# Dedicate to Graduate Logo

# Retention and Persistence Committee

## Meeting Minutes

## November 6, 2020

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| Dr. Amy Trogan | Present | Keith Martin | Present |
| Andrae Jones | Present | Kim Turano | Present |
| Angie Snyder | Absent | Linda Johnsen | Present |
| Dr. April Ring | Present | Dr. Matthew Sanchez | Present |
| Dr. Christy Gilfert | Present | Melissa Serrano | Absent |
| Cindy Quehl | Absent | Monica Moore |  Present |
| Dr. Deborah Teed | Present | Sabine Eggleston |  Present |
| Dr. George Harvey | Absent | Dr. Thomas Rath |  Present |
| Helen Bend | Present | Whitney Rhyne |  Present |
| Dr. Joseph van Gaalen | Present |  |  |

Whitney Rhyne started the meeting by providing an overview and having everyone introduce themselves.

**Overview**

This committee is one of four Dedicate to Graduate (D2G) committees. The Dedicate to Graduate committees are focused on the following four areas in alignment with the college’s strategic directions.

* Enrollment Plan and Development
* Enrollment Improvement Process
* Retention and Persistence
* Culture and Communication

This committee focuses on retention and persistence with the charge of assessing and developing activities and sustainable practices designed to enhance persistence towards timely program completion.

**Current Actions**

**Engagement Survey**

This fall, upwards of 1000 students completed the active student engagement survey.

Academic Preparedness

182 or 23% of survey respondents were neutral, disagreed, or strongly disagreed to feeling academically prepared to succeed at FSW. 95 of the 182 students stated we could contact them based on their response to the survey. Staff is the Academic Support Center (ASC) connected with this population of students. 90% of the 182 students stated they were aware of ASC, and 42% stated they had utilized ASC services.

Monica Moore and staff in the Academic Support Center reached out to this population first via email. Monica reported that six students responded to their personal invitation within minutes. Monica reported that the students were receptive to the outreach and happy that someone was reaching out to them. Some of the topics discussed included Math tutoring, time management, success tips. Monica noted the need for students to Know about college services and thanked faculty for pushing out information.

Wellness Outreach

523 students who completed the survey noted low or very low levels of confidence, determination, mental health, physical health, and energy or high or very high levels of stress. 306 students answered “yes” we can contact them based on their survey response, triggering a proactive outreach from FSW’s Bucs Care Office. 62% of the 523 students were aware of Bucs CARE, and 16% stated they had utilized services.

Whitney reported that Angie Snyder had sent emails to the 300+ students.

Motivation

105 or 13% of respondents were neutral, disagreed, or strongly disagreed to feeling motivated to be succeed at FSW. 50 of the 105 students stated we could contact them based on their response to the survey. The Office of Academic Advising connected with this population of students. 92% of the 182 students stated they were aware of academic advising, and 70% stated they had utilized academic advising.

Keith reported that the Office of Advising emailed the 50 students and echoed Monica’s remarks about the students being appreciative of the outreach.

**General Discussion Regarding the Engagement Survey**

The committee noted the need for this type of outreach earlier in the semester.

Dr. Trogan mentioned inquiring about the student’s K-12 experience and the importance of getting this information earlier in the semester to support students who feel they are or may not be doing well. Prof. Eggleston noted students have a better understanding of their academic ability/preparedness after the first exam and in between the first and second assignments. Professor Eggleston noted students in her class can make up five different items for life events and that the final exam replaces one test score. Professor Eggleston does not know if other instructors have similar policies. Professor Eggleston noted the importance of contacting students who might be in jeopardy of not succeeding around the College’s last date to withdraw. She noted the students appreciate being contacted.

The committee recommended a week two survey with interventions before week four.

**Early Alert**

Keith Martin provided an update on early alert. He noted the Early Alert Committee discussed structuring deadlines to submit alerts as well as using decision tree logic for alerts to distribute among academic advising, Bucs CARE, and conduct. He noted the committee will send a survey to faculty regarding early alert. Keith shows that the link to submit an early alert can now be accessed by faculty through the grade book in Canvas. Keith continued to share that the early alert committee discussed automatic alerts, with potential tigers from not logging into canvas for two weeks, etc., texting with students, closing the loop.

**DFW Highest Impact Courses**

Whitney shared the top ten courses with the highest DFW student impact for fall 2019 and Spring 2020.

Monica noted the need for increased visualization of remote tutoring services, noting that tutor.com is displayed and easily accessible via Canvas but not remote Academic Support Center services. Monica would like a link to remote ASC – Math support in all MGF, MAT, and STA courses in Canvas. And additionally, a link to ASC remote – English/writing services in ENC/writing courses.

Dr. Rath noted that linking courses together could help identify and support first-time students. Students in linked classes more easily see the connections between course material. Students in linked courses are not learning/operating in silos. The first semester is a critical period for setting expectations; linking more classes could increase term-to-term student retention. Dr. Teed mentioned learning communities where faculty work together to identify and remove stumbling blocks and provide additional support. Dr. Teed noted Dr. Gubitti with Math and SLS as a strong example. Andrae Jones pointed out the work to change and scale the registration process for linked courses. There was discussion about the power of place and the impact of smaller communities.

Dr. Ring mentioned that Cornerstone could be more strategic about required workshops for the GPS assignment. Asking students to select workshops that will support their academic pursuits. Dr. Trogan reflected on when she identifies a student as not prepared. The English department engages in continued discussion about student success, and Dr. Trogan recommended having a substantial part of adjunct training focus on identifying and supporting struggling students. Dr. Trogan noted a lot of adjuncts teach ENC 1101.

Professor Eggleston noted that MAT 1033 is the first course the majority of students can select to enroll. Students who find the MAT 1033 difficult and may be better served in MAT 0057, view taking MAT 0057 as an unnecessary class. Students see it as costing more and setting them back one semester. MAT 0057 is designed to build missing skills, and instructors discuss study skills. There is a large gap between students who are and are not prepared for MAT 0057. The skills gap leads to lost and bored students. The MAT 1033 and MAT 0057 has implications across many departments, financial aid, advising, etc. Including and encouraging supports such as study groups cohort, lab hours, and practices used in the developmental courses could help support struggling students. Infusing study skills in content, setting the right mindset and culture during the first course is essential. High failure rates in SLS 1515 inform us that academic rigor may not be the only issues students are encountering.

The group discussed methods of assessing students’ basic skills, including pre-tests in Math and English courses and noting that high school grades may not reflect learning. MAT 1033, instructors administer a pre-test. However, students who do poorly often remain in the course for the chance of passing and getting college credit. Professor Eggleston noted instructors do not know how to convince students to select MAT 0057 to build their skills. Professor Eggleston noted that MAT 0057 is set up in Canvas, and students must complete certain milestones and requirements before moving to the next module. English is using pathways in 1101 (if faculty desire to use that tool).

Professor Eggleston mentioned students did better when learning in chunks with weekly deadlines.

**Departing FSW Survey**

This fall, FSW launched a new survey focused on gaining insights from departing students. Students who took classes at FSW in the spring or summer but did not return to FSW this fall received the survey. Upwards of 600 students completed the survey. 71% noted they had degree aspiration when started at FSW, while 29% attended for another reason (personal fulfillment, job-related training, etc.). When students were asked why they choose to leave FSW, completed or changed, my goal was the top answer, followed by decided to attend a different college/university, and decided to take a semester off. 36% of students stated they planned to re-enroll in the future, 26% were unsure, and 38% said they did not intend to re-enroll.

The survey contained two open-ended questions. First, how can FSW best support you in achieving your goals? The top three themes that emerged were happy statements, noting FSW has already supported them in achieving their goals, comments focused on academics – the desire for attached space in existing limited access programs, more certificate, bachelor, and even the desire for master-level programs at FSW. The third theme was support; students noted a desire to be checked in on, to have academic coaching, and noted the need for additional mental health services.

When asked to provide additional comments on their exit from FSW, the majority of students noted they had a good experience, a high number of students noted they planned to return. A smaller number of students reported negative experiences, trouble navigating processes, not seeing their career pathway, not satisfied with the atmosphere at the school, and a poor website. The majority of comments were positive, but we often learn the most from our critics. Whitney noted the Office of Academic Advising will send a communication encouraging the 381 students who were considering re-enrollment at FSW a reminder/invitation to register for spring classes.

The group wanted to dig deeper in students changing or completing their academic goals.

Minutes submitted by: Whitney Rhyne