STUDENT AFFAIRS INTEGRATION:
USING DIVISION-WIDE GOALS TO FOSTER INTER-DEPARTMENTAL COLLABORATION

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Learning Outcomes

Participants will be able to:

- Identify a process for developing a cross-departmental team approach to planning and assessment within a division of student affairs.
- Identify a model for horizontal coordination of assessment that can focus data collection and reporting in areas that are most important to division-wide priorities.
- Identify factors to consider when developing a model for other institutional contexts.
The Context

Clemson University
Division of Student Affairs

- Public, land-grant university
- 16,000 undergraduates,
  4,000 undergraduates
The Context: Departments

- Campus Activities & Events
- Campus Recreation
- Dean of Students
- Fire & EMS
- Center for Student Life
- Housing & Dining
- Career & Professional Development
- Municipal Court
- New Student & Family Programs
- Community & Ethical Standards
- Parking & Transportation Services
- Police Department
- Publications
- Student Affairs Business Office
- Student Health Center

The Process: Vision

- New vice-president in mid-2006 led development of new vision & mission in line with university mission and objectives.

- **VISION**: Student Affairs will provide an exemplary, comprehensive and integrated student life curriculum, resulting in the nation’s most engaged, satisfied, and successful student body.
The Process: Mission

- **MISSION**: Clemson Division of Student Affairs creates supportive environments and innovative opportunities for student learning. We promote individual student excellence, invite collaboration and discovery, and challenge students to take responsibility as members of a diverse, global community.

The Process: Goal Development

- Spring 2007 discussion about strategic goals to move toward vision & mission.
- Year-long, iterative process involving:
  - all division staff
  - student leaders
  - president & trustees
- Six goals, each with 4-6 objectives.
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<th>The Goals</th>
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<td>1. Increase undergraduate student retention and engagement</td>
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<td>2. Promote graduate student satisfaction &amp; success</td>
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<td>3. Prepare all students to interact successfully and meaningfully with people from diverse identities</td>
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<td>4. Develop students as ethical leaders &amp; agents of positive change</td>
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<td>5. Provide services &amp; facilities that enrich the student experience</td>
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<td>6. Ensure a healthy &amp; safe campus for all members of the Clemson community</td>
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Goal Teams

- Steering group assigned to each goal.
- Developed spring 2009.
- Multi-department representation on each team.
- Initially led by an associate VP or executive director.
- Current: Staff leader & Champion
Teams identified measures.
- Survey data
- Program assessment
- Tracked in central spreadsheet per goal
- Departments report assessment data related to each goal
Report Template

- **Departmental reports consolidated into a single file.**
- **Goal Teams summarize progress.**
- **Conclusions inform Dashboard report to Board of Trustees.**
- **Status reports to the Division.**
What Has Worked Well

- Stimulated division-wide discussion about shared goals.
- Opportunity for cross-departmental interaction.
- Provides a focal point for data collection and reporting.

What Has Worked Well

- Created common language for assessment & quality improvement.
- Mechanism for developing staff capacity for conducting assessment.
What Has Worked Well

- Initiatives that emerged from this:
  - Comprehensive review of services for and communication with graduate students.
  - Division-wide framework for assessing student employee learning.

Challenges: Goal Teams

- Factors that have limited potential to advance improvement:
  - Emphasis on reporting over action
  - Role ambiguity relative to departments
  - Common element to the prior two items: limited role for staff involvement
  - Missing, indirect, or infrequent measures
  - Missing framework for overall success
Challenges: Goal Teams

The role of Goal Teams is clear.

- Strongly Agree: 2%
- Agree: 41%
- Disagree: 53%
- Strongly Disagree: 4%

Open-ended descriptions of Goal Team role

- Described the intended role of the goal teams, but questioned enactment.
- Role in moving objectives forward less clear.
- Role clearer for Goal Team members, but skepticism about broader division understanding.
Challenges: Departments

- Expectations are clear for which Goal-related data to report?

- Processes for reporting Goal-related data to report are clear?
Challenges: Departments

- Multiple assessment/planning frameworks
  - University Road Map
  - Division Goals
  - Departmental Goals
  - New Student Life Curriculum soon
- Lack of coordination with other reporting processes (WEAVE)

Next Steps

- Evaluating overlapping and unique aspects of division goals & curriculum
  - Operational & learning elements
  - Dialogue between Goal Teams and Curriculum Task Force
- Improve individual success measures
- Develop coordinating framework for key performance indicators
Transferable Principles

- Executive support is critical
- Broad, shared responsibility for developing objectives & framework
- Rewards & funding decisions not solely based on short-term success
  - Demonstrated evidence of quality improvement process.

Transferable Principles

- Regular, public discussion of results & action plans with key constituents
  - Division staff
  - Students
  - University leadership
- EMPOWER TEAMS FOR ACTION!
  - Explicit role in planning process
    - Departmental & Divisional
Contact Information

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