<p>More intense, perhaps mandatory, advisor professional development</p>	
<p>Information sharing to improve faculty awareness of financial aid procedures</p>	
<p>More advisor training related to transfer students which includes: a) More recognition of PTK (CC honorary) students, b) Tracking transfers' use of academic support to better determine needs, c) Increasing Student Services programming for non-residential students, d) Chat boards/WebCT e) A <i>Frequently Asked Questions</i> section that discusses questions often asked by transfer students to be included on each college's website</p>	
<p>Offer scholarships for sophomores who as freshmen did not qualify for a scholarship but whose academic record during their freshmen year was outstanding and solicit faculty input and involvement in the selection process and criteria development for institutional financial aid</p>	<p>Action has not been taken. It is recommended that financial aid advisors be consulted to determine what financial aid is available to meet this recommendation.</p>
<p>Department chairpersons evaluate faculty course assignments to determine whether they should be more deliberate in the selection of those who</p>	<p>Action has not been taken. It is recommended that department chairs and deans be encouraged to incorporate these recommendations.</p>

teach core courses/entry level classes –adjuncts may not be the best choice	
The value and importance of excellence in teaching entry level courses be communicated to all faculty members	
Track the retention records, special needs and interests of groups such as male students, commuting students, nontraditional students, online students, international students, “average” students to determine specific needs as a basis for developing plans to meet those needs	Action has not been taken. It is recommended that Institutional Research be consulted to determine necessary steps for collecting this data.
Consider additional housing options for Students whose needs are not met by traditional residence halls; for example, married students, students with children, non-traditional students, and international students.	Action has not been taken. It is recommended that Community Living be consulted to determine if arrangements can be made at this time.
Create a pilot program for BSN students similar to that provided to honors college students which includes a) two designated courses in addition to UN 101, b) a residential program, c) a faculty coordinator, d) tracking of participants	Action has not been taken. It is recommended that nursing faculty, honors faculty, community living, and institutional research develop a committee for creating this pilot program.