



**Achieving the Dream Core Team Meeting
March 21, 2012 2-4 pm
SC213**

Minutes

Attendees: Bill Heineman, Colleen Walsh, Rick Lizotte, Lynda Gagnon, Grace Young, Janice Rogers, Pete Dulchinos, Lynne Nadeau, Tom Fallon, Karen Mitchell, Tom Greene

1. Report on Activities/Research of the Latino SFIG (Guest: Jorge Santiago)

Jorge began with some background on the Latino SFIG. He stated that it began in Fall 2010 with 17 people participating. They spent 2 years of extensive literature review of Latino males in community colleges, looking for possible barriers which would impede their retention and completion. The group decided to focus on College Reading – one of the most important courses for students to succeed in. In Spring 2011 they developed a pilot research project and selected 3 College Reading sections: two faculty members volunteered, one didn't know they were involved. Two sections were given SI's, one Anglo, and one Latino. During the summer the SI's did extensive reading on the Latino culture and Latino males, followed by a 3 hour seminar. A variety of data gathering methods were used. SI's kept a log and 90% through the semester a survey was administered. Jorge handed out a table (**attached**) that he developed which compared the Latino Males in College Reading passing by NECC's definition of passing (C- and above in the College Reading course) and the same group passing by ATD definition of passing (C and above). This table showed a significant rise in completion in the SI sections (9.2% rise with a C- and above and 13.8% rise with a C and above, both compared to the previous semester). Jorge pointed out that culturally there is a difference in the Latino learning style. Latino's learn in a circular way, talking about a lot of transcendental things; Anglos learn linear. He suggested that faculty and staff development on Latino culture could help bridge the gap in learning/teaching styles. He also went on to explain that first generation Latino students rely on faculty and staff to provide them with social capital by teaching them how to succeed in school and teaching them the way we do things here. He said he will be taking a sabbatical to produce video tapes for faculty/staff development to help bridge the gap. Jorge went on to discuss the SI's. He said the Latino students completed at higher rates with the Latino SI (whose instructor received none of the cultural training) than the Anglo SI (whose section instructor did have the training). Completion rates did improve with the Anglo SI, but not at the same rate as the Latino. In addition to classwork issues, the students came to the Latino SI to talk about family, problems

with the wife and kids etc. They used the SI as a mentor, not just a tutor. The Anglo SI was mainly a tutor, and the students came to them strictly for classwork.

Jorge talked about an advising booklet "How to Get Good Grades in College." He said that the booklet was written by an academician. He handed out a sheet which he had prepared on the same topic, but written in a language that the student can understand. He pointed out that the booklet needs to be in a language that students understand.

Jorge reported some of the data that he collected from 13 students which will be submitted to Bill and Lane Glenn when he gets it back from editing:

- 12 between the ages of 18-21
- 9 Dominican, 3 Puerto Rican, 8 born in U.S. 5 other countries (mostly Dominican)
- 8 U.S. received some social capital through educational process
- 5 other stated they need social capital
- 10 educated in U.S.
- 9 single, 12 no children
- 10 lived with other family members
- 3 full time students, 9 part time
- 9 owned a computer
- 12 had a quiet place to study
- 8 preferred working alone on projects, 5 preferred working in groups
- 7 asked for help, 6 did not
- Most stated SI's were very helpful

Jorge asked the group if they had any questions. Lynda Gagnon asked if both SI's had the same training and experience. The answer was "yes." Janice Rogers asked if mentoring was going on this semester. Jorge said that he was working on a plan to take 6 SI's and train them to be mentors for students of color under the Title V grant, and put them in Lawrence. Bill Heineman said that beyond the problem of understanding the booklet that Jorge presented is whether course syllabi are understandable to our students. Jorge reported that the College Reading sections above had social capital information in them. It was noted that requiring this information in the syllabus is not required in the union contract. Tom Fallon said that it is difficult to draw conclusions with this small sample. Jorge closed by saying that he introduced the concept to develop a Latino/Latina database in which every semester he would acquire data for 25 Latina/Latinos and put it into SPSS to track changes and measure trends. He said he already has the questionnaire prepared; however he needs to wait for the report to come out to go any further.

Bill thanked Jorge for coming and said he is looking forward to the report.

2. Report on the ATD DREAM Conference.

Bill said that at the end of the conference the team typically sits together to discuss what they had learned. A few key members were missing then (and today), but here is a summary of what he thought he heard.

- Fee structure – heard how fees are structured at other colleges. This is an issue which is up for discussion here at NECC. We have indications that some of our fees are an impediment to improving credential completion.
- Get more faculty involved with microgrants – small grants for faculty to get involved in data collection and analysis for student success. Details would have to be worked out carefully.
- More explanation to faculty pertaining to what's working and what isn't. Bill said that as feedback comes in from the Academic Master Plan, he is seeing a lot of those questions. There is work to be done there. He said Professional Day will address this to a certain extent.
- Accelerated Learning Program (ALP) – Middlesex is doing a version of this. Baltimore is doing Basic Writing to Comp I. Students co-register for both at the same time and are getting good results. It is being done in Math too but it is not working out as well.
- There is a community college on the big island in Hawaii whose presentation featured hula dancing and Hawaiian culture which is much different than you think it is. The college had few native Hawaiians as students or staff. They didn't offer anything of interest for this population. They talked about how they have changed that by tapping into the culture of this group. The NECC team saw strong parallels to needed work here.
- Rick Lizotte talked about a presentation by a psychologist who gave students an article on changing connections in your brain. Students did better in Math after reading the article, suggesting that student beliefs about their abilities will shape their performance.

The group discussed the fee structure at NECC:

- Grace pointed out that North Shore doesn't charge an application or graduation fee. They charge one flat fee to incoming students which covers it all.
- Tom Fallon said a request could be made to find out what was brought in for Fiscal 2011 from our various fees. We could take a look and see where we place system-wide and take a look at where we want to be. He said that the various fees don't have to be reported to Boston if they are not charged to everyone. He suggested adding them all up and dividing it up – charge one fee to everyone.
- Grace said this would alleviate the barrier to apply or to graduate.
- Pete Dulchinos said that although funding from state has been down, it is not the intent to punish the students.
- Bill mentioned the health certificate that nobody applied to get when they were finished. Students don't need it as they get credentials from the state, which is what they are really looking for. The fee discourages them from graduating.
- Colleen Walsh said there is a retention scholarship where we do waive the fee but the students have to ask for it.

- Bill brought up the costs to administer fees and that it sometimes is easier to administer a single fee than to juggle many.

Bill said that all of these things are on the radar screen. He and Nora are talking about fees. Overall he felt it was a valuable experience in Dallas.

3. Changes for Next Year –

- A. Core Team assuming role as College Strategic Plan team** - Bill said that “Improve Student Learning, and Retention and Graduation Rates” is one of our strategic goals. He said that in order to do this, Lane wants to tap into existing groups. He also said that next year, we will still be the ATD Core Team, but this will be one of the five subgroups in the college strategic plan, which makes sense. We are finishing our five year ATD grant and should be institutionalizing our work. The reality is that hardly anything will change for this group. Bill went on to talk about two changes that were discussed at the last meeting:
- B. Creating a new Culture and Equity Team** - The Math team will morph into the math council. The advising team key people know what they are doing and know how to advocate for what they need. The FYE team still needs to exist. He raised the question: Does early alert need to come under FYE’s umbrella? Bill stated that based on what we’ve heard from Jorge, and the group learned at the conference, he feels we need a group to look at culture and equity. He said he’d like to bring up that idea with Terri and Jim and decide whether we will go forward at the next meeting.
- C. Creating a new Integrated Initiatives (cocktail) Team** - He brought up the idea of combining interventions (cocktail), which was discussed at the last meeting. He said the creation of this team is less certain in his mind and he said he will talk to Jim and Terri about that as well.

He asked the group to think about any other ideas that need to be discussed with the coaches and to get back to him.

4. Preparing for the Coaches Visit

- A. Data and Strategy Teams meetings and reports** – The coaches will be visiting on April 4 and 5 and as in the past, each team will get one hour. Bill will need a one or two page summary from each team. Tom has finished the CSS and SI reports, as well as a draft of Tutoring. All three strategies will have a report.
- B. ATD Annual Report:** Rick suggested the strategy teams look back at their reports from last year and include changes from this year. He said ATD is very interested in the scaling up of interventions. Bill suggested talking more about CSS and DegreeWorks in this year’s annual report.
- C. Core Team Meeting, April 4 (2:00 to 3:30 SC213)** – Bill pointed out that the Core team meeting during the coaches’ visit will be different this year. They will still do the activity that Jim has sent to the group (attached to this email). In addition, however, Bill Leaders from the Boston Foundation will be joining us. Bill handed out the CCCSE report for the group to use as a formative evaluation (those not present have been sent this document

via intercampus mail). He asked everybody to read through it and he said he will look to them to address their sections relevant to their work during the meeting and talk about what they are doing. He stressed to not be afraid to say why we are not doing something, or whether we tried it and it didn't work and why.

- 5. Other Business** - Bill announced that the filmmakers would be here tomorrow and Friday filming the ATD video which will be shown at Lane Glenn's Inauguration and for other purposes. He said they are interviewing Karletty Medina, Rebecca Rose, Clare Thompson, Rick Lizotte and Lane. He reported that the effort to market ATD externally and internally is ongoing. Print versions will be available later.

Coaches visit is **April 4 & 5**, agenda will follow shortly

The next scheduled Core Team meeting **after the coaches' visit** is **April 25, 2:00 to 4:00, SC213**