ABSTRACT
              Working from a timeline established by the Office of
the Chancellor for the California Community Colleges (CCC) for
implementing student equity initiatives, this report describes a
model process for planning and implementing programs to increase
minority participation and graduation rates. The first section
describes the planning group, suggesting that colleges assign the
project to a committee at the highest level, rather than creating a
special committee for the purpose, and that the chief executive
officer be made ultimately responsible. The next section reviews
budgetary concerns, suggesting that early preparation is useful,
despite the need for estimating uncertain future revenues. The final
sections outline phases of a model planning process, with actions
presented chronologically based on the CCC timeline. The first phase
is for the spring and includes organizing the committee; collecting
and reviewing new data; reviewing existing programs and plans; and
collecting information about the college climate through surveys,
discussions with student and community groups, and campus
inspections. The next phase is for September in which tentative goals
should be established by reviewing data on student access and success
and the campus climate. The next phase corresponds to October and
involves meeting with various school groups to ascertain what changes
will prove to be most useful. Finally, in the November phase,
priorities are established and in the December phase the plan is
reviewed and adopted by the board. (MAB)

Student Equity:

The Task Is Not Simply To Produce a Plan

But To Make a Difference

Mike Anker

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by

Mike Anker

We cannot achieve access and success so long as the "students are expected to do all the changing." (Richardson, p. 14)

"The first requirement for improving minority participation and graduation rates is its definition as one of a small number of top institutional priorities. Few public institutions have the resources to pursue with observable results more than two or three priorities simultaneously." (Richardson, p. 43)

"Resistance to placing additional emphasis on helping students learn should be attributed more to the corresponding additional demands on faculty time than to any inherent incompatibility with relevant concepts of quality." (Richardson, xii)

"Institutional leaders need to be convinced that progress toward assigned goals is the price of continuing state support without unwanted state intrusions." (Richardson, p. 229)

"Achieving priorities requires strategic planning, as well as allocation of scarce discretionary dollars. When institutional leaders are serious about improving equity outcomes, both of these activities are in evidence. Availability and use of information is another important indicator of administrative commitment to managing culture to improve equity outcomes. Institutions that lack or conceal information about current status and past trends for the minority students they serve are unlikely candidates for changing the conventions of past practice. Institutional leaders keep track of the information they consider important to attainment of their priorities. Those committed to improving equity outcomes are familiar with the indicators of minority participation and achievement for their institutions." (Richardson, p. 43)

Richard C. Richardson, Jr., and Elizabeth Fisk Skinner, *Achieving Quality and Diversity*, Macmillan, 1991.

1. **"By March 31 the college/district planning group(s) should be established, the planning schedule determined, and the review of existing program plans (e.g., EOPS, VATEA, Matriculation, et al,) and data collection initiated."** (Mertes letter, February 3, 1993)

      A.   **Planning Group**

      B.   **Budget**

      C.   **Planning Schedule**

            1.   **This Spring**

                  a.   **Review of Existing Program Plans**

                  b.   **Data Collection Initiated**

            2.   **September, October, November, December, and Then**

A.   Planning Group

The task is not simply to produce a plan but to make a difference, to change the college so the college .n help more and more students attain their educational goals and, thereby, contribute to a better California.

1.   Use the highest level college or district committee.

Don't create a special committee but, rather, use the highest level college or district committee and assign actual writing to a subcommittee of that group.

2.   Make increasing access and success one of the college's primary goals.

"The first requirement for improving minority participation and graduation rates is its definition as one of a small number of top institutional priorities. Few public institutions have the resources to pursue with observable results more than two or three priorities simultaneously." (Richardson, p. 43)

3.   The College President Should Chair and Be Accountable.

An individual needs to be responsible for keeping the planning process moving on schedule and at a high level of quality. Ideally, the CEO should have this responsibility. However, the CEO will probably want to delegate the day-to-day responsibility which presents no problem so long as the CEO and the other top administrators are held accountable for the quality and effectiveness of the plan. **Therefore, make increasing access and success one of the objectives by which all top administrators will be evaluated.** Even better, include student equity in the evaluation and incentives for all staff.

B.   Budget:

Not only is money tight, but this planning process is out of phase with the budget process. It is too early to make decisions about budget for student equity during the budget process this Spring, but the budget process next Spring will take place after the plan has been submitted, and Title 5 requires that the plan include "sources of funds for the activities in the plan." [Section 54220(a)(4)]

1.   The Senate's "Guidelines" discusses where extra funds might come from, for example, grants from private or even public sources such as the Fund for the Improvement of Instruction. It is not too early to assign some group to review grant possibilities.

2.   The Senate document also goes into some detail on the importance of many components that need not require new money at all, for example, focusing staff development funds on student equity.

3.   It is also not too early to put a subcommittee together to review the 1992-3 budget, and the 1993-4 budget as it takes shape, for areas which are lower in priority or could be accomplished at a reduced cost. Those possibilities could be considered in the Fall for reallocation to the activities of the student equity plan at least for 1994-5.

4.   Lastly, since the sun has to shine some day, a district might propose some activities that would be contingent upon receiving growth, COLA, or program improvement funds for 1994-5. Such contingent proposals should not be for the major or essential components of the plan.

B. Budget (Continued):

5. CEOs who are concerned only about compliance will want to list what the college already does and call that list a plan. After all, they will point out, this approach costs no money, and the colleges are certainly short of money.

   a. **Remind such CEOs of the Board's policy:**

   > **The Board, at this time, is not establishing any specific consequences for not develop- ing a student equity plan, nor is it establish- ing standards of quality for such plans. However, the Board is committed to adopt- ing the regulations and policies necessary to attain the maximum rate of student success and to attain student equity and will con- sider more prescriptive regulations, if they appear necessary, when it receives its an- nual report. (Student Equity Policy, Board Agenda, September 10-11, 1992, Item 4, pages 3-4)**

   b. The Academic Senate and local senates must make it unmistakably clear that we will seek specific mandates and weighted funding formulae if the plans are window dressing or in other ways ineffective.

   c. The Academic Senate needs a resolution at this Session directing the Executive Committee to review the plans as soon as they are available, drawing state-wide attention both to the promising and to the weak, and making recom- mendations for specific state mandates and weighted fund- ing formulae if they seem necessary.

C. Model Planning Schedule

1. **This Spring:**

   · In addition to getting organized, review existing data and collect more data:

   a. **Involve as many groups as possible,** including off-campus groups, in making preliminary suggestions. **Success will ultimately depend more on whether the college mobilizes all its human resources than on any other single factor.**

      (1) Especially counselors and others who work one-to-one with students should report what obstacles the students say are the major concerns. Resist the temptation to trot out everybody's old agenda.

      (2) Talk to student groups about obstacles to success.

      (3) Talk to community groups about obstacles to access.

      (4) Get some less recognizable staff members to pretend they are new students and try to find their way through registration, the counseling department, the library, and the first day of class.

      (5) Walk around campus and look for publications or characteristics of the campus itself, including interior decoration, that make the college seem indifferent to some groups of students or even hostile.

C. Model Planning Schedule (Continued)

1. **This Spring (Continued):**

   b. **Review existing programs and plans:** what is being done, what has been learned, what works?

   c. **Collect information:**

      (1) **What has to be reported.** Please use the measures published in the Board policy.

      (2) **Campus climate survey:** take everyone's suggestions, review some standard instruments to see if anything has been overlooked, than survey the students to find out what they need most.

C.   Model Planning Schedule (Continued)

  2.   September:

  a.   Review the information regarding student access and success and set tentative goals. The goals should be significant but attainable, not the ideal.

  b.   Review the campus climate data to identify tentative areas of change. The changes need only be progress, we won't turn ourselves inside out. If some faculty will attend a set of workshops on teaching strategies but are resistant to changing the curriculum, that's progress. If others won't even do that but they will agree to do some mentoring, that will make a difference, too.

  c.   The point is not to make it right but to make a difference. None of us knows what "right" is but we do know if we aim that high, we'll spend all our energies in the fights with others who are equally convinced of entirely different views of what is right.

C.   Model Planning Schedule (Continued)

3.   **October:**

Meet with various groups to develop proposals for what changes and which new programs are most promising.

- What can classroom faculty do?

- What can counselors do?

- What can librarians do?

- What can classified staff do?

- What is the role of those staff, especially administrators, who do not deal directly with students as regularly?

- Review registration procedures, catalogs and schedules, parking and other transportation issues, whatever causes complaints needs to be reconsidered.

- Some of the best ideas may be too complex or controversial to be resolved in this short period of time. Establish a mechanism so they will get resolved somewhere. For example, should the entire schedule be reorganized so that classes are all taught Monday-Wednesday or Tuesday-Thursday to permit Friday to be dedicated to support and enrichment opportunities? Should summer be made a third full term so students can complete their education more quickly with registration priority for students who enroll in all three terms. How about converting the entire afternoon schedule to one day a week, like the evening schedule? Proposals of this magnitude should not be ignored or forgotten but will need a different process.

C.   Model Planning Schedule (Continued)

4.   November:

Combine and establish priorities among these proposals to complete the Student Equity Plan. The recurrent question is, "What will make a difference?"

5.   December:

Complete district review of these plans including adoption by the board.

2. *"July 1 is the due date for districts to submit to the Chancellor's Office a report on progress in planning for student equity." (Mertes letter)*

    A. **What group is developing the plan and who is chairing that group.**

    B. **How the college and district will hold itself accountable** for results, for example, by making student equity one of the top priorities for the district and by including progress in student equity among the objectives for evaluating the CEO and other top administrators.

    C. **What data the district will be using to set goals and measure progress.** (Again, hopefully these are the same as the ones recommended in the policy adopted by the Board of Governors.)

    D. **What areas of concern have developed in the preliminary review of that data,** i.e., which groups are currently enrolled at rates significantly below their percentage in the adult population of the college's service area, what groups are succeeding at significantly lower rates than the student population as a whole by one or more of the measures of student success? In other words, in what general areas are there likely to be both goals and specific plans.

3. *"December 31 is the due date for submission of district student equity plans with goals and timelines and an executive summary."* (Mertes letter)

But you're not done. A strategic plan is a beginning but only a beginning.

A. **Implementation must be effective**, so it should be clear in the plan who is responsible and accountable for successful implementation of each activity.

B. **Evaluating progress and revising the plan will be necessary** no matter how successful the first plan is. Therefore, the plan should include the schedule of when and by whom it will be evaluated and revised.