



Enrollment and Student Life Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: Thursday, June 4, 2026

Time: 1:00 PM

Location: Boyd Conference Room

Present: Ms. Cathy Deeb (Co-Chair), Mr. Anthony Tolley (Co-Chair), Dr. Darrin Martin, Dr. Ted Lewis, Dr. Sudhakar Jamkhandi, Mr. Randy Price, Ms. Christina Sammarco, Mr. Jack Sheffler, Mr. Josh Grubb.

1. Call to Order

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

2. Student Life Report – Dr. Ted Lewis

Dr. Ted Lewis reported that New Student Orientation Sessions (NSO) are underway, with additional sessions scheduled for June 12, June 24 and July 10. An online orientation option will launch July 15 to accommodate students unable to attend in person. Approximately 1,900 admitted students have been invited to orientation, with 85 registrations received to date. Students attending orientation will have access to on-site registration services, and registered students will receive class schedules upon arrival. Committee members discussed the importance of ensuring students understand eight-week course formats and mid-semester course start and end dates.

Residence Hall

Dr. Ted Lewis introduced a new electronic housing check-in/check-out process utilizing the Guardian case management system. The process includes room condition documentation, photographs, electronic signatures, and real-time reporting of maintenance and damage concerns. Committee members supported the process and recommended documenting room conditions after repairs are completed to provide additional accountability and protection for both students and the institution.

The University has hired resident assistants for the upcoming academic year and will begin RA training on July 27. One RA will reside at the Quality Inn to provide on-site support for students housed there. Current housing numbers include 108 completed applications with an additional 22 applications pending review. Dr. Ted Lewis indicated housing capacity is expected to be reached by July.

Student Move-In and Welcome Activities

Athletic teams will begin moving into residence facilities beginning July 30 (move in date for football), followed by volleyball, soccer, and cross-country athletes on August 7. General student move-in is scheduled for August 14. The University plans to designate freshman-focused residence hall wings and dedicate cottage housing for international and honors students. Students will receive roommate assignments in advance, and welcome activities are being planned for all returning and new students. Faculty and staff volunteers will be invited to assist with move-in activities.

Residence Hall Facilities and Student Conduct

To improve student supervision and support, the Residence Director's office will be relocated to the third floor of the residence hall, where the majority of conduct issues have occurred. Resident assistants will also be located nearby. Committee members discussed the importance of maintaining residence facilities, ensuring rooms are move-in ready, improving signage during move-in, and enhancing the appearance of the Quality Inn student housing area.

Student Engagement and Campus Life

Student Life hosted several end-of-semester activities, including cookouts, an awards banquet, and the annual Almost Midnight Breakfast. Alumni volunteers assisted with the breakfast event. Planning is underway for Fall Welcome Week activities, and improvements are being made to campus recreation and game room spaces.

Career Services

Dr. Ted Lewis reported that Career Services Director Mrs. Rebekah Hatch will be retiring. The position is expected to be posted shortly, with the goal of filling the vacancy as quickly as possible.

Division Initiatives

The Student Affairs Division will hold a retreat on June 17 focused on team development and organizational effectiveness using concepts from *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team*. Planning is also underway for Fall 2026 Matriculation, scheduled for August 14. The committee discussed enhancements to the matriculation ceremony, including a student commitment pledge emphasizing academic responsibility and engagement.

Enrollment Report

Online Education Expansion

Discussion focused on the continued development of Bluefield State Online. Existing online offerings include the RN-to-BSN program and several graduate programs. Academic leadership and faculty are working to convert additional courses into standardized eight-week online formats. Plans are underway to launch a Master of Science in Engineering Technology and strengthen recruitment efforts for online learners. Committee members emphasized the importance of online education as a strategy for enrollment growth, particularly among adult learners and international students.

Enrollment Update

Admissions staff reported strong enrollment indicators for Fall 2026. Key updates included:

- New student registrations are up approximately 66% compared to the same period last year, with 103 students already registered.
- Accepted freshman applications are approximately 17% ahead of last year.

- Accepted transfer students are approximately 35% ahead of last year.
- Recruitment efforts continue throughout the summer, including campus visits, outreach events, and expanded communication plans.
- The University is implementing faster admissions decisions and strengthening outreach efforts through increased counselor engagement and proactive student communication.

Enrollment Management Strategies

University leadership reviewed efforts to streamline the student enrollment process, including earlier housing assignments, accelerated transcript evaluations, proactive billing, and expanded one-stop student services. The committee discussed the importance of personal engagement and communication throughout the enrollment process as a retention and conversion strategy.

Tuition Billing and Student Financial Support

Committee members discussed concerns regarding tuition billing communications and emphasized the importance of timely billing for students and families. University leadership reported that billing timelines are being moved earlier to improve planning and payment options. The committee also discussed opportunities to expand work-study and student employment programs to help students address outstanding balances while gaining valuable work experience.

Enrollment Projections

Enrollment forecasts indicate healthy recruitment trends, particularly among first-time freshmen. While transfer and readmitted student numbers remain relatively flat, leadership expressed optimism about meeting enrollment goals through continued recruitment, retention, and outreach efforts. University officials noted that current projections place enrollment within reach of budget targets for Fall 2026.

Beckley Campus Update

Enrollment at the Beckley location remains closely tied to nursing and allied health programs. Nursing enrollment continues to face competitive challenges; however, general education enrollments have increased significantly. University leadership continues to explore opportunities for growth and potential facility improvements in the Beckley market.

International Student Recruitment and Transportation

The committee discussed international recruitment opportunities, particularly through partnerships with schools and organizations abroad. Members also discussed transportation challenges faced by international students and the need for coordinated airport transportation services. Opportunities to collaborate with Athletics and improve transportation planning were reviewed.

3. Adjournment

- a. There being no further business, the Enrollment & Student Life Committee meeting was adjourned by Mr. Anthony Tolley at 2:20 PM.

Minutes submitted by: Donna Linkous, Executive Secretary

