Retention and Graduation Council  
March 12, 2008

MEETING MINUTES

Approve 2/12/08 Minutes
Dr. Lovitt reviewed the following action items from the February 12th meeting minutes.

- Dr. Lovitt suggested including someone from IT on the early intervention committee, who would assist in the development of an electronic system for referring students.
  - Ms. Washko was asked to recommend someone from IT to serve on this committee.

- Ms. Fangiullo will provide information regarding how many of the 356 students who registered in January had holds on their records.
  - Ms. Fangiullo was not in attendance, this item will be moved to the next agenda.

- Dr. Lovitt suggested that someone meet with all students who request a transcript, in an effort to find out why the student is leaving.
  - Dr. Lovitt asked Mr. Bielawa to find out how many current students request transcripts, and if there is a way that someone can meet with those students to see why they are requesting a transcript.
  - Mr. Hazan asked if there is some way to determine exactly why students are requesting transcripts. Mr. Bielawa suggested including something on the Transcript Request Form, which would specify why the student is requesting a transcript.
  - Dr. Hosch suggested gathering a few months worth of data, before developing an intervention program. Dr. Hosch suggested some information that should be requested.
  - Dr. Lovitt asked Mr. Bielawa to include the following questions on the Transcript Request Form:
    1. Are you requesting a transcript because you would like to transfer to another college?
    2. Are you requesting a transcript, so that you can take a course at another college?
    3. Are you requesting a transcript for employment purposes?

The February 12, 2008 minutes were approved.

Subcommittee Reports
Part-time Students – Ms. Hicks reported for this subcommittee. The charter for the part-time student honor society has been received. Ms. Hicks stated that they are currently in the process of identifying students who will qualify.
Transfer Students – Ms. Garcia-Bowen reported for this subcommittee. This committee is focusing on developing a transfer student manual, which will address the issues/concerns that students usually bring to their advisors.

Residence Life Students – Ms. Alicandro reported for this subcommittee. The Inter-Residence Council has decided that they would like to do more community based projects. Two events that have been discussed are:

1. Event in the fall, which would invite the community to campus for a day of events.
2. Reestablishing the leaf raking project.

This subcommittee would like to support the Inter-Residence Council with these efforts.

Commuter Students – Mr. Hernandez reported for this subcommittee.

Students who Successfully Graduate within Six Years – Ms. Petrosino reported for this subcommittee.

Dr. Lovitt announced that the Faculty Senate has endorsed the Early Intervention Program. It was decided that nothing would be implemented until a complete proposal was brought back to Faculty Senate for final approval. Dr. Lovitt stated that there are two key components, which need to be addressed:

1. An intervention process/policies need to be developed
2. Development of a notification process/system – who will notification go to and what will the notification trigger?

Mr. Frazier discussed two situations which recently occurred in Financial Aid, where students were attending classes but were not actually registered for those courses. Mr. Frazier asked if faculty receive lists regarding their class enrollment. Mr. Bielawa stated that Continuing Education sends out a hard copy enrollment list to each faculty member. Faculty are asked to review the list and send it back to Continuing Education with changes/corrections. Mr. Bielawa stated that faculty can log on to CentralPipeline at any time for the most up to date list of enrollment. Ms. Hicks stated that the majority of faculty do not take attendance in their classes, so they would not know if students are actually enrolled in their course.

Ms. Garcia-Bowen stated that the Early Intervention Program is primarily geared towards first year freshmen. Ms. Garcia-Bowen requested that transfer students be considered when developing the intervention program. Dr. Lovitt stated that 80% of the students in the School of Arts and Sciences who were coming up for dismissal were first semester transfer students. Dr. Hosch stated that the reason for this is because the standards set for freshmen are very low, as opposed to transfer students, who have to earn a higher GPA because of the number of credits they have earned. A brief discussion occurred.

Ms. Hicks stated that most transfer students have some type of issue with their previous institution, which needs to be addressed when they arrive at CCSU. She suggested a transfer orientation course. Dr. Lovitt stated that this has been suggested, but the transfer students did not want this to be mandatory. Dr. Lovitt stated that the Advising Task Force needs to include
information in their plan on how transfer students will be advised. Mr. Hazan asked what the adviser/student ratio is. This number varies by department. Dr. Lovitt stated that this issue is one of the items listed in the Council report.

Mr. McLaughlin discussed the issue of students who are having difficulty finding their way back to a “good standing” status after a difficult semester or two. He proposed offering a course for those students, which would allow students to reach “good standing” if they complete/pass the course. The course would focus on basic skills, but would be very intense. This would give the students who had a difficult start a chance. Ms. Leake stated that the course she teaches does this. 30 students recently took the course, of which 16 successfully finished.

Questions for Otis Mamed
Dr. Lovitt welcomed Mr. Mamed to the meeting. Mr. Mamed addressed the following concerns:

- “Runaround” - Mr. Mamed stated that it is very difficult to respond to the “runaround” issues, when he does not actually know what that means. He asked Dr. Lovitt if there is some way that we can define “runaround.” Mr. Mamed suggested getting a definition established so the “runaround” can be addressed.

- Parking - Mr. Mamed discussed the parking problem, which he said does not actually exist. However, students complain about it all the time.

- Food Service - Mr. Mamed reported that the number of students who are visiting the dining hall this year is up by 16%, and the number of retail sales on campus is up by 18%. He asked why these numbers would be going up if there is a problem with food service.

- Mr. Mamed stated that he knows that parking and food service are not a problem. He then asked if “runaround” is really a problem. Mr. Mamed stated that he would like to verify that “runaround” occurs and what that “runaround” is.

Dr. Lovitt commented on Mr. Mamed’s remarks. In regards to parking, we can objectively say that there are enough spaces to accommodate the number of cars on campus. In regards to food service, we cannot objectively say that there is not a problem. Even though food sales are up, some students do complain about food quality.

Dr. Lovitt recently received an e-mail from a student who is transferring to CCSU. The student had a number of questions, which could not be answered by one person. Instead of sending her to several different offices, Dr. Lovitt sent the student to Ms. Garcia-Bowen who was able to assist the student with her questions.

Mr. Hazan stated that it is difficult to address “runaround” when you do not know exactly what it is. In regards to food service, Mr. Hazan stated that students are not leaving CCSU because of the food quality. Food and parking are the most commonly complained about items on college campuses across the country.

Dr. Hosch stated that the perception of the food and parking is what triggers the complaining. He suggested starting a campaign to change the way people think about parking and food. Dr.
Hosch stated that he does not know what “runaround” means either. Dr. Hosch mentioned a student focus group that was recently held. The students stated that if you know the right people to go to, they can help you. However, if you do not know the right person to go to, then you are stuck.

Ms. Hicks stated that course substitution, override, and change of major, create the most “runaround” on campus. Students have to go to multiple places to obtain multiple signatures. Each department sets their own criteria for getting an override; there is no clear definition. This is extremely frustrating for students, who have busy schedules also. Dr. Lovitt charged Dr. Paige and the Associate Deans with examining these three policies and developing a standardized process.

Ms. McDavid spoke regarding the “runaround.” She stated that the majority of “runaround” can be avoided by training staff to be more friendly and helpful to students. A wealth of information can be found on the internet, or by picking up the phone and calling someone in another office. Students appreciate this. Ms. McDavid suggested waiting until someone picks up the phone when transferring a call. This ensures that the student will get to the appropriate person and that someone is there to answer the call.

Mr. Frazier stated that “runaround” begins when students phone in to campus and do not speak to a live person. The main telephone number for CCSU is automated. Therefore, students must select an office/person to be transferred to. Mr. Frazier reported that Career Services now handles all student employment on campus. This will help to alleviate some “runaround” for the students. In the past students had to go to several different offices on campus. Mr. Hazan stated that the environment that has been created regarding work study students is extremely competitive. Mr. Hazan stated that he will continue to recruit students on his own. Ms. Alicandro agreed with Mr. Hazan. Ms. Deloy stated that departments need to have a budget for student help, other than the work study students. Ms. Deloy stated that students who are employed on campus have higher retention/graduation rates. Dr. Lovitt mentioned the budget process, which is precisely the time to indicate these types of requests.

Dr. Lovitt asked if the Council wanted to survey students regarding “runaround.” Ms. Washko stated that “runaround” has more than one definition. Dr. Lovitt asked that everyone take back what they learned at today’s meeting to their respective units.

Ms. Reasco asked if there has been any change to the all access food plan. Mr. Mamed stated that there has been no change. Mr. Mamed stated that all of the concerns/suggestions that were made regarding food service have been addressed. He suggested that the campus not talk badly about services, without actually knowing that something is bad. Dr. Lovitt asked for suggestions on how the parking and food service perception issues could be changed.

**Consider Issues Raised by Myra Rosenstein and David Spector**

Dr. Lovitt reviewed some concerns that were brought forth regarding non-academic issues that adversely impact student persistence and success. Dr. Rosenstein and Dr. Spector forwarded a number of issues that should be considered. Mr. Hazan asked if there is data to support these concerns. Dr. Lovitt is not aware of any data, but stated that these issues should be considered. Ms. Horan asked about what the staff’s limits of responsibility should be.

A brief discussion occurred.
Dr. Lovitt asked how the Council can respond to the concerns raised by Dr. Rosenstein and Dr. Spector. It was decided that Dr. Rosenstein, Mr. Corbitt, and Ms. Ginter be invited to give brief presentations to the Retention and Graduation Council regarding the programs/services that are currently offered on campus. Mr. Hazan suggested reviewing the minutes from the Alcohol, Drug, and Tobacco Task Force. This task force was set up by the President and looks specifically at alcohol/drug issues on campus. Dr. Craine asked that Dr. Spector be invited to attend the meeting.

**Review Subcommittee Priorities and Action Plans**

Dr. Lovitt stated that the report, which was recently completed, contains a lot of really good recommendations. Dr. Lovitt asked each of the subcommittees to prioritize their list of recommendations, identifying the top two items they would like to focus on. In addition, Dr. Lovitt asked the subcommittees to review each recommendation and decide if it can or cannot be accomplished.

Ms. Hicks expressed her concern regarding the lack of faculty participation on the Council. Dr. Craine noticed this also. He suggested that it may be due to the time of year. Dr. Lovitt suggested increasing the number of faculty who are on the Council.

**Action Items**

- Dr. Lovitt asked Ms. Washko to recommend someone from IT to serve on the Early Intervention Committee.

- Dr. Lovitt charged Dr. Paige and the Associate Deans with examining the course substitution, override, and change of major policies, and developing a standardized process.

- Invite Dr. Rosenstein, Mr. Corbitt, and Ms. Ginter to the April 14th meeting to give brief presentations about services that are currently available to students.

- Invite Dr. Spector to attend the April 14th meeting.

- Dr. Lovitt asked each of the subcommittees to prioritize their list of recommendations, identifying the top two items they would like to focus on.

- Dr. Lovitt asked the subcommittees to review each recommendation and decide if it can or cannot be accomplished.

- Invite more faculty to join the Retention and Graduation Council.

The next Retention and Graduation Council meeting will be held on **April 14, 2008**, at 11:00 a.m. in **Bellin A/B, Student Center**.