President Flavius Killebrew, in the Spring semester of 2008, asked the Provost to develop a comprehensive plan to enhance student retention and success at TAMUCC. An ad hoc Presidential Task Force on Student Retention was formed soon after. At the President’s Cabinet retreat in the early 2009 fall semester the Provost was further charged with developing a concrete set of recommendations and timelines. The Provost, subsequently, began conversations with faculty involved in the first-year/freshman learning experience and administrators to draw up data-driven recommendations that help retain students on campus. A preliminary report was reviewed by the President’s cabinet on February 9, 2009, on plans to optimize efficiency of all units within the Enrollment Management (EM). Since student recruitment and retention are closely related, the draft recommendations were developed together by the Academic Affairs leadership and by the Retention Task Force. A previous draft of these recommendations was reviewed last month by the Deans’ Council and the Provost Council. This review of the recommendations will be on-going. As part of this on-going conversation, the Provost office is now soliciting suggestions and ideas from the Faculty Senate, the Chairs’ Council and from the Staff Advisory Council.

The following are the recommendations and, where relevant, deadlines and primary administrative oversight are identified:

RETENTION GOAL: Increasing Student Retention by 3% per academic year and 9% — from the current 61% to 70% by AY 2011-2012.

1. **Appoint an Administrative Officer** (Dr. Gerardo Moreno, director of the Tutoring & Learning Center), as the head of student retention and student success efforts on campus with comparable designation (Assistant Vice President for Student Success) and adjusted compensation for added responsibilities of oversight of all retention programs, strategies, authority over assessment and evaluation of retention and student success, and reporting to the Office of the Provost. This position will help create an institutional culture that values student success, persistence toward graduation and coordinating the campus-wide retention efforts between Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, Finance and Administration (Bursar’s Office), Institutional Effectiveness and Institutional Advancement. **Effective: May 1, 2009.** (Oversight: David Billeaux, Babbili)

2. **Re-name** formally the Tutoring & Learning Center as: the **Consortium for Academic Success & Achievement (CASA)** accompanied by appropriate publicity and media releases. **Deadline: May 1, 2009. Cost: for fall 2009 completion of Glasscock building renovation and construction: $995,000.** (Oversight: Moreno, Billeaux, Paul Orser)
3. **Coordinate progress of retention efforts with Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP)** by:

   a) Collaborating with Office of Institutional Effectiveness in identifying trends in the historical decline in student retention and of areas for intervention for retention and student success. *In progress.* (Moreno, Orser, **Billeaux**, Babbili)
   
b) Identifying faculty expertise in the College of Education in the research and the development of retention measures. *In progress.* (Dean Art Hernandez, **Babbili**)
   
c) Working with the University Core Curriculum Program (UCCP), the Learning Communities and other student success-related programs to develop retention strategies. *In progress.* (Moreno, **Billeaux**, Orser, Babbili)

4. **Map the freshman advising processes** and college deans’ student services. Explore the possibility of centralized first-year and/or centralized student advising including visits to two Texas institutions with similar advising structure. *Recommended* in the Enrollment Management Report. Deadline: **May 15, 2009** (Moreno, **Billeaux**, Dechant, Babbili)

5. **Create an Advisors’ & Counselors’ Council** for continuous improvement of advising and for better intra-campus communication. Deadline: **July 1, 2009** (**Billeaux**, Babbili)

6. **Implement retention-relevant QEP recommendations on the professionalization of 4 full-time seminar instructors** with salary/benefits adjustment and increased costs of staff support to provide a foundation for the development of Basic Skills Learning Communities in the University Core Curriculum. *Deadline: May 1, 2009.* Cost: $103,171 (**Billeaux**, Wolff-Murphy, Carlos Huerta, Babbili)

7. **Hold regular training sessions for academic advisors** on intrusive methods for student retention and student success. *Start during Summer 2009* (Moreno, **Billeaux**, Dechant, Babbili)

8. **Coordinate with the Faculty Renaissance Center (FRC)** in developing programs that help develop faculty expertise in student success and enhancing FRC’s role in student persistence toward graduation. *In progress.* (**Billeaux**, Eugene Billiot, Babbili)

9. **Institutionalize the Presidential Task Force on Student Retention & Success** to review and assess institutional efforts and make appropriate and on-going recommendations for student success and retention. Membership to include representatives from the Faculty Senate, Chairs’ Council, Staff Advisory Council, Provost Council and others. *Deadline: July 15, 2009* (**Babbili**)

10. **Assess and evaluate outcomes of efforts for overall student retention and student success** to be undertaken and will be on-going with the first of evaluations completed by *Deadline: December 15, 2009*** (Moreno, **R. Nelsen**, **Billeaux**, Orser, Dechant, Babbili)
ACCOMPLISHED

1. **Launched preparatory sessions on student success** for incoming first-year and transfer students and parents. (Dechant, Babbili)

2. **Identified barrier courses** for instructional innovation and faculty. Completed as part of QEP discussions. (Orser)

3. **Hired Retention Specialist** in the Tutoring & Learning Center to assist with specialized advising/counseling and train mentors. (Moreno, Billeaux)

4. **Implemented the Island Promise** financial aid package to help retain students. (Dechant)

OTHER IDEAS TO EXPLORE IN THE AY 2009-10:

1. **Enhance the role of Student Affairs** in civic engagement and on-campus employment opportunities for students as a retention tool. (Chenaux, Babbili)

2. **Establish a formal status and designation of First-Year Faculty** and provide advanced training relating to retention strategies, interventionist 4-week grade reports and intrusive advising methods, Web-CT and new media teaching innovation, expectations of scholarship of service. (Billeaux, Huerta, Wolff-Murphy, Babbili)

3. **Implement a President’s Service Award** for a faculty member for demonstrating meritorious advising and service to students. This award must be highly selective and recognized by a monetary reward. (Billeaux, Babbili)

4. **Explore enhancing distance education** to help retain students and promote student success (Billeaux, R. Nelsen, Babbili)

5. **Pursue Luminis Project** to boost retention and student success. Summer, Fall, 2009 (Rendon, Dechant, Moreno)

6. Explore **on-campus student housing** for student retention and success (Chenaux).

(The Enrollment Management Report prepared for the President’s Cabinet follows)
ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT REPORT

Draft Recommendations to the President’s Cabinet

Prepared by Provost Babbili

GOAL MANDATE: Increase student population of TAMU-CC to 10,000 students by 2010

1. **Conduct Comprehensive Business Process Mapping**: an RFP for the study of processes within five critical units functioning in the Round Building (Student Services Center): Admissions office, University Registrar, the Financial Aid office, Academic Advising Transition Center and the Bursar’s office — has been submitted by the Registrar for hiring an outside consultant group. **Deadline**: The mapping work will begin on June 1, 2009 with the completion of the mapping phase is August 30, 2009. **Cost**: $65,000. (Dechant, Babbili, J. Nelsen)

2. **Remodel the Round Building** space of staff service desks and circular area to foster student-friendly atmosphere that allows for greater efficiency and increased student responsiveness. **Deadline**: July 1, 2009. **Cost**: $60,000 from funds secured with AY 2009-10 HEF requests. (Dechant, Babbili)

3. **Utilize the Tiger Team**, already in place to review the volume of telephone calls and of work in relation to current staffing levels, will make recommendations to the Provost on staffing required to meet student demand. **Deadline**: April 15, 2009. (Rendon)

4. **Install and/or remodel a comprehensive Enrollment Management Communications Center**. Recommendations of the Tiger Team on staffing will be taken into account in this action item. **Deadline**: December 1, 2009. **Cost**: $300,000 (subject to availability of AY 2009-2010 HEF funds. (Dechant, Babbili)

5. **Conduct a review** by the Directors of Admissions and Student Recruitment & New Student Programs of the state, regional and related geographical data and cultural factors in order to explore the possibility of expanding our primary and tertiary recruitment populations. These recommendations will be submitted to the Office of the Provost. **Deadline**: May 1, 2009. (Dechant, Christopher Fleming, Leticia Bazan)

6. **Explore and implement effective communication strategies** with assistance from the Office of Public Affairs to increase student awareness and promote services offered in the Round Building. **Deadline**: May 1, 2009. (Rendon, Fleming, Marshall Collins)
7. **Assess and evaluate the outcomes of continuous improvements in Enrollment Management division** with the first of evaluations to be completed by **Deadline: December 15, 2009** (R. Nelsen, Billeaux, Dechant, Babbili)

ACCOMPLISHED

1. **Acquisition and implementation of a comprehensive 12-month staff training program** with Super Customer Service to enhance quality of response to student needs related to Enrollment Management. Implemented on January 10, 2009. Program will continue until April 10, 2010. **Cost:** Initial cost $9500 already paid. $5000 needed to continue this program for another year will be provided internally. (Dechant, Babbili)

2. Each EM business unit has identified one key staff person as **Customer Service liaison** responsible for **continuous improvements** in responding to student-customer needs. Implemented on January 10, 2009. (Dechant, Babbili)

3. **Student Advisory Board** implemented to advise the Registrar’s office on student satisfaction with customer service and student support. In place since January 2009. (Rendon, Dechant)
Retention Action Plan and
Enrollment Management Plan

Approved/Achieved

1. Dr. Gerardo Moreno’s title change to Assistant Vice President for Student Success with salary adjustment and concomitant responsibilities.

2. Comprehensive Business Processes Mapping for Round Building operations: Admissions office, University Registrar, Financial Aid office, Academic Advising & Transition Center, and Bursar’s office ($65,000)

3. Budget for the First-Year Seminar Instruction professionalization of existing 4 instructors’ salary adjustment, three new positions and benefits: $103,171 (with caution that uncertain economic climate in the state may recall this spending).

4. Hired one additional Retention Specialist under Tutoring & Learning Center (now CASA) to support retention efforts under TLC.