

## University Council

### Student Engagement and Success

**Minutes:** January 18, 2017

**Attendees:** Brown, Jenna; Byrne, Michelle; Caillet, Barb; Kemp, Sukanya; Krovi, Ravi; Levy, Paul; Pluess, Carol; Simmons, Todd;

**Absent:** Angeletti, Ricky;

**Absent with Notice:** Gannon, Debbie; Messina, John

#### Old Business:

- I. International Scholarship Q & A with Dave Black
  - a. The basic “how to” of International Scholarship
    - i. Scholarships run through Financial Aid. Incoming international freshman students receive all of the same opportunities for scholarships as incoming domestic students, including consideration for honors and honors housing. This is to allow international students the same opportunities as domestic students.
    - ii. International students are also awarded a \$3,000 scholarship.
    - iii. International students typically do not take the ACT or SAT so they are typically disqualified for awards based on these scores (they are considered for admission by the submission of their transcripts as well as their TOEFL scores and math placement test. One main goal going forward is to encourage international students to take the ACT or SAT so they can receive funds based on scores.
    - iv. Many international students are “self-pay” which means they do not receive government funding or scholarships and are paying tuition and fees in full. These students must show they have the funds to pay for tuition in order to enroll.
  - b. Where are we recruiting from?
    - i. Many higher education institutions are heavily recruiting in China, 31% of international students are from China and there are more undergraduate students versus graduate students. UA is backwards in this regards, there are more international students enrolled in graduate programs than undergraduate programs. One form of compensation and financial aid for graduate students are graduate assistant positions which cover tuition and provide a stipend.
    - ii. The Midwest and Ohio are popular for international students. But the Ohio area is not as popular as other locations like New York and California.
    - iii. Agents are the main method of connection between international students and a university.
  - c. How is success of international students measured?
    - i. TOEFL scores are not indicative of how prepared international students are to be in English courses.
    - ii. Efforts need to be made to create programs that will best support international undergraduate students. These students typically experience difficulty with being far from family and not feeling connected to their new surroundings.
  - d. What can UA do to draw international students to campus and retain them there?

- i. UA needs to focus on marketing the campus as a prime location in relation to other major cities like Cleveland, Washington D.C., Toronto, Chicago, etc. Students can visit these locations relatively inexpensively.
- ii. UA should focus on emphasizing the affordability of cost of living, they will save money and have more funds to see other large cities.
- iii. Developing a presence that is appealing to the parents and spreads through word of mouth.
- iv. Agents are the main method of connection between international students and a university. Creating trust with these agents will put UA on their radar. Trust can be created through the establishment of alumni associations abroad.
- v. Collaborations with other established institutions who are already recruiting abroad, like Kent State. Both institutions are have a similar recruiting mission and are not necessarily competing.
- vi. Creating collaboration with Akron and other institutions and campus departments to create connection to the area and institution while giving them opportunities to meet other international students in the area.
- vii. Other considerations: creation of an Akron Experience course catered to international students in order to create connection, gender separated floors in housing, and accommodations for other cultural differences through Residence Life.

e.

**New Business:**

- I. Establishment of committee goals
- II. Begin work on connectedness and its relation to student success for international student
- III. Find and establish connections within Akron and the surrounding areas

# University Council

## Student Engagement and Success

**Minutes:** Feb, 15, 2017

**Attendees:** Byrne, Michelle; Caillet, Barb; Gannon, Debbie; Levy, Paul; Messina John

**Absent:** Angeletti, Ricky; Simmons, Todd

**Absent with Notice:** Brown, Jenna Kemp, Sukanya; Krovi, Ravi; Pluess, Carol

### **New Business:**

#### I. New Goals for the Year

##### A. NSO

1. Debbie Gannon proposed sending new students the option of enrolling themselves in some of their first semester classes before they come to campus for NSO. This would a) give students the chance to become familiar with logging into and navigating the system (which takes considerable time during NSO) and b) perhaps shorten the time needed for advising during NSO. Students would not be allowed to register for courses that require placement tests or pre-reqs. Possible options include communications courses, Intro to Psychology, English Comp 1.
2. Debbie will look into a possible pilot with incoming Engineering Honors students. She will contact the people would be be involved and get their input.

##### B. Student Services

1. Given the impact of the layoffs of 2015 on Student Services, we agreed to invite key people from Financial Aid and Admissions to get their input about the effects. We noted that on the HLC Student Survey, students remarked they had trouble in these areas. An discussion will help up uncover if there are recommendations we can make to improve communication with students so they have a better experience.

**Old Business:** None

**Minutes prepared by:** Michelle Byrne

University Council Student Engagement and Success Committee

May 17, 2017

3:00 PM

Student Union 321

Minutes

In attendance: Michelle Byrne, Barb Caillet, Paul Levy, John Messina

Absent with Notice: Debbie Gannon, Sukanya Kemp, Ravi Krovi, Carol Pleuss

1. Welcome/Roll Call
2. New Business
  - a. Update from meeting with UC Communications committee: Michelle reported that she met with the UC Comm. committee on May 8th. That committee researched ways students want contact from the University. UA is working on developing a mobile app through which students can opt in for notifications. Different areas (advising, financial aid, etc) may be able to send the student a notification. This would be an alternative to texting students.
  - b. The SES committee is still exploring the possibility of using texting on a very limited basis. Given that many schools use this, it may be an effective way to reach students.
  - c. Goals Brainstorm
    - i. Transfer credits that satisfy pre-reqs as indicated in DARS:
      1. Students who have transferred in and have credits from other schools that satisfy pre-reqs have to contact the advisers to register for classes. In the new system, post-DARS, this will no longer be the case.
    - ii. Faculty/Staff Book/Discussion Group for AY 17-18: Brainstormed ideas to connect with EXL and create a discussion group focused on topics such as

retention, being a “student-ready” campus, and experiential/service learning projects.

- iii. Proposal of Ombudsperson: This was also brought up in the Communications Committee meeting. SES would like to have identified where the gaps in service for students exists in order to know what the best solution is. It may be the case that communicating about existing channels could also be effective.

### 3. Old Business

- a. Pilot Program for NSO with Honors Students?
  - i. We will check with Debbie, but it seems likely this is happening.

Next meeting is TBD.

UC SES Committee Meeting  
June 8, 2017  
Meeting Minutes

In attendance: Michelle Byrne, Barb Caillet, Debbie Gannon, John Messina  
Guests: Ron Bowman, Julie Cajigas, Maureen Davis, Dale Gooding, Wayne Hill, Bob Kropff, Bill Torgler, Mary Verstraete, Jim Weber

This meeting was called to discuss the best way to communicate with students given they rarely read emails or take phone calls. The discussion started with considering if we could use text messages effectively.

Bob Kropff emailed several policies from other universities (see links below). UA could use these as a guide for developing our policy.

Need for and concerns about texting

We need an effective mechanism to connect with individual students (not a large group text, but specific, person-to-person communication). Current mechanisms--email and phone calls--don't work.

Current use of texting: restricted to emergency (weather, safety)--not used extensively and only when it is, it's very important. It's also centrally controlled.

Financial aid, registration issues are urgent (but not emergencies). They need a method to connect with students.

Example of scope of problem: about 4,000 returning are not registered for fall.

Need a policy to keep texting to remain useful. If we overuse texting, students will ignore it. This is especially problematic if the texts are the main way we send out safety alerts.

Could texting come from individuals (advisers, etc)? The safety alerts would always be coming from one separate and distinct sender so there isn't confusion about it.

Options for Messaging Students:

**GradesFirst** has texting capabilities--license applies to texting. We buy 75. The texts go to the student from a number created for each sender. Students can opt out if they don't want the messages. Advisers (or whoever has the license) can send direct, personal messages to students.

**New UA App** options--process of replacing current app. New app will have notification capabilities.

Depts. Instructors, etc. could have notifications  
Notifications will need to be customized to the student

**Springboard**--can messages be sent when student logs in? Make it something so the students have to dismiss it. Once concern about this is how often students check springboard, especially during breaks. This would be most effective during the school year.

**MyAkron** has notifications system (update for 9.2) that could do many of these things, but we haven't received the update. Currently, the system can do a broadcast, but not individual message.

Action Items:

Bill Torgler will talk to David Bird about how to use GradesFirst. Will learn about how to search & identify the students. Will run a pilot to see what the response is.

Michelle Byrne will talk to DDS about the possibility of using Springboard to message students.

Julie Cajigas will survey different units for need and also dates. Doing this we can try to rank the needs and decide which platform will be the best for which message.

Two UC committees, Communication and Student Engagement and Success, agree to work together on this goal of communicating with students as a goal for the next year.

Links from Bob Kropff:

Western Illinois University's policy

<https://www.usi.edu/policies/admissions-texting-policy/>

Southern Indiana:

<https://www.usi.edu/policies/admissions-texting-policy/>

The provost approves text messages at Washington State University:

<https://provost.wsu.edu/tag/text-message-policy/>

Minutes prepared by Michelle Byrne

**University Council Student Engagement and Success Committee**

**July 26, 2017 2:30 P.M. SU321**

**MEETING MINUTES**

In attendance: Michelle Byrne, Barb Caillet, Debbie Gannon, Paul Levy, John Messina

Absent with Notice: Sukanya Kemp, Ravi Krovi

Absent: Maureen Davis, Carol Pleuss

1. Welcome/Roll Call
2. New Business
  - a. Position elections were held with following results:
    - i. Chair – Michelle Byrne
    - ii. Vice Chair – Debbie Gannon
    - iii. Secretary – Barbara Caillet
  - b. Goals for AY 2017-18 were discussed and established as follows:
    - i. Continue working with Communication Committee to examine texting and other possibilities to improve communication of important information to students (i.e. enrollment dates, financial aid deadlines, etc.).
    - ii. Examine central unit advising system and other advising models to determine most successful delivery practices regarding registration, academic advising, and mentoring, and the role faculty and advising play in retention and student success.
    - iii. Encourage use of “Help A Zip” by faculty and request feedback to that faculty member.
    - iv. Develop communication to faculty to encourage use of “Class Roster Verification” link on class roster to report students who have never attended or have stopped attending throughout each semester.
3. Old Business
  - a. Need follow-up with Bill Torgler regarding outcome of texting pilot program.
  - b. Need follow-up with Debbie regarding pilot program for NSO with Honors students.

Next meeting: August 16, 2017, 2:30 P.M., SU321

Respectfully submitted by Barb Caillet

## University Council Student Engagement and Success Committee

July 26, 2017 2:30 P.M. SU321

### MEETING MINUTES

In attendance: Michelle Byrne, Barb Caillet, Debbie Gannon, Paul Levy, John Messina

Absent with Notice: Sukanya Kemp, Ravi Krovi

Absent without Notice: Maureen Davis, Carol Pleuss

1. Welcome/Roll Call
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  - a. Need follow-up with Bill Torgler regarding outcome of texting pilot program.
  - b. Need follow-up with Debbie regarding pilot program for NSO with Honors students.

Next meeting: August 16, 2017, 2:30 P.M., SU321

Respectfully submitted by Barb Caillet

**University Council Student Engagement and Success Committee**

**October 18, 2017 2:30 P.M. SU321**

**MEETING MINUTES**

In attendance: Michelle Byrne, Barb Caillet, Jessica Dickinson, Debbie Gannon, Paul Levy, John Messina, Taylor Swift

Absent With Notice: Ravi Krovi

1. Welcome/Roll Call.
2. Approved minutes of September 20, 2017 meeting.
3. Debbie reported that Maplesoft replaced Compass for math placement testing, but it is currently under review to improve the results and more correctly place students at appropriate levels.
4. Michelle asked for ideas to share best practices through ITL. Discussion centered around the need to be clear with expectations for student mentorship at various academic levels by faculty, and that resulting institutional practices must have overall support in order to be successful. Successful faculty could be invited to conduct workshops to engage other faculty by sharing experiences and classroom techniques used to build student relationships both in and outside the classroom.

Next meeting: November 15, 2017 at 2:30 P.M. in SU321

Respectfully submitted by Barb Caillet

**University Council Student Engagement and Success Committee**

**November 15, 2017 2:30 P.M. SU321**

**MEETING MINUTES (Corrected)**

In attendance: Barb Caillet, Preston Crawford, Jessica Dickinson, Debbie Gannon, Jennifer Manista, John Messina, Taylor Swift

Absent With Notice: Kayla Bouchard, Michelle Byrne, Katie Cerrone, Ravi Krovi, Paul Levy

1. Welcome/Roll Call.
2. Approved minutes of October 18, 2017 meeting.
3. Michelle is collecting ITL ideas for Best Practices and via our agenda shared as an example the Information Literacy Workshops with Libraries – a series of workshops for instructors who require their students to evaluate information and determine its credibility (that is, how do we teach students to seek out sources and evaluate them without saying “just use the databases” but instead teach them how to think about the information they find).

Discussed the need for a system through which successful faculty could share proven techniques to engage and encourage students while keeping them accountable.

Jessica shared her experience as a student with an extremely organized and dependable professor who follows a “KISS” philosophy (simple processes but effective, paper and pen exercises in the classroom, less technology - doesn’t post Powerpoints online which in turn encourages attendance, follows office hours, answers emails, serves as a student group advisor, etc).

Examples of taking attendance: use of clickers, swiping Zipcards, deck of cards with student pictures.

Sharing organizational skills that transcend all fields.

4. Discussed the importance of tailoring Akron Experience classes to specific colleges, majors and student groups.

We agreed to cancel the SES meeting originally scheduled for Wednesday, December 20, 2017.

Next meeting: January 17, 2018 at 3:30 P.M. in SU321

Respectfully submitted by Barb Caillet