academic affairs and sees held a joint retreat on tuesday, july 9, 2013 from 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. in the learning commons. those present were carol simpson and ellen neufeldt (co-chairs), osman akan, ali ardalan, debbie bauman, oktay baysal, richardean benjamin, erin bentrim, judy bowman, jane bray, leigh butler, andy casiello, jane dané, traci daniels, chandra de silva, gail dickinson, jim duffy, larry “chip” filer, christopher fleming, scott harrison, bill heffelfinger, janet katz, jeanie kline, gwen lee-thomas, brenda lewis, terri mathews, lisa mayes, connie merriman, david metzger, shelley mishoe, ravi Mukkamala, ellen neufeldt, ginnny o’herron, renee olander, brian payne, chris platsoucas, marcelo siles, bob spina, don stansberry, mary swartz, g.w. thompson, linda vahala, sandy waters, charles wilson, robert wojtowicz, gil yochum, and johnny young. the following topics were discussed.

1. ODU’s Response to Changes in Technology

Andy Casiello discussed the University’s response to changes in technology. Topics covered were changes in Distance Learning, the changing world of higher education, content delivery options and strategies, and external content delivery outlets. Questions presented for discussion were as follows.

- How do we best promote ODU and its strengths by strategically aligning content in external environments with the University’s mission and goals?
- Would ODU’s lack of participation harm our reputation and what does it say about ODU?
- What’s the value added to students?
- How do we best utilize each outlet?

The following comments were made during the discussion.

- Will ODU develop MOOCs or mini-MOOCs? Examples of mini-MOOCs in the College of Education could be preparation for the Praxis exams and the Virginia Communication and Literacy Assessment (VCLA). Carol Simpson encouraged the Colleges to develop short modules that provide useful, practical advice for intending or current students. She asked the Deans to encourage faculty to come forward with ideas about areas where students struggle; these topics could form the basis for modules.
- ODU needs strategies for online learning at all levels – regional, national and international. We risk enrollment declines if we are not active at all three levels.
- The University has made progress in implementing new programs, but marketing is expensive. Provost Simpson said that the University is putting more funding into marketing.
• Consider offering MOOCs for K-12 to provide educators with information and strategies they can use in their classrooms. This could be further developed so that the educators can obtain credit toward a degree at ODU.

2. Graduate Enrollment at Old Dominion University

Brian Payne presented information on graduate enrollment at ODU. Topics covered were Graduate Studies accomplishments, trends in graduate enrollment at ODU and in Virginia, and opportunities for graduate enrollment. Questions and topics presented for discussion were as follows.

• What are opportunities for graduate growth?
• How have other universities increased graduate enrollment?
• What are some barriers at ODU for graduate education?
• Marketing, recruitment, etc.
• Graduate school discussion

Comments from participants were as follows.

• ODU could offer more accelerated bachelor’s to master’s programs.
• Utilize Hobson’s to track prospective part-time students who are interested in returning to school, but who take some time to decide. Hobson’s can help us follow up with these prospective students.
• Can we distinguish non-degree students who do not want a degree vs. those who do? These groups should be targeted differently.
• The University standard of a 3.0 undergraduate GPA for admission as a graduate student could be a deterrent for non-degree students. Carol Simpson asked that the University look at whether there should be a different GPA standard for non-degree and degree-seeking graduate students.
• The delivery mode is especially important to part-time graduate students.
• Concern was expressed about the delay in when a graduate student applies and when the program receives the information to make the admission decision. This is especially problematic for international students. ODU has failed to enroll some high quality students because our offer of admission was too late. Provost Simpson and Dr. Neufeldt agreed to convene a group to examine where the hold-ups are in the international graduate admission process so that we can speed up the process.
• ODU should develop a strategy for graduate enrollment that includes different strategies for different audiences, such as those in professional degrees and resident degrees. Provost Simpson stated that the Colleges will be asked to work on enrollment targets for different subcategories of graduate students. Graduate student success and graduate enrollment will be one of the areas of focus for the next Strategic Plan.
3. Proposed New College for Continuing and Professional Education

Carol Simpson discussed the proposal for a new College of Continuing and Professional Education. Topics covered were the planning that has taken place, why we need a new college, the recommendations from the Task Force, implementation questions to be resolved, and an updated timeline. Several questions were raised by participants.

- How will students know where to go upon entry to the University, whether they are going into the new college or one of the academic colleges? Provost Simpson responded that as the new College will not be offering degree programs, the web site entry points should be designed to route students into an academic degree program or into a non-degree certificate program.
- Will there be an opportunity for the academic colleges to have differential tuition? The tuition structure for the College is still under discussion.
- What would faculty in the new college be paid? Adjunct faculty might prefer to teach in the new college instead of the academic colleges, and full-time faculty might prefer to teach in the new college during the summer instead of credit courses in summer school, which could decrease credit offerings. Provost Simpson clarified that the College would employ non-tenure track faculty specifically to teach the Continuing and Professional Education courses. These courses would not replace the full-time faculty teaching load.

4. Student Success Initiatives Updates

a. Don Stansberry reported on changes that will be implemented at the beginning of the fall semester. These changes are the result of the discussion at the joint Academic Affairs/SEES retreat in January.

There will be more of an academic focus for the opening of the fall semester. School will open on Friday. The Convocation/Induction ceremony will take place Saturday morning followed by breakout sessions on academic topics. Mr. Stansberry asked the Deans to encourage faculty to volunteer to lead one of the breakout sessions.

All first-year students will be encouraged to become involved in an active learning experience, which will be called the Monarch Experience. The students are starting their co-curricular transcripts at Preview.

A position has been added in Residence Life that will focus on academic initiatives. In addition, a position has been added for an assistant director of service learning.

b. Ellen Neufeldt mentioned the work done by the various committees on the Time to Degree initiative.
c. Johnny Young noted that a group from Academic Affairs and SEES will attend a conference on learning communities at Evergreen College. The group will develop an action place for learning communities from now until August 2015.

David Metzger distributed information on learning communities in place for fall 2013. After the fall semester begins, there will be a call for proposals for learning communities for 2014.

d. Carol Simpson reported that the University’s retention goal is 82%. Actions have been taken to reduce the number of holds that prevent students from registering. Students with combined debts of less than $100 will not be prevented from registering. Students who have not registered for fall 2013 have been contacted to determine why they have not registered and to provide assistance. We will continue to look for ways to intercede with students at an earlier stage regarding registration.

Dr. Simpson stated that the University has contracted with the Education Advisory Board on a collaborative tool to help with student success and degree completion. Training for a pilot program will be held in the spring. Two additional tools to help with student success already in place are Degree Works and the Noel Levitz tool that provides a predictive model on entry to the University.

Leigh Butler suggested that we work with the Office of Educational Accessibility to see if information can be shared with students’ advisors in addition to their faculty members. Advisors could help students enroll in classes with professors who offer a better fit for their learning styles. They could also provide more effective advising and contact these students more frequently. This could be a topic for the next retreat.

5. COACHE Report and NSSE/FSSE Data

Worth Pickering presented information on the COACHE report and NSSE/FSSE data. Topics covered were background information on COACHE and the survey, COACHE areas of strength and areas of concern, engagement and student success, and principles of good practice in undergraduate education.

Data from NSSE (National Survey of Student Engagement) and FSSE (Faculty Survey of Student Engagement) were presented. Dr. Pickering also discussed high impact practices to increase student and faculty engagement. The NSSE and FSSE data show that there are differences in the perception of faculty and students regarding student engagement. Work is needed to close the gaps and improve student engagement.
The following comments regarding the COACHE report were made during the discussion.

- The suggestion was made to include a dean or department chair periodically in the sessions held by the Provost’s Office for tenure-track faculty.
- Senior faculty want to help junior faculty through the tenure process, but they are often basing their advice on the process that was in place when they achieved tenure. Perhaps more emphasis should be on tenured faculty and the information they receive about the current tenure process.
- Carol Simpson reminded the deans that the Faculty Handbook states that each department should establish, with approval of the dean and the provost, a clear statement of the criteria for evaluating scholarly activity and research in that department.
- Provost Simpson and Chandra de Silva will work with the deans, associate deans and chairs during the coming year on how we can be more consistent and clearer on what is needed to achieve tenure and promotion.

6. Diversity Among Faculty – Steps Taken and the Road Ahead

Gwen Lee-Thomas discussed the CORE^2 Initiative (Committing Our Resources to Excellence through Equity). Topics covered were a review of the pre-work and year one of the initiative, college-level recommendations and highlights, demographic data for our faculty, measuring and sustaining progress made, and next steps for the CORE^2 Initiative.

Carol Simpson thanked the deans and associate deans for taking seriously the University’s commitment to minority faculty, both in recruitment efforts and support once these faculty members join ODU.

7. Carol Simpson summarized highlights from the retreat. Discussion of issues and follow up from the retreat will continue at upcoming Provost’s Council meetings.