

Leadership Briefs

Recommendations to Engage Faculty in Student Success

Improving student success pathways to achieve higher retention and graduation rates in higher education requires multifaceted approaches. Faculty members play a central role in developing and advancing these pathways.

Faculty from Portland State University (PSU), the University of Central Florida, (UCF), the University of Akron (UA), Florida International University (FIU), California State University Northridge (CSU Northridge), the University of Missouri Kansas City (UMKC), and California State University Los Angeles (CSU Los Angeles) came together to discuss effective strategies to engage faculty in student success. They identified three strategies: 1) rewards and recognition for all faculties from adjunct to tenured ranks; 2) professional development to all faculties; and 3) monitoring faculty involvement.

Providing rewards and recognition for all faculty

Every institution offered faculty awards to recognize excellence in teaching and engaging students. Notably, very few offered award programs for adjunct faculty or part-

time instructors, who may reach a significant number of students. Incentives ranged dramatically between the institutions. The most progressive incentive was a teaching-excellence award consisting of a several thousand dollar base pay increase; the least being travel funds to attend professional development meetings.

Key Recommendations

- Expand faculty award structure to all types of faculty to recognize faculty excellence in achieving student success.
- Develop new and creative opportunities to incentivize participants (e.g. base salary raise, professional credit for tenure/promotion).

Offering professional development for all faculty

Culture change requires education. As such, programmatic offerings for faculty professional development were offered consistently across the seven institutions, addressing such topics as teaching and learning, management issues affecting student success, and diversity. However, the staffing resourced to support professional development



COLLABORATING FOR CHANGE

Collaborating for Change is a six-year initiative implemented by USU and APLU, and supported by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, to work with urban serving universities to plan and implement transformational—often disruptive—approaches to advance student success efforts. These efforts are particularly focused on helping high need and traditionally at-risk students while keeping costs down, reexamining business models, and reaching deeper into the community.

THE COALITION OF URBAN SERVING UNIVERSITIES

The Coalition of Urban Serving Universities (USU) is a president-led organization committed to enhancing urban university engagement to increase prosperity and opportunity in the nation's cities and to tackling key urban challenges. The Coalition includes 43 public urban research universities representing all U.S. geographic regions. The USU agenda focuses on creating a competitive workforce, building strong communities, and improving the health of a diverse population. The Coalition of Urban Universities (USU) has partnered with the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU) to establish an Office of Urban Initiatives, housed at APLU, to jointly lead an urban agenda for the nation's public universities.

THE ASSOCIATION OF PUBLIC AND LAND-GRANT UNIVERSITIES

The Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU) is a research, policy and advocacy organization representing 234 public research universities, land-grant institutions, state university systems, and affiliated organizations. Founded in 1887, APLU is North America's oldest higher education association with member institutions in all 50 U.S. states, the District of Columbia, four U.S. territories, Canada, and Mexico. Annually, member campuses enroll 4.7 million undergraduates and 1.3 million graduate students, award 1.1 million degrees, employ 1.3 million faculty and staff, and conduct \$41 billion in university-based research.

varied enormously from institution to institution. One resourced as many as 50 personnel to support rapid expansion of on-line initiatives. Others relied on 2–7 faculty managers or staff to oversee and operate their professional development programs. Again, these faculty managers and staff generally dedicated their efforts to assisting full-time faculty rather than adjuncts. In no cases were part-time faculty excluded; rather professional development programs were generally not structured to meet part-time availability or needs.

Key Recommendations

- Invest staffing and financial resources in teaching and learning centers to support all faculty.
- Expand professional development opportunities to include all types of faculty.

Monitoring involvement

Faculty noted variations in their institution's abilities to gather data on faculty professional development participation, engagement with award recipients, and faculty attendance at other institutional events. It was not possible to discern which of these strategies were most efficient or most effective. While attendance records were available, sparse data were available regarding the extent to which professional development activities fostered change.

Key Recommendation

- Implement follow-up surveys and/or studies to determine which professional development strategies most effectively engender change.

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- Invest staffing and financial resources in teaching and learning centers to support all faculty.
- Expand professional development opportunities to include all types of faculty.
- Grow capacity to track participants, to provide gap analysis data.



BRIGHT IDEAS

University of Central Florida

The University of Central Florida budgets approximately \$500,000 annually to support faculty awards and recognition and far more than that to support faculty development. These amounts are well above the average support offered by any of the

other six institutions. Funding is used to maximize the amount of, and number of, faculty awards offered by the institution, incentivize excellence in teaching, and award specific student success outcomes awarded by its colleges.



SPOTLIGHT

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USU AND APLU

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- **Shari Garmise**, Vice President of Urban Initiatives, and the whole USU staff.



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