Council on Retention and Graduation
Meeting Minutes
November 6, 2008
UC 115
Presiding: Scott Evenbeck

Present: Melissa Biddinger, Robert Bringle, Linda Brothers, Mary Jane Brown, Cathy Buyarski, Craig Campbell, Judy Carley, Lauren Chism, Scott Evenbeck, Mary Fisher, Chris Foley, John Gosney, Michele Hansen, Amanda Helman, Kathleen Hursh (for Ingrid Ritchie), Sara Hook, Mikki Jeschke, Kathy Johnson, Susan Kahn, Claudette Lands, Amy Maidi, Rebecca Porter, Frank Ross, Jennifer Schott, Kate Thedwall, Regina Turner, Pratibha Varma-Nelson, Rick Ward, Jeff Watt, Gayle Williams, Kathryn Wilson, and Marianne Wokeck

Regrets: Andrew Klein, Nancy Lamm, Susan Montgomery, Ted Mullen, Gary Pike, Ingrid Ritchie, and David Sabol

Guests: Jan Blondin and Mary Beth Myers

Evenbeck welcomed everyone to the meeting, and introductions were made. Evenbeck gave an overview of the council's mission.

Electronic Portfolio
Evenbeck: The electronic portfolio, ePort, is a tool that has incredible potential to improve student learning at IUPUI.

ePort can: 1) enable students to work smarter and more efficiently, 2) enable faculty to be a strong partner in students' progress, and 3) enrich students' learning experiences across courses and cocurricular activities, and meaningful connections to the community and work.

Kahn: ePort is in place at IUPUI. Using PowerPoint slides, Kahn gave an overview of ePort and how it works. Usually departments or faculty work with the Center for Teaching and Learning to set it up. ePort is based on the concept of a physical portfolio, similar to one that an artist might use. The purpose of ePort is to support intentional teaching and learning around the Principles of Undergraduate Learning, to support department-specific outcomes, and to allow departments and faculty to create a guided portfolio experience. Used well, ePort can increase student learning and engagement. In an English capstone course, Kahn has found that using reflection in student portfolios is very helpful; she gave an example of this. She talked about how and why some units at IUPUI are using ePort. IUPU Columbus is working to implement ePort across their campus. ePort software has assessment management capabilities. She gave an example of how ePort works with the Principles of Teacher Education in the secondary teacher education program. Coming next in ePort will be the further development of assessment management functionality, a usable resume-building tool, and a free-form portfolio (such as personal Web site).

Gosney: ePort works; it is tightly integrated with Oncourse. He gave a demonstration of accessing the ePort within Oncourse (click "create," and then "edit matrix links"). He explained how courses are integrated with a portfolio site and how faculty can use the ePort for classes. He has used ePort with PULs within Oncourse. ePort can contain images and links to other Web sites. An assignment

can be linked to a particular matrix, and students can have access to their matrix to see what they have submitted. They can get feedback from faculty or classmates as well as external resources.

Wokeck: What is the timeframe on free form?

Gosney: Free form will be available within the next year.

Wokeck: What about links to a course management system?

Gosney: ePort will be accessible in and out of the system. For example, it will be possible to establish rubrics within Engineering and Technology that can assess skills and decide outcomes for critical thinking. ePort can assess PULs for the whole campus. Students can upload information on their own.

Wokeck: What about access to the system when students graduate?

Kahn: We haven't worked it out yet, but that will be in place when we have a larger group of users.

Fisher: Is there grant funding for ePort projects?

Kahn: Yes, support will be available from the Center for Teaching and Learning early next semester. She gave examples of CTL resources and support.

Carley: Can staff access ePort?

Gosney: Yes, just like Oncourse.

Kahn: The resume-building tool will be useful to students for storing items to use later.

Fisher: The personal development plan (PDP) will be linked with ePort at some point, when the PDP is finalized and up and running.

Helman: Returning students can add items from classes taken before they returned. When students graduate, they can submit both a resume and their portfolio to employers.

Evenbeck: This is high-stakes stuff. All of this needs to be in place and working smoothly by 2012, the year of our accreditation.

CRG Task Forces
Evenbeck gave an overview of the CRG task forces.

Task Force on Sophomores:
Ross distributed a handout. He talked about sophomore interventions in place at other institutions, such as sophomore mentors and sophomore learning communities. He and Kathy Burton will be assessing these sophomore interventions, and Burton is also doing an analysis to find out what is working on our campus in the schools that we might not be aware of. If anyone would like to join this task force, let Ross know.

Task Force on Transfer Students:
Williams gave an update on the research her committee has done. This is a very complex issue, and the task force is working to define exactly who these IUPUI transfer students are. The task force wants to look at programs at other institutions to find out what works well. Many transfer student issues are related to Ivy Tech; there will be an audio conference with Ivy Tech on November 19, and everyone is welcome to attend. She will send out more information about this. Representatives of the task force may visit the University of North Texas in January. If anyone would like to join this task force, let Williams know. Biddinger volunteered to serve.

Task Force on Seniors:
Johnson explained that she has been working with Wokeck. They have developed a survey to assess why students are not graduating. She told about the survey. Evenbeck suggested they work with Pike on contacting capstone instructors. Evenbeck asked Johnson to tell about some of the things they are doing in her department for seniors. Johnson explained that they have an advisor to focus on juniors and seniors. It is difficult, but they are trying to build a master schedule, a two-year (including summer) schedule. They have been asking students what they need and when. Wokeck talked about what they are doing in the School of Liberal Arts. There was additional discussion about this. Wilson discussed undergraduate research programs and what they are doing in her school, such as counseling students that they have to make choices.

Fisher: We are going to have to find ways to integrate these things. She noted how IUPUI will be funded by the state in the future based on new standards.

Evenbeck: He will send out the link for the Indiana Commission for Higher Education reports (http://www.che.state.in.us). Stan Jones of ICHE will be giving a keynote address at the University College retreat in January. Evenbeck will make sure that CRG members are invited to hear Jones speak.

Data Reports
Hansen used a PowerPoint to review her assessment reports. Although we have increased our retention rates over the last three years, we are still below our peers. In a PowerPoint presentation, Hansen presented one-year retention rates and graduation rates. She reviewed the factors that threaten persistence to graduation and also factors associated with academic success. She reviewed approaches to assessing first-year programs in University College. There will be a focus on performance-based funding and accountability, including graduating in four years.

Jeff Watt: Some parents think a good education now takes five years. Hansen agreed with this. There will have to be a mind shift. Wilson said some students think their degree programs are set up to graduate in five years. Hansen believes there will be a cost effectiveness issue.

Helman: Generally speaking, legislators who make these decisions were privileged students who had a lot of AP credits.

Williams: We can no longer blame legislators for their failure to understand the needs of the students we serve. The United States ranks 10th in world in the number of college graduates. Indiana must graduate 10,000 more students per year just to stay competitive or we will pay a terrible penalty. We need to change the faculty and advising mindset too.

Rick Ward: He appreciates what Williams said, but we also need to keep in mind that the money we get from the state is decreasing every year. We do not need to sacrifice our academic principles, but we need to be able, as an institution, to push back at legislators.

Hansen: We need to have more conversations just about this. Continuing her presentation, she talked about the complexity of retention and indicators of academic success. She discussed the most valued aspects and the least valued aspects of learning communities. She touched briefly on the National Survey of Student Engagement. (Note: At the next full council meeting in March, Hansen and Pike will do a report on the 2008 cohort.)

Degree Audits
Porter: Anyone transferring in Indiana will be encouraged to check the degree audits Web site and compare IUPUI degree audits to those of other institutions. If we want to recruit students, we need to provide this information. It is extremely important for students to make good decisions in their planning as they move efficiently to a four-year degree.

Mary Beth Myers passed out and reviewed a handout about degree audits. Some schools are not interested in degree audits. For some schools, it is a matter of resources, and she explained how they are working on a proposal to help schools. Perhaps the schools could code and then Myers and her staff might have a person to maintain it. However, this is not the right model. The experts are in the units, and they need to be part of the process. They want to get degree audits out to academic units. In addition to degree progress reports, they have a tool to use for advisors and students to sit down and plan for four-year degree. There are tools in the system to plan for academic progress.

Passport Program
Porter reviewed the profile of students transferring from Ivy Tech; the profile is changing. Helman distributed the Passport Report and reviewed highlights from the report. Porter explained that students are now coming in with 21 credit hours. Ivy Tech will increasingly focus on retaining their students to a two-year degree. Helman said that students in this chart are students who went to Ivy Tech at any time. Porter noted that Ivy Tech is an important contributor for African American students, but it does not seem to be the route for Hispanic students. Helman explained that as our population changes, so does that of Ivy Tech. She noted that freshmen transfer students do better than sophomores.

Fisher explained that time was up; it was time to end the discussion. If there are additional comments, please e-mail Fisher, and she will forward comments to Evenbeck to put on the agenda for the next meeting.

Submitted by:
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