

Deans Council Minutes
September 20, 2017
Leaders Conference Room

Present: Abraham, Ball, Berardini, Blair, Cossentino, Howell, Hripko, Licata, Mosca, Myers, Paul, Pintar, Sanders, Steelant, Swegan, Torres, and Ward

Guests: Heather White, Christina Hardy, Kim Verdone

First Day Ready Pilot Program

Ms. White explained two pilots were tested fall semester as part of the First Day Ready Program. The program allows students to have access to their course materials on the first day of the semester, and the students are billed for their materials through the Bursar's office. The program works when the same books/materials are used for all sections of a course. Barnes and Noble is then able to negotiate a rate with the publisher, which is at least 30 percent lower than the publisher's rate. The first pilot was for PSYCH 1560. The materials selected would have cost each student \$200. Using this program, the digital book cost students \$84.50, and students wishing to also use a print version paid an additional \$29. With a total cost of \$114, this was a savings of more than 40 percent. The fee for the materials are charged through the Bursar's office, so financial aid can help pay for the course materials. Ms. White stated the second pilot was for the Physical Therapy program. Students paid a total of \$900 for their classroom materials, in comparison to \$3,000 if using the traditional methods of purchasing textbooks and materials, for a savings of 70 percent. Ms. White explained other universities using this program have experienced a 41 percent decline in customer service complaints. A discussion ensued. Ms. White noted charges are not assessed until after the add/drop period, so students who drop the class will not be billed for the materials. She also noted that because the price is guaranteed to be at least 30 percent below the publisher's price, it would be difficult for students to secure the materials at a better cost. If students do not have access to the internet from home, they are able to access the information in the computer labs on campus. Barnes and Noble will help any students who have trouble accessing the materials. Ms. White noted she will learn how this affects students who are re-taking the class. She closed by saying the pilots were a success and she hopes the program can continue.

Career Fair

Ms. Hardy distributed booklets for the Career Fair that will take place on Wednesday, September 27, 2017, from 10:00 am. – 2:00 p.m., in Kilcawley Center. She asked the deans to reach out to faculty to let students (especially juniors and seniors) know the relevance of attending the fair. Last year, the student turnout was small, which may have led to the decline of the number of employers registered to participate this year (90 vs. 79). Ms. Hardy will share an email with deans who will forward to their faculty in the hopes of recruiting more students.

Clearing Undergraduate Students for Graduation

Associate Provost Ball stated there are too many students graduating from Youngstown State University who have not fulfilled the general education requirements. Ms. Verdone stated some of the problems include substitutions for general education courses that are not approved and senior sheets that have been signed off with unmet requirements. Ms. Verdone explained the process for senior sheets and added that for fall 2017, she proposes to eliminate the "paper" senior sheet and

use an electronic process so all colleges will be on the same page. A discussion ensued. It was decided that students' registration should be locked when they reach 75 credit hours. At this time, students will have to meet with their academic advisors to complete a pre-audit of their coursework to make sure they are on track to graduate on time and with the correct courses. The UAchieve system allows students to complete degree audits at any time, letting the students be aware of what is necessary to graduate. A list of students who did not graduate will be shared with the colleges to be filtered to the academic advisors to meet with the students and explain what is necessary to graduate.

Student Transfer Credit Evaluation Process

Dr. Ball stated the Ohio Department of Higher Education expects YSU to make the transfer process easy and seamless for students coming from other Ohio institutions. YSU has an average turnaround time of 30 days to complete student equates. That amount of time is too long, and we are losing students to other universities because they do a better job of transferring equates. Ms. Verdone explained the current process: First, courses are sent to Degree Audit. If an equate is not available, it is sent to the department chair. If the chair does not respond, it is sent to the dean. This process is better than a previous method, but it is still ineffective. Most institutions in Ohio promise a ten-day turnaround time. Ms. Verdone passed out three options for Council to review. After discussion, it was decided that Option 2 should be shared with the chairs. The deans were asked to obtain feedback from the chairs, and this item will be placed on the Deans Council agenda in October.

Approval of September 20, 2017 Minutes

Dean Sanders made a motion to approve the September 20, 2017, minutes. Dean Mosca seconded the motion. A vote was taken, and the minutes were approved.

Starfish

Associate Provost Berardini asked for feedback from the deans regarding Starfish usage, including what is liked/not liked about the system. She distributed handouts that showed Starfish alert data from Fall 2016 for courses with historically high D/F/W rates. She noted that the functionality of the software is okay, but she does not see any great impact in terms of results. Dr. Berardini indicated she has two concerns with Starfish: (1) When a student is flagged, faculty don't know what the outcome is; and (2) less than 40% of faculty use the product. The majority of flags that are raised are not lowered, meaning that either no contact has been made with the student or that the individual who performed the outreach did not lower the flag. Data from Fall 2016 showed that many flags for poor performances but a much smaller number for tutorial assistance. Academic advisors do not get information on the alerts. Basically, YSU has an alert system that is not working.

Dr. Berardini stated that in the past, peer mentors were assigned to reach out to first-year students who have received a flag for academic reasons. Therefore, the outreach came from someone the students did not know. As far as Dr. Berardini knows, academic advisors are not performing outreach. It was stated that courses with high D/F/W grades should be targeted. Council was in agreement that an early alert system is needed and is important, and the functionality of Starfish needs to increase.

Department Name Change for Department of Mechanical and Industrial Engineering

Dean Steelant announced the Department of Mechanical and Industrial Engineering wishes to change its name to the Department of Mechanical, Industrial, and Manufacturing Engineering to be inclusive of the three programs offered within the department. Dean Licata made a motion to support the name change. Dean Blair seconded the motion. A vote was taken, and the motion was approved. This change will be presented to the Board of Trustees in December.

Plan for Improving Use of New Student Evaluation of Teaching

If the new contract is accepted, new language states that students will be evaluating all faculty every semester for every course. YSU has purchased software to guarantee at least a 65% response rate from students. In the new system, all responses are completed electronically. Students will be able to complete evaluation forms on their smart phones. The demo indicated faculty can send emails to students to encourage them to complete the student evaluation of teaching. A discussion ensued. Faculty need to know that evaluations are a positive mechanism to get constructive feedback from students. It was stated that students have to want to complete the evaluations. Part-time faculty need to know that continual poor evaluations is a reason for discharge. Untenured faculty need to know positive responses are helpful for tenure and evaluation purposes. A firm plan to communicate to faculty should be implemented early in the semester.

Schedule of Operations

Associate Provost Pintar asked for comments on the schedule of operations. She noted that in Spring 2019, the semester begins on January 14. It was determined the January 7 start date would be too early for students to move in. There were some concerns that January 14 is late, but the schedule will correct itself by fall semester. These dates have been given to Financial Aid.

Adjournment

With no further business to come before Council, the meeting was adjourned at 3:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Jodi Clowes