Achieving the Dream  
January 27, 2015  
Minutes

Attendees:

Core Team: Kemba Chambers, Heather Congo, Valerie Cox, Brian Gann, Vickie Hale-Brown, Bryan Helms, Debi Hendershot, Charles Holbrook, Janet Kincherlow-Martin, Michael Kinney, Jannett Spencer, Alicia Taylor, Jennie Walts (Recorder)

Absent: Odessa Jordan, Dr. Klauber, Necia Nicholas, Carla Swinney

The responsibility of the Core Team is to work with faculty and staff across the college to get "buy in" for Achieving the Dream. The Data Team works more with the data that will help us make decisions. The Achieving the Dream Conference in Baltimore will be held on February 17-20, 2015. On February 24th, the Achieving the Dream coaches will be on campus to assist us during our professional development activities. The afternoon portion of this day will be devoted to data analysis.

Ms. Taylor asked Dr. Hendershot for an update on what the Data Team has planned for the data analysis portion of professional development. A keynote speaker has been arranged, Corrine Hoisington, and she will address technology and how efficiently it is being used. Graham Sissom will be here to present information related to ADA accommodations. Dr. Klauber will also spend about an hour talking with faculty and staff.

Hopefully the initial data overview will result in 4 or 5 ideas that will be the focus to begin our work. The team doesn't feel like we are receiving a lot of direction from our coaches. There hasn't been much communication. Dr. Hendershot will reach out to our data coach to see what plans should be made for February 24th and how much time should be allotted to the data analysis. There may be a need to have breakout/working sessions for the Data and Core teams. Brian Gann feels we should give a snapshot of the top issues and ask the group to help narrow these down to 2 or 3 items.

Chuck Holbrook will take a leadership role in Decatur and Heather Congo will serve in this capacity on the Huntsville Campus. Chuck Holbrook and Dr. Hendershot have been looking at the student survey data and comparing it to the staff survey. There are many discrepancies between what students think and what faculty think. Technology seems to be the biggest issue. Our technology doesn't work at times. This is a big problem. Technology is not standardized so there are many different types being used. Lack of preparation - students are coming to us not prepared for college. Instructors are also not as prepared as they should be. Faculty either expect too much or not enough. Faculty say technology, students are not prepared and students are dealing with a variety of other issues that aren’t school-related. The technology piece will be very hard to solve. The level of expertise plays a very important role in this area. We need to identify the data we need and find the gaps in student achievement and then we need to come up with new approaches to foster student success and improve front end services. Professional development for staff will help to educate them on which departments do what so students can be guided to the right areas for assistance.
The issues are: technology, preparation and advising.

Ms. Taylor passed out CCSSE Survey information for the group to review. These are the benchmarks of effective practice. Students that are engaged are more likely to learn. A challenging work environment for students helps to promote engagement. CCSSE may be a good framework to use for the Achieving the Dream process. Ms. Taylor passed out an article from the Decatur Daily that discussed how learning has changed. Ms. Taylor also passed out our CCSSE results from 2010 - 2013 as it compares to the top performers. Calhoun is significantly lower than the top performers. We are losing ground not gaining. Students don't do optional. Some ideas include:

- Bring everyone to the same level - equitable
- Faculty should not forget the disadvantaged students
- Assuring that we develop a plan/vision that oversees how we guide our students to that level.

How should this be disseminated to faculty? Maybe use Brian Gann's idea about Letterman's Top Five, and give supporting data. Under-preparation of college students is a number one concern.

More technology training for faculty should also be a number one priority. Adjuncts should be included. How can this be accomplished? In Social Sciences, there have been many training sessions for adjuncts.

We are very close to having a top five list of issues.

Ms. Taylor passed out information from a top 10 nominee for an Aspen Award so that the group could see some of the ideas that they used. We have implemented some of the same things. Some of these changes are not huge, they are small things we can do to improve.

The Core Team will meet each month. Tuesday afternoon seems to be best for the group. A meeting will be scheduled prior to the Dream Conference. This will be to talk about the top five issues to be addressed at Professional Development.

Chuck Holbrook will be the liaison between the Core and Data team. Ms. Taylor will send the data out to the team.

Next meeting will be held on February 10th at 3 pm.

The meeting was adjourned.

Submitted by:

Jennie Walts
Recorder