

Meeting Minutes – University Senate

Student Admissions, Aid and Affairs Committee

Date: February 18, 2016
Time: 4:00 – 5:00 PM
Location: 272 Hillman Library
Facilitator: Robin Kear (Co-Chair)
Note Taker: Chyongchiou (Cho Cho) Jeng Lin (Co-Chair)

Attendees:

Elected members: Lance Davidson, Ray Jones, Robin Kear, Julius Kitutu, Steve Levine, Cho Cho Lin, Juan Taboas

Student representative: David Gau, Nasreen Harun

Staff Association Council:

Chancellor’s liaisons: Kenyon Bonner, Penny Semaia

Senate Appointment: Mike Spring

Guests: Kim Barlow (University Times), Joe Kozak (GPSG), Stephanie Hoogendoorn (Office of the Provost), Josh Ye (Pitt News)

Agenda Items

1. **Existing graduate services by school - final summary and next steps** (Hoogendoorn)
Ms. Hoogendoorn’s final presentation of the interviews with more than 30 administrators in 14 schools. Each interview lasted for one to 1.5 hours.

Discussion included recruitment, the campus visit, orientations, housing, teaching, research, career development, student organizations, and communications.

The identified gaps were:

- 1) Recruitment – best practices, funding, diversity, developing pipelines (mentioned 5 times)
- 2) Counseling Center – wait too long (mentioned 4 times)
- 3) Technology Issues (disparate systems for admin-side student information) (mentioned 4 times)
- 4) Housing support information (mentioned 3 times)
- 5) Removing barriers to collaborate across school boundaries (mentioned 2 times)
- 6) Cultivating diversity (mentioned 2 times)
- 7) Writing Center for international students (mentioned 2 times)
- 8) Incorporate professional development into curriculum (mentioned 2 times)
- 9) Career Services for non-health sciences (this and all below were mentioned 1 time)
- 10) English Language Institute – more classes
- 11) Expertise to assist with grant/fellowship applications
- 12) Scholarships

- 13) Develop stronger alumni ties
- 14) Childcare support — retention issue for women
- 15) First-year retention — first-year review is essential
- 16) Using placement data

Activities in progress:

- **Orientations** – UCGS Student Affairs to look expansion this semester and the OTP to offer more support
- **Minority Recruiting** – Graduate Associate Dean Group chaired by Dr. Sbragia
 - Recently conducted a survey of schools to inform the discussion.
- Looking at **gaps in technology** to address information needs
 - Customer Relationship Management system
 - PeopleSoft functionality
 - Support for cross-disciplinary programs
- Investigating a new **graduate satisfaction survey** that is being piloted elsewhere.
- Interested in providing **staff increased support** via sharing of best practices and increasing touch points to answer questions
- Goal: Inform **faculty of existing resources** so that they can better advise their students
- Goal: Improve **graduate studies website** to better communicate offered resources

2. **Committee Discussion** – (All)

A discussion of all of the information related to graduate students presented to the committee since the November meeting. How are we going to proceed as a committee? Our committee's goal is not to dictate particular activities at particular schools. We don't need to articulate certain things. We may report as: Our Committee members have noticed gaps in..., we encourage University to make some services more visible, etc.

- 3. See Kim Barlow's University Times article 'Senate committee gathers more info on graduate student issues' on 3/3/16 <http://www.utimes.pitt.edu/?p=38204>
- 4. See Josh Ye's Pitt News article <http://pittnews.com/article/68680/news/university-senate-considers-graduate-programing/>

Action Item:

We are going to create a report our findings.

Next Meeting: Thursday, March 17, 2016, 4-5 pm, 272 Hillman Library