

ACHIEVING DIVERSITY ON CAMPUS – STUDENT RETENTION

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Summary of seminar presented by Dr. James Anderson
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Achieving Diversity

- Learning Centered Institutions
 - Commitment to institutional effectiveness and accountability
 - Appropriate program outcomes
 - Appropriate student learning outcomes
 - Identify the 10 courses that have the highest number of D's, F's and W's among low income and students of color.
 - Use information from these to facilitate the development of a retention model for diverse students

Achieving Diversity

- Student Centered Learning Environments
 - Clearly defined and measurable outcomes in the areas of teaching, learning, retention and student social and psychological development.
 - Ongoing assessment
 - Well trained faculty and staff for delivery of appropriate services
 - Front loaded activities which engage the student ASAP to the academic and social expectations

Achieving Diversity

□ Retention Scorecard

▣ Indicators of Student Success/Achievement

- GPA
- Socio-academic integration
- Attendance is **not** an indicator (attendance measures attendance) – unless for example there is evidence that attendance leads to grade increase in the course.

Achieving Diversity

- The diversity plan
 - Received early review by and input from student, staff and faculty and other critical groups
 - Includes mandated attendance of the student leadership at two meetings of other groups that they either disagree with or know nothing about.
 - The understanding is there will be interaction followed by **measurable** collaboration.

Achieving Diversity

□ Miscellaneous

- Data about performance is more valuable than data from satisfaction surveys
- Non cognitive factors are more likely to predict student retention

Achieving Diversity

- Student Outcomes
 - Academic adjustment/integration
 - Social adjustments/integration
 - Attitudes towards learning
 - Expectations for success
 - Academic self esteem
 - Utilization of Academic Supports
 - Other non cognitive factors
 - Above account for 70% of the reasons for attrition

Achieving Diversity



- Factors that affect effort
- Level of confidence
 - Intensity of effort
 - Level of concentration
 - Willingness to take reasonable risks

Achieving Diversity

- Factors that affect effort
- Perception of failure (esp. unexpected failure)
- A. Confident students
 - Encounter failure → attribute it to lack of effort → hence work harder
- B. Students who lack confidence
 - Encounter failure → attribute it to lack of ability → decrease amount of effort invested

Achieving Diversity

- Assessing contributions to student difficulty – **targeting the cause without victim-blaming.**
- **What is the students contribution to the problem?**
 - Weak academic and/or cognitive skills?
 - Good skills but motivational problems
 - Application of incorrect learning style or strategy to course content
 - Affected by environmental problems (work, family, finances, commuting, etc.)

Achieving Diversity

- Assessing contributions to student difficulty – **targeting the cause without victim-blaming.**
 - **What is the academic departments contribution to the problem?**
 - Inappropriate course placement for students
 - Department has 'no' vision about teaching and learning
 - Department does not profile strong vs weak student and gear teaching to profile
 - Department does not evaluate effective teaching (which is connected to effective learning)
 - Department relies upon a primary mode of testing e.g. overreliance on multiple choice test

Achieving Diversity



- Universities with models for transformational excellence with diverse students
 - Babson College, MA
 - University of Maryland, Baltimore MD
 - Tacoma Community College, Tacoma WA