

RESOLUTION-POLICY

X	Action Item
	For Information Only

From: Dr. Eric Milou, Rowan University Senate President  
To: Dr. Ali Houshmand, Provost  
Date: 12/15/08  
RE: Senate Resolution **081215-1**

RECRUITMENT, ADMISSIONS, AND RETENTION

**Whereas:** Undeclared students require more intensive advisement than Declared students.

**Whereas:** Many Rowan students who are unable to gain admission to restricted degree programs enroll in a “shadow major”, i.e. a degree program the student has no intention to complete that bears some similarity to the desired course of study; this is a practice that lowers graduation rates and is not in the interest of the student.

**Whereas:** Many Rowan students remain Undeclared beyond 60 credits.

**Whereas:** Undeclared students often encounter barriers to speaking with faculty and degree program advisors.

**Whereas:** Undeclared students currently have no academic home, no dean to advocate for them, and no institutional mechanism to ensure that they have access to the courses they require.

**Whereas:** Undeclared students often have greater difficulty internally transferring into Rowan degree programs than similarly qualified external transfer students.

**Whereas:** Rowan’s President, the Provost, and the Senate President decided to form the Provost’s Task Force on Undeclared Students in 2007-2008, whose report<sup>1</sup> was then vetted through the Senate RAR Committee and the Deans in order to produce a set of resolutions to address the issues with the Undeclared students.

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<sup>1</sup> This report is included as an appendix to this resolution.

## **Therefore Be It Resolved:**

### **General Policy Recommendations:**

1. Any policy, practice, or procedure that preferentially admits external transfer students into any major over internal transfer students should be vacated.
2. Any major that wishes to restrict internal transfers (including majors that are currently restricted) should reapply for restricted status. To facilitate this process, a group should be formulated to develop general criteria for restrictions (e.g. – certification or accreditation issues) and establish a process for evaluating applications from the departments. This group should involve the academic deans, the university senate, and faculty from each college.
3. The CAP Center should receive sufficient resources to allow for 1 hour face-to-face individual appointments with undeclared students, in lieu of the current 30 minute appointments.
4. Students who are not making progress toward degree must be blocked from registration until they have met with the CAP Center staff.
5. The 60 credit rule must be enforced. All students who have not declared by 60 credits will automatically be folded into LS:HSS. Students are then free to declare any major other than undeclared. We recommend that students receive a contact letter from the CAP center once they reach 45 credits to arrange a meeting to plan for their migration into a major. By extension, no readmit students with greater than 60 credits may re-enter as undeclared.
6. Each Department and Degree Program should designate a faculty representative to meet with undeclared students. Departments, Colleges, and Degree Programs should make every effort to meet with Undeclared, or any other non-degree, students. Note – this does not replace the advising function of the CAP Center.
7. One representative from each college should be available to assist the CAP Center staff with prospective students for their college. Their role would include periodically updating the departments in their college about advising strategies, trends and other pertinent information necessary to advise students knowledgeably, attending advising workshops conducted by the CAP Center staff in conjunction with the Office of the Associate Provost for Academic Affairs, and to help connect students with faculty in specific majors.
8. Restrictions for entry into degree programs should be reexamined in order to determine whether it is possible to revise them such that students can meet the requirements in 2 semesters.

## **Be It Further Resolved:**

### **Academic Home Recommendation:**

Incoming undeclared students will be placed in the *Exploratory Studies Program* within the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences' *Center for Interdisciplinary Studies* (which houses all of LAS's interdisciplinary majors). This proposed program within LAS will serve as the academic home for the entire undeclared student population.

Rather than creating another administrative position, it is recommended that the *Exploratory Studies Program* be directed by a faculty member (with 3 credits per semester of reassigned time) to insure the academic integrity of the process; additionally, it is recommended that a fulltime AFT professional staff member handle the day-to-day operations of the *Program*. The *Exploratory Studies Program* director will collaborate with the CAP Center to ensure that undeclared students are informed about their degree programs available to them and have access to representatives of degree programs across campus (as mentioned in 6. above). Furthermore, the program director will keep an eye on the retention data for undeclareds and will oversee the program to ensure that the students are able to get into the classes they need and migrate into degree programs by 60 credits. The *Program's* director will be nominated by the program coordinators of the other LAS interdisciplinary programs and will be approved by the Dean of LAS. The undeclared students will continue to be advised by the staff of the CAP center, supported by faculty from across campus. The housing of the undeclared students within LAS offers several advantages:

- A. A significant majority of undeclared students ultimately enroll in majors within the college of LAS. Thus, the majority of undeclared students will start in the college from which they will eventually earn their degree.
- B. Students who reach 45 credits without selecting a major are asked to meet with the CAP Center to plan for their entry into a major. These students would also be asked to meet with the advisor from LS:HSS to prepare for their entry into the LS:HSS major unless they have chosen and are accepted into another major by 60 credits.
- C. Since the students are housed in LAS, they will have a dean to look after their academic interests. Furthermore, their course needs will be met because a special fund will be created for that purpose. Under this model, we recommend that a pool of funds (~\$30k) be set aside to ensure that courses essential to the progress of undeclared students get staffed. This fund will be administered by director of the *Exploratory Studies Program* upon recommendations from the CAP Center, the LAS Dean's office, and the *Center for Interdisciplinary Studies's* advisory board. Thus, the undeclared students will have an academic dean, an advocate for the creation of new course sections, and the financial support to ensure the creation of needed courses.

Acceptance:

\_\_\_\_\_ I give my approval. I have forwarded this item to \_\_\_\_\_ for implementation.

\_\_\_\_\_ No approval is actually needed. I have forwarded this item to the following individual or office for informational purposes only:

\_\_\_\_\_

ADDITIONAL REVIEW NEEDED:

\_\_\_\_\_ I am willing to give approval if the following modification(s) are made:

\_\_\_\_\_ Before I can approve or reject this item, I need clarification on the following:

\_\_\_\_\_ I have forwarded this item to the following individual or office for further consideration and consultation.

Rejection:

\_\_\_\_\_ I decline acceptance of this item for the following reason:

*Please Return this Copy to the University Senate President ~ Retain a Copy for Your Records*