Grand Rapids Community College

Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE)

Review and Recommendations
Academic Deans
January 2012

Introduction

The Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) is an instrument that seeks to provide community colleges the opportunity to gather student perception data on several important topics. The CCSSE gathers data on five broad categories of student engagement:

1. **Active and Collaborative Learning.** This category includes the depth in which students participate in class, their interactions with peers, and how frequently they take advantage of co-curricular learning opportunities;
2. **Student Effort.** This category documents how much time student spend on assigned tasks including preparing assignments and how frequently they use student services;
3. **Academic Challenge.** This category explores how rigorously students experience the College;
4. **Student-Faculty Interaction.** This category measures assesses the frequency and depth of relationships between students and faculty;
5. **Support for Learners.** This area elucidates students’ perceptions and use of counseling and advising services.

For more information about the CCSSEE please visit their website at:
http://www.ccsse.org/center/

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1 The Academic Deans are comprised of the Provost, Deans, Associate Deans, and Directors of the College’s Technical Centers, Workforce Training, and Employee Training. The Academic Deans are led by the Provost and meet twice a month throughout each calendar year. The proceedings of their meetings and other related documents may be found at http://cms.grcc.edu/provost
Grand Rapids Community College is committed to quality improvement. Each year the Academic Deans and others work closely with Institutional Research and Planning to review and interpret the College’s data. These activities guide decision-making, process and program improvement, and resource allocation. For more information about the College’s institutional research and planning activities visit:

http://cms.grcc.edu/institutionalresearch

This document provides a summary of the Academic Deans’ recommendations for strategies that may be considered for responding to the College’s CCSSE data. It should be noted that not all recommendations will become action items. The College offers this document to internal and community stakeholders as a guide for considering efforts that may benefit students. Further, the categories—First-Generation Students; Gender; Non-Traditional Aged Students; Part-Time/Full-Time Students; and Race/Ethnicity—seek to better understand the needs of particular sub-populations of the College’s very diverse student community. For each of these categories it was recommended that those faculty and staff colleagues who direct and work in the College’s numerous academic, student affairs, and student services departments and program will benefit from reviewing, discussing, and considering how they might further consider the implications of the data on their respective areas. When and where possible, faculty and staff could benefit from engaging in professional development opportunities that allow them to develop strategies for better supporting student learning and engagement.

**Developmental Students Compared to Non-developmental Students**

1. Promote the importance of academic advising to the faculty teaching developmental courses. Provide in-class time for Academic Foundations Program Counselors to present on this issue so that students have a greater understanding of the importance of advising.
2. Promote the importance among faculty of encouraging students to spend X amount of time studying for class, as determined by instructor. Communicate to PY 097 and CLS 100 faculty to integrate discussions and activities about the amount of time required to study for classes and strategies for doing that.
3. The implementation of the Customer Relations Module (CRM) will allow for increased communication to students.
4. Continue to enter classrooms to make students aware of tutorial services.
5. The Student Life Office has implemented OrgSync to strengthen understanding and participation in student organizations. This tool was not fully implemented at the time of this survey. Therefore, these data should be re-evaluated through SENSE/CCSSE.
6. Mandating CLS100 would provide students with strategies and skills to be effective learners on their own.
7. The personalized calling campaign, robocalls and various communications we have been providing to students about financial aid should continue as they seem to be effective based upon our observations.

**First Generation Students**

1. Findings do not support differentiating resources and service utilization between First Generation and Not First Generation students. However, there may be benefit in tailoring programs to better assess and then respond to students based on their generationality.

2. Additionally some programs and services already exist for first generation students at GRCC through grant funded initiatives.

**First Semester Students**

1. Expedite implementation of College Action Project 5.1.1: *Mandate the student success course (CLS 100) for all first time, degree-seeking students; PY097 for developmental students.*

**Gender**

1. Opportunities exist at GRCC to improve processes that promote all students' feelings of being connected to the College early on, especially in necessary, but bureaucratic processes such as matriculation, financial aid, orientation, advisement, and registration\(^2\).

2. All students are more likely to engage in support opportunities that are promoted as necessary, if not mandatory; students seem to perceive "optional" programs as unimportant.

3. Students will benefit from being provided support programs that teach them important personal and social skills that augment and strengthen their coping strategies (e.g., time-management, goal-setting, communication, and stress management\(^3\)).

4. Students deepen their learning and benefit from opportunities for teaching one another. This has important implications for pedagogy and student employment.

5. A mandatory first year experience (FYE) course for all students would improve student skills.

6. A mandatory per semester advising appointment would improve academic and career planning.

\(^2\) Myriad opportunities exist to use these processes as strategies for teaching students of all ages how to engage in common tasks necessary for productive citizenry. For example, applying for financial aid is similar to completing one’s taxes; registering for classes is similar to being an engaged and registered voter, etc.

\(^3\) It should be noted that many of these skills are the same as or similar to the College’s Institutional Learning Outcomes.
Non-traditional Aged Students

1. Several data points illustrate the positive engagement of GRCC non-traditional students. Through planned, intentional marketing, the College should acknowledge the efforts and engagement of non-traditional students.
2. The College also should develop, implement, monitor, and report on efforts to support non-traditional students in working with advisors.
3. Non-traditional students also may benefit from having One Book/One College or other literacy programs that promote life-long reading tailored to them.
4. Non-traditional students will benefit from engaging in experiential learning opportunities that are customized to their interests, academic goals, and that fit within their academic and personal schedules.

Part-Time Students Compared to Full-Time Students

1. Students will benefit from the development and implementation of an outreach campaign that defines academic advising and teaches them about the benefits of and strategies for fully using this academic advising services.
2. Form closer relationships with community partners at Network 180, Goodwill and other social service agencies that can provide other counseling services to students – some at low cost or even free.
3. Research the change in why part-time students discontinue their preparation of draft versions of assignments for class the longer they attend school.
4. Seek strategies for more effectively encouraging and engaging full-time students in the use of tutorial/peer and specialty labs.
5. Engage a marking/advertising campaign on the value and usage of these labs.
6. Students may not understand the role that faculty members can play in influencing their lives, that is, that faculty members can play important roles as mentors to students—both within the student’s chosen area of academic interest and in co-curricular or other experiential learning activities.
7. Encourage students to connect with their faculty and conversely encourage faculty to appreciate the significance of their presence in the lives of students.
8. Develop a deliberate plan to encourage students to meet and work with their instructors. Communicate the importance of this faculty/student interaction with students from the very beginning of their journey at GRCC. Have this written in documents, on the website and include it at orientation sessions. Encourage professors to extend this outreach to their students in the curriculum through deliberate exercises that support this commitment. Faculty advisement may also be a way to encourage stronger faculty student interaction.
**Race/Ethnicity**

1. Be more intentional about reaching out to all student segments as evidenced by success with efforts to support African Americans. For example, the geographical locations of Learning Corners; tutoring of athletes; and Perkins projects such as Union of Perspective Nurses in a Diverse Community (UPNDC).

2. Support mandatory FYE for all students.

3. Continue support for all Strategic Leadership Team and College Action Project efforts but in particular, those associated with Academic Alignment, Access, GRCC Experience, and Student Success