

Strategic Goal #4: Improve Student Career Preparation

December 17, 2012 L 144

Attending: Co-leaders Chuck Phair and Dawna Perez, members Ashley Bragger, John Sabbagh, Deb LaValley, Deborah Regan, Paula Richards, Christine DeRosa, and Josefina Taveras.

We began with Dawna summarizing all of the work that has been happening this semester with Goal Team 4. She stated that we have established a great foundation of research and best practices for the team. Now, we can begin to make solid recommendations. We then talked about the trends and themes that emerged from the interviews. Professionalism was a huge topic of discussion and we struggled with how to incorporate levels of professionalism into the curriculum. We currently do a lot with professionalism in individual workshops, but how do we translate that into the everyday experiences of the students?

After, we discussed the recent lunch visit to Whittier Tech High School. One important lesson we learned from this visit is the importance of utilizing our advisory boards to their fullest potential. Whittier hosts appreciation dinners and networking events to ensure that advisory board members are active, involved, and know one another.

Later, we continued to discuss website best practices and went over the information that Ashley and Deborah put together. Deborah summarized a list of easily implemented suggestions that came up from this research. These suggestions would require very little staff power to implement and would enhance the career resources available to our students online. This list of suggestions will be given to the sub-committee who will be working on revamping the website. Some of these suggestions include: career steps or timeline in DegreeWorks that provides a career path for students; information by major; links to job hunting websites; fast facts about NECC; samples of resumes, cover letters, and interviewing best practices; and a College Central Network. Dawna also mentioned that through her, the team has access to EMS which is the college's subscription to real-time information on jobs, industry growth, educational requirements, salary ranges, and five year projected growth or decrease, etc. by geographic area and by industry.

Lastly, Paula Richards updated the team with what she has been doing in Service Learning. Paula is the new Service Learning Coordinator and she sees this area growing tremendously in the next few years. She heard that our team was projecting a three year timeline for a Career Development Center in collaboration with Sue. She does not seem to think this projection is reasonable; she feels they need a center sooner. Dawna explained that a meeting with Bill, Lane, Ellen, Mary Ellen, Dawna, Chuck, and Sue was going to be held in early January to make sure that Goal Team 4 and Experiential Learning are on the same page going forward.

KEY POINTS:

- We are going to start moving ahead with some business plans for suggestions; our first one will be for the National Career Readiness Certificate. We are looking to see how this will fit in at NECC.
- We can begin using the best practice research and easily implemented suggestions to starting revamping the website, we just need to determine who has access to the website updates.
- The Whittier visit emphasized the need to engage our advisory board members more in helping to prepare our students for their careers.
- We need to work on suggestions for some sort of Career Course that is required of all students, just like the College Success Seminar
- The team needs to keep the number one issue of professionalism in mind when working on creating future suggestions for the college

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER THOUGHT/DISCUSSION

- Professionalism Ideas

- Include professional readiness into the syllabus, emphasize that this is their educational profession
- Dawna mentioned that faculty members who participate in the Steering Committee were very supportive of the idea of incorporating professionalism. Thus, it may not be all that difficult to get faculty buy-in
- Implement a capstone Career Success Seminar
- Middlesex Community College has their core College Success Seminar which is one credit, and then the students are required to mix and match two other one credit courses, including Career Preparation, Career Development, etc.
- John uses reference standards which reminds the students if they want to use him as a reference, there is a certain level of behavior expected in the classroom
- We could also institute a professional readiness grading system; John used to do this at another school and will send along the rubric to the team.
- Deb L. mentioned RICCS systems used in iHealth, which is **R**esume development, **I**nterviewing skills, **C**ommunication skills, **C**ustomer service skills, and **S**olving problems
- NECC's website
 - Deborah has compiled a list of easily implemented suggestions that we could update the website with according to best practices at other schools
 - UMASS Lowell has a lot of good information to help with the career development of historically underrepresented groups. For example, COSD which is Career Opportunities for Students with Disabilities.
 - Who do we need to get in touch with about gaining access to updating the website?

NEXT STEPS

- **Dawna** will send invites to the team for next semester's meeting which will begin in January
- **Dawna and Ashley** will contact Ellen Grondine about how she wishes to publicize the results of the advisory board interviews. They will work on putting the summary page in an easier format as was suggested in the meeting.
- **Chuck** will be going to a conference in January in San Francisco. The conference is working on incorporating soft skills into the curriculum. He will bring back information from the conference for the team.
- **Dawna, Chuck, and Sue** will meet with Bill, Lane, Ellen, and Mary Ellen to make sure that everyone is on the same page in regards to the work our team is doing and that Sue is doing.
- **Ashley** will work on a business plan for how the National Career Readiness Certificate could work at NECC. The business plan will be presented to Lane and Bill and hopefully the Occupational Advisory Board to get their input on the certification.
- **Deb L** will forward information to the team about RICCS used at iHealth.
- **John S** will send the team information about professional readiness grading rubric.
- **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 follow up with Bev DeSalvo to find out more about how Whittier prepares its students for their careers
- **Ashley and Deborah** will finalize the best practices research by listing out easily implemented suggestions for the new website. These suggestions require very little staff power. They will also do some research on some career exploration tools that students can use to self-assess.
- **Team** will decide on a sub-committee of who would like to participate in the revamping of the new website.

Our next meeting is to be determined