

TO: Neil Murphy  
 FROM: JR White  
 RE: Retention Initiatives  
 DATE: April 8, 2003

Neil, as you requested here is a brief of the retention initiatives and a report of the progress to date. Many of the action items have already been accomplished and will continue to be implemented as they were this academic year.

The two pages that follow give you details that might prove helpful while the table below gives you a snap shot of those initiatives that could use more structure. As you will see, it is those initiatives that are primarily academic in nature that require most thoughtful consideration and subsequent action planning. In the pages that follow, you will see that Bill Tully and Dudley Raynal have begun conversations about these particular items.

If I can provide further information, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Initiative	2002-2003 Progress	Comments
Smaller class sizes in Botany, Calculus, General Chemistry I & II, and Zoology and appropriately assigned <u>teachers</u> .	2 Sections of Botany, Fall '03	Discussions/No other action items identified at this time.
Break up Botany, Calculus, and Chemistry		Discussions/No action items identified at this time.
Formalize a Freshman Year Experience	Accomplished	"Evolutions"
Enhance ESF 132 (orientation course) to include transition and social issues	Accomplished	Uneven participation/facilitation by faculty. Will do again fall 2003.
Early Hands-On Field Experience		No action items identified at this time. Could be a PACE topic for the future.
Early Alert System--reporting of grades 1/3 of the way through the first semester	Accomplished	Will do again in fall 2003.
Improve Academic Advising and Information Sharing		Possible future topic of PACE or COI.
Increase Opportunities for Student Success	COI Symposium	No action items identified at this time.
Provide more flexibility for elective courses		Discussions/No other action items identified at this time.
Address issues of incongruence in messages students hear versus what they experience	Accomplished	Will continue to monitor messaging.
Create a Formalized Opportunity for Maintaining a Dialog About Student Satisfaction	Accomplished	Will continue small group interactions and open forum experiences.

## Retention Team: Accomplishments 2003-2004 and Agenda 2004-2005

### Accomplishments to Date

#### Smaller class sizes and appropriately assigned teachers.

- ❖ Botany divided into two lecture sections, Fall 2003
- ❖ Chemistry divided into two lecture sections, Fall 2004
- ❖ Still need to address issue of "appropriately assigned teachers"

#### Break up Botany, Calculus, and Chemistry

- ❖ EFB and RM have flexibility relative to calculus placement—we will advocate that curriculum coordinators and advisors exercise this flexibility with appropriate students. If EFB and RM move calculus, this reduces the number of first year students simultaneously take "the big three" from 228 to 71.
- ❖ Math placement may be part of the problem of students (in)ability to handle "the big three". Provost Tully has committed to summer assessment of students' math placement test scores and high school grades for the purpose of placement in pre-calculus or calculus (presumably by S. Phillipon).
- ❖ There will be increased communication to faculty advisors regarding students' preparedness in math and their ability to take three difficult science/math courses. The Dean of Instruction and Graduate Studies will facilitate this through the "Early Awareness Program."

#### Formalize a Freshman Year Experience and Enhance ESF 132 to Include Transition and Social Issues

- ❖ "Evolutions": student mentoring program, learning communities, community service, freshman class community building, student organizations.
- ❖ There will be a link between the "Evolutions" program and ESF 132 via course requirements for students to attend five "student life" sessions.

#### Early Hands-On Field Experience

- ❖ We learned in 2003-2004 that this has improved greatly. ESF 132 courses and most of the traditional first year courses have incorporated a great deal of "hands-on" field experience.

#### Early Alert System--reporting of grades 1/3 of the way through the first semester

- ❖ In process since Fall 2002.
- ❖ Faculty of first year courses identify students "in jeopardy" and e-mail them
- ❖ Fall 2003 added letter to students identified as "in jeopardy". Letter suggested courses of action and resources. Repeated in spring 2004.

#### Improve Academic Advising and Information Sharing

- ❖ There will be increased communication to faculty advisors regarding students' preparedness in math and their ability to take three difficult science/math courses. The Dean of Instruction and Graduate Studies will facilitate this through the "Early Awareness Program."
- ❖ Students will be placed in appropriate math courses via summer assessment of placement exam scores and high school grades (per B. Tully and presumably by S. Phillipon).
- ❖ Curriculum plan sheet will have an "interactive notes" section for faculty (and others).

#### Increase Opportunities for Student Success

- ❖ No action identified at this time

#### Provide more flexibility for elective courses

- ❖ Decided this is not a topic for the retention team; Faculty-specific issues.

#### Address issues of incongruence in messages students hear versus what they experience

- ❖ Accomplished and continuing

#### Create a Formalized Opportunity for Maintaining a Dialog About Student Satisfaction

- ❖ Student Government-sponsored open forums with Dr. Murphy
- ❖ Monthly meetings and additional gatherings with students of color—J. Heffernan
- ❖ Student Leaders Retreat—fall '04
- ❖ Student Opinion Survey; Learning Community Survey

**Retention Team: Accomplishments for 2004-2005 and Agenda for 2005-2006.**

**2004-2005 Agenda and Accomplishments:**

Goal	Objectives	Who
Promote Interactive Component of Plan Sheet	Attend individual faculty meetings for "training" (preferably by faculty colleague)	D. Raynal / D. Soderberg
	Accomplished!  Solicit faculty feedback—early spring --is it useful? --suggested "tweaks" -resize page—no need; maximize screens -lengthen time in use—done → 30 minutes -working on "toggle" from plan sheet to notes	
Improved Student/Advisor Relationships	Student Leaders Retreat Topic = Advising Accomplished!	L. Flynn
	ESF 132 Session on "How to be a good advisee" —October 24 Accomplished!	JR. White, coordinating
	Mentoring Program / 132 Interface Accomplished!	L. Flynn / J. DeBaise 132 Instructors
	Alcohol and Other Drugs Programming Accomplished!	Student Life Staff
	Tutoring Program Promotion Accomplished!	J. Turbeville
	Newsletter to Faculty—topic: today's student (general and ESF) and their needs Accomplished!	J. White
	Dismissed Student Interviews Accomplished!	Turbeville
Identify Barriers to Student Success	Solicit Student Perceptions—focus groups Move to 2005-2006 Agenda	
	Solicit Faculty/Staff Perceptions—focus groups Move to 2005-2006 Agenda	
	Identify Pre-ESF Predictors of Academic Success Move to 2005-2006 Agenda	T. View / T. Fletcher
	Newsletter Move to 2005-2006 Agenda	
Promote Efforts of Retention Team to Faculty	Faculty/Campus Governance Interface Move to 2005-2006 Agenda	

**2005-2006 Agenda:**

- Review of GoalQuest Operation and Possible Implementation
- Review Participation of Faculty in Mid-Semester Progress Report Process
- Launch Academic Success Series, Fall 2005
- Launch Academic Success Webpage, Fall 2005
- Request Academic Success Resource Inclusion in Syllabi
- "110" Brochure to Faculty
- Review ESF 132 Grading: S/U vs. Letter Grades—missed opportunity for success?
- Undeclared Students: Why do they fit / Who are their peers? Suggest Environmental Science 132
- Identify Barriers to Student Success: Focus groups of faculty/staff and students
- Promote Efforts of Retention Team to Faculty

▪ Retention Team: 2005-2006 Agenda and Accomplishments:

2005-2006 Agenda Item	Status
Review of GoalQuest Operation and Possible Implementation	ACCOMPLISHED (though no action to date)!
Review Participation of Faculty in Mid-Semester Progress Report Process	ACCOMPLISHED! Reviewed both fall and spring participation and Dean of Instruction communicated with appropriate faculty.
Launch Academic Success Series, Fall 2005	ACCOMPLISHED!
Launch Academic Success Webpage; Communication of Support Resources, Fall 2005	ACCOMPLISHED!
Extend Math Preparedness Assessment/Course Placement to Transfer Students	ACCOMPLISHED! Review of transfer preparedness will commence summer '06.
Examine Freshman Course Sequence Relative to Curricula Needs and Current Offerings	ACCOMPLISHED & IN PROGRESS! EFB faculty currently considering general biology course
Examine Class Size for Lower Division	ACCOMPLISHED! Smaller chemistry sections
Improve Advising	ACCOMPLISHED & IN PROGRESS VIA PROVOST
Examination of "Vanished" Students	ACCOMPLISHED! Not a "real" concern; problem = internal tracking issues
Review ESF 132 Grading: S/U vs. Letter Grades—missed opportunity for success?	ACCOMPLISHED! Dean of Instruction communicated with appropriate faculty units to move to graded system
Undeclared Students: Why do they fit / Who are their peers? Suggest Environmental Science 132	ACCOMPLISHED! More attention paid to this group. Dean of Instruction = advisor.
Identify Barriers to First Year Student Success: Focus groups of faculty/staff and students	ACCOMPLISHED! Barriers primarily focused on personal behavior
Promote Efforts of Retention Team to Faculty	IN PROCESS—PART OF PROPOSED EXPANDED FACULTY GOVERNANCE
Assess Transfer Student Perceptions of ESF Experience	ACCOMPLISHED!

*Supervise ESF's Learning Communities Initiative*  
*In the 2005-2006 academic year, we managed learning communities. The Sadler & and Fry residential communities were*