

Provost Report for Faculty Senate

April 2017

Submitted by Alison Morrison-Shetlar, Provost

SACSCOC Update

Review team members concurred that the university's DegreePlus proposal deserved their approval without any formal recommendations. They were "all smiles" when discussing DegreePlus, stating that it was an excellent proposal, and eager to know the results so that they could implement something similar on their campuses. They also encouraged us to report our findings through scholarly outlets as we collect data on the process. WCU will have no additional issues to deal with regarding DegreePlus and can implement it as planned.

The review team also concurred that the university still needs to address a few lingering compliance-related issues. SACSCOC has more than 90 standards in its Principles of Accreditation with which institutions must comply in order to gain or maintain accreditation. Although the official report will not be available for up to six weeks, the review team did offer a few areas in which they recommend the university still has some work to do, primarily in the areas of assessment of the effectiveness of academic programs, academic and student support units, administrative support services and research activities. In the exit interview, the team also asked for additional information regarding formal contractual agreements and facilities arrangements for the university's off-campus instructional sites and programs.

Update on Strategic Initiatives

Last week we received an updated draft of the technical definitions of the 9 metrics in the UNC Strategic Plan. Andrew Kelly from UNC General Administration will be visiting campus on April 26 to discuss the initiatives and goals for our campus. We will have as many members of the Senate task force as possible join the meeting with Andrew. A group of faculty and staff including Chris Cooper, Alison Joseph, David McCord, Erin McNelis, Brian Railsback, and Brandon Schwab will continue to work over the summer on our metrics that will be due to General Administration in August.

Scheduling Guidelines Task Force *Draft Report*

Guidelines for Department Heads

1. Rooms. Schedule the right class for the right size room so that we can maximize seat utilization. EVERY CLASS SHOULD BE ASSIGNED A CLASSROOM. Make sure you are scheduling classrooms not conference rooms. For hybrid courses be prudent in scheduling classroom space correctly.
2. Section Size. Look at section size. If there are courses that are more suited to being offered in larger sections (meaning it is pedagogically appropriate), then do it, even on an experimental basis. That will allow us to maintain smaller section sizes where necessary.

3. Upper level sections. If you had upper level course sections that did not fill last year, take a careful look at how you are scheduling your faculty. Schedule appropriately, working through exceptions with your dean.
4. Class Times. Schedule throughout the instructional day. Try not to schedule competing offerings at the same time. This is not just important for the university metrics; a balanced schedule is important for student success. University Deans are charged with delivering schedules that meet this intent.
5. Growth. As we grow, additional sections cannot be added during the most preferred times. The University is not gaining classrooms so additional growth will occur at underutilized times of the day. If a time slot resulted in sections not placing in a classroom during the R 25 run last year, do not plan to build more sections during that time this year.
6. Liberal Studies and gateway courses. Growth will need to occur in line with projected enrollment growth; that might mean slightly larger sections or more sections, or both.
7. Residential online courses. Residential online courses are offered to manage University seating and instructional capacity, not to replace face-to-face instruction. When vacant seats are anticipated in a distance online course, then a residential on line section should be offered as part of the same course to fill any vacant seats. Instructor availability and the potential to fill the course with additional enrollment are primary considerations. Online residential seats should not supplant needed distance student seats.
8. Online distance courses. Growth in online course offerings should occur in line with projected online distance enrollment.

We very much appreciate all the work, and all the considerations, that go into crafting a department schedule. The work and leadership of department heads is essential and appreciated. All issues and concerns should be solved through discussions with your dean.

Coordination of Scheduling

Department heads collaborate and coordinate to build schedules that accommodate potential student conflicts. Important areas of coordination include liberal studies, gateway courses and courses between majors, education. Please be aware of additional opportunities for collaboration.

Scheduling at Biltmore Park

Western Carolina University is continuing to grow its programming in the Asheville/Hendersonville corridor by further utilizing its instructional site at Biltmore Park Town Square during the summer months. Through management of its summer operating hours, as well as encouragement of Asheville- and Cullowhee-based programs to offer more classes at the Instructional site, WCU will continue to grow its presence and service to Western North Carolina. For those scheduling a summer class at Biltmore Park there will be an advanced coordination before the full R 25 schedule run to manage summer operating hours.

Information for Department Heads

Data that will be provided for review and support of scheduling include:

- A dashboard with information about course spread, overall and by department
- Counts of double majors to assist coordination between academic units
- The responses from the senior survey to understand reasons why it might have taken longer than four years to graduate

- Data on time to degree and average earned hours of graduates to allow units to review the effectiveness of the pathways to degrees.
- Other data will be developed on an ongoing basis that might assist or inform the programs. An appendix is attached with sample data.

Professional Development for Advisors/Faculty

The Advising Center and the Center for Career and Professional Development will collaborate to offer faculty professional development sessions on the following topics:

- Understanding the degree evaluation tool
- Liberal Studies
- Using GradesFirst 2.0
- Fostering Undergraduate Students' Success – policies for persistence toward degree completion
- Opportunities for participating in High Impact Practices such as undergraduate research, service learning, internships, study abroad, and capstone experiences
- Applying to graduate school (e.g., conducting searches for programs, assistantships, etc.)
- Applying for jobs (e.g., searching for positions by location, field, salary, etc.; preparing application materials; preparing for interviews)
- Incorporating career preparation in classes
- Facilitating transfer students' success

Campus Infrastructure

The University is addressing infrastructure needs to accommodate student life as we grow. For example, facilities is exploring processes that can link building temperatures to the R 25 schedule. Parking and transportation conversations are ongoing with internal stakeholders and consultants and remain university priorities.

Dining services, as well as other university services including parking, can negatively be impacted by class schedules that are not reasonably distributed though out the day and week. This could especially provide challenges during particular peak periods when heavily utilized classes dismiss within a typical meal period potentially resulting in longer wait times and compromised customer satisfaction. With that in mind, Dining must expect typical lunch and dinner periods to provide heavier demand and thus be staffed and prepared to deliver as quality an experience as possible during those peak times. Fortunately, data shared by OIPE during our task force meetings shows that classes are currently reasonably well distributed throughout the week. We did not look at historical distribution, but our current distribution seems to support better Dining experiences. Dining continues to adapt to accommodate a growing campus community through a variety of actions. Some specifics include:

- Design, construction, and a January 2017 opening of a full service Chili's in Noble Hall to provide a nationally recognized, table serviced, restaurant experience.
- Design, construction, and anticipated summer 2017 opening of Brown Hall providing dining options with over 500 seats, an additional Starbucks, and a full service Steak & Shake.
- The recent introduction of Tapingo, a service that allows users to avoid lines by ordering food ahead for pick up. This service is available at most locations.
- The use of a mobile delivery station on the Plaza near the Alumni Tower for the first two months of the semester during the peak lunch period.

- Providing more grab and go options including additional sandwiches and salads at the C-Store locations, as well as the University Center Food Court.
- Campus Services welcomed new Dining leadership in June 2016. Our new leadership placed greater focus on staffing and training models that would impact the August opening and the early part of the fall semester. Better overall customer service was delivered at the beginning of Fall 2016 as compared to previous years. Customer satisfaction levels confirm that observation.

Administrative Search Update

The positions of **Executive Director for Community and Economic Engagement and Innovation** and **Dean of Education and Allied Professions** campus visits have concluded. Individuals selected for these positions will be announced shortly.

Administration and Finance Fee Discussion

This will be a verbal report provided by Mike Byers, Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance.