

East Tennessee State University
Administrative Services Review Committee Meeting
December 17, 2014 – Meeting Summary

Background

ETSU held a meeting of the Administrative Services Review Committee on December 17, 2014. The goals for this meeting were as follows:

1. Meeting Summary from last meeting (December 3)
2. Discussion of Plan
3. Subgroup Reports
4. Communication plan update

Attendees

Bert Bach, Leslie Adebonojo, Chris Dula, Marsh Grube, Michael Hoff, Scott Jeffress, Mary Jordan, B.J. King, Karen King, Michaele Laws, Barbi Ly-Worley, Stefanie Murphy, Mary Ellen Musick, Margaret Pate, William Rasnick, Donald Samples, Vincent Thompson, Patricia Van Zandt, Greg Wilgocki, Teresa Williams, Dora Wyett

Discussion

The members present confirmed the December 3rd Meeting Summary was an accurate description of the meeting.

Discussion of Plan/Calendar (proposed by Rick Staisloff on December 3rd)

1. Pursue a two-month goal (January and February) by which each Subgroup would review any gaps and, by seeking to identify as many viable ideas for pursuit as possible, would bring them to the Committee for discussion, and would determine by its meeting on March 4 next steps.
2. Request the RpG Group to identify ASAP areas for review that peer institutions have found productive but that the Committee has not yet identified or addressed.
 - a. RpG Group to review the list of focus items from each Subgroup. Consider all areas determined for review: budget reduction, cost avoidance, and revenue generation. Are there any gaps?
3. Continue Subgroup action items consideration along lines committee has been pursuing.
4. Confirm calendar for meetings on January 21, on February 4 and 18, and on March 4 (at which meeting we would take stock, determine what if any next steps are required, and proceed).

LTC(Ret) Jeffress stated that with the nine subgroups working independently, the collaboration of ideas for large opportunities may have been missed. Other members were in agreement with LTC(Ret) Jeffress. Dr. Bach suggested that at the meeting on January 21st, a block of time be used for items such described by LTC(Ret) Jeffress, i.e., are there any large opportunities that we may have missed? How can we get them on the table for this committee to review? The committee agreed that it might be helpful to have a facilitator assist the committee with this endeavor. Dr. Bach will contact Dr. Kimberly Hale as she was highly recommended from a previous meeting in which she served as facilitator.

Subgroup Reports

Student Support Structures

1. Increase Part of Term and Massive Open Online Courses – Chris Dula

Recommendation – Encourage development of Part of Term (POT) and Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) classes so students can drop/add during mid-term without a change in enrollment status negatively impacting lottery scholarship or other aid, and to prevent unnecessary failures negatively impacting GPA.

Dr. Dula stated that there are very few late starting classes offered at ETSU and they are normally filled by the time students realize they need to drop a class. Several committee members spoke in favor of this recommendation.

Dr. B.J. King moved that the recommendation be forwarded to the appropriate group to be pursued and assessed. The motion was seconded and carried.

2. ETSU 1020 Curriculum Dates – B.J. King

Recommendation – Move date for financial planning instruction to within the first two weeks of term for ETSU 1020 Freshman experience course to help prevent student financial problems. Include a quiz entitled *Knowledge of Financial Aid* to the course to assess understanding.

Dr. King distributed a copy of the syllabus for the ETSU 1020 class and pointed out that the topic “Financial Literacy” occurs in November. By this time, many students are already out of money. Ms. Williams stated that there is an ETSU 1020 Committee chaired by Dr. Kirkwood. That change could already have been made as several changes have been made to the course. Dr. King moved that the financial planning piece, particularly the budgeting section, for this course be moved to as early in the semester as possible. The motion was seconded and carried.

3. Consolidated Responses for All Student Refund Appeals – B.J. King

Recommendation – Produce one letter that covers responses from all offices that currently correspond to students who file Student Refund Appeals. Currently, the student files one refund appeal in the Registrar’s Office that is distributed via a shared folder for processing by several offices. The student receives response letters from multiple offices. Sometimes the appeal decisions by these offices appear to be conflicting to the student. This is due to the fact that the appeals committees have different standards for appeals. One letter should be produced to consolidate information and explain the decisions. This process should be housed in Student Affairs. The responses should include information on how to get back into school.

During discussion it was determined that this recommendation does not need to be submitted to a higher level. Dr. Bach stated that he would ask representatives from the nine departments included on the Student Refund Appeals Form to meet and determine how to best resolve the issues from this recommendation and report their findings back to the committee.

4. Faculty Incentives for Non-Instructional Student Involvement – B.J. King

Recommendation – Offer incentives for faculty to increase involvement outside classrooms with current and prospective students. University administration should clearly and frequently communicate to faculty the shared interests in engaging current and prospective students outside the classroom.

Dr. King and Dr. Dula stressed that faculty involvement with students is imperative to student retention and graduation. Noting that much of the proposal referenced tenure track faculty, Ms. Jordan stated that the University is increasingly hiring faculty not in tenure track positions. This may be a big untapped area to consider and she felt the recommendation should specifically include all faculty. Dr. King moved that a variety of incentives be devised to encourage faculty to be more involved with students outside of the classroom, which ultimately leads to student retention and graduation. This is a priority that should be communicated to academic administrative and faculty leadership. The motion was seconded and carried.

5. Calendar Changes for Early Semester Progress Report, Drop Deadline and Late Semester Courses – B.J. King

Move Early Semester Progress Report (ESPR) from 6 weeks to 8 weeks to give instructors more grading opportunities. Move drop deadline from 8 weeks to 10 weeks to give students and advisors more time to make use of graded materials to make informed decisions.

Dr. King reviewed how these changes would positively impact the students. She added that moving the drop deadline could positively impact the financials of the University in that less aid dollars would have to be returned. Dr. King moved the recommendation be approved and the motion was seconded. Discussion followed regarding other dates and issues this recommendation may impact. The motion carried.

6. Single Point of Entry for All Student Online Activities – B.J. King

Recommendation – Single point of entry for all online access should be GoldLink. From there, students should move to D2L, GoldMail, DegreeWorks, and other sources.

Dr. King stated that this step would allow ETSU to display key information in GoldLink in a timely manner; therefore, improving communications with students. It was pointed out that GoldLink “times out” after a certain period of time and this requirement would be problematic when students are taking tests in D2L. Dr. Karen King stated that if the “timing out” issue in GoldLink is causing problems with D2L, the matter should be resolved. Agreeing that it isn’t the intent of this recommendation to “block” other points of entry, Dr. King moved the recommendation that students should access D2L, GoldMail, and DegreeWorks by first entering GoldLink be approved and the motion was seconded and carried.

Academic Support Structures – Leslie Adebajo

Roan Scholars Leadership Program

Recommendation: Capitalize on the Roan Scholars Leadership Program as an existing magnet for talented student leaders, by providing “matching” scholarship funds to enable intentional, accelerated expansion of the Roan Program and increase the number of students (from a wider geographic area) who choose ETSU, at least in part, because of having been Roan nominees.

Dr. Adebajo explained that the Roan Program currently selects seven students per year from high schools within a 21-county region (TN, plus VA, NC border counties) immediately surrounding ETSU. The Roan attracts talented student-leaders to campus, and also helps generate revenue in terms of student-nominees who are not selected as Roan Scholars but choose to attend ETSU anyway, in part because of their experience with the Program. This recommendation would allow the Roan to expand the geographical recruitment area, attract more student-nominees, and increase the number of Roan Scholars selected each year. Benefits would include increased visibility and likely revenue for ETSU, as well as closer ties with high schools, potential students, and potential donors and supporters.

The investments for the proposal would be (1) to provide matching funds for each new privately-funded scholarship added; and (2) an assistant director (to ensure continuity and sustain current levels of quality as the program expands). Dr. Adebajo moved the recommendation be approved and the motion was seconded. LTC(Ret) Jeffress restated the importance of the Roan first generating new private funds before ETSU matching funds would be applied, and indicated support for the recommendation. The motion carried.

Dr. Bach expressed appreciation to the committee members for the hard work they have done during the past semester. He wished everyone a wonderful holiday season.