



# *Maximizing Student Success* *through a Community of Learning*

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

Savannah, Georgia  
October 21–23, 2007

Edited by  
*Elise Davis-McFarland*  
and *Tina Stovall*

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**nscsd** NATIONAL COUNCIL  
ON STUDENT DEVELOPMENT  
an official council of the American Association of Community Colleges



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## **National Council on Student Development**

The National Council on Student Development (NCSD) is an affiliate council of the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) and the only organization solely dedicated to serving the needs of student development professionals in the community college. NCSD is the nation's primary voice for sharing knowledge, expertise, professional development and student advocacy for community college student development professionals.

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MELISSA GREEN

*Rhodes State College (OH)*

NCSO President

The National Council on Student Development (NCSO) is pleased to present the proceedings of its 2007 National Conference held in Savannah, Georgia. Over 120 participants attended this year's annual event. Throughout the conference, student development professionals heard the very best of innovative practices from community colleges across the nation. The success of this event came through the tremendous efforts of many individuals and organizations.

NCSO extends gratitude to Dr. Freida Hill, Assistant Commissioner for the Department of Technical and Adult Education, and Dr. Jan Kettlewell, Associate Vice Chancellor for P-16 Initiatives, University System of Georgia, who opened our conference. Dr. Patricia Stanley, Deputy Assistant Secretary, U.S. Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education, addressed our audience as our closing speaker. These professional national leaders enlightened the audience on current trends and educational developments.

Important contributions to our conference were also made by our local hosts, Savannah Technical College, Gainesville State College, Altamaha Technical College and Georgia Highlands College. A special thank-you is extended to Tom Walter and the conference planning committee that was responsible for many of the logistical arrangements. We appreciate all of your support and commitment in making the conference a success.

We would like to thank the following sponsors and exhibitors: League for Innovation in the Community College, World Education Services, Inc. and ACT. Much of our needed conference materials and resources were supplied through these organizations.

The NCSO Board of Directors wishes to express appreciation to Tom Anglin and Mary Grimm and the staff at ACT. The production and publication of this monograph is possible due to their assistance. Without the support of Elise Davis-McFarland, our NCSO Communication and Publications Director, records of the conference proceedings would not exist. Your help with this project has been tremendous.

We also extend much gratitude to each of the authors who contributed material for this monograph. The extra time and energy they expended to provide the content of their presentations in written form is greatly appreciated.

In closing, we thank all the participants for attending our conference. We believe this conference provided an opportunity for student development professionals to address important educational issues that directly impact student success. We look forward to seeing you in November 2008 in Albany, New York.

Copies of this publication are free of charge to our current members. Others may purchase copies from:

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## Conference Overview

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TINA STOVALL

*Lake Land College (IL)*

NCSO Secretary and Monograph Co-Editor

The ninth annual conference of the National Council on Student Development (NCSO) was held at the Savannah Marriott Riverfront in Savannah, Georgia, from October 21–23, 2007. Following this year’s conference theme, *Maximizing Student Success Through a Community of Learning*, more than 120 community college student development professionals from across the country and Canada joined together to share best practices and learn from each other.

The opening keynote address by Freida Hill, Assistant Commissioner, Georgia Department of Technical and Adult Education, and Jan Kettlewell, Associate Vice Chancellor for P–16 initiatives, University System of Georgia, provided an opportunity for conference participants to learn how Georgia’s educational agencies have collaborated through *The Alliance of Education Heads* to strengthen educational opportunities for Georgia residents from pre-kindergarten through post-secondary education.

Following the conference opening session, participants had the opportunity to share challenges and best-practices through participation in one of four hot-topic break-out discussion sessions. The sessions included *Service Learning/Community Involvement* led by Pamela Flaherty, Middlesex Community College (MA), *Health and Wellness* led by Joseph Watson, Columbia-Greene Community College (NY), *Student Civility and Social Responsibilities* led by Mary Holloway, Midlands Technical College (SC), and *Learning Communities* led by Elise Davis-McFarland, Trident Technical College (SC).

Day two of the conference began with a panel discussion including representatives from two community colleges recognized as 2005–2006 *MetLife Foundation Best-Practice Colleges*. Panel members shared information about how their colleges used the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) to improve student retention and achievement. Panel members included Arleen Arnsperger, Project Manager, MetLife Foundation Initiative on Student Success, Sharon Kristovitch, Associate Vice President, Accountability and Research, Parkland College (IL), and Susan Daniel, Banner Functional Leader/Coordinator of Institutional Planning, Gainesville State College (GA).

The remainder of the conference included 16 informative and interactive concurrent presentations by participants from community colleges across the United States and Canada. Four of the presentations, previously selected as finalist programs by NCSO, competed for the Ninth Annual Shared Journey Award, an award honoring Dr. Terry O’Banion, past president of the League for Innovation in Community Colleges and a strong supporter of community college student development professionals and NCSO. Day two also included a presentation by the 2007 NCSO Dissertation of the Year Award winner, Serena Ota St. Clair. A summary of each conference presentation is provided on the following pages.

Along with dinner and the annual NCSD business meeting, the Terry O'Banion Shared Journey Awards Program was held on October 22. The Bronze Award was presented to LeAnne Schmidt and Barbara Read, Inver Hills Community College (MN), for their program, *IDEAS+ : Imbedding College Success Strategies into Content Classrooms*. The Silver Award was presented to Derek Brandes, Janet Garza, Maddy Jeffs, and Alice Rehm, Columbia Basin College (WA), for their program, *First Year Introduction (FYI)*, and the Gold Award was presented to Cami Bishop, Victoria Galanopoulos and Kat Arno, Portland Community College (OR), for their program, *SOS (Send Our Students): Leadership Development Through Embedded Service*. Descriptions of these award-winning programs are provided in this monograph.

The 2007 NCSD Conference closing speaker was Dr. Patricia Stanley, Deputy Assistance Secretary for Community Colleges, Office of Vocational and Adult Education, U.S. Department of Education. Dr. Stanley's presentation outlined how OVAE initiatives support Secretary of Education Margaret Spelling's Plan for Higher Education. She also explained how the initiatives will include establishing widespread knowledge and support of the important role that community colleges play in higher education.

Thanks to all of the conference presenters and participants for attending the conference and for their contributions in making this community of learning interactive and informative. We hope that each and every one of you took home with you a new idea that you could implement, pleasant memories of your time in Savannah, and contact information for a new colleague to continue this community of learning.

# Opening Plenary: Seamless Education in Georgia

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## Keynote Speakers

FREIDA HILL

Assistant Commissioner for the Department of Technical and Adult Education  
State of Georgia

JAN KETTLEWELL

Associate Vice Chancellor for P-16 Initiatives  
University System of Georgia

## Overview

This presentation consists of five parts:

- A brief history of the University System of Georgia
- A brief history of the Technical College System of Georgia
- A description of the Alliance of Education Agency Heads in Georgia
- Examples of the seamless education efforts in Georgia
- A description of the articulation of coursework between the Technical College System of Georgia and the University System of Georgia

## University System of Georgia

The University System of Georgia was formed as a part of the Reorganization Act of 1931 and was formally “born” in 1932. The Act established an 11-member Board of Regents to govern the System. Its challenge was to gain control over an uncoordinated collection of 18 individually governed colleges and universities. The System achieved status as a constitutional entity through an amendment passed in 1943 which effectively removed it from unnecessary political interference. With the passage of the 1947 GI Bill, 27,000 additional students enrolled in the University System. Also, two new universities were created. The period of the 1950s through the 1980s saw the addition of 15 new colleges and universities, the beginnings of integration in the System, and continued rapid growth. The period from 1990 to the present saw an increased emphasis on access; establishment of the Georgia H.O.P.E. Scholarship and Grant Programs; an increase in the admission standards; and, an increase in Internet utilization. Currently, the University System of Georgia includes 35 colleges and universities (four research universities, two regional universities, 13 state universities, four state colleges which are predominantly two-year colleges offering a limited number of four-year degrees, and 12 two-year colleges); enrolls 270,000 students; has a “Fixed for Four Years Tuition Plan”; and projects an increase in enrollment to 370,000 students by the year 2020.

## **Technical College System of Georgia**

The mission of the Technical College System of Georgia is to contribute to the economic, educational, and community development by providing quality technical education, adult literacy education, continuing education, and customized business and industry workforce training to the citizens. The roots of the System go back to 1944 when the Georgia Department of Education opened the North Georgia Trade and Vocational School. A similar school was opened in 1948 in South Georgia. In the 1960s, 19 more schools were established along with the Georgia Quick Start Program. In 1984 a separate State Board of Postsecondary Vocational Education was created to oversee technical education in the State and in 1988, this was formalized through the creation of the Department of Technical and Adult Education. In that same year, Adult Literacy was transferred from the Department of Education to the Department of Technical and Adult Education. By the year 2000, the state had invested \$1 billion in the DTAE System. In that same year, state legislation allowed the “technical institutes” to change their names to “technical colleges,” resulting in increased enrollment. The technical colleges also began offering associate degrees. There are currently 33 colleges under this Department and in 2008, legislation will seek to change the name to the Technical College System of Georgia. In addition, four units in the University System have technical divisions. One unique characteristic of the Technical College System of Georgia is its guarantee: “If one of our graduates educated under a standard program and the employer find that the graduate is deficient in one or more competencies as defined in the standards, the technical college will retrain the employee at no instructional cost to the employee or employer.” The System also has a significant online learning component with 45,720 unduplicated students learning in completely online classes, 19,392 in hybrid classes, and 35,425 in web-enhanced classes.

## **Alliance of Education Agency Heads**

In Georgia, the heads of the seven education agencies meet on a regular basis to strengthen the seamlessness and the overall quality of education. The Alliance is chaired by the State Superintendent of Schools and also includes the Chancellor of the University System of Georgia, the Commissioner of the Department of Technical and Adult Education, the Commissioner of the Department of Early Care and Learning, the President of the Georgia Student Finance Commission, the Executive Director of the Governor’s Office of Student Achievement, and the Executive Secretary of the Georgia Professional Standards Commission. The goals of the Alliance are to:

1. Increase the high school graduation rate, decrease the high school drop-out rate, and increase the post-secondary enrollment rate
2. Strengthen teacher quality, recruitment, and retention
3. Improve workforce readiness skills
4. Develop strong education leaders, particularly at the building level
5. Improve the SAT/ACT scores of Georgia students

The Alliance of Education Agency Heads also has an Implementation Team (AEAH-IT), which consists of two representatives from each Alliance agency plus two representatives each from the Governor’s Office of Planning and Budget, the Governor’s Office of Workforce Development, and the business community. The AEAH and the AEAH-IT constitute Georgia’s two-tiered structure for coordinating and advancing P–16 work in the state. The Alliance has established ten strategies to realize its first goal:

- Implement a coordinated set of strategies/programs for at-risk students
- Develop incentives for schools and local education agencies to increase the high school graduation rate
- Develop an improved comprehensive system of student advisement focusing on post-secondary options and careers
- Create a seamless Pre-K through post-secondary student tracking system
- Make accelerated learning options (e.g. AP/IB/Dual Enrollment/Early College/Gateway to College/Online learning) available to all secondary (6–12) students
- Narrow the achievement gap in grades Pre-K through grade 3
- Narrow the achievement gap in grades 4 through 12
- Implement rigorous standards for high school graduation and align these standards, curriculum, and assessments with expectations for post-secondary education and the workforce
- Establish additional direct links with the business sector to participate in “stay in school” strategies
- Build public awareness and support for the value of high school graduation and post-secondary education

### **Examples of the Seamless Education Effort in Georgia**

One example of Georgia’s efforts to follow the eighth strategy above is its participation in the American Diploma Project (ADP). ADP is a 30 state network attempting to accomplish four goals:

1. Align academic standards in high school with expectations for college and workplace success
2. Upgrade high school course requirements so that there is a college and work ready curriculum required for any high school diploma
3. Re-design selected high school tests in English and mathematics to also serve as college and work placement tests
4. Hold high schools accountable for all graduates reaching college and work readiness standards and colleges accountable for the success of their students once enrolled

The University System of Georgia, the Department of Technical and Adult Education, and the business community agree that students who meet or exceed the following new Georgia Performance Standards will in fact be college and work ready. The English and mathematics faculties of the Systems and the business community recommend the college and work readiness threshold is:

- Four years of high school English, at least through English III
- Four years of high school mathematics, at least through mathematics III

In September 2007, the State Board of Education adopted the High School Graduation Rule which requires the following unit completions for graduation:

- Four units of high school English through at least ADP English III
- Four units of high school mathematics, through at least ADP mathematics III
- Four units of high school science
- Three units of high school social studies
- One unit of high school health and physical education
- Three units of high school technical coursework, modern language, Latin, or fine arts
- Four units of high school electives

The Board of Regents of the University System recently voted to adopt the above standards, along with two years of foreign language, as its admission requirements. The Technical College System also gave strong support to the new standards.

The Department of Education is currently working to re-design its High School Graduation Tests to become college and work readiness tests that would serve for both high school graduation and college placement for both Systems. The English portion will be implemented in the Spring Semester, 2008, for high school graduation and Fall Semester, 2008, for college placement. The mathematics portion will be implemented Spring Semester, 2011, for high school graduation and Fall Semester, 2012, for college placement.

The Georgia Department of Education and the two college Systems are also working collaboratively to establish a shared accountability System which will include these indicators:

- Number and percent of students in Dual Enrollment, Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate
- Number and percent of students enrolled in DTAE and USG Systems who enter within two years of graduation from a Georgia public high school
- Number and percent of students who earn the HOPE Scholarship and retain it after the first year of college
- Number and percentage of DTAE and USG students who enter within two years of graduation from a Georgia high school and who must take remedial courses
- One-year retention rates for first-time DTAE and USG students who entered within two years of graduation from a Georgia high school

A second example utilizing the ninth strategy to accomplish the first goal for the Alliance is the Stay in School (SiS) Project. Partnering with middle and high schools, this program provides students early opportunities to explore career options and the connections between their current academic preparation and their future career opportunities. The project began in 2006 with a \$1 million allocation in the Technical College System budget that continues through 2008. There was an additional \$1 million allocation in 2007 from the Workforce Investment Board, within the Governor's Office of Workforce Development. The identified performance indicators for this Project are:

- 80% of participating eighth grade students complete career interest inventories and academic career plans
- 85% of participating middle school teachers meet with ninth grade teachers regarding course content and academic expectations
- 85% of participating middle school teachers are involved in structured guidance programs

Last year, this collaborative project included 29 technical colleges, one technical division of a USG institution, 178 middle and high schools, and served 37,000 students and 1,913 teachers in public schools. Businesses were also a part of this collaboration. Their participation included classroom presentations, field trips, job shadowing, career days, and teaching High School 101.

### **Articulation of Coursework**

The Technical College System of Georgia and the University System of Georgia have established two separate types of formal articulation agreements. First, there is a System-to-System agreement on a Mini-Core of nine semester hours that are completely transferrable from any Technical College System of Georgia institution to any University System of Georgia institution. There are also program specific transfer agreements. One example is the program for preparation of teachers for children from birth to five years old (the name of the program varies by institution). In this program, 38–39 semester hours are transferable from the Technical College System to the University System. In addition, there are institution-specific articulation agreements wherein students complete a certificate or diploma at a Technical College System college that transfers as a block of credit to a University System college or university.

With the Alliance of Education Agency Heads and Alliance Implementation Team in place, prospects for collaboration in Georgia have never been higher!

# Closing Plenary: Community College Projects Support Recommendations of Secretary Spelling's Commission on Higher Education

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PAT STANLEY

Deputy Assistant Secretary for Community Colleges

Office of Vocational and Adult Education

U.S. Department of Education

The Commission appointed by Secretary of Education Margaret Spelling to address issues and concerns in America's Higher Education systems made recommendations that led to the Secretary's Plan for Higher Education. The plan focused on accessibility, affordability and accountability. The community college efforts in the Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE) support the Secretary's Plan and the Commission's recommendations. The OVAE's community college activities and projects include:

1. A plan for serving community colleges with the following goals:

To establish widespread public support for community colleges as centers of innovation and providers of superior education and training that are affordable and accessible to all Americans.

To serve as a portal for timely and actionable guidance on community college education for teachers, administrators, students, parents, and employers.

To develop a structure and culture within the U.S. Department of Education that value and promote the role of community colleges in post-secondary education.

2. A Virtual Summit was held June 28, 2007. The Summit was an outgrowth of the Secretary's March 2007 Higher Education Summit held in Washington, DC, and four regional summits held in June of the same year. Experts in DC and community college leaders at four community college sites in California, Texas, New York, and North Carolina discussed the following topics:

Two-to-four-year transfer

Adult and non-traditional students

Accountability

Leadership

A summary of the proceedings and a tape of the Summit can be found at [www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ovae.pi/cclo/index.html](http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ovae.pi/cclo/index.html).

3. Issues That Matter to Community Colleges: In the fall of 2007 and the spring of 2008, the OVAE will convene a series of four meetings on issues that matter to community colleges. Small groups of community college presidents and chancellors will share experiences and learn from colleagues about their challenges and successes in four topical areas. The four issues were identified as priorities by members of the National Council of State Directors of Community Colleges. The issues are:

Fostering Career Pathways in High Growth Industries

Washington, DC – November 7, 2007

Serving Low Literacy Adults

Austin, TX – April, 2008

Integrating Developmental Education

New Orleans, LA – January 22, 2008

Establishing Statewide Articulation Agreements

Denver, Colorado – March 2, 2008

The meetings will result in one or more publications reflecting the discussions about concerns, challenges and successes that community colleges face as they implement the four topic areas.

4. The Community College Research Symposium will be held in June 2008. Ten community college issue papers will be commissioned and presented at the symposium in Washington, DC. The symposium will be webcast to sites across the country. The issue paper topics were elected by a broad-based panel of experts and include:

#### **Policy**

- Running On Empty: Financial Aid Awareness Among Low-Income Adult Learners
- Community College Accountability and Student Outcomes
- The Status of Minority Males in Higher Education: Losing Momentum
- Emerging Trends and Policy Implications of the Community College Baccalaureate
- Issues and Implications of Transitions To, Through, and From the Community College
- Problematic College Plans: Incidence, Disparities and Advise Programs to Reduce Them

#### **Promising Practices**

- A Framework for Supporting Students with Disabilities Transition to Community College
- The Promise of the College and Career Transition Initiative
- Community College Course-Taking Patterns: Identifying the Key Markers of Success
- The Complexities of Vocational Pedagogy Issues in Community Colleges

5. The Community College Showcase Sites Project will examine practices in community colleges focused on tenets of the Secretary's Plan for Higher Education. Once sites are selected and case studies developed, peer-to-peer technical assistance will be provided to assist with the replication of the showcased programs in community colleges across the country.
6. The College and Career Transition Initiative (CCTI) moves into its fifth and final year. CCTI has developed career pathways from Secondary to Community Colleges in 16 career cluster areas. The outcome of student participation in a career pathway is completion of a certificate or degree. Programs of study (careers pathways) are recommended as a means to meet requirements of The Carl Perkins Career and Technical Education Act passed by Congress in 2006. Community Colleges have been critical partners in all CCTI pathway development. As a final activity, the Community College STEM curriculum strategies will be developed for integration into community college courses.

As Secretary Spelling said in her introductory remarks at the Community College Virtual Summit: "You can't have a serious conversation about higher education without discussing the 11 million Americans attending community colleges every year."

Terry O'Banion Shared Journey First Place Award

## **SOS (Send Our Students): Leadership Development through Embedded Service**

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### **Portland Community College (OR)**

KAT ARNO

CAMI BISHOP

VICTORIA GALANOPOULOS

Portland Community College's Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society organized six students to participate in the New Orleans relief effort during spring break 2006. It was such a life-changing experience for the Phi Theta Kappans that the student government joined the effort for their Fall 2006 leadership development program. As of October 2007, five student groups have gone to New Orleans to help rebuild and another group will go in December 2007.

During the day, students worked on many projects: gutting houses down to the studs, distributing food, cleaning, nailing in drywall, installing insulation, opening a tutoring center, removing toxins from parks, organizing a volunteer center, and cooking. Evenings unveiled exhausted students processing their daily experiences and relating them to leadership lessons, learning about activism and organizing, and learning about oppression through experiences and "Stop the Hate" training.

This embedded service learning experience gives student leaders a sense of others in a way difficult to replicate through classroom exercises. Students met some of the people hit hardest by Hurricane Katrina, and were moved by their emotional stories. Returning to campus, these students were changed. Not only was their team stronger, but they had an appreciation of the privileges they enjoyed and had a commitment to continue making a difference in their world. One student commented,

"I explored all of my values. I knew we had it good in this country but to see and hear for myself the injustice being done within our borders. I had to reflect on my own values... This wasn't the kind of experience that a person leaves behind and moves on. It will be with me forever."

Faculty members have also benefited. A biologist and sociologist accompanied the student leaders on one trip. They learned that this intense leadership training goes well beyond classroom service-learning experiences and found they had to throw out their previous goals to adapt to new needs. Working on the environmental issues facing New Orleans and dealing with the power issues surrounding the classism, racism and oppression that are inhibiting progress gave them a new perspective they shared with staff and students upon their return. It is obvious that those with the least means were the hardest-hit and the last to receive relief. Beyond that

observation, it seems that the racial dynamics are changing. With the largest majority of volunteers being Caucasian, the African American community seems to be noting a change in priorities of other races.

Fifty-eight students and staff have participated in the SOS program to date. This experience has touched far more people, as they cannot stop talking about what they learned. Ten families now have homes in New Orleans due to the efforts of these groups from Portland. Our students joined thousands of students across the country by transforming their academic breaks into meaningful learning experiences and making a huge difference in New Orleans. Integrating this rebuilding effort into intentional teaching and learning in the classroom and in the field has deepened the experience for Portland Community College students. Perhaps this experience is best illustrated by one student's words in her evaluation, "Our mission was to help others, but the trip helped us most."

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## First Year Introduction (FYI)

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### Columbia Basin College (WA)

DEREK BRANDES  
JANET GARZA  
MADDY JEFFS  
ALICE REHM

Columbia Basin College is a comprehensive community college in eastern Washington with a large percentage of at-risk students. Through 2003 CBC had experienced quarter-to-quarter attrition rates around 32% and year-to-year rates around 62%, with minority populations faring worse. Our open door had become a revolving door and we concluded that opportunity alone would not solve the barriers to access for many students.

Based on our analysis of the retention literature and our own experiences in developing programs to assist students, the college embarked on an exciting journey to develop an intrusive, integrated and comprehensive program which would equip all new degree- and certificate-seeking students with the knowledge, skills and attitudes to maximize their potential for student success. Following nine months of debate, development, and planning, CBC implemented "FYI: First Year Introduction," a mandatory, graded, 12-hour transition experience for all new students that would be completed prior the start of their college classes.

The role of the college's leadership in FYI's success cannot be overemphasized. The President and his executive team were quick to realize that, although a very different concept and complex undertaking, if the college was to truly change students' entry to the college to maximize success, we would have to commit our resources, our effort, and our willingness to accept risks.

Work groups made up of instructors, staff, and students converted theory to practice as we decided to organize FYI around three components: Seminar Groups, Learning Modules, and Sample Classes. It was believed that each would affect different student outcomes. The *seminar groups*, not to exceed 25 students in each, provide opportunities for students to develop cohort relationships with peers and seminar leaders. At the same time seminar groups allow the college to deliver a standardized curriculum covering those elements felt to be critical for students to know about college in general and about CBC in particular. *Learning modules* are designed to be fun and informative, allowing students some autonomy in choosing sessions that might address individual needs and interests. *Sample classes* pair students with faculty members in an informal class "tryout," without the pressures of a real class but closely simulated, so students learn what to expect in the classroom. Throughout, students complete assignments, take class notes, and participate in active learning exercises. Successful completion is necessary for subsequent registration.

In its fourth year, FYI has been rigorously assessed and analyzed for continuous quality improvement. As the college has identified specific areas of concern, we have developed FYI tracks designed to help students with special needs. For example, we developed an FYI track for undecided students and adjusted curriculum to include career exploration assignments and pathways-to-majors activities. We developed a special FYI track for single students with young children. This group's seminar discussions often concern problems associated with the conflicts between school and family and with personal stress. And, to address the growing involvement of the "helicopter" parents of our new students, we developed a "FYI for Parents" evening session. Parent interest has been amazing with approximately 200 parents attending each of our sessions. The "FYI for Parents" provides: (1) scheduled campus tours; (2) a phone and email contact list for resources, services and other important departments; (3) a yearly schedule depicting all financial aid, registration and refund deadlines; (4) a learning module outlining the developmental psychology of traditional-aged college students, and tips on how to effectively communicate with them, and (5) a question and answer session.

FYI is offered throughout the day and evening and in various formats, including a self-guided web-based format. As a required workshop for continued enrollment in our degree or certificate programs, it is covered by financial aid. Students are encouraged to register for an FYI workshop at a time and in a format that will most closely mimic their college class schedule. Students are charged \$50 for the workshop and \$5 for their workbook and class materials. Revenue from FYI has been sufficient to meet the costs of the program which include faculty stipends.

Since its inception, students who have taken FYI have demonstrated a 20-30% increase in quarter one-to-quarter two retention and a greater than 25% increase in quarter one-to-year one retention when compared with students who have not taken FYI. These increases have been replicated with every cohort group since 2004 regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, and other demographic characteristics. Additionally, even two years after taking FYI, increases in retention have remained constant compared to students who have not taken FYI. Underrepresented student retention after FYI has shown the greatest increase (> 30%) when compared to our retention statistics before the initiation of FYI. Fewer students who have taken FYI find themselves on academic probation. And, lastly, completion rates have increased for those students who have taken FYI. Student self-reported outcomes include a greater awareness of student responsibilities for their education; comfort in the college environment; knowledge and use of support services; establishment of relationships with faculty, staff and peers; use of the library; and recognition of the importance of diversity.

For CBC, FYI has been a tremendous investment which has strengthened our FTEs, not negatively affecting them as had been feared. It has changed the culture of our institution and imbued us with a sense of pride. Collaboration among faculty, staff and administrators has been tremendous. This year, three other community colleges in Washington and one in Oregon have adopted some version of our FYI program. We believe it is a program worth replicating!

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## **IDEAS+: Imbedding College Success Strategies into Content Classrooms**

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### **Inver Hills Community College (MN)**

LEANNE SCHMIDT

BARBARA READ

IDEAS+ was implemented in 2003 to increase the success and retention of students enrolled in developmental courses. Its three core strategies are:

- (1) Create a faculty development model to examine and modify course curricula to promote student success. This objective was accomplished by identifying a common set of “college success” strategies that faculty integrate into developmental course curricula.
- (2) Create individual learner profiles and develop mentoring relationships between instructors and students.
- (3) Link students with the academic support services that meet their individual learner needs, resulting in increased retention and success.

### **Background**

The rationale for IDEAS+ was the realization that current strategies to foster student persistence were not addressing the complex lives and needs of our commuter students. Such strategies as promoting the use of campus services and offering workshops had not impacted the students most in need of services and resources. Therefore, through a strong partnership between Academic and Student Affairs, a different approach to student success emerged: reach students where they are—in the classroom—and deliver relevant college success strategies through developmental instructors.

### **Core Components of IDEAS+**

IDEAS+ utilizes a faculty development model which incorporates college success strategies into the classroom. First, students take the Noel-Levitz College Student Inventory (CSI), which identifies each student’s strengths as well as areas of concern related to the college experience. CSI results enable instructors and students to discuss concerns related to college transition, preparation, and success. Instructors have also created specific course assignments related to CSI results, which give students valuable insights into their unique learner strengths and needs, and ensure that students utilize appropriate campus services. Each cohort of participating instructors meets regularly with a college counselor to discuss CSI summary results and brainstorm ways to address learner needs. To date, 24 faculty (including over 90% of developmental faculty) and over 3,000 students have participated in IDEAS+.

### **Quantitative Results: It's About Student Success**

The impact of IDEAS+ on retention rates of developmental students has been very positive. Data collected since the project's inception confirm that semester to semester retention rates for students in IDEAS+ classes are 8–10% higher than their counterparts in non-IDEAS+ classes.

### **Qualitative Results: It's About Student Development**

Student evaluations of IDEAS+ have been extremely positive. Over 85% of participants responded that they have learned strategies that they will use in other classes. This is a main goal of IDEAS+: to help students gain self-awareness and specific skills they will use as lifelong learners. This is critical to Inver Hills students, because almost half (44%) are first-generation students who lack role models to coach them about ways to be successful in college.

### **Qualitative Results: It's About Faculty Development**

Survey results from faculty are equally positive, with 100% indicating that they know their students better as a result of this project, and actively match students to the specific support services that meet their identified needs.

Participating instructors have modified their curricula to incorporate college success strategies into their courses, and their evaluations confirm the value of this experience. Faculty participants believe that students now have a better understanding of course expectations and, in turn, produce higher quality assignments.

### **Implementation of Retention Strategies Based on IDEAS+**

The IDEAS+ philosophy and strategies have served as a foundation for new retention initiatives implemented since 2004. Each initiative is based on the unique focus of IDEAS+ on *both* student and faculty development, strong collaboration between Academic and Student Affairs, and faculty-driven, classroom-centered interventions. Among these retention strategies are learning communities, first year experience extended orientation course, transformed Learning Center, Student Success Days, *Got Direction?* and *Finish What You Start* campaigns.

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# **The Journey of Developing Multicultural Competence: A Phenomenological Exploration of Lived Experiences in Student Affairs Professionals**

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**Oregon State University (OR)**

SERENA OTA ST. CLAIR

Prior research has noted the changing demographics of higher education since the Civil Rights Movement and the expanded need for multicultural education. Armando Hernandez Morales (2003) wrote that, “A multiculturally competent person is aware of and knowledgeable about cultural differences, their own cultural identity, and the history and contemporary struggles of marginalized groups” (Morales, retrieved 2005). This study adds to the field by using the qualitative research method of phenomenology to examine the life experiences that led to the development of multicultural competence in student affairs professionals. Seven co-researchers were selected from a pool of 17 adults who were currently working or had recently worked in student affairs and who had been nominated by their peers for demonstrating multicultural competencies. They were interviewed to uncover the lived experiences that contributed to their development of multicultural competence.

The co-researchers’ responses were recorded, transcribed, reviewed by the co-researcher, and then analyzed using transcendental phenomenology, a qualitative research method outlined by Moustakas (1994). The first step in this process was the *Epoche*, where the researcher disclosed her personal relationship to the questions. The analysis of each co-researchers transcripts revealed between 25-40 significant themes which were combined and clustered into 14 overarching universal themes, and then categorized into three realms: personal, professional, and structural/institutional.

In the personal realm, seven shared themes emerged from the co-researchers as they reflected on their lived experiences. These themes described the collective essence of what they shared:

- Personal Humility: Understanding of Self
- Inspired by Others: Mentors and Role Models
- I will be for differences until difference no longer makes a difference
- Religious Foundations and Spiritual Guidance
- Seven Generations Forward: Listening to Elder Wisdom
- Understanding Oppression: Personal Experience Facilitates Skill Development
- Commitment to Social Justice for All

In the professional realm, four strong themes emerged as co-researchers reflected on how their multicultural competence has been developed and practiced in their professional lives. These themes described the collective essence of what they shared:

- Eloquent Educational Philosophy for Inclusion, Empowerment, Respect, Being a Learner
- Authentic and Transformational Leadership Philosophy
- Embracing Students as Teachers: What We Learn Directly from Them
- What The Face Of Intelligence Looks Like: Issues of Race, Gender, Sexual Orientation, (Dis)Ability, and Class

In the institutional realm, three themes were articulated from the co-researchers' lived experience about what supports the development of multiculturally competent student affairs professionals. These themes described the collective essence of what the professionals shared.

- Leadership Is Key: What Does That Need to Be on an Institutional Level?
- Operating Framework: Multicultural Work is Mainstream
- Student Affairs is the First Line of Communication, the Back Door, and the Space In-between

The interpretation of these 14 universal themes leads to the implications for developing multicultural competence which are shared in the figure below.

### **Implications for Developing Multicultural Competence**

- |               |   |
|---------------|---|
| Personal      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Begin with personal awareness and move outward</li><li>• Build on empathic awareness from recounting personal experiences</li></ul>   |
| Professional  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Develop a shared vision of multicultural competent service delivery among staff</li><li>• Motivate increasing multicultural competency with an understanding of changing demographics of students, staff, and community</li><li>• Assist staff and students who are not multiculturally competent by role modeling, attentive supervision, communication training, mentoring, and evaluation.</li></ul> |
| Institutional | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Adopt universal hiring practices that assess a candidates multicultural competence</li><li>• Evaluate institutional integrity by assessing whether the mission of student affairs includes support for diversity and equity and is matched by policy and practice.</li></ul>  |

At the core of multicultural competence, the researcher concludes by emphasizing that what she observed in working with each of the co-researchers was:

- Sophisticated Intuition
- Profound Respect
- Honorable Values
- Philosophical Vision
- Passion for Change

Morales, A.H. (2003). Multicultural education and human relations: Multicultural competence 101. Retrieved February 20, 2005, from <http://www.soemadison.wisc.edu/eas/multicultural/multicultural-ed-101.htm>.

Moustakas, C. (1994). *Phenomenological research methods*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

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# Nailing Jell-O to the Wall: Capturing and Delivering a Stellar Student Experience on Your Campus

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## Douglas College (BC)

TED JAMES

What's it like to be a student on your campus? What are the key components your institution wants to promote? How could you define them? One of the Douglas College strategic goals is to position itself as a leader in creating a welcoming and engaging environment where the student experience and learning are paramount. To achieve that goal, the College embarked on an institution-wide process to define the student experience and then to implement changes that promote this experience for students.

Douglas College is a comprehensive urban community college located in metropolitan Vancouver in British Columbia, Canada. It serves approximately 16,000 credit students in career and academic programs leading to degrees, diplomas and certificates on two campuses along with large continuing education and contract training offerings. More information about the college is available at [www.douglas.bc.ca](http://www.douglas.bc.ca).

Over the past few years, the College has developed strategic planning documents designed to help the College respond effectively in an increasingly competitive landscape where institutional accountability to its stakeholders has become more pronounced. Part of this response was articulating the following goal: "The College intends to position itself in British Columbia's post-secondary education sector as having a uniquely different educational experience." The underlying imperative was to attract more students to enroll at the College and to improve their completion rates.

This is easier said than done. Much depends on student expectations of college, the experiences they actually have, and what they communicate to others about those experiences. And the characteristics of students and their expectations are changing rapidly. We are serving fewer traditional students, more part-timers, more students with special needs and with greater ethnic diversity. Those students are increasingly outcomes-focused with a stronger consumer-orientation that results in greater demand for individualized service and access to electronic formats.

We are usually much better at conveying **our** expectations of students rather than understanding and meeting their expectations of us. We regulate student behavior with codes of conduct and require students to meet deadlines for application, registration, fee payment and so on, while also determining grades and requirements for graduation. But we fall short in establishing what students can expect to receive in return: for example, we lack standards of service that make promises on how quickly a student inquiry will be answered, or guarantees on the students' access to resources on campus, such as a counselor or financial aid advisor. Some may see this as unnecessary, even seditious, saying that students are not customers to be satisfied and pandered to. Others suggest this attitude in itself is a key part of the problem to be addressed.

In response, Douglas College embarked upon a process of consultation with its students and employees to determine what are or should be the characteristics of the student experience that we want to commit to achieving. A special forum for members of the Student Advisory Council was organized by college personnel to explore the experience of current students. The forum used an appreciative inquiry method focusing on positive experiences that can be enhanced rather than problems that need to be fixed. Student responses were summarized and further reduced through discussion into five key themes. Students said they wanted a campus experience that was (1) friendly and personal, (2) satisfying and engaging, (3) growth promoting/transformational, (4) relevant, and (5) supportive.

Then the College consulted with employees using a similar format facilitated by an external expert in appreciative inquiry. A day-long, cross-college forum was held where employees were asked about their understanding of the student experience and examples of where they felt the college had successfully met student needs. The employees validated the student descriptors and articulated examples of how these themes could be operationalized. Employees listed how environments, resources and programs could be better aligned with the themes, and priorities for action were established.

The next part of the process is to convert the operational characteristics into measurable levels and establish these levels as service standards so that each employee understands what the College is wanting to commit to as levels of service. Concurrently, the College needs to provide increased staff training about these standards and how to meet them, as well as to communicate these standards to students so they know what they should expect of the College. Finally, the College needs to collect data on service performance, and then to benchmark that performance against those of competitors to compare how well the College is meeting its goal of being a leader.

Douglas College is still in the process of achieving this last part of the process and will report out on its progress over the next year. To date, the College has successfully launched a process for validating the expectations of its students and committing to meeting those expectations. That process is readily applicable to other colleges and can easily be replicated.

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# Two-Year College GLBT Students and the Gene Roddenberry Cloaking Device

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## Trident Technical College (SC)

JOHN JAMROGOWICZ

More so than at four-year residential colleges, even “out-of-the-closet” Gay Lesbian Bisexual Transgendered (GLBT) students at non-residential two-year colleges may be nearly invisible. Perhaps consequentially, perhaps causally; of nearly 300 colleges and universities on a “Safe Zone/Allies Programs Campuses” listing by the National Consortium of Directors of Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgender Resources in Higher Education in December, 2006—only eight were two-year institutions!

Did *Star Trek* creator Roddenberry leave two-year college GLBTs a working model of a Klingon cloaking device? Should we “uncloak” them? Can we uncloak them? And, if yes, how? Assuming that up to 10% of a two-year non-residential college’s population may be GLBT, that they typically span the other demographics associated with how we “group” students (and, in fact span a much wider age range than their counterparts at a four-year residential college), and that at least some of the barriers to their access to and success in post-secondary education may be uniquely associated with their sexual orientation; then the student affairs practitioner may have multiple student development, ethical, and enrollment management reasons for wanting to provide effective programs and services to these students. Information provided in this session included several reasons two-year non-residential college GLBT students may be “cloaked,” what considerations student services professionals may weigh as they decide whether they should “uncloak” them, and what resources would be necessary to accomplish and then sustain “uncloaking.”

For those of you who may be “*Star Trek*-challenged,” the Romulans (from one stellar empire) invented—and the Klingons (from another stellar empire) more regularly appeared in episodes using—a “cloaking” device that enabled their starships to blend safely into the background of space and stars. They could reveal their ships when they were ready or wanted to do so. GLBTs have their own version of a cloaking device: the closet. Being “in the closet” can allow a GLBT to blend safely into the background of daily life and reveal his/her sexual orientation only when and to the extent he/she wants to do so.

However, when a Klingon vessel used its cloaking device, it also encountered certain disadvantages. Using the device drew heavily on the ship’s energy production. In fact, so much so that—depending on the particular generation of the device in that particular episode—the ship may not be able to reach full warp speed. Or, it may not be able to power its defensive shields. And/or it may not be able to fire its weapons. In short, it was not able to fulfill its mission or fully utilize its assets. Furthermore, if the ship’s cloaked presence could be deduced (that pesky photon trail, for example) by some Federation starship captain like Kirk or Picard, then it was completely without protection from the Federation’s weaponry. So, too, can a closeted GLBT find himself/herself at certain disadvantages. Even a closeted person may inadvertently “out” himself/herself (by

leaving some kind of “photon trail”) or be “outed” by someone else. Closeting may prevent the person from developing coping skills and self-esteem that a sudden, unexpected “outing” may immediately require. A closeted person may feel unfulfilled or incomplete while in the closet. Or, he/she may be comfortable and feel safe, but arguably, simultaneously being closeted and engaging in “outside” activities places higher demands on and even saps one’s emotional, physical, and intellectual energies.

So, let’s say that as data-driven practitioners, student services professionals complete a needs assessment, conduct a climate survey, and document anecdotal evidence; all of which suggest that the college’s GLBT students (ranging from those who are fully and comfortably “out” to those who are closeted and interested in “de-cloaking,” to those who are comfortably closeted and wish to remain so) have unmet developmental, programmatic, educational, and/or social needs. Attempting to meet those needs, however, will mean dealing with the racial, age, gender, ethnic, political, and religious diversity that exists within the mythically monolithic “gay community” itself. It will involve dealing with many, and perhaps all, of the same cloaked/uncloaked issues among faculty or staff volunteers, advisors, or sponsors that may be found among students. And, it can literally involve physical and emotional safety issues for everyone.

### **Some Resources:**

ACPA Standing Committee for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgendered Awareness  
[www.myacpa.org/sc/sclgbta/organization.cfm](http://www.myacpa.org/sc/sclgbta/organization.cfm)

Gay, Lesbian & Straight Education Network  
[www.glsen.org/cgi-bin/iowa/all/about/index.html](http://www.glsen.org/cgi-bin/iowa/all/about/index.html)

NASPA Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender (GLBT) Issues Knowledge Community  
[www.naspa.org/communities/kc/community.cfm?kcid=7](http://www.naspa.org/communities/kc/community.cfm?kcid=7)

Project SAFE, North Carolina State University  
[www.ncsu.edu/safe](http://www.ncsu.edu/safe)

National Consortium of Directors of Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgender  
Resources in Higher Education  
[www.lgbtcampus.org](http://www.lgbtcampus.org);

*Star Trek*; Ex Astris Scientia, Bernd Schneider  
[www.ex-astris-scientia.org/treknology1.htm#C](http://www.ex-astris-scientia.org/treknology1.htm#C)

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The list was modified through the removal of one duplicate US institution and four Canadian institutions, correcting one from “Canada” to “UT,” and correcting one from no state to “PA” on the original at [http://www.lgbtcampus.org/faq/safe\\_zone\\_roster.html](http://www.lgbtcampus.org/faq/safe_zone_roster.html) that was last updated on December 6, 2006.

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# Steering in the Same Direction: The Importance of Academic and Student Affairs Relationships to Student Success

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## Ivy Tech Community College (IN)

BRYAN D. NEWTON

JAMES O. SMITH

When key individuals work at cross-purposes in any organization, the results can be devastating. Community colleges in particular are vulnerable when the leaders of its two primary functional areas, that is academic and student affairs, are not strategically aligned. Since community colleges are more influenced by market forces than public and private senior institutions, the organizational alignment is vital for both the success of the students, as well as the college. Navigating the conflicting experiences, personalities, and priorities of professionals from both academic and student affairs can often be the lynch pin to ensuring that leaders, the students, and the college achieve their maximum potential.

In this presentation, we explored why academic and student affairs' professionals view their professional roles differently and how this dichotomy can negatively affect student learning. We then discussed how good relationships coupled with an aligned vision among academic and student affairs' leadership contributes to overall student learning and success, as well as an improved college image that may influence student enrollments and transfer opportunities to senior institutions.

### Research

Gray (1989) postulates that collaboration is “a process which parties who see different aspects of a problem can constructively explore their differences and search for solutions that go beyond their own limited vision of what is possible.” Thus, in higher education, Academic and Student Affairs represent organizational “stovepipes” not preordained to operate with a seamless alignment for the benefit of student learning and persistence. In addition, community colleges operate in an environment whereby they provide students an educational commodity without the benefit of product branding.

In the most recent national study identified, Kezar, Hirsch, and Burack (2002) noted that high levels of collaboration existed between Academic and Student Affairs in regards to counseling, first-year experience programs, orientation, and recruitment. However, much of the literature and continuing research assesses collaboration by the number of “joint events” on campus. This approach provides little insight into the competencies that must be developed by the faculty and staff for the benefit of the students.

Collaboration must be more than joint events, increased communication, or mutual informing. Collaboration must add strategic value that differentiates the institution from others.

**Results:**

Collaboration at Ivy Tech Community College–Bloomington has produced the following results:

- Double-digit enrollment growth for 10 straight semesters, nearly doubling the headcount of the college. Ivy Tech–Bloomington was named the 3rd fastest growing community college of its size in the nation by *Community College Week*.
- Increased associate degree graduates by 62%.
- Produced a residential-based partnership called *Hoosier Link*, student life, and civic engagement partnerships with Indiana University.
- Increased credits that transfer with our primary four-year partner (Indiana University) from 39 to over 400.

Gray, B. (1989). *Collaborating: Finding common ground for multiparty problems*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Kezar, A., Hirsch, D., & Burack C. (Eds.). (2002). Understanding the role of academic and student affairs collaboration in creating a successful learning environment: No. 116. *New Direction for Higher Education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

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# How to Follow the Leader

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## Virginia Community College System

JENNIFER ALLMAN

Student development personnel are often faced with a lack of student leaders to fill critical roles in student government and campus/civic organizations. Approximately fifteen years ago, Virginia Community College System (VCCS) office staff recognized this need and initiated sponsorship of an annual statewide Student Leadership Conference. This “grow our own leaders” venue is an opportunity for VCCS students and student services personnel from the 23 VCCS colleges and the 40 campuses to network, attend educational and professional development workshops, and participate in various leadership opportunities.”

The conference opens on an early Fall semester Friday afternoon featuring a nationally-known keynote conference speaker (for example, Jason Dorsey, author of *Graduate to Your Perfect Job*, *Violence Not Allowed*, *50 Ways to Improve Schools for Under \$50*, and *My Reality Check Bounced*). The opening session is followed by dinner and entertainment, for example, a comedian, a dance with a disc jockey, game shows, and the VCCS Idol Contest. Saturday’s sessions are kicked off by another nationally-recognized motivational speaker who sets the tone for the day. Participants are then offered a series of concurrent workshop sessions held four times during the course of the day, with a choice of 5-6 topics in each session. VCCS student services personnel conduct the 20-25 sessions on topics such as ethics, personal finances, leadership, community service involvement, stress management, and goal setting. During the noon meal, a student leader selected from each of the 40 individual campuses is recognized by their peers at a special event, The Student Showcase. (Students must have maintained a balance of a proven academic record, co-curricular merit, and community involvement to be selected for the showcase award.) Saturday night ends with either a “sit-down” dinner or participants have dinner on their own at a local restaurant. Planned entertainment usually follows for those who wish to participate. Sunday morning’s programming begins with breakfast and a question-and-answer session with the VCCS Chancellor. Another nationally known keynote speaker further inspires the audience to return to their campuses to implement their newly acquired skills. Throughout the three-day conference, committee members offer spirit activities and door prizes to keep the audience engaged.

Under the direction of the VCCS Director of Student Support Services, the conference is planned and conducted by a committee of 10 to 15 representatives from the annual host college(s) and other student services personnel from several of the other colleges. Committee membership varies from year to year. The initial planning session is held approximately eight months prior to the conference. At this time, the committee selects a conference theme. This year’s theme was “Leaders Under Construction,” while the 2006 theme was “Reaching their Peak: 40 Years of Creating Leaders.” Concurrent session topics/titles presented reflect the overall conference

theme. Examples of individual committee member/college responsibilities include securing and scheduling keynote and concurrent session speakers and arranging conference audio-visual needs, meals, and logistics. Several face-to-face committee meetings and telephone conferences precede the conference.

Initially, the conference was intended for each campus student activities coordinator and several campus student government officers/students who were interested in discovering and developing their leadership skills. The original meeting was attended by fewer than 100 persons for two days. The conference now boasts attendance of more than 325 participants in a three-day format and is held at a different location each year around the state so that all VCCS colleges can participate. Not only have the number of participants increased, but so have the number and caliber of speakers—using only a select group of well-known speakers/instructors within the VCCS with a mixture of national keynote presenters such as book authors and inspirational and motivational experts. Local and state-wide political figures also participate by offering welcomes or conducting concurrent sessions.

Since funding usually precludes college student leaders from attending national leadership conferences, a concerted effort has been made to offer a quality conference while maintaining an affordable registration fee that is not prohibitive for the colleges. For the 2006 conference, the registration fee was only \$75.00 per person, while meal costs alone exceeded \$125.00 per person. Given the positive reaction to the last several conferences, the VCCS Council of Presidents (consisting of each president from the 23 colleges) approved supplementing the registration fee from their individual college budgets based on an FTE student fee so that the 2007 conference could continue at its current level of quality programming. Limited outside sponsorship has been obtained for the last two years of the conference, with Northrop-Grumman being a conference sponsor for 2007.

The VCCS has made a commitment to offer a quality statewide conference consisting of excellent keynote speakers, concurrent sessions on a variety of topics, and fun opportunities where students can interact and exchange ideas about campus, state, and national issues.

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# A Preview of Student Learning Outcomes Assessment in Student Affairs

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## Morgan State University (MD)

CHRISTINE JOHNSON MCPHAIL

MURIEL BASKERVILLE THOMPSON

This study identifies learning outcome assessment practices reported by Chief Student Affairs Officers (CSAOs) to be in use in community college student affairs divisions. The Middle States Commission on Higher Education's publication *Assessing Student Learning and Institutional Effectiveness: Understanding Middle States Expectations* (2005) clarifies for institutions the Commission's expectations for *Standard 14: Assessment of Student Learning*. These expectations were introduced as the conceptual framework to assess the extent to which current learning outcomes assessment practices in student affairs were aligned with the Standard 14 principles. The study measures the perceptions of CSAOs in a case-study state in the Mid-Atlantic region of the United States.

Respondents revealed that there was a wide range of student learning outcomes assessment practices in place in student affairs divisions, but a major gap existed between these practices and Standard 14. Research indicates that student learning outcomes assessment is a relatively new paradigm for student affairs in community colleges. It involves making expectations explicit and public; setting appropriate criteria and standards for learning quality; systematically gathering, analyzing, and interpreting evidence to determine how well performance matches those expectations and standards. Learning outcomes assessments practices were compared among all college typologies (urban, suburban and rural) and size of institution. When the three typology groups were compared to each other, it was noted that each college was making some progress toward establishing learning outcomes assessment practices. No apparent differences were observed based on size. The colleges' implementation practices demonstrated a focus on their local values and missions with minimum attention to the principles of Standard 14.

In summary, there were few differences between the level of implementation of learning outcomes assessment practices based on college typology and size. Major findings of this study highlighted the following: (1) a gap between existing student affairs' learning outcomes assessment practices and Standard 14; (2) most of the colleges practiced some form of goal assessment; (3) colleges used assessment to inform student learning plans; (4) no apparent differences between colleges assessment practices based on college typology and size of institution; and, (5) there was no collective efficacy in the development of a learning outcomes assessment process in student affairs, even in those institutions that participate in the statewide student affairs coordinating committee.

In the contemporary community college, the student affairs divisions must be able to demonstrate how its programs and services contribute to student learning and the overall effectiveness of the institution. It is apparent from this preliminary study that there is a need for expanded research to further explore how student affairs might develop and implement learning outcomes assessment practices to obtain greater congruence with Middle State Commission on Higher Education's expectations.

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# Looking for Retention Models: Athletics and Persistence

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## Northern Essex Community College (MA)

NITA M. LAMBORGHINI

Between 1998 and 2006 the retention rate among student-athletes at Northern Essex Community College increased 14%. Twice during that time period the retention rate reached 100%. While athletic programs may be the last place on campus most people might look for high retention rates, at Northern Essex Community College athletics and student academic success go hand in hand.

The Athletic Department Retention Program was developed in 2002–03 in response to high student-athlete attrition. Despite existing efforts like a Progress Report Card Program and a new President’s Cup Award for team academic achievement, the fall-to-spring retention rate among student-athletes was only slightly higher than for other full-time degree seeking students.

A mandate was established by the Athletic Department to build a culture of retention based on the norms, values, and symbols that send a clear message, “Academics Come First.” This more comprehensive approach to student success focused on three major areas: (1) Changing students’ habits; (2) Adding to students’ academic “tool kits”; and, (3) Expanding students’ horizons.

To change students’ habits the Report Card Program was revised and strengthened; study hall sessions were implemented, and academic advising gained new prominence. Students’ “tool kits” were bolstered through the scheduling and presentation of various workshops that facilitate student success including time management, study skills and goal setting. To expand students’ horizons various departments across campus, including the Career Planning and Advising Center, the Financial Aid Office, and the Alumni Office were asked to talk to student-athletes about planning for the future.

In addition, the Athletic Director and coaches were critical to the Retention Programs’ success. They reinforced the idea that “Academics Come First,” by treating student-athletes as students first and athletes second. In doing so they became important role models for student success.

In 2002–03 the fall-to-spring retention rate improved to 95%, and in 2003–04 it increased to 98%. In 2004–05 it reached 100%, and dipped to 98% in 2005–06. The improvement in student-athlete retention was followed by increased athletic success. Last year the fall-to-spring retention rate for student-athletes again reached 100%, five student-athletes were named Academic All-American, and all eight varsity teams qualified for postseason play.

The Northern Essex Community College Athletic Retention Program is a retention model consisting of five elements: (1) small cohesive groups; (2) a set of clear overarching values evident in norms, values and symbols; (3) values consistently modeled by respected leaders; (4) programs that help students develop and practice academic skills and that add to their “tool kits”; and (5) programs that help expand students’ horizons. This model may be replicated, in whole or in part, in other parts of campus, especially where small cohesive groups and respected leaders already exist, such as student clubs and organizations and learning communities.

Recent research makes clear that students who are more engaged on campus are more successful, and that contact with and support from faculty, staff and other students is very important. Athletic programs on community college campuses, especially those in Division III, provide a unique setting where student success and retention may be fostered. The Northern Essex Community College Athletic Retention Program can serve as a model for others to follow.

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# Creating Community Between Student Services and Academic Affairs

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## Trident Technical College (SC)

DAPHNE HOLLAND

It is important that student services practitioners possess a comprehensive understanding of the importance of efforts to increase communication and learning between student services and academic affairs. They must also understand student development theories. “Student development theory describes how students change, grow, and develop as a result of the college experience” (Helfgot, 2005, p. 7). In addition, the inferential theory of learning “stresses the use of multitype inferences, the role of learner’s prior knowledge, and the importance of learning goals” (Michalski & Tecuci, 1993, p. 3). As a manager working in Student Affairs, I know I must understand, implement, and assess the goals of these theories.

The programs presented here provide student services practitioners three strategies to satisfy the learning and communication needs of the students and faculty within academic affairs as related to student services. The first strategy includes the utilization of a student services online tutorial CD within a college skills course or orientation course. Divided into two components, the Student Services online tutorial CD begins with a welcoming statement followed by an overview of the role of the Enrollment Management Department, which includes Orientation, Testing Services, Financial Aid, Admissions, and the Registrar’s office. The other component includes online tutorials incorporating detailed information regarding the navigation of the Trident Technical College (TTC) website, TTC Express, and Campus Cruiser, followed by an interactive quiz for each component. The multipurpose CD fosters student empowerment, enabling students to be well-informed, productive users of electronic tools and services provided by TTC. It also increases students’ understanding of the college’s policies and procedures.

Another strategy is to develop and implement a Student Services Open House for faculty. The open house allows faculty the opportunity to meet and interact with staff members within the Student Services division and obtain information about the services provided to them and the students. The purpose of the open house is for the faculty to experience the student services vision to connect as valued partners in the education enterprise and be recognized for excellent customer service and high quality, student-centered services, activities and programs.

The third strategy involves the creation of a Student Affairs curriculum template used by student services personnel to guide their in-class visits. Student services staff use the visits to explain financial aid programs and policies and to tell students about the college’s services for students with disabilities and counseling services, student employment services, graduation application procedures, etc. By visiting classrooms, student services personnel are able to build a personal rapport with students and faculty members. The collaborative effort is usually initiated by student services

staffers; however, there are instances when faculty request the special visits. Both divisions collaborate on scheduling and presenting material. The majority of in-class visits coincide with academic calendar events such as registration, financial aid application deadlines, and graduation. “By collaborating with faculty members, student affairs professionals can...make a positive difference in a critical area where many academic departments lack depth” (Lovett, 2006). By reaching out to Academic Affairs and implementing these strategies, student affairs practitioners will satisfy the learning needs and improve the communication, collaboration, and community between the two divisions, thus creating a quality learning community.

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# Supporting Reintegration of Veterans: Reducing Impediments to Education and Employment

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## Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MN)

STEVEN FRANTZ  
DON PFEFFER  
LINDA LADE

This statewide project involves the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities, the sixth largest system of two- and four-year colleges and universities in the country. The System serves over 374,000 students annually through 25 community and technical colleges located on 45 campuses and seven state universities. The System partners with the Minnesota Army National Guard and Department of Veterans Affairs (MDVA).

Our partnership with the National Guard began in 2002 when we provided online courses to soldiers deployed to Bosnia and Kosovo. The Guard Online Project forged the connections leading to our current partnership, energized in the fall of 2005 with the deployment announcement of 3,000 Minnesota National Guard members to Iraq. That same fall, the Guard Adjutant General shared his experiences as a returning Vietnam veteran and issued the challenge that returning veterans never again receive the same disrespect.

Colleges are observing increased numbers of mental health and learning concerns, higher college drop-out rates among returning soldiers and a new awareness of the effects of the war experience of female soldiers. Further, some veterans return with personal and relationship issues.

In partnership with MDVA, our goal is to make Minnesota colleges and universities “veterans friendly” including:

- Assisting faculty and staff on reintegration issues.
- Analyzing policies and laws to remove unnecessary impediments and to assist in developing legislative proposals.
- Improving credit transfer and developing learning experience credits.
- Providing support services on campus and on-line.
- Assisting families to reintegrate with their soldier.
- Developing collaborative programs addressing mental health and special learning needs.

We provide training to faculty and staff, develop policy and procedures, and assist in legislative proposals. We are improving information, testing, admissions and enrollment processes and are developing a network of campus veterans’ resource centers. Credit transfer and prior learning policies have been developed, and we have created or enhanced on-line services. We provide facilities to the National Guard, in support of Family Reintegration Academies and other activities.

This program is innovative in both implementation and concept due to the scope and nature of the shared journey. The change that has occurred is significant and rapid. Higher education is one component of the total vision for veterans' reintegration.

We use a variety of measures to view progress. Our System serves about 4,000 of the 5,000 individuals receiving Veterans Affairs benefits in Minnesota. In May 2006, there were veterans' centers on three System campuses; in September 2007 there were 41 centers. Between August 2006 and September 2007 over 3,000 individuals were served in the centers. Additional achievements include:

- Establishing an on-line and international telephone information center.
- Establishing state policy to give deployed students options for course completion.
- Waiving the application fee for service member deployed overseas.
- Providing training for faculty/staff at over 30 campuses.
- Hosting and providing resources for National Guard Family Reintegration Academies.
- Conducting presentations on higher education to over 3,000 demobilizing soldiers.
- Cosponsoring with ACE state-wide training on transfer of military credit.
- Developing online training and career information on military-to-civilian transitions.

The need for replication of this effort across the country is strong and immediate. Minnesota has become a test site for the concept of soldier reintegration. We have presented to national leaders who have indicated that higher education in other states will have the opportunity to participate in similar reintegration activities.

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# Reaching Back and Moving Ahead: An Early College Partnership

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## Rhodes State College (OH)

TIM LITTELL

### **Purpose**

This early college partnership between an urban high school, a two-year technical college, and a four-year private university presents an approach for enhancing student engagement and implementing dual enrollment strategies. As higher education evolves in unexpected ways, the new landscape demands innovation and flexibility for the institutions that serve learners. In order to be successful, this partnership uses strong collaborative processes, and maximizes local and state policies and programs.

### **Need**

In the fall of 2005, students from Lima Senior High School represented the largest number of new students to Rhodes State College. However, of the top ten feeder schools, the number one feeder showed a unique difference. Two-thirds of students enrolling from the top feeder schools were under the age of 25, while two-thirds of students from the number one feeder school, Lima Senior High, were over the age of 25. What was happening to make these students delay their college enrollment?

This program strives to prepare all students for post-secondary education by changing the conversation from, “Am I going to college?” to “Which college am I going to, and what am I going to study?” The program had to be flexible enough to meet the unique needs of individual students, while maintaining the rigor necessary for college work. Also, to have any chance for success, the program had to be a collaborative effort between the school, the colleges, and the community.

### **Organization**

All students from grades 9–12 participate in this early college program. Approximately 25 students from each grade are enrolled and represent a heterogeneous cross-section of the student body, including students whose test scores and GPAs may not accurately reflect their academic ability. An individualized plan is developed for each student. Throughout the school year, each class meets weekly with college faculty and community organizations. Some sessions include college course work for credit. Freshman students earn college credit for an integrated college study skills course. Sophomores enroll in a public speaking course for college credit. Juniors and seniors branch off into individual interests enrolling dually at the colleges and the high school. In addition, students take monthly trips to colleges in Ohio to learn about academics and financial aid, and they take campus tours. Students participating in the early college program travel to district middle schools to mentor fifth and sixth graders. Colleges provide student tutors for students who need additional help in content areas.

**Impact**

Forty-five students began the early college program in August 2005 (23 tenth graders and 22 ninth graders; 52% Caucasian, 45% African American, and 3% Hispanic). The students' average ACT writing score was 24. In May, the average ACT writing score was 31. Today, nearly 100 students are participating in the program, and test scores on the Ohio Graduation Tests show marked improvement. The students' spring 2006 scores showed significant point differences from their peers on all sections of the test including reading (+18.5), math (+23.7), social sciences (+19.4), and science (+36.8).

**Advice to Others**

You can use existing college policies and programs to craft an early college program that works for your community. Examples include credit for advanced standing, credit for experience, non-academic learning and proficiency, special status and non-degree seeking status. You can work with your scholarship committee to develop tuition funding resources. You can consider a curricular integration of the college's first-year experience course with the high school success course, if they have one. If they don't, you can help them craft one.

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# Career Management by Menu

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## John Wood Community College (IL)

SUSAN DEEGE

### **Need: Diverse Students, Diverse Needs**

The Career and Advising Services Office assists traditional and nontraditional students as well as community members in job search activities. The ever expanding diversity of these populations has been challenging to the department, whose staff also teaches structured and online career management courses. Credit classes and departmental workshops serve very different individuals needing very different career-related services. Examples include dislocated workers retraining in a new field, traditional age students with little or no work experience, and individuals with background issues returning to the workplace. Some topics, such as background issues, have very limited audience interest, and are so sensitive that meaningful discussion can be difficult. However, those topics are often the big “elephants” in the room. Simply providing resume, cover letter, and typical job search advice does not get to the *real* concerns such as “Am I too old?” or “I am so inexperienced, how can I compete?”

### **Strategy: To pick and choose employment issues**

Solutions were found through coordinating web resources. The departmental website was expanded to allow all visitors—students and community—to choose from a list of topics most pertinent to each individual’s needs. Links are provided to quality web sites that address job search topics, and the list is ever expanding. Course materials include simple five- to ten-question quizzes for students to self-test themselves, and the website has been updated to provide that option to community visitors. Widely used textbooks, such as J. Michael Farr’s *The Very Quick Job Search*, are cited and recommended as resources for future student exploration. The website also includes a phone and email contact for those wishing to make an appointment with a job/career advisor.

### **Impact: Positive Feedback and More Involvement**

Student feedback has been very positive with the special topics often mentioned as “strengths” in class evaluations. The accessibility of the materials to the campus community has also increased feedback and interest on the part of career and technical education departments in terms of providing specific job search advice to their students.

**Ongoing Improvements: The List Grows**

The initial list of tailored topics includes: Background Concerns, Age Concerns, Poor Work History, Switching Careers, and Illegal Interview Questions. Topics being added include: Appearance Concerns, Interviewing Stage Fright, Returning to Work after Motherhood, Returning to Work after Health Problems, and Getting a Job after Being Fired.

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# Community College Student Experience of Math Anxiety

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## Edmonds Community College (WA)

PETER G. SCHMIDT

Many sources highlight the poor performance of U.S. students in mathematics. The National Commission on Mathematics Science Teaching declares less than one-third of all U.S. students perform at or above “proficient level” and similar findings can be found on the National Assessment of Education Progress, 1992. On the Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), conducted between 1995-1997, eighth and twelfth graders scored below the international average. Similar results were found on the TIMSS-Repeat (1999), involving 38 other nations. The U.S. Departments of Labor, Education and Commerce highlight the need for a trained and competent workforce.

It is clear math literacy is essential to being informed about understanding weather, stock reports, cloning, DNA as evidence, the development of new drugs, chemical and biological terrorism, nutrition, e-commerce, and global warming. Global Positioning Satellite systems, modern equipment and weaponry, and communication systems all require mathematical skills. Learning mathematics imparts an understanding that the world is predictable, and contains pattern and logic.

What are the factors that contribute to the poor performance of our students? One major influence is math anxiety.

The experience of the community college student with math anxiety was explored, using grounded theory as a methodology, at a northwestern community college. In-depth interviews were conducted with participants scoring one standard deviation above the mean on the Math Anxiety Rating Scale. Each interview, after a series of coding processes, gave rise to eight phenomena or themes that are supported by quantitative literature:

- Disrespecting/Humiliation and Fear-Based Instruction (Math Authority Fear);
- Disbelieving or Abusive Parents (Primarily Fathers);
- Turbulent Home Life and Parental Conflict;
- Major Life Transition (Moves, Divorce, Death);
- Math-Me Inadequacy – Negative Self-Appraisal;
- Perfectionism (Control/Fear of Failure);
- Cultural and Gender Acceptance to Hate/Fail Math;
- Respectful and Supportive Instruction (Corrective Emotional Experience).

The methodology of this study doesn’t allow for generalizing the findings, yet my own personal experience counseling and teaching math anxious students has revealed how elements of these phenomena do exist in their lives. While there can be a myriad of causes for math anxiety (poor self-efficacy, self-concept, attitude, personality attributes, learning style, parents and home-life, educator preparation, instructional methodologies, math anxious teachers, no standardized national curriculum and so on), typically the math anxious student has the potential of becoming, according to

Usiskin (1993), a *mathlete*. If math anxiety is not biological in its origin, then it began in relationship to another human being, and therein is the cure! A respectful and supportive tutor and/or math instructor can make the difference by creating hope and opening new doors of opportunity.

What else can be done to assist the math anxious student? The interventions can be done at individual, institutional, and state and national levels. The following is a highlight of several recommendations from each:

### **Individual Level**

- 1) Write and analyze a math autobiography.
- 2) Assess and understand one's math anxiety, locus of control, and learning style.
- 3) Evaluate one's math study skills.
- 4) Describe and understand the physiology of stress and the fight or flight response.
- 5) Develop a list of, and practice stress relaxation strategies.

### **Institutional Level**

- 1) Uphold and instill the belief that students can be "mathletes."
- 2) Assist math faculty in believing the phenomenon of math anxiety does exist.
- 3) Educate key student services personnel (counselors, tutors, advisors) and math instructors over the psychological causes of math anxiety and to be sensitive and empathetic over the past experiences and histories of the math anxious student.
- 4) Teach intentional interviewing skills to faculty and tutors.

### **State and National Level**

- 1) Create uniform national standards for math education.
- 2) Broaden the curriculum in teacher preparation programs to include multimodal learning, manipulatives, etc.
- 3) Encourage students in teacher preparation programs to examine past experiences with math and address any anxiety or negative attitudes held by them.

Math anxiety is a complex phenomenon with myriad causes, and it is imperative that it be addressed to assist in developing a math competent workforce. Every campus has a math anxious student with the potential of becoming a mathlete. A supportive and understanding intervention by a math tutor and instructor, along with implementing strategies at the individual, institutional, state and national level, can make a difference.

Usiskin, Z., et al (1983). *Algebra: The University of Chicago School Mathematics Project*. Pearson Prentice Hall.

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**October 19–21, 2007**

The Community College Student Development Leadership Institute is dedicated to building and fostering a network among participants and facilitators. The Institute is held annually, in conjunction with the NCSD conference. Established in 2000 by the National Council on Student Development, to date the Institute has graduated 150 participants representing many states across the United States and Canada. Participants benefit by reinforcing their focus on leadership and student development theory. They also establish a network of colleagues in the student services profession.

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