

Drake University

Faculty Senate Admissions and Financial Aid Committee

End of Year Report, 2013-2014

Keith Summerville, Chair

The Admissions and Financial Aid Committee met roughly once every two weeks for the Fall 2013 semester and then once a month for Spring 2014. We used our time work develop progress towards three primary objectives:

- Reinvigorate the committee by examining its current charge and develop revisions to that charge that more fully engage faculty in deliberations regarding Drake University's approach to undergraduate admissions.
- Track progress of various admissions and retention programs aimed at developing a more diverse pool of undergraduate students (e.g., CREW scholars, the QI) or recruiting a larger pool of transfer students.
- Develop approaches to aligning the work of this committee with the cross-unit efforts to retain students once the formal 'admissions' process has been completed.

The Committee chose to use our time to achieve these objectives because (i) this committee ceased meeting in 2011-2012 and perhaps was being underutilized by Senate, (ii) this committee can bring a string faculty voice to meeting the admissions challenges that we know Drake University faces (declining prospective student populations in the Midwestern United States, increased scrutiny of 'value' of undergraduate degrees by the public, and higher levels of competition in awarding financial aid to students choosing among multiple academic institutions. Further, it was clear from historic annual reports that this Committee had been very active and engaged on the admissions functions of the University but was less involved in structuring the type of programming used to recruit and retain students. In other word, this committee proved to be an effective mechanism for staff and administration to report to and solicit feedback from but it had not been proactively involved in shaping admissions and retention efforts.

To date, we have made the following progress:

Revised Charge for the Admissions and Financial Aid committee – we are proposing that this Committee be charged with working with and providing support for programs that address issues surrounding University retention (for both traditional undergraduate and transfer

student populations). This language for the revised charge appears below and will be given to Senate Exec for discussion in August 2014.

Description ---- Admissions and Financial Aid Committee --- *Current*

The Committee reviews the admissions and financial aid policies and practices of the University. It shall recommend change in these policies and practices when, in the Committee's judgment, such change is appropriate.

The committee's broad-based membership shall consist of six members of the Faculty of Instruction appointed to two-year terms, three students appointed by the Student Senate, the Vice President of Admission and Financial Aid, the Director of Admission, the Director of Student Financial Planning, the Dean of Students, and one member representing the Council of Associate/Assistant Deans. The Chair is appointed by the Executive Committee from among the faculty members.

Description ---- Admissions, Retention and Financial Aid Committee --- *Proposed*

The Committee reviews the admissions strategies and financial aid policies and practices of the University. It shall recommend change in these strategies, policies and practices when, in the Committee's judgment, such change is appropriate. Additionally, the committee will collaborate with administration in developing and assessing University-wide retention strategies. The Committee will deliver a report on admission yield, discount rate, and annual retention data to Senate during the Fall semester of each academic year.

The committee's broad-based membership shall consist of six members of the Faculty of Instruction appointed to two-year terms, three students appointed by the Student Senate, the Vice President of Admission and Financial Aid, the Director of Admission, the Director of Student Financial Planning, Associate Provost for Academic Excellence & Student Success, the Dean of Students, and one member representing the Council of Associate/Assistant Deans. The Chair is appointed by the Executive Committee from among the faculty members.

In addition to developing a new charge for the Committee, we worked in conjunction with an ad-hoc University retention committee to develop a strategy to allocate resources to develop a

cohort of faculty to become practitioners of a more proactive advising approach. The goal of the “intrusive” or “proactive” advising model is to train faculty to be more hands on within advising students that tend to be at a higher risk for non-retention: students that are undeclared majors, commuter students, students that do not participate in June EFR orientation / registration, etc. This spring a call for participants was issued through the office of the Associate Provost for Academic Excellent and Student Success and a cohort of 10 faculty were identified to engage in summer workshops led by Wade Leuwerke. Early feedback on the summer workshops will be presented at the 2014 Learning Symposium and faculty involved in this new advising model will report their experiences to the committee in the next academic year.

The Committee also positioned itself as a Faculty Senate-led connection to the CREW Crew Scholars program. Crew Scholars is a program originally conceptualized by ENG faculty member Melisa Klimaszewski and staff member William Hatchett. Neither are affiliated with the program at this writing and the 2014-2015 academic year will see REL/PHIL faculty member Jennifer Harvey assume the role of faculty director. A new staff director will be hired by July 2014. The Crew Scholars program is very important to the Faculty Senate and it was formally endorsed by this body in February 2013. In the view of the Chair of this Committee, the Admissions and Financial Aid Committee needs to be engaged in collaboratively shaping the future of this initiative. Greater level of faculty engagement not only will help contribute to flatter governance but it will give faculty a stronger sense of co-ownership of programs that are jointly overseen by faculty and administration.

Beyond these three more substantive efforts, the Committee also gave regular feedback on the office of Admissions approach to trying to yield as many as 900 EFRs¹. Various departments and programs presented on their unique approaches to admissions – SoJMC does quite a bit of recruiting at Journalism fairs and high schools; Admissions purchased a new technology (prepTalk) that some departments found quite effective when recruiting students (others found it less so); the STEM hub offers some unique opportunities for raising Drake’s visibility in the central Iowa region (we don’t yield well out of the greater Des Moines area).

Goals for next year include approving the revised charge, assessing the proactive advising faculty development project, assessing Crew’s efforts with the first two cohorts, discussing what a University-wide retention goal should be, and improving the efficiency with which we handle transfer student admissions (especially the workflows used to equate transfer courses with Drake coursework in majors / general education curriculum).

¹ As of this writing (5/7/2014) there are 871 tuition deposits for EFRs for the 2014-2015 academic year.