Overview of National Perspectives/Activities to Enhance Student Success

Meeting of Sarasota Manatee Success Makers

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Who were we? Who are we?
Every Campus is Different
What Have We Learned from Years of Research and Theory?

that yield student success and satisfaction:

– Institutional fit
– Social and academic integration
– Involvement
– Engagement
– Commitment
– Motivation
Institutional Fit

• Are you recruiting and admitting the students whom you are best able to serve?
  – What promises do you make? Are those promises fulfilled?
• Do they find a sense of belonging here—a sense of fit?
• Can you help them develop a sense of fit?
Learning the Rules of the Culture through “Social and Academic Integration”

- How do students become integrated into academic life?
  - Do they have the skills they need?
  - Do you provide help with skills that need improvement?
  - Do they understand your goals for their learning?
- How do they become integrated into campus social life?
  - Are they developing relationships with you, with each other?
- Are they linking the academic and social spheres of higher education?
What Students Do: Involvement

• We know it’s important – but what does it mean?
  • For commuters
  • For adults
  • For online students
Intentional Design of Learning Environments: Engagement

• Are students developing a passion for learning?
• Are you providing engaging experiences in and out of the classroom – experiences that make learning more relevant, more fun, more experiential?
An Essential Student Attribute: Commitment

- To the institution
- To completion of a degree
- To a career or life goal
Another Essential Student Attribute: Motivation

- Student motivation can be
  - Entirely extrinsic
  - Mixed
  - Entirely intrinsic

- Cultivating students’ intrinsic motivation is a challenge for educators.
Many Approaches for Helping Students Experience the “Big Ideas”

We will work together to help determine the best approaches for USFSM.
Looking back over a four decades’ odyssey
Colleges and universities were not designed for the students who now predominate
And many of us weren’t made for these students either…challenges of empathy, understanding, relevance
So what do we do?

a) change us
b) change our institutions
c) change the students
d) change public policy
e) all of the above
Importance of ...

a manageable focus – individual

and institutional locus of control
Staying the “course”…

vs. fads and administrative ideas de jour
Retention is all about…

“institutionalizing” innovation and improvements = “sustaining”

hard work, long term systemic change, no quick fix, no panacea, no silver bullet, sound educational practices
It is more than “completion”…

“Completion” for what? Being intentional about our mission and having “foundational” experiences to attain the mission

Most common response? “Develop a program.”
It is more than “completion”…

Program focus on sub-populations vs. all students

What works in America: What we do for the critical mass—as close to all students as we can get
Beyond Programs

Programs are necessary but not sufficient

What’s missing is a comprehensive plan
(examples: Sarasota Manatee Success Makers, Foundations of Excellence®, Gateways to Completion®, Retention Performance Management™)

Have to execute that plan
Which programs seem to yield the greatest impact?

High-Impact Practices
1. First-Year Seminars and Experiences
2. Common Intellectual Experiences
3. Learning Communities
4. Writing-Intensive Courses
5. Collaborative Assignments/Projects
6. Undergraduate Research
7. Diversity/Global Learning
8. Service Learning, Community-Based Learning
9. Internships
10. Capstone Courses and Projects
Key decision:

Engage the faculty or Avoid the faculty
Need for partnerships

The academic/student affairs divide

Need for new models

Integration is new normal/new mantra
Key undergraduate student transitions represent best possible areas for partnerships:

- the developmental pre-matriculation experience
- the first-year experience*
- the transfer experience
- the sophomore year experience*
- the senior year experience*
Gateway Courses Defined

- Foundation-Level
- High-Risk
- High Enrollment
- “Killer Courses”
DFWI Rates by Course for Four-Year Institutions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Number of Courses</th>
<th>DFWI Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economics</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math developmental</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math college level</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biology</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemistry</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychology</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philosophy</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political Science</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sociology</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English college level</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fine Arts</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health/PE</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FYS/ success</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speech</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Percentage of High Enrollment Courses that Are High Risk

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Year</th>
<th>2-Year Institutions</th>
<th>4-Year Institutions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2004-2005</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005-2006</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006-2007</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-2008</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008-2009</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-2010</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-2011</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011-2012 &amp; 2012-2013</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overall: 68% 30%
Admitting There Is An Issue

Houston, we have a problem
# DFWI Rates by Course/Area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Column A. Course</th>
<th>Column B. Number of Institutions Working on Course</th>
<th>Column C. Average DFWI Rate for All Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accounting</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>43.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biology</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>30.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemistry</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>31.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English – College Level</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>30.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>30.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math – College Level</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>35.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math – Developmental</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>49.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychology</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>30.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Early Lessons – Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Column A. Course</th>
<th>Column B. Subpopulation</th>
<th>Column C. Average DFWI Rate for Subpopulation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accounting</td>
<td>African American</td>
<td>62.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hispanic / Latino</td>
<td>69.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>First Generation</td>
<td>48.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Gateway Course Success is a **DIRECT** predictor of retention . . .
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Column A. Course Examples from Individual G2C Institutions</th>
<th>Column B. Average DFWI Rate</th>
<th>Column C. DFWI Rate for Non-Retained Eligible-to-Return Students*</th>
<th>Column D. DFWI Rate for Academic Dismissal Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principles of Accounting I</td>
<td>54.0%</td>
<td>81.6%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foundation for Physiology / Biology</td>
<td>18.9%</td>
<td>55.0%</td>
<td>92.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Chemistry</td>
<td>36.3%</td>
<td>73.9%</td>
<td>82.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing and Rhetoric I</td>
<td>10.6%</td>
<td>25.8%</td>
<td>61.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey of American History</td>
<td>26.8%</td>
<td>67.2%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College Algebra</td>
<td>59.7%</td>
<td>73.5%</td>
<td>89.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beginning Algebra</td>
<td>24.4%</td>
<td>65.1%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Introduction to Psychology)</td>
<td>28.1%</td>
<td>46.1%</td>
<td>83.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean of Average DFWI Rates for Examples</td>
<td>32.4%</td>
<td>61.0%</td>
<td>88.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Helping Sophomores

• Yes, there is a “sophomore slump”
• First-year support structures not at same level/may have been withdrawn prematurely
• Buyer’s remorse
• Is really a second first year—the first year in the major
• So how do you introduce to the major? (a cottage industry—what could be done at the institutional level for consistency?)
Helping Sophomores

- The signature hand off to the major: advising
- What are the critical academic skills needed beyond the first year? And where might they be taught and by whom?
- Role of second-year seminars: comparison to first-year seminars
- #1 developmental issue is PURPOSE
- Hence greater attention to advising and career planning
Defining Transfer

**Usual definition:** In the most literal sense it is the action or process of moving as an articulated student from one post-secondary institution to another.

**Instead, transfer is** the totality of the educationally purposeful experiences which we intentionally provide our students to enable them to pursue their educational and personal aspirations for academic movement from one institution to some other learning environment that enables our students to pursue a form of educational credentialing which may not be provided by the sending institution.
Why Transfer Matters

First-year transfers still have high failures rates

Transfer students are a neglected, captive audience, who are often not understood, taken for granted, and discriminated against

Transfer is now normative route to the BA/BS

Current successful transfer rates are unacceptable

Is a matter of social justice

Transfer students lack centralized advocacy and common entering experiences that build loyalty
The Senior Year

- Yes, students do drop out in the senior year
- Key question: How do you treat your most “frequent flyers”? 
- Key areas of transition for which support is needed: work, graduate school, major personal decisions for life after college
- Capstone academic experiences
- Importance of culminating rituals—especially commencement
- Need for a Senior Year Experience coordinating stakeholders’ group
The Senior Year

- Need for policy audit regarding rules for: graduation check, eligibility for graduation/commencement, transcripts, fines
- The “other” transcript for your seniors: student activities and/or a portfolio requirement
- Are students prepared for work?
- Preparing students for the differences between the college culture and that of the world of work
- Developing student alumni before commencement
- Assessing senior year outcomes: What did I learn in college?
- What services/support will you provide after commencement? For whom? For how long?
Next steps

Initial planning meeting of Success Makers

Conduct an assessment

Need to mine the data we have

Inform wider campus community of what we know
Next steps

Actually use the data to make decisions for educational improvement

Need campus policy audits

Finalize the plan

Execute the plan

Shift focus from “access” to “success”
Going forth

Student Success”/”College Success”/“First-Year Experience”/“Transition Studies” is now an established field of research and professional endeavor

We know what to do and know how to do it

Need for campus and national political will
Going forth

Lack of money is a cop out (on part of students and institutions)
There are sufficient resources
Need to bring pilots and boutique programs to scale
Need disruptive change and redesign
Going forth

There are many inspirational examples—some old, some new: TRIO, Alverno, Elon, University 101, Guttman Community College, Valencia College

You can leave with a plan to be one!
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