

General Education Council

Minutes

February 16, 2015

Members present: Jeremy Tost, Byron Brown, Catherine Schaeffer, Jane Kinney, Lai Orenduff

Members absent: Gayle Taylor, Mark Smith

Guest: Dr. Denise Reid, Department of Mathematics: What the Math Department is doing to help at-risk students and retention rates.

New Business:

- 1) At-risk Math students:** Dr. Denise Reid of the Mathematics and Computer Science Department discussed how they've been making strides in advancing at-risk students. The department is helping at-risk students and retention rates by creating a system by which freshmen students are given a score of 1-4 based on GPA, SAT, and previous math courses taken. They created a 5-day-a-week class for students who received a score of one. The course is still three hours, but gives the students two extra days to come into an open lab where they practice problems. Additionally, there is another lab open where students can go and ask questions or get more help. Students love the additional help because they can stay in their own building and not have to go over the Student Success Center. The department has decreased its DFW rate, and two-thirds of the at-risk students received an A, B, or a C after completing the class.
- 2) CORE classes:** How to help students relate core classes to real life? One AREA title could be "Cultural Competency" and list classes that they could take to increase their knowledge in this area. We need to train those in Centralized Advising to help students focus on what the CORE areas mean and how they link to other classes students will take later in college. Much of the problem lies in the delivery method. There needs to be a different way to present the information. It is also important to include faculty and to make sure that their syllabi explain what the CORE classes mean. The Committee discussed the possibility of spreading the CORE classes over the entire college experience instead of having them all at the beginning of college. A name change from CORE curriculum to General Education was also discussed. We want students to feel that the Core is meaningful and not just a checklist. Michael Black has a study that looked at the CORE classes that have been offered over the last five years, and he will send a copy of this to the committee.
- 3) Good advising:** Continue to work closely with Centralized Advising. The Mastering Advising Series is a program on campus through which VSU advisors can receive a Master Advising certificate. CORE could offer a module that the advisors would have to pass in order to obtain the certificate.

- 4) **Action steps selection-** Committee is still in the process of selecting one or two of the action steps from the Comprehensive Program Review, fall 14.

Next meeting: Monday, March 16 at 3:30 at Nevins 1060

Respectfully submitted,
David Daniel