Open Space Forum at GateWay Community College
April 7, 1998
Meeting Notes

Title:
Old Dogs New Tricks

Convener:
Tom Jordan - GWCC

Facilitator:
Toni Rodriguez - GWCC

Attendees:
Jackie Fergusson - GWCC

Discussion:
- Students are coming unprepared to take responsibility for their own learning.
- Students need to know their own learning styles and what works best for them.
- Explorations of learning, what it is and how one can learn should be undertaken.
- Instructors have the problem of time constraints and curriculum responsibilities which limits their ability to incorporate more creative teaching techniques that might facilitate learning.
- Students are definitely ”old dogs” and ehave no idea of what is involved in the learning process and do not wish to take responsibility for their own learning.
- Faculty sometimes are “old dogs” and also need to learn new tricks. There needs to be some incentives in place for faculty to learn new tricks. Faculty need time to put these new ideas in place.
- The whole system is an “old dog” geared to a semester format, the time periods for classes are fixed, and the physical institutional layout is set in stone.
- The evaluation process is an “old dog” and is not conducive to the improvement of instruction. There are certain basic differences between the disciplines which are not recognized.
- The system is an “old dog” and everyone is learning new tricks [i.e. students, faculty, administration].

Possible Solutions:
- More time given to instructors to develop new models of learning.
- Educational workshops and seminars for instructors.
- Making education more seamless by adopting a more interdisciplinary approach.
- In view of the fact that resources are limited, instructors might have to devise new methods like computer simulations to achieve a better learning goal.
- Re-examine relationships between the various divisions of the college to make better use of the future possibilities which could improve learning.

Title:
How Students Services Impact Learning

Convener:
Debbie Stanfield - GWCC

Facilitator:
Debbie Stanfield - GWCC

Attendees:
Andy Bernal - GWCC, Cathy Meschke - GWCC, Ester Schon - GWCC,
Irene Ruiz - PC

Discussion:
- How to get out of the boxes--e.g. signatures from advisors if student is taking certain number of credits.
- Policy and procedures -- based on traditional -- re-examine policies and procedures.
- Residency policy -- many are not learner centered; chose to go elsewhere.
- Need a place to go to get needed information.
- Teach how to navigate our system, policies, and procedures.
- Employees are limited also.
- Different models / procedures on each campus.
- Coach vs. trial and error.
- Customer service / student centered.
- Disabled students are restricted.
- Retraining of staff.
- Problem solving techniques.
- Teach / coach, do not do for them.
- In some ways policies (rosters) distract faculty from being able to teach i.e. students learning distracted.
- Concern that implementation of policies / procedures are different throughout the district.
- When programs / services are district-wide, no vehicle to get information to all campuses.
- Systems not set up to do things systematically.
- Size of college has impact on flexibility.
- Computer systems do not support instruction / services in many ways.
- Implementation of system to track allied health students -- no dialogue with those being impacted.
- District reacts vs. being proactive.
- External drivers, financial aid, faculty's last day of accountability.
- Develop communication line where issues can be raised on a continual basis to discuss with all.
- Job descriptions / personnel may not have the needed experience / training -- change in how we do business, walls / counters are done -- tasks within a job.

- Models are different.
- Students don't know who to ask.
- Expectations of students from the college -- not a "real college".
- Paid and want it their way.
- Student's need to learn what it is we do -- and know what their responsibilities are.
- Tools / publications / forms need to be "user friendly".
- Use technology (WEB) to coach students -- on-line tour via District Advising Council.

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Title:
How will we know when our system is progressing toward a learning system?

Convener:
Yvonne Zeka - GWCC

Participants:
Jackie Moran - MCLI, Clyde Perry - GWCC, M. Denise Menchaca - GWCC, Manny Griego - GCC, Geri Rasmussen - GWCC

Discussion:
- Need to understand where we are now. How do we know? Summary of what we are doing now -- where and by whom.
- Teaching system now?
- Indicator [1] -- schedule reflects needs of students as opposed to needs of faculty, staff, etc.
    - One indicator will be when we progress, such as GCC, when the scheduling reflects the needs of the students.
    - A good indicator is what we can see right now; need to talk about things that do not exist right now.
- Indicator [2] -- students taking responsibility for their learning -- how to measure now and in the future?
- Indicator [3] -- learning cannot take place without good instruction and an environment conducive for learning.
- Indicator [4] -- the number of opportunities for students to demonstrate what they can do and know.
    - In order to teach the proper thing - are they learning what they need to learn.
- Indicator [5] -- measure input from external community in development of the curricula for liberal arts and sciences.

- Zeka -- read article on the three C's of education -- Content, Context, Certification. Explained what these mean.
    - Still need to have other qualities -- team building and getting along with other people -- are not taught by specific courses but should be modeled within all courses.
    - Will there be rewards / recognition for those who are assisting in the movement of the system toward a learning system. Having a clean classroom.
    - Rewards and recognitions for those who are placing learning as their core value.
    - When learning is at the center -- faculty, student records, student services all orbit around the student - no one area is better or more valued than the other. All staff and faculty are also learners themselves.
- Indicator [6] -- We have to replace FTSE to determine funding. Need to come up with another method to determine funding. FTSE creates competition among colleges to gain more funding.
- Indicator [7] -- when MCCD becomes one and not 11 (colleges / skill centers)
- All learning <----> Faculty, A & R, Student Services, Activities, etc.

Recommendations:

- Define specific outcomes that will measure where we are on the continuum.

Baseline Data Goals

X_____X

Now

- Goal -- Learning is the core value -- will never reach that but always working to get there.
- The system needs to have the goals established with the student as the center.
- One way we will because everything about our being -- mission, goals, etc. -- will reflect the needs of the external community, also within. Person coming in will define goals with the proper guidance and counseling.

Further develop indicators:

- Difficult and important areas -- How to fund other than FTSE? Getting students to value learning. Need to think beyond classes and programs.
- Portfolio evaluation -- will reflect accumulation of experience and learning. Getting away from grades.
- Learning is important outside of the classroom. Processes -- grievance procedures, registering for classes, real-situation problem-solving -- not getting what you want when you want it -- real world experiences. Valuable learning experiences. A lot of these processes are given in the first day of classes to help them negotiate through the class and be successful -- i.e. learning / going through the processes of getting an education.

• Quote -- “Learning seems to occur after the event."

Title:
Measuring the Impact of Technology on Learning

Convener:
Fred Gaudet - GWCC

Facilitator:
Fred Gaudet - GWCC

Attendees:
Fred Gaudet - GWCC, Alan Levine - MCLI, Gloria Stahmer - GWCC,
Doyle Burke - MCC

Discussion:

- *learning@maricopa.edu* has a section on measurement (p. 13).
- Does technology impact the speed of learning, retention, and quantity of learning?
- Do grades measure learning; is learning measurable?
- It is important to ask whether technology has an impact on learning.
- What does technology do in the learning process?
- Can we measure applications of technology in the teaching/learning process?
- Is technology an enabler or an inhibitor?
- Can learning be measured?
- How can we know that learning has occurred?
- Something is measurable, but what?
- What is measurable?
  - Performance-based activities seem to be measurable
  - Concepts are more difficult to measure
  - Easier to measure skills
  - Can technology be measured in assessing skills development?
- Why do we want to measure whether technology enhances learning?
  - So much hullabaloo over cost
  - Some faculty are questioning whether technology is worth it
- What is the alternative to technology use?
- Shift of the question: While it is apparent that technology won’t go away, the question is what impact it will have on the society (academic society).
- Is it appropriate to measure the impact on the teaching/learning process as opposed to measuring learning?
- Faculty may or may not use technology. Will students rise up and make demands of faculty?

- Question: where do we put our scarce resources?
- Report: some chairs have ordered faculty to use technology. Some faculty use an outline program, but question the effectiveness.
- Is it possible to assess outcomes? It depends. Outcomes may be vague.
- Some students like PowerPoint because the faculty member is more organized.
- An array of possibilities may be more effective.
- Question: What is the alternative?
- It is important to help faculty plan to use technology effectively.
  Much of instruction is a focus of "Me, the transmitter of information."
- Shift: How does technology facilitate learning?
- We still have to assess learning, but there is talk of third-party assessment.
- Is there any research that suggests that technology makes learning worse? (None reported.)

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Title:
Student Activities: Involving faculty in student activity programming.

Convener:
Wiley Davis - GWCC

Attendees:
Michelle Bush - GWCC, Connie Rainey - GWCC, Dean Stover - GWCC,
Madge Valladares - GWCC

Discussion:
- How to come together to discuss and promote the concept.
- Utilize available funds to promote service-learning inside and outside the classroom.
- Recognition that student activities can play a vital role in supporting classroom instruction.
- Student services and instruction are on the same team.
- Both areas are guided by the vision and mission of the college.

Recommendations:
1. Hold a break out session on faculty and service days.
   Facilitate discussion on ways to use student activities to promote classroom instruction.
2. Attend staff development meetings to plan combined activities.
3. Develop a plan of action, and present it to the administration, division chairs and other department faculty.

4. Find common themes that **connect** the disciplines and promote learning.
5. If plan is accepted, faculty would need plenty of lead time to incorporate activities in their syllabus
6. Learning issues to include: problem solving, diversity, family values, culture, health, environmental, money management, careers, educational etc.
7. Have FUN.

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Meeting Insights:

by Naomi Story - MCLI

Insights at end:

- Something other than FTSE needs to drive the colleges.
- Scheduling an issue.
- Do we over analyze?
- Can learning really be measured?
- Change will occur if FTSE is not at the center.
- Feeling of sadness that we need to reflect on learning now...what were we doing then as educator.
- If there are different models for learning what would it take?
- FTSE, loading inhibit our ability to try new models.
- Learning occurs outside classroom--joyous.
- How we've locked ourselves into the system---what we have is not working...FTSE is a problem for 20 years.
- We're discussing same issue from a different point of view---policies and teach within confines of policies---we need to communicate between two sides of the college.
- All student services structured differently at all colleges and students who attend more than one college have problems--how can we work systematically.
- If you do what you always did, you're going to do the same.
- New word in town---learning--but it's old...let's enhance learning (outside classroom).
- Problems are same...we talk it to death but need to move forward.
- Students as being old dogs...then faculty as old dogs...then administration old dogs.....therefore everyone old dogs...biology evolution---if I have a new idea will it be accepted.
- AAHE-joint task force on learning--need to get across curriculum by themes and unify campus--what are some of themes?
- Learning is complex -- hard to get a grip -- look at a number line -- where are we now and where do we want to be.
- Enormity of the goal -- systemic change overwhelming...buy in of administrators...have deans discussed this too? Presidents and department chairs

need to talk to faculty and listen.
- Process of analysis important but we should not lose sight of innovation and experimentation.
- Recognizing efforts that we are trying to improve communication; good system to work for; ball keeps moving too fast for some of us.
- Policies and procedures not learner-friendly across the district; they are designed for a 9 month calendar rather than 12 month one.
- Sensing a need to change because society is changing -- we were always focused on learning -- worry about setting up a change for a particular audience -- we need to be diverse in our teaching for our diversity.
- No one talking about a new concept; we have always been about learning, but we can do it better even if there are limitations; at GWCC -- walls beginning to crumble -- moving toward interdisciplinary; seamlessness across disciplines and student services.
- Learning focus is what education is about -- we get caught up with how much we have to teach--look at competencies rather than content -- do a better job about learning.
- Learning is not about covering a subject but uncovering it.
- A lot of little baby steps in doing this change.
- Analogy with technology when it first came into Maricopa.

Open Space Forum:
- Allows for topics to surface.
- Circle good.
- Democratic process.
- Issue: FTSE what will be done with it? Move to action.
- Good way to get together.
- Free to speak.
- Having different folks is great.
- Chance to listen to other perspectives; allows us to speak about issues that we are passionate about.
- Issue -- student responsibility -- organized mechanism to deal with issues.
- Process truly exemplifies diversity.
- Change from lecture / presentation.
- Exciting -- never know what's going to happen.
- Agenda is dynamic.
- No other forum like this process; start the discussion on change...now hope that it continues.
- Discussion goes beyond the discussion.
- Appreciate hearing the issues for the first time.
- Can't come over for just an hour.
- Informative.
- People who need to be here the most -- open their minds--how to get them here saddens me.
- Good to hear about holistic learning--need to include PSA and staff and encourage

them.
- Move forward to address one of the issues.