

# **Advisement and Registration Council Year-End Report**

**May, 2008**

Members: Alex Panayides, Julie Rosenthal, Tony Joachim (co-chair), Donita D'Amico, Kathleen Korgen (co-chair), Jean Fuller Stanley (Administrative Liaison)

The Advisement and Registration Council worked hard to fulfill our charges. In doing so, we met with John Martone, Sandra Bembry, Sharon Rosengart, and Nina Trelisky and presented the following report to the Faculty Senate in the spring semester:

## ***Report from the Advisement and Registration Council***

*Whereas William Paterson University endeavors to market/brand itself as “putting students first” and “dedicated to student success”; and*

*Whereas one of the key research findings of the Branding Assessment Research is that “students expressed the greatest need for improved administrative services”; and*

*Whereas the Registrar’s office has informed the Advisement and Registration Council that the Registrar’s Office is down 6-7 employees, which is making it difficult to provide information in a timely manner; and*

*Whereas students often have a difficult time contacting their advisors during winter and summer breaks when they may need to adjust their schedules; and*

*Whereas faculty are now unable to post notes on their advisement sessions in Banner; and*

*Whereas the Bursar’s office has informed the Advisement and Registration Council that there is just not enough staff in their department to respond to telephone calls and emails in a timely manner; and*

*Whereas the Bursar’s office suggested that a call center with trained part-time workers be established, the Advisement and Registration Council moves that the Senate recommend that the Administration do the following:*

- 1) In order to enhance student success, seamless transition for transfer students, and timely graduation, hire enough additional staff for the Registrar’s office, so*

*that adjustment of degree requirements and any such paperwork can be done efficiently.*

- 2) Implement a call center, with well-trained, part-time staff for the Bursar's office (and all other student-centered, highly trafficked administrative offices on campus, e.g. Admissions, Registrar's office).*
- 3) Purchase and integrate software, such as Advisor Trac, into Banner, so that faculty may take notes on advisement sessions that can be accessible to both them and to their advisees (the parts the advisor wants to make available to students).*
- 4) Look into whether there is a way for students to be given permission to enroll into classes once they have met with their advisor, rather than requiring the entry of an Alternate Pin number (Perhaps advisors could select a "permission granted" online option after they meet with each advisee.)*
- 5) Place information about holds in student's Personal Announcements section of Banner, rather than simply referring them to WPCONNECT, as is current practice.*
- 6) Move link for Registrar's Office on Banner, which is currently located towards the bottom of the "Enrolled Students" tab to a more visible location.*
- 7) Until the offices of the Registrar, the Bursar, and Financial Aid are brought together (which should be done ASAP) make representation from the offices available in the Student Center on a regular basis.*
- 8) Indicate on advisors' lists of advisees when holds exist on student's accounts.*
- 9) Have Registrar notify faculty by email of date when students are removed from classes (and rosters) for non-payment.*

## **Results of Report**

We were very pleased that the following areas of the report have already garnered the following responses:

- The Registrar notified faculty by email early in the spring semester about when students were going to be removed from their classes (and rosters) for non-payment (item 9).
- The Banner system now has the capacity for Advisors to write notes (item 3).
- The Bursar, Registrar, Admissions, and Financial Aid offices will be moved together to Morrison Hall by September of 2009. In the meantime, representatives from those offices will make themselves available to students in the Student Center (item 7).
- The link for the Registrar's Office has been moved to a more visible location on Banner (item 6)

We were also delighted to hear from Sharon Rosengart that students will soon be able to apply to a major online. That will be an important step forward in all of our efforts to make the registration and advisement process more student-friendly.

We hope the items in the report that have not yet been addressed will be so shortly and suggest that next year's Advisement and Registration Council follow-up about them **and** carry out the following additional efforts:

- Work with the Bursar's Office and Steve Bolyai to make the billing process more user-friendly for students (Why is the credit card fee so high—how was the vendor selected? Why must students be dropped from courses instead of just being charged a fee for late payment, etc.). Making the Bursar's office more capable of communicating with students effectively by having enough trained staff to answer phone calls and emails in a timely way is a crucial part of this endeavor
- Work with the Basic Skills office to ensure that they do a better job of communicating with the Registrar's office about when they are giving (or not giving) Basic Skills exams (The courses many students choose are based on their passing those exams).
- Work with the administration to ensure that all advisors are clear on how to guide transfer students based on the new community college transfer agreement and that programs in Banner have been adjusted accordingly
- Encourage the administration to put forth a proposal on how to re-work the current advisement system that the Advisement and Registration Council (and then the Senate and union) may review.