RAC/PRAC
January 9, 2006

Present: Gary Andersen, Bonnie Anderson, Shuji Asai, JoAnnAsh, Pamela Baker, Sheryl Bolstad, Jackie Carlson, Pat Coffey, Carolee Cohen, Pam Cook, William Dana, Dan Delaney, Laura Ericksen, Bill Van Essendelft, Tina Falkner, Tracy Fischer, Mary Vincent Franco, Marci Freundschuh, Teresa Fruen, Laurie Gardner, Sarah Groskreutz, Carol Gross, Sarah Hosfield, Angela Huckleby, Barb Jensen, Sara Johnson, Charleen Klarquist, Jennifer Koontz, Andrew La Chapelle, Amy Lund Swalley, Kate Maple, Rose Miskowiec, Margo Mueller, Jessica Murra, Stephanie Nichols, Kathy nolan, Linda Norcross, Ingrid Nuttall, Lonna Riedinger, Genny Rosing, Cindy Salyers, Steve Schaus, Chris Schlichting, Deanne Silvera, Clare Strand, Fran VanSlyk-Zaslofsky, Sue Van Voorhis, Kendra Weber, Amy Winkel, Kris Wright

Introductions

Student Support task force update: CHE Assistant Dean Kate Maple and Chief of Staff for Student Affairs Amelious Whyte updated the group on the findings of the Student Support task force. Assistant Dean Maple noted that the task force had already received a lot of thoughtful feedback and had made changes to their recommendations based on this feedback. Assistant Dean Maple referred the group to the task force's executive summary at http://www1.umn.edu/systemwide/strategic_positioning/tf_recommendations.html for complete details, including the charge of the task force and detailed accounts of its recommendations.

Assistant Dean Maple stated the task force had six specific recommendations. The first recommendation deals with looking for a way to bring appropriate groups together regularly so as to effectively communicate existing resources. Currently, students and staff aren't aware of all the resources available.

The second recommendation concerned an assessment of what works and what doesn't work in student services. Assistant Dean Maple provided the example of the high withdrawal rate of "gateway" courses. She recommended these courses be researched so they may be delivered to students in a manner that supports their success.

The third recommendation deals with adviser ratios. Adviser ratios should be structured to ensure advisers can reasonably see all their advisees in any given semester. It is also recommended that academic and career advising come closer together. It has been suggested a center be established for truly undecided students to receive help in determining what path they will follow. This center should include services for life-planning and learning abroad experiences, truly a meta-look at the students career. An important component of this recommendation is the concept of space. Currently, the various spaces in which a students conducts his or her business varies from excellent to poor. Aligning with the issue of space is the recommendation for a "Welcome Week" to help students find their place; a focus on the creating a positive environment for students should be the focus of the University.

The fourth recommendation addresses the need for advising to be brought closer to the academic discipline. Campus-wide training for advisers is recommended. Advisers should "know" the University, including culture and space. A communication plan should be developed to maintain a consistent message to students from first contact through graduation.

The fifth recommendation would require every undergraduate to complete a scholarly, creative, or research experience with a faculty member.
The sixth and final recommendation is somewhat aligned with the fifth; specifically, developing a program for new faculty that promotes work with undergraduate students. More will be added to this recommendation before the final report is due. It is understood that it is not possible to implement this program unless faculty rewards are involved. More dialog with the faculty culture task force is required. Assistant Dean Maple concluded her presentation and asked for feedback from the group.

Theresa Fruen asked how the third recommendation would interact with the current advising structure. Assistant Dean Maple answered that one idea would be a place for "urgent care" advising to provide services to students who haven't "landed" yet. This would be different than a student's "primary care" adviser who would provide more substantial, academic guidance.

Sheryl Bolstad asked a question about adviser training. For colleges who rely primarily on faculty advisers, will they be required to attend training similar to professional advisers? Assistant Dean Maple replied that she hoped this would be the case and it would be highly recommended.

Mary Koskan asked how the idea of a "Welcome Week" came to be discussed again. Assistant Dean Maple noted that although it has financial implications, the task force still felt it was an important component to a student's experience at the University. Further, graduating students in four years also has financial implications for the University, and a "Welcome Week" may aid in this goal. The key is to put the student experience first.

Jess Murra noted that she and another adviser had been thinking it may be fruitful to have advisers from different colleges attend each others advising meetings when appropriate. This may fall in line with the adviser training piece.

Sue Van Voorhis asked about the Best Practices task force. She noted that their early list of best practices did not include anything related to the student side. Amelious Whyte stated that he believes the task force view of best practices is high level and strictly administrative, which may explain the lack of student service material. Sue Van Voorhis noted that the concept of "culture" is continually raised as a key for success in the strategic positioning process, however the conversation continually drifts back to systems because it is easier to measure. However, culture is the key to a student's meaningful experience.

Clare Strand stated the Morris campus had tried to capture the student experience through a grad survey. Assistant Dean Maple noted the Twin Cities campus has a similar tool but she has not seen the Morris version.

Assistant Dean Maple encouraged the group to continue to provide suggestions and to attend upcoming review sessions on January 18 in the St. Paul Student Center from 3:00-5:00 p.m., and on January 25 in 140 Nolte from 3:00-5:00 p.m.

Announcements: Teresa Fruen announced that, in an effort to meet the needs of their students, particularly the CCE Non-Degree Seeking students, CEE is extending Monday hours for walk-in students until 6:00 p.m. CCE will be offering the following services on Monday evenings during the spring term (beginning Monday, January 9th): CCE Information Center staff will be available to serve walk-in students until 6:00 p.m.; CCE non-degree advisers will be assisting students on an appointment basis until 6:00 p.m.; CCE will be offering ICP (traditional & multidisciplinary track) and PIL information sessions (by appointment); Evening IDL exams (by appointment).
Please also note that CCE will not be answering the main phone line, 612-624-4000 after 5:00 p.m. Please share this information with others as appropriate. If you have questions please contact Teresa Fruen at 5-5041 or Anne Daly at 4-3397.

Ingrid Nuttall announced that all course bracketing has been done on students that applied to graduate for Fall 2005.

Drew La Chapelle reminded the group that the Dean's List report has been modified to include all active academic plans, not just the primary academic plan.

Mary Koskan announced that non-degree students have until February 15 to pay their bills in full. On January 6, 118 degree-seeking students with outstanding bills were canceled from their spring courses. The list of canceled students was sent to the main RAC contact in each college that had a student in the list. Also, information regarding the deadline for exemptions to the 13 credit policy is now on the web and on the Refund Cancel/Add form.

Review of December minutes: There were no changes to the December minutes.

Parent/Guest Access update: Mary Koskan provided the group with the latest statistics for Parent/Guest Access. Since it's inception in fall 2005, 3,688 students have sent invitations. One Stop has received good feedback from users and is currently working on an FAQ for the application. This will be live in the next few weeks.

PeopleSoft 8.9 upgrade update: Dave Krueger reported that OTR is still waiting to begin testing. The deadline for system testing is in March. There were 890 modifications in in the last upgrade and there are an additional 800+ for this upgrade just in student records. Dave reminded the group that requests for system changes will be held until after the upgrade except for critical items.

Adviser entry/effective dating update: Dave Krueger requested this agenda item be held until the February meeting; the group agreed.

Portal update: Amy Lund-Swalley provided the group with an update on new views that will be available in the Portal. This includes Morris, class of 2010 (coming in February), Faculty, and Graduate School. Currently, there are views for class of 2009, Undergraduate, Guest, AHC, Extension and Strategic Positioning. The portal steering committee is planning to upgrade the software this summer. Alternatives for gathering statistics are also under review.

GoldPASS demonstration: William Dana showed the group a job posting system that will serve as the entry point for employers to post positions, and for students to find positions. A go-live date has yet to be determined, however the system should be live some time in spring 2006. Any active UMNTC degree-seeking student at the University can use the system. Students can conduct searches which meet various criteria and save those searches in the system; students can also post resumes. When an employer posts a position, the job will go to the career services offices (CSO) for approval; there is no automatic approval. William noted that the system will be administered by career services offices throughout the University. 1-HELP will serve as the primary support contact for users.

Sue Van Voorhis noted that the vice chancellors on the coordinate campuses are aware of this program and the system is being designed to accommodate the addition of the coordinates later.

Clare Strand asked if the system would accommodate graduates without active x.500 accounts. William answered that those alumni who have never had an Internet ID will need to contact their CSO to arrange for access. If their Internet ID has expired, the student can contact 1-HELP for reactivation.

Jess Murra asked if students can save multiple searches. William responded that this was possible. Someone asked if professors seeking students for research opportunities could use the system. William responded that this decision would be up to the CSOs. Jess Murra asked if plans were in place to accommodate conversion with other existing systems. William responded that this is in place for the organizations but not the individual job posts. Linda Norcross asked how the name GoldPASS was chosen. William responded that the name was chosen by the working group and that PASS stands for Post and Search System.

Jess Murra asked if there will be advertising to attract employers to the system. William responded that communication is currently being handled by the career services offices and that Becky Hall is planning for increased communications. Sue Van Voorhis noted that Becky wishes to wait until a firmer go-live date had been established. Someone asked if there was any fee to use the system; the system is free.

Someone asked if U of M jobs would be automatically posted; the answer is no, there is no direct connection to the HR system.

Tina Falkner asked if any usability had been conduced; William responded that usability took place in April 2005. Mary Franco asked if a job would be able to be posted if approved by only one CSO. William responded that whichever office responds first will determine if a position is posted and if there is dissent, the offices must work it out between themselves.

Tina Falkner asked if there would be any online training available for students. William responded that FAQ will be available to inform students about how to maximize their searches. Mary Franco asked if students can submit a cover letter; William demonstrated how a student can cut and paste text into the cover letter form field. A separate cover letter cannot be attached.
Dave Krueger asked if an email would be sent to employers automatically from the system and if so, is there a way to ensure that an employer's spam protection would not be rejecting applicants' information. This will be part of the communications plan and has been successfully tested.

Questions can be submitted to William Dana (danax002@umn.edu) or Becky Hall (rahrah@tc.umn.edu).

Knowledge base software demonstration: Dan Delaney provided the group with a demonstration of the new knowledge base software available on the One Stop website. This is another method for students to get information. This software is a tool for users to ask questions and get automated responses immediately. A user enters a question and, based on a search of key words in that question, an answer is returned to the user. In addition, a section where users can view the top ten most frequently asked questions from all users will be included. Users will also be able to rate how well the system answered their question. This allows administrators of the software to change the answers to better serve future users. The new software will allow users to easily ask questions at their own convenience in subject matter areas including registration, financial aid, billing, and payment. The icon for accessing this search function is featured on every One Stop page on the left-hand side.

Mary Franco asked if a user's comments are anonymous or if One Stop is able to reply to those who submit comments. Dan Delaney replied the comments are anonymous, however contact information for One Stop will be provided. Mary asked how the top ten FAQs are determined; Dan replied it is based on the most frequently viewed answers. Chris Schlichting noted that in an example given by Dan, the closest answer was not the top one on the list and asked how the system ranked the answers; Dan replied the most popular answer is given first.

Jess Murra noted that she didn't know this was a link and thought it might be helpful to highlight this.

Dan Delaney stated that changes made to the FAQ are live immediately. The software is administered by One Stop staff on the West Bank and in St. Paul and has received 1,000 views since its go-live on December 30, 2005.

Questions received are not able to be tracked for future reference.

Mary Koskan noted that Michigan State uses the same software and Twin Cities was able to get some of its FAQ from them.

Feedback can be directed to Dan Delaney at delan021@umn.edu.

Student Roster report demonstration: Cindy Salyers demonstrated a change to the Student Roster report to accommodate those who need count information, including those without access to private student data. Information is gathered based on the primary program and plan. International students are excluded from individual ethnic categories. Academic level is based on the number of credits a student has completed at the beginning of the term. The report can be customized to include or exclude certain information. The new features are expected to be in production by end of the month. IMS will send out a notice to the RAC list serve when the changes are out. Someone asked if academic level included graduate students; yes, it is based on to which college the student belongs. Drew La Chapelle noted the customization of columns is a feature in production for a number of reports. This helps limit the amount of information exported.

Grade entry statistics for fall 2005: Sue Van Voorhis noted grade entry statistics improved marginally from the previous semester. 92.9 percent of grades were in by the deadline for fall 2005 compared with 92.5 percent in fall 2004. There was a significant improvement in graduate courses; 82.2 percent for fall 2005 compared with 74.8 percent in fall 2004. Sue Van Voorhis distributed each college's statistics and noted that whatever the departments can do to help ensure grades are submitted on time is greatly appreciated.

Permission number issue: Sue Van Voorhis informed the group of a problem with the new permission number fix and the combining of colleges under strategic positioning. An update will be provided once more information is available.

Services task force update: Bill Van Essendelft, director of degree and credit programs for the College of Continuing Education, provided the group with an update on the Services task force's progress. The preliminary version of this report is due sometime in January and a final version is due later in the spring.

The Services task force is focused on looking at what services are needed to meet the needs of students, staff and faculty. One service—currently being examined by the PEL—is electronic communications with students. While email is the official means of communication at the University, it is not well managed. Students are bombarded with emails; a PEL group is looking into this issue. A goal is to improve student satisfaction. Sue Van Voorhis asked if University Relations is involved in this discussion as they are purchasing the Lyris system which will allow mass emails to be sent more conveniently.

Bill Van Essendelft noted that if they are not currently involved in the discussion, they should be.

A second service being examined by the PEL involved the hours of operation. It must be determined if current hours meet student, staff and faculty needs. The goal of examining this service is to increase satisfaction and productivity.

A third service involves an easy-to-use, more searchable web site.

Sue Van Voorhis asked if the services being examined by the PEL groups will coincide with the recommendations of the task force. Bill Van Essendelft replied that most reports currently due are not ready to implement which will likely be true of the Services report.

A fourth service concerns the experience of transfer and non-traditional students. The University needs to look at coordinating efforts to enrich these students' experience. This approach should address high school students as well. The goal is to increase retention and graduation rate for degree-seeking students, as well as encourage the same level of support and services as traditional students. Surveys and other instruments will be used. Sue Van Voorhis asked if any findings are coming to light from the PEL group in terms of how to bring individuals together to share their knowledge and solve these problems. Nothing has been received yet. Sue asked if non-traditional students were being interviewed; it is not certain this is the case but it will be recommended.

A fifth service concerns the various technology fees. Students and others have expressed frustration regarding the "hidden" nature of these fees and their inconsistency between colleges. Sue Van Voorhis suggested Carolee Cohen send a spreadsheet which illuminates these fees. Sue noted it is difficult for staff to explain the difference between all of the various fees assessed to students. Tina Falkner asked if the task force would be making a recommendation regarding this or if their role is to gather information? Bill van Essendelft replied that first, the task force needs to understand what is going on and then move on to recommendations.

The sixth service concerns enhancements to the U Card regarding declining balances. The U Card should be able to backup information in case their cards are lost or stolen; online tracking may be a solution.

The seventh service concerns the transformation of Facilities Management. FM will be changing with the new budget model and will be charging for services. It is not clear whether external sources will be able to be hired as an alternative to FM. FM is interested in customer satisfaction. It was a concern with IMG that come of the central services weren't accountable. This new model will be introduced in fiscal year 07.

Bill Van Essendelft read additional services the task force is investigating, including customer services training/orientation, coordination of surveys and reports, streamlining of business processes such as pre-populated forms, a Recreational Sports feasibility study, affordable housing for professional and graduate students, coordination with the

existing Greek system on campus, more transparent and consistent student fees, and staff recognition.

Transcript change in system: Dave Krueger reminded the group of an email sent to the RAC list concerning a transcript change. The attempted credits listed on the transcript will now reflect the true attempted credits taken by the student. This will not have an impact on certification.

Student information systems working group update: Tina Falkner informed the group that this working group is looking at technologies that currently exist which would make advising better, streamline experiences and improve service. The group has been meeting since November. Those with ideas should please send them along to Tina at rovic001@umn.edu. A report will available in late spring and both the professional and faculty adviser will be addressed.

College contacts follow-up: Ingrid Nuttall asked the group to please confirm they have submitted their emergency contacts for the calling tree.

OESS name update: Sue Van Voorhis informed the group the current names being discussed for OESS are either "Educational Services" or "Education Services." This is following a meeting of a CUD subgroup.