

Committee on Retention Efforts (CORE)
Meeting Minutes
August 13, 2026

I. Call to Order

The Committee on Retention Efforts (CORE) was called to order on August 13, 2026, at 9 am. in the Witters Conference Room in the Booth Library.

Attendees: Bobbi Kingery, Amy Odwarka, Dr. John Blue, Justin Tierney, Josh Norman, Jeremy Alexander, Dr. Chris Mitchell, Dr. Michael Gillespie, Dr. Amber Webb, Jessie Shuemaker, Danny Gourley Fischer, Dr. Gabe Grant, Crystal Brown, Dr. Ed Treadwell

II. Election of Committee Co-Chairs

- The committee discussed the election of two co-chairs for the upcoming academic year.
- Members were invited to submit nominations, but no nominations were made.
- The current Co-Chairs, Amber Webb and Danny Gourley Fischer, will continue to serve as Co-Chairs for the 2026-2027 academic year.

III. Navigate360 Journeys

- Dr. Amber Webb provided an overview and demonstration of Navigate360 Journeys
- Journeys create structured pathways that guide students through required tasks, important deadlines, appointment scheduling, and campus resources.
- Any department on campus can create journeys and have them specialized.
- Journeys can be assigned to specific students and groups.
- Journeys can reduce the barriers created when students overlook required tasks.
- Some of the existing or developing journeys include:
 - Required Immunization
 - Alcohol EDU
 - Mental Health Awareness training
 - Sexual Assault and Harassment training
 - Non-Traditional Students
 - PACK students

IV. Academic Alert System

- The Academic Alert system will now be housed within Navigate360.
- The previous system was homegrown with limited referrals and access.
- There will be a broader range of alert reasons and routing.
- The system will allow faculty, staff, and other campus personnel who interact with students to have the ability to submit alerts.
- The system will include positive alerts referred to Panthers Persist Kudos allowing faculty and staff to recognize students for positive behavior.
- Alerts will automatically generate cases and route students to the appropriate individuals or offices.
- The system will also allow faculty, staff, and other campus personnel to include additional comments, and the option to send it directly to the student or not.
- Alerts with different concerns and needs will create separate cases and will be routed to the appropriate office.
- Staff members handling one case will not automatically have access to confidential information contained in another case.

V. Retention Trends

- Dr. Michael Gillespie provided the committee with the most recent retention reports for freshman and undergraduate retention.
- Freshman retention was 66.2% compared with 66.4% at the same point the previous year.
- It was noted that retention had reached a higher point before August 4 schedule drops associated with B1 holds exceeding &1,000.
- Following schedule drops, retention declined relative to the previous year's numbers.
- The committee discussed an institutional guideline for the required schedules to be dropped at least one month before the start of classes. This most recent drop did not follow that timing.
- The late timing of the schedule drops has significantly reduced the amount of time available for students and advisors to address and resolve the issue before the start of fall classes.

- Increase in summer outreach efforts contributed to a slight increase in retention.
- There will be continued monitoring for retention data throughout the academic year.

VI. New Majors/Minors Database Progress and Timeline

- Josh Norman provided an update on the university's redesigned Majors/Minors Database.
- The database has been revamped to improve current and prospective students' access information about the university's academic offerings.
- Josh individually met with 19 of 20 department chairs during the summer to review the database and gather feedback.
- The redesigned database will allow students to
 - Browse programs by interest clusters
 - View popular programs
 - Review program-specific market differentiators
 - See number of credit hours required
 - Access catalog information
 - View student quotes
 - Learn what students will learn in the program
 - View career outcomes
 - Explore related programs
- Career information will incorporate information from College Scorecard.
- The tentative launch date is September 1st, 2026.
- Recommendations were made to review the source and methodology behind the career and salary information to ensure it is accurate and understandable and include additional academic information such as the lowest mathematics course or math placement test score.

VII. Next Meeting

Our next meeting will be on Thursday, September 17 at 9 am in the Witter's Conference Room in the Booth Library.

~Minutes submitted by Brandy Verdin, Recording Secretary

