President’s Taskforce for Online Learning and Services

Meeting Summary

Present: Dr. Jean Bartels, Dr. Christine Ludowise (For Dr. Smith), Mr. Christian Flathman, Dr. Teresa Thompson, Mr. Billy Griffis, Dr. Tony Bretti, Dr. Ron Core, Ms. Sarah Smith, Mr. Mike Deal, Ms. Connie Murphey, Ms. Pam Deal, Mr. Steve Burrell, Mr. Raleigh Way, Ms. Debra Champion.

Discussion Summary:

Academic Affairs Update

AA: Online Program and Course Development

Raleigh Way

Raleigh provided an overview of the COL course development methodology. He also reported that the B.GS. faculty are very engaged with the process and course development is moving along as planned. Dr. Bretti discussed the personnel status of the COL and its dependence on casual labor staffing. Discussion ensued.

Provost Bartels underscored the importance of consistency in online course development so that it reflects established learning objectives and is foundational to many other important issues such as good education practice, curriculum assessment and accreditation.

Dr. Bartels expressed interest in a process for reviewing or assessing existing online courses. She is looking at a process with the Deans and Department Chairs to ensure accountability for courses that have been put online. Dr. Bartels raised the question if the COL has constructed an online course review process? Raleigh responded that the COL has drafted a processes for assessing online courses, but they don’t have a plan in place yet. Dr. Bartels expressed concerns that the institution has reporting and regulatory responsibilities to the USG and SACS concerning online courses and programs. Dr. Thompson noted that there are federal regulations as well, particularly those associated with international students.

The COL staff also discussed a new program called “Pathways to Online Learning.” This program is intended to help faculty obtain the assistance they need from CET, COL, CATS and other education technology resources. This is not to be confused with the existing “Pathways” program for students.

AA: Student Advisement

The Advisement structure is in place and initially, the B.GS. students can be covered by existing staff. However, Dr. Bartels cited the critical need to get the Program Director hired. Requests for staffing should be directed through the VPs for Dr. Keel’s approval.
AA: Library Services - No Report. Dr. Mitchell will be invited to provide an overview of library resources and services for online students.

Business Affairs Update

B&F: Student Billing – the Bursar is working with IT Services to implement the billing mechanisms.

B&F: Textbook and materials fulfillment - The Bookstore is ready to go. It would be helpful if a link “button” from course registration to the bookstore was added to link courses to textbooks and streamline ordering.

B&F: Create Revenue Distribution Reporting – Planning stage.

Student Affairs & Enrollment Mgmt Update

SAEM: Admissions- modify Hobsons Connect for B.GS. - Hobsons has been modified for B.GS and live for incoming students. Working on communication plans for former students and transfer prospects.

SAEM: Development of online orientation – Outsourcing for December 1st completion. $7k-$8k cost. At least one vendor has indicated the ability to meet necessary deadlines.

SAEM: Financial Aid Services – Financial Aid services for online students is ready.

SAEM: Matriculation & Readmit Processes – Working on process to work matriculation and readmit processes through Hobsons. Shadow sections will be used to allow for enrollment of online B.GS. and on-ground students in the same courses.

SAEM: Market Research and Plan - There are as many as 11k students who did not return to school and the Registrar has identified between 5k-8k students identified as being former students and working to remove students from the list who may have already completed a bachelors degree.

University Advancement

UA: Develop and execute marketing plan – Christian Flathman distributed and reviewed a marketing plan for B.GS. It was noted that the timing of the plan would cause us to compete for very expensive “air time” during the thick of the political election season and Christian has adjusted the plan accordingly.

UA: Review of web pages for online learners. - Not started. This is a review and quality assessment of our web-based messages readability, consistency and linkage concerning online learning.
Technology Services

**IT: Technical Support** - IT Services is reviewing technical support services for online students. The Help Desk is currently open from 7:30am to 5:30p. ITS will expand hours as necessary to align technical services in conjunction with other online student services and support functions.

**IT: Enhance portal for online/B.GS. students** - ITS is adding ability to customize content for online students in the portal.

**Next Meeting: August 2, 3pm, President’s Conference Room**

Dr. Bede Mitchell: Executive Overview of Library Services for Online Learners.

Discussion: The impact on enrollment and other unintended consequences of extending online course cost rates to traditional students.