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**ABSTRACT**

This report of a national colloquium on promoting community college student success summarizes group discussions and provides the texts of six colloquium presentations. Chapter 1, "Leadership Strategies for Student Success: Issues and Challenges in the Community College," reports on small and large group discussions which sought to define student success, identify relevant issues, and make recommendations for action. The six presentations are given in chapters 2 through 7. They are: (1) "The Matrix Concept: Empowering the Student Development Professional," by George A. Baker, III, which recommends a restructuring and redesign of student services; (2) "Using an Assessment System to Create Student Success," by John Roth, which describes the cycle of service delivery, evaluation, and review necessary for an effective system; (3) "Computerized Student Information: One College Meets the Challenge," by Richard B. Schinoff, which describes the integrated student flow model operating at Miami-Dade Community College, Florida; (4) "Student Success: The Common Goal," by William Lindemann, which explains the planning principles and assumptions underpinning Central Oregon Community College's educational services process; (5) "Proving What We're Doing Is Working: The Student Flow Research Model," by Janis Cox Coffey, which presents an outcomes-based model for program evaluation; and (6) "Leadership for Effective Community Colleges," by B. A. Barringer, which describes the characteristics of community college leaders. (EJV)

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**TOWARD  
MASTERY LEADERSHIP:  
STRATEGIES FOR  
STUDENT SUCCESS**

Summary report of a colloquium  
held in Columbia, Maryland  
July 1987

Edited by  
Deborah L. Floyd

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# Contents

Acknowledgments	v
Introduction Deborah L. Floyd and Walter Bumphus	1
1 _____	5
Leadership Strategies for Student Success: Issues and Challenges in the Community College Deborah L. Floyd, Editor	
2 _____	15
The Matrix Concept: Empowering the Student Development Professional George A. Baker, III	
3 _____	33
Using An Assessment System to Create Student Success John Roth	
4 _____	49
Computerized Student Information: One College Meets the Challenge Richard B. Schinoff	
5 _____	61
Student Success: The Common Goal William Lindemann	
6 _____	83
Proving What We're Doing Is Working: The Student Flow Research Model Janis Cox Coffey	
7 _____	97
Leadership for Effective Community Colleges B. A. Barringer	

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Howard Community College staff helped to make this July colloquium a memorable event. Herman Thompson, Captain of Security, devoted untiring assistance to participants in making travel arrangements throughout the city and to the airport. His assistant, Sergeant Tony Washam of Pinkerton Security, was delightful indeed. Mary Collins, the Howard Community College work group supervisor, worked diligently on the conference program and volunteered a Sunday afternoon to register and welcome participants. Joan Fauble, Farida Guzdar, and Eileen Walker of the HCC Dean of Students office, typed, retyped, and photocopied all of the material for the colloquium. Because of their accuracy and timely work, each of the planning groups was able to receive typed rewrites of their paper each morning. Yvette Carney, Coordinator of Student Activities, and Anita Eames, Administrative Secretary to Student Activities, arranged an authentic Maryland crab feast (with a backup of chicken for the faint-hearted).

The conference planning committee comprised Robert Keys, Walter Bumphus, Deborah Floyd, Del Higham, Steve Herman, Michael Leymaster, Rosemary Wolley, Carolyn Williams, and John Roth. In addition to the major speakers, Dwight Burrill, Brent Knight, and Carolyn Williams served as reactors to George Baker's presentation. Colloquium participants worked in small groups to develop many of the ideas for the paper presented in Chapter 1. Group leaders included Rosemary Woolley, Mike Leymaster, Jack Selle, and Kenneth Atwater.

The presenters provided the stimulus and thought for the discussion that resulted in the student success paper. George A. Baker, III, John Roth, Richard Schinoff, William Lindemann, Janis Cox Coffey, and B. A. Barringer were excellent presenters on various subjects related to the main theme. Each of the conference participants provided insights on various aspects of ensuring student success in the community college. Participants included:

Kenneth Atwater  
Jackson State Community College  
Tennessee

George Baker  
University of Texas at Austin  
Texas

Bob Barringer  
Brookdale Community College  
New Jersey

Billy Bates  
East Wyoming College  
Wyoming

Donald Beach  
Mercer County Community College  
New Jersey

Walter Bumphus  
Howard Community College  
Maryland

Dwight Burrill  
Howard Community College  
Maryland

Dorie Clay  
City University of New York  
New York Technical College  
New York

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Washington

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Community Colleges of Spokane  
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Finally, I am grateful to Glenda DeLeon, Executive Secretary with the Collin County Community College District for typing several drafts of this monograph.

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## INTRODUCTION

Walter G. Bumphus and Deborah L. Floyd

This monograph is a summary of a national colloquium-- "Toward Mastery Leadership: Strategies for Student Success." Community college professionals from diverse backgrounds and settings all have a major common denominator--the challenge of promoting student success. The National Council on Student Development of the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges, in collaboration with The American College Testing Program, sponsored this fourth annual national colloquium.

During this July, 1987 colloquium, over 35 participants listened to six major presenters and participated in group discussions that resulted in a position paper. Chapter 1, "Leadership Strategies for Student Success: Issues and Challenges in the Community College," summarizes the small and large group discussions that focused on defining student success, identifying relevant issues, and providing recommendations for action. The papers prepared by the six presenters constitute Chapters 2-7.

George A. Baker, associate professor at the University of Texas at Austin and co-author of Access and Excellence, served as a presenter and facilitator for the colloquium. The focus on practical applications of administrative assistance for student success was introduced in Chapter 2 by Baker's discussion of leadership in the community colleges, including his current research on the topic. Chapters 3, 4, and 5 include examples of integrated student services models as described by John Roth of ACT, William Lindeman of Central Oregon Community College, and

Richard Schinoff of Miami-Dade Community College.

In Chapter 6, Janis Coffey, Director of Planning and Research at Los Rios Community College, presented a model that focuses on the need to measure outcomes and the importance of student services professionals to be accountable for programs toward institutional goals. B.A. Barringer, president of Brookdale Community College, described various characteristics of community college leaders in Chapter 7.

The first chapter, edited by Deborah L. Floyd as a summary of participant discussions and recommendations, is not intended to be a complete transcript or to comprehensively address the issues and challenges surrounding this topic. It is significant to highlight, however, that participants clearly agreed that predefined student goals and measurable student outcomes are key elements in assessing and planning toward student and institutional success. As a minimum, effective student success systems must include assessment, academic placement, advising, tracking and monitoring, and other effective intervention components.

Colloquium participants also agreed that creating student climates for promoting student success requires strong organizational leadership in the implementation of policies, programs, practices, and activities. Discussions, activities, and research must continue with the leadership of community college professionals if we are to maximize our potential to assure student success.



It seems appropriate that the first printing of this publication will be introduced at the time of the 68th Annual Convention of The American Association of Community and Junior Colleges, held in Las Vegas, Nevada, April 24-27, 1988. The theme of the convention is "Assuring Student Success." We hope this publication will serve as a resource and catalyst for positive action to promote student success on every community and junior college campus in the United States and Canada.

Additional copies of this monograph may be purchased for \$5.00 each from the National Council on Student Development. To order, contact Walter Bumphus, Howard Community College, Little Paxton Parkway, Columbia, Maryland 21004 (301/992-4809).

## CHAPTER 1

### Leadership Strategies for Student Success: Issues and Challenges in the Community College

Deborah L. Floyd, Editor  
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#### Introduction

The term "student success" has become quite popular in professional circles during the 1980s. This is especially true in the community college arena as evidenced by an ACT statement on Student Success as the Common Goal (Lindemann, et al., 1987), a League for Innovation statement on student success (League for Innovation, 1987), and a July 1987 national colloquium on leadership for student success. During the 1987 leadership for student success colloquium, over 35 professionals participated in discussions and listened to presentations by professional colleagues on various aspects of the topic of student success. The six presenters and their papers served as catalysts for small group discussions. In a few short days, these participants discussed major issues and challenges related to student success in the community college and proposed recommendations for action at the local and the national level.

It is significant to note that the colloquium participants did not intend for this paper to be read as a definitive, comprehensive analysis of the topic. Rather, this paper was written as a culmination of the work of four groups during an intensive effort of these professionals to identify various issues and offer recommendations on a topic that is basic to the mission of

the community college. It is the hope of this group that this paper will serve as a catalyst for thinking and action on ways to ensure student success.

### What is Student Success?

Success is a value laden term. Thus, "student success" may be viewed as student outcomes or the achievement of what the student and/or the institution value. For instance, success outcomes may be defined as high retention rates, degrees or certificates of graduation, high grades, increased self-esteem, or the development of leadership skills.

The fulfillment of the comprehensive community college mission requires that the success of students be the primary reason for institutional existence. Rouecne, Roueche, and Baker (1987) noted that community college leaders should create environments where all members of the college community believe that their very existence is to serve students. In these times of rapid change, it seems increasingly critical that all community college professionals accept the responsibility of ensuring that students are the number one priority. A commitment to this priority should be expressed by examining issues, developing plans, exploring systems, and developing procedures to ensure student success.

Because success is value laden, colleges must individually and collectively identify student goals, expected outcomes, and success measures. As Janis Coffey (1987) discussed in her description of a California research on student success, student success may be the achievement of a goal of completing one course

and may not relate to standard measures of success such as graduation.

It is significant to note that participants agreed that all students may not be certain of their goals and aspirations when they enroll. Thus, it extremely critical that leaders accept the challenge and responsibility of designing systems to help students identify their aspirations, develop plans, and guide them toward the fulfillment of their dreams.

Thus, the focus of the colloquium participants was to limit their efforts to identifying issues related to student success and to proposing recommendations. An underlying assumption of the group was that student success is best described as the achievement of student goals and aspirations. The issues raised and recommendations offered are based on a student-centered view of success (i.e., goal attainment), as opposed to a more traditional college-centered view (i.e., graduation rates).

#### Issues and Challenges

- I. A commitment must be made to student success and the belief that the student is our primary reason for existence. As simple as this issue may seem, the mission of the community college is primarily to serve students. Individual staff agendas, state and national political realities, and other barriers that might impede the focus on students as the number one priority in institutions need to be eliminated.

#### Recommendations for Action:

- A) Senior level college leadership should ensure that all employees are aware of and committed to the mission of

serving students. Leadership should ensure that this commitment is translated into practical applications.

- B) College CEO's should be held accountable for developing a student-centered environment and designating appropriate resources to carry out plans and activities.
- C) Colleges should review their mission statements and goals to ensure that their commitment to student success is explicitly stated. In order to accomplish this task, student success should be defined in pragmatic terms.
- D) As positions are filled, college staff should be hired who have a proven commitment to student success.
- E) National, state, and local governing groups should encourage and support college leaders to set goals, develop plans, and evaluate systems and efforts to promote student success.
- F) Graduate preparation programs should review their curriculums in efforts to affirm their commitment to teaching future leaders the value of student success.

II. Leadership must be provided for meaningful and effective assessment and planning activities to promote student success. To achieve student success requires that assessments of current conditions be made, an assessment of desires and aspirations be conducted, and goals or plans be developed. These activities and process steps are important for individual students and colleges alike.

Recommendations for Action:

- A) Prior to enrollment, students should have professional

assistance in the process of clarifying their aspirations and developing plans. This assessment should be in addition to an assessment of basic skills and appropriate course placement.

- B) Students should have professional assistance in developing plans to become involved in their learning. College leaders should ensure that students participate and are involved in their learning.
- C) College leaders should conduct environment assessments of the climate for student success. These assessments should be conducted by informed, sensitive critics gifted in reviewing policies, student perceptions, and other environmental factors. Organizational assessment data should be used to provide valuable insight for leadership to plan and implement change for student success.
- D) Colleges should develop an integrated "student flow" model from recruitment, through assessment and planning, into intervention and beyond leaving or graduation. This model should assist staff in planning pragmatically for student success.
- E) Colleges should include student success variables in their master plans. Progress toward student aspirations and goal attainment should be included in planning monitor systems.
- F) Colleges should develop staff development plans and activities that focus on achieving student success.

- G) State and local governing boards and leaders should support the process of student goal setting, aspiration clarification, and planning by recognizing through policies and practices that these areas are critical to student success.

III. Leadership must ensure that student success plans are implemented and that policies, programs, practices, activities, and the college climate are directed toward the implementation of student outcomes. Too often, the best plans are not implemented. Leaders need to make the implementation of individual student plans and institutional plans the highest priority of the CEO.

Recommendations for Action:

- A) Assessment scores, student goals and educational/life plans should be used to implement educational learning opportunities for students. In implementing success plans, leadership should focus on using these tools to promote the students' right to succeed, not to fail.
- B) College policies and practices that impede student success should be altered or eliminated. Data from environmental assessments should provide a foundation for implementation of certain changes.
- C) College leaders should ensure that systems, such as advising, are implemented to foster a caring, personalized environment for student goal attainment. In other words, the student must "matter" to at least one individual college employee.

- D) Students should be taught that the processes of assessment, goal setting, implementation of learning, and transfer/job seeking are integrated and a part of their overall journey toward success. Adequate resources should be allocated to achieve these process steps.
- E) Linkages between student development and instructional colleagues should be strengthened and stronger teams developed in efforts to create healthier, more productive environments for student success.
- F) College leaders should support risk takers with vision and the desire to try specialized efforts to promote success.

IV. Systems for the evaluation of student success efforts must be established. If student success is best defined as student outcomes, systems to measure and report those outcomes are a must. When possible, evaluation procedures should be designed to provide data about the effectiveness of various interventions.

Recommendations for Action:

- A) Individual and collective student successes must be documented, reported, and publicized internally and externally to learn about efforts and to encourage further activities.
- B) Colleges should develop evaluation systems that report data based on realization of student aspirations and goals and not just data on enrollment, re-enrollment, and graduation rates.



- C) College leaders should ensure that evaluation data are utilized in the review and modification of both student and institutional goals, objectives, and interventions.
- D) As an effort to reinforce accountability for student outcomes and institutional goals, colleges should develop an annual report to external populations served.
- E) College leaders should ensure that student evaluations of progress made toward the achievement of goals and aspirations is a meaningful component of the evaluation system.
- F) State and federal governing bodies and leaders should evaluate the degree to which individual community colleges promote success based on their mission. If funding is tied to outcomes, caution should be given to ensure the variables measured best represent the community college mission, not that of universities or liberal arts colleges.
- G) Researchers and graduate professors should encourage the evaluation and study of various community college efforts to promote success. Caution should be exercised, however, to ensure that the criteria and variables for defining student success are consistent with the mission and values of community college leaders.

#### Summary Comments

Obviously, every aspect of student success has not been covered in this paper. However, the group collectively thought that leadership must make commitment to student success a higher

priority. Activities of assessment, planning, implementation, and evaluation are important processes for individual students and colleges, alike.

This paper is a "back to the basics" comment on an issue that, though sometimes overlooked, is the number one focus of community colleges. Perhaps simple and basic plans, efforts, and systems are called for as community colleges forge ahead in this complex and changing society.

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## CHAPTER 2

### The Matrix Concept: Empowering the Student Development Professional

George A. Baker III

Almost twenty years ago Arthur Cohen wrote Dateline '79: Heretical Concepts for the Community College. This book dealt with his vision of the paradigm for community colleges 10 years hence. One only needs to compare his vision to the reality of 1987 to conclude that Cohen was an optimist. His view of the future in community colleges focused on curriculum and instruction because "throughout the history of the movement, the junior college has taken pride in being a teaching institution."

I mention Cohen's work here for two reasons. First, while there has been movement toward his heretical view of the future by some colleges, most community colleges have not departed from accepted beliefs or standards practiced in those halcyon days. Second, and important to the argument presented here, Cohen devoted little space to the future of student services. Did he believe that the services provided to students by a major component of the college had such limited effect on the quality of instruction that he did not need to mention this future?

It is the thesis of this writer that the functions referred to as student services must be restructured and realigned with instructional services if the collective efforts are to have greater impact on instruction and subsequently on student success. Implicit in this argument is the idea that when student services (referred to as student development in this article) are

aligned with and integral to instructional services, the student is better served and the student development professional is empowered to become a full partner in the process of assisting students to achieve academic and career goals.

In reviewing other literature of the '80s, one finds very little relating to relationships between instructional and student services. Perhaps the failure of writers to link the role of student services to instructional services is precisely the problem. Could it be that student services professionals have so strongly pursued the explicit goal of supporting students that they have missed the implicit need to support instruction and hence student success? But what does the literature say about the traditional student services structure?

O'Banion reported that one of the historical roles of the student services professional is that of regulator and that the profession came into being largely because the president needed help in regulating student behavior. C. C. Collins, in a study for the American Association of Junior Colleges, reported in 1967 that student services professionals believe that "student services should be the pivot, the hub, the core around which the whole enterprise moves."

However, when describing this conceptual core, community college writers have chosen to write about functions, categories, and responsibilities -- a classic bureaucratic approach to organizational design. It is possible that traditional descriptions and traditional behavior have resulted in student services becoming little more than a loose-knit grouping of functions

clinging to a historical mission of regulating student behavior, instead of participating with instructional professionals as full partners in the development of students. In short, a student of organizational theory might conclude that the functions of student services have become overly specialized, standardized, and formalized.

It is generally recognized that every organization of any significant size is bureaucratized to some degree and, therefore, displays routine responses based on a structure of roles and specialized tasks. To test the degree of bureaucratization of student service functions, we can ask three questions: Do student services professionals accomplish official duties within a set of official positions? (Specialization) Do student services professionals make most decisions in a rather controlled, predictable, and routine manner? (Standardization) Do rules, procedures, instructions, and communications become generally formalized over time? (Formalization)

Most experts would agree that we generally find student services personnel regulated in their work, that is, structured independently from other professionals in their specialized roles and inundated by documents and forms they are obliged to complete. Any organization that operates with rigid rules will quite likely treat its clients as pawns. In addition, when the college is more oriented to the process of collecting state funds than it is to serving students, it is usually derogatorily referred to as behaving "bureaucratically."

Several critics have noted the bureaucratic nature of student services functions in general. A particularly biased critic argued that while student services professionals see themselves as educators and purport to be interested in the holistic development of students, others in the environment see them as housekeepers, guardians of the status quo, and petty bureaucrats who sit in their offices giving warm strokes to students as the students complain about the college and its instructors.

In a recent work, Cohen and Brawer summarize why student services are not seen as making a pivotal contribution to the central mission of community colleges. Among their reasons for the difficulty of organizing student services programs into a coherent unit is the perceived lack of student involvement in and commitment to the college as a socializing factor in the student's life. However, Cohen and Brawer conclude that a major challenge for community colleges is to maintain balance among all student services and coordinate their functions with formal instructional programs in order to achieve an integrated student development concept. These writers find that most student services operations are organized to fit a time long past and they ask how this function of the college can be restructured to fit the adult, part-time, nonresident student body that predominates in community colleges. To begin, an analysis of the typical student services functions will be helpful.

There have been many attempts to divide student services into major categories. Collin, for example, who surveyed student services programs in 123 colleges between 1963 and 1965,

identified 21 essential functions. The major categories are orientation, appraisal, consultation, participation in student government, regulation, financial and job assistance, and program articulation.

A national study conducted by Roueche, Baker, and Roueche in 1984 identified the essential functions of student services, but found great variance (from 90 percent to 37 percent of the colleges) providing these essential services. In the mid-1960's the American College Personnel Association began to see higher education as a process that demanded significant alterations.

In 1972 Robert Brown published a monograph, the result of several years of consideration by the ACPA's Tomorrow's Higher Education (THE) Project. Among the conclusions of the project was that, although students undergo significant changes during their college years, the vast majority of colleges really do little to aid this developmental process. It was obvious that significant change was needed in the development of students.

We can trace the current holistic approach to student development to Brown and the Tomorrow's Higher Education Project. Through his recommendations to the ACPA, Brown ultimately concluded that the leadership of student development must become more involved in the academic processes of students. In calling for student services professionals to get into the mainstream of academic issues, he challenges these professionals to move from the extracurricular to the curricular. Such a move would clearly place the student development mission equal to and aligned with the academic services of the college.



The student development structure advocated by Robert Brown described the various functions of student development and concluded that student development activities should create a developmental setting to support student and institutional growth. The model is an obvious attempt to allow the student development concept to become the pivotal component of the college. However, neither the project nor subsequent student services publications has dealt with the organizational structure in which the student development professional could work to implement the holistic model.

Rippey reported in What is Student Development? (1981) a study conducted at the University of Texas to determine the extent to which the concepts were in place in American higher education. He named his version of THE the Student Development Model. Within his model he developed descriptive functions and structured the process to allow for "scores." In the evaluation of the extent to which essential elements are in place, he referred to the overall concept as Student Development Education, or SDE. He found that two-year colleges had higher student development scores (48.3) than four-year colleges (42.6). The score measured the extent to which student development education concepts were in place, with 80 as the highest score. In spite of the low scores discovered in the Texas study, Rippey concluded that colleges that use SDE more will have a student affairs program with greater impact and will have improved relationships, cooperation, and communication within the college. Given the low extent to which SDE is used in two-year colleges, the question

remains, how does student services move from the extracurricular to the curricular?

While student development does not need to be the core of the college, it certainly must be central in the student acquisition, matriculation, and management process. Several writers have argued that a central aspect of student development education is the assessment and placement function of the college. This function is critical since it serves to protect the quality of college-level curriculum courses and programs and to assist students in acquiring essential skills in reading, writing, critical thinking, and problem solving. This writer has argued elsewhere that faculty alone cannot be successful in meeting the diverse needs of students. Faculty have a good chance of succeeding with students when both mandatory assessment and placement function to cause students to be placed where they can succeed.

In an article developed for the 1986 ACT/NCSO monograph, Roueche, Roueche, and Baker argued for a strongly integrated student development concept. They built their systems for success around student acquisition (recruitment, marketing, and articulation with high schools and colleges), student matriculation (admissions, basic skills testing, advisement, and orientation), curriculum integration (general education core, developmental studies, and life skills), and student monitoring (academic alert, student information systems, and academic standards). They saw leadership as the key to implementing systems for student success and argued for the building of a new and powerful

structure. This structure, they argued, would allow the student services and academic services to function together to achieve more complete and successful development of students (Roueche, Roueche, and Baker, 1987).

The restructuring of the student development process would eventually place less pressure on faculty to deal with tremendous variance in student achievement and development in the courses and programs of the college. In a reconfigured structure, the obvious element of the college to protect academic quality and enhance student development is student services.

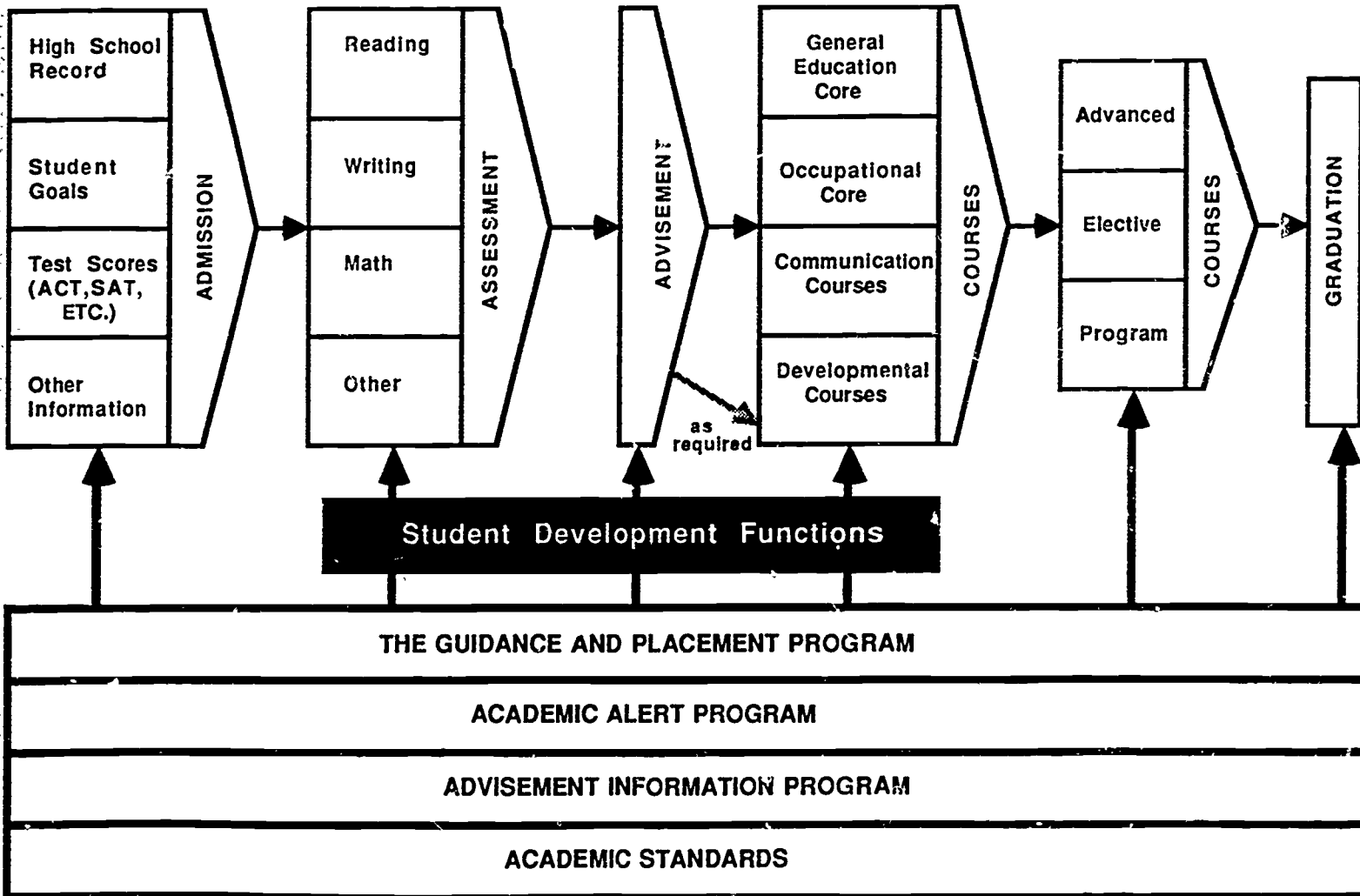
### Restructuring Student Services

One way to conceptualize the needed structure is to look at how the student moves through the college. Many colleges are now envisioning how the student moves through college toward his or her stated goal as a means of restructuring and aligning the essential functions of the college. The focus of this analysis is the development of a new general education core. Through this framework, college change agents envision a much broader system of academic support. The basic assumption behind the academic support overhaul is the consistent belief that institutional quality depends on more direction, assessment of individual skills and talents, and increased monitoring and follow-up to ensure student success. An example of a student flow model was reported in Beacons for Change (1982) and is simplified and presented as Figure 1.

This flow model depicts both the organization of the curriculum and the interface with student development functions. In

Figure 1

# Student Flow Model



this relationship student development functions or programs are designed to support and enhance learning. The student flow philosophy concentrates on individual student strengths, weaknesses, and aspirations, and constantly seeks to refine the ability of the college to respond to these individuals' needs with appropriate educational programs.

The challenge of such an individual approach is the development of functions or programs which can deal with student diversity. The individualized approach is based on the strongly held assumption that each student will experience academic, social, and personal difficulties in progressing through the college. The systems developed reach across all elements of the college and are flexible enough to accommodate each learner as an individual challenge. A brief summary of these systems appeared in the 1986 ACT monograph and will not be repeated here.

#### The Redesign of Student Services

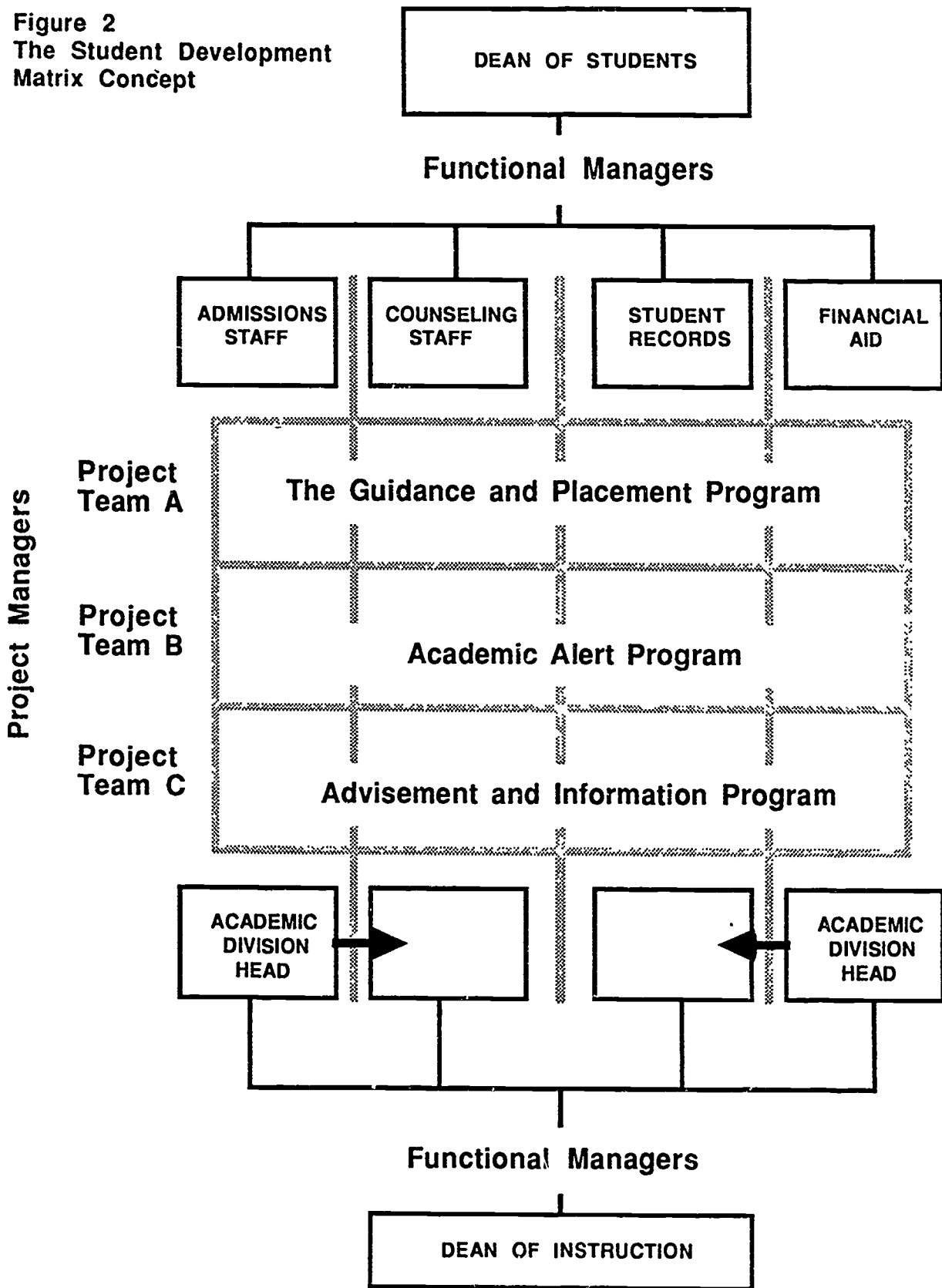
Research supports the conclusion that the typical student development element of the college is bureaucratic by design--that is, those particular services, through long and continuous response to uncertainty, have become specialized, standardized, and formalized. In the bureaucratic structure, the college is characterized by predictability, rationality, and internal efficiency (doing things right). Through this process, the typical leadership of student services has prized certainty in decision making as a hedge against a complex environment and uncertain tasks. Assume that the leadership of student services supported by the president of the college seeks an organizational

structure that can support instruction and interchange information with students and assist them as they make decisions regarding their future. To support this major assumption, a structure would be required that could place resources where and when students needed them, yet remain flexible enough to provide informational needs for the ongoing bureaucratic systems of the college. This structure would allow student services to deal with great uncertainty as to the timing and concentration of services students need. It is reasonable that predictable student services environments require a structure that is both functional in the bureaucratic sense and process-oriented in direct service to students. Yet, what is needed is a system to allow resources to be concentrated to serve student needs as the students move through the college. The organizational model that supports this need is the matrix.

In the matrix organizational configuration, a leader/manager of each project (or system) and a central coordinator of projects (dean or vice president for students) work together to achieve an integrated student development concept. Professionals are concentrated to meet student demands, and the organization responds faster to student needs for services. At other times, professionals continue to play functional roles and to provide ad hoc services to students in the traditional and more predictable mode.

Figure 2 depicts a matrix organization employing the Systems for Success concept. This structure allows for the integration of the functional roles in student development and in the aca-

Figure 2  
The Student Development  
Matrix Concept



ademic divisions, allowing both to work together to manage the processes designed to ensure institutional quality and student success. In this configuration, the student development component has primary responsibility for the systems referred to as "projects" in Figure 2. In order to ensure interface with the academic aspects of student development, the matrix design brings student services personnel into team relationships with academic functional managers. In the team configuration, faculty and other academic professionals provide information and act on information in order to motivate and cause learning and student success.

Successful systems of any type are characterized by five criteria: simplicity, flexibility, reliability, economy, and acceptability. How does the proposed Student Development Matrix Concept (SDMC) meet this five-way test?

Simplicity. The SDMC allows for the development of responsibilities and specific tasks for each unit and for each professional serving in both academic and student services components.

Flexibility. The SDMC allows for the concentration of professional energy when and where it is needed and can be modified or changed easily as student needs dictate.

Reliability. The SDMC allows for the evaluation of the quality of services provided to students and a means of gathering data and fostering interaction with students to increase the

possibility that the college can meet student needs. Economy. The SDMC is economical in that professionals are brought together into problem-solving teams in proportion to the needs of



students. Acceptability. The SDMC allows for the gradual acceptance by student development professionals as satisfying their professional needs for interesting and challenging work that is valued by students, faculty, and other colleagues.

### Dealing with Change

It is clear that the movement toward the Student Development Matrix Concept requires greater discussion and detail than space will allow in this article. Nevertheless, the idea is achievable and worth the effort. The uncertainty brought about by the new structure and the alignment will certainly require enormous efforts in reorganization and decision making to redesign job task, roles, and functions. The SDMC facilitates this change by creating a power balance between academic programs and student development functions. The student development programs with their new information technologies create a dual responsibility for what happens to students and creates information for joint leadership and management. The SDMC provides an answer to two basic questions: How do student services change from the extracurricular to the curricular? How can the student development professional become empowered to better assist students to succeed? Yet, it would be naive to conclude that substantive change from the status quo is easily achieved.

The change created by the adoption of the structure will certainly call for new and different leadership and management approaches on the part of the president and the top-level leadership team. The adoption of this concept will require flexibility in the major units of the college and a

well-developed plan. College leaders must restructure the college so that change is more easily accommodated by those who will operate in the new environment. Change will certainly be dramatic and possibly traumatic for those individuals within student affairs whose task and function will be to accommodate and operate within the SDMC. The leadership team will need to involve the student development professional in all aspects of the work design, the new matrix relationship, the communications network, and student information systems.

The planned change can be accepted if those involved in it see the change as an empowerment of their role and function within the college. If student development professionals, who have often felt powerless, see the change as producing new responsibilities, some of the trauma and uncertainty can be ameliorated. The SDMC should be presented as meeting the needs of the institution and the student through the development of new competencies by the student development professional.

Structuring for planned change can help the college position itself for better student success by developing a high level of trust between the major elements of the college, by providing for open communication, by confronting conflict, and by establishing a team within the two major divisions of the college.

The Student Development Matrix Concept can help accomplish the benefits mentioned above. The structure is not an end in itself, however, only a process for serving students more powerfully. Thus, the prevailing climate must eventually embrace the new structure. If the college climate and culture are not

moving in a positive direction, the SDMC will eventually be rejected and change will not be possible. Change is more apt to be permanent when the top leadership team is directly involved in the process and constantly verbalizes a commitment to the SDMC both within and outside the college. The president's unique position in the college must be used to ensure that deans and vice presidents are directly involved in the change. When the top level team is directly involved in change, the perception of what is occurring will be more accurate and will allow for direct intervention in the change process.

The student development professionals must also be directly involved in and visible in the change effort. Their values and orientation towards the SDMC must be in agreement and aligned with those of top leadership. When change is so important and so difficult to sustain, every visible signal must be positive.

In a future where continued public confidence will be necessary for the full realization of the community college dream, major changes in the organizational structure of the student development element of the college becomes a high priority strategy. This analysis has examined the traditional pattern of tasks and organization of student services, and has proposed the Student Development Matrix Concept to allow student development professionals to actually accomplish different and more professional tasks that are more directly related to the current needs of students. The solution to an age-old problem is a relatively new student services configuration seeking credibility at a time when change is certainly justified. This article has

not dealt with the challenge of integrating new information technology into the culture of the community college. Nor has the writer addressed the issue of whether student services should be organized under or equal to instructional services. The matrix organization tends to diffuse the organizational chart issue and make obsolete the argument of the student services role in relation to the academic structure. Perhaps the greater concern is how strongly student services professionals will embrace the need to change the current role and functions of student services. One thing, however, is certain: without the total commitment of the student development professional, significant and lasting change will not occur.

Change will be difficult because most traditional college leaders are accustomed to well-defined tasks, single and simple goals, well-guarded jurisdictions, and strong formal authority flowing from well-developed norms of organizational behavior. But the demands of the times cry out for new approaches and the rewards are well worth the risks.

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## CHAPTER 3

### Using An Assessment System to Create Student Success

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With an educational background focused on counseling psychology, and having worked with community colleges on behalf of a major testing company for the past fifteen years, I am well aware that the word "test" can frequently strike fear into the hearts of many students who approach the community college. On one hand, these students see the open-door college as an educational institution that provides promise of new opportunity for educational and occupational development. On the other, many students can recall testing experiences which left the feeling that the activity was more for the benefit of the institution than the student. Thus, the use of an assessment system must be accompanied by careful thought and planning so that the participant sees and experiences positive outcomes from the service.

#### Access, Assessment, and Success

Ironically, the very promise of new opportunity offered by open-door colleges for students with all kinds of educational backgrounds and all kinds of educational goals means that the successful delivery of that promise to such a diverse student body almost requires the implementation of a comprehensive information system. The more diverse the student body, the

greater the institution's need for relevant information about the individual and his or her needs, if the institution is to play a successful role in effectively linking its learning and support resources with the individuals with greatest need. It is my experience that a well-designed assessment program can contribute greatly to the successful delivery of these educational opportunities, but only if the system is carefully delivered with its primary focus the enhancement of student and institutional success. I would like to discuss what I consider the necessary components of such an assessment system, along with suggestions for implementation.

#### A Student Success Quiz

To develop a perspective concerning a positive use of assessment within a student success system, it may be helpful to introduce several key ideas through a brief quiz. Each of the following items may be answered "true" or "false".

1. True or False: *Most students entering community colleges are well equipped to succeed.* Most professionals agree that this is a false statement, noting the previous educational experiences of many students do not prepare them well for success in college.
2. True or False: *Most students can be taught many things that can help them improve their chances to succeed.*

Fortunately, this is a "true" statement and there are indeed a series of concepts that we can deliver within an "entering student" seminar approach that can actively position students to think about their own success plans. In

addition, many additional services offered by the institution (study skills and time management seminars, English, math, and reading review courses, tutoring, career counseling, advising) can help the motivated student improve his or her chances to succeed.

3. True or False: *The college that successfully teaches students to succeed will itself succeed.* Certainly there are many factors that contribute to make a college succeed, but teaching incoming students how to succeed is one ingredient that can be a real plus for the institution's efforts.

### Sources of Energy for Success

In purposefully designing and delivering an assessment system to enhance success, a prime requirement is the identification of the sources of energy which can be brought into the success formula.

In a simplified model of student success, one could identify perhaps two primary sources of energy that could contribute to success--the student and the institution.

(1) *Success energy within the student.* Clearly, the strongest and most important source of energy for success is inside the student. From a psychological perspective, we must help the student recognize and apply that energy to the tasks necessary to achieve success in educational pursuits. If we can assist the students in focusing that energy on building plans and implementing activities to achieve their educational goals, then



the student's chances will be enhanced. Conversely, the student who is unable to or who chooses not to devote that energy to the educational process is the student who is less likely to succeed. To measure up as a "success support system", an assessment system designed to build success must be developed and delivered in such a way that the student is encouraged to develop a perspective of responsibility for individual success, while also clearly seeing the resources of the institution as created for the purpose of contributing to that success. The "Success Seminar" process recommended for the implementation of the ASSET Assessment system is designed to generate and focus the energy of the student on the goal of building an educational plan which can lead to the successful attainment of the student's goals.

(2) *Success energy within the institution.* The second source of energy for success is that which is available through the resources of the institution. This is the energy and resource used by the institution, for example, to create a learning resource to assist students whose chances to succeed will be increased through an improvement in study skills. The effort to develop and deliver such a resource represents one investment of institutional energy. The "passive" offering of that service to students through a descriptive statement describing the services in the catalog represents another investment of institutional energy. ~~The assessment of the study~~ skills habits of every incoming student, with an accompanying reminder of how to enroll in the study skills course included immediately on the student's assessment advising report,

represents an "active" or "intrusive" application of institutional energy. A follow-up phone call or letter addressed individually to each student with such a need represents another "active" application of energy of the institution, which could lead to greater student success. Several components of the ASSET assessment system are designed to support the active and intrusive delivery of institutional energy for success to students with identified needs, including the microcomputer support system for generating lists, labels, and letters, and the retention research reports for each campus.

#### Components of an Assessment/Success System

Because one of its functions is to assist in the identification of strengths and weaknesses, assessment can be counted on to generate anxiety; students with weaknesses in areas important to their future success will become anxious about how to achieve success in those areas. The challenge and opportunity of educators is to build an environment in which such anxiety can be turned immediately into productive behavior directed toward overcoming a particular weakness. In effect, if we help a student identify a weakness and immediately help that individual discover how the institution is organized to assist in addressing that weakness, we can create a situation in which the individual can identify action which can lead to overcoming that weakness. A solution becomes visible, allowing the original anxiety to be channeled toward a solution, rather than remaining fixated only on the original problem. Thus, with proper support and effort by

the institution, assessment results can result in a situation in which the individual will be more likely to seek and apply institutional resources and services, in combination with their own efforts, to move toward the goal of greater student success.

An assessment system that significantly contributes to a total campus plan aimed at enhancing student success must be constituted thoughtfully to reflect the needs and take advantage of the available "success energy" of both the student and the institution's staff. Following the flow of the student into and through the institution, Figure 1 outlines a series of five concept points which can be identified as potentially affecting the functioning of a student success system which includes an assessment approach. The five points represent a series of steps which describe services and processes focused on the initial term of enrollment of a specific cohort of students. The information learned about the successes and failures of this initial group of students is processed and considered so that increased or realigned resources can be applied in the following year to a new cohort in such a way as to support increased success.

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Figure 1: ASSURING STUDENT SUCCESS  
THROUGH ASSESSMENT  
STEPS IN AN EFFECTIVE SYSTEM

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- |                                       |  |   |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| 1. SUCCESS SEMINAR<br>WITH ASSESSMENT | 2. FIRST-TERM<br>EDUCATIONAL<br>SERVICES<br>DELIVERY | 3. FIRST-TERM<br>OUTCOME<br>ASSESSMENT    |
|                                       | 4. RESEARCH<br>REPORT<br>DEVELOPMENT                 | 5. PLANNING AND<br>RESOURCE<br>COMMITMENT |
- 

Step 1: SUCCESS SEMINAR To increase the benefits of the approach for students, the assessment services are often delivered as part of a 2 1/2 to 3 hour "Success Seminar," in which the assessment activity is followed immediately by discussion which highlights and reinforces methods and resources the student can use to "plan for success" at the institution. Following contact with the admissions office, and prior to registration, a "Success Seminar" combines orientation services with assessment, followed by immediate scoring and advising services, preparing the student for further individual discussion with an advisor/counselor or for immediate course registration. The seminar is lead by a knowledgeable, energetic staff member who knows students' needs and the institution's resources. The leader brings these two factors together in the context of helping the students as they build their own plans for success. The leader's energy and knowledge is a critical ingredient in the success formula.

A key focus within the seminar is the collection of information about the student's educational background, plans,

and needs. A copy of the ASSET Educational Planning Form (EPF) is shown in Figure 2 to illustrate the types of variables which can be considered. Note that the local institution can add up to fourteen items of its own to reflect local interests, needs, and resource offerings. Supplemented by performance on one or more of the sixteen assessment measures included in the system (listed on the lower left of the EPF in Figure 2), the total information set is designed to stimulate student thinking about success factors to attend to (focus on student energy for success), while providing the institution with information it can use to identify resources it may wish to feature for students with particular needs and circumstances (focus on the institution's energy for success). The EPF is a self-carboning form, immediately providing four copies of each report, one for the student, two for the institution, and one for the research report system operated by ACT. An Action Guide provides samples of advising recommendations, a success behavior checklist, a time management activity, and other suggested resources for inclusion in the locally developed "success folder" for students.

To help institutions more effectively and efficiently implement intrusive "success" services, the ASSET system includes an optional microcomputer data-base system. The software, developed and supported by ACT, scores the answer sheets and immediately prints a Student Advising Report, complete with localized course placement recommendations and references to campus support resources. The system includes "query" capabilities for use in generating lists, mailing labels, and/or

Figure 2

**ASSET Educational Planning Form**  
**BACKGROUND AND PLANS SUMMARY**

Keep the gold copy of this form with you during your attendance at the institution. Today's date 

Month	Day	Year

(Please print)

**NAME OF CAMPUS** \_\_\_\_\_

**1. NAME** \_\_\_\_\_  
Last First MI S

**Address** \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP Code \_\_\_\_\_

**2.** Student/Social Security number \_\_\_\_\_ Area code \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone number \_\_\_\_\_

**3. DATE OF BIRTH** \_\_\_\_\_  
Month Day Year

**4. IS ENGLISH YOUR FIRST (PRIMARY) LANGUAGE?**  1. Yes  2. No

**5. SEX**  1. Male  2. Female

**6. ARE YOU A VETERAN?**  1. Yes  2. On active duty  3. No

**7. ETHNIC BACKGROUND**  
 1. Black/Afro-American  4. Puerto Rican/Cuban/Other Hispanic  
 2. American Indian/Alaskan Native  7. Filipino  
 3. White/Caucasian  8. Other  
 4. Mexican American/Chicano  6. Prefer not to respond  
 5. Asian/Pacific Islander

**8. TYPE OF HIGH SCHOOL CERTIFICATE**  
 1. High school diploma Year \_\_\_\_\_  
 2. GED  3. Foreign secondary  
 3. Proficiency exam  6. Not a high school graduate  
 4. Certificate of completion  7. Still in high school

Name of high school \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ H.S. code (see list) \_\_\_\_\_

**9. CREDITS EARNED AFTER HIGH SCHOOL**  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Quarter credits \_\_\_\_\_ Semester credits

**10. HIGHEST DEGREE/CERTIFICATE EARNED AFTER HIGH SCHOOL**  
 1. Have not attended  5. Bachelor's degree  
 2. Some credits/courses  6. Master's degree or beyond  
 3. Certificate or diploma  7. Other  
 4. Associate degree

Last school attended after high school \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Institution code (see list) \_\_\_\_\_

**11. OVERALL HIGH SCHOOL GRADE POINT AVERAGE**  
 1. A- to A (3.5-4.0)  5. C- to C (1.5-1.9)  
 2. B to A- (3.0-3.4)  6. D to C- (1.0-1.4)  
 3. B- to B (2.5-2.9)  7. D- to D (0.5-0.9)  
 4. C to B- (2.0-2.4)

**12. COURSES COMPLETED AND GRADES EARNED**

	High School		After High School	
	# of years studied	Last grade received	# of years studied	Last grade received
1. English	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. Business Math	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. Algebra	_____	_____	_____	_____
4. Calculus	_____	_____	_____	_____
5. Science	_____	_____	_____	_____
6. Foreign Language	_____	_____	_____	_____
7. Computer Skills	_____	_____	_____	_____
8. Vocational Skills	_____	_____	_____	_____

**13. ENROLLMENT PLAN**  
 Term Year Time Credits planned first term  
 1. Fall 19\_\_\_\_  1. Day \_\_\_\_\_  
 2. Winter \_\_\_\_\_  2. Evening \_\_\_\_\_  
 3. Spring \_\_\_\_\_  3. Day and evening \_\_\_\_\_  
 4. Summer I \_\_\_\_\_  
 5. Summer II \_\_\_\_\_

**14. CAREER GOAL** \_\_\_\_\_  
 Type of work or name of occupation Career code (see list) \_\_\_\_\_  
 How sure are you of your choice in number 14?  
 1. Very sure  2. Fairly sure  3. Not sure

**15. INTEREST REGION** (from ACT, CPP, VIESA, DISCOVER) \_\_\_\_\_

**16. EDUCATIONAL MAJOR OR PROGRAM** \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name of first choice Program code (see list) \_\_\_\_\_  
 How sure are you of your choice in number 16?  
 1. Very sure  2. Fairly sure  3. Not sure

**17. EMPLOYMENT HOURS PLANNED PER WEEK WHILE ENROLLED**  
 1. None  2. 11-15  3. 21-30  
 4. 2-10  5. 16-20  6. 31 or more

**18. AMOUNT OF EDUCATION PLANNED**  
 1. Classes only, no certificate or degree  
 2. One- to two-year certificate or diploma program  
 3. Two-year college degree  
 4. Four-year college degree  
 5. Graduate or professional study beyond four-year degree

**19. CONSIDERING TRANSFER TO ANOTHER SCHOOL LATER?**  
 1. Two-year college  4. Not planning to transfer  
 2. Four-year college/university  5. Undecided about transfer  
 3. Other type of institution

Name of institution being considered \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Institution code (see list) \_\_\_\_\_

**20. MOST IMPORTANT REASON FOR ATTENDING THIS TERM**  
 1. Learn skills to get a new job  5. Improve basic skills in English, reading, or math  
 2. Learn skills to advance in job  6. Take courses for personal interest  
 3. Transfer to four-year college  7. Other requirements  
 4. Satisfy general education requirements

**21. PLAN TO EARN CERTIFICATE OR TWO-YEAR DEGREE?**  
 1. Yes, two-year degree  3. Undecided  
 2. Yes, certificate or diploma  4. No

**22. WOULD LIKE HELP WITH**

Yes	Maybe	No	Yes	Maybe	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**23. GRADES EXPECTED FIRST TERM**  
 1. A- to A (3.5-4.0)  5. C- to C (1.5-1.9)  
 2. B to A- (3.0-3.4)  6. D to C- (1.0-1.4)  
 3. B- to B (2.5-2.9)  7. D- to D (0.5-0.9)  
 4. C to B- (2.0-2.4)

**24. RELEASE OF INFORMATION**  
 1. Yes I hereby authorize release of this information (including assessment results)  
 2. No to other postsecondary institutions, or I may contact me about their educational programs and related opportunities.

**25. COUNSELOR-ADVISOR**  
 Name and code \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone number \_\_\_\_\_

Student's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**SKILLS ASSESSMENT SUMMARY**

	Score	Results
BASIC SKILLS	A. Language Usage Skills	_____
	B. Reading Skills	_____
	C. Numerical Skills	_____
	D. Study Skills	_____
ADVANCED SKILLS	E. Elementary Algebra	_____
	F. Intermediate Algebra	_____
	G. College Algebra	_____
	H. Advanced Language Usage	_____
CAREER SKILLS	J. Clerical Speed Accuracy	_____
	K. Space Relations	_____
ADDITIONAL SKILLS	L. Mechanical Reasoning	_____
	I. _____	_____
	II. _____	_____
	IV. _____	_____
V. _____	_____	

**COURSE RECOMMENDATIONS**

Area	Institution Recommendations		Student's Plan	
	Dept./Number	Course name	Dept./Number	Course name
English/Writing/Communications	_____	_____	_____	_____
Reading	_____	_____	_____	_____
Mathematics	_____	_____	_____	_____
Study Skills	_____	_____	_____	_____
Additional Courses	_____	_____	_____	_____

**LOCAL ITEMS**

	A	B	C	D	E		A	B	C	D	E		A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
1.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		6.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		11.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		7.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		12.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		8.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		13.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		9.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		14.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		10.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>											



letters to allow the use of "institutional energy" to support recruitment and retention activities. Institutions can also open the microcomputer system files to upload the data to the campus computerized student information system or to conduct additional local analyses of the information. Figure 3 shows a sample of the Student Advising Report generated by the microcomputer software.

Step 2: FIRST-TERM EDUCATIONAL SERVICES DELIVERY. Based on the assessed skills and needs of the student, the individual is advised by the institution to participate in specific classes and out-of-class resources designed to further the educational goals of the student. Placement into a course whose beginning point of instruction parallels the skill of the student is an example of a service delivery designed by the institution to increase the success potential of the individual. At the same time, appropriate course placement also contributes to the quality of instruction which can be delivered within the various levels of a specific curricular area. Intrusive methods of drawing students with particular interests or needs into appropriate educational support services are delivered during this first term of attendance (i.e., students with weaker study skill behaviors are specifically invited, and perhaps reinvited, by means of a letter generated by the microcomputer software, to attend a special study skills seminar; students over 25 are invited to a "returning adult" seminar through a similar use of the software).

Step 3. FIRST-TERM OUTCOME ASSESSMENT. At the conclusion of the first term of enrollment for a particular cohort of

Figure 3

ENHANCED ASSET MICROCOMPUTER SAMPLE STUDENT ADVISING REPORT

Johnson, Mary L.                      McKinley Community College                      08/15/86  
1244 Winston Avenue, Iowa City, IA 55243                      319/339-3881

A. BACKGROUND: 479-588-7611; born 03/31/51; HS grades B- to B; diploma, 1969; City High, Iowa City; 12 quarter and 15 semester credits after high school; some courses, U of Nor Iowa; veteran; English is first language.

B. PLANS: Program/major-education (very sure); enroll fall, 1986, 9 credits, day classes; interest region 9; career goal-elementary teaching (not sure); planning 4-yr degree, transfer to 4-yr college/univ (U of Iowa); plans to earn 2-yr degree; will work 16-20 hours per week; expect grades of B- to B. Info is released.

C. HELP REQUESTED/CAMPUS RESOURCES RECOMMENDED

Financial Aid    Y Finan Aid Office, Admin Bldg, Rm 309 (338-2246 ext 346)  
Learn English    M Learning Center, Walker Bldg, Rm 114 (336-1234 Ext 110)  
Reading Skills    Y Learning Center, Walker Bldg, Rm 116 (336-1234 Ext 115)  
Major/Career    M Student Develop Ctr, Floyd Bldg, Rm 100 (335-1555)  
Day Care Info    Y Support Center, Old Main Bldg, Rm 55 (335-1456 Ext 234)  
Health Problem    Y Student Health Ctr, Walker Bldg, Rm 200 (336-1500)  
Commuter Info    M Student Develop Ctr, Floyd Bldg, Rm 85 (335-1456 Ext 200)  
Work Exp Credit Y Placement Ctr, Wilson Bldg, Rm 300 (335-1553 Ext 244)

D. MCKINLEY COLLEGE FACULTY COURSE PLACEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS

MEASURE	SCORE	COURSES AND ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS
Language Usage	32	Eng 21 (36) After English 21, take English 28 and then English 1.
Reading Skills	17	Read Dev 22 (15) Will help build reading strength.
Numerical Skills	24	Math 30(29) or Acct 1(27) Take course fitting your program req'mts. Talk with advisor if uncertain about choice.
Study Skills	122	Study Dev 1 (23) Will review study skills techniques to help you succeed in classes.
Chemistry	18	Chem 1 (45) Take Chem 2 after Chem 1 if required in your program.

E. FOR ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS AND ASSISTANCE: For help with your career goal or program of study, we strongly recommend that you make an appointment early in the term with a counselor/advisor in the Career Center, room 28, Wilson Building, 337-1987.

F. LOCAL ITEMS: 1.E 2.D 3.C 4.B 5.A 6.B 8.D 12.G 13.09 14.38

G. COUNSELOR: James Arnold, 339-3526, Career Ctr, Rm 28, Wilson Bldg

Ask about our new DISCOVER computerized guidance system to help you explore your options. (No charge for this service but appointment required.) We're glad you're here. Please let us know how we may help you plan your success here at McKinley College. Your success is our goal. Best wishes.

Please keep this copy with you for use in advising/counseling discussions. Copyright 1986 by The American College Testing Program; All rights reserved.



assessed students, the institution is invited to gather two types of information concerning the students' performance (grades achieved in courses of interest to the college and re-enrollment information). This information is matched by ACT to the original EPF responses and assessment results for each student, in preparation for the development of a series of reports describing the success and retention of the students served.

Step 4. RESEARCH REPORT DEVELOPMENT. To assist the institution in providing specific, relevant information to the many partners (both on-campus and off-campus) who participate in or benefit from the campus student success system, two separate reports are routinely provided to each institution. The Entering Student Descriptive Report provides a comprehensive summary of the background, needs, assessed skills, and plans of assessed students at an institution for a specific term. National, state, and district composite reports are developed as appropriate to supplement the individual reports provided to each campus. The Returning Student Retention Report links the re-enrollment information with the original EPF responses for each individual, resulting in a comprehensive review of the retention experiences of students. The information in the report is organized to assist in identifying EPF variables which may warrant attention as part of a future plan of action designed to help more students achieve greater success. A total of six distinct patterns of retention are identified, ranging from the group of students who participated in the assessment activities but did not enroll in the institution either first or second term, to the students who

enrolled and completed the first term and re-enrolled the second term. Each individual institution receives this complete retention report based on its own students as part of the standard service.

Also available is a composite of the results for over 60,000 students attending over 100 two-year institutions. The complete retention report includes approximately 25 pages of analysis, providing a great deal of information concerning the characteristics of students who are most likely to be in a "risk" group. Identification of the characteristics of the "risk" group can lead to the development of preventive services for the future.

A second set of tables, developed in this retention report for each course selected by the individual institution, links performance on specific tests in the system to grades earned by the student in a course. These grade experience tables are designed to assist the institution in monitoring the effectiveness of the course placement rules in place at the institution. Such information assists staff in making judgments about the possible effects of adjustments in services and activities which they may wish to make periodically to increase the success of specific student groups.

To facilitate research and planning for specific target groups of students, both the Entering Student and Returning Student reports include subgroup report options. Such subgroup reports can be highly supportive of the needs of individual offices on a campus charged with responsibility for the delivery of specific services.

For example, to assist with recruiting work at key feeder high schools (including those presently sending too few students), an Entering Student subgroup report can be developed which describes the needs, plans, and assessed skills of the enrolled students who graduated from a specific high school. The information can be shared by the admissions representative with the superintendent, principal, and counselors of the specific high school, accompanied by discussions of how the college assists students with advising, skill development, honors programs, and transfer support information services targeted to the needs of students summarized in the subgroup report. By discussing the college's services in the context of the goals and needs of the high school's graduates, the process is designed to "recruit the recruiters," the high school staff who will work with future groups of potential students. Better understanding of programs and services delivered by the college will lead to additional discussion with future potential students with similar needs and goals in that high school. A similar subgroup report and discussion approach can be implemented with senior institutions where students are indicating a transfer interest, hopefully resulting in strengthened transfer support cooperation and joint services.

The subgroup report approach can also be used to provide information about the needs and goals of particular groups of students who may be the intended audience for special services. For example, a particular office or task force may be charged with the delivery of services to students age 30 and above. A

subgroup report for students age 30 and above could provide significant information about their needs, goals, and skills, possibly providing helpful information which could assist in shaping the messages and services identified for delivery to the group.

For a campus working to help faculty members in a specific department (i.e., the accounting faculty) become more familiar with the students in the program, a subgroup profile can be developed for students who have indicated they will enroll in that specific program. Faculty can then review and discuss the data profile, using it to assist them in identifying ways to increase the student success rate in that program. Each of the above examples represents the use of institutional energy in the effort to build greater student success through use of information gathered through the assessment system.

Step 5. PLANNING AND RESOURCE COMMITMENT. Through careful review of the data linking success with the needs, plans, and skills of students identified at the time of entry, the institution can identify "risk" groups of students and build plans and proposals designed to increase student success for such students. Using the same information in combination with estimates of delivery costs and the improvements resulting from specific intervention processes, the net student and institutional economic benefits of this increased success can be projected. Requests for additional resources when accompanied by such projections based on actual data, may have an advantage in the highly competitive search for funding.

## Building Success Through an Assessment System

The five steps described above represent a cycle of service delivery, evaluation, and review which can lead to enhanced delivery of success-oriented planning experiences and services for future cohorts of students. In this process, both the energy of the student and the institution are considered as powerful allies in the development of student success. Critical to this process is the role of assessment, both as a means of gathering information about the student and the student's outcomes, and as a process which can activate and focus the energy of the student and the institution on the factors which will be significant in shaping and affecting that student's educational experience at the institution. With thoughtful planning and implementation, an assessment system can be used as a resource to actively develop and build student and institutional success.

## CHAPTER 4

### Computerized Student Information: One College Meets the Challenge

Richard B. Schinoff, Dean of Students  
Miami-Dade Community College  
Miami, Florida

During the 1970s, Miami-Dade Community College conducted a study of its general education program and the support systems designed to help students to be successful while enrolled at the college. The outcome of this study resulted in a major redesign of the general education curriculum and significant increased emphasis on student support systems. At Miami-Dade, an integrated student flow model was developed with several communication checkpoints monitored through the use of computer technology by faculty, advisors, and counselors, to ensure that students remain on a pathway of excellence. Robert McCabe, President of Miami-Dade, has expressed much concern about the communication that students receive while enrolled at the college. In 1981, he stated:

As we have become more directive and introduced high expectations, we have recognized the need to develop a system for on-going communication with students. Counseling and advisement are strongly reemphasized and studies show that gains are made in student performance when these services are available. (McCabe, 1981)

To emphasize the need for good student support systems within the Miami-Dade District, Dr. McCabe allocated additional support staff positions to the Student Services area, and

provided college funding along with Title III project money to improve communication with students and establish the integrated student flow model. With a headcount enrollment of approximately 42,000 credit students on four major campuses and several outreach locations, a centralized student information system was developed. This system utilizes the power of the mainframe computer with terminal access across the district, and has the capability of generating individualized letters to students indicating their progress to date, problem areas, and appropriate directions for success.

#### Student Flow Model

The integrated student flow model at Miami-Dade was designed to use a marketing approach for effective communication. The systems were designed to utilize student tracking programs to segment the population into different groups. Computer generated systems are designed so that "Dear Student" letters are never mailed to students; rather, students with specific attributes who require a special communication are identified through the use of computer technology and appropriate letters or communications are sent only to those students. The letters and communications that students receive are more personalized to their own specific situation. The result has been positive in that many students have commented that they did not realize Miami-Dade knew so much about them and were surprised to receive such a personalized letter. They all realized that the letter was computer generated but were impressed that so much information about them was stored in our data base.

The Miami-Dade student flow model was designed to establish an orderly process from admission through assessment and advisement, so that the advisors and students can make informed decisions about the proper courses in which students should enroll. The registration system was designed to be used as a guard at a crossing gate--to stop students at critical points for reassessment by advisors, counselors, and faculty; to direct students to honors programs; and to allow the majority of students clear passage through the general education program, the general education distribution courses, and finally, on to graduation.

#### Basic Skills Assessment (BSA)

Seven student support systems or testing points were designed to monitor student progress while at the college. The first of these, the basic skills assessment program, occurs after students have been admitted to Miami-Dade but before they are allowed to register. The assessment program is used to determine basic skills deficiencies, identify potential honor students, or waive requirements in the English and math areas. Miami-Dade staff administer the Multiple Assessment Placement Services (MAPS) test of The College Board on three of its four campuses. Reading comprehension, test of standard written English, arithmetic skills, and the elementary algebra skills parts of the assessment are administered in a paper/pencil mode in large testing sessions. Because of a state regulation that students may enroll a maximum of three times in a college preparatory course in a single discipline, correct placement in the first



level of English or math becomes most important for student success.

On the South Campus of the college, a Campus Assessment Center was opened this past year using the most modern computer technology and software programs to administer the basic skills assessment. With special permission granted by the State of Florida Commissioner of Education, the South Campus of Miami-Dade embarked on a program using the Computer Placement Test (CPT) from the College Board as the sole placement test on campus. A joint project among Miami-Dade Community College, the IBM Corporation, and The College Board, under the auspices of the League For Innovation, provided the mechanism to establish the Campus Assessment Center.

After admission to the college, students are directed by written communication (or by the admissions staff if they apply in person), to proceed to the Campus Assessment Center for a test. The Assessment Center is open from 8:30 a.m. until 9:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday, and Friday till noon. After the assessment is completed, the students view a video orientation to the college which leads them through an academic planning manual and provides an overview of campus offices and services. Following the viewing of the video, students receive the Course Sequencing Pathways document which lists courses they should take at Miami-Dade based upon test score, major, and requirements at their university of choice if they plan to transfer. From this point, undecided students are referred to the main Advisement Center while decided students are referred to an academic

department for advisement by a faculty member. With the opening of the Campus Assessment Center, students are now able to be admitted, assessed, advised, and registered by Touchtone telephone several months in advance of the beginning of a semester. And, they can accomplish these tasks any time between 8:30 a.m. and 9:00 p.m. convenient to their schedule.

#### Advisement and Graduation Information System (AGIS)

The second student support system, the Advisement and Graduation Information System (AGIS), takes the electronically stored transcript, current enrollments, and future term enrollments and matches them against curriculum files to determine graduation eligibility for currently enrolled students. The system also provides transfer program information for the nine state universities in Florida and the four large private institutions in Dade County.

After students fulfill all graduation requirements, the AGIS system is designed to "automatically graduate" them and place the appropriate graduation remark on the transcript. If students have applied for graduation but are not eligible to graduate, the AGIS system will automatically generate a letter informing them of the reasons they are not eligible. Weekly data mailers are also used to advise students who are enrolled in a class not needed for their degree or for transfer. The system includes individualized messages for veteran students, athletes, and other special groups at the college. By using the AGIS system, advisors now spend less clerical work time matching transcripts, current registrations, and university transfer requirements

against student records. They are able to spend more time on personal contact with students.

#### Course Sequencing Pathways (CSP)

Course Sequencing Pathways (CSP) is an outgrowth of the Advisement and Graduation Information System. When the AGIS system was first developed, it was designed to be updated on weekends through a batch process. The college mainframe and disk storage capabilities in the early 1980s were not large enough to handle an on-line system. Course Sequencing Pathways is an on-line system which serves as a companion to AGIS. The system will generate a document which indicates specific courses--based upon major, test scores, and university of transfer--that the student should take while enrolled at Miami-Dade. In addition, pre- and co-requisites, career information, and registration holds are included. The Course Sequencing Pathways program matches student records against the 125 computer holds at the college so that they know in advance of advisement and registration what part of the student information system will cause a roadblock for them at registration. Students and advisors can then examine the set of circumstances which caused the registration hold and develop an appropriate plan of action so they will be able to proceed successfully with their educational program.

#### Academic Alert

The fourth student support system, the academic alert system, is used by students part way through each of their terms at the college. This system identifies students with midterm

weaknesses in progress and students with sporadic attendance records and prescribes very personal intervention strategies to help them. Prior to midterm, faculty members are asked to provide midterm progress and attendance information on a bubble-in form very similar to the final grade roll. By using this information along with computer stored characteristics, individual prescriptive letters (over 250,000 variations are in the system) are written to students.

### Standards of Academic Progress (SOAP)

The fifth student support system, the Standards of Academic Progress (SOAP), was designed to establish student expectations of their performance in courses. This is a no-nonsense approach to education at Miami-Dade. Students are made aware that if they do not successfully complete courses as they proceed through their curriculum, they may be placed on warning, probation, or suspended status from the college. It is important to note that as students proceed through the academic program, higher levels of success are expected. If students do not meet these higher expectations, intervention strategies are employed to assist them to be successful. Students under academic probation have a more prescriptive program and are required to enroll in fewer courses than students on academic warning. If students find themselves on academic suspension (a one-term suspension from the college), there is an appeal process for readmission based upon extenuating circumstances. Once students return to the college, they must complete one-half of the credits registered for and have a minimum of a "C" average each successive term. If students fail

to maintain this standard, they will be suspended a second time which represents a dismissal from the college. A dismissal is a mandatory one-year separation from Miami-Dade.

Miami-Dade standards include two major components. First, students must maintain a satisfactory grade point average and secondly, they must complete at least half the credits for which they registered. Because of the emphasis Miami-Dade Community College places on assisting students who are having academic difficulty, 87% of the students enrolled at the college do not fall under one of the Standards of Academic Progress. During a recent Fall semester, only 900 of approximately 40,000 students were dismissed or suspended from the college. While this represented about 2% of the enrollment, it must also be noted that regardless of the action it is likely that some of these students probably would not have returned to Miami-Dade during the following semester.

During the period 1978 through 1985, 16,000 students were suspended from Miami-Dade. Fifty-eight percent of the suspended students eventually returned to the college and 10% of the students who returned did graduate. Although the suspended student is a high-risk student, there are still a significant number in that group who do eventually graduate from the institution.

#### Student Telephone Assisted Registration (STAR)

As students proceed through Miami-Dade, registration is made easy by Student Telephone Assisted Registration (STAR Service). This computerized system allows students to register by Touchtone

telephone and to pay by check, cash, or credit card. With the advent of this system at the college, students can now apply, be assessed, go through orientation and advisement, register and pay for classes with one stop at a campus many months before the start of an academic term. In fact, registration for a Fall semester begins the previous January. Registration for the Winter semester, begins the previous September.

### College Level Academic Skills Test (CLAST)

Although not instituted by Miami-Dade, the final feedback system for student performance at the college is the College Level Academic Skills Test (CLAST). This is a statewide exam administered to sophomores in the state university before they enter their junior year and to students at community colleges as a requirement for receiving the Associate in Arts degree. The CLAST test measures achievement in reading, writing, and mathematics, and includes a written essay. If students do not pass all four subtests, they cannot receive the Associate in Arts degree. Cutoff score levels for passing CLAST are projected to increase over the next couple of years. Because of this, many students, including a large number of minority students in the State of Florida who previously received associate degrees or successfully completed the sophomore year at a university and went on to graduate, may be denied a chance for further education. A study within the State of Florida is presently being conducted to review the CLAST test, the cutoff scores and the effect of proposed increases, and to consider other types of documentation which might be used to demonstrate student success in addition to the CLAST exam.

With the advent of more preregistration assessment and CLAST, the number of credits required for graduation has increased over the last six years, so that students now take approximately two additional courses before they graduate. The overall effect of the CLAST test has been a dramatic reduction in the number of students graduating from Miami-Dade in the last couple of years. In 1986, there was a 60% decline in the number of students who graduated as compared to 1984. Although the final figures for 1987 are not yet complete, it appears that the graduation rate has risen somewhat this year although it is nowhere near the 1984 level.

#### The Campus Reception Center

For the future, Miami-Dade is establishing the personalized campus reception center. In this center a student will first meet a college representative, complete an application, discuss career options and choices, be sent for career testing and basic skills assessment, take the results of assessment to an advisor, set up a program of study, and register from a Touchtone telephone in one convenient stop. Plans including staffing the reception center with a generalist who has much readily available information about the college and the student. Most of the systems are currently in place so that the personalized reception center has already become functional. Over the next several months, the financial aid process will be examined with the goal of developing on-line programs for immediate calculation of financial aid awards. Once this last step is completed, all the components of the campus reception center will be in place at

Miami-Dade, and students will be served in a more efficient and effective manner at a time most convenient.

### Summary

The student support systems, testing procedures, and registration gateways each form the basis of the integrated student flow model at Miami-Dade Community College. Although invisible to the student, there is a constant network utilizing computer technology monitoring student progress, sending communication to students indicating how well they are doing, or specifying areas for improvement and intervention strategies. Most important, advisors, counselors, and faculty use this information to provide the best possible assistance to students.



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## CHAPTER 5

### Student Success: The Common Goal

William Lindemann  
Central Oregon Community College

Many points described in this paper were taken from the recent ACT publication titled Student Success: The Common Goal--Integrating Student Services Within the Community College. In addition, credit should be given to the work of the Maricopa County Community College District's Student Services Task Force which was established in 1984 to undertake a detailed analysis of student services at the seven Maricopa colleges. Under the leadership of Art DeCabooter, President of Scottsdale Community College, and John Cordova, Provost at the Northeast Valley Center, the Task Force identified issues and made recommendations for improving student services throughout the Maricopa system.

It is important also to recognize the leadership efforts of the Washington and Oregon chief student services officers. For nearly eight years they have provided ongoing statewide opportunities for college staff to address many of the issues discussed in this paper.

And, the faculty and staff of Central Oregon Community College deserve credit for playing a key partnership role in implementing the student success systems described herein.

Reflect for a moment on possible reasons why student services are positioned as they are today. Over the past 20 years, the climate on community college campuses has changed from one of

fast growth, strong financial support, and more students than we knew what to do with, to one of slow growth, questionable support, and declining enrollment. While our climate has changed, this situation is not necessarily bad, because now we are beginning to take a qualitative look at ourselves. We are focused more than ever on our students. We value our students. Whether this is because we have "seen the light," or due to programmatic reasons related to enrollment or FTE, the fact remains that the Carnegie Council on Policy Studies in Higher Education noted:

We expect that students will be more nearly the center of attention on campuses during the next 20 years than in the past 10, they will be recruited more actively, admitted more readily, retained more diligently, counseled more attentively, graded more considerately, financed more adequately, taught more consciously, placed in jobs more insistently, and the curriculum will be more tailored to their taste. They will seldom, if ever, have had it so good on our campuses.

#### PLANNING PRINCIPLES

What, then, are the implications for student services? The current climate offers us a unique opportunity to play a leadership role as our colleges redesign their educational services. As we look at preparing student services to meet this challenge, a strong commitment must be made to these four key principles:

1. Focus on institutional issues related to student success. The time has come for us to transcend traditional organization structures and arbitrary departmental

lines to commit ourselves to one common institutional goal--that is, of course, student success. During the late 1980s and 1990s, those community colleges that will be most successful will be those that have staff members who share this common goal, who understand they serve a diverse public, who know how to identify student needs, and who can organize every institutional resource towards developing programs that address these needs. These colleges will place the highest priority on removing the barriers and resolving the issues interfering with student success.

2. **Emphasize proactive programming.** In the past, student services frequently met student needs in a reactive way. Often students came to the student services professional offices with a problem or a concern. Staff members reacted and attempted to help students. Unfortunately by the time some students realized that they needed to seek outside help, their problems had already reached a point where they were seriously interfering with their ability to succeed in college. A proactive approach calls for early identification of student needs and efforts that anticipate potential problems. By offering very specific and focused assistance to students early in their educational experience before the problems become overwhelming, we will increase the students' chances for success.

3. **Provide for close integration between student services and instruction.** On many of our campuses today, student services are not designed as an integral part of the educational programming. To many teaching faculty, the term "educational program" refers to academic programs, a curriculum of courses taught in the classroom that provides students with knowledge and skills that prepare them for college transfer or a job. Because we rarely explain to teaching faculty how the various student services functions relate to what they are trying to achieve, student services are often thought of as a vague set of isolated functions peripheral to the real purpose of college. The challenge before us is to develop programs that complement each other. The goal is to have each element in the student services program become an integral part in the college's overall educational plan for student success.
4. **Encourage practical solutions.** As we redesign our student services programs, effective approaches must be both practical and measurable. We no longer can be afforded the luxury of highly theoretical, complex designs. Rather, we need to seek simplicity and clarity in presenting ideas to our instructional colleagues.

#### TEN ASSUMPTIONS FOR PLANNING

Implementation of success efforts will require a commitment to basic assumptions. These ten assumptions are critical prerequisites for implementation of the success model.

**ASSUMPTION ONE:** There is a need for systematic planning in student services.

While it may seem obvious, it is important to stress that before any institution launches into an effort to redesign its student services program, there must be a strong commitment to an effective institutional planning process. On many of our campuses today, little effort is made to address issues and student needs in a proactive way. Planning often takes the form of crisis management, reacting to problems and leaving inadequate time for staff to consider all the factors involved. Simply put, successful programming requires systematic planning. The key elements in this process are:

1. Identifying the student and the institutional needs that should be addressed by student services. The basic criterion for determining what we should be doing must be the students' needs.
2. Defining the outcomes desired. If we were to meet these needs, what outcome would have been achieved?
3. Defining the services, activities, and skills that will be needed to achieve the outcome. In effect, then, we don't define the program until we know what the need is and what we are trying to accomplish. The program, then, becomes focused on meeting student needs.
4. Defining the staff skills needed to offer the activities and services in a manner that will bring about the desired outcome. We cannot assume that staff will have all the skills and the experiences necessary to meet

those student and institutional needs that we identify. We therefore must be prepared to teach the skills that are necessary and make sure we have the right people performing the appropriate tasks.

5. **Providing for evaluation and feedback on both the staff and the program performance as measured against stated outcomes.** Simply put, if we cannot measure something that we are doing, how will we know if we have done it well or if we were successful? The bottom line, then, is if we can't measure it, we shouldn't do it. Measurement needs to focus on qualitative criteria.

**ASSUMPTION TWO:** There is a need for student services staff to be actively involved with college-wide planning efforts.

If we are to integrate student services within the entire educational process, we must include student services personnel in the institutional planning process at every level. There are obviously a number of issues and topics the colleges will be addressing over the next five years in which student services staff could and should play a very valuable role. Examples of these include assessment, developmental education, student outreach and contact, staff development, customer service, and student information systems.

**ASSUMPTION THREE:** There is a need for institutional decisions to be based on measurable data.

Often decisions about student services programming are based on perception, opinion, or conjecture. The problem with these criteria is that decisions become more a result of power politics

within the organization rather than a result of calm, systematic review of current and future student and organizational needs.

To implement this assumption, the student services staff needs to develop an organized system of facts, figures, reports, justifications, and evaluations concerning every aspect of student services programming. Without accurate information and the ability to gather accurate information, successful planning in student services will be greatly hampered.

**ASSUMPTION FOUR:** There is a need for student services functions to be clearly defined.

Many college personnel (including student services staff) do not have a clear sense of what the role of each student services function is or should be. This affects every office within student services. Each office needs to develop a sense of its own priorities and expectations and to understand how each student services function relates to other student services functions. On the institutional level, each student services function needs to fit into the total educational process. Simply put, every staff member within each department in student services must be helped to understand what their role is, how their function relates to the departmental role, and what the departmental role is in relationship to the entire educational program at the institution. In addition, faculty, staff, and all members of the college community need to understand these roles.

**ASSUMPTION FIVE:** There is a need for regular attempts to coordinate the efforts of student services staff and to integrate these efforts with those of the instructional programs.



Student services staff need to interact with each other on a regular basis and interact with other college staff. If this doesn't happen, they become isolated and disconnected. On our campuses, we must coordinate operations within the student division and the total college community.

**ASSUMPTION SIX:** There is a need for clear policies and procedures that relate to all college functions.

On many college campuses, there are no policy and procedures manuals outlining those functions covered by student services. At best, staff rely on sporadic memos and word of mouth for understanding institutional policies and procedures and how they affect student life. Without clear policies, the staff in one office will not have a good idea how another office handles a specific issue or problem. The end result is that students and the general public will get different answers to the same question and frequently will get a sense of being run around campus. This is a public relations problem of the highest magnitude.

As we develop these manuals, it is important to evaluate the institutional rules and regulations with an eye towards developing the fairest and the simplest (student-oriented) customer service approach for each of our functions. Before we initiate any new policies or procedures, we should ask ourselves the question, how will this change assist students? Will it make the process simpler and easier for students? How will it help students succeed?

**ASSUMPTION SEVEN:** There is a need to develop a customer service approach to the way staff members deal with the many publics served by the college.

On some of our campuses the action of otherwise capable staff are perceived as authoritarian, uncaring, rigid, and simply not helpful. To assure that staff members take a customer service approach, it is important to have organized staff in-service training activities that teach new and long-term personnel good public relations skills. Staff need to be helped to understand the image that the institution wishes to transmit to its many publics. Colleges need to develop mechanisms to assure that students feel that there is a high level of concern and caring on the part of each staff member. Banks and airlines have long since realized that their product is service, not just money transactions and transportation. We in college education can learn much from this approach. The theme of caring must permeate every activity and transaction that we do.

**ASSUMPTION EIGHT:** There is a need for a comprehensive staff development program for all college staff members.

As student services staff begin to implement a systematic planning process and address the issues raised by their analysis of student needs, there should be significant stimulus for change. To implement the desired changes successfully, a staff development program must have a total college focus. Participation from all areas of the institution is crucial. Staff development would focus on issues related to meeting the needs of diverse populations our colleges serve. Examples of such topics

might include adult development, career changing, developmental staff evaluation, faculty advisement, developmental academic advising, customer service, computer-assisted information systems, etc. The list will depend on your particular institution. It is important, though, to emphasize that an institutional commitment to staff development is essential.

For instance, on our campus, we have a very progressive staff development program. One aspect of the program requires that all professionals at Central Oregon Community College leave campus for eight weeks every four years to focus on a learning activity or experience that will improve their performance at the college. The emphasis is to encourage staff to stay current and at the top of their professional competence. This level of institutional commitment is essential if we are serious about bringing about institutional change for student success.

**ASSUMPTION NINE:** There is a need to encourage at the institutional, state, and regional level model programs that introduce new ideas and experimental projects that focus on student services.

Currently, on most community college campuses there are excellent programs that could serve as models for other colleges. Often the ideas for these programs have come from grass-roots efforts and are usually the result of cooperative efforts among college staff. Efforts need to be made to share these grass-root model efforts and to develop additional model programs that address the student and institutional needs identified through the planning process. The results of these studies should be

disseminated and shared throughout the state, the region and the nation. One topic that should be reviewed on a local, state, and regional level is the development of intervention strategies for student success.

An excellent example of these efforts is the work by the states of Washington and Oregon on two day workshops. During these workshops representatives from colleges throughout the two states share with their colleagues the intervention strategies and ideas that they have developed to help students succeed. Participation at these workshops involves a cross-section of the college campuses. Usually as a result of attendance at one of the workshops, college staff come back revitalized and enthusiastic about implementing ideas on their campus.

**ASSUMPTION TEN:** There is a need to integrate technology throughout the entire institution to improve delivery of services to students.

In the 1980s, the computer technology expanding and improving the quality of services we offer is at our fingertips. The implications for student services are significant. Proper use of existing technology through student information systems can drastically change student services programming in the future. The day when a student can enter a room labeled "student information center" and access information about career and job opportunities, assessment scores, course selection, and college programs, both two- and four-year, is upon us. The technology is currently available, even though few of us are utilizing this technology.

The implications for information dissemination are also significant. We find ourselves now in a situation where technology has developed at a faster pace than many student services professionals who are charged with implementing the technology can handle. Many staff members are not prepared to take advantage of the available technology, let alone consider the future potential of technology that is on the horizon. To assure that student services departments take advantage of this valuable technology, colleges need to consider offering their staff effective in-service training in this important area.

#### A SIX-PART MODEL FOR AN INTEGRATED EDUCATIONAL SERVICES PROCESS

Following is a six-part model for planning student services. It is important to note that the model is based on the four planning principles and ten assumptions. In developing the model, a major challenge was to find a way to integrate student services within the college's total educational function. We took the approach that this could best be done by finding a way to get all college staff members focusing on the same issues and striving to achieve the same outcomes.

As we sought this common focus, we asked ourselves what issues were most important to all members of the college. To answer this, we asked ourselves the simple question, why are our colleges here? and, what makes colleges different from other institutions or organizations? The answer to both of these questions is, of course, students. Our students come to college to achieve their career and life goals. This may be graduation, going on to a four-year institution, or seeking a job. For other

students, it will mean satisfaction of their goals prior to graduation and leaving college early. Our job is to help these students achieve their objectives, and success in reaching their goals becomes our common goal.

The challenge, then, was to help each staff member understand the particular role he or she plays in the pursuit of this common goal. To motivate staff to assume this kind of ownership, it was important to focus on issues related to student success. We call these issues which affect the entire college community "institutional issues." We also have found that staff members can more easily agree on these issues and lend personal support to resolutions when decisions or directions are based on objective information. Our ability to gather and maintain good information about our students brought us from wishful thinking to meaningful planning.

The six systems that make up the institution's educational services process and that comprise the model are:

1. Institutional Information System.
2. Institutional Access System.
3. Inquiry/Admit System.
4. Registration System.
5. Educational Programming System.
6. Feedback System.

A "system," as defined by the American Heritage Dictionary, is "a group of interacting, interrelated, or interdependent elements that form a complex whole" and are functionally related. Each system represents a phase of an institution's

educational services process, which begins when the college first makes contact with the prospective student through student outreach and contact, and ends when the institution does a follow-up contact on graduates.

The six systems represent a natural grouping of college functions. This approach encourages putting organizational structures aside and focusing on the issues and tasks essential to student success. The six systems represent major issues that face our colleges today. The first and last systems were designed to provide support for the other four. By focusing on four topics--student contact and outreach, advisement, registration, and student success strategies--each college will be able to take an issue-oriented approach to integrating student success.

To assure that these systems are designed and implemented from a broad institutional perspective, colleges should establish four ongoing subcommittees. The focus of the subcommittees will be to develop a campus-wide plan of action for considering the four major institutional issues. The four subcommittees are:

\*Student outreach and contact. The focus of this committee is to develop strategies to assure student access to the institution.

\*Academic advisement. This group develops the entire academic advisement program and all issues related to placement in courses such as assessment, developmental educational, and other support systems.

**\*Registration.** This subcommittee looks at ways to improve the overall effectiveness of the campus registration program.

**\*Student success strategies.** This group looks at developing strategies to assure student success once the student is enrolled.

#### System One: Institutional Information System

As we have noted before, planning in student services must be part of the institutional planning effort, and the decisions must be drawn from data derived from the whole college. To assure that information is available which will help decision-makers plan in a more objective manner, it is highly recommended that colleges develop a comprehensive institutional information system. Key elements in the system include the following:

- (a) **Population demographics.** Included in this category are information on enrollment analysis, community population data, and student retention information.
- (b) **Community and student needs analysis.** As institutions begin to assess more student needs as well as the needs of the communities they serve, institutional data bases will need to be developed on the characteristics of the populations served. Included in this information is specific survey data which indicate the various types of educational programs and services needed by the populations the college serves.
- (c) **Institutional evaluation.** Information such as student transfer, job placement, employer follow-up, provisions



for evaluative feedback from students and the community, as well as institutional image surveys all provide valuable information from which college decision-makers can begin to get a sense of how well they are doing in fulfilling the mission, goals and objectives of the institution.

- (d) **Information to support the five systems that make up the educational services process.** In designing an institutional information system, several key questions need to be answered. What decisions does the college want to make for which they need accurate information? How does the college plan to gather the information? Which staff members will be responsible for making sure the data are available and made accessible to key institutional decision-makers?

#### System Two: Institutional Access System

Community colleges are beginning to reconsider the concept of student success. We have seen the open-door policy initiated during the 1960s and 1970s become a revolving door for many of our students, where "open door" was nothing more than a ticket to failure. We have realized that true open access goes beyond enabling students to enroll in programs they select and that supporting institutional access requires a commitment to offering support programs and services necessary to assure student success.

As a result of looking at what needs to be done to help potential students learn about their community college and make

necessary pre-college decisions early on, many community colleges are developing campus-wide student outreach and contact plans. These plans consist of specific strategies that focus on pre-enrollment needs of the various subgroups community colleges serve. Planning efforts should be made to assist students in making necessary decisions and getting needed pre-college assistance prior to the student's first enrollment. Through early identification, potential students can learn about available opportunities and have ample time to make the necessary decisions about their education. The focus is to establish early contact with potential students, rather than waiting for individuals to make the first contact.

### System Three: Inquiry/Admit System

Once a student has expressed an interest in or has asked for information about a college, every effort should be made to follow up on the potential student's inquiry. With the assistance of a computerized admit/inquiry system, many community colleges are assuring that students receive helpful information in a timely fashion.

These approaches can help colleges move away from the traditional process of waiting until the students come to our door. Usually, the student's first action was to come to college during registration (the busiest time of the year). College staff often have to scramble to provide assistance, assessment, orientation, and advising. The shortage of available time to work with students at this late date limits the effectiveness of assessment and advising. Students who were unsure about a program of study

or who lacked basic skills often find this last-minute registration hindering their success.

Through the inquiry/admit system, colleges can identify potential students and offer them the services early on to help the student succeed. Three key elements in this system are assessment, orientation, and advisement.

In designing this system each college needs to define its academic advisement program in terms of expected outcomes and to set clear expectations for both the adviser and the advisees. Efforts need to be made to integrate new student orientation and assessment, provide specific information to advisers and advisees to augment the process, use computer technology, and develop an in-service training program to review critical topics.

Colleges should be encouraged to implement mandatory assessment programs. Decisions concerning should be mandatory course placement should not be made until individual assessment instruments have been evaluated for validity and reliability. While many campuses debate the issue of voluntary versus mandatory placement, it is important to note here that mandatory placement is not a solution for a poor academic advisement program.

#### System Four: Registration System

Perhaps more than the other five systems, registration requires the involvement of every member of the college community. To be successful, planning must embrace the ten assumptions discussed previously. On many of our campuses, there is a need for improved planning, close coordination, clearly understood policies and procedures, a customer service approach, and the support of a fully-operational computer system.

The registration process is so important that each college should conduct a complete analysis of its registration system. This review should include evaluating the existing registration system, identifying needed changes, and reviewing new elements (e.g., computer systems, hardware, personnel and physical space, traffic flow, etc.).

Other registration issues to be considered include policy changes and in-service training needs. Once designed, the system should include a provision for staff input before and after each registration session. The objective of this review is to design and implement the simplest, most student-centered approach to registration possible.

#### System Five: Educational Programming System

Educational programs are at the heart of the educational process, but the role of student services functions in this system is vague and frequently misunderstood. Colleges need to rethink student services in terms of ways that they can be more closely attuned to the educational process. A key element in this redesign process is to look for ways that both academic faculty and student services professionals can be proactive by developing strategies to meet student needs before the needs turn into problems.

The major focus of these cooperative efforts should be on academic success. Institutions must implement strategies for helping high-risk students succeed once they are enrolled in the college. To this end, each college needs to develop a student success and retention plan that represents a compilation of

specific strategies focusing on cooperative efforts within the institution.

Institutions need to develop a profile of the characteristics of their high-risk students. Once this profile has been drawn, specific intervention strategies involving the entire campus in efforts to improve student success should be developed.

#### System Six: Feedback System

An institution's total feedback system should include a number of reports and studies to provide information on how well it is doing what it aspires to do. Too often the incident of evaluating program effectiveness against pre-stated, measurable outcomes is infrequent, and the process of asking others outside of certain areas to rate a service against pre-stated outcomes needs to be encouraged.

If student services are to make a difference, we must know what works. The simple question each student services function must ask is, how do we know we make a difference? If we cannot demonstrate the answer to this question ourselves, how can we expect others to support or join us?

Throughout this discussion, I have emphasized the importance of college-wide groups developing action plans in the areas of institutional access, inquiry-admit, registration, and educational program. As these plans are developed, two important evaluative questions should be considered:

- (1) What criteria will be used to measure the effectiveness of each activity?
- (2) How will the activity be evaluated and by whom?

Student services professionals should encourage and solicit evaluative feedback on all of the activities they offer from students, faculty and staff. Such input will help revitalize their programming. Program outcomes need to be stated in measurable terms and evaluated in the same format. In addition, student services staff should share their plans with other college staff and should periodically monitor their own efforts.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the National Council on Student Development for an opportunity to highlight the student success model and to encourage anyone who would like to review this model in its entirety to contact the ACT National Center for the Advancement of Educational Practices.

## CHAPTER 6

### Proving What We're Doing is Working: The Student Flow Research Model

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#### The Era of Accountability

Quality indicators. Student outcomes. Measures of accountability. Evaluation criteria. Performance-based funding factors. Whatever you call it, the concern for educational effectiveness is surfacing as the new focus for higher education in general and community colleges in particular. To an extent heretofore unknown, we are being asked to demonstrate to increasing numbers of local constituencies and state interests whether what we are doing is working and how we know.

This has been particularly true in California. Over the past four years there have been several analyses of the mission and performance of California's community colleges. At the state level, the Commission for the Review of the Master Plan for Higher Education (the "Master Plan Commission"), the California Business Roundtable, and the Joint Legislative Committee for Review of the Master Plan, have all issued reports on the state of the state's 106 community colleges. In each case, the authors of the studies criticized the dearth of information relating to institutional effectiveness and student success. The Master Plan Commission, commenting on the need for such information, stated:

Institutional research is essential to determine which types of programs work best with which students under what

circumstances, and to ensure the wisest use of public funds in meeting student and community needs. There is relatively little statewide institutional research available to evaluate the effectiveness of Community College transfer, vocational, or remedial programs, which are of particular concern to this Commission. If these programs are to be implemented successfully and cost effectively, they must be accompanied by research and evaluation from the start, to strengthen these programs as they develop as well as to evaluate their ultimate merit. Significant additional funds will be needed for this research.

The Chief Executive Officers and the Trustees of the California Community Colleges issued a paper calling for development of a shared governance model through which districts and colleges would be held accountable for achieving specific results in a variety of areas. They emphasized that:

... truly effective accountability will establish clear lines of communication and cooperation between the state and local boards, providing for sound, accountable approaches to planning, resource allocation, data collection and analysis, and evaluation of results.

Key to this view of accountability is the availability of solid research information that can assess the extent to which results are achieved. As Joshua Smith, Chancellor of the California Community Colleges, has pointed out: Nothing is more critical to our future than to demonstrate clearly ... that the community colleges make a qualitative



difference in the lives of more than a million California citizens each year. ... The Governor and the Legislature want to know what California is buying for the 1.8 billion dollars spent each year in the colleges.

As a result of all of this work, a number of legislative initiatives have now been introduced to link community colleges' educational outcomes to their fiscal futures. While arguments about the appropriate measures abound, one thing is clear: we can no longer just assume legislative and public support for what we're doing. The new reality facing those of us in community colleges is that of accountability for our educational effectiveness.

While some of the impetus has clearly been external, each of the critical reassessment studies cited individual districts whose solid research programs made it relatively easy for them to answer questions about their institutional effectiveness in terms of student success. Information from these local districts was used in state policy decisions since it was often the only information available. One such district whose student outcome information has been cited repeatedly at the state level is the Los Rios Community College District in Sacramento, California.

#### Genesis of the Student Flow Model

In 1983, considerably before the current emphasis on accountability, the Los Rios district began to build what would later come to be known as the "student flow research model" (see Figure 1). Given the district's major emphasis on using research for planning and decision making, we sought a model that would

# Los Rios Student Flow Model

Information implies Actions and Outcomes

## The Community – Potential Students

### District/College Service Area Demographics

- Actual/Projected Population Size
- Changing Age Mix
- Gender Mix
- Increasing Ethnicity
- Education Levels
- English Proficiency

### Labor Market Information

- Employment Outlook
- RETNA Data Base

### Economic Information

- Income Levels
- AFDC Areas

## Enrolled Students

### Match of Students to Community Population

- Age Groups
- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Unit Load
  - Full-time
  - Mid-load
  - Light-load
- Preparation
- Previous College Work
- Educational Goal
- Financial Aid Status
- English Proficiency

## The College Experience

### Activities

- Outreach/Recruitment
- Articulation
  - K-12
  - 4-Year Colleges
  - Business/Industry
- Assessment/Counseling/Placement
- Instruction
  - Transfer
  - Occupational
  - Remedial
- Delivery Modes
  - Credit/Non-credit
  - Contract
  - Community Services
- Student Proficiency Testing
- Transfer Assistance
  - Transfer Centers
  - Transfer Guarantee
- Career Placement Assistance

### Information

- Evaluation of Internal Programs & Services
  - Equity
  - Efficiency
  - Effectiveness

## Our Former Students

### Employment

- Vocational Student Follow-up
- Employer Surveys
- Employer Follow-up

### Transfer

- Transfer Student Follow-up
  - Preparation
  - Persistence
  - Performance
- Evaluation of Transfer Statistics
- Reverse Transfer Analysis

### Personal Objectives

- Nonreturning Student Follow-up
- Student Satisfaction Surveys

Figure 1.

bring together information in four critical areas: (1) characteristics of the district's service area population; (2) characteristics of the entering student population; (3) evaluation of student performance, programs, and services; and (4) follow-up of transfer, occupational, and nonreturning students.

We intended that the research produced in these four areas would answer a series of seven key questions, questions we thought any district or college should be able to answer:

- (1) What is our community like and who are our potential students?
- (2) Who are our enrolled students? Do they differ by college? Do they reflect the community at large?
- (3) What kinds of preparation do our students bring to our institutions? Are they prepared for our college-level classes or do they need remediation?
- (4) What are the educational goals of our students and do these goals differ by age, sex, ethnicity, work status, or economic level?
- (5) How well are we meeting our students' needs? Is what we're doing working and how do we know?
- (6) What happens to our students once they leave? Are they successful as transfers to four-year institutions? In finding jobs? In improving skills and potential if currently employed?
- (7) Finally, how can we improve what we're doing?

Much of the information needed to answer these questions resided in our district's mainframe computer--the question was how to extract the data, analyze it, summarize it and make it easily accessible and useful to key decision makers who had little interest in reading reams of computer-generated printouts. We decided early in the process to keep the questions and answers primary and the data secondary. In short, we didn't ask "what can we do with all this data?" but, "what questions do we want to answer about our students, our programs, our services?"

Through judicious use of the statistical program SPSS-X, we have designed studies and generated data that could answer the seven key questions. Sometimes special surveys--such as those for our student follow-up studies--have been designed and used to supplement our historical and current student data files. Data generated from special studies such as our longitudinal transfer student project--which requires matching and analysis of data tapes from the primary universities to which our students transfer--are combined with our historical student data files so we can analyze transfer student preparation, persistence and performance.

#### Components of the Model

The basic components of the student flow research model include: (1) the community--our potential students; (2) enrolled students; (3) the college experience; and (4) our former students. What these individual components include and how they can be combined to answer the seven questions is discussed

below. A graphic illustration of the model and the kinds of information included is presented in Figure 1.

### **The Community: Our Potential Students**

In looking at our community--our potential students--we analyze the key demographic factors of the changing age of the population, the gender and ethnic mix, the educational level, and English proficiency of people living in our district and college service areas. Much of this information comes from the 1980 Federal Census and is supplemented by more recent information whenever possible. We also gather labor market information, using federal, state, and local labor market publications, supplemented by our Regional Employment and Training Needs Assessment (RETNA) project data base. Information on community income levels and on areas with high numbers of families receiving Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC or "welfare") is also analyzed to provide a picture of areas that might require special services.

### **Enrolled Students**

Once the community information is assimilated, we compare that data to the information on our currently enrolled students to determine whether we are under serving any particular groups. We analyze our student data in a variety of ways--by age group, gender, ethnicity, and unit load status and often by combinations of these variables. We examine the educational preparation of our students, their previous college work, their educational goals, financial aid status, and English proficiency. With such information matched to our community

information, we are in a better position to answer questions about the success of our various programs in meeting educational needs in the low income or minority communities. By examining historical trends on an annual basis, the district is able to analyze changes in its student clientele that may warrant changes with respect to when, where, and how we offer our programs and services. In addition, differences in the student clientele of our three district colleges can be determined and appropriate alterations made so that each college can be flexible in meeting the needs of its own student population.

### **The College Experience**

This component of the model includes information on our internal programs and services, essentially the "activities" a student participates in once she or he enters one of our colleges. From initial outreach and recruitment activities, through our assessment/counseling/placement programs, and on into transfer, occupational, or remedial instruction, the student flow model is a means of understanding how students move into and through our institutions--and what happens to them while they are here.

Like many other districts, our analysis of student outcomes is still in its beginning stages, but measures of student performance, persistence, achievement, and satisfaction are taken at various times and are linked back to programs and services in order to evaluate their effectiveness. Such outcome information establishes a base for determining whether particular programs are actually achieving what they set out to do, and may suggest

curriculum changes or alterations in instructional technique. As measures of program equity, efficiency and effectiveness become more widely known and used, they can form a solid foundation for instructional planning and program review.

#### **Follow-Up on Former Students**

The real key to demonstrating that what we're doing is working is the student and his or her success in meeting transfer, occupational, or personal objectives. The Los Rios District conducts a major follow-up survey every year of all those students who have completed a degree or earned an occupational program certificate, as well as of a sample of "nonreturning" students. Now in its fourth year, the student follow-up survey provides a wide variety of information on our former students' success as either transfers to a university or as workers in the occupation of their choice. Student responses are available by college and program, for use by deans and faculty in program review and development.

In addition to the annual student follow-up studies, a number of special reports have focused on our transfer students' success. An annual report on the number of Los Rios transfers to the University of California and the California State University systems is produced, with the results analyzed by sex and ethnicity and compared to other community college districts statewide. A longitudinal study of the relative success of our Fall 1980 transfers at the two primary universities to which they transferred was completed in 1985 and will soon be replicated. And a special survey of students who utilized the new transfer

centers at each of our three colleges is currently underway and will be used to determine the effectiveness of the transfer centers (which are part of a statewide pilot program) in improving both the numbers and the performance of student transfers.

#### Uses of the Information

As the student flow research model has been improved and modified over time, so have our abilities to present and use the information for planning and decision making at the district and college level. Information on our occupational students' success has been shared with the Board of Trustees, with the occupational education deans, and with faculty at the program level. The information on our transfer students' success has been widely shared at both college and district levels, and our one-page "Transfer Outcomes" summary is used by counselors in their outreach and recruitment efforts. Information on our "nonreturning students" proved that they were highly successful in getting what they came for--most often, one or two courses related to their jobs. They were essentially "drop-ins," not "drop-outs," and this information has been used in curriculum review and program development.

In every study, we not only publish a formal report, but include an executive summary (1 or 2 pages), and a series of presentation overlays and graphics that can be used with a variety of audiences. We also try to get our "results" or "outcomes" into an easily understandable, one-page format. For example, our "Transfer Outcomes" page includes summarized data from three different studies that answer such questions as "How



many students transferred?", "What did they think about their preparation in Los Rios?", "How did they do in the universities compared to native university students?" In addition to using such information internally, we have also been asked to share it with state-level decision makers, including members of the Legislature, the Master Plan Commission, the State Chancellor's Office, and the California Postsecondary Education Commission.

#### Institutional Benefits: Proving the Point

The ability to demonstrate improvement in educational practices, to follow students through our colleges' programs and on into employment or a four-year institution, has both internal and external benefits for our colleges. Internally, you can assess which teaching strategies are working best with which types of students, which programs are articulating well with those at the high school and four-year institutions, and whether what you're doing in areas such as assessment and remediation is having the desired effect of improving student performance. Externally, with such institutional research you can prove to your local board, the general public, the Legislature, and to others at the state level that your programs are effective, are benefiting students and society alike, and are a wise expenditure of public funds. Had California's community colleges been able to do this over the past few years, it is quite likely there would have been far less legislative and public criticism--and far more money.

If our future in the community colleges is to continue to be measured and evaluated--and there is ample evidence to suggest it

will be--we must be in a position to help determine the types of criteria by which we will be judged. Increasingly, these decisions are being made in state offices or legislative halls, with little or no involvement from the local level. Given the diversity of our colleges and their communities--indeed the diversity of the communities even within a single college's service area--the best means for achieving the specific results desired may well differ from college to college. If we wish to keep our unique community orientation, we must be in a position to defend our own means for proving that what we are doing is working--and to defend it with clearly stated results. The student flow research model has helped us clarify in our district that we are successful in meeting the needs of our community and our students--and we can prove it.

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## CHAPTER 7

### Leadership for Effective Community Colleges

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Let me tell you a story that will illustrate what I believe about leadership. Some years ago a man accepted a presidency in a community college in which his predecessor had had a most difficult tenure and had eventually been dismissed by the Board of Trustees. Upon arrival of the new president in the community, he received a call from the former CEO offering to meet with him in order to discuss his perceptions of the college.

He was delighted to meet with the former president and thought the invitation was a gracious gesture. They met at breakfast and the new president was accompanied by his young daughter. As they arrived at the breakfast meeting, he told her that the meeting was with the former president to which she responded, "Isn't that the man who was fired?" Being mindful of how brutally blunt a nine-year old can be, he said, "Yes, it was," and suggested that she be "seen rather than heard" during breakfast. The breakfast meeting turned out to be cordial and informative as they discussed the local college, the state of the community college movement in general, and other topics appropriate for two presidents to discuss. During the breakfast meeting the child sat silently. Finally, the meeting ended and the new president thanked his predecessor for his kindness and professional courtesy in sharing his thoughts.

As the daughter and father returned to their car, she informed him that she had listened to the conversation and that in her opinion the former president seemed to know as much as her dad. She followed her declaration with a question as to why the other president was fired. He thought for a moment and decided to try to clear up this contradiction in her mind with an example a nine-year old girl could understand.

Since the daughter was very involved in ballet classes, his illustration was about ballet. He reminded her that in her ballet class she often saw girls who were physically perfect, whose turnout was natural, and who could stand at the barre in a perfect fifth position. In other words, they had the technical ability to do all the classical ballet positions to perfection.

Then he asked what might happen to some of them if the ballet mistress moved them from the barre to the floor and added movement. Recalling her experiences, she noted that some girls do not perform well when asked to move across the floor to the music. And, she agreed with her father that some girls may know the appropriate techniques and classical positions of their arms and feet, but they are not effective ballerinas. In other words, her father continued, "they can't dance!" He further noted that the former president apparently "couldn't dance." Although he knew the rules and understood the principles, he could not put them together to make the presidency work.

#### Characteristics of Leaders

A review of the literature will reveal many excellent pieces on the topic of leadership. John Roueche, George Baker, Clark

Kerr, James Fisher, John Gardner, George Vaughan, and the Exxon Education Foundation Study are among only a few of the recent works. While each has a different focus there seems to be some commonality running throughout recent writings regarding effective leadership.

Roueche and Baker, for instance, have cited that effective leaders think in larger terms, look beyond the unit which they are heading, and are able to grasp that unit's relationship to larger realities. They reach out and influence constituents beyond their jurisdiction; they have vision, clear values and motives; they possess political skills which allow them to cope with conflicting requirements of multiple constituencies; and they constantly think in terms of renewal.

I believe that much of what makes an effective leader is inherent in the individual human being. It has always been perplexing to observe people in positions of authority who seemingly have little understanding of the basics of human nature. Just like the ballet dancer who lacks the ability to be a ballerina, the lack of mastery of management principles does not cause the demise of a leader but rather the lack of understanding of people and human nature.

While I do not subscribe totally to the traits theory of leadership, effective leaders seem to share some common attributes. But, as John Gardner has pointed out, there is no one ideal model; there are many kinds of leaders and styles of leadership. However, Gardner does identify certain basic tasks that effective leaders are able to perform, including:

envisioning goals	achieving unity
affirming values	serving as a symbol
motivating	representing the group externally
managing	renewing
explaining	

It is vital that the president of a college have a sense of vision. This vision will provide the foundation for the establishment of a sound philosophical basis for the college and envision the institution as a whole, for it is in this office that the various units of the college converge.

An effective leader is one who can help a group get the results that have been identified as important. It is important to note that the process leading to the results should ensure a constructive, positive, and free environment.

Effective leaders usually will not ask others to make greater commitments of time and energy for organizational purposes than the leader is prepared to make. Further, a leader has the talent to select ideas, bring them into focus, and relate them to tasks confronting the organization. The leader is not the fountainhead of all knowledge or ideas, but rather the integrative force in pulling together diverse thoughts.

A college presidency may be likened to the conductor of a symphony orchestra. The president must ensure that the orchestra members are performing from the same sheet of music and that each unit knows its part. It is not necessary, however, that the president be a master at playing each instrument.

The task of directing and melding each unit into the whole and setting the tempo falls to the president as it does to the symphony conductor. If the conductor is successful, the result is a beautiful interpretation of a symphony; on the other hand, the success of the president will result in the institution's responses to the needs of the students. If the president is not successful, then we hear discordant notes and sounds like an orchestra tuning up. The successful performance of either one should result in beautiful music or in student success.

In both successful and effective leadership, the job gets done. However, effective leaders ensure followers not only perform in accordance with the leader's intentions, but discern that the leader's path also satisfies followers' basic needs.

A recent report by the Exxon Education Foundation Study of effective college presidents studied successful practices from among the best presidents in the country as perceived by their peers. The study found, in part, that effective presidents are different. They are strong risk takers with a dream. They rely on respect, not popularity. They tend to work longer hours and rarely speak without preparation. They make decisions more easily than others. They encourage people to think creatively.

In effective leadership there is no dimension more important than team building. The best leader is one who ensures that the appropriate talent and skill is built into the team. Leaders surround themselves with people of exceptional talent and ability.



In building a staff or team, there must be a balance of skills, characteristics having in common a singular commitment to the institution and its mission. In fact, the primary loyalty of a staff is to the mission of the college. Loyalty to the leader exists only insofar as that person carries out that mission. However, a hierarchy of loyalty to mission and to the individual should not be mutually exclusive.

For effective leadership today it is necessary to provide for a dispersion of leadership and, as John Gardner has stated, "to have faith in human possibilities." That faith is exhibited by the confidence of the leader in others.

For colleges to be successful with students there must be a commitment, dedication, and vitality throughout the organization. In fact, too often we ignore lower and middle levels of leadership. Competency and vitality at those levels can result in producing greater levels of success for the leader and, ultimately, the student.

Having confidence in other leaders in the organization and providing an opportunity for decision making at all levels forces each leader throughout the institution to become fully active in its welfare. Responsible people, who are performing leadership roles throughout the organization, are in a position to identify problems and react quickly to them.

#### Chief Student Affairs Officers or Leaders

Chief student affairs administrators are in a critical position which affects student success. While the positive attributes of leadership discussed previously apply to CSAOs, the following are especially important for CSAOs:

- 1) The CSAO must be part of a senior level management team. It is critical that the CSAO establish a close liaison and working relationship with the chief academic officer. The two must work together toward common student goals.
- 2) The CSAO must be an advocate for students, a priority which is too often ignored today. Too often time and energy is devoted to tasks and the managerial responsibilities of job (i.e., recruiting, records, placement, etc.) with too little time to focus on the basics of student success.
- 3) The CSAO must strive to ensure that the student affairs unit is an integral part of students' educational process. The tasks of student affairs specialists must be viewed as the key to the success of students, a fact that needs to be understood throughout the college.
- 4) The CSAO should raise the consciousness level of the college about certain activities that help us to help our students stay in school, persist toward goals, and succeed. Some of these activities include:
  - Establishing an environment in which we care about each other
  - Promoting high quality teaching and other services
  - Providing financial aid
  - Involving the students in the campus life
  - Promoting high quality advising

Many of these activities are the direct or indirect responsibility of the student affairs officer but require the support of all college leaders.

## Summary

In summary, a leader must have the will to do something worthwhile. Having the tools and the skills will be superfluous if one does not have the will to succeed.

Leaders fail, and institutions deteriorate, because of complacency, myopia, and an unwillingness to address change. Leadership is always founded in hard work and there are many who seek the rewards and the status but not the work or the sacrifices.

One must never forget the importance of the mission of the college and of gaining the cooperation of those in the college best able to achieve that mission. Although I have described certain aspects of leadership, I have not described the "perfect leader" because I cannot. Leadership should be thought of in pluralistic terms, since great leaders realize that leadership development is an ongoing, lifelong process.

## References

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