Evidence-Based Decision-Making: Planning for Student Success – the UC Merced Academic Policy Study Group

Elizabeth J. Whitt & Cinnamon L. Danube
University of California, Merced
The University of California Conference on Undergraduate Education
January 6, 2017

Presentation Overview: UC Merced's Academic Policy Study Group (APSG)

Goals and Process

Work Product Examples

Current and Future Projects

Q&A

APSG Composition, Goals, & Process

Group Composition

Charge: <u>Identify and investigate barriers</u> to undergraduate student success. <u>Make recommendations</u> for changing policy and practice.

Initial student success outcomes of interest: (1) timely progress and (2) degree attainment

Reviewed existing policies and developed list of data questions for IR

Data presentation, discussion, interpretation, and report production

Report Data Summary

Unsatisfactory course completion

- It is important that students are successful the <u>first time</u> they attempt a course, particularly gateway courses.

Academic probation

- Students who go on probation in the first term are not likely to make timely progress to degree or to graduate in 4 years.

In sum, the first semester and first year are <u>very</u> important for student success at UC Merced.

Current Interventions and Recommendations

Current interventions are <u>reactive</u>, but present some opportunities

- Implemented consistent messaging to students who repeat courses

Recommendations – how can we be <u>proactive</u> to help students succeed the first time?

- Recommend faculty, academic support staff, advisor, and academic administrator review of effective student success practices and consider implementation at UCM
- Share the data with those involved in student success efforts and foster conversations about programming and assessment

First Year Student Success (FYSS) Workshop

General Agenda:

- Provided data from the literature on student success

- Shared UC Merced data on importance of first year

- Facilitated introductions and small group discussions about programming

- Provided an overview of logic models and logic model practice to assess student success programming

- Closed with group conversation about next steps

Collected notes and observations throughout

Event Website: http://ue.ucmerced.edu/student-success/workshops/fyss2016

Current and Future Work Products for APSG

Produce report summarizing APSG charge, work products, and future plans

- Group composition has evolved over time

Follow up to FYSS workshop

- Student success website and listserv; myth busters report; logic model working groups

Contribute to development of campus definition of student success

Predictive analytics for identifying students at risk of poor academic standing at end of first term

- Examine midterm grades
- Discuss privacy concerns

Current and Future Work Products for APSG

Future policy analyses:

- Recommendations to facilitate major declaration for undeclared students
- Recommendations for redirecting students who are unsuccessful in STEM majors into alternative majors
- Recommendations for changes to academic standing policy

Help students make connections between academic program and post-baccalaureate plans

- Enhance communication between academic advisors and career center

Q & A