Standards for Students
Recommendation and Question
March 13, 2015 Senate Meeting

Question:
“What should the first-year students that Buffalo State enroll look like?”

Contextual Information Considered:
- The incoming first-year student headcount has increased by 538 in the 2012-14 timeframe.
- Buffalo State’s national indicator has decreased from “selective” to “less selective” (Consortium for Student Retention and Data Exchange, 2012-13, 2013-14, 214-15),
- The entry characteristics of incoming first-year students has declined in both high school average (85.5 to 84.2) and standardized test scores (968 to 895) in the same 2012-14 time frame (Institutional Research’s 2012-2014 Enrollment Summaries).
- The number of first-time freshmen in good academic standing after their first term has declined by over 3% in the 2012-2014 time frame. (Vice President Payne’s College Senate report, 2/13/15).
- The one-year retention rate of first-time freshmen has declined by just less than 2% from 2012-2013; 2014 data is not yet available (Institutional Research’s 2014 Enrollment Summary).
- The total headcount of Buffalo State has decreased by approximately 600 students in the 2012-2014 time frame (Institutional Research’s 2014 Enrollment Summary).

Definitions:
Headcount model – offering admission to students in order to meet enrollment targets that are budget driven.
Qualifications model – offering admissions to students who meet institutional selectivity standards and/or are otherwise qualified (e.g., EOP, SSSP, special consideration)

Recommendation:
Given that the “headcount model” utilized for freshmen admissions in recent years has caused a downgrading of the institution’s selectivity rating, a decrease in the number of first-year students in good academic standing and retained by the institution to their sophomore year, and using “new student backfill” has unsuccessfully addressed enrollment deficiencies at Buffalo State, the Standards for Students committee recommends that Buffalo State move to a “qualifications model” for freshmen admissions that will gradually return the college to a “selective admissions” institution.

Questions for Senate Consideration:
1. Are you in support of the recommendation?
   If so:
2. What organizational change must occur to support a qualifications model for freshmen admissions?
3. What can we do to ensure access and equity in the freshmen admissions process to stay true to our mission, visions, and values?
4. What suggestions do you have for changing internal and external constituents’ perceptions/opinions of Buffalo State to create broad understanding of the benefits of the Buffalo State experience?
   For later consideration:
5. What needs to happen on campus to effectively engage a more selective student body?