

Admissions and Student Aid Committee

Minutes

4/4/14

In attendance: Marc Harding, Robin Kear (chair), Hillary Koller, Juan Manfredi, Sanjeev Shroff, Janice Vance, Anna Mary Williford

Regrets: Linda Dudjak, Amanda Folk, Carol Mohamed, Ellie Tsatsos

On Leave: Laura Fonzi

Kenyon Bonner presented on student affairs and their programs to increase retention. Kenyon Bonner is in his ninth year serving as the director of student life and his fifth year serving in the role of associate dean of students. He is responsible for managing a comprehensive educational and social program for Pitt students. Bonner also oversees the Office of Cross-Cultural and Leadership Development and the Office of International Services, along with the University's RISE mentorship program.

The first-time first year undergraduate retention for fall 2011-12 was 92.8%. The first-time first year undergraduate retention for fall 2012-13 was 91%. The ideal percentage is 96-97%.

There are various pre-matriculation efforts to make connections with students. Programs include: PittStart from Office of Admissions & Financial Aid; the Virtual First Year Experience; the 2-day Pitt Odyssey Retreat; and regional gatherings called Parent Send-offs.

The week before classes begin in the fall student affairs holds the new student orientation. This includes social events, school presentations, healthy U, student activities fair, peer mentoring, and presentations on alcohol, campus safety, sexual assault, and mental health. 96% of students surveyed about the orientation agree/strongly agree that this makes them feel connected to Pitt. Outreach to commuter (3% of them are commuters) and international students also occurs during orientation. There is also a spring orientation.

The first 6 weeks of school is essential for retention. There are many strategies aimed at this time period. These include: Resident Advisor Community Development Plan, MAP-Works pilot to survey the risk level of students early in the term, and Panther Reach, where staff reach out personally to each first-year with phone calls.

There are also ongoing programs to assist with retention including the career fair, majors & minors expo, volunteer fair, Pitt Make a Difference Day, and the International Student Associates Program. Other initiatives include FOCUS, SSS, PITT EXCEL, Roberto Clemente MBA, RISE mentoring program, and graduate student mentors.

This was the last meeting for the academic year 2013-14.