

Enrollment and Student Life Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: Thursday, February 12, 2026

Time: 1:00 PM

Location: Boyd Conference Room

Present: Ms. Cathy Deeb (Co-Chair), Mr. Anthony Tolley (Co-Chair), Mr. Luke Roberts, Mr. Tim McKenzie, Dr. Darrin Martin, Dr. Ted Lewis, Mr. Darrel Malamisura, Ms. Christina Sammarco, Mrs. Donna Linkous, Mr. Josh Grubb.

1. Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Cathy Deeb at 1:00 PM.

2. Enrollment Update – Christina Sammarco

- a. Ms. Christina Sammarco provided the committee with an enrollment report for the upcoming Fall 2026 semester. Highlights included:
 - i. The University is currently ahead of last year's totals in both applications received and acceptances completed.
- b. Admissions activities were described, including:
 - i. On-site acceptance days are being held in various high schools.
 - ii. Plans for the second annual Mercer County Schools Day, similar to the event held the previous year, to encourage prospective students.
 - iii. Mrs. Sammarco's update emphasized positive momentum in fall recruitment and engagement activities within the admissions department.

3. Marketing Initiatives – Mr. Ansel Ponder

- a. Chief Marketing Officer Mr. Ansel Ponder shared an overview of recent and ongoing marketing strategies designed to support enrollment growth. He reported on:
- b. Postcard campaigns targeting key demographics.
- c. Newly installed billboards near Beckley and near Claypool Hill
- d. Expanded social media marketing efforts intended to drive interest and inquiries, particularly in Engineering and Nursing programs.
- e. These initiatives were described as part of a broader effort to increase visibility and attract prospective students.

4. Enrollment Data Dashboard – Mr. Josh Grubb

- a. Mr. Josh Grubb, Chief of Staff, presented enrollment funnel data drawn from University dashboards showing historical and current comparisons:
 - i. The funnel shows more applicants at the current stage than at the same time last year, suggesting potential for enrollment growth.
 - ii. Based on current funnel trends, the University is forecasting an increase in new and transfer student enrollment for Fall 2026 if the trend holds.
- b. Mr. Grubb also reviewed retention metrics for Fall to Spring, noting:
 - i. Overall fall-to-spring retention was slightly lower than the prior academic year.
 - ii. Student-athlete retention, although lower compared to last year, remains higher than non-student-athlete retention.
- c. President Martin added that retention specialist Ms. Melissa McGuire has identified commuter students as a group requiring increased retention support and strategic intervention.

5. Student Affairs Update – Dr. Ted Lewis

- a. Dr. Ted Lewis, Interim Vice President for Student Affairs, presented information from the enclosed PowerPoint, covering:
 - i. Peer Mentors
 - i. An overview of the Peer Mentor program and activities was shared.
 - ii. Academic Success Center Workshops
 - i. Workshops related to Math Skills, Writing Skills, Life Skills, and Study Skill are offered by the Academic Success Center. These workshops are listed in the enclosed documents.
 - iii. Career Services Upcoming Events
 - i. Blackhawk campus interviews – Feb. 19
 - ii. Newport News Shipbuilding – Feb. 25
 - iii. W. Paul Cole, Jr. College of Business Mini Career Fair – Mar. 4
 - iv. Graduate Fair – Mar. 10
 - iv. Housing Report
 - i. Current housing status was reviewed. All students are currently housed as follows:
 - a. MEC – 225
 - b. Cottage A – 7
 - c. Cottage B – 4
 - d. Cottage C – 5
 - e. Mt. Zion – 4
 - f. No students are currently residing at the Quality Inn.
 - g. The University has entered into a lease agreement with Mount Zion Church, securing four (4) apartment rooms located within walking distance of the University.
 - ii. Future Housing Plans
 - a. Committee discussion briefly addressed future housing needs, including:
 - i. The possible purchase of Tiffany Manor.
 - ii. Renovation plans for buildings I and E at the Medical Education Center.- b. Dr. Lewis reviewed the Academic Recovery Student Success Plan which is an intentional strategy meant to support students who fall below a 2.0 GPA. Dr. Lewis provided a copy of the plan to the committee and briefly reviewed Study Skills Inventory which is meant for students to think deeply about their study skills as a way of helping both the student understand themselves better and for the Student Success Center to offer the best types of support for each student.

6. Dual Enrollment Discussion

- a. Board member Mr. Anthony Tolly inquired about dual enrollment performance and next steps.
- b. The committee reported that dual enrollment continues to increase annually.
- c. A need was identified for a structured plan to support matriculation of dual enrollment students into full-time enrollment at Bluefield State University following high school graduation.
- d. Mr. Grubb noted that 20–25% of dual enrollment students attend Bluefield State University upon graduation, highlighting the importance of continued strategy in this area.

7. Adjournment

- a. There being no further business, the Enrollment & Student Life Committee meeting was adjourned at 2:30 PM.



Minutes submitted by: Donna Linkous, Executive Secretary