SPARC
September 10, 2013
3:00 p.m., WCCC
Meeting Summary

In Attendance:
Cathy Archer
Mike Berghoef
Barb Ciaramitaro
Dave Eisler
Fritz Erickson
Don Flickinger
Don Green
Dorothy Hart
Jackie Hughes
Mike Hughes
Amanda Jewell

Leonard Johnson
Michelle Johnston
Kristen Motz
David Pilgrim
Miles Postema
Jerry Scoby
Khagendra Thapa
Deb Tyson
Helen Woodman
Leroy Wright

Guests:
Mindy Baumgartner, Jim Hessler, Lucian Leone, Dave Nicol, Jim Powell, Bill Potter

I. Action: Approval of the meeting notes.
SPARC members approved the April 9, 2013 meeting summary and the July 8 Summer Retreat summary.

II. Ferris First Update
Ferris First Chair Dan Tuuri shared that he will be providing updates monthly. Ferris First will be working with Institutional Research on how Ferris uses data and the future application of analytics. The group believes that a STEM representative is needed on campus. Member Don Green reported on a partnership with Prima Civatas from Lansing for international initiatives regarding innovation design and building relationships to expand minority entrepreneurship. The group will visit Ferris on Sept 13. Ferris First holds once a month luncheons; all are invited to attend.

III. Summer Summit
Provost Fritz Erickson distributed a document “Summer Enrollment Initiatives for Consideration” and framed discussion on summer enrollment, sharing an update on the Summer Summit sessions held over the last months. Initiatives from the Summit were formed around six areas of focus: curriculum, sequencing/scheduling, financial/logistics, partnerships, international, and new markets. The Summit attendees reviewed trends and specific enrollment data. Work groups were then created and each provided initiatives for consideration. Provost Erickson has now brought those initiatives to SPARC for feedback. Student credit hours and head count were down this summer semester. To have a positive impact on summer 2014, we need to make changes now.
As a member of the Summit, Associate Provost Potter provided an assessment of the data shown in Appendix B and C of the document and responded to questions regarding Pell summer funds, Ferris financial aid packaging and awarding, and summer enrollment compared to and courses transferred from other universities.

Provost Erickson opened discussion on college-level initiatives to increase summer enrollment recommended in the document.
Curriculum:
- Move to a three-year model in which students attend year round. Comments: traditional freshmen may not be ready the first June to start; they would need to be willing to go through the next 3 summers at minimum. Some students still want/need to work summer to pay tuition rather than increase loans. To encourage year-round costs, it would be critical to demonstrate the full financial impact to each student. This could be an option for high-demand programs in an attempt to reduce waiting lists. This recommendation should stay on the list for further exploration.
- Provide an intensive on-campus component during the summer. An intensive one or two week on-campus experience, and then continue with online may work best for graduate or professional degrees.
- Expand online course offerings. There may be room to raise caps in online courses by providing additional assistance to the online faculty member.
- Build summer courses into high demand programs. Could use with cohort style format; however, student and advisor must follow a specific, highly structured roadmap similar to some current programs.
- Create more cohort-based programs where students take courses for 12 months and accelerate through programs.
- Increase the number of consortium students with community colleges.
- Other: Certificate programs could be offered during the summer in which the students would complete requirements in one summer. Use summer to provide courses for those who are only a few courses from completion; we would need to identify them and develop a plan to help them finish with a summer program.

Sequencing/scheduling:
- Survey students prior to deciding which summer courses to offer and how they should be offered. This is a shift in how we think about courses - ask what students want offered.
- Provide better academic advising regarding summer options. Advisors could assist by building a 4-year schedule; it creates more work up front, but provides a roadmap to move the student forward. The survey data would be valuable.
- Examine data to see how summer pass rates compare to academic year pass rates for the same courses.
- Examine class meeting schedules to see if scheduling may be rearranged to better suit student needs. There are 8 different summer sessions available now. Scheduling a course as a block of 11am-1pm on MTWR prohibits the student from taking most other classes, and we need to offer sections when students are most available.
- Other: Members suggested to target the 8 courses that were taken at other universities then transferred back, and find out why students are doing this; resolve the issue for future and keep the students in our courses. Better define online and mixed delivery for greater clarity of how and when the class actually meets, and then code courses so that students will know what type of class in which they are enrolling. Have we asked students which courses they would like to take online?
Advisors may have that information since students often share what they plan to do for summer and what courses they plan to take.

University-wide initiatives to increase summer enrollment:
- Eliminate summer course offerings in face-to-face format. Should we get to the point where we drive everything online for summer? The more we eliminate, the more students we lose – younger students need the face to face – they want flexibility. Summer is more laid back and relationships are different with faculty; some students desire that format.
- Improve financial aid options. Members encouraged to expand student summer employment to students who are enrolled in courses and to use marketing to promote summer.
- Consider Grand Rapids. Members felt it was a good suggestion to take more face-to-face courses to Grand Rapids or wherever the students are located.
- Other: We are developing more classes in high schools and building those relationships to take courses to the schools. We should continue to use focus groups of students; EMAT could use the data to determine the most successful online courses.

Outcome Suggestions:
- Some issues require additional discussion.
- Could accomplish many of these objectives immediately and it would increase summer 2014 enrollment.
- Move forward with survey of students.
- Look at broader initiatives to engage in and pursue in greater detail.

Next meeting: Tuesday, October 8, 3:00pm in WCCC
Adjourned: 4:43 p.m.
Submitted by Elaine R. Kamptner