Transfer Student Advisory Council
December 7, 2009

PRESENT: Jaffee, Lamkin, Christie, MacInnes, Yancey, Reedy, Jones, Sufi, Perry

GUESTS: Michelle Wilcox, Dean for Business & Computer Programs, SJRCC, Linda Mackey, Dean of COAS, SJRCC, Edward Jordan, Dean of Advising & Student Services, SJRCC

Welcome and Introductions

Dr. David Jaffee opened the meeting at 11:05am. He introduced guests from St. Johns River Community College: Dr. Michelle Wilcox, Dr. Linda Mackey, and Dr. Edward Jordan.

Jaffee explained that the council was newly formed out of Undergraduate Studies to bring together individuals who are interested in issues for transfer students and to enhance and improve their undergraduate experience. Jaffee said the profile at UNF may be shifting so that transfer students become an increasingly critical component of the student body.

Jaffee recapped the November 2009 Transfer Student Advisory Council meeting. He said it was clear that council members had several concerns for transfer students related to application process, existing programming, recruitment and enrollment, adjustment, and student experience.

Transfer Experience Discussion with SJRCC Representatives

David Jaffee invited the St. Johns River Community College representatives to discuss the experiences at their institution related to students transferring to other institutions generally, and UNF specifically. He asked for their perspectives and thoughts for improving the process.

- Linda Mackey said SJRCC would like to create a smooth transition, and reported that the VP for Academic Affairs at SJRCC was working with UNF Provost Mark Workman to develop articulation agreements between the two institutions, which she said should help to smooth the transition. Mackey suggested that UNF could recruit on SJRCC campuses directly.

- Michelle Wilcox asked whether the potential offering of baccalaureate degrees at SJRCC might be viewed as competition to UNF. The group discussed this issue, and the consensus of the group was that SJRCC baccalaureate programs, if approved, would not be seen as competition for UNF, particularly given the competitive nature of UNF programs and admissions requirements.
Michelle Wilcox explained that students within her purview earn AS degrees, which are similar to AA’s but require a lot of business-area coursework. Wilcox said she was working with Lisa Jamba and Judy Solano from the UNF School of Computing to create articulation agreements. Wilcox said she is happy to work to make the student transition better, but needs to make sure that UNF is satisfied with SJRCC’s business courses.

Edward Jordan said that SJRCC students are primarily interested in transferring into UNF business and education programs, and to a lesser extent, nursing and engineering. He said SJRCC advisors consult facts.org and the UNF catalog to ensure that students who plan to transfer are meeting requirements for both institutions. He said that keeping the info on facts.org as accurate as possible helps tremendously with preparing students who intend to transfer from SJRCC to UNF.

Michelle Wilcox asked how SJRCC can better prepare students who want to transfer to UNF for nursing. Catherine Christie and John Yancey explained that preparing for the TEAS exam, preparing for interviews and maintaining a high GPA help, but the program is highly competitive and many prospective students are turned away each year due to space limitations. Yancey explained that the Brooks College of Health handles its own admission process for the nursing program.

Wilcox asked how competitive UNF business programs are. John Yancey said business majors are popular, and while the programs are not limited access, selective admission or minimum GPA in prerequisite courses are being considered for some programs. He said prepared AA-transfer students don’t typically have a problem gaining admission to these programs.

Marnie Jones asked the SJRCC group if they’ve received feedback from students who have transferred from SJRCC to UNF. Michelle Wilcox said that faculty members tend to hear back more than administrators, but said a survey was being planned for January that should help with attaining this information from students.

Edward Jordan said that, generally, younger, full-time students tend to transition well to university institutions, whereas older, part-time students often have life issues to juggle, and sometimes have a harder time adjusting. He said SJRCC offers many online courses, which appeal to military and working adult students.

There was discussion among the group concerning low online course offerings at UNF being an obstacle for transfer students who are accustomed to taking many online courses at the community college level. David Jaffee discussed UNF plans to strategically increasing online course offerings, and discussed hybrid courses.

Questions about particular general education and cultural diversity requirements at UNF were discussed. David Jaffee explained the academic roadmaps system being developed at UNF. He suggested that these might be useful for SJRCC in terms of giving students term-by-term requirements for planning purposes.
Linda Mackey said it would be helpful if SJRCC students or advisors could pull program roadmaps from the UNF website directly.

Michelle Wilcox said SJRCC has laid out a 2-year plan similar to the UNF academic roadmap, so that students will know which semesters courses are offered and understand prerequisites. She said it would be helpful to make articulation agreements considering the SJRCC 2-year plan with a UNF transfer planning overlay.

Katie MacInnes explained that the UNF Office of Admissions staff were working to develop communication with SJRCC and other community college students, but said it was challenging to capture them. The group discussed suggestions for improving communication with community college students, such as live-chat, email, contacts with advisors, web information and program-specific AA transfer information cards.

Linda Mackey said it would be helpful to provide information to faculty so that they can share it with students who have questions about transferring. John Yancey said he would provide information to Dr. Mackey for this purpose.

John Yancey and Katie MacInnes offered to have conversations with anyone at SJRCC needing assistance from UNF. There was discussion about UNF attending open houses for high school juniors and seniors at SJRCC to provide students with UNF transfer information.

It was suggested that SJRCC host a transfer student fair on each campus with university representatives present. John Yancey said he would coordinate with admissions representatives from other Florida state universities and communicate back with SJRCC.

There was discussion about scholarship funds for transfer students. John Yancey said transfer scholarships are not widely available, though he’s made a concerted effort to improve opportunities. He explained the scholarship structure, and said he would send an email with transfer scholarship info to SJRCC representatives after the meeting.

David Jaffee thanked SJRCC guests for their participation, and said he hoped this conversation would facilitate continued communication.

Meeting adjourned at 12:15pm.

Minutes submitted by Melody Taylor.