This month, the President gave the charge to the Strategic Enrollment Management Planning Council (SEMP-C) to prepare a coordinated approach to stabilizing and growing Southern’s enrollment picture through the fall of 2020. This three-year plan will operationalize how to set targets and achieve the ‘Enrollment Zone.’

Campus-wide enrollment planning and implementation of strategies is an imperative outlined in several areas of the University’s strategic plan. SEMP is “not a quick fix to increase enrollment; solely an organizational structure; an enhanced admissions and marketing operation; or an administrative function that operates separately from the academic mission of the institution… Typically enrollment planning unites undergraduate and graduate recruitment plans, out-of-state recruitment plans, marketing plans, retention plans, international enrollment plans, academic affairs strategic plans, academic college [or schools] enrollment plans, diversity plans and financial aid strategies.”1 The goal is to develop realistic targets and measurable strategies utilizing internal and external data, bringing together many of the most optimistic and thoughtful constituents to the planning table and stretching to ensure that programs and resource usage is beneficial to longer term success. Terricita Sass and Sean Grace will work with a cross section of administrative and academic constituents to complete this work by fall 2017. Click here for an outline of the plan and listing of Council and Working Group members.

Lisa Siedlarz has worked in the Office of Financial Aid & Scholarships for over 12 years as the Student Loan Administrator. She handles the Direct and the Alternative Loan process—consisting of awarding, extracting, importing and reconciliation. She works diligently to ensure the loan process runs as smoothly as possible given the high degree of manual work required. As a writer, Lisa has published two books – What We Sign Up For and I Dream My Brother Plays Baseball. For eight years, she has organized the annual “Stockings for Soldiers” and enjoys helping veterans. She holds an MFA from WCSU with a concentration in war poetry. Lisa was a recipient of the John Holmes Award on the Leo Connellan Poetry Prize. Visit her website here.

Recruitment and Outreach Initiatives

Preliminary (non-Census) enrollment data for new graduate students illustrate positive increases in both part-time and full-time. Working collaboratively with several departments, the office is working diligently to launch of the new spring 2018 application on the TargetX platform in April. The TargetX CRM platform promises to provide an unprecedented connection with prospective students. Partnering with offices and persons like Dr. Winnie Yu in events such as the recent graduate information session and tour with a group of 30 Hofstra University students, we are working to expose more students to Southern offerings and benefits. The office seeks to expand upon its current one-on-one advisement sessions, available by appointment, as well as begin the brief information talks in 300 and 400 level classes. Invitations to faculty are forthcoming. If interested, please reach out to Lisa Galvin. Preliminary survey results are in seeking to understand and better address the various aspects of the graduate student selection, satisfaction and campus experience. Finally, a website audit is underway; Graduate Admissions, GRSI, and the department of Integrated Communications & Marketing will continue its collaborative work to improve the web experience.

The undergraduate admissions team completed the fall recruitment travel cycle with visits made to 193 Connecticut and out-of-state high schools, as well as 95 in-state and regional college fairs, 12 community college visits, 3 college planning presentations, and 20 on-site admission days at local feeder high schools.

The team planned and hosted a successful School Counselor Appreciation Day event on December 8. With 87 visiting School Counselors on campus, it was the largest attendance in the past four years. The program highlighted students, academics and support services, student involvement and residential life, Southern’s innovative facilities, and visitors engaged in lively conversations with constituents from across campus. Everyone in attendance, particularly partners from other Student Affairs and faculty helped to showcase what makes Southern a great place to send their high school students.

Fall 2017 freshmen application review is underway! With nearly 7,000 freshmen applications already received, applications are trending up by 1% over this time last year. Over 1,330 admission letters were sent to early applicants on December 12. For the first time, Admissions coordinated the mailing with other offices to provide a comprehensive admission package. Some students received their financial aid award (part of the new FAFSA Prior-Prior year process), a scholarship notification, or direct admission into the Nursing program along with their University admission letter and Next Steps information. With over 2,500 acceptances processed to date, admission notifications will continue to be sent on a rolling basis throughout the spring.

Community College Partnership Expansion

During the fall, Southern began a new pilot program with Housatonic Community College. The A to B in CT (Associates to Bachelors) program is targeted to prospective students who are deemed not quite ready academically are offered a path back to Southern through HCC without some of the traditional hurdles. A ‘soft denial’ invites directs students within specific zip codes (called service area) In addition to a seamless process to apply to HCC, students have the opportunity to participate in specific activities at Southern.

Steve Marcelynas and Anna Rivera-Alfaro meet periodically with students and HCC counselors regarding student progress while offering encouragement and keeping students connected to Southern. The initial cohort began with less than a dozen students. In April, participants will be hosted at Southern with other HCC transfers to acknowledge their one year success. Gateway is slated to be the second institution in the pilot program.
Retention and Persistence

Faculty Senate Passes Attendance Resolution

Working closely with Enrollment Management, the Faculty Senate passed an attendance reporting resolution which was signed by the President in December. The resolution is a joint effort to improve Southern’s ability to adhere to federal financial aid regulations to ensure compliance to timely reporting of last date of attendance. For more information, click here.

SSC Campus Advisor Platform Launched

The new and improved Advising platform, Student Success Collaborative (SSC) Campus (formerly referred to as EAB), has officially launched. The platform allows faculty to monitor a student’s progress, send early alerts and perform appointment campaigns and targeted outreach. Several faculty and professional advisors are using platform, and recently, the Curriculum and Learning department changed how they make advising appointments using SSC Campus. Using an automated appointment campaign, advisees receive emails from advisors and can electronically make appointments with one click of a button. Big shout out to faculty member Greg McVerry for making a “How To” video of this process, Creating and Emailing an Advising Appointment Outreach. The SSC Campus Leadership team is working on training all departments on this great platform. For more information on training please e-mail EM@SouthernCT.edu.

Team Transitions

Registrar Siham Doughman has accepted a position at Syracuse University effective March 1. We wish her much success. A formal search will commence soon.

Trish Regan will assume the responsibilities associated with advising the School of Business underclassmen. Trish will remain an integral part of the advising team, particularly as the campus prepares to review a new advising model.

Peter Leung has relocated to Wintergreen to assume the new role of Transfer Course and Enrollment Coordinator, focused on the transfer banks and emerging technologies to support transfer students.

Degree Works Transfer Evaluation (DWTE)

As part of on-going efforts to improve the transfer student experience, Enrollment Management is engaged in the implementation of DWTE for Summer 2017!

DWTE is a tool for potential enrolling transfer students. Transfer shoppers can find how their courses will articulate to Southern, and clearly see how these courses meet requirements for Southern’s majors.

Academic Road Maps

Degree Works offers a planning tool to help students create an academic road map. Students build a semester by semester plan at the beginning of their academic career and make adjustments as they progress through. This tool not only helps students stay on track toward graduation, it also informs the University of the classes that need to be offered.

We are asking the campus community to encourage students to login to Degree Works and build their Academic Road Map. This feature is available to all students. More information on Academic Road Maps will be coming soon.

Coffee Talks

Utilizing the Fred Pryor Training Modules

- Empathy in the Workplace
  Thursday, February 16, 2-3 PM. ASC 305
  Facilitated by Andrew Smith and Lew DeLuca

- Communication in the Workplace
  Friday, March 10, 1-2 PM. ASC 311
  Facilitated by Cynthia Patterson and Sherryl Chin
Celebrating December 2016 Commencement