VALENCIACOLLEGE
East Campus
2017-18

Divisional Strategic Planning Brief – Communications

Campus Outcomes:
- Support the research and design of a comprehensive College E-Learning/ Online-Distance Education Program
- Continue to address, review and improve low performing programs and courses

Department Outcome:
- Improve Student Success Rates in SPC1017 and SPC1608 online courses to a consistent rate of 70% or higher.

BACKGROUND & DESCRIPTION

In response to the significant student success gaps by modality revealed in the June 2013 Distance Learning Report, the introduction of the High Risk data report, and regular discussion with faculty and others within the college, two related initiatives merged into a:

1. A multi-year examination of student success in both SPC1017 and SPC1608 by modality which has included several college-wide meetings and faculty interventions.
2. The emergence of the Dean and Chair Training Work-team charged with training all Deans and Chairpersons/Coordinators to observe and evaluate online/mixed-mode (previously named hybrid) courses.

Tracing the progression of these two separate initiatives reveals how they quite naturally came together.

1. **Student Success in online Speech classes**
   As I explained in more detail in last year's brief, on November 4, 2016 we held a college-wide meeting with all fulltime faculty teaching SPC1017, Interpersonal Communication, and SPC1608, Fundamentals of Speech courses online to examine student success data.
   - Faculty agreed that the most common challenge students experienced in online courses was the fulfilling the minimum audience of five adults required for their speeches; therefore, faculty suggested we post the following comment in Banner (long and short text) for all online/mixed-mode Speech courses for one year beginning in spring 2017, after which we would meet to discuss results and next steps.

   Note: It is the responsibility of students to have a minimum audience of five adults for speech assignments which must be digitally recorded and uploaded.

- After reviewing the summer and fall data, we decided the problem was not significant to mixed-mode courses, and agreed we needed to confirm that students actually noticed the comments when registering for online Speech classes. We asked all faculty teaching SPC1608 or SPC1017 online during the fall 2017 (201810) semester to disseminate a one question survey during the first week of class simply asking students if they noticed these comments when they registered for the courses.

2. **Dean and Chair/Coordinator Training**
In 2015, as part of the Online Learning Plan, the Dean and Chair Development for Online/Mixed-mode Teaching/Learning work team was established to address the fact that "Valencia College currently does not have a process for training Deans and Department Chairpersons/Coordinators to observe online/mixed-mode courses. In addition, the quality of our online courses is not equivalent so we need to ensure deans and chairs are able to make data informed decisions about course success."

The work team's recommendations were the development and implementation of two training courses: one course to train Deans and Chairpersons/Coordinators to observe and evaluate online/mixed-mode courses and a second course applying the updated online/mixed-mode observation form to a mock course using the new Rubric for Online Competencies (ROC).

The team's recommendations were presented to the governing councils during late fall 2015 and spring of 2016, and we began developing the first course during summer 2016. The outcomes for the first course are listed below, although this document will focus on the last outcome, making data informed decisions:
- Evaluate the demonstration of the Essential Competencies of a Valencia Educator in online/mixed-mode courses.
- Evaluate the demonstration of current best practices in online education in an online/mixed-mode courses.
- Recognize the QM course design standards and use the QM rubric in a course review.
- Make data informed decisions about which courses should be offered online and which faculty should teach online/mixed-mode courses.

INTERVENTION:

1. **Student Success in online Speech classes**
Faculty provided the one question survey link to their students in their online SPC1017 and SPC1608 courses during the first week of fall 201810. Of the 425 students who completed the survey, 372 (87.5%) indicated they saw the note about the required 5 adult audience members for speeches.

Despite the college-wide inclusion of the comments for one year, and the number of students (372 or 87.5%) who indicated they saw the note in the comment section, the fall student success rate actually decreased in both courses to rates not seen since spring 2015 (SPC1017) and before we began this project in fall 2013 (SPC1608).

SPC1017			SPC1608		
Term	**Students**	**Success**	**Term**	**Students**	**Success**
201410	250	59.6%	201410	624	66.8%
201420	296	58.4%	201420	719	64.5%
201430	132	68.2%	201430	450	71.6%
201510	387	69.5%	201510	651	67.0%
201520	384	61.7%	201520	776	65.9%
201530	216	72.7%	201530	427	75.4%
201610	377	68.7%	201610	864	68.4%
201620	367	68.7%	201620	709	68.7%
201630	255	66.7%	201630	515	78.3%
201710	455	71.6%	201710	881	68.3%
201720	376	73.9%	201720	700	69.9%
201730	266	71.8%	201730	466	75.3%
201810	430	66.5%	201810	946	63.1%

However, the results were not consistent college-wide:
- Osceola's faculty do not offer either Speech course online;
- Lake Nona's online Speech courses are all taught by one faculty member;
- Winter Park only offers SPC1608 online which is taught by two faculty;
- East and West Campuses offer the largest number of sections and were therefore ultimately responsible for the low success rate.

Therefore, we agreed that the next conversations would be campus based. At this point, rather than continue to have group conversations with East Campus faculty, I prepared student success data sheets for each individual faculty member so we could discuss their own student success rates when I completed their online observations.

2. Dean and Chair/Coordinator Training

A group of three faculty members, including the then Faculty Council President, Suzette Ashton and three deans began meeting with Page Jerzak to develop the first of two online courses during the summer of 2016.

In creating the section on data informed decisions, we acknowledged that the comfort and experience using data throughout the college was uneven, faculty members would not have access to the grade distribution reports, and we needed faculty input on recommendations for using data. Therefore, we designed the data module so faculty participants would review their own success data and asked the Faculty Council President, Suzette Ashton to work with Faculty Council to develop a "Faculty Suggestions for Using Data" document for inclusion in the course; the document expounded on the following:
- Do look at data from multiple semesters
- Do use multiple data points
- Do respect faculty expertise and student choices
- Do ask probing, open ended questions

The course was named ASMT 5231 – Enhancing Online Learning. The offerings and number of participants thus far are listed below:

- Total sections offered during 2016-2017: 5
- Total sections offered during 2017-2018: 6
- Total sections planned for 2018-2019: 6
- Total course registrations: 126
- Total course completions: 81

STRATEGIC RESULTS

1. Student Success in online Speech classes

Since all of our faculty were training and transitioning their courses to Canvas, I waited until spring to begin online observations of fulltime faculty courses. While observing Edie Gaythwaite's online Speech course on February 20th and concluding that the course design was clear, consistent and engaging with no visible obstacles to student learning, I shared both the survey results, the multi-year student success data for our both the college and our campus, and the student success data for her online courses; then I asked her what she thought could be causing the continually low success rates in our online courses.

The conversation went better than I could have hoped! After our meeting, Edie Gaythwaite shared her concerns with her colleagues who also teach Speech online and convened a meeting of interested college-wide Speech faculty to discuss the college-wide and campus data on March 22nd. At her request, I privately shared the individual success data for each faculty member participating in the conversation, along with the overall success data for the year we included the audience member comments, 201720, 201730 and 201810.

After reviewing course data, and discussing factors they thought may be influencing student success, including assignment structure, points, etc., and textbooks, the group of seven faculty from three campuses developed the following collaborative High Impact Practice Plan (HIP) which they will implement next fall:

Project Overview

This project will be looking at online student success including the role of the speech requirements in SPC 1017 and SPC1608. Faculty teaching the course online have found that students often do not submit the speech, are unable to meet the audience requirements, or have such high apprehension they give up. Therefore, we are investigating the speech requirements and its role in student success.

High Impact Practice(s)

Gather quantitative and qualitative data on students. The quantitative data would include when students registered, overall GPA, reading and writing test scores, transfer information, probation status, the number of attempts in the course, no shows, and D as not being successful. We will create a survey to gather student rationale for both students' perceptions of success and reasons for withdrawal.

Setting

Online SPC 1608 and Online SPC 1017

Teaching/Learning Strategies

Our teaching learning strategies will be dependent on the outcomes of our data collection. We

hypothesize our teaching learning strategies may include, but not limited to, adjusting audience member requirement, timeline of speech assignment due dates, and preparatory/anxiety management strategies.

Assessment Strategies
Use self-assessment surveys. Use speech assignment completion data. Utilization of a common Valencia-UCF speech rubric.

2. Dean and Chair/Coordinator Training

After offering the course during fall 2016 and spring 2017, the team met during the summer to discuss the feedback and possible revisions for the course. One particular area of concern was the section on making data informed decisions. Some participants shared concerns about using student success data and some questioned the inclusion of the module on making data based decisions. In fact, one participant stated "most of us do not need [data] directly for observing online courses."

In addition, some faculty experienced challenges accessing their own student success data through ATLAS during the first year we taught the course; in response, Daryl Davis created the individual instructor report in Tableau which shows the faculty member's student success rate for a chosen semester compared to the student success rates on each campus during the same semester and tracks faculty success rates during a five-year period.

In the second year, we included anonymous examples of five diverse individual instructor reports so the participants could discuss the type of feedback they would share with faculty members in conjunction with an observation.

Overall, while 43 participants agreed or strongly agreed they could better "make data informed decisions about which courses should be offered online and which faculty should teach online/mixed-mode courses," 19 participants disagreed or strongly disagreed.

In addition, faculty comments ranged from suggesting "more discussion of data, and how to analyze and interpret" to "still skeptical on use of grade distributions" and, as noted earlier, "most of us do not need that directly for observing online courses"; meanwhile, other faculty indicated that they learned the most from the week that "focuses on data," and one participant stated "this course is too important to rush through and [we] should go into more depth on each objective. We barely addressed the learning objective on "Data-informed decisions about which courses should be offered online and which faculty should teach online/mixed-mode courses."

REFLECTION:

1. Student Success in online Speech classes

As explained above, we have had regular ongoing conversations about student success data, and we have employed at least one intervention per year since 2012-2013, but the interventions have not consistently produced the desired results during that time. Meanwhile our faculty have completed the Digital Professor Certification and the overwhelming majority of our faculty have been teaching these courses online for several years; ultimately, however, the success rates rarely reach 70% or above, although we have seen some improvements during a few terms.

The difference now is that because of our extensive ongoing discussions of data and the conversation

that occurred when the student success data was coupled with the online class observation as encouraged through the Enhancing Online Learning course, the impetus to address this issue is now fully in faculty's hands rather than the deans.

NEXT STEPS:
Although we will review the results of the faculty intervention through the HIP, I am convinced that having faculty lead the work will result in the vested commitment to the real changes needed to increase student success in these courses if we are to continue offering them online.

Meanwhile, in addition to continuing to use data as a tool for collaborative discussions to address low-performing courses and identify successful strategies for improvement, the Dean and Chair work team will develop and implement the second recommended course where deans and chairpersons/coordinators will have a chance to practice applying the updated online/mixed-mode observations form to a mock course using the ROC (Rubric for Online Competencies). Ultimately, these efforts should allow us all to become more comfortable using data to have these crucial conversations so we can better partner with faculty addressing student success in our courses.