

COUNCIL OF STUDENT SERVICES ADMINISTRATORS

ANNUAL REPORT -- 2004-05

In April, 2004, the Oregon Community College council of Student Services Administrators (CSSA) initiated a task force on improving student retention. This group became a subcommittee of the statewide Excellence in Delivery and Productivity (EDP) Working Group. The purpose of the EDP group was to identify ways to improve academic programs, transfer rates and graduation rates for Oregonians.

The following objectives were defined by the CSSA:

Goal: Clarify a working definition of retention and propose a model for assessing retention consistently across the state.

Objectives:

1. Identify retention indicators for each of the 17 community colleges. Identify patterns/commonalities relating to retention.
2. Identify a model for assessing retention performance, including a standard definition for retention, and indicators that would be used by all Oregon Community Colleges, using available data.
3. Run the data to identify Oregon's baseline performance using the model.
4. Disseminate and discuss the new model with CSSA and CIA.
5. Explore the possibility of aligning this model with the OUS data-collection system.

Progress:

- a. The subcommittee has worked through seven versions of a model for assessing retention for Lower Division Collegiate students. (See Measuring Student Success: Lower Division Collegiate (LDC Students v7.)
- b. A trial run was done and presented to CSSA in February.

CSSA worked with OCCWD, OUS counterparts, CIA, researchers, enrollment management representatives to develop a model that defines retention as well as data elements to measure retention in a systematic way for Community College and OUS institutions with regard to Lower Division Transfer Courses. Conversations have been initiated to develop a similar model for Professional Technical Courses.

To promote student retention, 50 different strategies were identified from conversations with Deans of Students and OUS Provosts and their designated representatives. Strategies were then defined so that the definitions fit for both Community Colleges and OUS institutions. Strategies were categorized and placed on a grid with a rating scale. Community Colleges and OUS institutions were asked to indicate which retention strategies they are utilizing and rate them according to the scale. Results were compiled and will be evaluated.

A Retention presentation was made at the OUS Transfer Conference based on the work of this committee.

A FIPSE proposal for a retention center to be housed at Western State University has been developed and submitted. If funded this Center would serve as a resource for Community Colleges and OUS Institutions to provide research, web-based information, and disseminate information concerning retention initiatives.

2. Initiate annual professional development activities for Student Services Professional (e.g. best practices, legal issues, students with mental health issues, etc.) Plan for Summer 2005 institute for new Student Services professional - July 21, 2005. Plan for Student Success Conference in February 2006