

MINUTES

Enrollment Management (Standing Committee) Meeting November 29, 2011 – Executive Conference Room

Members Present: Dr. John Schmidt, Buddy Starling, Larry Hawkins, David Amponsah, Vickie Miles, John Jinright, Curt Porter, David Griffin, Stacy Jones, Robert Allen, Hal Fulmer, and Jack Miller.

The meeting was called to order by Dr. John Schmidt, Chair. After a brief welcome and introductions from the committee members, a motion was made by Hal Fulmer to accept the minutes from the Spring 11 meeting. The motion was seconded by Vickie Miles and minutes from the Spring 11 meeting were approved.

In his introductory remarks, Dr. Schmidt reminded everyone that recruitment was the responsibility of everyone and that he has really appreciated the collaboration that now exists between Deans and enrollment. He also commented that, as a University, we should all be very pleased that our retention rate is now 80% and credited the efforts of First-Year Studies for the progress that has been made in improving retention.

In accordance with the agenda, Dr. Schmidt asked Buddy Starling to provide a Fall 2011 Enrollment Report. Starling distributed a number of handouts related to Fall 11 enrollment including a total headcount comparison showing a decline in enrollment as well as data reflecting the numbers of denied students by locations since 2005. Starling indicated that the Fall 11 data clearly shows the influence of the new admission requirements. The enrollment information initiated comments from a number of committee members who shared insights into factors they feel have affected enrollment:

Dr. Curt Porter suggested that cost of attendance was certainly a factor in declining enrollment and Jack Miller offered that prospective students and employers are possibly questioning the value of a college degree. Additionally, Mr. Miller indicated that the teachers market for the Phenix City campus had disappeared for all practical purposes. Dr. David Amponsah offered that perhaps international student enrollment/retention would improve by making faculty more aware of the needs of international students. He suggested having top level administrators attend faculty meetings and remind faculty that international students often need a higher level of understanding and sensitivity from faculty. Dr. Porter agreed and indicted that such action could have prevented the loss of Saudi students this fall.

In additional conversation regarding enrollment, Dr. Schmidt said that the immediate goal was to return enrollment to 30,000 students, which is where we were in 2009.

Regarding Strategic Objective 2.8, Dr. Schmidt reminded the committee that this objective is integrated with other strategic objectives (1.1, 1.2, 1.3, and 1.4 specifically) and that coordination needs to occur among and between appropriate objectives. Starling distributed a number of handouts related to 2.8 to reflect the progress that is ongoing in completing those goals.

Dr. Schmidt also made comments on the changes going on with military tuition assistance which result in decreasing benefits. Additionally, he made reference to the troop pull-outs in Iraq and suggested that with the substantial reduction in force that is taking place, unemployment will be affected. He also shared the fact that he felt the University's decision to recruit beyond the military was a good one, although the military remains a very viable market.

In further discussion:

Robert Allen questioned the relevance of our general studies program as it exists today and shared his concern that it offers a recruiting disadvantage for us in certain markets. Several committee members shared similar concerns. Hal Fulmer responded by saying that the general studies program is currently under assessment and offered some potential options to what is currently offered. Dr. Porter suggested that as part of the assessment, cost should be an important consideration. Fulmer reminded the committee that many institutions today still look like us regarding general studies.

Jack Miller stated that the University needs to focus on the demand for certificate programs in our various markets, particularly the degrees related to employment. His major concern was associated with the fact that students enrolled in certificate programs are not eligible for financial aid.

Vickie Miles stated that the credit by examination programs (AP, IB, AICE) are also currently under review for the purposes of expanding what we currently accept.

Dr. Schmidt informed the committee of the building of a Newman Center (residence hall) by Fall 2013. By having the Newman Center online, the opportunity for renovating Alumni Hall would be made available. He also updated everyone on the doctoral program in sport and fitness management, indicating that it had great potential. He added that the program already has SACS approval but ACHE is presenting a problem.

Dr. Schmidt asked committee members for other items of business. Hearing none the meeting was adjourned.