



HELENA COLLEGE
University of Montana

Institutional Effectiveness, Guided Pathways and the Survey of Entering Student Engagement

Institutional Effectiveness Committee

- **Defining IE:** “...bringing together assessments of all components of an institution to provide evidence of accomplishing its mission and goals...the synergistic interaction of activities in assessment, other evaluations, data from institutional research, strategic planning, and budgeting to provide demonstrable institutional effectiveness.”
Association of Institutional Research, 2012
- **IE Committee** established 2017 as a successor to the Recruitment, Retention and Completion Committee (RRCC) to expand, integrate, and actualize its focus and work.
- **IEC Mission:** To evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of college operations to ensure that policies, processes, and resources achieve optimal outcomes. The work of the committee will be informed by the college’s mission, core themes, and strategic goals; is evidence-based, results-oriented; and holistic, inclusive, and responsive.
Adopted 5/24/17

Guided Pathways Model

- Two-year college reform movement based on research out of the Community College Research Center (CRCC) at Columbia University
- Provides an alternative approach to the traditional two year college *cafeteria-style, self-service* model that focuses on low-cost access and course enrollment, and the limited success of recent college completion initiatives.
- Clearly structured, educationally coherent program pathways that lead to students' end goals. Instruction and student support services are delivered in ways that facilitate student learning and success as they progress along these pathways.
Redesigning America's Community Colleges

Survey of Entering Student Engagement (SENSE)

- Engagement is: (1) the amount of time and energy students invest in meaningful educational practices, and (2) institutional practices and student behaviors that are highly correlated with student learning and retention
- A companion survey to CCSSE taken by approximately 200,000 students each year, is designed to help colleges learn more about students' earliest college experiences and develop effective systems and practices to help students be successful. Based out of Center for Community College Student Engagement at the University of Texas at Austin. **Helena College has participated in 2010, 2013, 2016.**
- Survey results scored across six benchmarks: (1) Early Connections (2) High Expectations and Aspirations (3) Clear Academic Plan & Pathway (4) Effective Track to College Readiness (5) Engaged Learning (6) Academic and Social Support Network.

IE Committee Review of SENSE 2016 Results

- Quick Reference Guide and Data Narrative Exercise
- Working groups assigned to survey benchmarks with related questions, as well as special focus questions on advising.
- Each group produced commendations, recommendations and proposed action items for improving new student engagement
- 9 commendations, 8 recommendations and 19 proposed action items were consolidated and prioritized by the committee.
- Committee analysis and discussion of recommendations/action items revealed connections to Guided Pathways framework.
- Proposed action items were grouped according to potential implementation: (1) immediate (2) integrated into Guided Pathways initiative, or (3) existing efforts to continue supporting

IE Committee Commendations from SENSE 2016 Results

- Kudos to the first semester advisors for seeing a large majority of entering students before they registered for classes, especially because the SSC was down a Director and had two newly trained advisors in Summer & Fall 2016.
- Kudos to the first semester advisors for seeing a large majority of entering students in person, one-on-one, for their first advising appointment in Summer & Fall 2016.
- Students are connecting with their instructors.
- Students are engaged and participating in class
- A majority of our new students feel welcome. That is a testament to the people working in the Welcome Center as they are often the first point of contact. Specifically Mary Twardos.
- Instructors seem to be doing a great job of learning student names and having interactions with them.
- Instructors are reviewing course syllabi with students and students seem to understand what the basic concepts of their course
- Faculty should be affirmed for demonstrating investment in student success
- Students appear to be gaining some important academic skills and insights early in their first semester

IE Committee Recommendations from SENSE 2016 Results

- **Improve resources and support for career exploration**
- Expand access to and better coordinate enrollment/intake process
- **Promote more active engagement with advisors**
- Review enrollment process to determine how and when financial eligibility is discussed
- **Introduce and reinforce successful student behaviors inside and outside of instruction**
- **Introduce/emphasize clear pathways to educational goals**
- **Clarify need and importance of developmental coursework**
- Establish student-to-student and student-to-faculty connections to build community

Proposed Action Items by Category

Implement Now (in order of priority)

- Foster early connections to advisors by identifying who they are and encouraging regular contact throughout first semester
- Make program placement, job projections and average wage data more available to advisors and incorporate career exploration into advising
- *Dedicate classroom time or integrate concepts into curriculum to introduce or reinforce successful student behaviors*
- *Provide consistent advising information/approach with regard to placement in and timely completion of developmental coursework*
- Partner with local employers and community to increase internships, externships, apprenticeships and civic engagement activities
- Clearly identify where and how students can receive assistance with determining financial aid eligibility
- Encourage faculty to promote study groups and emphasize connections with other students
- Explore simplification of course syllabi to emphasize course content and success strategies more than academic policies that can be linked or referenced elsewhere
- *Integrate student leaders into WOW events, orientation programming, mentoring programs and supplemental instruction*

Proposed Action Items by Category

Integrate into Guided Pathways Initiative (in order of priority)

- Establish formalized pathways and gateways/milestones for academic programs/career fields (default, developmental, part-time)
- Require all developmental courses be completed within 1st year, evaluate impact on pathways and curriculum delivery
- Explore creation of communities of interest to cultivate student to student relationships
- Provide better integration or explanation of individual coursework within context of academic pathway and program learning outcomes
- Explore implementation of universal first year experience course/program to replace isolated cafeteria-style approach of HR 101 College Success course
- Offer supplemental instruction for introductory courses with high D/F/W rates
- *Dedicate classroom time or integrate concepts into curriculum to introduce or reinforce successful student behaviors*
- Flip or extend orientation programming throughout first semester to emphasize building connections, utilization of resources, internalization of processes
- Use Week of Welcome programming to introduce and reinforce habits of successful students for new and continuing students
- Bring professionals from community on campus to better educate students about jobs and career pathways (workshops, class visits, etc.)
- *Integrate student leaders into WOW events, orientation programming, mentoring programs and supplemental instruction*

Proposed Action Items by Category

Existing Efforts that Should Continue to be Supported

- Seasonal extended hours for admissions, financial aid, advising, IT, Cashier. Streamline enrollment process to minimize repeat visits to campus.
- *Provide consistent advising information/approach with regard to placement in and timely completion of developmental coursework*

Next Steps

- Forward proposed action items related to college policies and/or processes for consideration by appropriate institutional entities (areas, committees).
- Make connections to revised Strategic Plan, Guided Pathways and Complete College America Initiatives
- Proposed action items the IE Committee supports for immediate implementation:
 - Foster early connections to advisors by identifying who they are and encouraging regular contact throughout first semester
 - Make program placement, job projections and average wage data more available to advisors and incorporate career exploration into advising
 - *Dedicate classroom time or integrate concepts into curriculum to introduce or reinforce successful student behaviors*
 - *Provide consistent advising information/approach with regard to placement in and timely completion of developmental coursework*
 - Partner with local employers and community to increase internships, externships, apprenticeships and civic engagement activities
 - Clearly identify where and how students can receive assistance with determining financial aid eligibility
 - Encourage faculty to promote study groups and emphasize connections with other students
 - Explore simplification of course syllabi to emphasize course content and success strategies more than academic policies that can be linked or referenced elsewhere
 - *Integrate student leaders into WOW events, orientation programming, mentoring programs and supplemental instruction*

