

Student Success Committee

Year End Report 2014-2015

Introduction and Charge

In 2014, University of the Pacific invited Scannell & Kurz, a higher education consulting firm, to review retention and graduation data for traditional age undergraduates at Pacific as well as conduct a best practice “audit” of current retention-related programming at the University. The S&K final report made a series of recommendations for improving graduation and student success at Pacific. Based on this report, Student Success became one of the university’s top priorities for the next two years. In order to organize the Student Success Initiative, President Eibeck authorized and charged the Student Success Committee in August 2014. This year-end report documents the work of the Student Success Committee over the past academic year.

Charge

The Student Success Committee is charged with overseeing student success processes in order to make recommendations for actions to improve various aspects of student success and student outcomes as a whole.

Responsibilities

- In collaboration with IR, collect and analyze student success data, such as information about reasons for leaving Pacific, student satisfaction, campus climate, gateway courses, and retention and graduation rates.
- Become conversant about effective practices that improve student success
- Set research agenda for student success questions that increase understanding of student success dynamics and impediments
- Make recommendations for actions based on student success data and assessment of actions and impact to date
- Work with early alert team to respond to Pacific student trends
- Serve as consultants to Schools/Programs in implementing evidence-based actions
- Review, and if necessary revise, student exit survey methodology to ensure validity and usefulness of data.

Outcomes

- Improve retention and graduation rates to meet and exceed KPI targets
- Increase communication about student success findings and best practices across the University and with relevant stakeholders
- Issue annual report on student success data, types of interventions, assessment intervention impact, and improvement of interventions based on assessment data

Membership

Four individuals formed a steering committee that worked throughout Summer 2014 to organize for the fall:

Linda Buckley, Chair and AVP for Planning
Mike Rogers, Director of Institutional Research
Lou Matz, AVP Student Retention
Elisa Anders, Associate Dean of Students

In the original charge, seven individuals were identified for membership:

Associate Vice President of Planning (Chair)
Associate Vice President for Student Life/Dean of Students
Assistant Provost of Academic Student Support & Retention
Associate Dean of Students
Vice Provost Enrollment Management
Director of Institutional Research
The Registrar

It became quickly clear, however, that many people across the University saw this issue as vitally important and wanted to be included as stakeholders. We didn't turn anyone away. See the membership list in Appendix A.

Defining Student Success

In several of our early meetings, the committee discussed the amorphous nature of the term "student success." Acknowledging the need to use quantitative data to measure student success (such as graduation rates), the committee agreed that the University of Pacific definition of student success needed also to include what we expected students to learn and experience during their years at this institution.

Committee members engaged their constituents in conversations regarding the definition of student success over the course of the academic year, and in the end the committee agreed to recommend the following definition of student success for University of the Pacific.

The Pacific Community defines student success as acquiring knowledge and skills, academic achievement, engagement beyond the classroom, and developing foundations for a personally and socially responsible life.

Organization and Accomplishments

The Committee determined that the best approach for accomplishing the responsibilities in the charge would be to divide the committee into work groups. The working groups, their expected research, their results and recommendations are outlined below.

➤ 1. Data and Metrics Working Group

Expected Research

- Review basic metrics about student success such as graduation rate by college, ethnicity, gender, hsgpa, financial aid, etc.
- Review the Scannell and Kurz report and present recommendations to the full Committee
- Review all our student success KPIs and evaluate if they are sufficient or we need others
- Review the results from the Milestone study and determine how it could be used
- Discuss how we can drill down further on the data we have.
- Review WASC EER Student Success Section

<http://www.wasc.pacific.edu/eer.html#StudentSuccess>

Results

The Metrics group met and reviewed the KPI report and discussed changes including removing, editing, or adding new metrics. The following recommendations were made.

1. Remove the US News differential KPI. The group agreed that this metric developed by US News is flawed and does not provide important or accurate information to the Regents.
2. Conduct more research on the two satisfaction metrics on advising and teaching to assess what the KPIs actually measure. These are important metrics but it is uncertain if we are measuring advising and teaching globally at Pacific or just in the PACS class where the survey was administered.
3. Add a KPI to show what percentage of students graduate at another institution with a bachelor's degree within six years. This information was already given as part of a retention highlights report to the Regents and the group felt that this information is important to highlight each year.
4. Change the metric on "FR persistence rate" to exclude pre-pharmacy and pre-dental students. Almost all pre-pharmacy and pre-dental students return after one year and these two groups of students are already not included in the six-year graduation rate in official metrics. Removing these two groups

would give the Pacific community a better look at our bachelor's degree seeking students' persistence behavior and match with the current mandatory external reporting.

5. Reviewing progress towards or away from a goal can be complicated. An arrow indicating that the metric is "declining" can be misleading. There is concern that the Regents may see an arrow and assume that a metric's goal has not been achieved when in fact it has been exceeded. For example, the pharmacy and dental bar passage rates are constantly above the goal but fluctuate up or down each year. The group recommends that for any KPI that is above the goal highlight the borders of the box in blue so that the Regents get a quick look at which KPIs have met or exceeded goals.

Milestones are predictors of successful 6-year graduation and can be used to identify student demographic groups that lag behind in achieving the milestones. Examining the metrics will also lead to a better understanding of the academic performance of these at-risk groups. (See attached PP)

Conclusions

The group came to the following conclusions and recommendations:

1. The year one milestones yielded useful comparisons.
2. Students were more likely to meet the unit (i.e. credits earned) milestone as compared to the GPA milestone.
3. Generally students with remedial needs had lower persistence rates.
4. CIP students with remedial needs had higher persistence rates compared to other groups of students needing remediation.
5. Under-represented minority (URM) does not work as a group as some groups need to be disaggregated out on their own (Af. Am.).
6. Certain populations could be sliced out and graphs re-created. For example, show what male vs female would look like if we excluded athletes.
7. Consider adding in additional groups such as athletes, region.
8. Move on to the second, third, fourth, fifth, and sixth year milestone outcomes.

The metrics group reviewed data reports and came up with future research questions.

1. Deeper study of international students such as campus climate, TOEFL, and assessing where international students go after leaving Pacific.
2. Student flow study. Need to assess impact on retention as it relates to students changing major and schools, students taking time off, and transfer students into Pacific. Are there patterns of students always moving from one major to another and how would this affect advising.
3. Assessing the engagement of students using date/time of when students register for orientation, for classes, placement tests, add/drop dates, and

other data if available such as portal log in, email log in. This research could lead to better indicators of early warning.

4. Refine withdrawal and leave of absence reporting. These two behaviors need to be separated for reporting.
5. Study the profile of students that are financially cancelled. The concern is understanding the profile of the students, if they subsequently graduated or persisted. These students may already be at risk and are taken off of SAKAI when they are canceled only later to be put back on if they make financial arrangement. Removal from SAKAI likely harms the students' ability to perform well in class.
6. Assess out of state students. This group has lower graduation rates and assumptions are that they go home and graduate elsewhere. What can be done to retain these students?

Recommendations

- ❖ Revise some KPI metrics
- ❖ Continue research on the Milestone report
- ❖ Expand research

➤ 2. Interventions Working Group

Expected Research

- Identify and examine current interventions at Pacific; through alignment with the work of the Student Success Committee, identify opportunities to strengthen current interventions
- Participate in vetting and selection of early alert tools
- Review and provide feedback on draft SIF Student Success proposal
- Review and provide feedback on draft WASC interim report (student success section)

Results

- Mapped intervention processes as currently conducted in relation to desired future processes. Examined each intervention in relation to anticipated capacity to streamline, integrate, and/or strengthen through alignment with: findings from the Metrics Subcommittee, Policy Subcommittee Recommendations, as well as new early alert (advising and case management) tools. Mapping serves as a foundation to developing a multi-phased intervention plan (summer 2015).
- Conducted four final vendor demonstrations for the selection of an early alert tool in May 2015.
- Vetted Strategic Investment Fund plan of best practices in student success for Pacific. Funding approved (\$760,000) to establish new positions, tools,

and processes to improve four essential student support areas: referral and case management, advising, tutoring, and developmental skills.

- Vetted WASC interim report (student success section) prior to submission.

Recommendations

- Develop a detailed, multi-phased “early alert” plan (technical deployment, testing, training, assessment); pilot to be developed June – August 2015 for implementation during the 2015-16 AY.
- Include refinement and monitoring of assessment plans from SIF proposal into work of 2015-16 Student Success Committee.

➤ 3. Policies Working Group

Expected Research

- Review of the current policies that might impede student success
- Review of policies that help promote student success
- Refer identified policies to the appropriate group that has purview over the issue
- Make recommendations for change based on feedback.

Results

The subcommittee initially identified academic policies to review because of their plausible relationship with selected students’ difficulty in completing a bachelor’s degree at Pacific. The group also considered other administrative procedures, such as types of registration holds, or how communication is provided to past students who may be within a semester or less of coursework to finish a bachelor’s degree. The subcommittee focused this academic year on selected academic policies to bring forward for review.

The following policies were presented to the Student Success Committee, Council of Assistant and Associate Deans (CAAD), and the General Education Committee, among other groups or campus offices.

*Pacific Cumulative GPA and Major/Minor GPA Calculations for Repeated Courses

*Minimum Grade Necessary to Meet Fundamental Skills and GE

*Course Substitutions to Meet Quantitative Skills When Supported by Documented Evidence

*Minimum Grade Necessary to Earn a “Pass” under the pass/No Credit Grade Mode

*Waiver of Less Than One Unit Caused by Transfer Course Unit Conversions in a Specific Overall Area, such as GE, Majors, Minors (Does Not Apply to Overall Degree Units)

Recommendations

Some of these policies have been reviewed revised, and approved by committee, and will be brought forward to Academic Council in Fall 2015. Other administrative policies will continue to be reviewed in the 2015-16 Academic Year.

➤ 4. Communication Working Group

Expected Research

- Develop a newsletter that raises awareness regarding student success
- Help with the distribution of data and metrics

Results

- A two-page newsletter was created and sent to the faculty and staff in early March 2015. The contents were an overview of the committee membership, the charge, and the subcommittees. The purpose of the newsletter was to introduce the campus to the work of the committee.
- Positive feedback was returned on the quality and content of the newsletter. (See attached newsletter)

Recommendations

- The Communications Working Group recommends the next step be a newsletter to the campus about progress made by the committee this year. It could highlight the successful SIF proposal, the policies being reviewed, and a reflection on the conversation throughout the year. This could be produced in early May as a follow-up to the year-end report generated by the committee.
- Based on the progress and workload of the committee, it seems 2-3 newsletters a school year could be an appropriate recommendation going forward.

Conclusions

Progress on student success is not a one or two-year endeavor, but an on-going commitment to the most essential core value of the University. In this inaugural year of the Student Success Initiative, our research has provided the institution with a great deal of information regarding the populations of students who are succeeding and those who are struggling and need assistance. The approval of SIF funding for student success will provide much of the resources that are needed to respond to those needs.

In the 2015-16 AY, we will begin to implement the student supports that have been in the planning stages this year, and we will continue to study and analyze the data that lead to more refined and targeted interventions. We will also move the recommended policy revisions forward to Academic Council, and we will continue to communicate the work on student success to the wider community. In 2016-17

AY, we should be in a position to begin assessing the new student support interventions that are planned for in the coming year.

APPENDIX A MEMBERSHIP LIST

Elisa Anders, Associate Dean of Students, Student Life
Anita Bautista, Executive Director, Success
Torry Brouillard, Executive Director, Housing and Greek Life
Linda Buckley, Associate Vice President Planning (Chair), Planning and Research
Alex Caspero, Wellness Director, Health Services
Marilyn Draheim, Associate Professor, Benerd School of Education
Cynthia Eakin, Associate Professor, Eberhardt School of Business
Lynn Fox, Director, Financial Aid
Gesine Gerhard, Associate Dean and Director of General Education, COP – Office of the Dean
Ann Gillen, University Registrar, Registrar
Ryan Griffith, Director of International Programs, International Programs and Services
Marcia Hernandez, Assistant Dean, COP - Sociology
Cyd Jenefsky, Vice Provost for Strategy and Education, Office of the Provost
Gregg Jongeward, Senior Associate Dean, COP – Office of the Dean
Peggy Kay, Executive Director EIS, Pacific Technology
Bill Kehoe, Professor, Pharmacy and Health Sciences
Jonathan Latta, Assistant Dean, Conservatory of Music
Joel Lohr, Dean of Religious Life, Morris Chapel
Mary Anne Lower, Associate Director/Collections Manager, Student Loans
Lou Matz, Assistant Provost Academic Affairs, Office of the Provost
Mary McGuire, Assistant Dean for Student Affairs, Assistant Dean for Student Affairs Office, McGeorge School of Law
Karen Miller, Projects Support Specialist, Planning and Research
Rosa Munoz, Treasurer, ASUOP
Michael Orozco, Vice President, ASUOP
Yasmine Potts, Institutional Research Analyst, Planning and Research
Alexandra Renskoff
Michael Rogers, Director, Planning and Research
Gurman Shoker, Student
Louise Stark, Professor, Engineering and Computer Science
Belle Sung, Student
J. Michael Thompson, Vice Provost Enrollment Management, Office of Enrollment
Holly Trexler, Associate Athletic Director, Athletics
Serena Welch, President, ASUOP
Abby Wong, Student