Student Retention Committee – Minutes
SRC Minutes #3-13/14
December 16, 2013 – 3:00pm
President’s Conference Room

Attended: Russell Bloem, Elicia Davis, Todd Dornbos (chair), Christina Edmondson, Dana Hebreard, Tom Van Eck, Amy Wilsterrman, John Witte, and Rick Zomer.

Absent: Annie Bultman, Rana Huisman, and Darren Proppe.

Opening
Prayer (John)

(1) Sent minutes and action items from last meeting by email for review (SRC Minutes #2-13/14) – Oct 11, 2013.

(2) Reviewed the agenda – Starting with item 9, and finishing with 7.

Old Items
(3) Retention goals, plan, and KPIs – update.
   - Todd presented a proposed timeline (SRC Communication 7-13/14) for determining retention, persistence, and graduation rate goals for the college;
   - See action item #1 below.

(4) Student concerns referral system
   - No report; Overview of Advocate deferred to next meeting;
   - See action item #2 below.

(5) AHANA Retention
   - No report; Update on possible Hope College visit deferred to next meeting;
   - See action item #3 below.

(6) Strategic Plan 2019 - Review latest draft
   - No report; Excerpts related to student retention distributed to the committee (SRC Communication 6-13/14);
   - See action item #4 below.

New Items
(7) Intercultural Student Development Center (ISDC) and proposed data collection project.
   - Christina provided an update of happenings in the ISDC, which includes both Multi-Cultural Student Development and the International Student Development teams;
   - SRC members are invited to “Intercultural Happy Hour” which is a new event for students and staff to gather over refreshments and discuss current Calvin issues and/or provide opportunities for learning. This event takes place in the ISDC office on M and Th afternoons from 2-3:30pm.

(8) Daily discontinuation reports
   - No report; Deferred to the next meeting.

(9) Advising & Registration Report for Spring-2014
   - Todd distributed a Dec 15 fall-to-spring retention report (SRC Communication 5-13/14); while retention rates and semester hour loads are on track with previous years, it is noted that over the past three years, an increasing number of students have been served by a decreasing number of course sections. We should continue to monitor how the consequent advising and registration challenges may impact student retention.

Adjournment
(10) Next meeting: February 2014.

Outstanding action items (Blue items determined on 12/16/13)

(1) December 7, 2009 – Retention Goals, Plan, & KPIs - To help the Student Retention Committee (SRC) establish/refine a current list of retention goals and possible strategies for achieving them, a small task-force (short-term sub-committee) was charged with outlining a draft retention plan for the SRC to review and adopt. Given that (1) this plan will likely serve as a supplement to the broader enrollment objectives defined by the Enrollment Management Committee (EMC) and (2) that Dale Kuiper will be leading the EMC’s effort to reform the college’s existing enrollment plan, Russ requested that Dale also facilitate the SRC task-force. The following SRC members have also agreed to participate: Jacque R., John W., Russ B., & Todd D. While
no deadline for completion was established, it is assumed that this group’s work will likely parallel the EMC’s time-line for constructing a broader enrollment plan.

**November 22, 2010** - After a conversation regarding recent FEN updates with Michelle Loyd-Paige, MAC Chair and Dean for Multicultural Affairs, the retention committee will intentionally remember FEN’s retention objectives/goals [B1] for AHANA and International students when developing the SEM retention plan.

**March 7, 2011** – Dale and Todd will meet soon, to discuss next steps.

**May 10, 2011** – Planning team (noted above) has met once, and some work has been initiated to brainstorm a possible outline and important metrics for measuring success. The team will continue to work on this important task.

**October 28, 2011** - Dale and Todd have met a few times to consider possibilities, and will convene the larger working group, once a more substantial framework has been constructed. Given Jaque’s departure, both Alicia and Bob Crow have volunteered to join the working group. A working group meeting has been prescheduled for mid-November.

**September 21, 2012** – Now that the SEM plan has been adopted, Todd and Russ will discuss next steps for the construction of a retention plan. Perhaps the SRC could partner with the metrics committee to develop measurable retention objectives for this section, which could then serve as a reasonable alternative to a separate retention plan.

**March 25, 2013** – SRC should consult with Mike Stob as we work to further define the metrics that will be used to measure our retention goals. Calvin’s argument for re-accreditation must include a section on student retention and should be completed by summer of 2014. Tom VE is leading the SEM plan metrics team, and will include SRC members when they are ready to determine appropriate measures for the Retention/Graduation section of the plan.

**December 16, 2013** – SRC reviewed and approved a proposed timeline for determining retention, persistence, and graduation rate goals and KPIs for the college. We should complete this project in the spring of 2014, in order to meet the deadlines necessitated by the strategic plan [draft] and our HLC argument for reaccreditation. Goal authors are encouraged to rely on existing data and information, to keep this project manageable.

The SRC requests that point I.2.a be changed to read: “Retention and graduation goals will be set across key subpopulations of students and existing services aimed at success will be modified as needed.” More specifically, the committee recommends that the word “all” be changed to “key”. Amy agreed to relay this suggestion to the special faculty senate at the meeting later in the evening.

(2) **March 1, 2010** – Student Concerns Referral System - While members of the Student Retention Committee have varying opinions regarding the necessity of an electronic referral/alert system, Todd will coordinate a demonstration of Datatel’s ‘Student Retention Alert’ software to help determine whether or not this product (or perhaps a similar “home-grown” system) could be useful. Further discussion about possible next steps is deferred until after the demo.

**March 2010 – December 2012** – Detailed action items can be found in previous SRC meeting minutes.

**December 14, 2012** – SRC participated in an interactive demonstration of the Pharos-360 student retention software.

**December 18, 2012** – SRC participated in an interactive demonstration of the Retention Alert (Ellucian) retention system.

**December 19, 2012** – The SRC reviewed and discussed the retention system presentations given during the last two meetings (Dec 14 and Dec 18), and determined not to pursue a contract with either company at this time. While each system has differing and distinct benefits, the SRC was not convinced that our rationale for investigating these systems was compelling enough to justify the costs necessary to effectively deploy and maintain them. In short, the SRC determined that we already have mechanisms for identifying drop-out/at-risk students, relatively good cross-divisional communication, and a strong safety net for those who are connected with the right resources. Furthermore, the SRC was not convinced that either of these systems would directly leverage improvement of our current retention rates. Alternatively, the SRC determined that some benefit would be gained by assigning Academic Services staff to the task of tracking, facilitating, and quantifying support for drop-out prone students. Todd was tasked with drafting a memo from the SRC to Academic Services (via Tom Steenwyk), expressing the group’s request to allocate resources in Academic Services (part-time position?) toward this effort.

**March 25, 2013** – SRC reviewed the first draft of a memo to Tom Steenwyk, and shared several comments and suggestions for revision. Todd will update the memo accordingly, discuss it with Tom S., and route a final draft to the SRC for review.

(3) **October 11, 2013** – AHANA Retention (Day-10 Conversation) - In response to an observation that Hope College’s retention rate for AHANA students is relatively stronger (in comparison to cohort averages) than Calvin’s, the SRC decided to commission a Calvin envoy to meet with our counterparts at Hope to learn more and/or share best practices. Elicia and Todd will coordinate this meeting, and invite other participants, as necessary.

(4) **October 11, 2013** – Strategic Plan – After collecting feedback from the SRC’s review and discussion of the current draft of the college’s Strategic Plan, Annie, Dana, and Todd will collate the information and route it back to Doug Koopman.