**Committee on Retention Efforts (CORE)**

**Meeting Minutes**

**April 24, 2019**

1. **Call to Order**

The Committee on Retention Efforts (CORE) was called to order on April 24, 2019, at

3:03 p.m. in the Student Success Center Classroom 1115 in Ninth Street Hall.

**Members present:** Cindy Boyer, Joe Eichman (recording secretary), Shelley James, Josh Norman, Catherine Polydore, Karla Sanders, chair, Jody Stone, Ed Treadwell, and Tanya Willard

**Members absent:** Gurkan Akalin, Austin Cheney, Mona Davenport, Julie Dietz, Alexis Jones, Katie Lewandowski, Vicki Phillips, and Jie Zou.

1. **Approval of CORE Minutes- April 10, 2019**

Catherine Polydore motioned to approve the minutes from the April 10, 2019, meeting. Josh Norman offered a second. The minutes passed with Shelley James abstaining.

1. **CIRCLE-IN**

Karla Sanders introduced an app called Circle-In. They received a National Science Foundation grant so they can expand to 25 the number of schools across the country that try out their study-aid and retention app. The app can work with D2L. Josh Norman worried that this would push students further online and away from face-to-face competency. Karla Sanders expressed mixed feelings about the app. It would cost about $20-30 per student, and we would need to include the entire incoming freshman class, at a cost of roughly $18,000. Shelley James asked if it might drive unmotivated students to tune out in class, knowing they have access to other students’ notes. Karla Sanders said that the app is designed to give incentives for student participation, and the more points students get, the more real incentives they receive, such as gift cards. Students who only “take” information get no points. They have only tested their app on the middle- and high-school level, and are looking to expand to college-level with their grant. Cindy Boyer thinks it might hurt attendance in class. Ed Treadwell asked if this makes sharing homework too easy. He also asked if the app can identify misconceptions by the students, or incorrect information being given out among the class, with no chance for the professor to correct it. Tanya Willard said that she is philosophically opposed to incentivizing education like this. Catherine Polydore pointed out that this is a new generation of students, with a very different approach to not only technology, but education as well. Josh Norman asked if the company monitors the points and distributes the gift cards, which Karla Sanders assured they do. He said that this could be scary with possible side effects, but we don’t understand fully how it might have an impact on retention of students.

1. **Foundation Grants Update**

The President added an additional $10,000 to the available funds, so Mandi Starwalt in Financial Aid is looking for more students. So far, about half of the initial students have not responded. Shelley James said that the advisors will reach out to the students, if they can have the list of names. Josh Norman has added these students in his retention tracker.

1. **Risk Factors and Advising**

Karla Sanders has been thinking about ways to increase touch points between advisors and high risk factor students, especially those not in special populations. She pulled together some data on students with 4 or more risk factors. Starting in the fall, advisors will reach out to these students during weeks 3-5 to see how things are going. Catherine Polydore said that the Black Graduate Student Association will begin reaching out and mentoring black student teachers in the hopes of keeping them in the program.

1. **University Foundations and Retention**

Karla Sanders has compiled data comparing the retention rates of students who took University Foundations 1111 their freshmen year versus those who did not. Her initial data also included honors students in the group that did not take UF, but she will pull them out so as not to skew the data. She did not include those students in special populations (Gateway, Review Admit, Saga) who took UF.

The initial takeaways are this:

* Verification is a killer.
* The risk factors seem more risky for special population students than standard admits.
* First Generation and students with multiple financial factors really benefit from UF.

Jody Stone broke down some of the takeaways about Housing and Retention:

* Thomas Hall is where the honors students live.
* Lincoln Hall has a high GPA due to lots of female athletes.
* Andrews, all female with a high minority population benefits from UF.
* Douglas Hall has lots of male athletes who receive other academic support such as study tables.
* Pemberton may have low retention rate because many late admits are assigned there.

1. **CORE Next Year**

This is the final meeting of CORE this academic year. Karla Sanders is going to ask Jennifer Hedges from Financial Aid to join the Committee. Catherine Polydore’s term is up and will be replaced by someone from Faculty Senate. Jie Zou will be attending in the fall, but not spring due to scheduling conflicts.

1. **CORE Next Year**

Karla Sanders asked Committee members to let her know if they will serve on the Committee next year. She needs to know by the next meeting, April 24. Julie Dietz mentioned that she would be curious to learn the number of resident students enrolled in online degree programs. She has heard that many athletes are being steered to online programs to free up time for practice. It was agreed that this is something the Committee should look into next year, as it could become a retention issue, especially with more online courses being offered.

1. **Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 4:05.

*~Minutes submitted Joe Eichman, Recording Secretary*