

Norco College
Teaching & Learning Committee Minutes
Date: March 2, 2017, 12:50 p.m. – 1:50 p.m.
Location: ST 107

Dr. Dominique Hitchcock and Quinton Bemiller chairing the meeting

Present: Dr. Stephany Kyriakos, Dr. Tim Russell, Dr. Virgil Lee, Starlene Justice, Jose M. Sentmanat, Beverly Wimer, Peggy Campo, Dr. Kara Zamiska, Dan Reade, Dr. Teresa Friedrich Finneran, Dr. Jody W. Tyler, Jethro H. Midgett IV, Rex Beck, Dr. Dominique Hitchcock, Quinton Bemiller.

Guest: Omar Avalos, Student

Absent: Dr. Sarah Burnett, Araceli Covarrubias, Janet Frewing, Dr. Monica Gutierrez, Tracy Kazsuk, Dr. Courtney Buchanan, Dr. Lorena Newson

- I. Minute taken to look at minutes. – Approval of Minutes
Motion to approve: Stephany Kyriakos
Second: Dominique Hitchcock
Approved Unanimously
Abstentions: 5
- II. Motion to approve agenda
Motion to approve: Dominique Hitchcock
Second: Stephany Kyriakos
Approved Unanimously
- III. Review of Current Facts
 - a. Review of student data from 2015-2016, taken from *Progress Report on Strategic Planning/Educational Master Plan Goals, Objectives*, and “Dashboard Indicators.”
 - b. Data was reviewed, with particular focus on course completion rates, particularly vis-à-vis degree completion rates.
 - c. Several participants pointed out that the disparity between the completion rates and graduation rates (in particular, that completion rates are higher) might be because many students may A) transfer without getting a degree or B) take courses at Norco, yet get a degree from a different school.
 - d. There was general concern over the degrees awarded numbers, as a wide variety of factors may impact why students complete the 60 unit requirement, yet not get a degree.
 - i. Students are required to apply for a degree, a step that may prevent many from getting one even though said students have completed the requirements.
 - ii. Students may transfer without ever getting a degree.

- iii. Students may be confused or uncertain as to why they should apply for an Associate's degree if their plan is to transfer to a four year university to get a Bachelors.
 - 1. Debate ensued as to whether students who plan to transfer should be encouraged to apply for their Associate's degree. In some fields, such as the sciences, an Associates may hold no professional value, while in other areas, an Associates may hold benefits.
 - e. Individuals interested in this topic should consider attending Completion Initiative workgroup meetings.
 - f. Bemiller encourages individuals interested in these figures to also consider how these figures might impact how we teach various groups.
- IV. What Kinds of Pedagogy Support Student Success, Retention, and Equity?
- a. Student Equity workgroup recently received a presentation from Dr. Lisa Nelson regarding the Umoja program and its achievements.
 - b. Bemiller reviewed statistics related to Umoja showing that students participating in Umoja have significantly higher success rates in English classes as compared to other African-American students who are in the same classes but are not members of Umoja.
 - c. Omar Avalos, a student member of Umoja, presented his experiences.
 - i. Started in 60A and is now in ENGL 1B
 - ii. His current ENGL 1B is focused on African-American leaders and their impact on the lives of African-Americans.
 - iii. Omar explained the connection between the course's content and modern day events.
 - iv. Omar credits Umoja with financial assistance in areas such as books.
 - v. Omar also stated that there is a strong connection between students and Dr. Nelson, Umoja's coordinator.
 - vi. Omar described a strong emotional connection between students and Dr. Nelson, a connection that led to his desire to attend classes and his desire to work hard to make sure he doesn't let down his professor.
 - vii. Omar reports that there are also strong relationships between peers, with a strong sense of community connecting students together.
 - viii. One ongoing project is to expand Umoja beyond English classes into Mathematics courses.
 - ix. Another ongoing project is peer mentoring, with experienced Umoja students counseling and guiding incoming Umoja students.
 - x. Umoja provided access to counselors who Omar describe as especially helpful.
 - xi. The experience, per Wimer, could be summed up as being a member of a team, with the Umoja coordinator serving as a coach to guide and assist Umoja members.
 - xii. Omar responded to concerns that had been raised to Dr. Nelson about Umoja students showing such higher success rates because the Umoja

course requirements were not as rigorous. Omar stated quite strongly that Dr. Nelson upheld strong standards and pushed students to continually improve.

xiii. Omar emphasized that in his experience, a positive, relatable atmosphere often contributed to his success as a student. He preferred teachers who were approachable and created a sense that they cared about him.

V. Next session may follow up on this by talking about pedagogy based on these experiences.

VI. Next meeting: Thursday, March 16, 2017, IT-108