## Graduate Council meeting with Associate Vice President Dawn Ressel, 2/15/17

* Associate Vice President Dawn Ressel provided an update on the status of academic unit data. The Office of Planning and Budgeting and Analysis has been separated into the University Data Office headed by her and the Fiscal Affairs and Budget Office headed by Becky Christians. The University Data Office is on a campaign to build trust in the data. The initial phase of the campaign is a proof of concept project. It will establish shared definitions for key data elements.

The university has evolved into a culture of making adjustments to Banner based on various functional needs rather than maintaining standard definitions of data. For example, the department code is used for priority registration. This function causes inconsistent reporting to programs. Programs define items differently and must individualize reports to meet their needs. Their expectations and the actual definitions don’t match. There are different versions of crosswalk tables with no consistent communication to ensure the table is updated.

Some reports must be created in accordance to OCHE requirements. Unfortunately, reports that only capture state funds may not represent actual credit hours. For example any foundation funding that is used for instruction is not captured. This information is not entered into Banner to facilitate reporting. So there is a reason to distrust the data.   
  
There is a meeting this Friday to share information with the Deans to start to agree upon definitions. The Data Office has also been working to identify the various processes that cause inconsistencies. Currently the Registrar’s Office has a process that moves students’ majors. The hope is to have a set of definitions by July.

There will always be the issue of multiple definitions for reporting. For instance IPEDS uses different calculations for student FTE than OCHE. For IPEDS the standard for graduate student FTE is the number of credit hours divided by 12 and for undergraduates it is the number of credit hours divided by 15. The student to faculty ratio is calculated by dividing the fulltime plus 1/3 part time student credit hours by fulltime plus 1/3 part time faculty credit hours. OCHE’s calculations for student FTE are based on annualized budgeted FTE. This is calculated by adding the enrollment for three terms and dividing by 2. The definition of faculty can also be misleading. Contract faculty includes research faculty. Only instructional faculty should be used to calculate the student to faculty ratio. The current 16.7 ratio is based on budgeted FTE. Vacant lines are impacting this calculation because they are still listed as 1.0 faculty. Units are reluctant to eliminate the lines in the system. Staff who teach are likely not included in the calculation because their salary is attached to how they are paid. The position is not counted as instruction. Also if credit hours are paid by the Dean’s account code the hours are not counted toward instruction.

The FTE for faculty buyout is included in the calculations if the individual is paid out of the general fund. If three half-time faculty are hired (paid through a grant) to replace one full-time faculty member only the 1.0 instructional FTE is counted. Designated funds are also excluded from FTE calculations. Programs determine the percentage of designated funds used for instruction internally. It is not entered in Banner. The Deans need to understand the numbers that are provided to OCHE and how they are generated. Double majors and crosslisted courses need to be accurately captured as do the nuances of credit hour generation for co-convened and UG courses. Credit hours can be generated through tuition charged and the level of the course. There needs to be a discussion on which standard should be used and then the calculations need to be clearly labeled. General education or service courses should also be captured in some way.

In terms of Program Prioritization, a list of possible metrics has been sent to Dawn to determine for which we will have the most accurate data. Then the shared governance groups will help determine which metrics will be used. Ideally there should be 3-5 years of data considered for program prioritization. The Data Office will have to weigh the time and effort involved in fixing the historical data.

Dawn has a good working relationship with her counterpart at Bozeman and Tyler Trevor at OCHE. The campuses are required to provide the same data to OCHE.

The intention is to have an Academic Unit Dashboard available in July. This will be a self-serving web based program. After the census date the data will be loaded into the web tool. Reports should be available before the dashboard is up and running. The reports will be given to the deans and associate deans to discuss. There was concerned expressed that in the past numbers were released to the media before programs had the opportunity to review for accuracy. Dawn wants the numbers to be right, but she is not the person responsible for releasing the information to the media. The past report that was quoted in the Missoulian did not count double majors.   
  
It seems the program prioritization timeline that the President announced at the Senate does not allow for building trust in the data. A realistic budget must be submitted to OCHE in April.

The Program Prioritization Committee will need to have broad representation. It will take the metrics and try to answer the various questions, such as how general education courses should count.

Dawn noted that that the information shared about the focus of her office is current at this time. The main focus of the project will not change although some of the details on how we get to the end goal may, as other projects and priorities are introduced. [The data components (appended) for the proof of concept project were provided in an email message after the meeting. ]

1. Employees (headcount and FTE)
   1. Tenure & Tenure Track Faculty
   2. All other faculty
   3. All other employees
2. Student Major counts (headcount and FTE)
   1. Undergraduate counts
   2. Graduate counts
3. Degrees awarded
   1. Undergraduate programs
   2. Graduate programs
   3. Certificate programs
4. Student Credit Hours Generated
   1. General education
   2. Service to other programs (this one might not be available in the first round of this report but will be on the list)
   3. Students in the major
5. Retention, Persistence, and Completion
   1. Student stays within the program
   2. Student graduates from the same program
   3. Student moves to another program in university
   4. Student graduates from another program in university
   5. Student left the institution

In addition a couple of informational items will be calculated from the 5 data points listed above

1. Identify the level of the programs managed for that major … Bach, Master, Doctoral, Professional Certificate, Post-Bachelorette Certificate, etc.
2. Student to Faculty ratio (using either an agreed definition or possibly a couple of versions of this … but I am hoping we can get just a single calculation)