Dr. Toston called the meeting to order. Dr. Lovitt distributed the meeting agenda.

**Progress Report on Advising Task Force**
Dr. Paige provided a brief report on the Advising Task Force. Dr. Paige reported that the Advising Task Force has been meeting regularly. The Task Force has been working to define advising and to set advising goals for the University. A team will be going to the NACADA conference next week, and they will bring with them the goals and mission statement of the Advising Task Force to be reviewed and commented on. Dr. Paige reported that faculty have been added to the committee. Ms. Horrax asked if there were any students on the Advising Task Force. Dr. Paige stated that there are not any students currently on the committee. Ms. Reasco mentioned that Elizabeth Torres (student) was invited to serve on the committee, but she has not attended any of the meetings. Dr. Toston asked Ms. Reasco to follow up with Ms. Torres regarding her serving on the Advising Task Force.

**Update from Institutional Research**
Dr. Hosch provided an update on CCSU’s retention and graduation rates for the most recent reporting cycle. Dr. Hosch reported that CCSU’s graduation rates have increased slightly this year. He reminded everyone that this information is for first-time, full-time freshmen. A chart was distributed, which contained various information regarding CCSU’s retention and graduation rates. Dr. Hosch explained the information on the chart and highlighted the relationship between the first year retention rate and the six year graduation rate. He also noted the gap between CCSU’s graduation rates and the graduation rates of peer institutions. Dr. Hosch stated that the basic message of the chart is that CCSU is not where they should be. Mr. Hazan asked why the focus is on first year students and not second and third year students, which is where the issues seem to be. Dr. Davis asked why retention rates have increased. Dr. Hosch stated that CCSU’s average SAT score has increased, which is most likely responsible for the increase in retention rates. A discussion occurred regarding SAT scores and their effect on retention rates. Dr. Lovitt asked if there is any data that can assist in understanding what occurs after students’ first year, which may cause them to leave CCSU. Dr. Hosch noted that CCSU’s third year retention rates are similar to peer institutions.

Dr. Hosch stated that he is in the process of a comprehensive look at full-time, first-time freshmen. This study will look at groups from 1999-2006, across as many variables as possible, in an effort to identify where the lack of progression occurred. A similar study will be done later this year for other students, especially transfer students. Dr. Toston asked if the report will contain information about “swirling.” Dr. Hosch explained that “swirl” and “churn” are terms used to describe students who are either concurrently registered or who leave for a semester to take classes elsewhere and then return to the University. Employment outside of the University is also part of the “swirl” and “churn” issues. In regards to Dr. Toston’s question, Dr. Hosch stated that “swirling” information will not be part of the initial report. However, it may be considered in future reports.

Ms. Hicks stated that she would like to see the impact that Charter Oak has on CCSU’s retention/graduation rates. Many students approach graduation and get frustrated in their major. Those students then go to an institute like Charter Oak, which offers a General Arts degree – a degree that CCSU does not offer. Dr. Hosch stated that he will be able to provide that data. Dr. Lovitt asked Ms. Hicks if she was also suggesting making a recommendation to the Curriculum Committee to consider offering a General Arts degree at CCSU. Dr. Lovitt used the School of Business situation as an example. A 2.5 GPA requirement was passed last year for all School of Business majors, which could result in losing 250 majors. Dr. Lovitt asked where those students are going to go. A brief discussion occurred.
Dr. Hosch completed a comprehensive study of CCSU’s NSSE results, which is available on the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment website, http://www.ccsu.edu/planning/. Dr. Hosch reviewed the results of this study. A discussion occurred.

Dr. Hosch announced that his office will be coordinating a series of webinars beginning in November. These webinars are sponsored by The Consortium for the Study of Retention Data Exchange. The dates/times/locations will be sent via e-mail.

**Subcommittee Reports**

**Part-time Students** – Ms. Hicks reported for this subcommittee. This subcommittee is moving forward with a plan to form an honor society for adult students. Ms. Schuberth has secured funding for this initiative.

**Transfer Students** – Dr. Davis reported for this subcommittee. This subcommittee has chosen to hold focus groups for transfer students as their action item. Three sessions will be held – October 9, 17, and 24. A list of questions were discussed, but have not been confirmed yet. A suggestion was made within the subcommittee to meet with the students again at the end of the semester, to see what could have been done to make their transition to CCSU better.

Dr. Davis reported that the pilot transfer advising sessions that were held during the summer were successful. Three additional dates have been scheduled – October 26, November 9, and December 14. Ms. Horan provided an update regarding the correspondence that will be sent out, notifying students of the transfer advising sessions.

**Residence Life Students** – Ms. Alicandro reported for this subcommittee. Ms. Alicandro discussed some issues that this subcommittee has been struggling with. Mr. Hazan stated that one of the key questions is: how many students are we losing because we do not have housing for them? However, he pointed out that this is not a retention/graduation question. Ms. Alicandro stated that the subcommittee has decided to focus more on incoming students.

**Commuter Students** – Mr. Hernandez reported that this subcommittee will be meeting soon.

**Students who Successfully Graduate within Six Years** - Ms. Leake reported for this subcommittee. Ms. Petrosino is working with Dr. Hosch regarding the data that was collected. Ms. Leake reported that the action plan for this subcommittee will be to look closely at the data.

Dr. Lovitt asked Dr. Greene to provide an update on the study he is performing, which looks at inactive students. Dr. Greene reported that approximately 350 calls have been made to date. However, because of the time that has elapsed, most of the telephone numbers are no longer accurate. Approximately 25 students were reached; the goal is to reach 50 students. Dr. Greene reported that of the 25 students that were reached, half left CCSU due to personal reasons and the other half left because of 1) parking, 2) not being able to get the courses they needed, 3) advising is terrible, 4) commuting is difficult, etc… Dr. Greene hopes to complete his study by the end of November.
**Miscellaneous Discussion Items**

Dr. Lovitt thanked everyone for their efforts and stated that he is very encouraged by all of the work that is being done. He acknowledged Ms. Horan, who will be giving an Advising Workshop for new faculty on Friday, October 12th.

Dr. Lovitt stated that the suggestion regarding a General Arts degree might be taken to Dean Pease for further study. Dr. Toston expressed some concern regarding this issue – specifically in finding a place for students after they have experienced failure. Dr. Toston suggested that we improve efforts at the front end to determine if students are truly a good match for CCSU. Dr. Craine suggested that CCSU might allow students to graduate with two or three minors, rather than a major and a minor. Dr. Craine also suggested looking at what other institutions offer. Ms. Garcia-Bowen noted that UCONN offers a BGS, which is very successful and geared towards non-traditional students. Dr. Lovitt reported that he has asked Dr. Craine to have the Senate reconsider its ban on offering on-line courses now that CSU Online has been disbanded. This issue will be brought forward to the Senate.

Dr. Lovitt asked Dr. Hosch to provide some information at the next meeting regarding 2nd/3rd year students. In addition, Dr. Lovitt suggested that the subcommittees might also look at this issue.

Ms. Chase asked a question regarding AdAstra. Dr. Lovitt will ask Ms. Petrosino to provide an update at the next meeting.

**SGA Update**

Ms. Horrax announced that the SGA would like to raise awareness about advising and registration. Posters will be put up around campus and e-mails containing advising and registration information will be sent out to students. SGA will be in the Student Center lobby on October 22 and 25 to provide information to students regarding advising/registration. Students will be able to meet SGA senators, perform a degree audit, and print unofficial transcripts. Ms. Horrax invited all members of the Retention/Graduation Council to come to this event.

Mr. Estrom stated that he has been collecting information regarding campus climate. He shared an e-mail, which he recently received, regarding a transfer student who was treated poorly when they visited one of the offices on campus. Mr. Estrom reminded everyone that this is a very easy issue to resolve by supervisors reminding their employees to treat students with kindness, understanding, and respect. Dr. Lovitt thanked Mr. Estrom for the update and asked that SGA updates be routinely put on the agenda.

**Action Items**

- Dr. Lovitt asked Dr. Hosch to provide some information at the next meeting regarding 2nd/3rd year students.
- Dr. Lovitt will ask Ms. Petrosino to provide an update on AdAstra at the next meeting.
- Dr. Lovitt would like SGA updates to be routinely put on the agenda.

The next Retention and Graduation Council meeting will be held on **Tuesday, November 14 at 1:00 p.m.** in the **Bellin Gallery, Student Center.**