Strategic Task Force
Strategic Task Force *End of Year Progress Report (May 2014)*

Task Force Name:
Accountability

Charge:
Determine accountability metrics in meeting Strategic Goal #2 - Improve student persistence, increase graduation rates University-wide, and narrow the achievement gap for underrepresented students - by division, college, department or faculty.

Committee Members:
*Kelsey Brewer, ASI Lobby Corps Advocacy, **Dr. Cynthia Greenberg**, Director, School of Nursing, **Dr. Bob Mead**, Professor of Economics, **Ms. Sarah Song**, Campus Budget Director, **Dr. Ed Sullivan**, Assistant VP, Institutional Research, **Dr. Berenecea Eanes**, VP for Student Affairs, **Dr. Robert Koch**, Special Assistant to the Provost and **Dr. Raman Unnikrishnan**, Dean of Engineering and Computer Science (Chair)*

Meeting Dates:
1. *October 17, 2013*
2. *December 16, 2013*
3. *January 21, 2014*
4. *March 27, 2014*
5. *April 10, 2014*
6. *May 1, 2014*

Summary of Work Performed:

The Committee spent considerable time in understanding, interpreting and adapting the charge. These discussions helped to come to the realization that much of the work to be done by the Accountability Task Force depended on the work products of other taskforces dealing with Improvement of student persistence, increasing graduation rates University wide, and narrowing the achievement gap for underrepresented students.

One underlying element of the accountability component of the Strategic Plan grows out of the timing and data available during the writing process. At that time, the working group didn't have the data on which colleges, departments or programs were where with respect to any of the plan objectives. Such performance metrics, however, are critical to charting our progress towards meeting the plan objectives: the goals are enough of a reach that they won't be accomplished in the final years of the plan without making progress during the intervening years. At some level, generating the necessary data is a relatively straightforward compilation exercise from the office of Institutional Research and Analytical Studies.

While such performance metrics are necessary, they also present a challenge. Many departments and programs provide service or support to others. Performance metrics by programs are going to draw the narrow focus of a department or program to their own immediate metrics, but there may not be much (or any) attention to performance metrics that reach across departments and programs. A finding that may be partially confirmed by the challenges of various task forces trying to identify and inventory on-going or existing activities for some of the other graduation focused initiatives. Moreover, the shortcomings by a particular entity in attaining its performance level are likely to generate a plethora of

rationalizations which shift blame to other factors: pre-reqs are not met by incoming students, bottlenecks exists in pipeline courses offered by other departments, space constraints limit the ability for lab offerings, etc. Hence, the performance metrics which are a key component also generate a desire to shift blame elsewhere.

The higher level challenge in accountability is undertaking a shift from "we couldn't do it because…" to "how do we work with the cards we gave been dealt." Such shift in focus requires the creation of mechanisms or incentives to get parties vested in and take steps to improve not only their own outcomes but also to those situations where they may have a key role in but not necessarily a vested interest in the outcome.

Through many meetings, discussions and on-line exchanges, the Task Force was able to understand the original task as it relates to accountability, the limitations of the work product until additional outcomes from other taskforces become available, increase the awareness of the university community through town hall presentation as well as the report to PRBC and appraise the administration through periodic progress reports.

Recommendations:
The Task Force needs to continue its deliberations in 2014-15 and discuss the implementation strategies developed by other taskforces dealing with the Improvement of student persistence, increasing graduation rates University wide, and narrowing the achievement gap for underrepresented students.

Conclusions:
Until the results of the other taskforces are available, the Accountability Task Force will not be able to unilaterally assign responsibility to the various entities that influence student success. The apportionment of Accountability among division, college, department, faculty and students will be the goal of next year's task.

Supporting Documents (Please Attach):
- *Progress Reports (Attached)*
- *Agendas/Meeting Minutes (Attached)*
- *Statistics/Papers/Reports (Attached)*
- *Town Hall Presentation and Feedback (Attached)*