

## First Year Experience Committee Meeting

November 4, 2016—11:00am

**Attendees:** Kelly Ansley, Armond Boudreaux, Odey Egbe, Wiley Gammon, Sherrie Helms, Nick Kelch, Deborah Kittrell-Mikell, Bob Marsh, Georgia Mathews, Missie Roberson, Tabithia Ross, Sandra Sharman, Vicki Sherrod, Dave Strickland, Maria Stuckey, and Kristin Waters.

**Absent:** David Altamirano

Minutes recorded by Tabithia Ross (edited by Dave Strickland)

**Introduction:** Dave Strickland called the meeting to order (11:08am) briefly describing the purpose of the newly formed official committee for the new First Year Experience program that includes the CATS 1101 course. The new FYE program is intended to be a joint venture between the Academic and Student Affairs sides of the institution to support student success. A brief review of the program's vision statement details an extension of the P.A.W.S orientation program for new freshmen students.

**Progress Reports:** Dave reported that assessments of the FYE program were underway including pre-and-post measures of variables related to the program goals. He also reported that early evidence of success was suggested by the registration statistics. Dave referenced enrollment reports which were distributed by the registrar and show a 25 percent increase in registration activity for students on the Swainsboro campus during the first two weeks that registration was open compared to the same time last year. FYE efforts to bolster early registration and retention may have contributed to the increased student compliance during the first two weeks of spring registration for returning students.

Deborah gave an overview of the efforts of the advisement staff on the Swainsboro campus to early register students for the spring 2017 semester. Thus far, the CATS 1101 has been successful in its attempts with nearly 200 of the 372 students on the class roster for the Swainsboro campus registered for classes on the first day of early registration. A new advisement/registration protocol which involved a partnership of the CATS course and the Advisement Center was implemented on the Swainsboro campus. The program employed a combination of “intrusive advisement” and “developmental advisement” (as labeled in the research literature). Under the new program, every new student experienced a minimum of three interactions with the advising center:

- 1) during week three of the semester, Deborah gave a lecture on the core curriculum to the CATS 1101 students in the auditorium,
- 2) beginning in week four, new students, in groups of 25, attended a hands-on workshop led by a professional advisor, where each student constructed a personal graduation/transfer plan,
- 3) each student was required to make an appointment and meet individually with Deborah or Astraea at the advisement center, where they completed a spring registration form based on their graduation plan and authorized advisement center staff to automatically register them on the first day of registration,
- 4) students who were prevented from registration due to holds returned to the advisement center after satisfying the hold, and finally,
- 5) if needed, each student returned to the advisement center to review his or her schedule and receive help with any questions.

This procedure represents a change from the less intrusive protocol formerly used in the EGAC 1100 Student Success classes. Under the former condition, students experienced a lecture on the core and were told to schedule a meeting with their faculty advisor. They were urged to construct a graduation plan and submit it along with proof of registration for course credit but it was often the case that many opted not to comply.

Missie agreed that the division of each of the steps was beneficial for the students to realize the difference between advisement and registration. Tabithia discussed the need for an upgrade on the Degreeworks software in order to support the advisement center's efforts but it requires a lot of money to get it updated. Dave provided students that participated in early advisement/registration extra credit if they showed him their schedule. Dave and Deborah are co-authoring a proposal for the A.C.E. advisement staff to advise all first-semester freshmen students, not just learning support students. The proposal (IDEAS - Intrusive Developmental Engaged Advisement for Student Success) will include a more

comprehensive description of the new advisement protocol and will be presented to the committee for review at our next meeting.

Workshop Reports: Next, each department that taught a workshop reviewed their outcome:

- Conduct Workshop (Sherrie/Whiley)
  - Chief Gammon said that he appreciated the opportunity to interact face-to-face with the new students in this context.
  - Sherrie reported that the students were generally responsive to the workshop sessions and that many had questions.
- A.C.E Advisement Center (Deborah)
  - Reviewed the number of students in the course early registered.
  - Advised students ahead of the opening day of registration and put classes into the system on the day registration began.
- Library (Katie/Kelly)
  - Created the P.R.O.W.L program to use in the class workshops—Performing Research \_\_\_\_\_ With Librarian”.
  - The P.R.O.W.L bingo created an interactive opportunity for the students to engage with the library staff and other students.
  - Have also provided extra-credit workshops with instruction on Microsoft 365 and Introduction to Research.
  - Have requested laptops to use for workshops so students can perform research during the program.
- Human Resources (Maria)
  - Resume writing workshop.
  - Creates focus on career so that students know how to build a resume and think long-term.
  - The resume is one of the items that students are required to include in their portfolio. The idea is that the student can update his or her resume each semester so that they will be ready to transition into their career after graduation.
- A.C.E. Tutoring Center (Kristin)
  - Workshop teaching time management skills, test-taking tips and support services available to students.
  - Allowed students to meet one-on-one, if necessary, to facilitate good study skills.
  - The method is better than the practice (during previous semesters) of simply requiring the student to visit the ACE and collect a signature.
- Online Workshops
  - EverFi Haven (sexual assault prevention)
  - EverFi Alcohol Edu (substance abuse prevention)
  - Metacognition and learning theory video essays

Campus Reports:

- Statesboro (Sandra)
  - Still used old EGAC 1100 model for CATS in Statesboro with individual courses taught by different instructors.
  - Success rates are varying among the different instructors.
  - The Statesboro campus will attempt a model similar to the one used in Swainsboro beginning spring semester 2017 as room space allows.
  - Dave reported that rooms have been reserved for the CATS class and workshops in the College of Education building at Georgia Southern. For spring semester, we are preparing to accommodate four cohorts of 100 students each. Sandra will hold a weekly class session with each cohort and the students within each cohort will attend workshops in groups of 25. During spring, Statesboro will replicate the advisement protocol which was piloted in Swainsboro this fall. Other workshop content is to be determined promptly and will be announced at our next meeting.

- Augusta (Nick)
  - Since EGSC-Augusta is physically located on the AU campus it is difficult to have the same model as Swainsboro but is trying different methods to improve the quality of the program.
  - All students were required to come to a class “orientation” before the semester started.
  - 176 students enrolled in the Augusta section and only 35 are not pre-registered for the spring semester at this point.
  - At advisement class meeting, they discuss reverse transfer options with an AU representative.
  - Plans to collaborate with AU in the Fall 2017.
  - Primary challenge is space-related.

After the different department discussions, Dave discussed ways to improve the program and how to manage requests for withdrawals. The committee agreed there should be a zero-withdrawal policy with the exception of rare allowances for medical or hardship withdrawals.

Dave distributed copies of the EGSC custom pages which we have inserted into the textbook for CATS 1101. He requested that committee members review the document and make recommendations at our next meeting. He assigned specific pages to members as appropriate based on content and reported that they could provide content that they would like to see added for the next edition (to be used fall 2017) and said that May 1 is the deadline for offering submissions.

Dave and Georgia are working with Courtney Powers to design a T-shirt for use with new student orientation that will also promote the FYE program.

Dave will be presenting the FYE First Class results at the Annual Conference on The First-Year Experience which will be held in Atlanta this year (February 11 – 14, 2017) and Sandra expressed interest in going to a national conference. Dave would like for both Sandra and Nick to attend the National FYE conference in February if possible.

The Georgia First-Year and Transition Studies Conference is a one day conference held at Kennesaw State university. The conference will be on Friday, March 10, 2017. Dave would like for as many members of the committee as possible to attend the GA FYTS Conference. He would like for us to use a team approach. Therefore, he requested that each committee member review their travel budget or request travel funding from their department and plan to attend if possible. This conference is very inexpensive (last year the registration was only \$75). It would require only a single night stay and we could probably ride together in a college vehicle. Dave will provide more information about the conference at our next meeting.

Dave wanted to thank Norma Kennedy for an I-Pad to raffle and other prizes that were raffled at class meeting times. Banners have been purchased by the marketing department in addition to stamps being used soon. Special thanks to Courtney Powers and Katelyn Moore who have created FYE First Class and CATS logos, banners, stamp templates, over 20 mini-posters. Dave also expressed appreciation for volunteers who taught extra-credit workshops including Elisabeth Gilmer (workshop on Finance), Dr. Palumbo (workshop on Study Abroad), and library staff (workshops on “How to Google Like a Librarian” and “Office 365”). Thanks to those faculty and staff (including Raymond Hayes, Jeff Howell, Caroline Joyner, Daniel Mancill, Mike Moran, Sandra Sharman, and Jessie Williamson) who taught the individual course sections that were necessary this semester as we are in transition. Finally, special thanks to Nick Kelch who, on very short notice, designed a dynamic program to serve our Augusta students.

The meeting was adjourned with a plan to meet the first or second week of December but an email will be sent with specific date/time information.