

Student Services
Department Goals and Assessment 2013-2014

Department Name: Multicultural Initiatives

Department Goals for 2013-2014:

1. Enhance programming such as; The Pathways Transition Program, Bruin Steppers' LE 1900 and Career Advancement Program (CAP) as vehicles to provide ethnic minority students an environment to connect with each other, build meaningful relationships, explore career options and support networks, and support services while pursuing their educational goals.
2. A comprehensive ethnic minority Calling Campaign that focuses on connecting with students who have not committed or who have not persisted in pursuing their educational goals at SLCC.
3. A strong and versatile Student Services Committee that works collaboratively with other departments and project teams to develop sustainable programs that promote student retention.
4. A comprehensive web site that highlight programs, services and activities that inform and meet the needs of ethnic minority students and other student groups designated as a protective class.

Project (Assessment) Title 2013-2014—A comprehensive evaluation of the Bruin Steppers Program's impact on student retention as a result of participating in LE 1900 as a way to measure student engagement, participation, and involvement in programs that lead to retention.

College Priority & Objective:

- Strategic Priority I – Improve Student Access and Success
- Objective I A – Increase ethnic minority students' access and participation in varied and integrated learning pathways that leads to inclusion and engagement into higher education.

Methodology (Plan/Timeline/Method)

Fall

- Establish a working rubric from which to categorize the data needed to be collected.
 - Each assignment for LE 1900 had a basic 0-10 rating scale on which the student's work was graded on. Points were taken off for spelling, grammatical, and mechanic errors or not following directions.
- Update or create brochures for each program for marketing purposes.
 - Not completed due to lack of personnel to specifically address this task.
- Include program information and contact information on department's webpage.
 - Not completed: Current website does not have detailed information on the various programs offered by the Multicultural Initiatives Department.
- Recruit students for various programs as needed.
 - As part of the curriculum, students meet professional staff from various departments highlighting programs offered along with benefits and contact information.
 - Students participated in the piloting of the FYE Syllabus online modular. Feedback was gathered and used to make the necessary revisions before the modular was fully published for general use.
 - Students were highly encouraged to join these programs or assist in upcoming projects.
 - Students utilized connections made in class to collaborate with these individuals in order to complete their service learning project.
- Promote programs through student contact emails (invitation letters), brochures, hand-fliers, speaking with ethnic/diverse clubs, academic departments' contacts and instructors, plasma/electronic screens, etc.
 - Students were sent emails about scholarship opportunities, cultural programming events, and college workshops throughout the Fall semester.
 - Various departments conducted most of the promotion done during the Spring semester.
- Conduct focus groups, e-surveys, and interviews with participants to collect needed data on the impact of participating in our programs.
 - A focus group was conducted on the last day of classes by Dr. Joseph Diaz from Institutional Research. Results are listed in the "Actual Results" section of this report.
- Evaluate and analyze data and apply information to rubric.
 - Not completed. No rubric was completed in time to fully analyze the course and program as a whole.

Spring

- Welcome students back activity to get back on target.
 - None provided.
- Include program information and contact information on department's webpage.
 - Not completed due to pending departmental changes.
- Recruit students as needed.
 - Recruitment for Bruin Steppers will not begin until June 2014. Bruin Steppers Program will now be housed under the First Year Experience/Orientation department.
- Promote programs through student contact emails (invitation letters), brochures, hand-fliers, academic departments' contacts and instructors, plasma/electronic screens, etc.
 - Emails continued to be sent out to semester to students, staff and faculty of upcoming events, workshops, and other pertinent issues.
- Conduct focus groups, e-surveys, and interviews with participants to collect needed data on the impact of participating in our programs.
 - Not completed due to departmental changes.
- Evaluate and analyze data and apply information to rubric.
 - Not completed. No rubric was completed in time to fully analyze the course and program as a whole.

Intended Outcomes/Findings

Anticipated results include students building critical and system thinking, team work and problem solving skills, and gain a better understanding of the campus culture and how to use resources to their advantage as they aspire to achieve their educational goals. In addition, students will demonstrate evidence of the following Student Services Learning Outcomes:

1. Develop cognitive skills by thinking reflectively and critically about their development.
2. Acquire knowledge by applying the knowledge learned.
3. Display practical competence and intrapersonal skills by achieving personal and academic goals through engaging in the college experience.
4. Display interpersonal development by demonstrating and comprehending leadership skills and positive role-modeling.
5. Engage responsibly with the broader community through in service-learning for community building and enhancing academic experience.

4. Focus Group Results:

- Participants indicated that the program was flexible enough to accommodate personal experiences while still retaining enough structure to not just recognize institutional practices but effectively employ them as resources to deal with common obstacles standing between each student and their own personal definition of academic success.
- This produced a noteworthy secondary effect where the participants expressed (on multiple occasions) a heightened self-confidence in their ability to find new or additional resources to help them adjust to unforeseen events without interrupting their academic progress.
- Additionally, participants had no difficulty in expressing their views collectively when asked to do so and individually when their opinion differed from the one expressed by the group.
- Dr. Diaz found this particularly impressive given that his review of the published literature on the subject suggests that learning communities often have difficulty in trying to simultaneously create an institutional attachment, group cohesion, and an empowered individual in the same program, but in his observation the participants in the Bruin Steppers program displayed evidence of each.
- In sum, Dr. Diaz was profoundly impressed by this group as a collective learning community and as a loose-knit collection of empowered individual learners. Had he not studied the published research before leading this focus group, it's likely that I'd still have been impressed by these students' ability to express themselves as active participants in their academic progress, but he wouldn't have known how uncommon it is for post-secondary learning communities to produce such multifaceted, critical thinkers.

5. Participant Comments on Improving Program:

- Interestingly, there was no group consensus regarding how the program could be improved and no meaningful critiques were expressed. In Dr. Diaz's experience, cohesive secondary-groups like Bruin Steppers can be reluctant to offer critiques or improvement suggestions to a non-member (like Diaz in this setting) so a common way to neutralize that tendency is by pressing the group to come up with 3 specific ways to improve the program.

- The group produced suggestions that they acknowledged were incidental at best and seemed to have genuine difficulty in identifying what they “didn’t find useful” or “ways to make the program better for the next group.”
- Specific Suggestions offered were:
 - “make assignments due at 9pm rather than midnight”
 - “find a classroom with more comfortable chairs”

6. Participant Comments on What Was Useful: Participants were eager to share their experiences about what they found most useful in the program. When I analyzed their comments I found that they fit into 4 clear themes:

- a. The program gave them a shared experience that made them feel connected to SLCC in a myriad of ways.
- b. The instructors successfully demystified post-secondary education and allowed the students to recognize themselves as “college students.”
- c. The group learned practical and utilitarian ways to use available resources to help them in their academic pursuits.
- d. The multi-cultural/multi-ethnic group was a perfect way for them to, in the words of one student, “start to know how to learn.”