

eleven update

Commission XI: Student Development In The Two-Year College



Fall 2005

Commission XI:

Student Development in Two-Year Colleges is an affiliate of the American College Personnel Association (ACPA).

Commission XI is directly concerned with issues relative to student development programs in two-year institutions. The Commission is designed to promote the improvement of student development programs; enhance the professional development of student development personnel; and serve as an advocate for student development programs in two-year institutions.

Commission XI enhances your work with all types of students by:

- Giving you access to our newsletters
- Providing professional development opportunities through sponsored programs at ACPA's annual convention, Commission sponsored regional workshops, and co-sponsored programs with other national student development in two-year college focused organizations
- Affording opportunities for you to network with other student development professionals via internet, conferences and workshops
- Connecting you to job placement opportunities through ACPA's Placement services
- Providing exposure to the most current research theory in student personnel practice and access to research awards for student development in two year colleges
- Providing opportunities for you to dialogue with other college student development professionals from diverse cultures and backgrounds
- Recognizing members contributions through the following rewards: Service to the Profession, New Professional, Outstanding Publication and Innovative New Program

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FROM THE CHAIR:

Greetings from the College of Southern Maryland in La Plata, Maryland! I hope that your school year has begun well.

I am delighted to begin my term as Chair of the Commission for Student Development in the Two-Year College. For the past four years, the commission has provided me with chances to exchange information and ideas with colleagues and peers at other two-year schools, as well as a network of professional friends. I hope that you too will find the Commission for Student Development in the Two-Year College as a great way to connect to peers and to ACPA.

I had the opportunity to attend the ACPA Summer Leadership Meeting in Indianapolis, IN. During the meeting, we got a preview of upcoming convention which will take place in downtown “Indy”, March 18-22. Indianapolis offers us the opportunity to have a centrally located convention in a city that has undergone major changes in the last ten years. Convention Program Chair, Vasti Torres, has stated numerous times that this, “Isn’t your mother’s Indianapolis”, and I would have to agree wholeheartedly with that statement. As a former graduate student from Ball State University, located just 60 miles from Indianapolis in Muncie, IN, I visited the city many times still to be surprised of all the changes that have taken place in the 7 years since I left. So come for the professional development and networking, but also come to see all that this city in the Midwest has to offer!

Good luck with the rest of your fall semesters!

Sarah E. Merranko, Ed.D

TIMES HAVE CHANGED:

Understanding the Millennial Generation

By: Jennifer M. Corcoran

As every decade passes, trends evolve and disband. As time changes, so must we. These changes are apparent as you walk across any college campus and note the different hairstyles, clothing selections and tiny phones that send text messages and make calls and connect to the Internet. Today’s college student is one of a kind, and to be a successful higher educational institution, we must accept this change and embrace it.

To encompass the class of 2008, we must understand their thoughts and where they are coming from. For instance, incoming freshmen (born in 1985–86) think Paul Newman has always made salad dressing, an automatic is a weapon and not a transmission, computers have always fit in their backpacks and directory assistance has never been free, according to a mindset list published on Beloit College’s Web site, <http://www.beloit.edu/~pubaff/mindset/2005.html>.

The new wave of college-age students crowding our campuses is commonly referred to as the Millennials. The Millennial generation includes anyone born between 1982 and the present. Why focus on this group of students more than any other generation from the past? It’s simple—as with any business,

these students are our clients. But more than that, these students do not come alone to campus like the students of the past. Parents of Millennials are heavily involved in the college decision-making process.

Millennials are known for seven main attributes: they are sheltered, special, team-oriented, pressured, conventional, achieving and confident (Howe and Strauss 2003). What do these attributes mean, and, more importantly, how do they affect us on college campuses? Well, let’s break it down. More than ever, new college students are coming from extremely strong backgrounds—this includes their family life as well as the high school they came from. Parents of Millennials, which are typically Baby Boomers or Generation Xers, are sheltering these students from making the same mistakes the parents made as kids. They have established stricter rules and provided the Millennials with every protective necessity—cell phones, credit cards, cars. These parents feel that their child is very special and should be treated very special. Millennial students are more involved in extracurricular activities than any previous generation. These students are pressured, from parents and schools, to achieve the highest successes in and out of the

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classroom. Standards have been raised, creating more pressure for success, and once achieved, a more confident student has evolved. These students want the best for their future and are willing to work hard to get it. So, how can colleges embrace these students? We have to recruit them first!

Recruitment

Recruitment is a balancing act. But one thing stands strong—communication is key. Every college must approach the recruitment process as a family decision. You are no longer targeting only the prospective student; now you have to consider the entire family. Remember, nothing can replace a first impression. If you are speaking with a prospective student, always include tidbits about how your college encourages family involvement and topics that would be of interest to everyone. Getting a prospective student on your campus is your biggest recruitment tool. Students and parents love to see where the action happens—what the classrooms look like, how good the food is, what the student population is like. They also like to connect with a current student. Faculty and staff can speak about how wonderful the college is, but when a real student tells the story, it becomes more real. Prospective students noted that having a current student take them for a campus tour is powerful—they see the ins and outs of the college, and they get the real scoop on campus life.

Colleges need to think outside the box. Millennial students need more than just a recruitment table in the cafeteria to convince them your school is where they should be. Invite students and their families to your campus on a Saturday to take a tour, and give them free tickets to the basketball game. Put your viewbook on a CD-ROM and mail it to them with a follow-up letter or e-mail. Millennials are visual students who are technologically savvy. Establish a virtual tour of your campus that is so enticing a student can't help but want to see the real thing. All of these are recruitment efforts that can be used in conjunction with the traditional efforts such as mass mailings and phone calls.

Retention

You've done a great job getting the Millennials onto your campus, but how do you keep them there? Millennial students are future-oriented and want the best out of life, and they are

willing to work to get it. Many colleges are instituting a required freshman class that teaches students the ways of the college world. It is a class intended to transition incoming freshmen to the challenges and choices college presents, in and out of the classroom. Most colleges lose students because they spend time and energy recruiting a student but not retaining that student. Keep in mind that Millennials are coming from strong support systems in the high schools. Colleges must pick up where the high school left off. Host pep assemblies, hold student and parent orientations, sell "Mom" and "Dad" sweatshirts at the bookstore and institute a parent booster club. These are small and cost-conscious ways colleges can transition students and their parents into the realities of college. If a parent or guardian has a connection with the school, he or she will put forth greater effort at home to encourage the student to continue his or her education at the school.

Embrace the Change

At times, as higher education institutions, we feel as if we are giving in to the demands of parents and Millennial students. The reality is we are, but it should not be considered a bad thing. Change is good as long as it is conducive to the environment and the times. Just think, if we did not change with the times, our schools would not have computers every which way you looked nor would students be taking classes from the comfort of their home. When making changes, always look back at the seven main attributes of the Millennials and let those characteristics help guide the changes needed. Colleges, after all, are student-centered and are service organizations. If your college is unsure of what changes should be made on campus, survey your clientele. No one knows what the students want more than the students themselves. Millennials are here to stay ... now it is your job to make sure they pick your college and stick around!

Reference

Howe, N. & W. Strauss (2003). *Millennials go to college*. Washington, DC: American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers.

Jennifer M. Corcoran works as an admissions recruiter at Moraine Valley Community College in Palos Hills, Ill. She received her B.A. in English-Writing from Illinois Wesleyan University and is working on her M.S. in Adult Continuing and Higher Education from Northern Illinois University, in DeKalb.



Academic and Student Affairs: A PARTNERSHIP THAT MATTERS

By: Maggie Culp

For nearly three years, I have been helping two and four-year colleges across the country to design and implement student affairs programs that really matter, create cultures of evidence, and build partnerships between academic and student affairs. Some of these experiences provided a foundation for my chapters in *Community College Student Affairs: What Really Matters?* (Helfgot and Culp, 2005), but many ideas and some research never made it into the book because of time and space constraints. This article highlights a few of my experiences in helping academic and student affairs professionals create partnerships that matter, and offers examples of colleges that are successfully creating academic-student affairs partnerships that support student learning and increase student success.

Putting Partnerships in Perspective

Starting with the *Student Personnel Point of View* in 1937, student affairs leaders have called consistently for collaboration between academic and student affairs (Banta, Culp, Kuh, and Schraeder). Now, the calls are becoming more urgent as the educational landscape shifts, tuition rates and operational costs increase, and consumers and accrediting agencies demand proof that colleges offer quality programs and services that help students succeed. Kinzie and Kuh (2004) focused additional attention on the importance of partnerships when they published the results of Project DEEP (Documenting Effective Educational Practice), a two-year study of twenty colleges and universities that scored higher than predicted on benchmarks for effective educational practice on the National Student of Student Engagement (NSSE) and achieved higher than predicted graduation rates. Project DEEP researchers identified four characteristics that differentiated the twenty most effective colleges from other institutions in the study: leadership, partnerships between academic and student affairs, quality of personnel, and student agency (ability of students to take responsibility for their learning).

What Student Affairs Professionals Bring to the Partnership

Although community colleges were not included in Project DEEP, my experiences support the hypothesis that the results have a great deal of validity for community college professionals, whether those professionals work in academic affairs or student affairs.

Almost without exception in the first few minutes of any workshop I facilitate with university or community college faculty, five events occur. A skeptic asks, "What do student affairs professionals have to offer that we need?" Several faculty members admit that they have good working relationships with an individual who happens to work in student affairs, but do not know "what the rest of the people over there do." One or two faculty members (usually counselors or faculty

members who have worked in student affairs) leap to their feet and start to explain what student affairs professionals do, what they could accomplish with a little cooperation, and the barriers student affairs professionals face in trying to connect with faculty colleagues. Weary faculty members confess that they are too overwhelmed or consumed by their responsibilities to pay much attention to student affairs. Eventually, everyone agrees that students must learn to take responsibility for their lives and their learning, partnerships between academic and student affairs could make a difference and "someone" needs to take a leadership role in initiating these partnerships, and academic and student affairs professionals may need to expand their skills sets in order to meet the ever-changing needs of students, many of whom are unprepared to take responsibility for their learning—or their lives. In other words, workshop participants echo the major findings of Project DEEP, in many cases years before the study was published.

It is one thing to agree that partnerships between faculty and student affairs professionals have the potential to increase the chances that students will succeed, but quite another to identify the unique gifts student affairs professionals bring to a college. Using a series of structured exercises, I encourage academic and student affairs professionals to develop a list of skills, knowledge, and gifts unique to those who work in student affairs. The words may vary from college-to-college, but the list of skills, knowledge, and gifts almost always includes the following items:

1. Knowledge of how students develop, master new concepts, make meaning, and choose careers.
2. Capacity to help students manage transitions and connect with the college.
3. Ability to identify, track, and intervene with academically at-risk students.
4. Ability to help students learn how to study, manage their time, take tests and quizzes, and benefit from college.
5. Ability to create learning-centered out-of-classroom experiences.
6. Knowledge of the role culture plays in the developmental process, and the ability to translate this knowledge into programs and services that support students.
7. Knowledge of research methodology, and the ability to use this knowledge to build cultures of evidence.
8. Ability to differentiate between student behavior that is stage-appropriate, behavior that requires further study, and behavior that is inappropriate.
9. Knowledge of state and federal laws that govern access, admissions, athletics, equity, financial aid, student records, support for students with disabilities, and veterans' affairs.
10. Understanding of students' rights and responsibilities in and out of the classroom.

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Partnership Possibilities

The challenge, of course, is to help academic and student affairs colleagues build on the gifts that student affairs professionals bring to the table to create partnerships that increase the chances students will succeed. One of the most effective ways I have found to start the building process is to ask faculty and student affairs professionals to work in small groups to: (a) name the most effective academic-student affairs partnerships currently in place at their institution, and explain why they are so effective, (b) identify partnerships that are needed and could be in place within a year, and (c) think strategically about the future, and then describe desirable partnerships that could take two or more years to implement.

Although answers may vary slightly from institution to institution, the big picture remains fairly constant across the country. Some institutions have no clearly defined partnerships between academic and student affairs. Those with active partnerships typically have built them around advising, assessment, course placement, co-curricular activities, and college success courses. Partnerships that faculty and student affairs professionals identify as not currently in place, but essential and achievable within a year usually include academic alert systems, career counseling/career information workshops, early intervention programs, orientation (student and parent), and support for distance learners, learning communities, service learning, and students with disabilities. Bridge programs with local public school systems, crisis intervention programs, mediation, and conflict management are essential partnerships most frequently identified as not in place, desperately needed, and requiring two or more years to design and implement.

Implementing Partnerships

Identifying possible partnerships between academic and student affairs is a major step, but these partnerships will not happen unless faculty and student affairs professionals accomplish the following tasks:

1. Rank-order the partnerships that the college can implement within a year.
2. Identify the two, possibly three partnerships with the potential to have the most positive impact on student learning and student success. Move the remaining partnerships to the long-range partnership list.
3. Calculate the time required to implement each partnership, the resources needed (budget, staff, and space), and the project timeline. Be realistic. Partnerships that require new buildings, new staff, or a substantial reallocation of existing resources will not happen within a year.
4. Describe the major challenges (obstacles) facing each partnership and identify strategies to minimize or eliminate these challenges (obstacles).
5. Create a steering committee to design, implement, and measure the effectiveness of each partnership and the program it produces.
6. Outline clear expectations for the steering committee. Make sure steering committee members understand that they are expected to assign responsibility for each partnership to an

academic or student affairs professional (or both); collaborate with program leaders to identify implementation guidelines, important milestones, and evaluation and program reporting procedures; trouble shoot challenges that program leaders cannot handle on their own; monitor progress throughout the design, implementation, and evaluation phases; and celebrate successes.

7. Define clear expectations for program leaders. Require them to list the implementation steps, create an implementation time line, produce a realistic budget, identify outcomes and outcome measures, manage the partnership and the program, work with members of the steering committee to trouble shoot challenges, meet college and program deadlines, and monitor program effectiveness.
8. Design and implement strategies to communicate with the college community about the partnership and its impact on student learning and success throughout the year.
9. Follow the procedures each year until all essential partnerships have been implemented.

Colleges Leading the Way

It can be done! Here are just a few of the community colleges, four-year institutions, and universities that are building effective partnerships between academic and student affairs.

Advising – Monroe Community College (NY), Valencia Community College (FL)

Assessment and Course Placement – Austin Community College (TX), Community College of Denver (CO), Longwood College (VA), University of Missouri (Columbia)

Campus Governance – Miami University (OH), Wheaton College (MA)

Conflict Management – Madison Area Technical College (WI)

Connecting with K-12 and the Community – Austin Community College (TX), Community College of Baltimore (MD), LaGuardia Community College (NY)

Identifying and Tracking At-Risk Students – Manchester Community College (CT), Sinclair Community College (OH)

Orientation – Moraine Valley Community College (IL), Arizona State University, SUNY Oswego (NY), University of South Carolina

Service Learning – Lansing Community College (MI), Pima Community College (AZ), Trident Technical College (SC), Houston Community College System (TX)

Support Services for Distance Learners – Cerro Coso College (CA), North Carolina State University

Support Services for Students in Developmental Courses – Community College of Denver (CO)

References

Culp, M. "Infiltrating Academe." In Culp and Helfgot (eds.), *Life at the Edge of the Wave: Lessons from the Community College*. Washington, D.C.: NASPA, 1998.

Helfgot and Culp. *Community College Student Affairs: What Really Matters?* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2005.

Kinzie and Kuh, "Going DEEP: Learning from Campuses that Share Responsibility for Student Success." *About Campus*, Nov.-Dec. 2004, pp.2-8.

Kuh and Banta, "Faculty-Student Affairs Collaboration on

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AWARD NOMINATION INFORMATION

**Award nomination information will be arriving soon!!!
Please consider submitting a colleague or program for a commission award!
Student Development in the Two-Year College**

AWARDS DESCRIPTION

INDIVIDUAL AWARDS

1. **Service to the Profession - Commission XI**

This award is given to an individual who has a history of distinguished involvement to Student Affairs/Student Development in the two-year college movement.

2. **New Professional Award - Commission XI**

This award recognizes a new professional employed at a two-year college who has displayed outstanding professional potential and commitment to Student Affairs/Student Development in the two-year college.

PROGRAM AWARDS

1. **Outstanding Publication - Commission XI**

This award is given to a program or organizational entity at a two-year college which produces a publication which is creative and effective in reaching out and communicating to the constituents it was designed to serve.

2. **Innovative New Program - Commission XI**

This award is given to a person or institution at a two-year college that develops and implements a program that is new, creative and different and related to some aspect of Student Affairs/Student Development in the two-year college.

3. **Research Award – Commission XI**

The Research Award is granted to a research project that investigates a current community college issue and provides insight into factors that will improve or enhance student learning. Award recipients may be graduate students, practitioners, or college and university faculty members. The award amount is \$400. The recipient must agree to submit his/her research results to Commission XI, publish the results in the Commission XI newsletter, and, if invited, present project results at an ACPA conference.

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Assessment.” *About Campus*, Jan.-Feb. 2000, pp.4-8.

Schraeder, C. “What Matters to Alexander Astin: A Conversation with Education’s Senior Scholar.” *About Campus*, Jan.-Feb. 2000, pp. 11-18.

About the Author: A former chair of Commission XI, Maggie Culp served as senior student affairs officer at community colleges in Florida and Texas, and is currently Executive Director of Solutions-Oriented Consulting. Co-editor of *Promoting Student Success in the Community College* (1995), *Life at the Edge of the Wave: Lessons from the Community College* (1998), and *Community College Student Affairs: What Really Matters* (2005), Dr. Culp was honored by ACPA in 2003 for outstanding contributions to the field of student affairs. She can be reached at maggieculp@aol.com

Attention Commission Members! This is YOUR newsletter. We are seeking articles about your research or outstanding initiatives taking place on your campus. Please share your feedback and ideas. If you have information that you would like published in a future newsletter, please e-mail Sally Barton Dingee at Monroe Community College (sdingee@monroecc.edu).