

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

“Using Student Affairs to Drive Enrollment Management: A Case Study Web Conference”
March 29, 2006

Members of the Student Affairs Division, along with Tom Fanning and Steve Vitatoe, attended a web conference designed to address the challenges faced in student affairs and enrollment management operations. This web conference was a case study of the development of an enrollment management model in student affairs a SUNY College at Oneonta. This presentation covered techniques used to increase the quality and quantity of their freshman applicant pool, lower their acceptance rate, improve their freshman profile, and strengthen overall enrollment. This summary outlines the major ideas of the conference and offers implementation ideas for John Carroll University.

Building a campus culture that supports an enrollment management/student affairs partnership.

- Development of a Comprehensive College Plan that addressed academic quality, admissions selectivity, retention, pluralism, technology, community, and image and tradition.
- College-wide retention summit that refocused the enrollment management committee, implemented college-wide communications regarding enrollment, and reviewed mission.

Building an enrollment management culture within student affairs.

- Introducing the concept of enrollment management and supporting ongoing discussion at all levels.
- Developing a sense of shared responsibility for enrollment goals by identifying challenges and opportunities, having open discussions of strategic planning options, and sharing in success.
- Aligning departmental goals and outcomes with institutional priorities: Divisional planning commitment to College Comprehensive Plan and collaborating beyond Division.
- Building consensus for change in response to new/emerging enrollment data through ongoing survey assessment – data collection, analysis, and feedback.
- Supporting and recognizing successful student life initiatives that assist with retention and recruitment by reallocating resources and providing public recognition.
- Raising the bar for students in terms of academic performance, civility, adherence to community standards and college policies; requirements for student employment, leadership, and mentoring opportunities.
- Divisional initiatives to improve the quality of student life included addressing diversity, civility, customer service, alcohol, transfer issues, retention college traditions, peer educators.

Initial and ongoing budget considerations.

- Commitment of campus reserves to jump start admissions initiatives, including a comprehensive communication plan, web development, enhanced recruitment activities, and extensive use of students.
- Reinvestment of a portion of tuition revenue growth into student affairs/quality of student life initiatives, academic affairs/quality of student learning initiatives, facilities improvements, and scholarships.

Making data-driven decisions.

- Use of assessment tools and survey data, especially indicators of satisfaction and at-risk students.
- Enrollment Management Committee composed of key service area directors and representative to advance institution-wide initiatives. Continuous program and data review with recommendations directed to President.

Campus collaborations and contributions to an enrollment management/student affairs partnership.

- Academic contributions included program additions, accreditation, celebration of teaching, and teaching/learning/technology center.
 - Collaborations with academic affairs included first-year experience seminar, examination of freshman academic experience, and student recognition initiatives.
- Administration and Finance contribute through new and renovated facilities, technology upgrades, and campus infrastructure.
 - Collaborations with administration and finance included campus beautification, renovations, parking services, and technology upgrades in residence halls.
- College Foundation/Alumni Affairs contributed through growth in scholarships, alumni web portal, young alumni initiative, and building traditions.
 - Collaborations with college foundation/alumni affairs included prioritizing scholarships, and building traditions and class identity.

Measurable outcomes from an enrollment management/student affairs partnership.

- Improved student satisfaction and retention.
- Increased applications/acceptance rate/admissions selectivity.
- Improved incoming academic profile.
- Enrollment growth with fewer inputs.
- Improved campus climate for teaching and learning.
- Stronger institutional image.
- Increased alumni support.

JCU Implementation ideas

1. Communications with Admissions: It is imperative to find a way to regularly communicate with Admissions so that information is exchanged. It would be helpful to be able to spend more time with Tour Guides on an on-going basis so they can address issues with us that come up during tours that we did not prepare them for initially.
2. An Enrollment Management meeting with key people to regularly discuss at-risk students.
3. Comprehensive College Plan: It is important to have an easy to understand vision for the future. Student Affairs has laid out Strategic Goals, but it would be nice to have an accessible University plan. Also, as easy as our mission is to understand and recite, some freshmen still have never heard it.
4. It would be interesting to use the book “Good to Great” referred to in this presentation as an all-campus employee common reading.
5. Orientation. Develop a values-based orientation. Commit staff to Orientation. Revise transfer orientation.
6. Service and programming improvement: weekend and late night programming, improved academic advising, peer advocates, academic resources in the halls, expanded special interest housing, emerging leaders programming and a 4-year career preparedness plan.
7. Academic advising for first year and undecided students: Student Affairs educators are willing and able to help with this role. It is a great way to have positive, meaningful relationships with students. The current system keeps students disconnected for too long. Also consider integrating career advising.
8. Peer advocates: This is an initiative that is infused throughout many areas of the Oneonta case. It can ease new students' transition and provide more opportunities for student leadership development and may help retention and overall satisfaction. It may also fill possible future gaps created by staff reductions.
9. Student services: Conduct the exercise of walking through the path that students currently take to receive services. This is critical to students' satisfaction and retention. It will also be informative as we plan relocations, so that in creating more space for students we do not create more barriers for them to get things accomplished.
10. Instilling pride in JCU: Perhaps sending sweatshirts to all accepted or newly-enrolled students, t-shirts to all students in summer orientation, creation of a mascot, and an athletic fan club-mascot connection. Many people wearing JCU shirts in all over the country provides free advertising and gives students a feeling of belonging.
11. Diversity: We should explore making other faith services available on campus or establish a route to transport students to places of worship in the area.

12. New Student course: Discussion of mission (character development, diversity, respect), decision making (health, sex, alcohol, consequences) and navigation (resources: internships, study abroad, immersion trips, research opportunities, applying for scholarships, getting involved, adding a minor or concentration, making the most of the city). It could be voluntary but highly recommended especially for out-of-state students and students from underrepresented groups. It could be team taught by faculty and administrators or by administrators with a faculty connection.
13. Build or continue partnerships beyond Student Affairs, particularly in relation to New Student and Fall Orientation, Homecoming, and Senior Week.

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