ENGAGING STUDENT IN STRATEGIES FOR THEIR SUCCESS

As the importance of the investment in student success has continued to increase, it has become increasingly apparent how essential it is to have common reference points or tools that engage students and educators alike. The MAP-Works Program has served as one of those tools for the last six academic years. Specifically the Student Report has informed and shaped how we have approached our practice as well as some first year learning activities.

Not only has the use of the MAP-Works tools helped identify students at risk, but it also has increased university wide collaboration and enhanced our focus on student success. This past academic year, campus colleagues recognized that while we had a rich data set we were underutilizing the student report. Students were encouraged to access their report but only 56% of the students who participated in the survey did.

Our goal was to utilize the student report as an integrated part of the first year experience and student success initiatives. In conjunction with this work, we expected that this shared focus would also support the university wide goal of building a culture of student success. In our expanded use of the Student Report, we found the report to be an excellent tool by which to increase student’s self-awareness and engage them in their own learning and transition to college.

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Students were asked to reflect on, discuss and write about their areas of strengths and areas for improvement within PSYC 113 course, FYEP WRIT 101, and their FYEP 190 Inquiry Seminar. RAs now use the student report to inform and guide conversation during their Intentional Individual Interviews with their first year residents. These interviews are a purposeful tool for connection within the residential communities that also provide an initial point of contact for retention related concerns. As a result 78% of students accessed their report compared with only 56% a year ago.

Contact Laree Winer in Student Life with questions.
Pat Wodaege has been the Assistant Director for Institutional Research for over a year and has brought much appreciated energy and enthusiasm to her work and to the office. Pat worked in the Graduate Admissions office at PLU before taking the Assistant Director position in early 2014.

As a graduate of Evergreen State College, Pat is not able to tell us what her “major” was for her Bachelor’s degree. In fact, Pat graduated from Evergreen just as the faculty was hotly debating the notion that students might pick “focus areas” of study – presumably a highly restrictive curricular structure. When forced to claim something that might resemble a major Pat says she enjoyed cultural studies - learning about language, literature and history.

Given her liberal arts background Pat is a natural fit for PLU and has a grounded understanding of the mission. In the past year she has taken on significant tasks – learning SQL computer code to extract data from Banner and developing skills in turning large data files into understandable graphs, charts and tables useful for decision making.

Pat is also in the midst of a certificate program in Institutional Research and is presenting at the Higher Education Data Sharing Consortium Annual Conference in Portland this summer.

If you have any questions about students in your program – their course taking behavior, GPA, incoming test scores or demographics, do not hesitate to contact her directly. Her dedication to PLU and fierce work ethic is surpassed only by her tremendous heart and wonderful attitude. Stop in and say Hi anytime. She just might have some data for you!

While discussing interests department chairs have regarding student learning in the major a somewhat perplexing issue consistently arises. Faculty find developing methods to capture student work to understand student learning in the major is problematic for many 300 level courses. The difficulty arises because many of these courses are populated by both freshmen with little knowledge of the content in addition to juniors and seniors in the major well versed in the discipline.

While accepted as part of the curricular terrain at PLU, it appears to be a hindrance at times to developmentally laddered curricular programming. True or False? Is this really a problem? If so, what can PLU do about it?