

2018-2019 Annual Report

Council on Enrollment and Student Progress

Overview

MAIN ACTIVITIES

During the 2018-2019 academic year, the Council on Enrollment and Student Progress (CESP) undertook the following major activities.

1. Heard and responded to reports on student enrollment and progress from various offices under the purview of Dr. Beth Hume in the Office of Student Academic Success (OSAS).
2. Developed a role for the Dean of the Graduate School on CESP in accordance with the aspect of our charge related to the graduate student population of OSU.
3. Worked to increase time for discussion and decision making by the members of the committee by limiting the number and duration of reports and appropriately structuring the agenda.
4. Increased integration between the committee and the offices of Dr. Hume through agenda-setting meetings with the chair of CESP in advance of each CESP meeting and through administrative coordination of the committee's work from Dr. Hume's executive assistant.
5. Selected a focus area based on the analysis of student progress data that groups students into Green (most likely to graduate), Yellow, Orange, and Red (least likely to graduate) groups based on first and second semester freshman GPAs. The Orange group is large (~3000 freshmen) graduates at a demonstrably lower rate than the green or yellow groups. Traditionally, the Red group, with very low graduation rates, has been an obvious focus of attention from advisors and counselors, but the Orange group has not been studied as carefully. CESP decided to focus on understanding the Orange group this year.

COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

As stipulated in the Committee Bylaws, the committee is composed of members representing various stakeholders. Previously, the two provost's designees were the leaders of separate units (Enrollment Services and Undergraduate Education) that have now merged into one, the Office of Student Academic Success (OSAS). Presently, Dr. Beth Hume is the Associate Provost for Student Academic Success and Dean of Undergraduate Education, and she is the sole designee to the committee from OSAS.

Consistent with the interest of the committee in paying more attention to the aspect of its charge regarding graduate students, the second provost's designee is now the Dean of the Graduate School, Dr. Alicia Bertone.

Member	Source	Term Expires
Barnett, Chase	USG	2019
Black, Beth	Faculty Council	2019
Brosnan, Patti	Faculty Council	2021
Buford, John - CESP Chair	Faculty Council	2020
Cole, Susan	Faculty Council	2020
Cressman, Sophie	IPC	2019
DeBacker, Riley	CGS	2019
Kline, Susan	University President	2021

Loper, Alan	University President	2019
Lopez-Ruiz, Carolina	Faculty Council	2020
Marzette, Russell	University President	2020
McWhorter, Samantha	CGS	2019
Mendoza, Jorge-Eduardo	IPC	2019
Sullivan, Kimmy	USG	2019
Valco, George	Faculty Council	2019
Bertone, Alicia – GS VP	Provost designee	Ex-officio
Hume, Beth – UE VP	Provost designee	Ex-officio
Alternate		
Stokes, Taylor	USG Alternate	2019

COMMITTEE LEADERSHIP

Dr. John Buford, Professor and Director of the Physical Therapy Division in the School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences, was elected chair, taking over from Dr. Alan Loper, Professor of Mathematics. Dr. Susan Cole, Professor of Molecular Genetics, was elected Vice-Chair. On this committee, the vice-chair assumes the role of chair in the following year. However, in the Spring of 2019, we learned that Dr. Cole was moving into a leadership role in the Senate. Mr. Russell K. Marzette Jr., Assistant Professor of Practice in Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering, was elected as vice chair for the 2019-2020 year, so upon learning of Dr. Cole's new role, Mr. Russell K. Marzette Jr. assumed the role of chair. A new vice chair will be selected by the committee to begin its business for the 2019-2020 year.

Summary of Meetings

SEPTEMBER 9, 2011

The committee reviewed its charge and organizational structure, and typical duties. Dr. Hume explained the strategic planning process that had led to the development of OSAS and updated the committee on the general scope of activities for this new office and the associated restructuring of leadership. She explained that a new position, associate vice president for strategic enrollment planning would be created to lead that office. The committee discussed strategic enrollment planning, learning what it is and why we need it, as well as the practices surrounding holistic review of applications.

The committee then discussed high priority activities for the 2018-2019 year. Based on an analysis from the office of enrollment services analysis and reporting, Gary Kennedy updated the committee on a statistical approach he employed that produced a grouping of students into four groups based on the relationship between their first and second semester GPA (for first year freshman) and their ultimate 4 and 6 year graduation rates. He color-coded them as green, yellow, orange, and red, with green being most likely to graduate (green = go), and red least likely. Although the green and yellow groups could be statistically separated, there was little to no practical differences in their graduation rates, which are in the upper 90 percent range. The red group is obviously at risk, with initial GPAs below 2.0, and their graduation rate is low, which is not surprising; this is also a relatively small group. The orange group, however, might not raise initial alarm. Many have one semester above 3.0, and another slightly below. Overall, their average GPA is around 3.0, but despite this, they are significantly less likely to graduate on time, about 15% less likely than the green and yellow groups. The orange group is large, as much as a

third or more of the freshman class. A good deal of advising attention is naturally directed at the red group, but we may need a program to do more with the orange group. A significant impact on this group could have a significant impact on graduation rates. The initial analysis indicates that about 75% of those in the orange group are majoring in engineering or biology. The committee hypothesized that, in these programs, without a strong start, student may decide their goals are unattainable and this could drive the low graduation rate. It should be noted that the graduation rates above are graduation from any bachelor's program, even if the student transfers out of OSU. Thus, a significant number of those in the orange group, who were strong enough to be admitted to OSU's Columbus campus as freshmen, do not get a bachelors degree from anywhere within 6 years. The committee decided to focus on this issue for the year.

Other ideas for priority activities included revisiting the 18 credit rule, monitoring the impact of the GE revision on student progress, and seeking information about the impact of closed door majors on graduation (Randy Smith's office is examining this issue).

OCTOBER 2, 2019

Susan Cole was chosen as vice chair/chair elect. John Wanzer presented a plan for uniform criteria for a Dean's List. After a brief discussion, the committee endorsed this proposal with unanimous consent. Gail Stephenoff presented the 15th day enrollment data. Total enrollment was at a record high, and most categories of diversity also reached record highs. Some programs have capped enrollment. The number of offers was not higher than usual, but we had a strong yield. Our first year retention rate is 94.5%. The committee discussed the potential impact of the new GE structure. Committee members encouraged the registrar and enrollment planning to run models and scenarios to ensure that, as new requirements are instituted, it is not left to chance and voluntary action by course offering units to meet the need. Rather, there must be assurance that, if we implement new requirements, there is the capacity in the system for students to enroll in courses that will meet the need. Otherwise, there will be a negative impact on student progress. The committee then returned to discussion of issues pertaining to the orange group. There are about 3000 freshmen in this group. The STEM fields are over represented. The committee continued to explore the hypothesis that these students might be 'doing fine' in school in a general sense, but if their goal is something like engineering or medicine, 'doing fine' may not be good enough. The question arose about students applying to majors and whether there was centralized data to know which majors a student applied to, which ones accepted them, and which did not. This would be useful to see if students in the Orange group are affected by not being admitted to their preferred major, where this is a strong factor in their future progress beyond being in the Orange group. Centrally, the university knows the outcome for students who enter particular majors, but the decision making and tracking of the interim stages occurs at the local unit level. The committee suggested that, in developing new software for the registrar, attention should be paid to developing a way to track student applications to majors within the university, across time. Students who do not get into their chosen major, many of whom are in the orange group, might require additional advising support sophomore and junior year to find the right career path.

NOVEMBER 6, 2019

Dean Bertone joined the committee as the second provost's designee. Jack Miner (Registrar) provided a summary of a new uniform policy on how to evaluate international credit transfer applications. The committee voted unanimously to endorse the proposal. The Committee also approved the academic

calendar for the 2027 – 2028. The discussion then returned to the progress of the orange group. In this case, we focused on the consequences for financial aid to determine whether the academic performance issues of this group might have combinatory effects on financial aid eligibility that interact in some way. For example, many scholarships require a certain GPA, often 3.0 or better, to remain eligible. If students in the orange group fall below that level, this could be impacting their graduation rate as financial difficulties pile up. The committee discussed the possibility of programs and incentives that might increase the success of the students in the orange group. The office of student financial aid expressed interest in this concept and expected to continue considering these ideas. Dr. Hume presented an update on the progress in the OSAS, centering around the unit's new strategic plan. Dr. Bertone provided a summary of the structure of the graduate school and explained how graduate student enrollment works around the university. PhD enrollment is largely driven by the success and funding of the local department and is not dictated by the graduate school. Understanding the increasing need for graduate education in our high tech, service-based economy will require new ways of thinking about graduate education, well beyond the traditional PhD – professor route.

JANUARY 8, 2019

This meeting was principally devoted to learning about the graduate school and its admissions and progress from Dean Bertone. Overall graduate school enrollment has been stable for the past decade. However, in the past year, PhD admissions rose dramatically. It is thought this reflects a larger number of early offers, administrative efforts to make decisions faster, and an increase in the number of fellowship offers. The committee discussed recent reductions in funding for PhD students in Arts and Sciences. Dean Bertone explained that these were local decisions not driven by the graduate school. Her understanding is that the goal was to reduce the budget in this one college and to encourage faculty to find collaborative new ways of funding the appropriate number of graduate students. She emphasized the value of grad students that far exceeds their GTA or GRA duties and expressed strong support from the graduate school for the necessity of graduate students to help faculty and the university be its best. The graduate school is working with CFAES and the Department of Dance to develop predictors for graduate student success, with a similar over-arching goal as described above for the Orange group. Of course, with graduate students, predictors and red flags are likely to be quite different. The grad school is also looking at the student-advisor relationship for PhD students. There is currently no evaluation of PhD advisors with student input, and advisors are not always clear in their evaluation of students. The grad school is interested in developing a more comprehensive system for evaluating programs and advisors that would support continuous quality improvement. The grad school is also considering the next Gen Life Sciences Coalition. This would require increased measurement of graduate student metrics, which would be a good thing. The committee also reviewed concepts around the credit hour requirements for graduation, the value of GTAs over lecturers for the overall mission of the university. The committee discussed ways to get better metrics on graduate student progress in order to be able to identify and solve problems, and how to best use CESP to benefit the grad school mission. Dean Bertone expressed the value of seeing all the activities ongoing at the undergraduate level in spurring ideas for better metrics of graduate school progress. She looks forward to continued engagement in CESPT, with perhaps one CESP meeting per year devoted largely to graduate student enrollment and progress.

FEBRUARY 5, 2019

The committee spent some time discussing any future priorities. There is continuing interest in knowing the effect of changes in the GE on student progress. Michele Brown provided an update on the College Credit Plus (CCP) program, which is overseen by a subcommittee of CAA. Around the state, most CCP students enroll in community colleges. This program is still relatively new in the state. At Ohio State, students must come to OSU, and therefore be admitted, to participate. OSU's participation in this program is similar to that of our peers that require classes to be taken on campus. The committee then revisited the concept of the Orange group. An analysis was done to see the impact of students enrolled in STEM majors vs. others. Overall, it seems that students in the orange group have similar graduation rates regardless of whether they are in a STEM major. Those in STEM majors are likely to take longer to graduate than non-STEM majors in the orange group, but this does not appear to depend on membership in the Orange group; STEM majors often take longer to graduate regardless of whether they are in the green, yellow, orange, or red group. Various thoughts on this finding were discussed. The committee expressed interest in knowing how often students in the green, yellow, orange, and red groups utilize advising services. This will be difficult to track, but staff will consider ideas. The committee discussed the variation among course offerings in large, multi-section courses. Students are aware that different professors teach differently and may work to select courses taught by the 'easier' instructors (or to take the one taught by the 'best teacher'). How consistent is the quality of the experience for GTAs among different professors? Likewise, the quality among GTAs varies, so students in different sections may learn differently. Is this something we should be concerned about? Should there be more uniformity among faculty in their syllabi for courses with multiple offerings? Are college curriculum committees actively monitoring this? The committee asked undergraduate and graduate student representatives to check back with their constituencies to determine what there is a desire for CESP to get involved in these issues.

MARCH 5, 2019

Randy Smith, Meg Daly and Larry Krissek provided an update on the GE revision. The committee asked a number of wide ranging questions. In particular, CESP wants to be sure that the implementation of the GE is planned so that there will be sufficient capacity in required courses and so that the requirements are attainable. We do not want the new GE to have negative impacts on student progress; we hope it will have positive impacts. Shanna Jaggars presented on a Joyce Foundation Grant based on the American Talent Initiative. This is a program forming a coalition among large institutions to increase enrollment of low and moderate income students. Community College transfers have been shown to help achieve this goal. However, there are problems in the transfer process that can hold students back from participating, or reduce their rate of progress when they do. The grant is aimed at understanding the causes of these issues and developing proposed solutions. The committee engaged with Dr. Jaggars on questions surrounding this issue, seeking to learn more about difficulties faced by transfer students and solutions and programs presently in place. The registrar, Jack Miner, presented information on a request to collect additional diversity information on students from the MENA (middle Eastern North African) group. Presently, we do what is required by the US DOE. The common App allows us to request additional information, and it is expected we will be able to gain this and other additional details through that source. It is also expected that the transition to workday will provide a better ability to access and analyze these data.

APRIL 2, 2019

The committee heard an update from the Suicide and Mental health implementation Team which recommended a uniform mental health withdrawal policy. Students may be afraid to ask for a withdrawal for this reason due to stigma and unknown academic consequences. The idea would be to allow withdrawal from an entire course load resulting in a W for all courses rather than one at a time. At this stage, such cases are handled as special circumstances, and the university is generally supportive of withdrawal for mental health reasons, just as for medical reasons. However, students may not know this. This was a generative discussion with the committee. Suggestions included consulting with counseling services and the Wilce student health center, modeling processes after those used by the office of disability service and perhaps empowering that office to make the determination and lead the administration of this policy, a suggestion to work with student financial aid to be sure to consider the consequences of withdrawal in implementing such a policy, and considering the requirements to allow a return to classes. The committee also heard a recommendation for a unified absence policy proposed by USG. There is variation in how faculty respond to requests for absence (esp when it requires a makeup). There are stories of faculty requesting proof of religious participation, for example. A list of possible reasons was presented. The committee noted that things such as attending scientific or educational conferences in the student's field of study, intercollegiate athletics, etc., were not listed. More work needs to be done on this draft policy. The results of the Gallup study on alumni engagement was provided. OSU was in the lead compared to all comparison groups in several areas, including the academic challenge, preparation for life, experiencing diversity, being a perfect fit, and being an institution necessary to the world. We were average in the perceived value of the education and for our perceived interest in long term success of our alumni. Overall this was a positive set of results. Further analysis was completed on the at risk students (orange and red). These students seem to experience more academic stress, have a lower opinion toward educators, had less confidence in their study skills, but also wanted less help with academics and career advice. Their principal concerns seem to revolve money and external stressors (family and mental health). The meeting concluded with a year-end summary and thanks to all, especially those completing their terms.

Summary

The committee made significant progress in understanding the underlying factors associated with the orange group and identified areas needing further analysis. In particular, it seems that financial stress and other external factors, along with choosing demanding majors, are associated with being in the orange group. These students could probably benefit from programs designed to develop skills in time management, study skills, financial planning and budgeting skills, and building more positive relationships with faculty and academic advisors. They also might benefit from career advising earlier in their college career, especially around the time when they may need to switch majors. Addressing these issues early, in the freshman and sophomore years, through large scale programming would be important to get students engaged and keep them on track. The fourth and fifth years seem to be particularly associated with leaving college, and this may require individual attention. This should continue to be a focus of the committee in the next few years.

Adding Dr. Bertone as a representative from the graduate school was valuable. However, it may not be worthwhile for her to attend every meeting. More likely, having one or two meetings a year devoted in part to issues around enrollment and progress for graduate students would probably be enough.



Future issues to keep in focus for the committee will be the impact of the change in the GE on enrollment and progress