

Student Success Partnership

Minutes

March 6, 2012 12:00-1:00

Present: Terry Ballman, Marie Francois, Damien Peña, Jane Sweetland, Ginger Reyes, Kaia Tollefson, Cindy Wyels

I. Summary of Steering Committee meeting of 1/31/12. Brief summary was provided, including mention of the following:

- Islas Academic Advisory Board's goal is that everyone at CI better serve students
- Student Success Week was mentioned, and discussed later (see below)
- At-risk students
 - Learn their names – how do we find out who they are, early enough to intervene?
 - Go to major advisor for early intervention
 - How do we make this a campus wide conversation?
- Roadmaps were mentioned. It was suggested that we check out the transfer roadmaps at CSUN
- Orientation: should be mandatory for transfers?
- Students-at-risk:
 - Learn their names – how do we find out who they are, early enough to intervene?
 - Go to major advisor for early intervention
 - How do we make this a campus wide conversation?

II. Student Success Week in Fall 2012.

Lively discussion ensued:

- President previously promised support for this, including the use of banners

- Dates: 8th week would be Oct 15-19; problem is “mid-term” means different things with so many different calendars; 10% of our population is graduate so we can’t ignore them; don’t try to be all things to all people when we first roll out.
 - Everyone on campus taking responsibility for “student success”
 - Calling it “student success week” not “mid-term checkin” makes it universally useful – for graduate programs, credential students as well.
 - What does “student success” mean? Maybe for a grad student at that particular time “success” means knowing what to do to get financial aid in order. For another it may have more to do with course assignments, grades, workforce ready, etc.
 - Continuous improvement theme – having a spectrum of what “success” means for different students with different needs. We need to embrace the spectrum – that it will be different for different students and programs.
 - “Graduation begins today” theme. Our task force is the group to identify a theme and help it get traction.
 - Students who have learned to love learning
 - Lifelong ability to transfer and apply knowledge
 - Retention, continuous improvement, excellence
 - We use “progress” instead of “retention”
 - Workforce ready, further study ready
 - Why do we need a theme? Pres said he wants to make sure this is a campus wide initiative.
 - Themes become slogans, which become cheap. Us defining what “success” means makes us arrogant, sloganeering. Maybe our goal is to ask students, what does success mean for you today? It’s a changing thing.
 - I am ____ (fill in the blank).
 - If you write your goals there’s something to making your intentions explicit. We’re about empowering students to the extent that we can, to engage in difficult questions.

- Are we really asking students to figure out what their goals are? Is that what success hinges on?
- Everybody must acknowledge that they are responsible for the success of our students.
- Maybe the question for students is, “What does success mean for you today? Over the course of this year?” And the question for faculty and staff is, “How do you know how your students are defining success for them, today and this year?”
- Love that – strategies occurring (graffiti board, t-shirt contest). During student success week, ask not “How are you doing?” but “How are you doing in your classes?”
- In staff meetings across campus, OPC, Provost’s Council, support coordinators: part of the agenda is, “what have we learned from students about what success means to them?” We need to learn how they’re defining success.
- That’s where stories will come from. That’s what moves people and makes change, not someone chanting slogans.
- Video clips. Interview students: What does success mean to you?
- Library has story corps equipment – NPR model.
- Organic definitions. From our students, our OPC.
- Like the idea that it’s not for us to define what success means.
- Success for me might mean having people learn where I come from. On another day the same student may say that success is learning how to navigate this f’ing university. Freedom to speak requires open-ended question, reiterated in different forms.
- Is it a theme?

- It's an attitude. Of humility – asking students what success means to them. Of responsibility – student success is everyone's job.
- Part of orientation might be having students write what they think is successful, written to themselves. Then mail it to students in the 8th week.
- If students write "Success to me is _____" on one side of a card, with identifying information on the back. We could scan the whole collection and have that data.
- Timing: 7th week may be preferable.

III. Summary of SSP Task Force Findings and Recommendations

A. Task Force I: Focus on At-Risk Students

- EOP and SSS partnered with UNIV 100 and 150 Classes. How to broaden this type of help to greater population
- Low GPA entering students (e.g., UNIV 100 and 349)
 - Of 900 transfers, disaggregation by GPA does show likelihood of continuation to graduation.
 - We need to be able to coach incoming students with 2.0 not to enroll in 18 units. The challenge is for those students who know they can only afford 2 years and they need to max out enrollment accordingly.
 - Like directed self placement. Maybe we need to flat-out tell students: stats show if you have x GPA, this is the likely outcome. Parents need to hear this.
 - Fall 2012 will be 4 sections of UNIV 349 (100 students); 3 sections of 300 (75 students); this increases each year. Will teach them how to use academic requirements report in this course. Question: How do we get this info to all students?

- UNIV 150 strategy (first-year students): this year 78 students trapped in a linked block. Couldn't drop the course without dropping out of school. All came back, only 5 on academic probation. How do we get this to all students? 100 first-year this year; next year plan for 120 or 140 – if we grow more widely, beyond ISLAS – these are serving everybody. Making things scalable is an issue we face. EOP has such one-on-one rapport. We need to take into account all of the elements that have made this successful.
- Academic advising workshops, 2 during orientation. Students warned about unit loads; parents get this information about setting student up for success, too. Will have 45 EOP students this summer – 1300 applications.
- Would it be wrong for us, philosophically... can we cap the number of units a student can take based on GPA? If a student wants to take more units than their GPA allows, they talk to someone and get permission? Are we concerned about our transfers or our first-years? Different issues. I'm more concerned about transfers coming in with low GPAs.
- That's the population we want to get into a UNIV 349 class. Had no trouble filling seats – national initiative, research based... students eager to take it. Brand new course in the Fall.
- Making things scalable – we know people are successful when they operate from their strengths.
- Are we sure students are getting clear message re. 349? Can write a notice and get it to Ginger and Kirsten. Advisor workshops start in June. Better to advertise it when we get closer to the time and know what the topics are (they're open-content courses).
- STEM are high-unit majors – the more chemistry you do, the better; the more math you do, the better. These “touchy-feeley”

classes won't be seen by some STEM faculty as "counting." They don't do well in those "more chem, more math" courses. All good, but not if you fail them. Not sure that's a common perception. We need to be aware of that and think about strategies.

- Another idea, a series of UNIV labs. Maybe some 300s that are STEM focused. So not a huge unit count that gets in the way. Other thing, having the list of courses in which students struggle – target transfer-success faculty development. Incorporate strategies in the beginning of the semester to facilitate success in those particular classes. Or a late-start UNIV lab.
- So with at-risk students, for now – getting them into UNIV 349; reinforcing orientation re. how to place themselves in number of do-able units; Records sent out letters to at-risk GPA students – maybe survey that group, get info (what was major, GPA coming in, number of units taking, which classes did they take, what grades did they get), find out were there things they wish they had done better? These will be the same students who will be at-risk or on academic probation at the end of this semester. Use that data to decide whether or not to cap enrollment by GPA. Consensus of the group: Great idea.
- Concern on the academic side of things – what is being done at program level?
- For some students they didn't know what they were supposed to take. Combination of program-driven decisions and students not knowing where their transcripts stand so they take the wrong things, and then petition to have the wrong thing count as the right thing.

B. Task Force II: Focus on Advising

- We briefly mentioned the concern that 2378 internal petitions processed (Jan.-Nov. 2011): This suggests that academic programs should be doing more in this regard, but how do we encourage that?

- The use of CARR should help students be proactive about their program of study

IV. New Task Forces

There was agreement that there would be two new task forces: One to address at-risk students per suggestion (in III A section above); and one on roadmaps.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:05 p.m.