

2018-19 Annual Report of the
Faculty Admissions Committee

2018-19 Faculty Committee Members: Nancy Vosburg (Chair), Joshua Eckroth, Glen Epley, Giovanni Fernandez, Katya Kudryavtseva (S19), Andrew Larson, Dixon Sutherland (F18). Faculty Senator Steven Smallpage was also invited to committee meetings to facilitate communications with the Faculty Senate.

Meetings: Meetings were held on a biweekly basis throughout the 2018-2019 academic year.

Actions:

- Discussions, revisions and presentation to the University Faculty (after review by the Faculty Senate, the budget office, the finance office and the President) of The Stetson Promise, the 4-year graduation pledge.
- Discussion and approval of the new CI used in the Admissions Process. The importance of the GPA was reduced while class rank was enhanced as it is a higher indicator of yield. The Faculty Senate was informed of this change and agreed with the Faculty Admissions Committee that this was not an admissions policy change, so it didn't need to go to a full faculty vote.
- Successfully sheperded through UGEC and UCCAP a new transfer credit proposal that allows 6 credit hours in science to fulfill the "P" Gen Ed requirement.
- Josh Eckroth presented the software he has developed for advising students, nicknamed TAROT. This would eventually replace the Degree Audit system, and also allow us to engage with admitted students immediately and hopefully increase retention.
- Approved a pilot program to allow "self-reporting" of academic records by applicants. This will enable Admissions to issue earlier acceptances to applicants, pending the official transcripts. This is a practice at universities such as UF and FSU, as national surveys reveal a great deal of stress/anxiety created by long wait periods. The committee determined that this was a procedural change rather than a substantive change in the Admissions Policy, and therefore did not need full faculty approval.
- Biweekly oversight of admissions data (applications, acceptances, deposits). The Committee has access to a full range of data that includes breakdowns by gender, declared major, race and ethnicity, special categories (i.e., athletes, music, honors, ROTC, etc.).

Ongoing Issues/Discussions/Concerns:

- Transfer credit policies. The committee invited Registrar Rob Berwick to attend a meeting and address the current transfer credit policies and potential areas that come up repeatedly and could be revised (the most frequent are P, Q and L courses). While the Committee was successful in revising the P transfer credit policy, discussions ensued at several meetings concerning other revisions. There is more traction with revising the Q transfer policy (awarding 4 credit hours for 6 taken elsewhere) than the L (this would reward 8 credit hours for 6 taken elsewhere, which is obviously problematic as it does not fulfill the cultural intent of the L designation).
- The issue that consumed most of our meetings in the spring had to do with retention, despite the fact that it is not within the specific purview of the Admissions Committee. Nevertheless, the

continued relatively low rate of retention does impact the Admissions team as it puts pressure on the number of transfer students we must recruit. Some of the key issues we discussed are:

- 1) Possible causes: lack of faculty engagement with some students, lack of student engagement/sense of community, academic issues, student desire to be closer to home, student desire to be in a larger institution/larger city, lack of a specific desired major (such as nursing or engineering), all or several of the above. Since the causes are difficult to pinpoint (non-returning students often do not participate in exit interviews), these discussions were not particularly fruitful. As a community we need to be more informed about retention to be able to address those possible causes that we can have some impact on.
- 2) To that end, we recognize the need to disseminate retention information to Deans, Department Chairs and Faculty in the hopes of encouraging discussion at the departmental level on strategies for higher retention, particularly in light of Institutional Research data that indicate there is lower retention in some majors than in others. To assist in department analysis, I am attaching to this document a snapshot of some of these data (see the Pathways document) and a report compiled by committee member Josh Eckroth (Eckroth Report) that provides a different snapshot of the same IR data. We encourage department chairs to consult additionally the Power BI (which they all have access to) that contains all of the retention data (also attached is a table of contents of the Power BI). The Committee believes that discussion at the departmental level can be more productive than at the University level, and we encourage all departments and faculty to take ownership of this issue.
- 3) A recommendation that the Provost create a Retention Task Force or Committee to continue to address retention issues. The Faculty Senate did issue a Preliminary Report in collaboration with the Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness on Retention Modelling which could be a stepping stone for further study of this important issue.

The minutes of the 2018-19 Faculty Admissions Committee are available upon request from Committee Chair Nancy Vosburg (nvosburg@stetson.edu).

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Nancy Vosburg

Chair of the Faculty Admissions Committee (2018-19)

Professor of Spanish

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