

**Board Strategic Conversation: Student Success**  
**August 15, 2011**

**Participants:**

Board of Trustees: Andy Bell, Heather Corbin, Bill Mercurio, Peggy Noonan, Heather Tiefenthaler, Sharon Evans, Jim Doyle, Elise Spriggs

Clark State Faculty/Staff: Martha Crawmer, Jane Cape, Marilyn Carlson, Kathy Wilcox, Ed Busher, Jennifer Dietsch, Jim Franks, Kathy Klay, Marvin Nephew, Nina Wiley, Amy Sues, Cort Schneider, Brendan Greaney, Barb Deschappelles, Chris Bays, Carin Burr, Larry Everett, Susan Everett, Dee Malcuit, Lynn Mealy, Evelyn Naegel, Fabian Novello, Robert Sweet, Steve Vrooman, Bonnie Young, Kris Culp, David Devier, Karen Rafinski

Clark State Students: Robin Barcey, Charles Clark, Miles Crabtree, Diane Gray, Tilden Mobley, Rosie Mudaliar, Valerie Powell, Melissa Runyan, Shana Speaks

**Governance Institute For Student Success – Rafinski**

Discussion included:

- There are different definitions of student success. Clark State likes to describe success as whatever the student's goal is. A student may want a degree, a certificate, or a few classes to enhance skills.
- President Obama has set a national goal to increase the number of individuals with a college degree or a credential of value by 2020.
  - Karen noted that this goal will require that non-traditional students achieve degrees. We cannot achieve this goal by just ensuring that all high school graduates get a degree.
- The Gates Foundation sponsored the Governance Institute for Student Success which brought together community college leadership to identify how to improve student success. The information from this, which identifies policies, strategies, and indicators of success, can be found in Tab 2 of the trustee Strategic Conversation book.
- The last page in that Tab contains the endorsement for the college completion agenda. This will be addressed at a future board meeting.
- The information in Tab 3 was provided by the Gates Foundation.
- Tab 4 contains information that is specific to the state of Ohio. Karen highlighted the following statistics:
  - 43 % of people with licenses or certificates earn more than individuals with Associate's degrees.
  - 27 % of people with licenses or certificates earn more than individuals with Bachelor's degrees.
  - 31 % of people with Associate's degrees earn more than individuals with Bachelor's degrees.
- The state is now funding state institutions not just on enrollment, but also on student success. The percentage of income based on success rather than enrolment will increase in future years.

**Student Success Research Documents – Rafinski**

Karen discussed various ways to identify student success. These include:

- Course completions – we currently average 70% of students completing their courses
- COMPASS results compared with CPE and regular class grades.
- Student Success data can be found in the monitoring report.

## Faculty Panel

We had a panel of faculty addressing four questions about student success and barriers to success.

1) What are the barriers to student success that you have observed and are they different for traditional students as compared to adult learners? What strategies do you personally use to overcome these barriers with each group?

- Lack of computer skills (in both older and traditional age students), lack of reading and math skills, lack of study skills, and unrealistic expectations of what college is like such as the amount of work that is required.
  - To overcome these – keep class numbers small to enable focus on individual needs (10-15 is best), provide information on study skills, basic college skills, information on about the college, and information about the professional area.
- Lack of realistic expectations about college. Time is a big issue for traditional and non-traditional students – many are working, have families, and have difficulty spending sufficient time on the school needs
  - We introduce tutoring skills, group study skills but students don't have time to take advantage of these. Good advising is essential to help students take on only what they can handle.
  - An example of the time challenge – 3 CPE classes and one regular class is too much. Perhaps starting slower, then speeding up in later quarters would help.
- Students do not know how to learn today.
  - I have to pay attention to helping students understand how to learn anything. I start with understanding, helping students understand their motivation and goals, what skills you bring, understanding what your external environment is, how to pay attention, comprehension, evaluation, application. This helps students be responsible for their own learning.
- It is critical to have a successful first quarter. We need to do all of the things we can do for Q1 – best faculty, small class sizes, whatever it will take to help them be successful.

2) One of the secrets to student success is to strengthen classroom engagement and integrate student support into learning experiences. What are some practices you have used, and what are some practices you would like to see implemented?

- Teaching across the curriculum – helping students see the connections between subjects. We have professors working together now, and are creating a learning community within Arts & Sciences. When we go to semesters we will have an introductory course for Arts & Sciences students that is integrated and also addresses college readiness.
  - We would like more supports for this from admin and from other faculty, and want to get outside A&S.
- We are a very isolated institution – we need to take a concentrated effort to connect across departments and divisions so that we see what our students see.
- We do a good job in nursing today incorporating simulations and case studies, discussion groups. We keep information accessible to the students. We also do gaming as a way to get students engaged in the materials.
- Technology is a barrier, such as students texting in class.
- The agriculture program has always required a cooperative work experience about half way through the program. This has really helped students understand how to apply what

they are learning. Those who complete the co-op seem to be more likely to finish the program and get degree. (Although do not have evidence to prove this.)

3) Much work is being done here at the College in regard to student success as well as on the state and national levels. What innovations or best practices already initiated do you believe are making a difference and what additional initiatives would you like to see?

- The more time a student spends with the material, the better they will perform. 50 minute classes are tough. Many students need study tables for more time. I try to provide study tables for my students. I agree that students need to understand the connection between topics such as sociology to psychology.
  - Part of the problem with study tables is lack of space.
  - We now have more students who are on campus for longer times so they could be here for study tables.
- We need more tutoring and tutors. Note that CPE students get bonus points for going to tutoring.
- Orientation that is mandatory is good. Another helpful thing is the orientation class that provides study tips, information about college.
- Another positive is the Success Day with multiple sessions that help students. Topics are more than academics and study skills. They include money management, how to read a textbook, life management – these are very helpful.

4) How do you see the role of CPE (developmental education) in serving student success? Are we successful with these students? How might we improve?

- We need to combine writing with the COMPASS test; we must place students correctly.
- We need to address the students who are just there for money.
- Agree we need to get better at finding the students who are not serious.
- Students who stay through the entire CPE program tend to do well. However, some students find it too hard.
  - We recommend a retention specialist for CPE students.
- Agree that the CPE is important. Even the Champion City Scholars are not college ready. The CPE services teach more than basic skills such as reading and writing, they also teach social and cultural capital such as how to function in an institution like this. Students do not get this anywhere else. CPE is a vital component to help these students be more successful in college. Our CPE faculty are phenomenal.
- Many of the CPE students are also emotionally needy. It would be great to have counseling services expanded. Our students also need emotional support. We need to expand the services and have a place to refer emotionally needy students. This will let faculty members focus on academics.

### **Defining the Student Success Agenda – Devier**

David provided an overview of current and future initiatives. See his presentation [Board August 2011.pptx](#) for the details.

### **Student Services Panel**

We had a panel of Student Services staff addressing questions about student success and barriers to success.

- 1) What particular services are in great demand by what types of students?
  - High risk students tend to need high touch from someone at the college. We need to have sufficient people to help the students.
  - Advising over the break might be helpful. We need to coordinate the different programs more so faculty are not surprised when they return from a break.
  - We need tutoring for more than the high risk students, we also need it for students in the A and P classes, the level 3 classes. We struggle to find peer or other tutors to help.
  - We try to do group tutoring or workshops, but students want one on one, and we cannot give individual tutors. It is tough to find the right times and places for group tutoring.
  - In disability services we created workshops for any student. I struggle to get enough students to show up. However, if too many did show up, I would not have room for them! We need to connect student services with faculty in order to have faculty understand what student services can offer and to help students to take advantage of the services.
  
- 2) What do we do really well, and in what services do we continue to have challenges?
  - Orientation is something we do well. Have come a long way.
  - We are challenged by students who register for orientation and do not show – we do not track them.
  - I had 124 personal counseling referrals, 43 behavior interventions (threat, criminal background) last year.
  - We could improve the high touch interventions; we are hiring someone who will be dedicated to the highest risk students.
  - I'm proud that we have the COMPASS test on multiple computers in disability services. We are doing a better job of catching the students who need disability services. Still need to improve, but doing better already.
  - We have walk-in tutoring already. Have had students who are benefitting from this. Students come in with all kinds of problems – curricular, personal, computers. Our best practice is the tutors. They are great.
  
- 3) Financial aid is critical to student enrollment. What are the financial aid issues related to student success? Are there policies we need to implement that will improve our course completion and reduce the Z grades?
  - We are discussing the Z grades and unofficial withdrawals, and we are working on some policy changes to address this. These students have done everything but show up. We need to do more to track the students who just do not show up. Perhaps we need more times that we connect with the students - letters, emails, phone calls from faculty, various student services offices in the intermediate time before classes start.
  
- 4) What formal and informal indicators are predictors for at-risk students? What are the indicators that are predictors for student success?
  - Informal indicator – Facebook posts about when is my financial aid coming to me.
  - Another indicator of risk is when mom does all the talking.
  - Unclear goals is another indicator of potential risks.
  
- 5) What is one thing you wish we would do?
  - Collaborate more – between Student Services offices and with faculty
  - See more collaboration, more tutoring, more invested in tutoring.

- I want to see the results of the four new initiatives that we are starting.
- I want to see more support for our veterans. We do great in getting them enrolled. We need to provide support groups, individual advising, career advising.
- I want to find a way that when we meet students who want to be full time, that we can help them understand that they might be more successful with a smaller load.
- Agree, especially with adults who have been out of school a long time. We recommend that they start slow to get acclimated again.
- I would like to have more room. I can't get into my office these days because of the number of students.
- We do a wonderful job taking care of the students who want to be here, and need to do a better job with those who are not sure to help them get through college.

### **Breakout Group Reports**

We split into six groups to address the discussion questions.

#### Breakout Group 1

- 1) Do you understand and agree with the definition of student success? What improvements do you suggest?
  - Student success includes the success points per the OBR/OACC.
  - It should be: attaining individual goals and translating into job opportunity/outside success/self improvement. We recognize that this definition is hard to measure.
  - Success should include certificates
  - Success points are markers, milestones, not a definition of success.
  - Clark State is one step of success. Other life experiences can be valuable to the individual.
  - Degree/certificate indicates ownership of the skills
- 2) How can we help students in developmental education successfully transition to regular classes?
  - Use available resources. But we recognize that transition requires self-confidence and support...
  - Set short term goals and success makers.
  - Frustration of spending extra time & money can hinder success/deter student from continuing.
  - CPE includes introduction to college services.
  - Individual conferences help students.
  - Successful students serve as role models.
  - Need Study Tables or Study Buddies
  - Students need typing skills.
  - Adjuncts need training in classroom management – Crisis management for needy students.
- 3) What can we do to improve the success of adult learners?
  - Self confidence is an issue for adults.
  - Better to be a part time student.
  - They need to understand their own weaknesses.
  - Single parents have extra struggles and we need a better support network (child care is a huge issue).
- 4) What can we do to improve the success of traditional students?

- Understand what makes up a quality learning environment.
  - Address behavior issues – inappropriate classroom behavior is more of a problem with traditional students.
  - Student motivation vs. parent influence??
  - College policy on classroom behavior could be helpful and is under development.
  - Faculty/staff should make students responsible for behavior (academic behavior also).
  - Emphasize student responsibility & attendance.
- 5) What resources do our faculty need to help them help students succeed?
- Space, study tables, a learning community
- 6) What policy questions need to be addressed to improve how the college supports student success (addressing both traditional students and adult learners)? What should Clark State start doing, stop doing, change, or continue as is?
- Policies for:
    - Student behavior/discipline
    - Financial aid
  - We already have options for short term revolving loans
  - We need to provide training/support for adjuncts in classroom management
  - We need more tutors in general and in specialty areas.

#### Breakout Group 2

- 1) Do you understand and agree with the definition of student success? What improvements do you suggest?
- The group liked the Board End statement on student success. The measurable outcomes should be determined by the students' definition of success, the state's definition of success, and employers' definition of success.
- 2) How can we help students in developmental education successfully transition to regular classes?
- Extra tutoring
  - Student guides and mentors
  - Guidance on maturing as learners
  - Guidance on "street smarts" for college
  - Teach them time management skills
  - Help them connect with each others and learn to work in groups
  - Help them understand that learning is an active process and that they are responsible for their learning; provide them the tools to accomplish that
- 3) What can we do to improve the success of adult learners?
- Ease them into college (maybe one or two courses)
  - Help them develop the confidence that they can do the work
  - Help them identify their weaknesses and how they can overcome them
  - Prepare more extensive syllabi, giving them as much information up front as possible so that they can plan their quarter; give them a big picture up front

- Go beyond lecture (limit lecture) to application of the principles using real world examples
  - Solicit their input and help them draw the connection between the principles and what they have already experienced in life and the workforce
  - Treat them like adults and with respect
  - Provide them multiple ways of learning—traditional classroom, online, self-paced, etc.
  - Recognize that they may need more time to master a concept
- 4) What can we do to improve the success of traditional students?
- Make them aware of what is expected of them as collegiate learners
  - Hold them accountable
  - Provide them some hand-holding to help them figure out college
  - Let them we will do everything to help them be successful while letting them know that they have responsibility for their learning
- 5) What resources do our faculty need to help them help students succeed?
- Look at faculty load and ensure that they have the time they need to work with students and focus on teaching
  - More space and financial resources for tutoring
  - Consolidate technology so that there are not so many places they need to check things
- 6) What policy questions need to be addressed to improve how the college supports student success (addressing both traditional students and adult learners)? What should Clark State start doing, stop doing, change, or continue as is?
- Should the college have an attendance policy?
  - Implement a policy around administratively withdrawing students who have not attended or been actively involved in a course during the first part of the term

### Breakout Group 3

- 1) Do you understand and agree with the definition of student success? What improvements do you suggest?
- We have an internal list of success that we track – but what is the real intent?
- 2) How can we help students in developmental education successfully transition to regular classes?
- Take CPE and class in their major whenever possible
  - Tutoring and study tables
  - Classes are too big for the kind of attention needed
  - Help students develop organizational skills
- 3) What can we do to improve the success of adult learners?
- They carry a lot of baggage
  - Have many personal connections
- 4) What can we do to improve the success of traditional students?
- Champion City Scholars
  - Time management, organization skills

- Students think they are prepared, but are not
  - They want to sit in on a class
- 5) What resources do our faculty need to help them help students succeed?
- More space for studying and more tutors
  - IT issues frustrate students.
  - We should help good students motivate at risk students to keep going; keep the good students involved
- 6) What policy questions need to be addressed to improve how the college supports student success (addressing both traditional students and adult learners)? What should Clark State start doing, stop doing, change, or continue as is?
- Do not criticize students - Remember that they do not have a clue, and we do have a clue. Help rather than criticize
  - Help students make connections to others – students, faculty, and staff.

#### Breakout Group 4

General discussion addressing all questions:

- The state definition is sterile
- We need to focus on what success means to the students. Did I accomplish my goal – why I came to Clark State
- Work between Advisors, faculty, younger students; need faculty and staff to collaborate
- More motivated as an older student
- We need to plant seeds, when you are ready we are here
- Get student to define their level of success early
- Can we motivate the check baby through caring faculty & staff?
- integrate the student's definition of success with the state's definition
- We need to better support students
- Students need personal connections
- We need to expand support systems beyond typical services – more mentoring and 1-1 support model, more individual support
- Minority male support – we need a person who can interact with them, be their support network
- What Clark State should stop – Adjunct teachers are not teaching as well; they need more connections with the college. We need to provide more adjunct training.
  - Understand campus policies, procedures, and services
  - Agriculture provides a good example of what can happen with few adjuncts
- We need more full time faculty for consistency and quality
- There are system glitches with information systems such as no prerequisites, waivers, etc.
- Establish criteria for a learning community; form study group, have faculty release time for a study group.
  - Criteria might be low GPA, test score, first gen, etc.
- Take students who are on the bubble and move them forward
- highlight the importance of a student having internal drive
- Need a retention, transition specialist in CPE
- Set expectations for students and make sure they understand
- Take college readiness classes to high school students like Champion City Scholars

- Place everyone who does not pass COMPASS into Clark State CPE – putting into ABLE is not a good idea.
- More than half of our students attend class at night – study this population (adults, work, more motivated?)

### Breakout Group 5

#### 1. Definition of student success.

- Student success is relative to the student but no matter what his/her goal is, it involves learning; so learning is a necessary condition for student success. Moving from one stage to the next as the state describes it, is one measure of learning. But we are not rewarded for other evidence of learning, such as certificates.

#### 2. Transition from developmental education to regular classes.

- There was some discussion that grading scales are higher in CPE classes; that may be counter-productive.
- What is our responsibility to students who continually repeat CPE classes?
- There is a disconnect between our policy's definition of disabilities and the government's definition, which means we don't offer services to some students who could benefit from them; we are in the process of reviewing that policy now.
- Take classes with minimum prerequisites in the first quarter so that their first quarter is successful.

#### 3. Improve success of adult learners.

- Have orientation for people coming back to Clark State after having been away for 2+ years, perhaps mandatory.
- Have a few orientations specifically geared to adult learners.
- Learning communities may be helpful.
- More effort to assess technology proficiency; perhaps have some free workshops to learn how to use Angel, WebAdvisor, etc.

#### 4. Improve success of traditional learners.

- Often they are not prepared for the lack of daily structured assignments; they need to learn how to manage time, plan ahead, organize their work, etc. Learning communities might help. Hear it from students who have already been here for a while.

#### 5. Resources for faculty.

- Students have to be qualified to take the class. COMPASS is not an accurate predictor. Writing test is focused on grammar, not construction.
- Importance of student motivation.
- Make sure that adjuncts are more familiar with student services and how/when/where to refer students for help.

#### 6. Policy issues.

- Currently students can register 3 days before classes start; eventually increase that to two weeks.

### Breakout Group 6

#### 1. What is student success?

- State definition of success is not necessarily accurate or good for a community college.
- Student comment: a student with 14 or 16 credit hours was overwhelmed; would have enjoyed more and found a better field with well
- Success depends on what the student's goal is

- If you have an adult with family and job 6 years IS success.
  - Improved definition difficult
    - Difficulty in discovering and documenting their true goals.
    - Many will not list a true goal because they may lose Financial Aid.
  - Student comment: incomplete information on transfer credits. Did not know that developmental classes would not transfer.
2. How can we help students in developmental education successfully transfer to regular classes?
- “Refresher class” (Particularly in Math) before taking the Compass test.
  - Refer students to the Compass practice test
  - Have all faculty/staff involved with students take the Compass test so they know what it is like.
  - Many students with math phobia delay, then must take CPE classes at the end of their program.
    - Make taking needed CPE classes a prerequisite to any 2<sup>nd</sup> level course or after a certain number of credits have been obtained.
    - Mandatory advising midway through the program
    - Expand the advising center
  - Student comment: Students need to take responsibility to seek out resources
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> student comment: CPE students are not regular students. They need life coach or peer counseling. Fear paralyzes.
  - Change the image of the peer listeners
  - Establish a sort of early alert system for struggling students – really a “middle alert”
    - Need to get faculty to use it
    - Bring up in faculty meetings
    - Need more compliance from faculty on the early alerts
3. & 4. – Adult Learners/Traditional learners
- Peer Listeners
  - Need to recognize other life issues
  - Same for traditional students
  - Don’t forget the near graduates
  - More Career Center type help
  - Career Fair for all areas
  - Not that much difference between the traditional students and adult students; many traditional age students also have jobs and family
5. What resources do our faculty need to help them help students?
- Middle alert as mentioned above
  - More staff in the advising center
  - Check on why some faculty/courses do not get early alert info.
  - More training on MAP and e-advising for faculty (even though they did get training once they do not use it often enough to remember)
  - More info to students on degree audit (program evaluation) and how to use it—get students to declare the proper major so that degree audit will work correctly.
6. Policy
- Change the name of Disability Services to something more positive
  - Same comment for Counseling center
  - After 1<sup>st</sup> year (midway through a program) mandatory advising
  - Faculty have too many students to advise
  - Consider paid trained adjunct advisors