

Seminar Description Cosumnes River College

This session will discuss the methodology, key findings and implications of a brief 10-minute student perception survey that was administered at Cosumnes River College. The workshop presenters will highlight how the survey has influenced planning at the college and how this methodology can be utilized to assess college wide student learning outcomes.

A CRC survey of student engagement with the college produced interesting and useful results and demonstrates a useful methodology. Key findings from a student perception survey administered to 559 students during the Fall 2006 semester at Cosumnes River College provided information about student perception of campus climate in the following areas:

- their sense of connection with the college;
- their knowledge of social support systems on campus; and
- their engagement outside the classroom.

Data indicate that, although a majority of students (68%) expressed a high level of satisfaction with respect to feeling cared about, and a large proportion (83%) indicated that faculty and counselors were encouraging and supportive of their educational goals, a significant number of students had not formed a significant personal relationship with a staff person at the college. In particular:

- 57% of the students indicated that no professors/counselors had taken them under their wing
- 68% of the students indicated that they didn't have anyone who was mentoring them, and
- 51% of the students indicated that they did not have anyone at the college who served as a role model

The disengagement of a subpopulation of students was evidenced by the fact that:

- 15% of the students indicated that they didn't know whether the library staff was helpful,
- 27% of the students indicated that they didn't know whether the Financial aid staff helpful,
- 13% of the students indicated that they didn't know whether there were tutoring services available on campus,
- 22% of the students indicated that they didn't know whether the college values minority students, and
- 15% of the students indicated that they didn't know if faculty were available outside of class

The survey data has been used by the college to modify practices and processes and to influence planning. This survey data has been shared and utilized by a variety of campus groups on campus. In particular:

- Student Services faculty and administrators utilized the information to assist with the evaluation and ongoing development of existing services and processes and to inform the planning efforts for several programs including:
 - the structure and requirements for Freshman Seminar, a new program to facilitate the transition for incoming first time freshman;
 - program components of DIOPS, a program designed to support African American students; and
 - program components for Puente, a program designed to support Latino/Latina students.
- Members of the research and planning office have examined the data to identify whether perceptions vary or are predictive of student success for different student populations.
- Some of the results have challenged our assumptions about students, and informed future directions for campus change, particularly in the area of creating a sense of place on campus and sensitizing us to some issues that had gone unnoticed.
- Finally, teaching faculty are excited about the survey instrument and results because it is an example of how affective student learning outcomes could be assessed and how this assessment can influence teaching, program development and future research efforts at the college.

The methodology and findings are relevant to college-wide student learning outcomes assessment. In particular, one major expectation of our college is that students will make progress toward becoming engaged and self-reliant learners. The student learning outcomes associated with this expectation include:

As the result of a variety of learning experiences, students will be able to:

- Confidently seek out the information and resources needed to develop academically and personally.
- Incorporate what is learned at school into daily life and use this information to make positive personal, educational and career choices
- Be actively involved in campus life and express a sense of engagement with the campus culture.

Data from the student survey provides information that will help us to assess these outcomes. Future directions with respect to data analysis and the refinement of the survey instrument and sampling technique will allow us to strengthen its connection to college wide student learning outcomes. The current study clearly shows that it is possible to assess affective outcomes at a college-wide level, with the engaged participation of the college faculty and staff.