

Chris Joiner

From: Tony Holland
Sent: Wednesday, February 13, 2013 4:57 PM
To: Faculty
Subject: Prof Dev articles...

1. *Good article in the ACCS News Clips this month (below)...* Valencia College is one of the most proactive and innovative colleges in the nation. The lack of initiative is evident in colleges that wait until mandated by state or federal policies to implement effective strategies to solve problems associated with student learning. **Thank each of you for your concerted efforts in improving student learning by adopting a more engaging and relevant pedagogy, while using objective data to evaluate the effectiveness of our teaching based on the quality of student learning.**

Changing faculty culture leads to better student outcomes

Community colleges that are making progress in raising student success rates have developed a strong faculty culture in which instructors are committed to improving student learning through improve pedagogical techniques that involve increasing student engagement, according to a new report from the Aspen Institute report. **"Building a Faculty Culture of Student Success"** from the Aspen Institute's College Excellence Program, describes how colleges that have won or are eligible for the Aspen Prize have encouraged faculty to consistently invent new ways to improve student success. The colleges profiled in the report vary widely in their characteristics and populations served and have developed different approaches to engage faculty.

Valencia College in Florida revamped its tenure process to **focus on teaching ability**. The effort was initiated by faculty who were concerned about data showing that students who had to repeat a class did even worse the second time. Valencia's new tenure plan defined seven educator competencies that instructors are expected to master, **focused the tenure review process on a commitment to high-quality teaching and learning**, and established a Teaching/Learning Academy to guide faculty through the tenure process. Educators are now expected to create an individual learning plan that includes at least one action research project to evaluate whether their teaching strategies are resulting in higher levels of student success.

In Virginia, Patrick Henry Community College's efforts to engage faculty stemmed from a three-year **graduation/transfer rate of just 19 percent in 2004 and data that showed low levels of student engagement** in the classroom. The college **adopted a cooperative learning strategy focused on hands-on group work**. The effort began with professional development for just a few faculty members and, as student outcomes improved, the training was made **mandatory** for all full-time faculty. Develop an action plan
Based on the experiences of these and other colleges, the Aspen Institute report recommends the following steps for changing faculty culture:

- Create a **"widespread belief that the status quo is not sufficient."** **That calls for the collection of data and building an urgency for reform.**
- Build a core team made up of influential people who care deeply about improving outcomes.
- Develop an action plan to institutionalize and **sustain the change over the long haul.**

- Regularly evaluate, reflect on and **continuously improve** the strategies to determine whether the new college culture is leading to higher student success rates.

<http://www.communitycollegetimes.com/Pages/Campus-Issues/Changing-the-faculty-culture-leads-to-better-student-outcomes.aspx>

2. In the Dec. 2012 Chronicles of Higher Education Journal there was an article on reforming introductory general education courses at the University of Maryland. These courses were filled with students faculty perceived as “callow and with little interest in the subject”. They reformed these courses into ‘I-series’ courses, in which the ‘I’ stands for *innovation, imagination, inspiration*, and other higher-ed buzzwords beginning with ‘I’. The key to the success of these courses were listed as:

- More engagement than typical lecture.
- Problem solving discussions involving relevant and real-world scenarios.
- ‘Flipping’ all or part by having student watch lectures online outside class & spend class time working together to apply what they learned. (Our ‘Top Ten’ general education courses in enrollment will all have a complete set of instructional videos for all core course objectives by Fall 2013, which will be made available to all adjunct faculty)
- Includes training in core skills like quantitative reasoning, oral and written ability, and critical thinking.
- Stopping lecture every five or 10 minutes to ask questions and listen to the answers.
- Conducting real-world simulations.
- Shifting from lecture to discussion to brief video clips, and assigning a short paper to submit at end of class.
- Collaborating with faculty within and across disciplines.

These reformed courses were an answer to the Univ. of Maryland’s student responses that “*an ineffective teacher can ruin a good subject, while an effective one can make even a boring topic interesting*”. **By aggressively addressing student learning/ success in our Top Ten enrollment courses here at WCC (ART 100, BIO 103, CIS 146, ENG 101, HIS 101, HIS 102, MTH 100, MUS 101, PSY 200, SPH 107), we are poised to make the greatest impact with the greatest number of students. The added advantage is that these courses provide the very basics to a post-secondary education, setting the stage for continued academic and workplace success. In these courses we must interject the *personal and civic responsibility* training required to produce a more educated and productive member of society.**

<http://chronicle.com/article/At-U-of-Maryland-an-Effort/136317/>

Thank each of you for all you do to improve student learning and completion rates!...it does not go unnoticed or unappreciated!!

T. Holland