

NEWS

Pearson team begins contract implementation; faculty are involved in planning for Pearson services

The College's contract with Pearson Education, Inc. and its subsidiary Embanet, to provide marketing, enrollment, and non-academic retention-related services for Cincinnati State, began implementation in November with information-gathering activities led by Pearson staff members.

Six faculty members attended a portion of a one-day "partnership kick-off meeting" on Nov. 4 and heard an overview of the activities expected to take place over the next several months.

About 35 faculty members participated in a series of workshops that took place Nov. 18-20. According to the agenda for the three-day visit, goals for these sessions included Pearson "engaging with the campus community to provide an overview of the partnership," as well as "discovery" activities by Pearson staff members to "learn from and better understand the College community."

Some Pearson staff are returning to campus this week for additional "discovery" activities. All of the faculty "pre-admit" Advisors in Enrollment and Student Services

are expected to meet with Pearson staff this week, and a few faculty Program Chairs will meet with Pearson staff also. These meetings are intended to provide additional insight about how advising is carried out.

Interim President Monica Posey agreed to the contract with Pearson in late October.

According to Dr. Posey's email message to the College community, sent Nov. 13, entering into an agreement with Pearson was considered "vital to the College" because of "the enrollment and retention challenges we face."

AAUP Chapter President Pam Ecker said, "Faculty have been skeptical about a partnership with Pearson, for a variety of reasons, since the idea was first put forward several years ago by former President Owens."

"Many faculty remain skeptical about the benefits of this partnership," Pam added. "However, we appreciate that Dr. Posey is providing a transparent and participatory process as the implementation of this agreement gets underway."

Non-academic services include "success coaches" for CS students

Pam said that during Spring semester, the Pearson-led structure for carrying out admission and retention-related services will be put in place.

"According to the proposed organization chart I saw in October, Pearson will have four on-campus managers working full-time at Cincinnati State," Pam said. These managers include:

- Director of Recruitment
- Director of Student Coaching & Persistence
- Managers of Student Coaching & Persistence (two positions, reporting to the Director of Coaching & Persistence)

A Cincinnati State employee will serve as Assistant Director of Recruitment/ Admission, with a staff including Enrollment Coordinators, College Representatives, and various other personnel.

All of the Recruitment/ Admission staff members will

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be Cincinnati State employees whose positions are governed by the SEIU contract. However, Pearson will provide the funding for three Enrollment Coordinator positions.

In the service area called Student Coaching and Persistence, a Cincinnati State employee will be the Director of the Advising Center, and the faculty Academic Advisors (members of AAUP Units 1 and 2) will report to this Director.

The CS Director of Advising will report to the Pearson on-campus Director of Student Coaching and Persistence.

Pam said that an earlier draft of the organizational structure for the Pearson partnership had faculty Academic Advisors

reporting directly to a Pearson manager. "That proposed structure was not acceptable to AAUP," Pam said.

"When the Board of Trustees charged the College administration with seeking assistance for marketing, admission, and other services, they specifically limited the support to non-academic service areas," Pam said.

"We believe that putting faculty members into a direct reporting relationship with a Pearson manager would jeopardize the distinction between academic and non-academic work, and is not in keeping with the separation of responsibilities that the Board mandated," Pam added.

"However, after we made our concerns known, Dr. Posey negotiated a different structure with Pearson," Pam said.

"The AAUP will monitor closely whether there are any negative impacts of having faculty members in a reporting line that includes Pearson managers," Pam said. "We are confident that if problems arise, Dr. Posey and Provost Hoopes will assist in working through the concerns."

Pearson will provide funding for about 10 (or possibly more) "Pathway Coach" positions. These Coaches, whose work is defined as "non-academic," will serve students within a specific academic division through

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Background: Faculty & the Pearson deal (the lead-up to the contract)

For more information about interactions between Cincinnati State and Pearson prior to 2015, and the faculty responses, see the *AAUP News* from Nov. 14, 2014, and Dec. 11, 2014 (available at www.cinstateaaup.org, in the Library section).

Early in 2015, the Board of Trustees directed the College administration to seek proposals from companies that could provide marketing and enrollment management services.

A Request for Proposals (RFP) was prepared under the supervision of the College's Chief Financial Officer, Mike Geoghegan, and was sent on Mar. 12, 2015, to Pearson and 12 other companies.

The non-Pearson companies were located through research by faculty members, which was requested by members of the Board.

Members of the Faculty / Administration Communication Team (FACT), including Faculty Senate President Ryan Shadle,

and AAUP Contract Compliance Officer Geoff Woolf, along with Yvonne Baker, Amy Richardson, and Pam Ecker, met on March 18 with College administrators to discuss the RFP and other concerns about Pearson. Three College Trustees also attended the meeting: Michael Oestreicher, Mark Walton, and John Silverman.

At the Mar. 18 meeting, faculty said the Mar. 12 RFP had been slanted in favor of Pearson and also expressed concern about the RFP referring to a number of academic services, even though the Board had stated that only non-academic services should be requested.

A "statement of clarification" was sent to the organizations that received the original RFP, and eventually two companies in addition to Pearson submitted proposals.

Pam Ecker, who was at the time AAUP Vice President, requested and received for review all of the submitted proposals, including the Pearson proposal.

The Pearson proposal was the only one that met the RFP requirement to "invest" in the College by providing funding for initial implementation of some services.

From July through October 2015, Pam was given the opportunity to review four drafts of a formal contract between Pearson and Cincinnati State. The final portions were reviewed after Dr. Monica Posey became Interim President of the College.

"I provided feedback on all aspects of the draft contracts," Pam said. "In addition to seeking clarification about numerous contract provisions, and pointing out areas that seemed to deal with academic matters, I asked questions about the financial components as well."

"Many of my concerns were addressed by College administrators, but it would be inaccurate to say I was part of the final contract negotiations," Pam said.

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activities such as contacting students who aren't attending classes, helping students deal with personal challenges by recommending assistive resources, and other tasks.

The Pathway Coaches are expected to be hired during Spring semester 2016, and to begin their work in Summer 2016. The Coaches will be members of the SEIU bargaining unit.

"Defining the role and responsibilities of the Coaches is a big concern for faculty," Pam said. "In most instances, when Pearson staff give examples of activities carried out by Coaches, they are describing work that is currently done by faculty advisors and program chairs."

"Ever since the Board of Trustees stated that Pearson's

services would be limited to 'non-academic,' support, faculty have been concerned about where the line is drawn between what is academic and what is non-academic," Pam continued.

"For Cincinnati State faculty, academic work includes a lot more than the responsibilities associated with teaching classes," Pam said.

"The Pearson model for 'coaching' seems to be based on assumptions that faculty members don't want to have ongoing, supportive interactions with students," Pam added.

"However, that's the opposite of Cincinnati State's experience," Pam said. "For decades, Cincinnati State students have said one of the best things about their experience is the faculty members who care about them."

"Faculty members who care about their students certainly don't want to hand off to a group of yet-to-be-hired Coaches all responsibilities for supporting students during their journey to a degree or certificate," Pam said.

"On the other hand, in some of our large programs, faculty members can't always keep up with all students and address all of their needs and challenges outside the classroom," Pam said.

"Adding Coaches might turn out to be helpful for student retention—provided that the interactions of coaches, advisors, program chairs, and co-op coordinators are genuinely collaborative."

Background: Ten-year Pearson contract defines criteria for success

The contract between Pearson and Cincinnati State is a ten-year agreement, expiring on the first day of Spring Semester 2026.

The College has an option to end the agreement in July 2018 if the College's revenues from enrollments during the 2017-18 fiscal year are less than student enrollment revenues were during the 2014-15 fiscal year.

Pearson has an option to end the contract by giving notice to the College in either March or September of any year.

According to the Objective Statement in the contract's Statement of Work, the contract objective is for Pearson and the College "to jointly design, develop, and implement new and innovative methods to market, recruit, and support College Students in furtherance of the College's educational mission and strategic plan to (a) grow enrollments over and above the Baseline Course Enrollments and (b) exceed the College's

Persistence, Retention, and Graduation Rates."

- *Baseline enrollments* is defined as "4,000 newly registered students per academic year taking for-credit coursework."

- *Persistence rate* is the percentage of students who register in two consecutive terms, excluding students who have graduated.

- *Retention rate* is the percentage of students who return to register from one year to another (for instance, Fall 2015 to Fall 2016), excluding graduates.

- *Graduation rate* is the percentage of students who complete their program of study as measured over a defined time range. (The contract language does not specify the time range.)

Pearson earns Service Fees payments for New Students (defined in the contract as students who enroll for the first time in Spring 2016 or later, or who re-enroll following a lapse of

six years or more).

Pearson also earns Service Fees for Existing Students, defined as students who enrolled for the first time from Spring 2010 through Fall 2015, or who were admitted to the College prior to Spring 2016 but deferred enrollment until Spring 2016 or later.

The Service Fees for Spring 2016 depend on whether retention targets are met, but could be as high as 20% of Gross Revenue for all tuition paid by enrolled students (calculated as \$148.64 per credit hour), less amounts refunded to students who officially withdraw from courses.

The Service Fees for New Students starting in Summer 2016 or later are 20% of tuition revenue, less withdrawals.

The Service Fees for Existing Students are either 15% of tuition revenues (less withdrawals) for Summer 2016 through Fall 2017, or 10% of revenues (less withdrawals) for Spring 2018 and all subsequent semesters.

College change to self-insurance does not affect health coverage

Some faculty members have asked if the College's change to self-insurance of the employee health plan (reported on in Cincinnati State *Daily News* on Oct. 29) caused any changes to employee benefits. The answer is "No."

Self-funding changes how the College pays for insurance claims, but all other aspects of the benefits plan (including the health insurance carrier, Anthem) stay the same.

As stated in the current Collective Bargaining Agreements

for AAUP Units 1 and 2, the employee contribution to health insurance does change, effective Jan. 1, 2016, from an 8% contribution to a 10% contribution. (This change is described in the Unit 1 contract in Article 11-H-1-a. In the Unit 2 contract, the change is described in Article 12-G-1-a.)

Questions about health insurance should be directed to Gonzalo Camacho, the College's Manager of Benefits and Compensation, in the Human Resources office.

AAUP urges faculty to support the College Annual Fund

The Executive Committee of Cincinnati State AAUP thanks all faculty members who have already contributed to the College Annual Fund Campaign, and encourages all others to consider a contribution.

Over the past several years, employee participation in the Annual Fund Campaign has been low—for a variety of reasons. The AAUP officers hope faculty participation in this year's Annual Fund Campaign signals a change in direction.

Faculty members can designate a contribution for a specific purpose, such as the AAUP Ken Stoll Scholarship, or other scholarships. The amount donated is completely up to the donor.

The Annual Fund Campaign ends Dec. 18. To get a pledge form or more information, talk to a divisional Captain.

Save the Date

February 9, 2016 Luncheon at the Summit

**CState AAUP annual "Have a Heart"
celebration of community service**

**(and continued celebration of CState AAUP's
25th anniversary year)**

**CINCINNATI STATE CHAPTER
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS
3520 CENTRAL PARKWAY
CINCINNATI, OHIO 45223-2690**

**CHAPTER WEBSITE: WWW.CINSTATAAUP.ORG
EMAIL: EXEC@CINSTATAAUP.ORG
OFFICE: 124 MAIN BLDG., CLIFTON CAMPUS**

PRESIDENT
PAM ECKER
PHONE: 513.569.1722

VICE PRESIDENT
PAULA KIRCH SMITH

SECRETARY
HEATHER HATCHETT

TREASURER
SCOTT FREEMAN

PAST PRESIDENT
PAUL DAVIS

CONTRACT COMPLIANCE
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