

UNIVERSITY SENATE
ANNUAL COMMITTEE REPORT 2019-20

Committee Name: Recruitment, Admissions, Retention

Number of meetings held this year: 2

Committee Chair: Doug Cleary

Committee Members: (list here) Doug Cleary, Ashley Lierman, Luann Maslanik, Jessica Syed, Christopher Thomas, Julius Grayson, Kim Wilson, Amanda Cox, Tiffany Fortunato, Karen Brager, Celeste Del Russo, Patrice Henry-Thatcher, Michael Morgan, Cass Sherman, Cindy Finer, Mayra Arroyo, Yasmine Abel, Kyle Perez, Jason Fisch,

Purpose of/Charge to Committee:

Reviews and evaluates recruitment and admissions policies and procedures, specifically those which relate to curriculum, programs and instruction, and academic standards affecting progress toward a degree; recommends needed changes.

Summary of Activities this Year:

The first meeting was organizational and the committee generated questions that could be pursued. Many of the questions were answered during the meeting by committee members.

In the second meeting Soumitra Ghosh was the guest and the following items were discussed.

Soumitra Ghosh, Ph.D. Vice President, Strategic Enrollment Management presented to the committee.

1. Freshman recruitment – we are seeing some challenges with applications down about 150 from the same point last year. This seems to be primarily due to declines in the number of applications from specific schools or zip codes. Dr. Ghosh thinks this is mostly related to the declining student populations at these schools or in these zip codes. There has also been more restriction on access to these schools compared to the past.
2. The number of accepts is stable or ahead of last year and quality of the applicants is stable. Deposits are ahead for now. The goal is 2700 new first year students (2695 was the number we had last year).
3. We are ahead in transfer student applications so far.
4. Financial aid in the form of reduced tuition is still heavily skewed toward first-year admits with little going to transfer students. The way to get more financial support to transfer students (who may have more financial need than the typical first-year admit) is through targeted gifts toward scholarships during fundraising campaigns.
5. When considering the declining high school population and how Rowan University can maintain its undergraduate student population Dr. Ghosh felt improvements in retention would provide more benefit per dollar spent than improvements in recruitment and admissions. It costs much more to recruit a new student than it does to improve the student experience or support students in other ways to keep them on track toward a degree.

6. Recruitment/admission of female students continues to be a trouble spot. We admit approximately a 50:50 split by gender but the split of those that ultimately attend is approximately 40F:60M.
7. There has been some brand confusion w/ RCSJ, RCBC and Rowan University. Bad experiences at one of the RC institutions reflects badly on Rowan University as the general population does not recognize these are separate entities.

SUGGESTIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Suggestions:

Keep a watch on initiatives to improve retention. These will be critical as high school enrollments drop. Transfer students will also be critical. May also want to look at impact of dropping SAT and ACT for admissions into programs that previously required them. The change is an outcome of Covid-19. The evaluation won't play out immediately.

Chris Thomas has expressed interest in chairing next year.

Recommendations: