President's Retention Taskforce Committee (Fall 2015)
Meeting Minutes for September 4, 2015

Present: Carolyn Ashe, Ron Beebe, Chris Birchak, Jemma Caesar, Chris Cheatum, Carmen Cuevas, Ermelinda Delavina, Louis Evans, Sara Farris, RaShonda Flint, Bill Flores, Isidro Grau, Poonam Gulati, Ed Hugetz, Faiza Khoja, Tomikia LeGrande, Susan Henney, Souraya Mitri, Lisa Morano, Bill Pogue, Tim Redl, David Ryden, Tommy Thomason, Laura Wesley

Absent: Greg Dement, Gary Greer, Paulette Purdy

I.   Welcome & Introductions

Members introduced themselves and the area represented. Everyone was asked to share a reflection of working with UHD students or to share how they like to spend their free time. President Flores introduced Lisa Morano as the Chair of the Retention Task Force for 2015-2016.

II.   President's Charge & Vision, Flores

President Flores commented that we have made progress in several areas of student success. He reviewed the significance of the first-time in college (FTIC) graduation rate. Although the incoming FTIC freshman students make up only 900 or so of our student total they are the only students considered in our FTIC graduation rate. Last year our FTIC graduation rate had increased to 19% and this year it will be back down to 13%. This puts UHD very low on numerous lists for worst institutions based on its drop-out rate. This also makes UHD one of the worst universities in the state by this measure. President Flores was very clear that we are going to raise this number. The President then went over the charge for the committee. *The charge has been copied into these minutes so it can be part of the record of the first meeting.*

Retention Task Force Committee Charge (2015-2016)

- Take an immediate inventory of current retention programs, practices, efforts and strategies. This should include those both in and out of the classroom (curricular and co-curricular), student support services, financial aid, early alert, tutoring, supplemental instruction, intrusive advising, student life, career services, study abroad, and other high impact opportunities.
    o Evaluate which services are proving most effective, and how consistently they are applied; identify those areas that need improvement, and suggest recommendations.
    o Determine if we are collecting and using the data we need to evaluate an intervention's effectiveness.
    o Determine whether or not we have the right software, technology, and support to track our students so we can effectively analyze retention and graduation rates.
    o Consider how we can better support students, particularly those admitted conditionally; improve probation and suspension policies and practices; create joint admissions policies with community colleges; and other ways we can support student success.
    o Solicit recommendations from each division, including academic departments and colleges to determine which initiatives could be expanded campus-wide.

- Bring in experts to help evaluate how UHD can improve its work in the area of retention and graduation, as well as better implement initiatives proposed by the Retention Taskforce.

- Review best practices at other institutions with high populations of low-income, minority, and underserved students who have increased their FTIC retention and graduation rates, including peer institutions.

- Examine how communication flows from one area to another and recommend improvements needed for retention practices, such as Early Alert. UHD is engaged in multiple activities to improve retention. Some of these include support for classroom teaching and learning, co-curricular support, mentoring and advising, enrollment, and orientation. What are the critical links between these programs and how can the links be strengthened?

III.   Chair's Remarks, Morano

Lisa passed out a handout of organizational thoughts for the first meeting based on conversations she had with those who have been working on UHDs retention issues for many years. She reiterated the goal of the Task Force to "Raise the FTIC retention and graduation numbers. This is a small number of students and we need a highly structure plan to address the needs of these students so we can improve their success." She called on Tomikia LeGrande and Bill Waller to give updates on the issue from their respective areas of expertise.

IV.   Updates

Tomikia brought a handout of FTIC numbers. She showed the freshman numbers as the percentage of the fall 2015 enrollment. The trend shows we are admitting fewer freshman (but the students do have higher SAT scores). She also showed a graduation report by cohort. This table showed our target percentage for summer III of each year and our target percentage for that cohort (years 2015-2020). For example, our summer III 2015 target was 19% and but our actual graduation was only 13.3%. The table also showed how many students have filed for graduation. The graduation table is followed by a retention report table which showed how many students we are losing each year. We are also not meeting our retention targets and we must obviously retain students to graduate them.

Bill Waller walked the group through a presentation handout containing useful retention information. He highlighted slides on progress of the 40th anniversary freshman class and where UHD ranks with national norms. UHD is actually in the median of schools like ours during the first year, but by the second year we are below the 25th percentile for retention. He reviewed what it is the experts recommend (many of these initiatives or activities UHD has started or is considering). Remaining slides cover what experts recommend, what experts believe don't work and national and potential UHD game changers. Bill also passed out a large handout which is a draft summary of the strategic retention plan from University College. It includes a summary of current initiatives and recommendations for new initiatives (many of which will require working with departments and faculty more directly). He coded items in the table as items 1-4. Item codes indicate 1. Potential task force topic, 2. Ongoing or recently started initiative, 3. Complete College America items and 4. Grant-

funded or possible grant idea projects. Bill was asked whether this was an exhaustive list. He explained that it is UCC focused list and although he included items outside of his area when he knew about them it is likely that there are programs or initiatives that are not represented. It is presented as a starting point for creating our summaries and for discussion.

V.   Task force Discussion

Lisa reviewed two large areas where we need to start working right away. The first area is to address the charge of taking a current inventory of all UHD programs, practices, efforts and strategies. In order to do this she suggested we break into subcommittees based on areas of expertise. Each subcommittee would create one page summaries of individual efforts that fell within that group. For each effort we should have a description of the retention effort, what the goals were, who were the students targeted, an explanation of how students were selected, what assessment exists on the effort and what do the assessments indicate. It was suggested that we break into subcommittees of Academic Support, Academic/Co-curricular, Student Support, Enrollment and Orientation. There was no opposition to these categories. Lisa stated she would send an email and have people reply with their first and second choice of subcommittee.
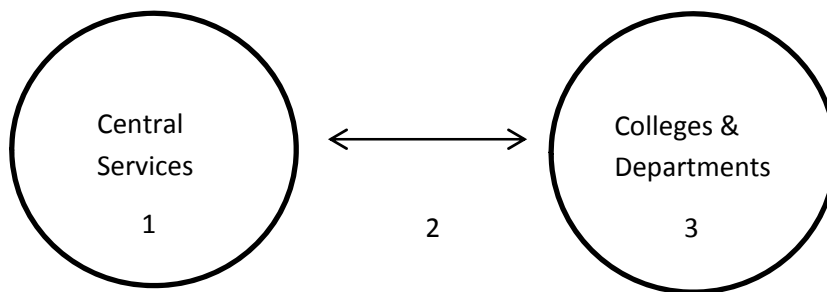
A second area for us to begin considering is the creation of a unified and structured plan. We will begin to look at what other universities have done and bring that to the group for discussion. Lisa also presented a model of balancing centralized and de-centralized efforts as we build a proposal for FTIC success. We need to consider what services or support the student will need to get from central entities and what support students will get at the college or departmental (or faculty) level and most critically how these two components will communicate. Over the next several months we need to start considering what are the critical components of a plan to support FTICs and how the critical components will work effectively with each other.

The next big meeting will be October 2nd. Subcommittees will meet before that date.

UHD Retention Task Force
September 4th 9:30-11 in N602
Organizational Thoughts – Morano

GOAL: "Raise the FTIC retention and graduation numbers. This is a small number of students and we need a highly structured plan to address the needs of these students so we can improve their success."

1. Current Inventory Charge
    a. Create one page summaries of each retention effort that UHD has initiated in recent history (last couple of years?)
        i. What was the retention effort? What were the goals?
        ii. Who were the students targeted? How were they selected?
        iii. What assessment do we have per effort? What do the assessments indicate?
    b. Divide ourselves into groups to develop one page summaries so that those with the greatest expertise can assist in getting this done as quickly as possible.
        i. Brainstorm on division of labor so all retention efforts can be analyzed.
        ii. Possible groups could be: Academic (tutoring, mentoring, supplemental instruction, course redesign), Academic Co-curricular (QEP, service learning, student activities), Student support services (career center, financial aid, central advising, college advising), Enrollment and orientation (admission standards, orientation, new student programs).

2. Consideration of a Structured Plan
    a. What have other universities (like ours) done? (We have some information here.)
    b. Balance of Centralized and Decentralized Efforts

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  |  Services  |                        | Departments |
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        i. What central services will we need to support all the sub-populations of FTICs?
        ii. What services at the colleges or departments will need to be created to support specific sub-populations of FTICs?
    c. Communication mechanisms between all parties will need to be purposeful and include feedback.
    d. What are the essential ingredients needed for 1, 2 and 3?
3. Communication to UHD community, previous & future retention groups, other issues?