

GRADUATION INITIATIVE 2025 TASKFORCE

Meeting Notes

Tuesday, November 19, 2019

ADM Room 101

12:30 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Present:

Vikash Lakhani, Deborah Boschini, Debra Jackson, Denise Romero, Dwayne Cantrell, Faust Gorham, Jennifer McCune, Kris Krishnan, Liora Gubkin, Lisa Zuzarte, Luis Vega, Michael Lukens, Nyakundi Michieka, Tanya Boone-Holladay, and Deisy Mascarinas (Administrative Support).

Absent:

Jaimi Paschal, Doreen Anderson-Facile, James Drnek, David Schechter, and Aaron Wan.

Action Items:

- D. Schechter will make edits to the Call for Proposal Sheet.
- V. Harper will be adding some points of emphasis on the call for proposals, based on his conversations with the Chancellor's Office and he will be sending those to V. Lakhani.
- The Academic Degree Progress sub-group will look into the issue with courses being offered every 2 years.
- V. Lakhani will put out a campus call for participation with the sub-committees in December.
- Updates on the sub-committees will be shared in the GI meeting in January.
- V. Lakhani will work with the Provost Office on a budget summary and request reports from Chancellor's Office.

Graduation Initiative Symposium

- D. Cantrell shared with the group a statement made by keynote speaker Alexandra Bernadotte, about the system not being broken but doing what it was designed to do which is to serve the elite and the few who have access to the system. All the work we are doing is to create a new system and to systematize it and with GI 2025 we are challenging our systems.
- K. Krishnan brought up the equity gap system and the fact that it is growing. When putting into context with what A. Bernadotte said in respects to the system doing what it is set up to do, he questions whether we will ever be able to close the equity gap or if it's something that is inherently in our system.
- F. Gorham shared his thoughts about human to technology interaction. He mentions that the speakers kept referencing the fact that we need systems, but we also need humans to run those systems and how to use them well. The Governor questioned what that workforce would look like in the future. Another speaker spoke to the amount of underlying digital literacy that's needed for all jobs and referenced a journalist because it's not just about writing but about knowing how to use the web, web interface, publishing on social media so that digital literacy has to be there and we teach this to our students in addition to everything else we are doing.
- We are turning into having more Transfer students than First time Freshman students, and this is a systemwide phenomenon that's going to happen. At the student panel, one student said, "as a Transfer student there were less supports for me." Another student said, "my parents have money, I don't and just because my parents have money I don't qualify for financial aid and had to take out a loan. My parents don't support me like that because they can't afford it, because they have debts. I'm working 2 jobs because I can't get financial aid and it makes it very difficult for me because I have to work a lot. I wish there was some way that people could know that my parents money doesn't belong to me." Another student mentioned needing help for Freshman courses and being more intrusive to bringing supplemental instruction. Also mentioned was, can GI 2025 or something help to provide more funding for jobs on campus, so students don't have to leave.
- K. Krishnan and A. Wan attended a session on BCSEE and it has shown to be successful.
 - L. Gubkin made a suggestion to invite A. Wan to the next ALT meeting to talk about what he learned about BCSEE or maybe zoom with the person who made the presentation. A zoom meeting with the BCSEE speaker and advisors can be a professional development opportunity for the advisors.

Graduation Initiative Mini-Grants

- There was a good discussion in the last meeting about what activities should be funded and how proposals should focus on direct student service and not release time to do research projects. This would be something that a program or effort that's going directly towards student success.
- On the call for proposals, V. Lakhani took a lot of the suggestions and recommendations that came from the Chancellor's Office report on closing our achievement gap as well as some areas of opportunities listed that come directly from the report.
- Additional points are given for those who go onto the dashboard and use that as a reference in any of the programs they are developing, as we need more exposure to the dashboard and all of the information provided there.
- We plan on having an open forum with the sub-committee that will be working through this to answer any questions that folks may have about the mini grants. It will be about an hour to an hour and a half.
- V. Lakhani suggested to launch the call in Spring.
- People can submit more than 1 proposal.
- If it is a blind review, the outcome could be that one area gets all the funding even if its different ideas. If all the ideas are in one school or department and we have to report that the next year it may have a certain look, and it may not look equitable.
- It was mentioned that the blind review could potentially cause to select proposals from people or groups that perhaps were not the most capable or connected to really follow through. If there is a name on the proposal, it could tell us more about the resources the team has available to them.
- It was decided that the mini grants should have a maximum amount of 10k for each proposal.

Student Advisory Committee

- We have a student in this committee, but we also plan to have a student advisory group that will provide feedback to V. Lakhani, which he will bring back to this committee.
- V. Lakhani has meetings with ASI Academic Affairs group on a bi-weekly basis and is getting very good feedback. In one of the meetings with them they discussed class availability, as that seems to be a big challenge on campus. One of the students mentioned sequencing of classes is a huge barrier for them and if they miss a course in the fall and that course is not offered for another 2 years, that student is here for an extra 2 years. We are hoping one of the sub-groups can take this issue and find potential solutions out of it. We will need a lot of faculty input in this area.
 - It was brought up that students may need to understand the constraints, in terms of who is available to teach courses and space on campus.
 - If the biggest barrier is getting the classes the students need, how often is the funding for GI going towards classes the students need to the extent that is possible?
 - Getting the information from the students is critical and getting that information to the Provost, the President, and the Trustees that we don't have enough Faculty. Some solutions include, full time Lecturers, Tenured Faculty, and offer classes online. Psychology is an area that has a high demand. We may not be keeping up with the growth and high demand.
- In sequencing classes, there are times that 2 courses are offered in the same term, same time, and the student needs to take both but one of the courses won't be offered for another year.

GI Taskforce Subgroups

- V. Lakhani provided a grid for the groups. (Sub-Committee Root Cause Analysis, Theory of Action, and Action Plan). D. Jackson and L. Zuzarte provided an example for the group to review together (Problem of Practice: Students are not progressing to degree completion at a satisfactory rate.)
- You want to discuss with your group what you want to identify as your problem of practice. Then you start identifying the major areas you see as the reasons for your "problem" and the 5 "why's?"
- As a group you have to decide what you want to focus on for the year (non-academic), and you want to come up with a theory of action statement. Ideally come up with 3-4 theory of action statements so that you know what the group can start working on and come up with an outcome at the end.

- Example- Problem: Course Sequencing. **If** we work with Faculty to improve sequencing as measured by a reduction in the number of courses that are only available every 2 years, **then** we will have more students progressing towards a degree.
 - You want to create the “If” and “then” statements that will allow you to have an action plan.
- Most groups will start their work in January so the target will be December.
- This is a way for us to collect our thoughts, get the campus involved, get their ideas in, and this will give us a clear action plan for the GI Taskforce so we know where we are headed.
- Is there a way to connect the work of sub-committees with the call for mini grants? This year its ok if it goes hand in hand but once we have the plans set and if we are successful in the proposals, V. Lakhani can request to the Provost another round of proposals which then would tie into the actual plans.
- D. Boschini will be a lead in the Health and Wellness sub-committee.
- Claudia Catota will be a part of the GI Taskforce and will be attending the next meeting.

Campus Communications

- V. Harper expressed interest in improving the visibility of the taskforce on campus and get more information out there for the campus to know. The sub-groups will help with this, but one idea V. Lakhani shared is to have a periodic information bulletin or newsletter out, once every semester.
 - The first one is expected to come out in Spring or sooner.
 - We can have the sub-groups contribute with the information that will go on the bulletin.
 - We can do a call out to the groups who have been recipients of GI 2025 money and have them send a few sentences on what they received the money for and how it was used.
 - We can look into our 2018-19 budget book to see the percentages and amount of money distributed for each of the areas.
 - Where has the money been spent? The committee doesn't have budgetary authority and we don't review the budget, we talk ideas, things happen and are implemented. Whether or not we got our money's worth is a big question mark. We don't know what we were trying to achieve with how many dollars, and it seems mysterious sitting on the taskforce and that is big question for the campus. This goes back to the Provost Office and how that money has been distributed. It would be helpful if a budget line can be a part of our agenda. Otherwise, we are just coming in with ideas but we're not in any way connected to what's being spent, what's possible, and what our biggest achievements have been.
 - V. Lakhani will work with the Provost Office to get a budget summary to know exactly where the funds went and get some kind of description.

Meeting Adjourned: 1:36 P.M.