

Committee Charge and initial set-up

The All Students committee was asked to use the bullets below as a framework for their work and discussions as they relate to student populations on the Arizona State University campus, specifically within the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences:

- Identify which subpopulations of students need specific support (athletes have ICA, disability has DRC)
- Evaluate how services are currently provided to subpopulations of students
- Recommend new structures for support of subpopulations of students
- Identify new metrics for determining subpopulations needs
- Identify an outreach model for subpopulations of students
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The All Students committee used these bullets to frame our work over the past six months. As part of the process the committee looked at tackling the role of understanding student populations by dividing into three areas. The first area looked at the already completed Current Inventory Practice (CPI) to identify areas where populations of students were not included in programming or policies, the second area looked at student questionnaire data and interactions with students to get the student populations perspective, and the third area looked at the data provided to the Gardner Institute as well as other data from ASU to determine if there was a quantitative approach to increasing student population retention and success.

This report provides information based on our discoveries and suggestions for the creation of new programs and policies to increase success of an array of student populations found throughout ASU.

Discoveries by the committee

CPI Review

Several members of the committee reviewed the CPI for an in depth review of what populations of students were being targeted by currently existing practices and policies. The review involved color coding the CPI to gain a better understanding of what populations are already being targeting and where we, as an institution, could make improvements. The color coded review was then shared with the entire committee to allow for additional review.

The conclusions of the CPI review were that most programs currently in practice throughout the college and to an extent the university were broad based in nature and did not target specific student populations. This allowed the committee to gain a better understanding of why some student populations might feel left out from the larger context of conversations. The review also allowed the committee to see some obvious places for expansion and direction of programming.

Student Questionnaire and Classroom experience

The initial goal for the student questionnaire group was to develop questions and interview students in our sub-populations, however, due to time restraints the committee determined that using the existing students' survey from the Gardner Institute in conjunction with the student success survey administered by ASU at the beginning of each fall semester would suffice.

After reviewing the student survey the committee was able to glean that many students felt left out in communication and programming, often feeling as though a program was not ‘for them’. Additionally a member of the committee used their classroom to ask some targeting questions for the committee. Their comments follow:

How well were you informed about?

Career exploration:

- Although I know that they’re career fairs, I’ve not been to any because it’s during most of my class times.

Resources available:

- I feel like I’ve learned a lot about resources via advisors, when I persistently go to advising meetings. Also, my faculty professors have been instrumental in letting me know about internships or clubs to join.
- They did a really good job with resources at orientation.
- Many resources are online. And the tours that they give are helpful.

‘Major’ selection:

- I chose my major because it was something I enjoy. I researched it by myself and just went with it. I am still in my major.
- I would recommend having advisors write the students at beginning of the year seeing if they’re content in their major. If not, ask them (the students) what they’d be interested in.
- Have the advisors help the students by going over necessary things they’d need to know, like job prospects and what classes they’d need to take.
- For major selection, we can utilize career tests for incoming college students. The last question would ask if the student is unsure of their major.
- Passport to ASU was good as well as the career fairs that are offered.
- They took it overboard with the success coach and peer mentors, way too many emails and phone calls.
- Some people didn’t even have a success coach.

What would help you with career exploration/major selection or just ‘staying at ASU’?

- I’m content at ASU because I’m involved in on-campus jobs, my professors are kind, my advisors help me when I see them, and I enjoy my classes.
- If the student is unsure, ASU should have a major fair that has a scheduled week of professors from each school talking about the majors that are available, what they entail, and what to expect to succeed after college graduation.
- Registering for classes is confused. Biology/ animal physiology class lists were not updated.
- Major maps need to be updated and DARS need to be explained more to students.
- Transfer students don’t get as much help as the first year students.
- Science and Society classes are difficult because class lists change every year and make it difficult for students.
- WP Carey School needs more/better advising.
- If a major is offered at the campus all the classes should be on that campus.
- Better interdisciplinary connections/communication.

By what methods were you informed?

- ASU email address; Facebook

- Be more direct in the emails and provide more information.

Who should be the messenger? Such as: faculty, other students, advisors, etc.

- I think that professors should have a slide before class of jobs/internships before their class presentation. If a student is interested, have them come to office hours.

What else are we missing? Safety issues, other?

- The religious protestors need to be gone. Sometimes these protestors are the professors.
- The housing system is terrible and made second year students struggle.
- Students Services is flawed because they are students and know as much as we do and they can't answer question. They need more training or always have a faculty member.
- Walk only zones should be extended to 5 pm.
- Have lanes so that only skateboarders and people on bicycle can use.
- I think incoming students and undecided students should have an outreach advisor that can help them throughout the year (once every 2 weeks).

Review of quantitative data

The final of our three groups attempted to look at the data provided to the Gardner Institute in addition to other data points that had previously been reviewed by the School of Life Sciences, a school within the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

The group was able to ascertain that commonly believed factors for success such as low social economic status or race were not necessarily **the main factors** in students' success. Though the group was not able to make direct correlations between the data and success points due to time constraints, the fact that it was not obvious that a single sub-population group or factor could directly be contributed to the success of students, it gave the committee new directions to consider.

Important Observations

1. In general, ASU does not currently have programs focused on a specific student population ex. First generation student, high financial need, race. Most programming currently is broad based to appeal to all ASU students or focused on academic preparedness coming into the higher educational setting.
2. The current tracking tool employed by ASU (critical tracking/e-advisor) is not a valuable resource for students at they enter the university and can often times create unnecessary stress in particular amongst our more at-risk academic students.
3. ASU currently does not have a standardized way of accessing our practices and programs. This means we have added new programming on a consistent basis without review of the programming's successes. Recently the university has seen a rise in its first year retention rate, but it would be difficult to point at a single factor to accredit that success due to a lack of assessment.
4. The majority of students are dealing with significant financial issues. This causes either the student to leave the university all together, or often times does not allow them the highest level of success due to the need to work etc.

RECOMMENDATIONS

After six months of review the committee was able to put together several recommendations for the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and ASU to consider.

1. Stop critical tracking first semester students.

- a. This recommendation would allow any student, regardless of academic ability to come into the university without any denotation on their academic pages of being 'off-track' to graduate. This would allow the faculty and advisors of all students to have purposeful conversations with students during their first semester and help students get situated into the correct majors without feeling behind before they start.
- b. This would also allow students to continue to declare a major before attending the University but not have to fall within an immediate tracking status.

2. Create financial aid/scholarship programs that reward students based on their success after matriculation to ASU if they were not given merit based awards initially.

- a. Currently students that come into the university on New American University Scholarships (NAMU) are given the ability to retain the full amount of their scholarship if they are successful in completing the parameters of the program. If a student misses all of the parameters they are given a large percentage of their scholarship and also given the chance to regain the full amount in subsequent semesters.
- b. Students that do not enter the University with a NAMU scholarship do not have the chance to be awarded anything from the University in subsequent semesters, regardless of their academic achievements.
- c. Giving students who enter ASU with lower high school merits the ability to earn a merit based scholarship would likely motivate and reward students for being their college successes.

3. Create peer mentoring programs across all departments in the college

- a. Currently peer mentoring exists through the VIP success coaching office. While this office plays an important role, the students peer coach may not be affiliated with a student's department and therefore cannot help the student connect directly with their home department.
- b. Several departments use peers for mentoring in a first year success course or for assisting at engagement events and orientations with high levels of student success. Peers could also be used as Undergraduate Learning Assistants in core freshman courses. The peers undergo training specific to the task – mentoring or learning assistant.
- c. The experience will allow for additional leadership opportunities for our students and help to connect like-minded individuals with younger classmates.

4. Create a 'know-it-all' center for students

- a. Currently a student could turn to many different offices for an answer and often times the results are simply referrals which leave students running around looking for assistance.
- b. The creation of a know-it-all center would allow students to know they have a single place to turn to ask questions. While the center would know have all the answers, it would serve as a common destination for students to start to ask questions and minimize on confusion.

5. Expand and enhance the collection of data about all our students

- a. Data collected from freshmen upon matriculation is incomplete and sometimes inconsistent. We should Data on an expanded number of social/socioeconomic/personal/family variables would be helpful in identifying "all students" and allow for more sophisticated analysis and targeted interventions.

- b. Data collected from all the advising units during freshman year about academic success should be complemented by data on university resource usage (advising, SI sessions, counseling, etc.) and changes in financial and family status. This can help with individual retention and help us develop a better understanding of retention issues at ASU
- c. Exit surveys should include face-to-face interviews whenever possible. The data from exit surveys should be disseminated to advisors and faculty who teach freshmen courses.

6. Create programs based on factors other than academic ability upon college entry.

- a. Currently there is no specific programming for students based on sub-populations such as first generation students, high financial need, out of state residency, race, sex, sexual orientation, religion etc. (data collected above)
- b. Creation of such programming might allow for students to gain insight into their specific needs while also connecting them to ASU resources and other students that have similar life experiences.