

## **Theme 1: Student Lifelong Success— Action Conversation 10/09/14**

**Notes from Action Conversation with students organized by AS Director of University Affairs, Michael Pratt, in Wildcat Leadership Center. Approximately 25 student participants at 3 tables. Table 1 facilitated by Katie Silliman. Table 2 facilitated by Bill Loker. Table 3 facilitated by Michael Pratt.**

### **I. What do you think are the most important actions Chico State can take to ensure student success?**

#### **Table 1 (Katie Silliman):**

-Professors need to be more involved with committees of AS

-Outside of classroom experiences are so important/courses need to require students have experiences outside the classroom

- Require that students meet with a professional/interview them
- Take a tour of a facility/other professional environment
- Professors need to make a better effort at coordinating learning with outside experiences
  - Professors should be aware of all the things that are happening locally and promote them in their classes

-Professors should value students' opinions/there needs to be an environment of mutual respect

-The quality of academic advising on this campus is mixed. Faculty need to be trained and they should be evaluated on the quality of their advising.

-We need to create a culture of inclusiveness (pay attention to the language we use) so the campus is a safe environment for all staff, faculty and students.

- Faculty/staff should be trained in area of inclusiveness
- If faculty/staff serve as models then behavior should trickle-down to students

#### **Table 2 (Bill Loker):**

More individualized advising with faculty for curriculum, professional advising. Peer advising works for Liberal Studies, consider more peer advising for other majors. Enthusiastic support expressed for peer mentoring in major and for adjustment to college life at Chico generally (FY students, frosh and transfer).

Academic Advising Services is good for GE.

Transfer students need more guidance, assistance with transition to Chico State

More informal study spaces in academic buildings, besides the library.

### **Table 3 (Michael Pratt):**

1. Help in finding internships.
  - a. A lot of majors require internships, but some majors make the student find an internship and have it approved by the Internship Coordinator.
  - b. Maybe Internship Coordinator can develop list of internships available for the student to try to get.
2. Build positive campus culture.
  - a. Have visible events and activities for students to engage in- it feels like less and less events and activities happen at Chico State.
  - b. Promote activities that will make students want to come to school.
  - c. Promote opportunities for students to network and engage with one another.
  - d. Have professor buy-in on campus-wide efforts to encourage more students to show up.
  - e. Programs need to be more user friendly- offer services outside where students can see them.
  - f. Get more things to go over to the Modoc side of campus...otherwise those students just feel left out of the positive campus culture on the BMU side of campus.
3. Gear more events towards Sophomores, Juniors, and Seniors
  - a. Almost all events are geared towards freshmen because they almost all live on campus.
  - b. People off campus (especially transfers) don't know about campus resources- spend more time reaching out to those students.
  - c. Develop more out of the box ideas to reach out to students- no one pays attention to posters, emails, flyers, or other traditional media outlets.
4. Get professors to be active and engaged on campus
  - a. If students see their professors doing something on campus or encouraging the class to do something, more students would be inclined to go.
  - b. Students are even more likely to use resources or go to events to promote campus culture if it can be related back to the major.

#### **I. Discussion of Action Suggestions**

- A. Every major has an intro to major required 1-2 unit course. Undeclared students have a required “major exploration” course in sophomore year.**

#### **Table 1:**

-Most felt it was a good idea, it might help people decide if they should switch major

-Job shadowing should be part of such a course.

-Liked idea for undecided majors – the class should make student explore and learn more about different majors on this campus

-Group was not sure if all transfer students would need such a course as they may already be committed to the major

- A transfer student in biology took their intro course and he felt it was useful and helped him figure out which option in biology to pursue (he changed his mind as a result of this class)

-A suggestion for English 130 or other writing intensive course – maybe a section of the course could be created for undecided major where the major components of the writing requirement are met by exploring different majors; students could learn about the history of different majors

-Students should be provided an opportunity at summer orientation to explore the major

**Table 2:**

-- less enthusiastic reception to this idea. There are so many requirements already, hard to fit it in. Students might not take the course seriously. Much depends on the content of the course

**Table 3: not discussed**

**B. Student Local: immersive experiences designed to serve the North State and provide a focused experience like study abroad, without leaving the North State**

-All loved this idea! It would be amazing.

-The experience would have to be counted towards some degree requirement like study abroad.

**Table 2: not discussed.**

**Table 3: not discussed**

**C. Convene a faculty-student committee (Academic Integrity Council) to forge a consensus on what is permissible in the cut and paste age.**

-Students need to be made aware of the seriousness of cheating and make sure there are consequences. Faculty need to do a better job enforcing policy.

-Many students are just unaware of how to properly cite.

-Turn-it-in is a useful learning tool.

-Students need to be better educated in how to properly cite sources.

-They all agreed there should be a consistency across campus.

-We discussed how ethics is a difficult thing to teach.

- One idea – create ethics stickers that show-up in unusual places like a bathroom stall that would make someone pause and think.

**Table 2:**

Professors teaching and grading practices greatly influence incidence of cheating. Keep assignments fresh. Also, cheating is more common on exams in large classes.

Lack of clarity on collaborative work. When is working with other students cheating?

Lack of clarity on cut and paste. Students need more guidance on citation practices.

OK with use of Turnitin.com as a means to detect plagiarism

OK with idea of a hotline to denounce cheating (but not cheaters).

Table 3:

a. Ethics and Academic Integrity

- i. Hold instructors to the same standard as students. How are students supposed to know it's a bad thing, when instructors take other instructors PowerPoints as their own and try to teach it?
- ii. Working together on quizzes isn't really a bad thing, especially if it is an online quiz. When the instructor tells you to use your available resources, aren't other students resources? In the end, you are still learning from each other.
- iii. There needs to be more specific rules that reflect the digital age. Some of these ethics issues are supposed to be common knowledge, but what is common knowledge nowadays? Where is the line drawn?
- iv. Each professor has different Turnitin requirements. Some professors say 20% or more is plagiarism, others say 15%, while other might go above 30%. Need a standard that is clearly defined across the board in all colleges.
- v. Self-plagiarization policies don't make any sense. How can you not build off of your own intellectual property? Teachers do it every time they use the exact same syllabus from two years prior...but they don't even bother to change anything.

**D. Create sandbox courses**

**Table 1:**

-All liked this idea.

-These skills are so necessary in the working world. These are the skills that employers want.

-Would support the idea if these courses could substitute for some general education requirements.

**Table 2. Students liked the idea if and only if Sandbox courses would have to count toward a requirement like GE.**

-For students in high unit majors or for greater flexibility these modules could be offered on-line or during breaks (winter/summer)

-It would be great if these modules would be open source so greater community could benefit as well.

-Last idea that was discussed was that broader mentorship opportunities should be available to students. Mentorship is used in the broadest sense of the word (professional mentors and mentors for personal growth)

- Create a student club/organization with a professional staff member who would help to create a mentorship club. The club would help connect student mentors (who would gain leadership experience) with students seeking a mentor for a variety of reasons. The student mentors need to have great character. Some clubs have GPA requirements but some of the best mentors may be students with lower GPAs. A club would provide a more informal environment that would be more inviting and less intimidating to students.

**Table 3:**

**Competencies and Skills for Lifelong Learning**

Financial literacy is so unknown to students that they would love to take a 1 unit class in it.

Things like Excel, PowerPoint, and Word need to be taught to students so that everyone is on the same page.

Having something like a Professional Finishing Course (1 unit) would be a great thing. The university teaches so much in the way of theory, but forgets about the practical things in life needed to succeed in the workplace. There's a major gap between what is taught in the class and what is expected in the workplace. Even an internship is not enough to teach all of the small things that are just good to know (how to write a work email, how to dress appropriately, etc.)

Don't know where the Career Center is, or even what services they provide. Most students have no idea. Create a 1 unit course on services available at the university and how to succeed. Maybe even an optional summer course to follow up Summer O.

Student employees on campus should be worked with on a professional level, not treated like incompetent children. Current treatment of students does nothing for professional development of skills.

**II. Other Comments**

**Table 2:**

Professors cancel classes too much.

Business computer labs in Glenn are too small. Glenn is a horrible building. Hallways are dangerously crowded when classes let out. Tear it down!

DPR for pre-Nursing is confusing.

More parking is needed for students who are commuters.

Better bicycle infrastructure, including better lighting. Nord Ave is dangerous. Pathway to RR tracks is dangerous.

HWY 32/Nord Ave is *dangerous* for pedestrians and cyclists.

**Table 3:**

## Course offerings

1. Reduce the size and increase the number of class sections. When only one class section is offered in the early morning, it limits the ability of students to attempt to make a later section and try to catch up on material if they miss the first section.
2. Students aren't able to make meaningful connections to professors in large lecture classes with 150+ students. Those shouldn't be allowed.
3. Courses should not only have an online option. There should always be a physical class location. Students don't receive the same attention and it is impossible to have truly meaningful interactions that may impact the way a student looks at the course, the major, and life in general.
4. Online courses lack competent professors who understand how to operate technology efficiently enough. Students often have to assist professors with rudimentary technology, so the online courses are far worse and delay everything that needs to happen in the course of a semester.

## Technological Comprehension

1. Instructors need to have a more thorough understanding of the technological tools at their disposal so that they can effectively teach the students (computer, Blackboard, DVD player, sound systems, etc.). If the instructors don't have a firm grasp of 21<sup>st</sup> century technology and advancements, how can university expect same of students? Maybe propose CELT program for instructors?

## Upper Division Pathways

1. Nothing but a hindrance to the learning environment.
2. Should be done at a Community College or in the lower division coursework.
3. This was probably done with the best of intentions, but now just seriously undermines students' interest in school in general. Makes students not want to be here.
4. Forcing someone (especially transfer students) to do these will provide no long term assistance.

5. Use the 1-3 unit professional finishing and practical skill building courses to fill this part of upper division course work.
6. Basically paying an entire for an entire semester to do nothing of interest for the students.