Committee Members: Brian Blume, Mihai Burzo (replaced Jie Song while he was on sabbatical leave during Fall 2017), Melva Craft-Blacksheare, Karen Cuzydlo, Kristi Hottenstein, Gergana Kodjebacheva (Chair), Margaret Murray-Wright, Toko Oshio, and Jie Song  

Student representatives: Adam Alamah and Sariba Shoukat

Charge of our committee. It was discussed that our committee should keep its focus on admission issues as stated in the Faculty Code below.

From the Faculty Code (effective May 1, 2002): The Committee on Undergraduate Admission Standards .... shall review and recommend to the faculty requirements for admission to the University of Michigan-Flint.

Admission requirements. There were no changes to admission requirements during the 2017-2018 period.

Potential reasons for enrollment trends. Potential reasons for decreases in enrollment were discussed. A primary reason could be declining enrollment in Michigan high schools. Enrollment at Mott Community College is also decreasing. The Flint Water Crisis may have had an effect on enrollment although decreased enrollment was taking place prior to the Crisis. The thriving economy may be a factor in the declining enrollment; studies have shown, however, that a thriving economy can increase enrollment at universities while decrease enrollment at community colleges.

Strategies to increase enrollment. The following strategies for increasing student enrollment were discussed and communicated to the Strategic Planning Core Team. Meetings between the Vice-Chancellor for Enrollment Management and Department Chairs are taking place to discuss ways of increasing enrollment for specific programs of study. Another strategy includes collaborating with high schools through the Dual Enrollment Program. We need to continue collaborations with high school counselors. Yet another strategy includes building relationships with community colleges. We need to develop more articulation transfer agreements. Employing high school/community college transfer coordinators will be valuable. It is important to examine not only students’ overall GPA but students’ entire application including student performance in different classes when making admissions decisions. While there are no plans to decrease admissions standards, it is important that if admissions standards are decreased, student support for advising increases. Strategies are being developed to work closer with the UM - Ann Arbor so that UM – Flint may have access to applications for students who have indicated they would like to be considered for UM – Flint admission. UM – Flint would like to have the information from UM – Ann Arbor on admissions decisions by the Fall semester. By April of the following year, most students have made a decision on what school to attend. The discussions with UM – Ann Arbor are continuing.
Renewal criteria for freshmen merit scholarships. Our committee was contacted by Ricardo Alfaro, Faculty Council Chair. Ricardo Alfaro asked our committee for an opinion regarding the change in renewal criteria for freshmen merit scholarships. Our committee was not involved in changing the GPA requirement for freshmen merit scholarships. More information on the freshmen merit scholarships is available here: https://www.umflint.edu/merit

Our committee learned that the change in GPA requirement from 2.75 to 2.0 for the renewal of freshmen merit scholarships affected approximately 5 students out of over 400. Some of the 5 students who benefited from the new policy had a lower GPA during their first semester at UM – Flint. These students may have been academically strong students who struggled to adjust to university life during their first semester.

Our committee discussed ideas to return to the 2.75 or higher GPA requirement while still supporting students who may have difficulty adjusting to university life during their first semester. We discussed offering to students who do not meet the renewal scholarship GPA: an appeals policy where students could explain the reasons for the lower GPA; a grace period of 1 semester where the GPA would need to be raised by the end of the next semester.

The criteria for freshman merit scholarships are different for newly admitted students and for continuing students. Our committee recommended that it would be appropriate if both new and renewal criteria were within the responsibilities of the same committee so that there is continuity.

Our committee discussed the most appropriate team to review criteria for freshmen merit scholarships. One argument in favor of the Scholarships, Awards and Special Events Committee (SASEC) reviewing criteria for freshmen merit scholarships is: SASEC is charged in the Faculty Code to: “review and recommend to the Faculty Council policies and priorities relative to scholarships. The SASEC committee shall establish and review policies and criteria for granting campus-wide awards and honors to students and faculty. It shall also make recommendations for the granting of such scholarships and awards.”

Our committee contacted SASEC to ask for opinions on what committee should review the criteria for merit scholarships. Our committee also contacted Ricardo Alfaro to inform him of our discussion.

Subsequently Faculty Council determined that SASEC is the appropriate committee to review the criteria for merit scholarships. Ricardo Alfaro sent a “thank you” note to our committee stating:

“I also want to thank the Undergraduate Admissions Committee for the suggestions …, on how to deal with students who do not meet the required GPA. Faculty Council believes this is a great approach, very student-centered, and I have communicated it …, so that it can be discussed with the Scholarship Committee when they meet.”

Admissions policy. Karen Cuzydlo and Kristi Hottenstein wrote an admissions policy to supplement the admissions decision matrix. Our committee began reviewing and revising the admissions policy. Overall, there were minor clarification suggestions related to the admissions policy to date. A task for our committee for next year is to continue revising/finalizing the admissions policy.