

Achieve the Dream Dialogue to Action Forum BLUE TEAM

Session Two Notes

How are our students doing?

- Black females have a low percentage in English 1301.
- Student retention is a big deal.
- The statistics that Achieve the Dream uses should be geared towards students that are failing and not solely graduation rates.
- Students should be able to choose classes aimed at what they want to do on an earlier level than college. We should tackle the problem at the root of the problem.
- A systematic statistic should be used to track exactly why students are not continuing their education at UHD.
- Family support is important in student success.

Action Ideas

- We should have mentoring for students that are not performing well.
- Students should actively be involved in brainstorming and determining ways that teachers can help them.
- Faculty and staff should have some type of mandatory training besides their degree.
- Student and teacher relations should be emphasized because this educational process is a partnership.
- Faculty and staff should have some type of cultural sensitivity orientation.
- An alumni day should be sponsored by the university.
- A change in perspective is needed about faculty and staff's perception towards students.
- The university should market its scholarships programs better, to motivate students.
- Stipends should be created for a good grade in a particular class.
- Free tuition for all students that maintain A's.
- A mandatory seminar should be created for freshmen to explore what success means to them.
- The university could possibly establish relationships with community health centers.

- The student health center needs to be marketed better. Some students lack simple healthcare needs like glasses.

Opinions on Viewpoints

- View 1: Students in general don't have role models in school no matter what their race is.
- View 2: Is not accurate because there are different cultures within each race, and it should not be based on your color.
- View 8: The solution needs to be holistic, focused, and creative.
- When a student finds themselves within themselves that is a big achievement.
- View 3: Because you're poor, some in society tend to think that you can't achieve.

Where Do We Agree?

- The university needs to make freshmen orientation more appealing and successful.
- Freshmen should be aware that they are going to take placement tests during orientation.
- Some students need health services. Students don't know about the services that are offered.
- The attitude of the student plays a big role.
- A great number of our students are first generation college students.

Where Do We Disagree?

- View 2: Socioeconomic status plays a larger role than race.
- In response to the action ideas of free tuition for A's, some in the group expressed that we shouldn't be given prizes just to learn.
- We should think out of the box instead of trying to make everything mandatory. The quality should be increased.

Things We Are Already Doing

- There are a lot of scholarships that all students don't already access.
- We already have freshmen orientation but it's just not successful.
- The student ambassador program has been improved.
- College readiness has been mandated for high school students.

Session Two Notes GREEN TEAM

Session 2, Part 2 How Are Our Students Doing?

- Interesting how males and females stand out depending on English or Math. The genders were close in English but very different in math. The shift in statistics is a reflection how women perform nationally in math. Some believe that the achievement gap between male and female with math is not just an issue in the university but nationally.
- Point made that Hispanic women have high math scores but with Caucasian and Afro-American the math scores are low. (small disagreement that all women scores are lower versus male in math)
- Point made that Hispanic women seemed to get more support because their math is higher.

Session 2, part 3: Exploring the Roots of the "Achievement Gap"

- A point was mentioned that a core root of the achievement gap lay with the student. "If you can't do the work you can't get the grade" students expect to take so many hours and get upset when they don't get wonderful grades. (Don't try and do what your friend does) what is good for your friend might not be good for you.
- We discussed viewpoint one in detail according to this view people of color are treated differently than white. This leads to a gap in student achievement. Common ground was reached that this view could be somewhat possible at other universities but not UHD. UHD represents our society around us. Our school is mixed with the most diverse group of race.
- There was an issue regarding race not that whites are treated differently in school but rather Afro-Americans did not have role models.
- The politics of education and race has always been a topic.
- Point was made that each student should have the tenacity for striving in achievement.
- Also a point was made that the faculty and staff and mentors at the university was a great help in being role models to help further achievement in school.
- We went into depth about view point seven. According to this view some professor teaching methods and style are obstacles to student success. Most teachers do give cell numbers out and it is up to the student to call and get further instruction. Points made that majority of students do not call. There was common ground reached that professors should be able to teach their own lab. There are times when lab is given as a means to help the student, but it really hurts the students because the lab is instructed by someone other than the professor. (This can cause confusion due to different teaching methods.)
- There was a student view that just because the student is in class doesn't mean they understand. The student might not have the previous knowledge that the professor thinks they should have. Unrealistic expectations from professor of student coming in and going out. Slight tension distinguished there was a viewpoint that if you don't put the stipulation on student the student will continue to give excuses. Also statement " If the instructor has to continue to stop and break stuff down this pulls the class behind from what current things they are suppose to be learning." Statement made "If you overload a student with to much new information they won't learn anyway."
- We discussed view point eight. According to this view UHD has yet to fulfill its vision of giving students a true four-year college experience and culture. Our group asked the question "What is true campus life?" Who defines that? Most people think of partying and student organizations.

UHD is a college experience but since UHD is a commuter school most people think of going away when you think of college.

Session 2, Part 4: Where do we agree or disagree? Action ideas New Insights

- Your attitude makes a difference in you achievement
- Teachers are not racist or bias towards students grades
- We disagree in the age and maturity of students the dedication where do the rest fall?
- Action ideas –Orientation program a mandatory orientation where students can know what to expect and what is expected from them. Also handouts example problems which let students know what they should already know.

Actions that Achieving The Dream are taking.

1. Improving college success programs.
2. Improving statistic tutoring because past studies show students have a hard time with statistics.
3. Supporting faculty development by giving money to faculty to help allow teacher development courses.

RED TEAM

DIALOGUE TO ACTION CIRCLES

SESSION 2 NOTES

Moderator: Ben Gomez

Recorder: Yolanda Turner

Session Date: March 6, 2009

Session Two: Explore the Problem

Themes Brought Up In Session:

- The responsibility of the student with regards to their academic success versus the responsibility of the school was the common theme in this session. A lot of dialogue was shared on specific things students can do better to contribute to their success as well as things faculty and staff is currently doing to help students and what they should not be responsible for doing.

- Students in this county do not take full advantage of the access they have to higher education as compared to other countries.
- University faculty and staff are dealing with behaviors of a generation of entitlement.

How are our students doing?

- Surprised that 50% of minorities do not graduate from High School
- Page 3, stat about Asian Americans was surprising
- Many students drop out of college because of need to work, family and social issues
- Students drop out because the school was not willing to help advise when student did not know exactly what they wanted to do (older student perspective)
- Students need to research career choices to help choose a career path
- Students do not have an idea of what to do when wanting to go to college especially when they are a first generation college student
- Staff do not have time to hand hold new student through admissions process
- 66% of freshmen are first generation students
- Students failing developmental courses

Action Ideas

- High School students should have mandatory college advising program they have to attend
- Freshman (FTIC) students need to be able to take more courses that are interesting to them instead of all math, history, sciences, etc.
- Better promote or market programs UHD already offer
- Center to provide more assistance to special needs students with learning disabilities
- Better advising

Opinions on Viewpoints

- Point 7, Professor-Student Relationship (Example: Professor lecture on one thing require reading from text and exams do not reflect either)
- Point 5, Need more support from school versus family. No support from counselors and teachers
- Point 8, Amount of information that is covered in class is too much based on timeframe for total course.
- Professors do good job at skipping certain sections and giving lecture versus requiring students to read all text.
- Point 6, students need to study this is what leads to their success

Things We Are Already Doing

- Writing Center, Math and Computer Labs
- Freshman Orientation Program

Where Do We Agree?

- Point 7, student centered teaching works best; less text more lecture based on what needs are

Where Do We Disagree?

- Student attitudes towards the subject affect their performance in class
- Need more support from school not family
- School can not hand hold every student
- Teaching a culture of entitlement

YELLOW TEAM Notes from DTA 3/5/09

How are our students doing?

- Low graduation percentages are a surprise
- Discouraging numbers stand out
- UHD population is not standard considering life issues of the students enrolled at this school
- UHD is heavily comprised of non traditional students
- Enrollment will increase because of economy
- Student – more people (including her) start at community college and transfer to UHD
- Community colleges have high school presence within the high school system
- Costs
- Themes
- Age is irrelevant here at UHD
- UHD is diverse in population
- Hispanic households' daughters are encouraged to stay near or at home. Hispanic females out perform other ethnic students
- FTIC can be students within their 30's.
- Hispanic traditions afford daughters and sisters to go to college over the males/sons in their families because they didn't want the daughters to have to depend on a man
- UHD close to home and economic option to Hispanic student choices.
- Why are students (white) not enrolling from semester to semester? (chart) no information as to why people stop or transfer
- Is the data accurate? Why aren't the transfer statistics considered?
- Track students that leave UHD for transfer or drop out reasons

Action Ideas

- Track students who leave, dropout or transfer from UHD.
- Collect data from those students

- Help students manage expectations (use advisors)
- Put mentors in place who can give help from their own experiences
- Make mentor program requirement
- Daycare option for faculty, staff and students
- Survey on Web regarding what students want or need to draw more student interaction
- Social group (UHD Alumni)
- Pre-Alumni association that will encourage current students to become active alumni upon graduation
- Support system with downtown businesses
- Establish community relations
- MORE MARKETING

Things We Are Already Doing

- Students (seniors) already participate in a mentor program
- Orientation is now required at UHD
- Destination UHD program where high schools and community colleges are invited out to UHD
- Community – fraternity and sorority organizations offer activities that students are not aware of?
- Staff – student government association;
- Alumni working at UHD
- New Alumni director

Opinions on Viewpoints

- Mentor was important (viewpoint #1) leaders from own culture
- #3-student –having money for books and school.
- Staff – students worry about finishing college in four years while working full time. Students place too much pressure on themselves.
- Advisor – advisors should help students realize expectations in order to be successful
- Staff - Some students do well in small classroom environment
- Students have fear
- What are professor expectations (from instructor)
- Student- favors group work while most students don't
- It is expected that students won't always like/admire the teaching style of instructors; some students listen better, some students take notes; professors can't always be blamed for student shortcomings; traditional students would stay around campus if more activities available
- Staff – night students are forgotten; students don't feel that things will change so they don't participate in surveys of student opinion

- Instructor – Low income students stay away longer; don't have outside support to say in school; family didn't have a plan for college
- Student – friends who had no thought of college
- Advisor – some parents or family don't understand student options (community college)
- Community – parents do want students to succeed; parents want student to do and achieve more than they did

Where Do We Agree

- Mentors are needed for student success

Where Do We Disagree?

- **Staff** - Family can be supportive (financially) of college education;
- Student – family is very supportive (emotionally/encouragement) with regard to finishing college
- Is it culture or income?

Opinions on Viewpoints

- Instructor - Some instructors teach the way they learn best (visual/lecture)
- Instructor – doesn't favor online teaching method because you can't see the student or see if they are learning; students disappear in online classes; encourages students even when they don't do well on first exam
- Advisor – students should introduce themselves to instructors; get to know their instructors and take advantage of small classroom setting, be honest about ability in subjects
- Instructor – students don't take advantage of teacher office hours
- Student – feels comfortable approaching professors at UHD, likes small classroom environment
- Student – had issues with advising when first enrolled at UHD
- Instructor – felt lost as a student; didn't have advising until junior/senior year of college
- Community – never used academic advising, used the student catalog; student life issues have changed (married, families, jobs)
- Instructor – peer advising doesn't happen much at UHD because of student dynamics. Students come to school and go home; are there student organizations that could get students to stay and participate more; would it make a difference, or would life responsibilities still take away from student community involvement
- Staff – students don't participate in school activities
- Student – planned to join organization but hasn't found the excitement or community/school involvement