

STORIES

of our students

Summary Report of the Eighth Annual Conference of the
National Council on Student Development

Tacoma, Washington October 22-24, 2006

Edited by
Faye E. Fullerton & Elise Davis-McFarland

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DEBRA DERR

Madison Area Technical College (WI)

NCS D President

The National Council on Student Development's 2006 national conference, *Stories of Our Students*, is behind us now. To keep the spirit of this conference alive, NCS D presents to you this publication for your reference. One of the most valuable products our organization has to offer its members is the opportunity to experience and learn from the best in our business. This is my formal opportunity to acknowledge and thank all who participated in making the 2006 conference one of our best.

First, I would like to thank our national planning committee and the colleges supporting each person's time and energy. Each of these committee members took on duties and responsibilities above and beyond the call of duty. It was a joy to work with this group of professionals. My thanks and NCS D's thanks to:

- George Smith, Edmonds Community College
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- Ron Wright, Clover Park Technical College
- Dolores Haugen, Tacoma Community College
- Larry Pierce, Pierce Community College
- Ivan Gorne, Bates Technical College
- Craig Kolins, Portland Community College

This conference's success can also be attributed to the amazing work of the NCS D National Office at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. The staff of the National Office work tirelessly to bring organization and attention to detail to the conference implementation. I extend my gratitude to Dr. Debra Bragg, Julia Panke Makela, and Linda Iliff.

I would like to thank our sponsors for the support each provides to NCS D, the conference, and our members. This year, I would like to acknowledge the League for Innovation in the Community College, ACT, Noel-Levitz, CampusWorks, Inc., World Education Services, and the Student Services Administrators' organizations from the states of Washington and Oregon.

I would personally like to acknowledge our three community college students who shared their stories with us. These stories are what inspire us and ground us each day in the importance and vitality of the work we do. My special appreciation goes to Dr. Joanne Truesdell, Shanta Anderson, and Shunita Bolden.

Finally, I would like to thank all presenters and participants. Every year that I attend an NCS D National Conference, I meet the most amazing people who share a passion for students and their success and development. Keep up your amazing work. You do make a difference.

Conference Overview

ELISE DAVIS-MCFARLAND
Trident Technical College (SC)
NCSD Secretary

Celebrating the Stories of our Students was the theme of the 2006 NCSD national conference which convened at the Sheraton Hotel in Tacoma, Washington, on October 22–24, 2006. The conference was an excellent opportunity to hear and reflect on students' academic and career success. It also provided a stimulating forum for sharing information, reconnecting with colleagues, and discussing the significant contributions student services professionals make to student success.

The conferees were warmly welcomed by Washington State legislator and Tulalip Tribe member John McCoy in the opening session. Dr. Mildred Olleé, president of Seattle Central Community College, provided the conference's keynote speech, "Educational Excellence and Student Success." She began by congratulating the audience on the fact that, as student development professionals, they focus on the whole person and student success. Then she went on to speak about the three mandates for student development professionals: Access, Achievement, and Accountability.

Following Dr. Olleé, a panel of community college graduates talked about how their community college experiences had influenced them and helped shape their quests for goal achievement and personal and professional fulfillment. Dr. Joanne Truesdell, a graduate of Clackamas Community College; Shaunita Bolden, a Bates Technical College alumna; and Shanta Anderson, who attended Portland Community College, talked about their college experiences, how they overcame obstacles to their achievement and advancement, and the community college faculty and staff members who supported and encouraged them along the way.

Being in Tacoma provided a perfect opportunity for the NCSD members to be exposed to Native American culture and heritage. Al Zantua, a cultural teacher at the Chief Leschi School of the Puyallup Tribe, shared traditional Native American songs and chants, providing the audience with explanations of their cultural and historical significance.

The conference program provided an excellent representation of the diversity of the student services profession. There were presentations related to student success, retention, professional development, and multicultural and gender issues. The Terry O'Banion Shared Journey Award finalists' presentations illuminated some of the key issues facing two-year and community colleges. The Gold Award winner, from Parkland College (IL), highlighted the successful collaboration between student services and academic affairs that led to the development and successful implementation of an academic development center and a campuswide retention effort. That collaboration resulted in a significant improvement in student retention and academic success. The Silver Award winner was the Student Public Policy Forum

at Maricopa College (AZ). The program exposes Maricopa students to the local, state, and national political processes that are responsible for public policy, social welfare and funding decisions for lawmaking. Students learn how to participate in and influence the political process. They visit the state legislature and the national capitol to observe and meet with politicians and experience lawmaking firsthand. The Bronze medal went to Prince George's Community College (MD), where low pass rates in developmental mathematics courses led faculty to create a mathematics confidence-building course. It has led to more timely completion of developmental mathematics courses and improved pass rates in mathematics coursework.

Another O'Banion Shared Journey Award finalist was the Maryland Community College System's Learning Outcomes Project. It was a statewide student services project that focused on learning outcomes assessment. Metropolitan College's (KY) Student Transition Program was developed to assist United Parcel Service third shift employees with academic and career planning and transitioning into college life.

Several of the conference presentations focused on student success and retention. Columbus State Community College (OH) developed the Student Assistance Center as a one-stop shop for resolution of students' registration, financial aid, and fee payment issues. The Allied Health Careers Outreach Program at Cleveland State Community College (OH) promotes student enrollment and persistence in the college's nursing program. Three of the four North Carolina technical and community colleges that received the Lumina *Achieving the Dream* grants shared information about programs and initiatives they developed to improve access, success and retention of traditionally underserved students.

Multicultural and gender issues were explored in several presentations. The unique aspects of Asian American and Pacific Islander women's academic and professional journeys were explored in a presentation by Kathy Ho and Clare Oliveros entitled *Talambuhay/Life Story: Asian American/Pacific Islander Women in Doctoral Studies*. In *Developing Resiliency Among American Indian and Alaska Native College Students*, Michael Pavel of Washington State University (WA) provided valuable insight into cultural and family traditions among Native Americans that support their ability to adapt to and be successful in college environments. Tarrant County College (TX) developed an innovative approach to supporting returning women's transition into college through the Women in New Roles curriculum. Portland Community College's (OR) Illumination Project provides a unique opportunity, through performance, for student actors and their audience to explore important and sometimes emotional issues such as racial, ethnic and religious bias. The unique nature of their Theater of the Oppressed approach facilitates performer-audience interaction as a way of exploring social issues.

Our professional preparation was addressed through presentations and panels that focused on the essential elements of being a successful student services professional. The Dissertation of the Year Award winner, Dr. Wesley E. Wilson-Strauss, discussed his doctoral research and provided some valuable insight into preparation of student services personnel. In his dissertation *Continuity and Perpetuation: An Investigation of*

How We Prepare New Community College Student Affairs Professionals, Dr. Wilson-Strauss identified 25 competencies that are critical to the success of community college student affairs professionals. *Looking Back, Looking Ahead: A Dialogue on the State of Community College Student Affairs* offered a panel of seasoned student affairs administrators and some “rising stars” in the profession who explored, with their audience, the major issues facing the profession as well as the major changes that have occurred over the years in the profession, and the future of the profession. The panel and audience also had a unique opportunity to explore the generational differences that exist within the profession. Jim Palmer and Phyllis McCluskey-Titus from Illinois State University presented initial findings of their research in *The Career Journeys of Senior Student Services Administrators*. In their initial study, they interviewed ten community college senior student services officers about the life journeys that led them to their current administrative positions. Palmer and McCluskey-Titus involved their audience in their presentation. They will use the information gleaned from the audience feedback to shape their subsequent research.

One of the highlights of the conference came during the conference banquet. Al Zantua brought several young dancers from the Chief Leschi School, representing several Native American tribes. They performed Native American dances and provided explanations about the cultural and traditional values the dances expressed. It was a wonderful cultural education for everyone.

The conference ended with a dynamic panel, “How Learning Colleges Enhance Student Success.” The discussion, which was facilitated by Dr. Alicia Harvey-Smith of The Community College of Baltimore County (MD), provided the audience with a stimulating conversation about the Learning College as a culture with a consistent focus on student and learner access and success.

The Tacoma conference was a rich opportunity for student services professionals to supplement their knowledge of the profession and discuss new ideas. The invaluable networking opportunities were surpassed only by the beautiful view of Mt. Rainier across the Tacoma skyline.

Opening Plenary: Educational Excellence and Student Success

Keynote Speaker

MILDRED OLLEÉ

Seattle Central Community College (WA)

The following is a transcript of President Olleé's opening keynote address.

Thank you, Craig, for your kind and personalized introduction. Good afternoon to you all. I am honored to have been chosen by your leadership to be the keynote speaker for the National Council on Student Development's national conference. You have just heard in my introduction that I had a long background in Student Services. I feel very much at home with you as kindred spirits in values and beliefs, and heart and mind.

As Student Development professionals, you are prepared to *focus* on the development of the whole person and student success. You know that student learning begins with marketing and recruitment and continues through to completion or graduation. Your assistance in supporting student success continues throughout the college life span of the student. The focus on student success begins with you most often at that first point of contact. You begin to make the students feel that they matter in your colleges. The teaching and learning process begins, whether it is in person or electronic contact or by mail. The Student Development programs, activities, and strategies which attract, teach, engage, and transform are critical.

I know as a president the importance of your work for students and the college. I also know that it is important that I promote establishing and maintaining positive working relationships between Instruction and Student Development Services to promote collaborative efforts on behalf of student persistence and completion. We are asked to measure and quantify success with such indicators as GPA, transfer, graduation, and others. And well we should. However, it's the stories that create the passion and provide a face to the numbers.

I am energized, after the numbers are reported, when I see and hear the student stories of their transformation. Think about the junior in high school taking college classes who receives a high school diploma and Associate of Arts Degree. Or what about the woman who has made attempts over the last 15 years to get to college and finally does and is so pleased with herself that she tells me about it even though I don't know her? It could be the recovering drug addict who has lived on the streets and is now president of the campus chapter of Phi Theta Kappa. Think of that reluctant student who is not sure that she really belongs in a college, because no one in her family attended high school or college. Let us remember the African-American male who doesn't rap or "sag," who aspires to become an electrician through the apprentice program, but isn't sure about race and employment.

These are but a few of the many stories and representative profiles of the students that you as Student Development Services professionals assist in their transformation in our daily tasks and functions. You provide them with direct service, you create and develop programs, you create policies and develop procedures and practices to ensure that they achieve their goals and, in many cases, surpass their original stated intents.

The stories and the work we do should be a source of pride, and we are proud. Today I want to focus on what I am calling the three mandates for student development professionals. The three mandates for the future are Access, Achievement and Accountability.

Let us first look at the mandate of Access, which is the hallmark of the community college with its open-door policy. The community college was begun to democratize higher education. The principle of access is part of our belief and value system. We can give ourselves a pat on the back for our progress in this area. With the broad mission of this sector of higher education—transfer, technical and workforce education, basic studies/English-as-a-Second-Language—communities have the opportunity to meet the educational needs of their citizens.

In the state of Washington, forty percent of those individuals attending colleges and universities have attended community colleges. The Community College Workforce and Professional Technical programs have helped business and industry meet the need for a skilled workforce and the nation to address the shortages when needed. The English-as-a-Second-Language instruction is growing as it provides the language development for ethno-linguistic minorities who often come as refugees and immigrants.

We have provided access and we can take that credit, but we must continue to prepare ourselves to meet the threats and barriers to access. Let me challenge us all to review institutional policies and practices that limit those who have the ability to benefit by attending our colleges. Consider yourselves the “watchdog” and the advocate, both for the student and for the college.

The current debate over whether higher education is an individual good or a common good, and who benefits, translates to “Who pays for it?” That debate is critical to access. With diminishing state support for operations, a greater burden is placed on the student through increased tuition. The state of Washington has increased tuition within the last eight years by more than forty percent. This has raised the student’s share of the total cost of education from 28 percent to 34 percent. Remember, there is more than the cost of tuition. There are the many fees to be paid, depending upon the program of study. There is the cost of transportation, a rise in living expenses, and the cost of books. Most of the students attending our colleges have incomes lower than their university counterparts.

As costs continue to rise for students, I encourage you to carefully study the enrollment patterns in programs based on their cost. Look for high-cost programs and determine who is left out. Help your colleges determine if students of color, under-represented, poor students, and first-generation students are more negatively impacted and denied access. If so, policies and practices must be examined and

changed. You must be at the forefront to use research and form coalitions and partnerships for change.

The second mandate is Achievement. Although we have many success stories in the area of achievement, there is room for improvement. When we discuss achievement, we must consider such indicators as persistence, graduation, and attainment.

Attainment and achievement are critical in the new global economy where at least one year of postsecondary education is required for most jobs of the future.

Community colleges push students past the “tipping point” where they can earn enough to support a family. Consider these Washington State 2005 average annual wage estimates by training level:

- Students with little or no secondary education earn \$24,230 annually
- Students with one to 12 months postsecondary education earn \$36,364
- Students with more than one year and up, but less than 4 years, earn \$45,579

Many of the new family-wage job opportunities will be in occupations that require postsecondary education but not necessarily a four-year degree. This is what is known as a tipping point—the salary that is most likely to move a worker from poverty level to a livable wage.

If we are to meet this challenge, it will require that we collect data about our students. We need to identify where the gaps in persistence, completion, transfer, and graduation rates exist. Based on the evidence gathered, you must identify and implement programs that will increase achievement and attainment. After implementation, it is necessary to collect data that measures and demonstrates student success.

There are groups of students that are identified as having the greatest barriers in education. One of those groups often identified is the first generation student. A research study entitled “Faces of the Future: A Portrait of First Generation Community College Students” was conducted by Takako Noni and funded by AACC and ACT. I want to share the results in a very summary form. I suggest you read the entire study. The study began in 1999 with a total sample of 49,893 students. The demographic profile of the sample showed that 67 percent of the students were women, a larger percent were employed full-time, they had dependents to support, and they were [more] racially diverse with a 36 percent representation [when compared to non-First Generation students].

The significant findings of the study showed that financial aid was a major source of support for students and that parents had less influence on children’s educational decisions. The students also took fewer courses. They encountered personal and financial problems at a higher rate of 47 percent and tended to have more family responsibilities, at a rate of 34 percent.

The two goals the students most often sought after they had accomplished their education were a steady secure job and to make lots of money. The reasons given for attending a community college were to take courses related to a future job and to improve their job skills or obtain a degree. Additionally, they wanted to increase

their earning power, make a career change, develop computer skills, advance in their current job, enter workforce after children were grown, or enter the workforce after a major change.

The factors that influenced their choice of a college were cost, program of choice, availability of financial aid or scholarships, and academic reputation. Their rate of satisfaction with the college attended was at a rate 38 percent higher than other community college students. They were most appreciative of financial aid and stated they could not have attended without financial aid.

At Seattle Central, we are looking closely at our achievement and attainment. And we're excited to be a part of a national project called Achieving the Dream, which will establish a stronger culture of evidence. Many of you have heard of Achieving the Dream because it was launched in 2004 with twenty-seven participating institutions across Florida, New Mexico, North Carolina, Texas, and Virginia. Each year, the initiative is expanded to include additional states and colleges. Last year, Seattle Central was one of six Washington colleges invited by the College Spark Washington to participate in "round three." Achieving the Dream is funded by the Lumina Foundation for Education and its partner foundations, including College Spark Washington.

Accountability is the third mandate, and the study I just shared is a perfect segue to this topic. The public is demanding more accountability. Our public and governmental agencies are asking for more proof that we are providing the programs and activities that we have agreed to do. The outcomes assessment movement, accreditation, and pay-for-performance are all part of the accountability movement. The public is asking that we describe our ways so that they can understand. We must be willing to develop and use instruments that help our campuses to have data that give an accurate picture.

Seattle Central Community College uses an instrument and assessment system called PAVS—Program Analysis and Viability Study. All functions, programs, and units used this structured instrument to create a single source of data and information that is used for program and curriculum review and institutional effectiveness. We wanted to get ahead of the curve.

I leave you with the three mandates of Access, Achievement, and Accountability as the challenges of the future. We have met major challenges in the past. To meet the challenges of the future, we must remain sharply focused, active listeners, opportunistic versus responsive, willing to take risk, accountable, and student-learning driven. If we do these things, students will achieve and attain, and our colleges will be accountable in ways that help the public understand what we do.

Remember, you serve as champions and lead institutional efforts requiring systemic change.

If Dr. Martin Luther King was establishing a higher education sector that adhered to the principles that he lived and practiced, I believe that it would have been the community college.

Closing Plenary: How Learning Colleges Enhance Student Success

ALICIA HARVEY-SMITH

Community College of Baltimore County (MD)

The closing session of NCSd's Stories of Our Students conference addressed the Learning College, a timely and important initiative that continues to sweep the country. The session focused particular emphasis on student development and student success. Panelists included student affairs leaders who are NCSd members at Vanguard Colleges: Jean Hernandez, executive vice president of Student Learning, Cascadia Community College (WA); Sonia Christian, vice president for Instruction and Student Services, Lane Community College (OR); Debra Derr, vice president for Learner Success, Madison Area Technical College (WI); and Cindy Peterka, dean of Learning and Student Development, Essex Campus Community College of Baltimore County (MD).

Alicia B. Harvey-Smith, dean of Learning and Student Development at the Community College of Baltimore County (MD), author and advocate of the Learning College, facilitated the session, offered opening remarks, and engaged panelists and audience participants in a discussion of ways the Learning College movement is enhancing student learning and student success. Following the introductory remarks, each panelist provided examples of how the Learning College principles are being implemented at their respective institutions.

Opening remarks included an overview of the Learning College principles with an emphasis on The Seventh Learning College Principle: Create and Nurture an Organizational Culture that is both Open and Responsive to Change and Learning (Harvey-Smith, 2003). Dr. Harvey-Smith's comments are summarized below:

Students are constantly changing, while many of our institutions remain stagnant and some are non-responsive. Learning College principles can provide a guide in creating more open and responsive systems and learning environments supporting the total college community. Learning College principles are being used across the country to re-shape college environments to enhance and support learning.

Across the country, colleges are utilizing Learning College principles to achieve significant results not only in retention and student success but also in the creation of healthier campus climates and improved internal collaborations.

In 1997, Terry O'Banion released *A Learning College for the 21st Century*, a seminal work that captured the essence of an emerging learning revolution and new learning paradigm in higher education. O'Banion's six principles established clear institutional goals to transform for the sake of improved learning and sought to establish a new relationship with learners by seeing them as full partners in the educational process.

Principle 1 encourages learners to develop new ways of “seeing, thinking, and doing...that lead to changed behavior.”

Principle 2 relies on two key expectations for new learners at the first levels of their engagement with our institution:

- That learners are full partners in the creation and implementation of their learning experiences.
- That learners will eventually assume primary responsibility for making their own educational choices.

It then becomes our responsibility to provide students with tools, skills, and opportunities for experimentation, particularly for students who are unfamiliar with learning environments.

Principle 3 requires institutions strategically to rethink traditional forms for the delivery of educational opportunities to students. Renegotiating time, place, structure, staffing, and delivery methods requires that colleges step “out of the box” and consider alternatives that will reach students.

Principle 4 focuses on the importance of assisting learners to form and participate in collaborative learning activities, knowing that when they do, they show significant increases in academic and social success.

Principle 5 reflects a major shift in focus from individual roles and responsibilities to the learning facilitator’s role in forwarding student learning, and asks all employees of the Learning College, “How do I support student learning?” Also important in this principle is the idea that the transformation of institutions to Learning Colleges requires an evolution of services and personnel. Thus, new positions will be created, services revamped, learning experiences modified, instruction reconsidered, all to meet the diverse needs of student learners.

Principle 6 indicates that Learning Colleges gauge their success when improved and expanded learning is documented. This principle asks two key questions: “What have students learned?” and “How do we know?” The idea is that the Learning College creates a culture of evidence that guides the practice of facilitators and the experience of its learners. This moves us beyond traditional success measures to using competency goals and learning plans to document achievement.

Although the literature contains clear shifts in instructional practice, it remains far less clear about shifts in practice within student affairs divisions and, as a result, we are limited in our ability to document the impact the learning revolution has had on transforming student development practices.

This led me to conduct additional research in this area, culminating in the release of *The Seventh Learning College Principle* in 2003 and NASPA’s publication of *The Seventh Learning College Principle: A Framework for Transformational Change* in 2005. It is my belief that strategically documenting the involvement of student affairs divisions in leading learning-centered change and providing a voice for Student Affairs in Learning Colleges represented a logical expectation of the Learning College architecture.

The Seventh Learning College Principle directs attention to establishing environments that are more open and responsive to change and learning as one strategy for moving students to greater academic success. This principle encourages the intentional creation of cultures of CARE—represented by compassion, appreciation, respect, and the empowerment of a diverse community of learners—and is a natural building block in the evolution of Learning College Principles. It has been described as an umbrella principle from which the six learning college principles can emerge. In essence, the learning college concept places learners at the center of the educational universe.

The Seventh Learning College Principle: “Create and nurture an organizational culture that is both open and responsive to change and learning” *underscores* the importance of organizational culture in transformational change and creation of environments where students are admitted and graduated or achieve goal completion. It places caring about the broader community of learners—including faculty, staff and students—and transforming the institution’s culture at the center of the educational universe, as well as the need strategically to foster human connections to achieve intended outcomes.

In his foreword to *The Seventh Learning College Principle: A Framework For Transformational Change*, O’Banion writes, “The Seventh Learning College Principle transcends the six principles of the original Learning College idea, bringing an organizing focus that adds heft and ballast to the evolving concepts. It is a significant contribution to the concept of the Learning College with tremendous implications for transformation within learning organizations.”

Colleges and universities implementing the Seventh Learning College Principle have reported cultural shifts, such as an increase in open and diverse systems and more willingness of community members to engage in innovative practices. They have also identified such results as higher levels of trust, collaboration, and inclusion and deeper, more authentic communication.

Steps to actualizing the seventh principle include conducting a culture audit at the initial stages to assess college culture, readying the culture for change through processes that encourage and reward risk-taking and innovation, weaving these messages throughout the environment, and of course using feedback to shape institutional change, while fostering relationships, connections and networks.

The role of Student Services has evolved within Learning Organizations. My research demonstrates seven significant shifts, which can be expressed as moving Student Services *from*:

- Traditional *to* Expansive Levels of Involvement
- Supplemental *to* Equal and Full Partner in the Learning Process
- Isolated *to* Integrated Planning and Decision Making
- Reactive *to* Proactive Collaborations and Effective Use of Data
- Counting *to* Assessing Learning Through Programs and Services
- Supporting Margins *to* Leading From The Center Through Core Initiatives
- Anecdotal *to* Documented Alignment and Impact on Learning

As a result of the Seventh Learning College Principle research and the evolving roles of student services in Learning Colleges, I have proposed a new framework for learning-centered student affairs divisions. This involves reconsidering how we view student affairs and changing the view to one where our pedagogical significance is without question, moving us to a place where we are intentional about directing attention to enhancing learning and valued for our role as an equal partner in the learning process.

This framework calls for us to engage our environments in ways that move our involvement to the center of discourse and leadership as it relates to learning and where we are explicit about our role and student learning and development goals and outcomes. The new learning-centered student services framework will require us to coordinate all efforts to promote student learning and success and to develop clear systems for communication and collaboration.

It is also important that we align our philosophy, structures, and resources to better enable us to achieve our outcomes, that we integrate changes throughout the division and college and that we remain committed to creating and nurturing effective learning environments that support not only students but also the faculty and staff committed to serving them.

It is my assertion that as student affairs divisions embark upon learning-centered change, it will be crucial that learning expectations are made explicit, through the development of assessment rubrics to aid in determining if and how expected outcomes are achieved and at what stage of the learning process.

Moreover, the evolving role of student affairs within this dynamic new architecture will incorporate innovative processes that are broad-based and genuinely collaborative, involving student affairs personnel, faculty, students, deans/department chairs, and other institutional leaders working together as partners, authentically communicating from the onset of the change process.

There are challenges and opportunities woven into the tapestry of organizational change, yet the complexity diminishes and challenges fade when approached strategically and comprehensively. Student affairs divisions within the 21st Century Learning College will succeed or fail in their new role in large part as a result of their ability to develop and implement a plan that enhances student learning and student success and which effectively documents the achievement of intended outcomes. Student affairs leadership is paramount to transformation within the new learning architecture to effectively enhance student success and learning.

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The Academic Development Center and Campus-wide Retention Efforts

Parkland College (IL)

LINDA HAMMAN MOORE
SHARON KRISTOVICH

Since fall 2001, seven to eight percent of Parkland College's seats have been in developmental courses; *at least 72%* of first-time students require at least one developmental course; of those, *at least 54%* require two or more. Underpreparedness and a failure to make satisfactory progress resulted in unacceptable return, graduation and transfer rates. Parkland was losing over one-third of its degree-seeking freshmen from one year to the next.

Solutions were found through an institution-wide approach. The Academic Development Center (ADC) was created in Fiscal Year 2002 and later funded by a Title III grant. The ADC provided a unique organizational model; faculty remained in their academic departments and ADC staff members collaborated with all units on campus to coordinate services across disciplines. Strategies were selected by reviewing best practices and ideas from the entire college. Some of the successful ones are highlighted below.

Student Development Advocates: Advocates provide significant outreach to students in developmental courses by monitoring progress and connecting students with needed services. In 2004–05, *78% of those receiving services in the fall returned in the spring semester, compared with 61% of those declining services.*

Academic Development Specialists: Specialists provide academic support to students in developmental courses who have either a documented disability or a history of learning difficulties. In 2004–05, *57.1% of those receiving services in the fall semester returned the following fall, compared with 47.7% of developmental-level students not served.*

Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL): The CETL increased the number of offerings related to developmental student learning (284 participants, 33 workshops in the first year). Participants reported that they had a better understanding of the concepts covered in the workshops, applied the information to their classes, or transferred the information to students.

Facilitated Study Groups (FSGs): Tutoring activities provided by mathematics faculty increased time-on-task for students in developmental mathematics courses. FSG participants had higher success rates in math courses than non-participants.

Jump Start English: One course hour in addition to the traditional composition course allowed some students to bypass developmental English. Jump Start students are performing as well as or better than students in traditional English composition.

Third Attempt Contracts: Students taking a class for the third time due to unacceptable grades or withdrawal drew up academic contracts with counselors and advisors. Nearly 30% of the students completing the process earned As or Bs, compared with 10% of those who did not complete the process.

The most successful retention initiatives have been campus-wide efforts that involve careful research and planning. The individualized attention appears costly but pays for itself in increased student retention, graduation and transfer rates. Of a 2003 cohort of first-time, full-time, degree-seeking students, 66% had completed their course of study in “150% time” (i.e., within three years for a “2-year degree”) or transferred to another institution—more than double that of the 2001 cohort.

This success has resulted in the expansion of services through the creation of the Center for Academic Success. Here, services are coordinated, modular curricula are developed, and the holistic approach used with developmental students has been expanded to address needs of all students.

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Terry O'Banion Shared Journey Award Winner—Silver Award

Student Public Policy Forum

Maricopa Community Colleges (AZ)

CHAD DOUWSTRA

MARY GURIEL

The Student Public Policy Forum (SPPF) is a program designed to provide an exceptional learning environment which will prepare students to become educated and involved citizens.

From October to March of each year, students receive a variety of educational experiences at local, state, and national levels, including interaction with policymakers. Learning takes place through specialized workshops, guest speakers, leadership development, field trips, online activities, networking opportunities and, ultimately, engagement in the public policy process.

SPPF is a co-curricular activity that provides an overview of local, state and national public policy making, citizen influence, and involvement. A focus is placed on experiential learning, leadership development, and student engagement in public policy processes. SPPF involves partnership among the Maricopa Community Colleges' Directors of Student Life, Student Affairs, Center for Civic Participation, and Government Relations, fostering a spirit of collaboration by working with community organizations to provide students with a network of resources and information.

Generally, two students are selected from each of the ten Maricopa Community Colleges by the college's director of student life. Students attend five learning sessions during the Fall and Spring semesters and participate in learning activities that discuss policy topics related to higher education, including such topics as Pell Grant funding, the Workforce Investment Act and Job Training Grants. These topics are meant to stimulate discussion among the cohort and lead to research of areas of interest. As the students become familiar with a topic, they participate in larger discussions with city council members, state legislators, and lobbyists, progressively becoming "resident experts" on their selected area of interest and eventually lobbying members of Congress and their staffs on Capitol Hill, in Washington, DC.

The learning sessions include opportunities for socialization and team building. Background information on the program is provided, including information on past SPPF cohort members' activities. Students begin their understanding of the public policy process by learning about local, state, and federal governments. Overviews of the public policy process and 'How a Bill Becomes Law' are presented early in the program and drawn upon throughout the program. Locally elected governing board members, city council members, and legislators make presentations to and engage in

conversations with the students at the learning sessions. Time is set aside for individual conversations to take place, helping the students understand the interaction that is available between an elected official and private citizen. This concept of being involved in politics and participation in the civic engagement process is often lost among the public because of a sense of disconnection between the general public and the policymakers. The Center for Civic Participation provides access and information that help students create pathways toward greater civic engagement. Students learn that political figures are approachable and truly have concern for the communities they serve. Ultimately, the goal of SPPF is to create a better informed public that is engaged in the public policy process which affects their family, friends and community.

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Terry O'Banion Shared Journey Award Winner—Bronze Award

Math Confidence Building (CAP 103)

Prince George's Community College (MD)

MARGARET TAIBI

An increasing number of students are entering Prince George's Community College (PCCG) underprepared for college-level mathematics. The Student Development Services office implemented a mandatory course in Math Confidence Building for students testing into developmental mathematics. The program provides students with foundational mathematics skills to increase timely completion and pass rates of mathematics coursework.

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A College-Wide Collaboration to Improve Student Success

Columbia Basin College (WA)

DEREK BRANDES

MADELINE JEFFS

In 2002, Columbia Basin College (CBC) embarked on a journey to change our culture to fully embrace student success and retention. The establishment of the Office of Student Success and Retention (OSSR) and the director's initial efforts to establish effective collaborations between instruction and student services, promote frank discussion on student success and explore strategies to improve retention were critical first steps.

In early 2003-2004, the Vice President for Student Services (VPSS) and the director of the OSSR developed a proposal for a mandatory transition workshop, *FYI: First Year Introduction*, for all new degree and certificate-seeking students. Desired outcomes included: (1) inform new students of college expectations; (2) identify and provide earlier interventions for "high risk" students; (3) develop educational plans for every student; (4) create a stronger sense of responsibility among students for their education; (5) "warm-up" students' critical thinking skills; (6) build student relationships with peers, staff and faculty; (7) improve new students' socialization process; (8) reduce the number of students on academic probation and suspension; and (9) increase retention rates.

Planning and implementation included brainstorming, obtaining presidential support, obtaining buy-in from all departments, establishing work groups to develop curriculum, training FYI participants, implementing the program, assessing results, and recommending improvements. Funding was provided for the first year and we were assured a three-year trial period to show significant positive results.

Comprised of 12 hours of seminar sessions, learning modules, and sample classes or large group presentations, FYI is offered in a four-day block prior to Fall quarter. Intra-quarter sessions are offered for new students in Winter, Spring and Summer quarters. Opportunities abound for participatory learning in teams and for students to interact with their peers, faculty and staff.

Administrators, faculty, exempt and classified staff and student leaders provide meaningful learning opportunities. Seminar sessions cover such topics as college success tips, students' expectations, student academic responsibility, and various CBC policies. As a graded workshop that must be successfully completed for continued enrollment, students complete assignments utilizing library and computer resources, identifying student support programs and services, and developing educational plans. Students choose to attend learning modules in note taking, career exploration, transfer planning, financial assistance opportunities, overcoming test anxiety, managing the multiple roles of adult students, and so on. Sample classes are offered in English, mathematics, science, speech, social science and technical programs.

The results have been astounding. In the first two years of FYI, Quarter 1-to-Quarter 2 and Year 1-to-Year 2 retention has increased approximately 20 percent. All student subpopulations (age, gender, ethnicity, full-time/part-time, GED) have shown significant increases with older students and Hispanic students demonstrating the most marked improvement (28% and 35% respectively). There has been a slight decrease in the number of students on academic probation/suspension. Library and student e-mail utilization has significantly increased. Evaluations, focus groups, and surveys have been extremely positive from all respondents—students, CBC faculty and staff, high school counselors, parents, and the general public.

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Talambuhay/Life Story: Asian American/Pacific Islander Women in Doctoral Studies

Portland Community College (OR)

KATY HO

CLAIRE OLIVEROS

Organizational leadership is often dominated by Western- and male-centric viewpoints. It can be hard for a woman of color who is a leader in the community college setting to find her own style of leadership and grow within it—especially when her leadership values are informed and influenced by her cultural background. Women of color often have to compromise their cultural values in order to survive in and be heads of organizations.

This presentation explored the educational journeys of Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) women of color in higher education. Within the framework of critical race and feminist theories, AAPI women’s stories were told, and the presenters shared their experiences as first-year doctoral students in a Community College Leadership Program (CCLP). The CCLP prepares teachers and administrators for leadership roles in technical and community colleges and similar organizations, focusing on the application of quality research to the problems and opportunities in community colleges.

Emerging issues in educational leadership were addressed, including multicultural competency, community building, becoming an ally, leadership development, and social justice. Participants were provided an opportunity to reflect on their own “lived experience” and to gain a better understanding of issues impacting AAPI women in education.

According to the annual *Survey of Earned Doctorates Summary Report* for 2004, 20 percent of all doctorate degrees awarded in the U.S. were earned by racial/ethnic groups. Asians earned 1,449 doctorates, and Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders earned 59.

While the number of people of color and AAPI’s entering and completing doctoral degrees is slowly increasing, minimal research exists about the lived experience of AAPI women completing doctoral studies. Moreover, there is limited discussion about AAPI women’s leadership in higher education.

Talambuhay is a Tagalog word loosely translated in English as “to tell a story” or “talk-story”; it reflects the traditions of Filipino and Chinese storytelling. In the spirit of telling a story or narrative, this presentation highlighted AAPI women who are at various stages of their doctoral studies within the Community College Leadership Program (CCLP).

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The Learning Outcomes Assessment Project of the Maryland State Community College Vice Presidents and Deans of Student Services

Maryland State Community Colleges (MD)

CINDY PETERKA
NANCY PRISELAC

Student Affairs professional organizations, accrediting associations, the Learning College movement, and the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education underscore the need for student affairs practitioners to assess their programs and services. In response to this need, the Maryland State Community College Vice Presidents and Deans of Student Services developed a Statewide Learning Outcomes Assessment in Student Services project. The goals of the project are (1) to shift the focus of assessment from student satisfaction with services to student learning of core indicators; (2) to assist staff to learn how to design, implement and analyze learning outcomes projects; (3) to assist staff to improve student services and programs based on learning outcomes; and (4) to create benchmarks for comparison of findings across institutions throughout the State.

The vice presidents and deans declared 2003 the Year of Assessment for Student Services in Maryland Community Colleges and sponsored a day-long workshop on learning outcomes assessment. One hundred and fifty student services staff representing the functional areas of admissions, records and registration, athletics, financial aid, counseling and advising, student life, tutoring, and testing centers attended the workshop. Core learning values and ways to gather evidence were discussed. To start the project, the group identified one core value that was included in General Education programs in colleges across the state, the value of assisting a student to become a self-directed learner. For the purposes of this project, a self-directed learner was defined as a student who will: (1) define a need or problem and employ effective decision-making to resolve it; (2) plan ahead and set goals; (3) acquire knowledge; (4) use available resources; (5) seek assistance from appropriate people/experts; (6) apply critical analysis to consider options; and (7) evaluate decisions. Coordinating the desired student learning outcome with the larger institutional-level General Education goal strengthens the overall assessment project by clearly demonstrating how student services support the institution in fulfilling its mission and achieving its goals—an expectation of the Middle States Commission on Higher Education Standards of Excellence.

Since 2003, the vice presidents and deans have continued to sponsor learning outcomes assessment workshops to assist staff to design and implement learning projects. To assist with this process and to assist with consistency of project reports, the vice presidents developed a matrix form that includes the definition of self-directed learner and a statement of outcomes, strategies, measurements, benchmarks and feedback loops.

In September 2005, affinity groups in admissions, records and registration, athletics, financial aid, academic advising, student life, tutoring and testing centers submitted learning outcomes assessment plans that were to serve as road maps for college projects. College projects were implemented during 2005–2006. College teams are currently analyzing project data and making recommendations for program improvement. Affinity group leaders for the various functional areas are scheduled to meet with the vice presidents and deans to report results and recommendations for program improvement. At this meeting, benchmarks will be determined, and projects will be revised and re-implemented during 2006–2007.

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Promoting Student Enrollment and Persistence Through the Allied Health Career Outreach Program

Cleveland State Community College (TN)

MICHAEL STOKES

The nationwide shortage of nurses requires colleges to creatively address enrollment and persistence issues of students in allied health fields. The Allied Health Careers Outreach Program (AHCOP) is one example of how a community college counseling center is working with internal and external partners to increase student enrollment and success.

History and Development of the Program

After the sale of the local county hospital, the hospital foundation gave the college approximately \$400,000 to use in developing and strengthening programs in the allied health area. Cleveland State committed to use \$75,000 to hire a counselor to work with schools and students in the immediate service area to encourage students to pursue allied health careers.

In discussing how best to utilize the new staff position, the college decided to establish the Allied Health Careers Outreach Program. The mission of the program is:

To increase awareness of the availability of allied health careers, as well as educational and training opportunities, among the service area population. The AHCOP will create a qualified, highly trained group of workers who can meet the workforce needs of the health care providers in the service area. Through partnerships with other educational institutions, community agencies, and area health care providers, the AHCOP will seek to expand education and training opportunities as appropriate to meet workforce needs.

Major Program Initiatives

The AHCOP Counselor/Coordinator will develop an information database regarding allied health education, training, and career opportunities throughout the college's service area. This database will include information about college programs, as well as those available at other institutions. Information about career opportunities and area workforce needs may assist CSCC in developing academic programs to meet community needs.

Individual career assessments will assist potential students in understanding if a particular career path is a good match for them. For students who enroll in allied health related programs at CSCC, the counselor/coordinator can assist with academic success strategies, course selection, and academic planning. These and other group and individual activities will contribute to the academic success and retention of students enrolling in CSCC programs.

Partnerships will be crucial to the success of the AHCOP. Housed in the Student Services division, the counselor/coordinator will work in cooperation with many college staff, including academic deans and department heads. Community partnerships will also be developed and will include local hospitals, clinics, and other healthcare providers; Department of Labor and Workforce Development offices; sister institutions of higher education; and staff at local secondary schools.

Evaluation of the Program

While the AHCOP is still in its infancy, program activities have already begun and are progressing. First year goals are being developed, services for enrolled students are being offered, and meetings with community partners are taking place. Monthly activity reports will be a regular part of the evaluation process, as will the assessment of goals through the existing college administrative processes. An AHCOP annual activity report will be made through appropriate supervisory channels at the end of the year.

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Metropolitan College Student Transition Program

Jefferson Community & Technical College and University of Louisville (KY)

JULIE TAYLOR
LISA HAGUE
DONNA DUNN
MIKE ROBERTSON

The Metropolitan College program is a partnership created in 1998 by the State of Kentucky, City of Louisville, University of Louisville, Jefferson Community and Technical College, and United Parcel Service (UPS) to provide a stable, part-time workforce for the expanding UPS Next Day Air Operation at the Louisville International Airport. The Metropolitan College program offers UPS employees who work third shift in the Next Day Air operation full college tuition (up to the Kentucky resident tuition rate for University of Louisville undergraduates, currently \$2,766 per semester).

Prior to the inception of the Metropolitan College program, employees working third shift in this UPS operation remained employed an average of eight weeks. Since the Metropolitan College program was implemented, an employee in the operation now stays an average of 118 weeks. UPS enjoys the benefits of a stable, better educated workforce and approximately 1,200 to 1,400 students are able to attend college each semester as participants in this program.

Due to the nature of the Next Day operation, the vast majority of employees in this area are part-time. The dilemma that UPS has faced is the employees' expectation that their jobs will eventually become full-time. Because full-time employment positions are few, UPS asked Metropolitan College to assist student employees with career development. When Metropolitan College partnered with Jefferson Community and Technical College, Career Resources Inc., and Kentuckiana Works to develop the CREW (Connecting Resources Education & Workforce) Career Center, UPS asked CREW to target Metropolitan College student employees for career services. CREW services assist students and the general public with their career exploration, career planning, and career placement. Hence, the Metropolitan College program supports students in any college major with any career goals.

The Metropolitan College Student Transition Program (STP) was developed to assist new freshmen (those with fewer than 13 college credit hours earned) with academic and career planning and transition into college life while working third shift. The Metropolitan College Student Transition Program was designed to provide information to this group of students about how to successfully make both transitions. The program addresses three issues: (1) transitioning to college life; (2) transitioning to third shift work; (3) choosing a major/career path. The four sessions of the program are (1) career exploration using the DISCOVER® program, (2) academic and career planning,

(3) adjusting to college and working third shift (“Starting the Semester Off Right”), and (4) specific requirements for participating in the Metropolitan College program. Students electronically sign up for an STP time that is convenient for them.

The STP provides students the opportunity to make connections with those in a similar situation—a cohort who understands what it is like to sleep when most are awake and to work when most are asleep or socially interacting with their peers. Uniquely, our target audience attends both 2-year and 4-year schools and our program addresses issues related to both. Our students, like many other new college freshmen, are unsure about career and major decisions. The STP provides them a hands-on opportunity to discover how their values, interests, and abilities match careers and what educational requirements those careers have. They are provided an opportunity to learn about career and academic planning, time and money management, safety and stress.

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Developing Resiliency Among American Indian and Alaska Native College Students

Washington State University (WA)

MICHAEL PAVEL

Going to college can be a lonely experience for American Indian and Alaska Native students, so they should strive to be strong of spirit and have the support of at least one individual. We must encourage American Indian and Alaska Native college students to preoccupy themselves with cultivating resilience. Resilience, for American Indian and Alaska Native people, is an ability to address adversity and overcome current challenges, as well as heal from the legacy of hardship endured by countless generations before them.

Before American Indian and Alaska Native students step on a college campus or enroll in a college course, we must convey to them the need to start thinking positively. They have come this far. They can go further. There are many American Indian and Alaska Native people who say they have a strong history of resilience. American Indian and Alaska Native people need to keep up this tradition—being successful despite the hardship—because it is their inborn tendency to adapt. That is one of the many ways American Indian and Alaska Native peoples' have overcome the historical colonization and constant affronts to maintain their ancestral identity.

Today, American Indian and Alaska Native college students can further cultivate resiliency by positively developing their attitudes and emotions, academic competence, social competence, and physical health. We can facilitate their development to achieve a high degree of resilience for the sake of themselves, their families and communities, and future generations of American Indians and Alaska Natives. They should be encouraged to create a world of prosperity and fully experience the joy of life. Our guidance to them: Don't suffer. Laugh more. Enjoy each other's company. College is as good a place as any to experience this joy.

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Achieving the Dream: Leveraging Change for Student Success

Guilford Technical Community College (NC)

KATHRYN BAKER SMITH

BARBARA BAKER

MARY CAULEY

Four North Carolina community colleges were among the first recipients of the Achieving the Dream grants from the Lumina Foundation, grants intended to promote access and success for underserved students. To qualify, the colleges had to have at least 50% of students receiving Pell grants and/or minority students making up one-third of enrollments. A required emphasis on creating a “Culture of Evidence” includes commitment to tracking a cohort of new students from each fall during the grant, analyzing data about student progress, selecting interventions to respond to what the data reveal, and measuring the results of innovations.

The participating colleges range from large (Guilford Technical Community College) to very small (Martin Community College). Their students are different, and so are the students’ needs. This session at the NCSd conference provided insights into how each college selected, implemented, and is evaluating interventions designed to achieve access and success for underserved students.

Guilford found itself ready with a variety of ideas. The college tried some of those ideas in the first year and settled on a set of interventions that have enthusiastic backing of faculty and staff. A major objective was to change the college’s culture to recognize the value of student success to the college as well as the students. Existing committees and other structures were used at every opportunity to ensure that the interventions would be sustainable. Interventions included revamping Orientation, instituting a mentoring program, trying several types of learning communities, incorporating more study skills classes, revamping developmental curricula to better fit student needs and better prepare students for college credit classes, improving advising, marketing to GED graduates, and greatly improving access to and use of data.

Another participating college, Durham Technical Community College, has emphasized modifying, implementing, and improving four specific intervention strategies: orientation, early alert, a study skills course, and academic advising. The Dream Keepers Emergency Financial Aid Fund, another grant made available to 11 of the first 27 Achieving the Dream colleges, has complemented work on the four strategies by giving college personnel a tool for helping students facing financial challenges to stay in class. The collection and analysis of data on the intervention strategy participants and other students in the Achieving the Dream cohorts has given faculty and staff renewed energy for supporting student attainment of educational goals.

Martin Community College focused on the intake process and on mathematics success. The college reviewed data that documented the gaps in success among ethnic groups; it also conducted a study of the conditions contributing to students' academic probation and suspension status. Based on this research, the college implemented a new study skills course and increased tutorial assistance for developmental students. A math "Jump Start" two-week program for developmental math students was implemented, and 300 students were involved in 14 workshops on learning styles, test-taking, and test anxiety offered through Academic Success Press, Inc. All of these changes were facilitated by professional development for faculty.

Common themes among the colleges were orientation, advising, and study skills courses; however, each chose an approach most appropriate to its history, culture, community, and size. All are welcoming the use of more data to document success and to identify areas where more improvements are needed.

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Looking Back, Looking Ahead: A Dialogue on the State of Community College Student Affairs

Maricopa Community Colleges (AZ)

KEN ATWATER

TONYA DRAKE

STEVEN HELFGOT

LAUREN SHELLNBARGER

This panel discussion involved two veteran community college student affairs professionals and two “rising stars” in the profession. The participants addressed the following questions:

- (1) When did you enter the student affairs profession, and what was it that drew you to a career in student affairs, especially in the community college?
- (2) What were the major issues or concerns in the profession when you began your career? Do those issues or similar issues still exist today? What are the differences?
- (3) In your view, what are the major changes that have occurred in (a) community college students, (b) community college student affairs practice, and (c) community colleges themselves during your time in the profession?
- (4) In terms of things like professional philosophy, guiding principles, professional literature and the like, what has been the most important to you over the years, and what has guided you as a professional?
- (5) *Student development*, *student success*, and *student learning* are all terms that have worked their way into our profession and practice over the years. Can you tell us what these terms mean to you and how you have used them in your work over the years?
- (6) What in your mind are the major challenges facing community college student affairs professionals today? Do you feel that you and your staff are equipped to meet those challenges? If not, what do you think that you need to do so?
- (7) If you had the power to effect one major change in our profession today, what would it be?
- (8) If young persons considering careers in community college student affairs today were to seek your advice and counsel, what would you tell them?
- (9) What do you see on the horizon, and what do you think this profession is going to look like in the next ten years or so?
- (10) What final comments would you like to make to the participants here today?

The discussion revealed that there are “generational differences” in motivations for joining the profession, in professional training and career paths, and in formative

experiences early in one's professional life. The panel discovered in its own discussion and in discussion with the audience that many younger professionals are somewhat disconnected from the profession's history and the seminal events and literature that gave form and shape to community college student affairs. For example, at this conference NCSD had distributed the May 2006 document, *Toward the Future Vitality of Student Development*. Younger professionals in attendance were unaware, for the most part, of the 1984 NCSD document of the same title (also known as the Traverse City Statement) which had a powerful impact on the evolution of the profession.

Motivations to help and commitments to student success seemed to be integrating themes "across the generations," and the use of the ideology and theory of student development, even on an informal basis, seems to be a unifying element in the panel and with the audience as well.

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Continuity and Perpetuation: An Investigation of How We Prepare New Community College Student Affairs Professionals

NCSA Dissertation of the Year Award

WESLEY E. WILSON-STRAUSS

This study identifies 25 competencies deemed by research and community college student affairs leaders to be critical to the success of community college student affairs officers, and measures the extent to which these competencies are important and their rate of acquisition due to graduate education preparation. It examines the perceptions of the graduate faculty of the two most academically related graduate fields—community college leadership and student affairs administration—and current community college senior student affairs officers. Respondents revealed that there is agreement between the graduate faculty and practitioners on the importance of the competencies but a sizeable amount of disagreement among the three groups regarding the acquisition of those competencies through graduate education. A significant gap was reported between all but one of the competencies (Leadership Theory) when comparing importance and acquisition due to graduate education.

All competencies were rated higher in importance than their rates of acquisition due to graduate education except for one—Research Models and Methods—which was reported to have a higher acquisition rate from graduate education than its rate of importance. When the three groups were compared to each other, significant differences at the .01 level also appeared. Differences between community college leadership program graduate faculty and community college student affairs practitioners highlighted the focus of community college graduate preparation on executive leadership with little exposure to student affairs theories. There were also discrepancies noted between community college practitioners and student affairs graduate faculty on the competencies of Institutional Culture, Student Demographics, and all but one in the group of Individual Development competencies.

Major findings of the study noted (1) a major gap between the average reported importance level of almost all competencies and the acquisition of those competencies due to graduate education; (2) no apparent difference between the importance of the competencies in relation to two-year versus four-year institutional preparation; (3) no immediate need for separate community college student affairs graduate preparation programs from the current community college leadership and student personnel graduate programs; and (4) while notable positive feedback from the practitioners to the graduate faculty of both programs was given, improvements including cross-exposure among the fields of graduate study should prepare graduates from either program, close the gaps between importance level and acquisition, and give new professionals a greater chance to be successful in the field of community college student affairs by virtue of their graduate academic preparation.

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This dissertation is also available through UMI under the title "An Examination of the Preparation of Community College Student Affairs Professionals".

Health Services in the Classroom: Integrated Learning at its Best!

Tarrant County College South Campus (TX)

FLO BRADY STANTON

Women in New Roles (WINR) at Tarrant County College South Campus (TCCSC) is a blocked six-hour college credit program which offers human relations and applied psychology (career/work force) in a blended curriculum. The program is designed to assist women in the transition of returning to school and provides information on how to succeed in the workplace. It serves a diverse population of women who without intervention might otherwise live and work at poverty level.

When WINR student surveys showed a need for stress management, the coordinator of the program (Behavioral Sciences Department) and Health Services saw an opportunity for interdisciplinary collaboration. Following a curriculum review, Health Services planned and developed a three-part health forum series that blended with related WINR course objectives. The topics are: Balancing Multiple Roles, Positive Self-Talk, and Laughing Your Way through Stress. Each provides a means of coping with stress and can be taught as part of a series or independently. At TCCSC, the campus community is invited to attend these 45-minute presentations which take place at the beginning of the class period and allows non-class members to leave at break time. Several faculty members give their students extra credit for attending the presentations. Student reporters covering the series write about each topic in the TCC student newspaper, *The Collegian*.

The selected topics are presented “in sync” with the student’s mindset during the course of the semester. Early in the semester, students new to school are questioning their decision to take on another role—that of being a student. Ardell and Langdon (1989) write of the importance of safeguarding one’s sense of balance. Since we most often live in imbalance, the objectives of Balancing Multiple Roles are (1) to identify roles and (2) to discuss resolving role conflicts for that “balanced feeling.”

At mid-semester, students may doubt themselves and question their capability as students. The second topic in the stress management series contrasts negative and positive self-dialogue and its impact on decision making. The objectives of Positive Self-Talk are (1) to identify the language of negative versus positive self-talk; (2) to “listen” for irrational (destructive) thinking; and (3) to practice positive (constructive) self-talk.

The third topic is presented within weeks of finals when students are immersed in their studies. The objectives of Laughing Your Way through Stress are: (1) to increase awareness about attitudes and feelings towards laughter; (2) to increase knowledge about the benefits of laughter; (3) to provide an opportunity for participants to laugh; and (4) to promote more laughter in everyday life.

Health Services in the Classroom: Integrated Learning at its Best is a model for interdisciplinary collaboration. Implementing a stress management series in the Women in New Roles curriculum has established a partnership between Instruction and Health Services to enhance student development.

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The Student Assistance Center: Serving Students from Theory into Practice

Columbus State Community College and The Ohio State University (OH)

BARBARA ALLEN

Background

With a more than 40-year history, Columbus State Community College (CSCC) is an urban community college in central Ohio. Its mission is to educate the many diverse learners within its six-county district. According to fall 2004 statistics, CSCC had a total enrollment of 21,371 students, of which 58.7 percent were female and 41.3 percent were male, with a mean age of 27.1. Further, 69.8 percent of the students were white, 19.4 percent African-American, 3 percent Asian, 1.8 percent Hispanic, 1.4 percent non-resident Alien, .5 percent American Indian, and 4.1 percent unreported (Columbus State Community College, *Report to the Community*, 2005). Thirty-nine percent of students were full-time, the rest part-time. The average class load was 9.49 credit hours, and 72.1 percent of the students lived in the county where the main campus is located, Franklin County.

Theory into Practice: The Student Assistance Center within the Context of CSCC

In the summer of 2004, CSCC student affairs administrators and staff asked significant questions related to student need: How well were our students negotiating Web registration, fee payment, and other general student processes? What could Columbus State do to help students become more self-sufficient and successful as students? With these questions in mind, a task force was formed to determine how best to serve students. Many activities were conducted to “put students first,” with staff attending benchmarking exercises at various community colleges across the country to familiarize themselves with best practice principles. Further, an internal audit was conducted to determine specifically what services were needed most, as well who would best deliver these services and in what model.

As a result of the findings, the Student Assistance Center (SAC) was developed, opening its doors in December 2004 as a pilot project specifically designed to meet these student needs. The mission reflected the goals: to become a customer service-oriented center where students could solve issues related to registration, financial aid, and fee payment. Students would have the opportunity to view self-directed Web modules or meet individually with advisors or in group sessions to learn about the Cougar Web registration process. To meet these ambitious goals, staff members were carefully selected because they would need to be comfortable, confident and competent while “wearing a number of different hats” ranging from managing the information desk and assisting with financial questions and workshops to serving as admission counselors and advisors. In essence, the SAC would become instrumental in creating and maintaining the student enrollment process for CSCC.

Equipped with 47 computer stations, the SAC provided space for individual counseling, self-service, and presentation facilities to meet student needs as they would arise. Staff members would “triage” students and help remove barriers so as to aid in not only successful registration but also overall student success, satisfaction and retention.

As imagined, because of its success the SAC continues today as a highly functioning, cross-collaborative center. From the time the SAC opened, its staff have provided general advising for more than 10,000 students, have answered more than 6,500 financial aid questions, and have assisted more than 13,000 students with finding their student passwords and working with the e-mail system. They also have helped students register for classes, determine their financial aid awards, and pay fees. In addition, they have provided general campus directions, made referrals, served as admissions advisors and solved complex registration issues for literally thousands of students.

As anticipated, this type of direct support helped significantly reduce workloads in other student support areas, freeing up “home” offices to focus their expertise elsewhere rather than on these more basic, start-up processes. In January 2006, after a year of operation, the SAC was funded as a stand-alone cost center, and it now also serves as a planning model of student service delivery for CSCC’s second campus in Delaware, Ohio, slated for operation in the next few years.

Measuring Success

With this foundation, success is easy to measure not only in terms of the volume of students served (in January 2006 alone, staff members served 17,231 students in some capacity, ranging from registration assistance to advising to financial aid needs to simple directions), but also in terms of the Center’s philosophy. The staff—consisting of one administrator, four full-time advisors and seven part-time advisors, including one enrollment assistant—have a wealth of knowledge as seasoned professionals in higher education. More importantly, however, their delivery is peppered with care, concern and compassion. Staff members share their expertise as well as success strategies within a teaching context so that students indeed become self-sufficient and are able to negotiate our student service systems for themselves the next quarter. Clearly, within this learning cycle, the SAC is mission-critical to the student service delivery flow. For example, with financial aid assistance alone, the SAC has assisted thousands of students with the completion and revision of the FAFSA, as well as the completion of the Master Promissory Note and entrance interview exams.

Continuous Improvement (Challenges) and Impact

As an effort to ensure quality improvement, the SAC views challenges as opportunities to fine-tune student service. In fact, the SAC tracks student contact weekly to proactively study trends and determine emerging student needs. Based on this information, we have made conscious programmatic changes to address the evolving enrollment needs of our students.

The SAC leads innovation in student service delivery. For example, in response to the changing needs of students and in an effort to serve them fully, the SAC developed a new orientation program in collaboration with the admissions office, creating a structured and convenient CSCC overview for students. Likewise, the SAC developed Web modules for students to watch so they could learn the registration and fee payment processes at their own pace and from a distance. The SAC has also partnered with the existing Welcome Team, which is a collaborative group of staff, faculty, and students who assist new students with their transition to classes during the first two days of each quarter. With more than 40 volunteers quarterly, the Welcome Team serves in tandem with the SAC staff in printing schedules, answering questions, giving directions and locating instructors and classes to help serve students more fully during the high volume times at the beginning of the term. The SAC anticipates further innovative programs as it continues to wrestle with how best to serve its students.

As it matures, the SAC will no doubt evolve and change, but at its center will be both its goals and mission to serve students fully. Because the SAC adhered to solid student development theory, putting students first in any evaluation, many of the qualities and programs the SAC offered can be replicated. Each institution needs to conduct its own audit, however, and not simply transplant CSCC's programs. Perhaps what the SAC can best offer is an authentic concern for students rooted in theory and realized in practice. This connection between the two makes all the difference for success. We hope to lead by example and welcome any inquiries or recommendations.

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The Illumination Project: Student Stories Through Interactive Theater

Portland Community College (OR)

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The Illumination Project is a year-long student leadership program that exists to create equality, justice, and respect for all people in the Portland Community College (PCC) academic community and the community at large through interactive community performances. The Illumination Project has the dual purpose of providing participating students with an opportunity to develop skills as activists and educators as well as providing tools for students, staff, faculty and community audiences to work toward social justice and an inclusive community. The Illumination Project (IP) was developed five years ago through the joint efforts of the PCC Sylvania Women's Resource Center and Multicultural Center. The Illumination Project's interactive performances are designed so that large numbers of people on the campus participate in problem-solving around issues that traditionally have made education more difficult for students of color, women students, poor/working class students, immigrants, and sexual minority students. Since its inception, IP has performed over 140 times to 6,000 audience members.

The Illumination Project admits 20 students each year. For their service to the campus community, Student Educators receive four tuition-free sociology credits each term (a total of 12 over the academic year). Students write and perform plays reflecting realistic current issues on the PCC Campus and surrounding community. Student Educators not only write and perform but publicize the plays and create accompanying educational materials for each performance.

By the time they begin their performances, students are prepared to provide education and leadership around difficult and potentially emotional issues. The plays students have created include topics such as anti-Arab/anti-Muslim bias in the U.S. post-September 11, date rape, domestic violence, "coming out" as a sexual minority, and race and class issues for first-generation college students.

The Illumination Project performances are based on Theater of the Oppressed, developed by Brazilian theater activist Augusto Boal. Theater of the Oppressed is a non-traditional theater style used to promote community-centered problem solving. During performances, Student Educators perform a short play which presents a problem of discrimination or oppression. After the play is performed once, the students start the play again. This time, any audience member can say "Stop!" when he/she sees the problem happening. The audience member then comes up on stage and replaces one of the characters who could create a positive solution to the

problem presented. In this way, the Illumination Project challenges the viewpoints of both the audience and the Student Educators. In a realistic yet safe atmosphere, actors and audience members have the opportunity to rehearse situations in order to build communication skills and understand alternatives.

The Project works with various academic departments to facilitate instructors' bringing classes to Illumination Project performances. Instructors then use the performances as a teaching tool through in-class discussion, papers, and journal writing. The Illumination Project puts the responsibility of learning in the hands of the audience while still providing structure such as ground rules, debriefings, accompanying materials, and in-class follow-up to ensure that the educational strategies employed are successful.

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The Career Journeys of Senior Student Services Administrators

Illinois State University (IL)

JIM PALMER

PHYLLIS MCCLUSKEY-TITUS

This presentation summarized findings of an exploratory study undertaken in the late spring of 2006 to understand student services work from the perspective of those who lead student services programs at community colleges. Current literature offers few insights into these perspectives. Thus, the study was based on open-ended interviews with the senior student services officers at ten randomly-selected community colleges in Illinois. Interviewees were asked to describe the life journeys that led them to their current administrative positions. They were also asked about their views on how student services help community colleges fulfill their missions.

During the presentation, audience members were engaged in a critical examination of the hypotheses drawn from this exploratory study by the researchers. Specifically, the audience members were asked if the hypotheses ring true in light of their own experience. This feedback will help in planning the second phase of the study, which will employ a survey of senior student affairs administrators at community colleges. Preliminary results offer tentative insights into how the differing backgrounds and experiences of student services administrators shape the varied nature of student services work across community colleges. These variations emerged in the differing emphases placed by the interviewees on—among other constructs—boundary-spanning work with the community, efforts to enhance the organization's capacity to help students, and work with individual students as they face challenges that jeopardize their academic success.

Boundary-spanning activities as described by the interviewees were those programs and services jointly sponsored with or in support of community partners, such as outreach to a housing project or tuition scholarships offered to junior high students. These varied roles were dependent on the needs of the community in which the college was located and the relationship of the vice president/dean with the various community partners. Enhancing organizational capacity involved purposeful steps undertaken by student services staff to make the organization work for students. Examples include serving as campus experts on issues related to students (such as federal student aid legislation) or creating *ad hoc* groups to address specific student concerns that are not within the purview of a specific office or person. The final emphasis explained by the interviewees was the work they did with individual students, helping them manage crises or encouraging their involvement in campus activities. Through these one-on-one interactions, student services staff perceived themselves as mentors on the one hand or simply as confidants who, like a big brother or sister, help the student with day-to-day problems.

Understanding how student services operations vary in these roles across colleges is important because, as Manning (2006) points out, the tendency of the literature to speak of student affairs practice in a “monolithic,” one-size-fits-all approach belies the considerable variation across colleges in how student services are viewed and organized. Further research in this project will examine these variations, their relationship to the different backgrounds of those who lead student services, and other factors that account for institutional differences in student services work.

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Mysterious Ways: The Counselor Chronicles—Application and Integration of the NCSD Recommendations

Estrella Mountain Community College (AZ)

STEPHANIE J. FUJII

Significant dialogue has taken place regarding the purpose of community college counseling for the past decade. Many of the conversations address issues of role, function, mission/purpose, and the difficulty of articulating what college counselors do and the value (cost) of that work by college administrators. For many at the institution—peers, faculty, administration, and students—there exists a great deal of mystery about what a community college counselor does. These challenges become intensified when counselors in higher education disagree about how to best serve their institutions. The inability to clearly define and understand the profession has resulted in the elimination of counseling services at many institutions.

The NCSD's 2004 Colloquium Report, *Toward the Future Vitality of Student Development Services: Redefining the Legacy in 2004*, provides recommendations for community college counseling. These recommendations have been implemented by the Estrella Mountain Community College's Counseling Division, and serve to maintain the integrity of the profession, as well as provide a plan of practice to empower counseling services.

NCSD Recommendations & EMCC's Implementation

1. *Community college leaders and counselors must work together to provide:*

- a. *direct service to students*
- b. *institutional support*
- c. *assessment and continuous support*

The foundation of EMCC's Counseling Division's work is collaboration and support. The direct service needs of students are assessed and identified by many parties: students, faculty and staff. Services are provided through a variety of roles (counselor, teacher, advisor, etc.) and in such a way that the division can provide evidence of a direct link of such services to the academic mission of the college.

2. *Community college counselors must possess the necessary education and skills to meet current and future counseling needs of students.*

In addition to master's degrees, EMCC counselors have experience in higher education and student development services. We value the community college and are aware of our many roles as a support service to the academic mission of the institution.

3. *Community college leaders and counseling departments must work together to overcome potential challenges and barriers.*

Counseling services must reflect the priorities of the administration. We are active and visible on the college campus. This involvement allows us to have awareness of the challenges faced, and enables us to be proactive in identifying options and solutions.

4. *Counseling departments should engage the use of a consulting psychologist or psychiatrists to address the therapeutic needs of students.*

As counselors, we attend to the developmental needs of students. Anything which is assessed as long term (beyond a semester) and intensive (meeting more than every two weeks) therapy is referred out.

5. *NCSD should serve to identify a national organization to enhance recognition of the profession of community college counseling.*

We have chosen affiliation through the American College Counseling Association (ACCA). ACCA has been active in seeking out community college counselors, and provides us voice in their national news e-letter.

As community college counselors, we must ground our counseling practices and services in student development. The two must be aligned. Student development (which is at the heart of the NCSD recommendations) is the means by which the profession can sustain and proactively demonstrate value because it is intrinsic in the mission of the community college. EMCC Counseling Division is not limited by only providing counseling. We are student development facilitators attending to the psycho-social and intellectual developmental needs of students.

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Tech Talk: Technology Implementation in Community College Student Services

NCSD National Office, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (IL)

JULIA PANKE MAKELA

Technology can play an integral role in how community college student services professionals engage students to address their educational and career needs. In light of rapid developments, high cost, infrastructure demands, and required training, keeping up with technology can be a daunting task. The National Council on Student Development (NCSD), with support from CampusWorks, Inc., sought to learn about technology implementation in community college student services as a way to help practitioners make sense of complicated technology options and undertakings.

“Tech Talk” Project

The project began with the National Office of NCSD forming a Technology Advisory Committee (TAC), including 11 NCSD student services leaders and professionals from across the country, to brainstorm about technology opportunities and challenges facing community college student services. The main thrust of the project was an online survey of chief student services officers aimed at describing the current state of technology implementation and needs in community colleges. The following three questions guided exploration in this current study:

- (1) In what functional areas have community college student development professionals implemented technology tools?
- (2) What is the overall level of technology implementation across two-year institutions?
- (3) How do staff members perceive the ease of use and effectiveness of these technology tools?

Study Participants

A total of 589 Chief Student Services Officers, including 168 NCSD members and 421 non-members, received e-mail requests for their participation in an online survey. A total of 118 community college employees (about 20% of the total sample) responded to the survey with 102 (17.3%) providing data complete enough to be used in analyses.

Persons with the titles of Vice President or Dean of Students, Student Affairs, or Student Development were the primary target audience, and comprised 77% of all respondents. A secondary audience, targeted when an institution’s member of the first group could not be located, was Presidents and Vice Presidents, and made up 8% of respondents. The remaining 15% were a combination of System Directors in multi-campus systems and Directors or Assistant Directors of a particular student services office.

Respondents came from across the country. The largest groups were from institutions in the Midwest (23%) and Southeast (23%). Institutions in the Southwest accounted for the smallest percentage (4%). Larger groups of respondents came from institutions with higher enrollments, including those enrolling 10,000 or more (36%), 5,000 to 9,999 (25%), and 2,000 to 4,999 (26%) students. Fewer respondents came from smaller institutions with 500 to 1,999 students (11%), and fewer than 500 students (2%). This indicates that results may tend to represent larger rather than smaller two-year colleges.

Study Findings

The survey addressed technology implementation in the following 11 student services functional areas:

- (1) admissions and student recruitment
- (2) financial aid
- (3) academic placement, orientation, and assistance
- (4) academic advising
- (5) registration
- (6) student email
- (7) assistive technology for people with disabilities
- (8) counseling
- (9) career services
- (10) student activities
- (11) an “other” catch-all section

During the conference session, findings were presented in three ways. The first provided aggregate information on responses to over 40 questions about individual technologies across the eleven student services functional areas. The second data cut showed a comprehensive picture of technology implementation across individual institutions to uncover patterns. The final data cut examined respondents’ perspectives on the specific technology’s ease of use and effectiveness in meeting staff needs.

Future Directions

The National Council on Student Development looks forward to building upon this initial study. In the coming months, our TAC will discuss strategies for exploring the future of technology in community college student services. We are interested in identifying some particularly exemplary practices in technology implementation and helping our membership learn from these experiences. Using data from and discussions of this initial survey, the Council will design a focused approach to gather more in-depth information regarding how technology can impact and enhance the day-to-day work of student services personnel.

More information on this and NCSD’s future activities can be found at the NCSD TAC website at www.ncsdonline.org/resources/specialinitiatives/technology.asp.

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