C. Lovitt announced that CCSU’s graduation rate is now officially at 49%. Four years ago the graduation rate was 40%.

**Enrollment Update**
C. Lovitt reported that the number of applications was up this year, but this did not translate to increased enrollment in most categories. Applications for transfers were up, and applications for first time/full-time were up by 700 students. C. Lovitt reported that the number of confirmed students in those two categories is actually slightly below where we were last year at this time. First time/full-time numbers are under 1,300; we were preparing for 1,400. However, the numbers for continuing students are up by about 300. Graduate numbers are up significantly, compared to last year. Part-time numbers are below where we were last year at the 3-week freeze, but they are above what they were last year at this time. C. Lovitt anticipates an increase in the part-time numbers before the 3-week freeze, which may put us above where we were last year.

**Report on New Strategies to Promote Retention & Graduation**
C. Lovitt recently received information from the University Leadership Council, which conducts research on different strategies to promote student success. C. Lovitt stated that one of his colleagues recently attended a meeting of this Council where they focused on retention and graduation. C. Lovitt briefly highlighted some of the ideas that came out of that meeting:

- Mississippi State University – instituted a program that focused on student attendance. This program is similar to our Early Academic Warning System. However, their program had a very strong residential component. C. Lovitt suggested that we may want to broaden the scope of CCSU’s intervention program.

- Purdue University – instituted a program called Blackboard Stoplights. Students receive color coded alerts when they log on to Blackboard. Alerts are coded according to the level of concern. Data showed that the students did respond to these warnings and performed better than students who did not use Blackboard.

- California State (Long Beach) – instituted a program to help Juniors and Seniors stay on track. They held workshops, which focused on various issues to keep these students on track for graduation.

- Department Retention – one university instituted a program that rewards departments that have high rates of student retention.

- Bursar Holds – C. Lovitt briefly discussed several programs that were instituted at various institutions to resolve the Bursar hold issue, which prevents students from registering for classes. One strategy focused on intervening before “disaster strikes,” which focusing on ensuring timely submission of Financial Aid paperwork; the second
strategy was to hold Financial Aid workshops; and the third strategy was to resolve all hold issues prior to students summer departure.

- Identifying Students Considering a Move – Track students who are requesting transcripts. This program serves as an intervention, when student request a transcript, they are contacted to see why they are requesting the transcript for and to see if anything can be done to assist them.

**Progress Reports from Committee Members**

L. Glaser reported that a grant was awarded to allow for the development of a CCSU Babysitting website. Two IT students will be setting up the website. L. Glaser hopes to have the website up and running within a few weeks. C. Lovitt asked if the babysitting will occur on campus. L. Glaser stated that they do not currently have a site on campus. S. Hazan asked what the numbers are for students with children; how many students have children, part-time and full-time, and what are their graduation rates? L. Glaser stated that they have national numbers, but not numbers specific to CCSU.

J. Mulrooney stated that he has advised a lot of students who do not even know that they have a hold. He stated that this is a big issue and asked if there is something we can do to lift holds during the add/drop period, as 5 minutes can be the difference of a student getting a spot in a class or having to wait one full year for the class to be offered again. E. Fangiullo stated that the Hold Release Program runs every 20 minutes. If a student takes care of their bill, the hold will be released within 20 minutes. The Office of the Bursar notifies students in every way possible. C. Lovitt asked how many students are currently subject to holds. E. Fangiullo reported that 1900 student currently have holds, which includes students from the Spring 2009 semester. M. Bigley stated that CCSU places holds when students owe $1 or more, which is significantly less than other universities, even within the CSU System. C. Lovitt asked what percentage of the 1900 owes less than $100. E. Fangiullo will run the figures and send them to C. Lovitt via e-mail. C. Lovitt asked what the policies were at the other CSU Universities. E. Fangiullo stated that she did not know, but that she would look in to it. A brief discussion occurred regarding students who experience holds and their success. S. Hazan asked if FYE faculty could be notified when freshmen have holds on their accounts. This would allow for someone to personally address the issue with the student. L. Tordenti stated that this would be an issue of privacy.

A discussion occurred regarding communication and support for students and their parents in regards to financial issues. Several suggestions were discussed informally. E. Fangiullo reviewed the current steps that are taken by the Bursar’s Office. A. Frazier expressed his concern in regards to being helpful versus enabling the students. Students can find answers to their questions on our website. A. Frazier stated that we should encourage all students and parents to review the information on our website.

**Plans for 2009-10**

Dr. Lovitt briefly discussed plans for this academic year. He suggested that the committee focus their efforts on the following areas:

- Sophomores, Juniors, and Seniors – what strategies can be used to help these students succeed?
Faculty Contribution – in what ways can faculty members contribute to the retention and graduation of our students?

C. Lovitt asked individuals to notify him via e-mail if they are interested in working on either of these issues. C. Lovitt suggested forming a Faculty Subcommittee that would look into the various departments on campus to share ideas and concepts that are currently being used to assist their students. C. Lovitt stated that each subcommittee will be responsible for conducting several focus groups. The subcommittees will be asked to report back to the Retention and Graduation Council with their findings.

**Action Items**

- E. Fangiullo will provide hold statistics/information to C. Lovitt via e-mail.
- C. Lovitt asked individuals to notify him via e-mail if they are interested in working on the Sophomore/Junior/Senior or Faculty Subcommittees.

The next Retention and Graduation Council meeting will be held on **Wednesday, October 7, 2009** at **9:00 a.m.** in **Bellin A/B, Student Center.**