

## V. Subcommittee on Student Demographics Changes

### 1. The University should consider the following recommendations regarding First Generation College Students

- A. In progress now:
  - 1) Implement "Student Services Center" that puts a number of student services including advising and counseling in a central location.
  - 2) Continue with Upward Bound, Gear Up, Educational Talent Search, McNair and other support programs.
  - 3) Use technology to connect with FGCS and families, i.e. Facebook groups, website, etc.
- B. Can be done short term with little, if any, expense:
  - 1) Emphasize the support available (tutors, writing lab, counseling services, etc.) in UI 100 classes. Have a successful FGCS speak to UI 100 classes about overcoming the unique challenges.
  - 2) Provide handouts listing jobs that correspond with each academic degree program offered.
  - 3) Place informational and helpful articles targeting FGCS in the Arrow and other University publications.
  - 4) Actively seek FGCS for Work Study/ student worker positions.
  - 5) Offer new student orientation in small groups and provide specific FGCS information at orientation.
  - 6) Encourage FGCS high school students to take an academically challenging curriculum. Emphasize the importance of this to parents, superintendents and counselors.
  - 7) Encourage more student organization/activity participation. Facilitate a FGCS support group and organization involvement. Start a FGCS student organization.
- C. To be done within the next 2-4 years:
  - 1) Offer more scholarships for low income students, including FGCS.
  - 2) Develop a FGCS mentoring program.
  - 3) Create campus FGCS traditions at Homecoming, Graduation, etc.
  - 4) Incorporate FGCS families and parents into campus events.
  - 5) Provide more information for parents in recruiting efforts.
  - 6) Explain the University systems to students via:
    - i. Provide written instructions/ information that are easy to understand
    - ii. Train University staff in 'customer service' to teach this information

iii. Provide more trained advisors and counselors for students to go to as needed - train them about the uniqueness of FGCS and the importance of building a trusting and supportive relationship and comprehensive knowledge of campus resources. These students often require additional staff time.

## **2. The University should consider the following recommendations regarding Hispanic Students**

### **A. For immediate implementation (within 1 year):**

- 1) Establish a formal presence on campus by encouraging the formation of a Hispanic Student Association that can serve as a source of social support for them and as a vehicle for increasing the visibility of Hispanic culture to the campus as a whole (note: This is already in progress as of the Fall, 2011 semester. The Student Organization of Latinos has petitioned for official recognition as a University-sponsored organization and has begun regular meetings during the same semester.)
- 2) Hire a fully bilingual/bicultural admissions specialist with a primary responsibility for increasing Hispanic student enrollment.
- 3) Increase the accessibility of information about the admissions process, financial aid, and other relevant campus information for prospective students and their families by translating this information into a Spanish version that can be linked to the current web pages. Although students who attend Southeast must clearly demonstrate proficiency in English, this would make important information available to parents whose command of the language may be less adequate and it would demonstrate to Hispanic students that this University is aware of and receptive to their background. This has already been implemented at other institutions, such as Lebanon Valley College in Pennsylvania and could be implemented relatively easily using the expertise of Spanish-speaking faculty and students.

### **B. For implementation within 2-5 years:**

- 1) Recruit Hispanic students aggressively in those parts of Missouri and Illinois with the highest proportion of Hispanic inhabitants. This would include areas within Southeast's usual areas of recruitment, such as rural southern Illinois (Anna, Cobden, etc.), the Metro East area of St. Louis (Collinsville), and North St. Louis County (St. Ann, Overland), as well as more remote areas with large Hispanic populations, such as the Kansas City and Chicago metropolitan areas.
- 2) Take advantage of Southeast's relatively low tuition and the financial stresses being placed on public universities in other states by establishing relationships with community colleges with large Hispanic enrollments in places such as San Antonio, Houston, Dallas, and other large cities. Recruit students from those areas interested in coming to Southeast for their last two years of undergraduate study who might have difficulty gaining admission to their in-state universities as a result of severe pressures on these institutions resulting from population increases and reduced state appropriations. (Note: an informal contact has already been made with Dr. Judith Gallagher, Dean of Humanities at Tarrant County (TX) College District and a Southeast alumna who expressed interest in and willingness to assist us in these efforts.)
- 3) Recruit additional Hispanic faculty. According to data released in September, 2011 by the Chronicle of Higher Education, Southeast reported a total full-time faculty enrollment of 433; of these, 1% are Hispanic. In order for Hispanic students to believe that academic achievement is possible for them, there must be some evidence of successful role models for them to follow.

4) Recognize that many Hispanic students recruited to campus will be both first generation college students and of limited financial resources. They are likely to be unfamiliar with the culture and traditions of higher education. There is also evidence that Hispanics are less likely to use technology on a regular basis than other groups (Pew Hispanic Center, 2011). As a result, in order to be competitive with students from other backgrounds, they may require special assistance. This may take the form of special mentoring on such topics as developing mastery of current technology, understanding the financial aid process, and developing effective study strategies. This may require formal assessment of their technology literacy at admission, providing a formal orientation to University resources, and intensive academic advising.

### **3. The University should consider the following recommendations regarding Military-Related and Disabled Students**

#### **A. Veterans**

- 1) Assign a full-time professional coordinator/recruiter/counselor to work with military education centers and bases within the Southeast recruiting area focusing on veterans as well as military related prospects. Other institutions are aggressively working to recruit these students; Southeast is a perfect venue for them. This recruiter/counselor could also work with military-related students in recruiting them and assisting with their transition to campus. Another function of the position would be to tie in other military groups in the area with Southeast veterans and their families.
- 2) Provide a tuition discount or work opportunity (possibly in student leadership). Would not offering a modest discount to military-related students more than pay for itself with the addition of just a few eligible students?
- 3) Provide a student lounge/veterans' center. Possibly the military recruiters would help with this. This could serve as a one stop resource center committed to facilitating and coordinating the overall integration of veterans into the academic community.
- 4) Develop a clear policy for accepting military service as creditable work.
- 5) Visit established and recognized veteran centers at other universities such as SIUC
- 6) Enhance the Southeast veterans' affair page to be more appealing to veterans
- 7) Explore participating in one or more of the SOC (Servicemembers Opportunity College) Degree Network Systems, tailored to each military service (Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard). SIU is a full partner in most of these. Southeast is a Servicemembers Opportunity College participant, but has not gone beyond the standard guidelines - <http://www.soc.aascu.org/Default.html>
- 8) Work with local Reserve Component (Reserve and National Guard) units in our service region and adjacent states to encourage enrollments.
- 9) Improve marketing of our Southeast Online options to current active-duty military personnel (for example, in Army Times, Air Force Times, Navy Times, and their periodic educational supplements).
- 10) Create a capability of individually modifying classes for unexpectedly mobilized military personnel, such as through switching from a F2F to highly blended or online course delivery. This could help minimize incompletes (or these becoming failures) when students are deployed mid-semester.
- 11) Developing a Best Practices syllabus statement on veterans' issues, and asking Faculty Senate to recommend that faculty members voluntarily include it in syllabus
- 12) Working with CSTL to put on a workshop this fall to educate faculty members about this

**B. Disabled**

- 1) Visit schools such as the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign which is a top disability friendly university.
- 2) Dedicate a portion of an enrollment counselor's time to recruiting and working with disabled students, their families, and the community.
- 3) Make certain that all admission counselors convey Southeast's welcome to the disabled when they meet with high school counselors.
- 4) Enhance Southeast's Office of Disability Services page to be more appealing to students. See <http://www.disability.illinois.edu/> for an example of an attractive one.
- 5) Strive to integrate students with disabilities into all aspects of the student experience at Southeast.
- 6) Make certain that disabled students and their families know they are valued at Southeast by efforts on their behalf.
- 7) Provide welcoming social and recreational opportunities for them.
- 8) Consider employing students as readers or aides for the disabled.
- 9) Advertise a well-rounded cadre of services for the disabled including ability athletics.
- 10) Add information to the admission's site and printed information appealing to disabled students
- 11) Include photos of disabled students in University marketing

**4. The University should consider the following recommendations regarding African American Students**

- A. A dedicated commitment to bridge programs such as financial literacy, community outreach, first year experience courses and learning communities can be a way to combat the negative statistics for African American students. Currently, Southeast offers a variety of these opportunities through our College Access programs, Student Support Services, Educational Access Programs and the MDHE Default Prevention grant which provides financial literacy education. We also complete a large number of financial aid and college readiness sessions in the local high schools, junior highs and middle schools.
- B. Continued community outreach is an area that is very important in this ethnic group. We have to look at ways to get the family involved in the college process
- C. Examine the gap between Southeast and the for-profit sector. What are they offering African American students that we aren't.
- D. We also need to look at financial aid avenues that ensure sufficient aid through Pell and other financial sources as well as enhanced academic support. Southeast offers the support but students aren't always aware.
- E. Southeast's commitment to diversity of faculty and staff: Recruiting and retaining more minority faculty as another way to create a more diverse university experience. In 2010-2011, Southeast had 12 African-American full time faculty members. That is less than 1% of the faculty population.

**5. The University should consider the following recommendations regarding Male Undergraduate Enrollment**

- A. Focused male recruitment within Southeast's service region
- 1) Continue to give recruitment attention to regional all male High Schools. In the St. Louis area particularly, more resources might be dedicated to focused recruiting at male High Schools where Southeast has had only marginal impact at attracting students. In addition to better recruitment numbers for males, successful recruitment of students from these schools also potentially addresses another characteristic of low male enrollment at Southeast: retention. We may presume that these students will have a high degree of college preparation, thus reducing the risk of untimely withdrawal from the university.
  - 2) Since one explanation offered for lower male enrollment in higher education is an apparent "pragmatic" penchant for going to work instead of spending money on a degree, recruiting for males might benefit from an emphasis on Southeast's affordability and geographic convenience.
  - 3) Continue to highlight its strong programs such as the Theater and Dance facilities, Business, Polytechnic Studies, and its MBA program.
  - 4) Highlight Southeast's active fraternity and other social organizations.
  - 5) Graduates of Southeast who are alumni of targeted High Schools in the region may be more actively engaged to serve as mentors and recruiters.

B. Retention efforts within the institution itself.

- 1) We recommend that already existing male-to-male mentoring programs on campus be identified and their depth and breadth extended. Particularly useful for extending their established structures would be fraternities on campus and the promotion of mentoring activities within individual academic programs.
- 2) Additionally, alumni attending Southeast from specific High Schools could be identified and asked to serve as mentors to underclassmen recruited from the same schools.
- 3) It bears emphasis that we view these suggestions not so much as solutions to the problem of male enrollment, but as necessary components of a broad ethos of recruitment on campus. The crisis of male undergraduate numbers must be taken into consideration on a continuous basis and addressed as resources permit. It is not a problem that will quickly go away.

**6. The University should consider the following recommendations regarding International Students**

A. To maintain current international population (700-750):

- 1) Determine goal composition of international population, including distribution of Intensive English Program (IEP), visiting, undergraduate and graduate students as to avoid agent conflicts and loss of current recruitment momentum. Review IEP target size in relation to revenue structure and sources for International Education and Services. (Goal: January 2012)
- 2) Offer on-going orientation throughout the first semester to assist international students with the transition process. Develop UI100 specifically designed to address their unique needs. Select cultural-sensitive faculty to teach these, and provide additional training as needed. (Goal: February 2012 for the Fall 2012 term)
- 3) Provide funds for departments that hire new international students to increase positions that are not limited to federal work study students. Model similar to work study, but specific to international students that have no prior work experience in the US. (Goal: approved; implementation by May 2012)

4) Review policies for exemptions to on-campus housing requirement, particularly the sophomore exemption. International students frequently struggle in their first time while adapting to a foreign culture, new teaching methods and varied spoken accents. As a result, GPA suffers in the first semester, and students may not pass all classes. Also, international students are frequently advised to enroll for fewer hours during this adjustment, which deems them unable to earn the required 30 hours to be considered for the exemption. However, most students show dramatic improvement as of their second semester. Exclude first semester GPA/hours or lower requirements to 24 credit hours with 2.75 GPA for international students. (Goal: May 2012 for continuing Fall 2012 students)

5) Actively partner with and recruit from articulated community colleges in Missouri and Illinois, particularly St. Charles Community College and the St. Louis Community College system. This would increase visibility within the service area, as well as recruit students likely to be exempt from the housing requirement. (Goal: ongoing process, beginning with Fall 2012 recruiting)

6) Develop and provide faculty training through CSTL for sensitivity to culture issues. Invite international faculty to present about the educational and social structure of their home culture and how this impacts working with international students from that population. (Goal: ongoing development of topics, beginning with Fall 2012 offerings)

7) Review food service policies for international/cultural student organizations. Permit one exemption per organization each semester to allow students to serve native foods. Provide access to training and facilities necessary for student preparation. (Goal: August 2012)

B. To grow international population (800+), in addition to the above:

1) When considering future housing projects, add apartment-style housing options that would permit international students to opt out of meal plan service, if desired. (Goal: immediately; review plans for new residence hall in Fall 2013)

2) Partner with the City of Cape Girardeau to expand regular bus or shuttle routes to a larger radius around campus and/or streamline transfers between the campus and city lines. Reintroduce reduced rate monthly pass for Southeast students. This would provide opportunities for increased revenue to area businesses and housing that are not accessible through current fixed routes, as well as increase the ability to support additional off-campus international students. (Goal: August 2012)

3) Offer an elective, credit-based computer/technology skills class, including online/blended course navigation, which could serve both international and domestic needs. Advertise through advisors and faculty. (Goal: February 2013 for the Fall 2013 term)

4) Allow departments trial periods to add or revitalize programs recruiting international students. Provide alternate enrollment goals for first two years of such approved, developing programs. Review overall enrollment based upon strategic plan. Rebuild MA in TESOL as face-to-face program. (Goal: Fall 2013)

5) Expand admission and advising staff in the Office of International Education and Services to serve additional growth over the long term. (Goal: review with population of 800 students, as well as each additional increase of 200 students)

## **7. The University should consider the following recommendations regarding Non-Traditional Students**

A. Since many groups of non-traditional students are represented in other categories such as part-time students, and veterans, it is unlikely that a specific recruiting strategy can be suggested. What is important is that all members of the University community recognize the stress factors and barriers encountered by these students and offer assistance when possible. If these students are to increase in numbers and thrive at Southeast, their unique needs must be recognized and responded to.

**8. The University should consider the following recommendations regarding Lesbian, Gay, BiSexual, and Transgender Students**

A. Add a discussion of LGBT issues to any anti-sexual harassment training offered to faculty and staff in the future

B. Provide specialized training in addressing LGBT issues to staff in the Office of Counseling & Disability Support Services and have that office disseminate information to the campus community concerning the availability of such services

C. Announce the inclusion of LGBT-relevant concerns to the mission of the Office of Equity & Diversity Issues

D. Contingent upon any future change in the legislative climate of the state that would make it possible, consider adding sexual orientation to the University's anti-discrimination policy