Promising Practices & Organizational Structures: Promoting Community College Student Success

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Session Agenda

• Overview of National Survey of Community College Structures for Student Success (SCCSSS)
• Promising Practices
• Survey Results
• Discussion & Questions
• Concluding Thoughts
The Study of Community College Structures for Student Success (SCCSSS)

- The Collaboration
  - College Board
  - Project on Academic Success, Indiana University-Bloomington
  - Center for Enrollment Research, Policy, and Practice, University of Southern California

- The Study
  - National survey of community college structures and policies that enhance student *persistence, transfer* and *completion*
  - Grew out of an ongoing study of four-year institutions (Hossler et al., 2009)
  - Focused on the multiple roles and current and emerging research on community college student outcomes
Focal Points of Our Inquiry: Actionable Implications

Guiding Question: How do community colleges work on increasing student persistence, transfer and completion?

- Understand the role of campus policies and organizational structures supporting community college student success
- Identify promising practices, structures and policies via research, practical literature and a new survey
- Provide national comparative data on the organizational structures and policies community colleges currently employ
Framework

Foundational Leadership & Organizational Structures

- Supporting Institutional Leadership & Intensity of Effort (CCSSE, 2007; Hossler, 2006; Hossler, Ziskin & Gross, 2009)
- Cultivating a Positive Institutional Climate for Diversity (Achieving the Dream, 2005; Williams, Berger, & McClendon, 2005)
- Fostering a Culture of Evidence (Achieving the Dream, 2005; Bailey & Alfonso, 2005; CCSSE, 2007)

Adapted Policy Levers

- Facilitating Access to Financial Aid (Braxton, Hirschy, & McClendon, 2004)
- Developing Excellence & Coordination in Student Support Services (Braxton, Hirschy, & McClendon, 2004; Purnell & Blank, 2004)
- Providing Curricular Structure, Organization, & Focus (Calcagno, Crosta, Baily & Jenkins, 2006; Matus-Grossman & Gooden, 2002; Moore, Shulock, & Offenstein, 2009)

How Community Colleges Organize to Support Student Success
SCCSSS

• Web-based administration
  • 1,050 colleges surveyed
  • Response rate of 22% (ca. 236 responding institutions)

• Sample
  • Nationally representative sample (FT/PT student retention, cohort graduation, Pell, enrollment aged 25-64, etc.)
  • Median revenue (Total revenue/FTE: $9,958; Core revenues: $42,861,790)
  • Enrollment size (39%: 1,000-4,999; 27% : 5,000-9,999; 82% : below 20,000)

• Administrators closely involved with success initiatives
  • Identified through professional lists, web searches and referrals from the college presidents

• Questions were based on the framework
Matrix of Promising Practices

• Tool for discussion as well as reference for research
• Identification of institutional practices and organizational structures that have potential to support community college student success
• Organized by SCCSSS framework, with two major sections:
  • 1) Foundational leadership and organizational structures
    • Includes institutional leadership, positive climate for diversity, and culture of evidence
  • 2) Policy levers
    • Includes access to financial aid, improvements to student support services, and curricular structure and focus
Institutional Leadership & Intensity of Effort

Clearly delineate roles and responsibilities

- Designate individual to coordinate retention/diversity efforts
- Committee to oversee retention/diversity efforts

Integrate retention/diversity efforts across campus

Show visible institutional commitment to student success

- Communicate mission and vision with focus on student success
- Formally adopt written retention/diversity plan
Presence of Retention Coordinator by Total Revenue (per FTE)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Total Revenue</th>
<th>Has a Retention Coordinator</th>
<th>Has No Retention Coordinator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>70.1%</td>
<td>29.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>66.7%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>66.2%</td>
<td>33.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Extent of Coordination of Student Success Efforts by Institution Size

- **Large**
  - Not at All: 1.6%
  - Slightly: 21.9%
  - Somewhat: 51.6%
  - Great Extent: 25.0%

- **Midsize**
  - Not at All: 3.0%
  - Slightly: 16.7%
  - Somewhat: 63.6%
  - Great Extent: 16.7%

- **Small**
  - Not at All: 4.2%
  - Slightly: 33.3%
  - Somewhat: 45.8%
  - Great Extent: 16.7%

- **Overall**
  - Not at All: 2.8%
  - Slightly: 23.0%
  - Somewhat: 54.5%
  - Great Extent: 19.7%
Positive Climate for Diversity

Create welcoming and nondiscriminatory environment

- Formal plan for racial and cultural diversity
- Clear antidiscrimination policies and practices
- Assessment of student perceptions of campus climate
- Training of personnel in racial and cultural diversity

Support academic transition into community college for diverse populations

- Identify student academic needs
- Disaggregate data based on race/ethnicity, language, gender, etc.
- Use early warning systems

Develop curriculum that incorporates diversity-related issues
Structures for Cultivating a Positive Climate for Diversity

• **46%** had a campus committee charged with assessing *campus climate* for racial and cultural diversity

• **49%** of responding institutions indicated they had *conducted a formal assessment of campus climate* for racial and cultural diversity

• **49%** offered faculty development programming focused on racial and cultural diversity on campus
Foster Culture of Evidence

Build culture of evidence

• Foster institutional culture that discusses institutional performance regarding student persistence, learning and attainment
• Use student and institutional assessments to inform decisions on strategic priorities, resource allocation, and faculty and staff

Systematically collect, analyze, and report data

• Collect data on student characteristics and outcomes
• Disaggregate and report data
• Analyze student progress through milestones and key enrollment patterns (Moore & Schulock, 2010)
Access to Financial Aid

Minimize financial barriers to student success

- Provide access to various types of aid available (grants, campus-based work-study, federal and state loans, scholarships)
- Link financial aid with other college processes like course registration

Communicate info about financial aid

- Disseminate through multiple methods that are culturally and linguistically appropriate
- Partner with local organizations to disseminate financial aid info
- Improve financial aid counseling
Excellence & Coordination in Student Support Services

- Require orientation for all incoming students
- Ensure advising and counseling accessible to students
- Proactively monitor students and have early warning systems to alert on excessive absences or low grades
- Provide academic support through student success courses, supplemental instruction, and tutoring
- Create multiservice student support programs/one-stop centers
### Orientation Offerings by Institution Size

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>College Offers Orientation Program</th>
<th>Orientation Required for First-Time First-Year Students</th>
<th>Orientation Includes Individual Meeting Between Student and Advisor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Small</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>31.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midsize</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
<td>48.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>55.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentages represent the proportion of institutions offering each service.
Supplemental Instruction Offerings by Total Revenue

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Total Revenue</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>51.8%</td>
<td>48.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>62.7%</td>
<td>37.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>55.3%</td>
<td>44.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Yes
No
Curricular Structures, Opportunities & Focus

- Require completion of gateway courses, including first-year English composition and entry college-level mathematics
- Provide quality developmental/remediation courses
- Encourage credit accumulation through adequate course offerings
- Encourage full-time enrollment, which promotes degree completion
- Create learning communities, especially for first-year students, linking courses and creating cohorts
- Offer experiential or real-world learning opportunities
Summing Up

• Community colleges are actively organizing for student success. However, ...
  • Results reflect variation in community colleges’ structures and use of policy levers - Differences in structures across enrollment size
  • Resources (e.g. FTE, funding and programming authority) devoted to the enterprise may not address all concerns
  • Colleges are engaged unevenly in cultivating a positive climate for diversity
  • Many community colleges are engaging with data systematically and are cultivating a culture of evidence in this way
Implications for Institutions

• Report documents the prevalence of organizational structures and promising practices in community colleges
  • Matrix is a reference resource and tool for campus discussion
  • Survey provides comparative data on peers
Audience Questions and Discussion
Project on Academic Success

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INDIANA UNIVERSITY
BLOOMINGTON

USC Rossier
School of Education
SUPPLEMENTAL SLIDES
Campus-wide Discussions: Fostering a Culture of Evidence

• Respondents described **campus discussions** regarding specific student success outcomes
  • *Retention and Degree or Certificate Completion:* 83% said their **administration** prompted campus discussions **several times or more** per year
  • *Transfer:* 63% reported these campus discussions occurring **several times or more** per year

• 52% of respondents characterized these campus discussions as **including data “to a great extent”**
Analysis of Student Retention Outcome Data, by Total Revenue

- Less than Once Every Five Years
- Once Every Two to Five Years
- Once a Year or More

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Middle</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Semester-to-Semester Retention Rates</th>
<th>Fall-to-Fall Retention Rates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
<td>8.2%</td>
<td>I</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>26.9%</td>
<td>20.4%</td>
<td>8.2%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>69.2%</td>
<td>70.4%</td>
<td>83.6%</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Low</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.9%</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
<td>8.2%</td>
<td>High</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13.5%</td>
<td>18.5%</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>84.6%</td>
<td>77.8%</td>
<td>88.5%</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Developing Excellence and Coordination in Student Support Services: Academic Advising

• Advising Structure
  • 21% require first-year students to meet with an academic advisor at least once per term
  • 36% reported having advisors who specialized in transfer

• Advising Roles
  • 38% estimate that a majority of their first-year students were advised by faculty advisors
  • 42% estimated that a majority of first-year students were advised by professional advisors/counselors
Developmental Education Services by Institutional Level of Total Revenue

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Self-Paced Developmental Education</th>
<th>Short-Term Developmental Education</th>
<th>Online Developmental Education Courses</th>
<th>Mandatory Placement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>43.5%</td>
<td>56.5%</td>
<td>82.6%</td>
<td>17.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>46.4%</td>
<td>52.0%</td>
<td>92.2%</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>47.8%</td>
<td>53.6%</td>
<td>93.0%</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Legend:
- **Yes**
- **No**
Practices for Cultural and Racial Diversity, by Institution Size

- Faculty Development Focused on Racial and Cultural Diversity Issues
- Presence of Committee to Assess Campus Racial/Ethnic Diversity
- Formal Assessment of Climate for Racial and Cultural Diversity