

Drake University Faculty Senate

Admissions and Financial Aid Committee

Minute 10-25-2013

- I. **Members present:** Sandy Henry, Kevin Lam, Andrew Welch, Tom Delahunt, Susan Ladd, Laura Linn, Megan Franklin, Bob Soltis, Michael Harvey (pre-pharm), Kevin Saunders (guest)
- II. **800 four year colleges and universities have moved away from using standardized test scores as a predictor of student success**
  - a. **Are we eliminating an opportunity to recruit students because we are using standardized test scores to assess student success at Drake University?**
  - b. **Are there specific subcomponents of standardized tests that are better predictors of student success than others?**
  - c. Kevin Saunders – IR office has done some work with a small cohort of students – 2009 to 2011 and looked at performance on standardized test and end of EFR GPA. Scores on standardized tests explain somewhere around 30% of variance in student achievement after the first year. High school GPA tends to be a better predictor.
  - d. The committee engaged in a lengthy conversation about how we can model predictors of academic performance at Drake – it’s a multivariate problem but factors such as standardized test scores, high school should be considered. Interventions – EFR orientation, welcome weekend, etc. also play a role – a student with a lower test score might perform just as well as someone with a higher test score if he/she attends orientation, etc. Michael Harvey’s comments bear this latter statement out – a welcoming and engaged culture at Drake is pretty critical to how a student performs in the classroom.
  - e. The committee decided to go with a phased approach to this data analysis project – phase 1 will consist of an examination of multiple cohorts of students and will model how numeric measure of student performance – standardized test scores, etc. correlate to end of EFR GPA, 4 year grad rate, frequency of major switch (e.g., from STEM to something else), etc. Phase 2 will test how various interventions might remediate for lower test scores, etc. in terms of student achievement.
  - f. Kevin Lam offered remarks about issues of welcoming environment / inclusive environment on campus and our efforts to diversify the student body. The committee agreed this topic needs to be included in a future meeting.
  - g. The charge of the Admissions and Financial Aid committee does not speak to issues of retention and diversity, but perhaps it should? The question of the committee’s charge has been on the table for a couple of years and faculty might be able to play a large role in increasing retention – even a 1-2% increase in retention can have a big impact on budget.

- III. Tom Delahunt and Laura Linn gave an update on campus half-day programs and the upcoming preview days. Attendance at these events is robust and, thus far, applications are 7% ahead of last year. Admissions office has also begun the process of accepting students to Drake.
  
- IV. Future meeting agenda items:
  - 1) Results from phase 1 analyses
  - 2) Issues of campus culture and creating a welcoming environment
  - 3) Discussion of how we determine whether the programs we offer today will be consistent with the educational needs of students in the future
  - 4) New communication tool for Admissions – PrepTalk.
  
- V. Next meeting date is Nov 15 at 9am **[report any conflicts to Keith]**