

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **Ad Hoc Committee for Student Development Review '04-'05**

#### **Introduction**

The Ad Hoc Committee for Student Development Review was charged by Orange County Community College's Executive Committee of Governance to: (a) review and update the mission statement for Student Development overall, tying in the College's Vision/Mission/Values statements, as well as related mission statements for the areas of Admissions and Enrollment Management, Academic and Program Advising, and Student Success/Retention; (b) review the processes, methods, and structure used by Student Development to deliver key services to students, especially in the areas of enrollment management, academic and program advising, and student success and retention; (c) make recommendations to address Middle States findings.

In reviewing the mission of the Student Development Division, the committee found it to be basically sound and decided the committee was not the best body to determine if the current mission of the division should be further updated. However, the committee in its subsequent interviews discovered that the various departments within Student Development did not have or did not publicize true mission statements. This deficiency should be addressed by divisional leadership.

The Ad Hoc Committee met from the middle of September 2004 through March 2005, dividing itself into three sub-committees to focus on the areas identified in the charge above. Each sub-committee then produced a report of its findings and recommendations from which the following is summarized. The committee acknowledges that there are areas of the division that currently work well, however, it decided to narrow the focus of its findings on the areas where significant improvements would benefit the division, the student population, and the college.

The findings of the committee are consistent with many of the issues and recommendations identified by the 2004 Middle States Report and past committees (referenced in the individual sub-committee reports).

College administration, in concert with the Student Development Division, needs to implement the specific recommendations pertaining to divisional leadership, communication, structure and function (including staffing, space, and technology needs) as well as outcomes assessment.

#### **Leadership:**

Effective divisional leadership must be the foremost goal of the college administration. The need for strengthening the current divisional leadership was strongly noted in numerous interviews and written responses the committee received.

Divisional leadership must be responsible for revitalizing morale; improving communication and teamwork throughout the division; ensuring each area has appropriate mission, values, and goal statements; and advocating for divisional needs. College administration should take the necessary steps to increase and strengthen the effectiveness and advocacy skills of divisional leadership.

#### **Communication:**

The absence of good communication in the division needs to be addressed. Feedback received by all three sub-committees indicated that the flow of important information is not coming from the divisional leadership nor is important information from divisional membership being received by the leadership of the division.

Communication in the Student Development Division needs to be strengthened among colleagues, between staff and students, and with other areas of the college, particularly Academic Affairs. Divisional meetings requiring the attendance of the entire division should be reinstated to allow for communication lines to be re-established and to encourage members to freely discuss concerns and brainstorm ways to help resolve problems. All personnel should attend mandatory workshops in conflict resolution, team building, customer service, civility in the workplace, and developing positive oral and written communication skills.

To improve collaboration between Student Development and Academic Affairs, workshops should be held on a semi-annual basis to keep Academic Advisors informed of new courses, programs, and college events. In addition, faculty support is needed to ensure the success of New Student Orientation.

### **Function and Structure:**

The current structure of the Student Development division does not appear to be the result of a careful analysis of the mission of the Division, needs of the student population, or services provided.

Develop and implement a structure that will lead to the most effective means of providing enrollment management, advising, and student success/retention services utilizing both conventional and alternative delivery systems. This plan should include the most efficient reporting structure that will optimize decision-making and communication throughout the areas providing these services.

In accomplishing the above, the committee recognizes resources will be required in the following areas:

#### Staffing

Staffing needs throughout the Student Development Division and the Newburgh Extension Center must be reviewed and evaluated to identify shortages and to ensure services are effectively delivered. In doing this evaluation, job descriptions should be reviewed, created, and upgraded where necessary.

While acknowledging that staffing shortages exist across the division in multiple areas, positions that should be filled immediately are the leadership position in Counseling and Advising and a new position at the Newburgh Extension Center to oversee daily operations of Student Development services. Individuals hired should be given the authority and accountability to carry out the functions of their positions.

#### Space

A review of the physical layout and space utilization of the Student Development Division needs to be done and a plan developed and implemented to address issues this committee found in doing its research. These issues include ensuring a positive public image, addressing privacy concerns, maximizing workflow, and significantly reducing student runaround. This plan should have two components. The first component should include what can be done now to address these issues for the immediate future in light of current budgetary constraints and the second component should address long-range plans to redesign the Commons in conjunction with the Facilities' Master Plan.

#### Technology

Administration needs to address technology deficits throughout the Division. In development of a technology plan for the division, information already collected by the Student Development Technology Advisory Group and the survey recently done by the IT Department should be referenced.

Specific examples (not all Student Development Division related) of technology initiatives that are needed to improve services in academic and program advising; enrollment management; and student success and retention include, but are not limited to: computerization of the writing part of the assessment, automated phone systems, degree audit, web registration, scheduling software, tracking software, automated financial aid packaging, document imaging, a comprehensive student information system, a divisional color printer and folding machine, on-line advisement capabilities, e-mail advisement capabilities, an advising chat room, an advising web-site with FAQs (frequently asked questions), and in-depth program information available to students via the web-site or CD-ROM.

Once the needs assessment and technology plan are developed, it must be implemented and integrated throughout the college community. A key component of the integration should be training campus-wide on these technology initiatives. Lastly, a plan for outcomes assessment should be developed and implemented to determine that student needs are being met.

### **Outcomes Assessment:**

The various areas within Student Development should work with the new Coordinator of Assessment to develop appropriate assessment methods and practices to: 1) identify and measure key performance indicators; 2) obtain and utilize student feedback; and 3) identify the baseline quality of our current services and establish the benchmark of where we and our students believe these services should be.

### **Conclusion**

After an intensive review by this committee our membership respectfully submits this Executive Summary. We urge college administration to address the problems as outlined and actively work toward resolutions that will enhance the overall experience of our students and improve the working environment of the Student Development Division.

The committee strongly believes the Student Development Division cannot fulfill its mission in a professional, coordinated, and effective manner unless these identified issues are addressed and the recommendations acted upon.

In addition to this Executive Summary, the committee further recommends the individual sub-committee reports be examined prior to implementing any changes.

Committee Members: Rosemary Barrett, Paul Broadie, Peter Cutty, Dyanna Dunlevy (student), Neil Foley (Chair), Patricia Guallini, JoAnn Hamburg, Steve Harpst, Maryanna Hudak, Nona Lavorgna (Chair, Sub-Committee Student Success and Retention), Kirk Manning (ex-officio), Christina Northrip (student, Fall semester), Gary Pavek, Michael Roe (Chair, Sub-Committee Academic and Program Advising), Ken Sincerbox (student), Karen Stephens, Margot St. Lawrence, Michelle Tubbs (Chair, Sub-Committee Enrollment Management), Terri VanEveren