

Engaging the Student Learner

SEM Summit

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Overview of Session

- Introductions
- Why “engaging the student learner” is important
- Different Perspectives:
 - Faculty working on Partnerships with Student Affairs
 - Exercise: Reflection and Sharing of Institutional Approaches
 - Student Affairs working on Partnerships with Faculty
 - Exercise: Reflection and Sharing of Institutional Approaches
- Lessons Learned

Why is engaging the student learner important

- Access and Retention
 - Government Accountability Agreements
 - Diversity of learners: Aboriginal, First Generation, Persons with Disabilities, New Immigrants, International, Student Mobility – University/College
 - Public, parents, employers
- Institutional Reputation
 - External Surveys (Globe and Mail, CUSC)
- Financial Impacts
 - Student success impacts BIU/funding stability
 - Engaged students graduate and become supportive alumni

Stages of Student Engagement

- Access: Pre-university (before they arrive)
 - Engage students and their parents/guardians before they arrive
 - Programs tailored to specific cohorts (put additional resources in place to support the pre-university/college process)
 - Summer transition programs for students and parents/guardians
- Transition: The First-Year Experience
 - Orientation (Academic and Student Life)
 - The first six weeks – Early Alert Systems
 - Academic skill development
 - Social integration - “A sense of belonging”
 - Importance of “peer mentoring”

Stages of Student Engagement

- Retention: Beyond First Year
 - Co-curricular activities (volunteer, clubs, athletics)
 - Community Service Learning
 - Practicum, Co-operative Education
 - Research Labs
 - Intentional outreach retention/support activities
 - Academic/Career planning
- Graduation: Supportive alumni
 - Engaged students graduate and become supportive alumni

Faculty working on Partnerships with Student Affairs: Central – SFU Arts

- SFU - Arts Central
 - New student space for all Arts students
 - Centrally located within academic quadrangle
 - Student Services advisors and Faculty advisors co-located; career and co-op advisors part-time
 - Informal place for students to hang out
 - Space as the “carrot” for partnerships
- What’s Engaging
 - Location
 - One-stop advising model
 - Informality of the space
 - Staff with different reporting lines co-located
 - Students involved in all aspects

Faculty working on Partnerships with Student Affairs: Explorations/TechOne – SFU Surrey

- Explorations/TechOne
 - Interdisciplinary, first year cohort programs, exclusively at our new Surrey campus
 - New courses; run as independent programs
 - Partnerships: across all areas of SFU Surrey (advisors, student learning commons, student enhancement coordinator, peer mentors)
- What's Engaging
 - Support embedded into courses
 - Cohorts
 - Professors choose to teach in these programs
 - Supportive campus infrastructure
 - Writing, research and community services courses (in first year!)

Student Affairs working on Partnerships with Academic Affairs: Learning Services WLU

■ Old Model

- Accessible Learning Centre – AVP: Student Services
- Central Academic Advising Office – Did not exist
- Math Assistance Centre – Chair of Mathematics
- Study Skills – Director of Counselling
- Supplemental Instruction – Did not exist
- Writing Centre – Director of Academic Projects

■ New Model

- Units report to one director within Student Affairs
- Academic based, led by Student Affairs, supported by VP: Academic

■ What's Engaging

- Common focus – more strategic and comprehensive program
- Faculty and Librarians interested in partnerships: New Hybrid Research SI, HECOO Research Grant
- Departments interested in partnerships: Athlete Academic Success Program
- Students' Union interested in partnerships: Orientation Week enhancements

Student Affairs working on Partnerships with Academic Affairs: Greater Expectations Institute, Nashville, WLU

- Theme: Leadership to Make Excellence Inclusive
- Led by VP: Student Affairs
- 10 participants
 - VP: Student Affairs, VP: Academic, Principal: Brantford Campus, 3M Faculty Winners ,and Teaching and Learning Directors
 - Two teams: One led by VP Student Affairs, the other by Principal, Brantford Campus.
 - Implementing Laurier's new Academic Plan: An Integrative Teaching, Learning and Development Culture

Exercise – 15 minutes

- Describe three or more activities your institution does to intentionally engage the student learner.
- Who leads the activities? (position/department)
- When and where do they take place?
 - Year level, Inside/Outside the classroom, On/Off Campus
- How do the activities engage the student learner?
- Are they successful? Do you measure their impact?
- What was the catalyst for these activities?
- Does your institution have a strategic plan that focuses on engaging the student learner? (Access, Transition, Retention, Graduation)
 - Campus-wide/Silo
 - Academic and Student Affairs Partnerships – Who's leading?

Lessons Learned

- Partnership with faculty/student affairs is critical for program success
- Concurrent learning and development
- Students will help design, if you let them
- Space is an incentive to partnering
- Not everyone “gets it”; work with those that do
- SEM is a *perspective*, not a *product* or a *process*

Closing Remarks

We would like to acknowledge the contributions of our colleagues who helped create a model that bridges the academic community and student affairs.