

Minutes of the Vitalization Project Task Force Workgroup #1, Student Services  
October 20, 2016  
2108 Buzzard Hall

Committee Members Present: Richard Roberts (chair), Peter Andrews, Eric Davidson, Hugo Escobar, Heidi Hawkins, Kallee Peebles-Tomes.

Also present were Emily Stuby from the President's Liaison Committee and Abbey Whittington of the *Daily Eastern News*.

Roberts called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

A motion (Garner, Andrews) to approve the minutes of the last meeting was approved unanimously.

1. **Update from the Chair:** The chair distributed a copy of the report template provided to the workgroup and reviewed our schedule.

2. **Updates on data analysis**

- a. Escobar reported that he and Peebles-Tomes have begun interviewing students. Preliminary results indicate that students have noticed a negative effect of budget cuts on the appearance of campus. The committee agreed that this result should be shared with Workgroup 5 (Facilities). When asked what's most appealing to them on campus, students often list specific student services.
- b. Roberts reported that he has interviewed eight student services. He noted the following themes that have emerged from those interviews: (i) reorganization is already under discussion in the division of Student Affairs and (ii) student affairs is an integral part of the EIU experience.
- c. Davidson reported that he has interviewed the student services outside the VPSA area. He noted the following themes that have emerged from those interviews: (i) Student demographics are changing, and student services needs to focus on diverse groups; (ii) Student needs are changing, thus requiring additional specialization within student services; (iii) Financial literacy is an area of need; (iv) Some decentralized services could be centralized; (v) Student services relate directly to University learning goals and are central to our educational mission.
- d. Vietto reported that she has interviewed seven student services. She noted that many of the themes reported by Roberts and Davidson have also emerged in her interviews, and noted the following additional themes: (i) Despite budget cuts, students services have mostly maintained their level of service; limited cuts have been made after careful study of demand; (ii) In some cases, it seems that we offer comparable services to our competitors but for lower fees; (iii) Maintenance of services has often been accomplished by staff working longer hours without additional compensation. She also

noted an additional point to be referred to Workgroup 5: UPD notes that hallway lighting is often left on 24 hours even in locked classroom buildings.

In response to d.ii above, Stuby indicated that she could provide comparative fees as listed by IBHE, and Hawkins noted that comparisons of fees are extremely difficult due to a lack of standardization in fee terminology across universities.

- e. Andrews and Hawkins reported on budget analysis. Andrews noted that some units in student services are self-contained, with their own source of revenue and without access to any appropriated funds. Decreases in revenues in these units are directly attributable to decreased enrollment. Expenses have also decreased due to decreased personnel expenses. Hawkins reported that these departments are staying within their means. A few areas are struggling, and these are the ones that are student-fee funded.

3. **Student survey:** The committee decided it would be valuable to expand the interviews conducted by Escobar and Peebles-Tomes into a student survey. After discussion, Davidson agreed to work with them to review their questions and prepare an online survey.

Roberts adjourned the meeting at 3:00 p.m.

Next meeting: October 27, 2016, 2 p.m., 2108 Buzzard Hall.

Respectfully submitted,  
Angela Vietto