**Ways to Improve Program with Assessment Data**

**To improve the enrollment of the degree program**:

* Enhance program recruiting literature and websites to provide students with academic and program information
* Possibly change or implement placement or admission criteria where warranted
* Find ways to offer program scholarships
* Engage faculty in pro-active recruiting
* Coordinate with recruitment to communicate with interested prospects

**To improve the completers of the degree program**:

* **Develop a “map” of course schedules** by term for every major with the critical courses highlighted. If a student does not successfully complete a critical course in the term recommended, place a registration hold. Require the student to meet with an advisor to find out what happened and take appropriate action to ensure the student understands how to proceed. For example, if an accounting major has not completed calculus by the end of the first year, it is unlikely that the student can complete the degree in a reasonable amount of time. Part of the conversation with the advisor may well involve looking for an alternate major that might better suit the student’s strengths and provide a viable alternative for reaching the student’s career goals.
* **Establish Freshman Interest Groups** (known by several different names) allowing small groups of students with similar interests to take several classes together along with a small weekly seminar in the topic. With appropriate supervision, high-achieving senior students can lead the seminar and provide inspiring role models for the new students.
* Pay attention to where students live. Research shows that students who live on campus for the first year earn higher grades and are retained at higher levels than those who live off campus. **Living-Learning Communities** offer an even better opportunity to a smaller segment of the on-campus population. Students in these special programs live in the same residence hall and participate in courses and programs that have a common theme. Teaching at least one of the courses in a classroom in the residence hall will further enrich these programs. The result is an even higher level of academic success and retention.
* **Look at course grades. The courses with high percentages of D’s and F’s particularly those with high enrollment, should be studied.** There are national programs to assist with this effort. Encouraging faculty to take attendance is a good idea for all courses but is particularly important in courses with high percentages of D’s and F’s. This is getting easier with so many electronic options available to assist faculty teaching courses with high enrollments.
* **Survey students who choose to leave the university prior to graduation** and take note of their academic performance. Retention can be an issue for high-achieving as well as low-performing students and different strategies will be necessary to engage and better meet the needs of all student groups.
* Do not neglect the full range of **academic support services** available to help engage and retain students. A great deal can be learned and accomplished by working with student groups, especially student government, since this group often has more resources than the average academic department.
* Be willing to intervene early. Data shows that without intervention more than half of the students who fall below a 2.0 early in their college experience will drop out. Yet, a relatively low cost mandatory course focusing on study habits, time management, note taking, etc. will significantly reduce attrition.
* **Strengthen participation in the University’s Early Alert Program** by…in order to…Be willing to deploy new approaches.
* New or revised degree requirements where explicitly warranted
* Offer new career exploration and career services for students who desire to change programs
* Engage in efforts to properly track students to determine if they changed programs, stopped out, transferred to another institution, etc.

**To improve the curriculum or student learning**:

* Revisions in content of program courses to strengthen student learning
* Addition/deletion of courses or changes in course sequences
* Develop academic services for students such as tutoring
* Revise the sequencing and prerequisites of the degree programs for optimal learning
* Improve or introduce new teaching methods
* Further refine assessment methods or implement new assessment methods Changed emphases for new or vacant faculty positions
* Enhancements in advising processes
* Review assessment results with alumni and program advisory boards for feedback for improvement
* Co-curricular activities/Increased connections between in-class and out-of-class activities such as employment, internships, student research opportunities, study abroad, and living-learning communities
* Faculty development (i.e., mentoring and advising, adoption of new teaching methodologies, etc.)
* Expanding students research participation or deepening their experience