

Continuing to improve student retention and 4- and 6-year graduation rates

Round 1 recommendations:

1. Use summer/winter to improve student timely graduation; employ data analytics to aid efforts.
2. Billing and payment structures need modifications to provide students more options and greater flexibility in payments and payment arrangements.
3. Expand summer with study abroad opportunities.

STOP: Do not assume that students know things they may not know, and stop yelling at them.

Round 2 recommendations:

1. Provide professional advising for first two years, not just first year.
2. Have summer institute/mentorship program to bridge loss of contact with students, especially in the summer months.

STOP: We do not need alternative PINs.

Round 3 recommendations:

1. Revamp orientation within first six weeks of semester to set an academic tone for students
2. Find out what causes students to fail in the first and second years and have targeted intervention to correct.
3. Work hard to develop powerful academic pillars during first year orientation.
4. Talk to those who stay and are successful and learn from them.
5. Let students opt into texting so that we can better connect with them when interventions are needed.
6. Find out what courses students are failing in the first and second year and work on interventions.

STOP: Stop comparing ourselves to Montclair State and focus on WPUNJ.

Curricular development and redesign to meet evolving student and societal needs

Recommendations:

- Offer more integrated, interdisciplinary/inter-college course offerings/experiences for students
 - Biotech
 - Music technology
 - STEAM
- Mandate internships in all majors
 - Bridging theory and practice in real world settings
- Expand International experiences
 - Short term study abroad
 - Winter session
 - Spring break
- Common Experiences for freshmen

- Experiences that take students outside their comfort zone as soon as they come to college so they know this is not high school
- Non-graded courses where students feel safe to voice opinions and concerns without the fear of repercussions or judgment
- Learning communities are good experiences but even these should push students outside of their comfort zone
- Market analysis by experts – faculty in individual programs should not be expected to do this, they do not have this expertise
 - Why do students choose WP?
 - Are our programs responding to student and market needs?
 - Delivery format (on line/hybrid/weekends/accelerated)?
- Faculty is resistant to change without support
 - Perhaps a program similar to ART that allows faculty to take time and have professional experiences to upgrade their pedagogical skills
 - Suggestion: A Year of Disruption at WP (culture change experiment)
 - More opportunities for faculty learning (Pedagogical innovation infrastructure)
- Review all programs on a regular basis – all courses – all outcomes - (every 3-5 years)
- Identify needs of our local communities and design programs to help them – use data to plan
- What are our students’ perceptions of their experiences here? Is the faculty evaluation the only metric we use and surveys? Are there other metrics to use? What other data are available?
- Forget minors – offer students certificates in specialized knowledge and skills that they can take to a job interview

To be fixed/improved:

- Process for approving new/revised curriculum/programs
- Too many bureaucratic layers for everything we want to do

The role of graduate education in a regional public university

Round 1 recommendations:

- Graduate Business Program and other graduate programs need different marketing/advertising strategies.
- Cultivate graduate student list. (Variety of sources).
- Office of graduate admissions – seamless process (Business Process).
- Personalized approach to graduate programs. College based centralized student services.
- Merits of having a separate graduate school
- Voice/visibility of Graduate Dean
- Encourage creating new programs and Streamline process
- Better Marketing strategies
- Graduate programs are not friendly in catalog
- **NOT- Fix website and have exclusive graduate catalog**
- **NOT- Should not be treating ALL programs the same.**

Round 2 recommendations:

- Ease up programs curriculum process
- Advertise better
- Separate Graduate school
- Create many 3 + 2 programs – graduates
- Thought leadership is essential
- What matrices are used in graduate program? Define those metrics
- Purpose of graduate education, clarify if it is for training professionals / for research / or to enhance service regional public universities
- UG College Deans are used as administrators of graduate programs, therefore no clear visibility for graduate education
- Increase engagement in professional programs.
- Revenue/Expense – Run graduate education as a business
- Return on investment of graduate programs needs cost sharing
- Support Interdisciplinary programs
- Expand Modes of instruction
- **NOT - Graduate Admissions Streamlined:**
- **NOT - Do Not Continue in the current mode.**

Round 3 recommendations:

- Foster a culture of research
- Graduate education must coincide with Research and they both go hand in hand
- Discussion in 4 credit offerings
- Market research data
- Deep practical programs, publicly used research
- Support during program development at release time
- Profit share model
- Have to be nimble with market demands
- Give more time to develop program
- **NOT – Streamline and expedite graduate curriculum process**
- **NOT – FIX the outdated graduate catalog**

Two recommended actions:

1. Create thought leadership by having a distinct Dean of Graduate Studies and a separate office.
2. Better marketing and advertising strategies for graduate programs

One recommended action NOT TO DO:

1. Don't continue the current mode of business process

The role of research, scholarship and creative expression in a regional public university

Action items that the university should consider in evaluating the role of RSCE

1. Facilitate a way for chairs of larger departments to receive ART. Help faculty moving from an administrative role to immerse and “get back” into the scholarly role (release time, etc).
2. Have an ART Model that is rooted in a dedicated commitment to scholarship. Currently ART is viewed as teaching 1-2 less classes not allowing for longer-term research projects. Some schools have a 5-year model, which requires comprehensive proposals that highlight development work with distinct markers of deliverables. Allows faculty to engage in deeper scholarship with an established mid-point for updates.
 - a. Make teaching load a 3 and 3 model like peer institutions.
 - b. Research evolves and faculty wish to be productive.
 - c. Current ART focuses on achieving what you say you’re going to achieve with little room for the evolution and twists that research sometimes takes. ART should be flexible enough to allow for creativity.
 - d. Establish a creative research model that incentivizes the faculty.
 - e. Disaggregated way of doing research- ART does not allow for a distant field site.
 - f. Research, service and teaching should be fully integrated.
 - g. Financially support student research for doctoral programs.
 - h. Model after the Graduate Assistantships to create similar opportunities for undergraduates to have research and scholarship opportunities.
3. Clearly articulate expectations to new faculty regarding research requirements. Expectations vary greatly department to department with leaves untenured faculty confused and concerned about tenure, promotion and reaching research goals.
 - a. Establish a standardized criteria and process for ART. Expectations and criteria vary greatly by program/discipline/college.
 - b. Make one central expectation at the university level and provide guidance and support to the departments as it relates to their application of those shared expectations.
 - c. Clearly articulate: University Wide Expectation-College Expectation-Departmental Expectation.
 - d. Foster collaborative research between faculty within the different disciplines. BASS Connections-used for that purpose at Duke. <https://bassconnections.duke.edu/>
4. Facilitate a for-credit model with formal standards in place for promotion and tenure, which is similar to the model used at peer institutions.
5. Faculty should be required to explicitly state how their research ties into their teaching and how it will enhance the classroom experience and contribute to society. “What are we giving of ourselves to our students through our research?”
6. Expand/Increase flexibility with the 24-credit rule. Instead of having a balanced 12/12, allow faculty to move 6 credits to provide additional time to work on projects/research (including the summer).

Things to STOP doing as it relates to ART

1. Stop the rule that chairs cannot receive ART.
2. Stop supporting research out of multiple pots.
3. Stop the emphasis on “presenting” research and more on “conducting” research.
4. Stop the Author’s reception and use funds differently.
5. Stop requiring individuals to re-apply who frequently publish.
6. Stop rationing ART. Divide ART funds to departments so that they can disperse it. (dissenting opinion).

Meeting the educational needs of an increasingly diverse student body

Round 1 Recommendations:

1. Increase Literacy Skills
2. Increase Advising
3. Stop: a) changing advisors, office of sophomore experience, PSS.

Increase literacy skills by providing classes in Spanish writing, for example, so that bilingual students have good written language skills in both languages; reimaging and revisit our support for ESL skills and ESL students. More Spanish language web pages for parents (not just admissions pages). Reading comprehension in English and in Spanish. Recruit more diverse grad students. Recruit diverse faculty.

Intrusive advising for ESL and first generation students. Or peer mentor advisor. Allow students to self-identify and in need of intensive advisement. Bring student clubs into peer advising.

Students suffer from continual change in advisor. Not clear that the office of sophomore experience helps. We try to front load all information about the university into PSS and it’s impossible for students to retain that information or to even know that the information is important in their first semester.

Round 2 Recommendations:

There is a majority population and it is white. Forty-percent of our students identify as white and many Hispanic students identify as white.

1. Study what our students needs actually are based on their group identification
2. Create institutional support for structural changes in behavior

Student what students have what needs. For example, which groups have lowest retention rates? African-American males? Hispanic women? Study that group in particular to find exactly what they need rather than assuming we know what they need. On the other hand, our students’ needs are so different we can possibly meet all of their needs. Consequently, we should look for best ways to deliver our courses. What are the best pedagogical strategies? Diversity isn’t just about race – also economic issues, immigration issues. But first, get the data right on who needs help and ask them what kind of help.

Faculty and professional staff need strategies for supporting students. Training to hear students’ needs, to think about how to address students (for example, asking what pronoun they would like to be identified by), learn how to hear our students. Diversity isn’t the problem. The democratization of the university requires structural changes. The university leaderships needs to lead the way on/for these changes in the classroom and in academic support.

Stop seeing diversity as a problem. Stop grading students on their world-view.

Round 3 Recommendations:

1. Create more outside of the classroom academic support through online tutorials and peer mentors
2. Stop: Enrollment services needs to be more in sync/knowledgeable about academic affairs.

Education has seen a significant decline in diversity due to the PRAXIS/CORE. White students are more likely to pass. Expand courses at local high schools to draw more education students to WP (who are prepared for CORE. Have summer, online boot camp training for currently enrolled students to prepare for PRAXIS/CORE. Will Tutor.com help?

What do we mean by diverse? Working students? Other kinds of diversity. Set up schedules so courses are more available to students.

Freshmen and sophomores need a tutorial for how to take an online course. Can an online tutorial be a part of PSS? Have PSS peer mentors continue to meet with freshmen during second semester. At a different university this increased retention from 63% to 87% in one year. The professional advisors were the supervisors for the peer mentors.

Create a night time common hour – host coffees, social events, academic advising.

Innovation in pedagogy: teaching, course scheduling and assessment

Round 1

Recommendation #1: *Be willing to consider 50-minute classes 3x a week to increase contact time with students*

Recommendation #2: *Leave scheduling modules open for a longer period of time so that chairs can tweak schedules*

STOP: *paper handouts (syllabus, assignments, etc.) since Blackboard is available for all classes*

Round 2

Recommendation #1: *Review current pricing structure of the technology fee for fully online programs*

Recommendation #2: *Check into use of Digital Measures for assessment (and other technologies as well)*

STOP: *paper assessment and paper course evaluations*

Round 3

Recommendation #1: *Get faculty input on choice of technologies the university is considering buying and have faculty pilot (test) them before the university buys them.*

Recommendation #2: *Consider redirecting monetary support to -- enable bringing in more outside academic speakers and enable thorough support of our current technologies with adequate staffing.*

STOP: *Automatic cancellation of low enrolled courses and instead assess on an individual basis for what is needed by the students per these courses.*

Propose an issue

Table Topic Task: Topic of Choice

What else does the University need to consider? Understanding that the university has a fixed amount of support for all operations of the university:

- Grade Changes
 - There should be a real policy on grade changes and clear guidance
 - When to issue an incomplete grade
 - When should a letter grade be changed to an incomplete
 - How far back should grade changes be allowed
 - What kinds of justifications should be entered for a grade change
 - If extra credit is a reason for the grade change, was the extra credit offered to all other students in the class?
- The Role of Global Education – we need a clarified and pointed strategy
 - Pilot a global education program for faculty/administration/professional staff to develop connections abroad and maintain them with financial support
 - Should politics be considered as a factor in developing relationships with other international schools and how do we manage this issue
- Efficiencies – advisement – are too many people advising students? Is there a structure in place to guide students?
- Creation of a graduate school to allow programs more flexibility and control over probation, ADRs, waivers and registration – also needs support
- Change in marketing move from corporate branding to house branding – college based
- Expansion of other services to 7 days a week beyond the library including IT support, ID cards, looking at programs that can be nights and weekend focused.
- Recommend a more nimble structure in scheduling for more ¼ courses or monthly 1 credit courses. These can also supplement students who are 1 or 2 credits short.
- More course that are three days per week and two days per week rather than a once per week class meeting structure
- Move typical class meeting times from 8-4pm to 12-6pm to accommodate the time of day our students work best. This can also provide impetus to increase services on campus for later in the day, stagger classroom use, traffic and parking availability on campus.
- The university needs to make an effort to communicate with students in the way they communicate. They do not use email.

STOP

- Inflating the number of vacation days available for higher ed managers e.g., week between Christmas and New Year's. If the university is closed and we MUST take those days then they are really not vacation days. They are required days off and therefore not vacation
- Communication
 - Less centralization re: branding both UG and Grad. Colleges should be able to brand