

2009-2010 Strategic Planning Retreat Report Template

Student Engagement

Significant Accomplishments for the 2008-09 Academic Year:

1. Sent a team (Zarina Blankenbaker, Amy Bell, Robert Galindo, Shereé Porter, and Mary Darin) to the ESSI Institute in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Team developed three recommendations that will be implemented in 2009 – 2010. See recommendations below. SENSE results and recommendations have been discussed with Academic Council and the President's Cabinet.
2. Sent a team (Fonda Vera, NeKeith Brown, Tony Summers, Zarina Blankenbaker, Thales Georgiou, and Mary Darin) to the Achieving the Dream Kickoff Institute in Austin in April 2009. See recommendations below.
3. Tony Summers and Mary Darin discussed SENSE results with Student Development Directors at a fall 2008 workshop held at LeCroy.
4. Created a LearnLab-like classroom for DWRI program in M-145. Completed second year of course redesign initiative in developmental writing and greatly expanded the number of redesigned sections offered. Doug Wilson presented all over the country on this course redesign initiative.
5. Received THECB-funded summer bridge funds for intensive DMAT instruction for 60 current RLC students that includes supplemental instruction, math coaching, and study skills support. This grant was written by David Canine and is led by Eleanor Browne and Thales Georgiou.
6. Created the *Center for Success in Mathematics* using approximately \$100,000 from a Round One DCCCD-funded Retention Incentive Award. Faculty member, Saeid Darabadey, is the lead person for this initiative. DMAT students receive supplemental instruction in the Center and can earn points for going over tests with Center staff members.
7. Received Round Two DCCCD Retention Incentive Award funding to develop four multimedia modules all about math and math learning. Topics will include: assessment testing rationale; Accuplacer practice tests; overview of developmental math instruction and how to progress through it to college-level math; explanation of the various modes of instruction and delivery formats; how to maximize use of MyMathLab and Academic Systems; how to use a graphing calculator; math study skills; STEM careers; and math skills necessary for the 21st century, etc.).
8. Hired full-time person (*Howard Clapper*) to staff the Welcome Desk in Thunderduck Hall. Because of his previous work experience in the financial aid office, he is able to answer simple financial questions, direct students to the FAFSA workshops, and encourage students to apply for financial aid. He makes sure that students and community members feel they are welcome at Richland.
9. Dru Bookout provided customer service training to the Admissions staff during the fall 2008 semester to improve the communications skills of our staff members.
10. The Admissions web site was updated and improved and now contains our "Seven Steps for Enrollment" handout.

11. Financial Aid workshops were conducted each week for students to demystify the process and help students complete the FAFSA. Training was also provided for academic advisors.
12. E-mail blasts with information about opportunities to participate in various student clubs and organizations were sent to students in spring 2009 by the Institutional Research Office at the request of Tony Summers.
13. Advisors visited over 1,000 classes during the fall and spring semesters to explain the advisement process and to encourage students to come in early for career and educational planning.
14. A special orientation to college and to services for veterans will be conducted for veteran students in August 2009.

Major Goals and/or Activities for 2009-10 (and Beyond if Available).

1. FTIC Students and Student Engagement:
Three priorities/strategies for strengthening the college's work with entering students were identified at the *Entering Student Success Institute* in Santa Fe, New Mexico. SENSE and focus group results and recommendations will be discussed with the Councils for Teaching and Learning and Community Building and with various work groups (admissions and academic advising staff members, etc.). The three recommendations are to involve all college faculty and staff (student development, instruction, business services) in the following initiatives so that **student engagement** becomes the hub around which all programs and services are focused:
 - Develop an intensive introduction to the college that includes both an on-campus orientation and an improved online orientation that requires active student participation. Use SENSE survey results to assure we include programs and services that students were unaware of such as tutoring and student clubs and organizations.
 - Develop a strategy to assure that all college faculty and staff recognize that student engagement is a part of their job responsibilities. Involve faculty members in ways that promote student/faculty engagement such as attaching the list of campus resources to their course syllabi, promoting the use of these resources, and being involved in orientation activities.
 - Develop processes and procedures to help students determine academic goals and/or learning plans. Incorporate these in the new pre-Core Learning Frameworks course (LRNG 1300).
2. Achieving the Dream Recommendations/Goals:
 - Create a new AtD *super* team focused on student engagement/success/retention chaired by faculty members (Amy Bell and NeKeith Brown). Determine levels of support required for core team co-chairs. Finalize team members. Team should: (1) review policies and procedures that impede student success; (2) consider consolidating current student success efforts to eliminate redundancy; (3) determine whether faculty and staff have the information they need when they need it; (4) work on a paradigm of student success to share with faculty and staff; (5) involve adjunct faculty in AtD with possible discipline specific expectations; (6) discuss the creation of advisory committees (or something similar) for developmental education and transfer programs; (7) discuss improving the current orientation of new faculty; (8) discuss methods to address issues with poor student classroom behavior; (9) conduct focus groups with faculty and service area community partners; (10) discuss practicing equity for student success; and (11) consider potential pilot programs.

- Institutional Research Office will: (1) produce initial data tables for core team discussions; and (2) separate RCHS students out of DMAT data/
 - Prepare for visits in fall 2009 and spring 2010 of our AtD coach (Dr. Mary Ellen Duncan) and data facilitator (Dr. Marisol Arredondo).
 - Have courageous conversations with faculty and staff concerning student success data.
3. Three RLC staff members (Gary Duke, Becky Jones, and Mary Darin) are serving on the District team charged with the creation of the new pre-Core *Learning Frameworks* course (EDUC 1300) that will be required for all new degree-seeking DCCCD students. Becki Williams is also routinely meeting with this team. Although the course will not be offered for the first time until fall 2010, the creation of the course, decisions about number of sections of offer, preparation of the faculty to teach the course, etc. will all happen during the 2009 – 2010 academic year. It is believed that this course will provide the foundation for student success in core courses and will connect students to the college in significant ways.
 4. Effective fall 2009, *first time in college* (FTIC) students will be assigned to individual full and part-time academic advisors after their initial visit to the Advising Center. Advisors will contact each of their students by week three of the semester to discuss academic goals and initiate the development of a learning/educational plan.
 5. Orientation for veteran students and other programming for veteran students will be further developed. Possibilities include the creation of a new VA Center separate from Financial Aid that will centralize all services for veterans and dependents, including: counseling; mentoring; VA Student Club; orientation, benefit certification; and educational/social/therapeutic groups.

Major Challenges to the Accomplishment of 2009-10 Goals.

1. We are understaffed in advising to deliver what students want, which is help determining academic goals and developing strategies and plans for learning. The EDUC 1300 Learning Frameworks and HDEV 0092 Student Success courses will be appropriate venues for student exploration of goals and for the development of formal learning plans. Until students are able to take EDUC 1300, advisors will need to work either individually or in groups with the FTIC students assigned to them.
2. We most likely will need supplemental funding to support campus-based orientation for students and to develop an effective, engaging online orientation for students. The teams will need to communicate their needs to the appropriate VP's.
3. The FTIC student engagement and AtD initiatives must be coordinated to be effective. Also team leaders and members need to be able to commit sufficient time to this work.
4. If the *Center for Success in Math* successfully increases student success/retention rates, we will need to find a way to fund it once the District funding ends.

Report Submitted By: Mary Darin