Minutes of Project Graduation Committee Meeting

Tuesday, March 25th 2014
2:00 – 3:00 pm
Room C-313

Attendance:
Chair, Denise Liguori Student Affairs, Dean Greg Fenkart Student Life
Jennifer Reyes Student Affairs, Dean Monica Postle Student Affairs
Nestor Melendez Student Affairs, Dean Jackie Ottey Registration and Records
Andrew Tomko Business and Social Sciences, Dean Kim Smokowski Counselor, Faculty

Hyacinthe Nkurunziza Office of Specialized Services

1. **Evaluation and Technology Sub-Committee Update**

1.1 Kim inquired about a replacement for the vacant sub-committee Chair position.

**Action/Implementation:**
- Denise will assume the role until a decision is made on the permanent replacement.

1.2 Data on ‘Students No Longer Attending, Missing 1-3 Courses’

**Findings:**
- Kim had additional student EVAL records in this category to hand over to Monica.

**Action/Implementation:**
- Monica will add students to the existing spreadsheet and continue to collect the data

1.3 Data on Eligible Students

**Findings:**
- Kim has been able to identify approximately 12 more students who may be eligible to graduate subject to the approval of course substitutions by the Academic Deans.

**Recommendations:**
- Previously the Deans had been consulted on a case by case basis. Denise recommended that the committee begins work on documenting guidelines it can use before submitting additional Adjustment of Degree request paperwork for approval. This will eliminate the need to review records and submit similar requests to academic deans that had previously been denied approval.

**Action/Implementation:**
- Andrew will inform the other deans that more Adjustments of Degree requests will be coming from the committee. He will ask them to make notes and categorize their decisions, to assist the committee in their writing of the guidelines
- Samantha will continue to meet with the Academic Deans for evaluation and approvals of the additional graduation interventions
- Denise will schedule a meeting with the Data Mining Sub-Committee and the Academic Deans to discuss decision making rationale and to write standardized guidelines for future change approvals.

- Guidelines will be added to the procedures manual.

### 1.4 Students that require waivers:

**Findings:**
- Kim identified one student who had earned 64 credits in the pile who would need a 1 credit waiver to make her eligible to graduate. She advised Monica that the Lynne Richardson has normally done this waiver in the past. Denise requested clarification of the policy for doing this type of waiver. No-one at the meeting was aware of any particular written policy related to this waiver; it was assumed that it had just been common practice.

**Recommendations:**
- Denise stated that all waivers should go to the academic areas for approvals. She reminded the committee that Student Affairs does not make policy or decide when policy should be adjusted. The role of Student Affairs, and the Project Graduation Committee, is to develop processes and practices that implement the academic policies.

**Action/Implementation:**
- Denise requested that the student record be evaluated by an Academic Dean for approval of a 1 credit waiver and that the policy and related procedure will be looked into further.
- The student record will be added to Samantha’s pile to be reviewed to approval by the Academic Dean associated with the student’s degree.
- Denise will speak with the Academic Deans regarding the academic policy of this adjustment of degree total credits.

### 1.5 Posthumous Degrees:

**Findings:**
- Kim updated the committee regarding a student who, through the efforts of Project Graduation, could be awarded a degree posthumously. Conversation is currently taking place with the family to decide on how they would most like to receive the degree on behalf of their son. It became apparent that although the college does have a protocol in place for dealing with currently enrolled students who have died, there is no SOP for awarding posthumous degrees.

**Recommendations:**
- Once the family has made a decision, Kim will inform the committee of next steps that need to be taken to award the degree.

**Action/Implementation:**
- The committee will incorporate a protocol on posthumous degrees in the SOPs currently being written by the Project Graduation Committee.
**Assessment of Initiative**

- Monica will continue to collect graduation category data to be used to compare with past and future data, to increase graduation numbers
- Samantha will report back on the Adjustment of Degree approvals or denials by the Academic Deans
- Denise will capture the approval categories to be used for future interventions protocol

2. **College Wide Communication Plan for Project Graduation**

2.1 Denise explained that the focus for the rest of the meeting was to begin developing a Communication Plan for the work that is being done by Project Graduation.

**Findings:**

- Changes that had taken place as a result of the work of Project Graduation had been explained to a variety of audiences. However, no formalized communication plan had yet been developed to map out what needs to be communicated and to which audiences including; students, any offices affected by the changes in daily duties, the division and the college as a whole. A lengthy discussion ensued on all the components such a plan would have and the best ways of creating and implementing it.
- Discussion also took place on the communication of all the timelines associated with Graduation, both internal to Student Affairs and externally to the wider college community especially as so many new initiatives had been developed with their own particular timelines.

**Recommendations:**

- Jennifer suggested using Moodle as a way of communicating and storing information in one location. It could also be used as a possible vehicle for training employees on all things graduation related. Although the committee liked the idea, it was felt that this would be a longer term goal. The immediate goal was to
  - focus on organizing our policies and practices,
  - identify which of them have been affected by the changes the committee has made, and
  - whom in the college community is affected and therefore needs to be made aware of those changes.
- Nestor recommended that the committee creates a Glossary of Terms that would incorporate the new initiatives such as ‘Confirm my Graduation’, ‘Final Countdown’, ‘100 Day Countdown’, ‘Graduation Salute’, ‘Commencement’ etc.
- As the major part of the processes associated with either Graduation are triggered by, or land in, the Enrollment Services area it was believed that the best place to start with a calendar/timeline was with that office. Once that timeline was completed, then Nestor’s and Jennifer’s areas could be incorporated

**Action/Implementation:**

- Monica will work on a draft of Project Graduation Glossary of Terms to present to the committee at the next meeting.
- Denise will work on a draft of the calendar for the next meeting.
Assessment of Initiative
- Denise and Monica will share task progress at next meeting
- Committee will identify areas in the college where communicating changes in process are necessary

2.4 Graduation Budget

Findings:
- Additional costs have been incurred by various offices that have been involved in Project Graduation initiatives. Jennifer asked where a ‘graduation’ budget would fit in to this plan as her office would be spending money on their 32 and 48 credit outreach initiatives.

Recommendations:
- Denise responded that it is her hope that a budget would be created specifically for Project Graduation purposes and that this would be included in the Committee’s recommendations

Action/Implementation:
- Until a budget is secured, Denise recommended that people keep track and inform her of any expenditure they have incurred in their departments and send it to her.
- Denise stated that if anyone was struggling with their budgets to let her know so that perhaps she or other departments could help absorb some of the cost.

Meeting adjourned.

Further work on the Communication Plan would take place at the next meeting.

Minutes of Meeting respectfully submitted by Monica Postle