

Strategic Goal #4: Improve Student Career Preparation

October 22, 2012 L 144

Attending: Co-leaders Chuck Phair and Dawna Perez, members Ashley Bragger, Jason Bohanan, Christine DeRosa, Euthemia Gilman, Nita Lamborghini, Deb LaValley, Deborah Regan, and Josephina Taveras.

We began by discussing our contacts at Whittier and Lawrence Vocational Technical High Schools. Dawna and Chuck asked for volunteers to form a subgroup and to attend an informational luncheon meeting regarding how the vocational schools prepare their students for careers. Deb LaValley said that she would reach out to Superintendent, Bill DeRosa, to set up a time for our subgroup to meet with him and have lunch at the Poet's Inn. We discussed topics to be covered at this meeting, including:

- How the vocational schools prepare their students for careers
- Is there some component that all students get as a foundational base
- Jason discussed classes such as "Related" or "Theory of" which taught students about everything that had to do with a particular subject (for example: culinary program – discussed terms and definitions, serve safe testing, etc.)

We then discussed the archived website and how we used to have job postings and a large career fair in both Lawrence and Haverhill. Chuck mentioned that there will be a career fair in February for STEM programs with both NECC and Middlesex Community College. The fair is for juniors and seniors at local high schools including Methuen, Lawrence, Haverhill, Chelmsford, and Billerica (about 10 schools total). In attendance will be faculty from both NECC and MCC along with a representative from Microsoft.

Sue Grolnic was unable to attend the meeting because she was at a conference. However, she had previously offered to use her funds towards an interactive website. We need a committee to help develop a website deliverable. This does not necessarily mean that we will create a website, but we need to generate ideas from a user's perspective. Jason said that as a student, he would be a good person to get involved with this committee.

Additionally, Chuck mentioned a recent Dean's meeting which cautioned the school about issues with experiential learning. Certain coops and internships do not transfer and therefore do not count towards completion, unless the programs have 63 credits. The college should be up front with its students about these credit and transfer limitations.

Ashley summarized her work and interviews with NECC advisory board members. With the help of Bill Heineman she has a total of eight interviews lined up. She shared some examples of how she is summarizing the data. Lastly, she discussed the team's plan for developing a survey in the near future and also asked the team for suggestions in best practice research.

KEY POINTS:

- Set up a meeting with the vocational schools and develop specific questions to ask at the meeting
- Do we know the number of graduates in a particular department/field that get jobs in that field?
- Form a subgroup from our team to develop a user friendly interface for a Career Services website → make sure to tie in Sue's interactive website plan
- Make students aware of the limitations to transferability of certain experiential learning opportunities
- There are many best practices research available, the group is a wealth of knowledge on where to look

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER THOUGHT/DISCUSSION

- From the trends highlighted in the advisory board interviews, the team will need to develop survey questions to be distributed to all advisory board members
- NECC's website needs a central location for career exploration. This may be an easy success for the team and an opportunity to work with marketing. We should have a subgroup dedicated to generating ideas about user friendly interface and design ideas.
- As discussed in September's meeting, we would like to engage alumni and community partners a couple times a year in either panel discussions or classroom presentations. According to interview data, most advisory board members are already participating in such activities. Additionally they find it a VERY appropriate request and use of their time and involvement with the college.
- Advisory board members have really been receptive towards some of our ideas including
 - Career Success Seminar (1 credit?) offered in last semester (as bookend to College Success for incoming students)
 - Grading the students on professionalism

NEXT STEPS

- **Dawna** to find out where NECC is getting their statistic about the percentage of students getting jobs, mostly within their field of study, within a year of graduation
- **Deb LaValley** will contact Superintendent Bill DeRosa to set up a time to meet at the vocational schools for November or early December
- **Sue Grolnic** will determine the best use of her funds in a possible website development
- **Ashley** will have Beth Donovan post the minutes to Strategic Plan webpage
<http://facstaff.necc.mass.edu/vision-and-planning-initiatives/strategic-planning/strategic-goals-2012-2015/goal-4-improve-student-career-preparation/>
- **Ashley** will wrap up interviews with Advisory Board members and begin to code the data for survey development
- **Ashley and Deborah Regan** will divide up best practice research and figure out a way of formatting and presenting it
- **TEAM** will volunteer to be part of a subgroup that will work on a user friendly interface for a career services website
- **TEAM**—will volunteer to be part of a subgroup to attend the information session at the vocational technical schools and will coordinate a date to visit with the group

Our next meeting is scheduled for Monday, November 19, 1:00 – 2:30 PM in L 144