

Wayne State University
Proceedings of the Student Affairs Committee
April 10, 2013

Present: Cheryl Dove, Avril Genene Holt, Barbara Jones, Liza Lagman-Sperl, James Martin, Michele Ronnick, Naida Simon, James Woodyard

Absent With Notice: Basim Asmar, Veronica Bielat, Moira Fracassa, Judith Fouladbakhsh, Michael Horn, Victoria Pardo, Brad Roth, Madhu Sanan-Venkata, David Strauss, Ellen Tisdale, Ardiana Vuljay, Mary Width, Nancy Wilmes, Lee Wurm

Guest: Dwayne Simmons, PhD, Department of Integrative Biology and Director, Minority Access to Research Careers (MARC) Program, Bridges to the Baccalaureate Program and Diversity for Neuroscience Education and Outreach, Brain Research Institute, University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA)

The meeting was called to order at 1:42 pm. The Minutes of the March 27th meeting were unanimously approved. As this was our last meeting for the academic year, the Chair thanked the committee for its service with a special thanks to Michele Ronnick who was interim chair while the chair was out ill.

The speaker for today was Monica Brockmeyer, Associate Provost for Student Success. Her topic for today was the undergraduate research programs and their change from the Honors College to her portfolio.

The chair had received an email from Judith Wittum-Hudson, a senator from the School of Medicine that expressed her concerns about the abrupt transfer of the undergraduate research program from the Honors College to the Office of the Provost. There was poor communication about the how and why of the transfer. As a result of the transfer requests for abstracts for participation in the local undergraduate research day were sent out much later than usual. This meant that students did not have the experience of a local research day prior to applying to present at the national conference. This year (2013), the local conference will return to the November date. One suggestion was to have better communication and let faculty know early enough to meet the deadlines. There is a \$280K budget for undergraduate research. She is working with Marketing to upgrade the website. The university wants to give pre-research support. The university uses what is known as a hub and spoke model.

Ms. Brockmeyer discussed the ten High Impact Practices that the university wants to implement if not already here:

(1) First-Year Seminars and Experiences:

Many schools now build into the curriculum first-year seminars or other programs that bring small groups of students together with faculty or staff on a regular basis. The highest-quality first-year experiences place a strong emphasis on critical inquiry, frequent writing, information literacy, collaborative learning, and other skills that develop

students' intellectual and practical competencies. First-year seminars can also involve students with cutting-edge questions in scholarship and with faculty members' own research.

(2) Common Intellectual Experiences:

The older idea of a “core” curriculum has evolved into a variety of modern forms, such as a set of required common courses or a vertically organized general education program that includes advanced integrative studies and/or required participation in a learning community (see below). These programs often combine broad themes—e.g., technology and society, global interdependence—with a variety of curricular and cocurricular options for students.

(3) Learning Communities:

The key goals for learning communities are to encourage integration of learning across courses and to involve students with “big questions” that matter beyond the classroom. Students take two or more linked courses as a group and work closely with one another and with their professors. Many learning communities explore a common topic and/or common readings through the lenses of different disciplines. Some deliberately link “liberal arts” and “professional courses”; others feature service learning.

(4) Writing-Intensive Courses:

These courses emphasize writing at all levels of instruction and across the curriculum, including final-year projects. Students are encouraged to produce and revise various forms of writing for different audiences in different disciplines. The effectiveness of this repeated practice “across the curriculum” has led to parallel efforts in such areas as quantitative reasoning, oral communication, information literacy, and, on some campuses, ethical inquiry.

(5) Collaborative Assignments and Projects:

Collaborative learning combines two key goals: learning to work and solve problems in the company of others, and sharpening one's own understanding by listening seriously to the insights of others, especially those with different backgrounds and life experiences. Approaches range from study groups within a course, to team-based assignments and writing, to cooperative projects and research.

(6) Undergraduate Research:

Many colleges and universities are now providing research experiences for students in all disciplines. Undergraduate research, however, has been most prominently used in science disciplines. With strong support from the National Science Foundation and the research community, scientists are reshaping their courses to connect key concepts and questions with students' early and active involvement in systematic investigation and research. The goal is to involve students with actively contested questions, empirical observation, cutting-edge technologies, and the sense of excitement that comes from working to answer important questions.

(7) Diversity/Global Learning:

Many colleges and universities now emphasize courses and programs that help students explore cultures, life experiences, and worldviews different from their own. These studies—which may address U.S. diversity, world cultures, or both—often explore “difficult differences” such as racial, ethnic, and gender inequality, or continuing

struggles around the globe for human rights, freedom, and power. Frequently, intercultural studies are augmented by experiential learning in the community and/or by study abroad.

(8) Service Learning, Community-Based Learning:

In these programs, field-based “experiential learning” with community partners is an instructional strategy—and often a required part of the course. The idea is to give students direct experience with issues they are studying in the curriculum and with ongoing efforts to analyze and solve problems in the community. A key element in these programs is the opportunity students have to both *apply* what they are learning in real-world settings and *reflect* in a classroom setting on their service experiences. These programs model the idea that giving something back to the community is an important college outcome, and that working with community partners is good preparation for citizenship, work, and life.

(9) Internships:

Internships are another increasingly common form of experiential learning. The idea is to provide students with direct experience in a work setting—usually related to their career interests—and to give them the benefit of supervision and coaching from professionals in the field. If the internship is taken for course credit, students complete a project or paper that is approved by a faculty member.

(10) Capstone Courses and Projects:

Whether they’re called “senior capstones” or some other name, these culminating experiences require students nearing the end of their college years to create a project of some sort that integrates and applies what they’ve learned. The project might be a research paper, a performance, a portfolio of “best work,” or an exhibit of artwork. Capstones are offered both in departmental programs and, increasingly, in general education as well.

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Jim Woodyard presented a report on the analysis of the 2012 Bridge to Academic Success (APEX) Program data. The purpose of the analysis is to determine the role of ACT scores on the GPAs of students and to compare GPAs for the summer program and fall semester. Information on the APEX program is available at <http://www.apex.wayne.edu/>. The data were collected from the WSU Student Tracking, Advising, and Retention Application (STARS) by Naida. Eighty-eight students entered the summer 2012 APEX program, three did not have ACT scores and 6 did not enroll in the fall 2012 semester, leaving seventy-six students with ACT scores that enrolled in the fall semester.

The average GPA was determined for each group of students with the same ACT for the summer program; ACTs ranged from 15 to 23 and the average GPA for each ACT group ranged between 3.10 and 3.44 with an overall average of 3.33. The average GPA for each ACT group for the fall semester ranged between 1.36 and 2.86, and averaged 1.92. The data show a relatively small correlation of ACT with GPA for the students in the summer program. There is a correlation of GPA with ACT for the fall semester students. Student groups with ACTs in the range of 15 to

19 had average GPAs that increased from 1.65 to 2.15. However, a group of eight students with an ACT of 20 had an average GPA of 1.64. The average GPA for the fall semester is 1.41 points below the average for the summer program.

Dr. Simmons from UCLA participated in the discussion. Dr. Simmons shared his insights in a frank discussion of what his university has discovered in their research. A link will be forthcoming as to what has been published on their data. At UCLA the McNair Scholars students are not STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) majors whereas here at Wayne they can be. One key difference with the UCLA “at risk” minority students is that they strongly advise that these students TO NOT TAKE a full-time LOAD.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:15 pm.