Committee on Retention Efforts (CORE)
Meeting Minutes
September 17, 2026

I. Call to Order

The Committee on Retention Efforts (CORE) was called to order on September 17, 2026, at 9 am. in the Witters Conference Room in the Booth Library.

Attendees: Amy Odwarka, Jeremy Alexander, Dr. Michael Gillespie, Dr. Amber Webb, Jessie Shuemaker, Danny Gourley Fischer, Crystal Brown, Dr. Ed Treadwell, Dr. Lynne Cameron, Leon Mire, Dr. Ahmed Abou Zaid

II. Retention Data

- Dr. Michael Gilespie reviewed the most recent retention data.
    - Freshman retention increased by 1.6%, bringing the overall rate to 69.8%.
    - First-Gen retention increased by 4%, bringing the overall rate to 65.5%.
    - PACK retention decreased by 1%, bringing the overall rate to 54.2%.
    - TLF retention increased by 2.3%, bringing the overall rate to 81.4%.
    - PSY retention increased 1.5%, bringing the overall rate to 57.3%.
- International student retention increased to 65%, reflecting a 2.4% increase.
- Pell-Eligible retention remained stable at 65.3%.
- Total graduate retention decreased to 44.6%.

III. Academic Alerts

- Dr. Amber Webb provided an update on Academic Alerts.
- A recent change to the new academic alert system means that multiple reasons listed on an alert will generate multiple cases.
- This change is intended to ensure that specific reasons and concerns are directed to the appropriate departments.
- A total of 351 cases have been created so far.
- Faculty and staff have provided substantial support.
- In a recent case, a student needed app to submit an assignment.
- In this same case, inappropriate comments from the instructor were included.

- Several students were connected with the Tania Ward Scholarship Fund for assistance with the app fee.
- An academic alert feedback form is being developed and will soon be posted on the ASC website.

IV. Cost of Apps Required for Courses

- Concerns were raised about how to support students with additional course-related costs such as required apps.
- Conflicting IGPs regarding additional fees were discussed.
- ARGOS lists 634 courses with additional fees.
- It was also noted that not all courses display additional costs in PAWS.

V. PACK Fall to Fall Outcomes

- Danny Gourley Fischer presented recent PACK outcomes and data to the committee.
- The average GPA increased from 1.55 to 1.85.
- There are now two full-time PACK advisors.
- PACK served 109 students in Fall 2024 and 132 students in Fall 2025.
- Retention and meeting attendance are both decreased.
- Students who attend four or more advisor meetings tend to perform better.
- Advising resources is limited.
- Potential peer mentoring was discussed.

VI. New Majors/Minors Website

- Concerns were raised about the accuracy of salary information listed for EIU graduates on the major and minor website.
- Leon Mire said they would connect with Bobbi Kingery to identify the appropriate sources.

VII. Potential Priorities for Committee

- After reviewing all items, the committee discussed it's priorities for the current academic year.
- The following potential priorities were identified:

- Developing guide for executive functioning.
    - Training students to support other students.
- Addressing supplemental cost.
- Housing: How to help residing students with curriculum.

VIII. Next Meeting

Our next meeting will be on Thursday, November 19th at 9 am in the Witter's Conference Room in the Booth Library.

~Minutes submitted by Brandy Verdin, Recording Secretary