Student Success Update
COLLEGE ACTION PROJECTS

Project Title: Implement a student portfolio system throughout the campus to track co-curricular experiences

Project #: 4.1.1

Project Author: Sara Dorer, Director of Student Life and Conduct

Date: March 2013

Project Team: Mursalata Muhammad, Eric Mullen, Jeremy Osborn, Julie Parks, Felix Periero, Mike Schavey, Peggy Schoenborn, Liz Tyrell, Luanne Wedge, Seth York, and Sheryl York.

Highlights:

- *Team has been reconstructed with people who have a direct connection to the goal of this project*

- *Piloting project in Eric Mullen's CLS 150 Leadership and Mursalata Muhammad's EN 100 course this semester*

Purpose:

The electronic portfolio will expand the transcript to tell the complete story of our students' experiences. This will allow students to compile a record of academic, leadership, service and professional experiences to share with 4-year institution admission panels, scholarship committees, internship coordinators, and ultimately, future employers. In addition to helping track student experiences and accomplishments, this CAP will also focus on finding ways to expand and promote opportunities for students to increase their academic, co-curricular, leadership, volunteer, and professional experiences.

Goals:

- Investigate existing portfolio systems or other freeware programs (e.g., Orgsync, BlackBoard, WordPress, Wikispaces, etc.)
- Select a system that best serves the needs of our students
- Implement use of the portfolio system in all co-curricular and service learning experiences, and via appropriate courses (CLS 100, gateway courses, etc.)
- Develop campus wide communications plan (for both students and faculty)
- Develop faculty training and resource guide to incorporate into courses

GRCC works

Next Steps:

- *Complete research with students, faculty and employers on interest, usefulness and impact of an ePortfolio*

- *Compile and review all data/input gathered from research*

- *Determine plan for implementation based on findings, with specific focus on faculty engagement and training*

- *Evaluate outcome of pilot being used in two classes currently*

- *Implement expanded pilot Fall 2013 with select faculty or courses*

- *Evaluate expanded implementation pilot before launching on larger scale*

Results:

- A product was selected; we will use the portfolio option in OrgSync, a tool we have already purchased and integrated through the Office of Student Life.
- Completed three student focus groups and included a question about ePortfolio use on a campus wide survey sent out to all students and spoken to seven employers and spoke to the head of the HR Policy Associates membership organization.
- Trends/information gathered from student focus groups included:
    - o Many students are not currently tracking involvement or accomplishments in any structured way
    - o Those who are tracking are using hard copies (in a binder, for example.)
    - o Students are most likely to utilize a tool like this if it is mandated through a class
- Information gathered so far from employers:
    - o Want evidence of skills, activities and learning
    - o Information desired by employers will be very discipline specific

Relationship to Other Projects: We're exploring whether or not there might be a connection between our project and CAP 1.1.2 (Promoting faculty leadership in academic advising.)

Challenges:

- Educating students about what experiences and information they need to build a portfolio, in addition to the value and use of portfolios

- We have a significant digital divide within our student body, making implementation of any new technology a challenge

- Developing the best way to communicate availability and advantages of this tool to faculty and staff