Ad Hoc Meeting: Student Success Scorecard and Certificate Reporting

Notes

April 24, 2013
1:00-3:00
PCR

Present: Ara Aguiar, Michael Goltermann, Carmen Dones, Art Lara, Anna Chiang, Phyllis Braxton, Sunny Leon, Rebecca Tillberg

1. Student Success Scorecard Metrics. Rebecca Tillberg chaired the meeting, and opened it by setting the scene for the reason for the meeting. The new ARCC 2.0 metrics, now called Student Success Scorecard, continue to show that West's student success rates are not as high as we would like. The major metric, Completion (SPAR), is lower than West's peer group average (39.3% vs. 48.1%), and the Completion rate of collegiate-prepared students is the lowest in the District (62.4%). Some of the metrics were discussed, noting that the Completion rates of collegiate-prepared students is far higher than that of remedial students.

   The connection of the Scorecard metrics with the current meeting is that if West's certificate count were higher, the Completion rate and CTE successful completion rate would be higher. There has been some concern that not all certificates are captured.

2. West's Degrees and Certificates. Rebecca shared several reports about West's degrees and certificates, showing the number of awards by program over time. Another report listed all approved programs at West.

   A major issue was noted and discussed. A large number of 'Skill Certificates' are awarded each year; many of these programs require 12 or more units. The Skill Certificates are not State approved. Art Lara explained that Skill Certificates of 12-18 units could apply for State approval, and then would be called certificates. West's Skill Certificates are not recorded on student transcripts, and are not reported to the State for accountability reporting purposes. Admissions & Records prints certificates for students who earn Skill Certificates even though they are not transcriptable.

   Anna Chiang described how the Computer Science Division took advantage of a limited time period when the CCCCO allowed colleges to grandfather-in Skill Certificates and receive approval as Certificates without going through the lengthy approval process required of new programs. Ara Aguiar described the full process for obtaining approval, which includes completing a PNCR, doing employer surveys and LOWDL approval.

   The group reviewed the list of Skill Certificates awarded in recent years to see if any might be eligible to be approved as Certificates. There are about 8 early childhood specialization skill certificates, 3 POPP skill certificates, possibly 4 Humanities/Fine Arts skill certificates, and 1 basic travel skill certificate that require 12 or more units.

3. Evaluation Process
   a. Forms. We discussed the possibility of having one form for both degrees and certificates because some degrees have certificate requirements embedded in them. If

both the degree and certificate can be awarded, then the number of awards would be increased. However, Rebecca clarified that for purposes of ARCC 2.0, only the student level counts, not the total number of awards, thus making the need for this capability less urgent. Art explained that the process associated with such a change would be extremely burdensome. The group decided not to request this change.

Action Item 1: Change the Certificate application form so that more than one certificate can be listed, so that multiple forms do not have to be completed. Michael Goltermann will do the redesign.

b. Timelines. Art let the group know that it would be most helpful if divisions would submit certificate applications early in the last semester of a student's program so that the evaluation process can be conducted in an efficient, systematic way. When the applications come in late in the semester, this causes a problem for the processing. If a student does not successfully complete the final required course, the application will be rejected.

Action Item 2: Let all division chairs know to submit certificate forms early in the final semester. (Who and how?)

c. Dates.
d. Closing the loop. Division chairs described the problem that they do not know when or if a certificate application has been processed and accepted or rejected. Several possible solutions were discussed.

Action Item 3: The document Art uses to monitor certificate application processing can be made available to division chairs who need it on a shared drive. Michael will make the request to IT to have the computers of those chairs mapped to the shared drive.

4. Curriculum Process
   a. West's approved programs. There was concern that eligible Skill Certificates should apply for Certificate approval. There was the strong suggestion that West discontinue unapproved Skill Certificates. Awarding Skill Certificates places a burden on Admissions & Records, but yields no benefit for West, and are not placed on student transcripts.
   b. Required minimum units for certificates. Skill Certificates that require 12-18 units can apply for CCCCO approval as Certificate programs.
   c. Approval process. There was discussion about how to inform faculty about how to apply for CCCCO approval of programs. Ara suggested a 'train the trainer' approach: she could train division chairs and Curriculum Committee members in the process.

Action Item 4: Ara will develop and offer training to Curriculum Committee members and to interested division chairs in the process to obtain CCCCO program approval.

Action Item 5: Ara and Rebecca will present the issue of Skill Certificates to Divisional Council and to Academic Senate for their consideration.

5. Other issues.
   a. Noncredit Certificates. Michael raised the issue of whether or not the noncredit courses required in a noncredit certificate should be transcripted. This question was held over for future discussion

b. Associate Degrees. The question was raised about whether or not all associate degrees are being captured. Some colleges, including Pierce, award a Certificate to students who complete the IGETC requirements even though they are not eligible for a degree. The group decided to explore other possibilities related to degree awards in greater detail after the work on Skill Certificates is more developed.

Action Item 6: Investigate the possibility of awarding IGETC Certificates. (Who and how?)

c. What to call the group? The name proposed by Michael, and endorsed by the group was 'Scorecard Improvement Committee.'

d. Honors cords for honors graduates who receive Certificates. Currently, students who earn Certificates do not receive honors cords, as degree recipients do. In addition, students who earn Skill Certificates are not invited to graduation. The group recommended that students who receive Skill Certificates should be invited to graduation, and honors cords should be given to Certificate recipients who earn a GPA of 3.5 or more in their certificate-applicable courses at West. This is a higher GPA than for degree recipients because of the courses included in the GPA computation.

e. Associate degrees in majors that are not useful. There was discussion about the large number of associate degrees in which very few students ever graduate. There was discussion about the transferability of the courses in specific degrees. There is tension between upper division courses and lower division courses offered at community colleges that would be upper division courses at 4-year universities.

f. Program requirements. There was discussion about the misalignment of Plan A, Plan B and Transfer requirements; each plan requires slightly different courses, making it difficult for students to navigate their educational program. There was also discussion about mapping courses to programs, and then identifying those courses that meet the requirements of no program.

Action Item 7: Align the Plan A and Plan B requirements. (Who and how?)

Action Item 8: Identify courses that meet no award requirement by mapping courses to programs. (Who and how?)

6. Follow up – What's next? Next meeting:
   - Tuesday, May 21,
   - 1:00-3:00
   - PCR
   - Ara and Michael will co-chair the meeting