

Summary of Activity: Student Retention Committee

- *The committee will coordinate the development of the overall retention plan for undergraduate students at KU.*

Members:

James B. Carothers, David Ambler, Alan Cerveny, Ken Stoner, Mary Ann Rasnak, Kathryn Nemeth Tuttle, Justin Mills, Barbara Ballard, Kathleen McCluskey-Fawcett, Robert Page, Michele Eodice, Richard Johnson

In August 2001, Page and Eodice, as co-chairs of the Retention Planning Committee, asked the Student Retention Committee to consider a number of changes in the language to describe committee roles, in the membership, and in the tasks and goals of the committee.

As of Fall 2001, the sub-committees and study group topics:

Academic/Curricular

- Includes oversight of PRE 101, LAS 292, Math 002/ 101 and other academic components to retention efforts

Living/Learning Communities

- Studied the effectiveness of FIGs; could provide guidance on design and facilitation of FIGs, should these be developed to a greater extent at KU

Recruitment & Retention of Students of Color

- Includes oversight of HawkLink, Diversity in Engineering and other campus programs

Sophomore Programs

- Includes assessment of second year student needs in terms of advisement, special interest groups, etc.

Career & Employment Services Task Force

- Includes designing ways to integrate career pathways activities into overall retention effort

Activities

Recent reports
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Retention Programs for Students of Color at KU2. Honors and Mt. Oread Scholars3. Residential Retention Programs Master Plan4. PRE 101: Impacts on Retention & Graduation5. Special Task Force on Career and Employment Services: Career Services Blueprint6. Standardized Withdrawal Procedures

Consensus

- Agreement that the Student Retention Committee can and should focus on existing and new information from the sub-committees to create concrete goals, to sponsor recommendations directly, , and to keep the Provost apprised of efforts related to retention
- Agreement that institutional readiness, a shared responsibility, and a concerted cross-institutional effort will be required for recommendations and implementation of any programmatic efforts
- Agreement that current assessments (within programs and from OIRP) are valuable resources as we move to prioritize issues and ideas

Recommendations of the Committees:

Institutional/cultural recommendations:

1. Adopt an institutional statement that invites all members of the University community to participate fully in the University as a dynamic living and a learning community, with retention as a primary goal
2. Make a financial commitment to support and provide incentives for retention efforts – to support programs, conduct research and ongoing assessments, and reward examples of extraordinary engagements with students, e.g. expansion of PRE 101 sections; incentives for teaching.
3. Establish a well-funded office under a retention director to ensure the establishment, coordination and continuation of multiple efforts; this person would require institutional support to work to build the multi-disciplinary and cross-organizational connections required for success of multiple retention efforts.
4. Recognize and reward the scholarly efforts of faculty and staff that include personal connections with students; create a climate in which teaching and connecting with students is viewed as scholarship; honor advising; explore the potential of the co-curriculum; provide teaching grants for the development of credit-bearing service learning and research opportunities for undergraduates; cite other examples of connected teaching.

A common conclusion of all reports was that a continued effort by individuals and individual programs is limiting and confusing; a holistic, comprehensive, and more centralized resource – **in the form of a retention services office**—would better serve the needs of the faculty, students, and staff as they join to focus on student retention.

With a dedicated budget/leadership . . .	Without such support . . .
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ clear statement/message regarding retention would emerge ➤ coordinate efforts of all retention programs ➤ provide ongoing assessment of programs ➤ disseminate data for public via web/newsletter ➤ focus on various cohorts with particular needs ➤ invite collaborative leadership ➤ revive internal and external interest in the issues of student development ➤ interface outreach efforts with technology (PeopleSoft) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ duplication of services/inefficient referral system ➤ difficult to make budget decisions ➤ mixed messages to parents/public ➤ lack of attention to groups with particular needs blocks diversity efforts ➤ systemic problems are not uncovered ➤ Minimal progress toward sustained improvement of retention rates ➤ No retention mission + low priority=little incentive to improve