Meeting Minutes: Regents Advisory Committee on Records and Admissions (RACRA)

Joint Meeting Minutes: RACRA, RACSFA, RACAR

April 13, 2005
Macon State College

On April 13, 2005 the **Regents Advisory Committee on Records and Admissions (RACRA)** held a joint meeting with the **Regents Advisory Committee on Student Financial Aid (RACSFA)** and the **Regents Advisory Committee on Accounts Receivable (RACAR)** at Macon State College. This joint meeting was followed by the regular meeting of RACRA.

John Brown (RACRA), Kathleen Caldwell (RACSFA), and Donja Tripp (RACAR) presided at our joint meeting. The joint meeting was called to order at 10am.

Mr. John Kolotos from the U.S. Department of Education Federal Student Aid Policy Office spoke to the joint meeting. Mr. Kolotos' topics included: 1) Basic Constructs, 2) Stored Value Cards, and 3) Third Party Servicers.

Some of the points made by Mr. Kolotos were:

- Student must actually attend to be eligible for federal aid
- Generally, school is liable if student fails to attend
- School needs to document whether the student attended or whether the grades for each course were earned
- Stored value cards-school deals directly with a bank, not a third party--no checks associated with stored value cards.
- Stored value cards can be used to pay a student directly as long as A) Value on card can be converted to cash, not restricted to certain vendors, B) Student's "account" at the bank is FDIC insured, C) School cannot make any claims against the funds on the card–except to correct an error in transferring funds, D) Stored value cards cannot be converted to a credit card.
- Stored value cards can be used to pay a student directly as long as process meets all regulatory timeframes and credit balances are disbursed within 14 days.
- Third party servicer is an entity that enters into a contract with a school to administer any aspect of its federal aid programs. All requirements that apply to schools also apply to servicers.
- Schools must notify the Department if using servicer. School and servicer are jointly and severally liable. Servicer must submit annually a compliance audit to the Department.

Mr.Kolotos can be contacted at the U.S. Department of Education at 202-377-4027 or by email at john.kolotos@ed.gov

Georgia Student Finance Commission Presentation

Shelly C. Nickel, President of Georgia Student Finance Commission (GSFC) and Dr. Kris Bissinger presented an information program on GSFC that included updates on ACCEL program and GAcollege 411.org website.

Ms. Nickel began her presentation by stating the GSFC's mission statement: "To promote and increase access to education beyond high school for Georgians by delivering student financial aid information, services, and funding in a way that is fiscally responsible and understandable."

Ms Nickel stated that GSFC is a "bundled" agency that for FY 2004 distributed funds totaling $ 748,915,022

ACCEL Program

Ms Nickel outlined the following points regarding the ACCEL Program:

- Courses must be in one of the five CPC areas.
- Course directory is available of GSFC's website at www.gsfc.org
- Electronic application will be available for 2005-06.
- Awards are restricted to regular academic year–NO SUMMER TERM!
- Neither hours nor grades are included in the 127 semester/190 quarter HOPE attempted-hours limit.
- Hours paid by ACCEL are included in the 127 semester/190 quarter HOPE combined-Paid-Hours limit.

HOPE GPA Average Change- May 2007 Graduates

- Starting **May 2007**, GSFC will calculate HOPE GPAs for all students from transcript data supplied by high schools.(Beginning January 07 high schools will send transcripts electronically to GSFC for HOPE GPA calculation.)
- The high school academic requirements for the HOPE Scholarship will be a 3.00 GPA on a 4.00 scale, rather than an 80 numeric average
- Weighting will be applied by GSFC for Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) coursework only–no Honors course will be weighted.
- New GPA standard counts all core courses including "F" grades and uses only a 4.00 grading scale.

GA college 411.org

Dr. Kris Bissinger stated the strategic vision of GAcollege 411 as: "A Student portal that will improve access to and increase participation in Post Secondary Education offerings in Georgia. GAcollege 411 will be a one-stop shop to help students plan, apply, and pay for college."

Dr Bissinger gave a detailed review of the various "tabs" on the GAcollege411 homepage.

It was emphasized that on the Campus Tour Tab that colleges can add video, pictures on the website and displays can be customized by institutions. "My Recruiter" will allow a student to enter college and academic data, send message to college, college previews information and determines if student is acceptable.

Tonya Lam stated that three contracts for GAcollege 411 and XAP application are being mailed to campuses the week of April 18.

Karen Nunn from OIIT spoke to the joint meeting and issued a call for presentations for the 8th Annual Georgia Summit in Augusta on September 21-23, 2005.

Ms Nunn stated that Banner 7 will be demonstrated this fall at various meetings. Banner 7 will be delivered to campuses in Summer 2006 with mandatory implementation no later than end of December 2006.

Dr. Richard Sutton, USG Director of International Programs and Sr Advisor for Academic Affairs, spoke to the combined group regarding issues in international programs.

Dr Sutton's remarks were related to: 1) Study Abroad Program, 2) Student Exchange Program, 3) International Students and 4) On-Line and Collaborative Curricula.

Several issues were identified as problematic including cross registration of courses, transfer of credit, restrictions on the number of on line courses that can be taken by an international student.

Multi Institutional Functionality (M.I.F.)

Tonya Lam gave an update on M.I.F. Tonya stated that M.I.F. had been delivered to OIIT and installed two weeks ago. No delivery date set for campuses to receive. Testing by OIIT will continue.

Banner 7.2/7.3 will contain best functionality for M.I.F.
Tonya stated M.I.F. will be elective–not mandatory–for campuses.

Academic Data Mart/ Data Warehouse

Lori Garrard Fernandez from OIIT gave an update of the Data Warehouse. Phase I collection is set to begin Summer 2005.

Katherine Sweeny encouraged all to attend an Academic Data Mart workshop. The next workshop will be in late May--contact Lori Garrard for more details.

Points of discussion centered on 1) SAT–need to designate in SOATEST if SAT is a national or institutional SAT, 2) ZOARESI–Bonnie Stevens expressed concern regarding the pending decommission of ZOARESI to SOASUPL as related to coding issues.

Banner Student System Consolidation

Rich Loftus, Tonya Lam, and Jim Wolfgang, Chief Information Officer at Georgia College and State University, gave an information presentation of the proposed consolidation of banner services for several USG institutions.

Rich Loftus explained that in September 2004 the Board of Regents voted for 25 institutions to consolidate Banner functions on a single server for the purpose of saving money, security, end redundancy, equipment, hardware, etc.

Jim Wolfgang explained that the consolidation will take place in several phases/groups with the first group being 5 institutions, followed by another group of 5, then perhaps 10, etc.

Three of the first five institutions identified are: Fort Valley State, Bainbridge, and the new Gwinnett College.

A project management team is being recommended for this project. The BOR will decide at April meeting if this project will be funded for FY 2006. (** Note: The BOR did approve at April meeting FY06 funds for the Banner consolidation project for five institutions. The 5 institutions have not yet been selected.)

Several attendees-- representing all parties in attendance-- recommended to Tonya, Rich, and Jim that an advisory/focus group be created of "functional" users to help with this project.

Anyone interested in being a member of this advisory group should contact Tonya Lam.

The joint meeting of RACRA, RACFAS, and RACRA was adjourned at 2:40pm.