

Community Connections
Advisor Feedback: Fall 2011

Minutes

In attendance: Grace Lopez, Hal Deutschman, Ron Rockland, Basil Baltzis, Karen Roach, Sarah Vandermark, Shivon Boodhoo, Balraj Mani

Topics for Discussion

December 13, 2011

The meeting focused on discussion of the Fall 11 cohort and improvements that can be made as we prepare for the Fall 12 cohort.

1. Comments/Recommendations

- Caseings: Some cohorts were more successful than others in scheduling caseings with all involved in LC instruction. When instructors and advisors were able to come together for a caseing, they were very productive. As a result, additional attention would be given to those “students of concern” identified during such meetings. It was recommended that 5 caseing meetings be spread out more evenly during the course of the semester. More proactive scheduling is needed for the Fall.
- Freshman Seminar: Seminars offer a great opportunity to connect with students and “tweak out” issues. It was also pointed out that having an individual with counseling experience participate in the seminar is vital; counselors can identify behavioral issues that others might not. It was also suggested that students have more opportunity for writing experiences during the seminar.
- Study sessions: Scheduling is critical. It was suggested that time blocks be built into the students’ schedules, much like what EOP does. Mentors should be more prepared to meet academic needs of students; they should be more informed on homework assignments. There should be better organization of student groups according to math preparation.
- Peer Mentoring: Some mentors should be assigned supervisory roles (i.e. super-mentor”) to manage the schedules of other mentors so that students have more access to the study lounge/study sessions. Since most of the LC team activities will be outside of class, advisors were asked to provide the names of student leaders in the LCs who can help lead activities. For next fall, mentors should be more involved in LC and other critical classes (like Math);
- Community service: Communities that were involved in “team” activities had very positive community service experiences. It was suggested that a community service event be organized across cohorts for the spring to build on the fall experiences.
- The transfer community: A few students participated in workshops, but most did not continue as the semester progressed. Since most transfers come from community colleges that are well represented on the campus, these students generally have a campus connection when they arrive. While it is difficult to

schedule LC sections of courses for transfers, the experience of team building in class is critical for new transfers as well as FTFTF. ET will consider a learning community to FTFTF for next Fall.

2. **Comments on surveys:** A breakdown of the response according to cohort will be available; advisors want to be able to track responses relevant to their community.

3. Spring 2012

- More clearly defined mentor roles: Suggested roles include academic coordinator, social coordinator, web/video coordinator, community service leader, scheduling coordinator.
- In-class activities: Hum 102, CS 101, PBL 101, ECE 101. While a few advisors did not feel that LC course scheduling was not critical for the spring, others felt that the students could benefit from the structure. The process is evolutionary: more students may participate actively in team projects after the first-semester; they are more comfortable and perhaps have a better understanding of the benefit of the LCs. While many students did not register for LC sections in the spring, we will track group of LC students that may have self-selected to be in the same major.
- Out-of-class activities: Mentors and student leaders will organize events that promote academics, professional development, and social interactions.
- Recruitment of next generation of peer mentors: Better training needed, with more emphasis on academic preparation, tutoring skills (for both individuals and groups). Student leaders in current cohort should be considered.