

Colloquium Fall 2013

Welcome, everyone, to the Fall 2013 Colloquium. It's a pleasure to have everyone back on campus and to begin another academic year.

On the 50th anniversary of Martin Luther King's "I Have A Dream" speech, I would like to say that while I have a dream, this, unfortunately, will not be an 'I have a Dream' speech.

I do, however, want to say that we will be asking you to join the leadership team and Board in undertaking a new, campus-wide initiative to assess performance excellence and develop strategies to permit OCC to flourish in an era of declining enrollments and tight finances. As we approach our third consecutive year of reduced enrollment, this year down about 5%, we need to bring together a coalition of members of the OCC family to face the facts of today's higher education challenges in a collaborative search for genuine solutions to problems we and all colleges and universities must address if we are to not end up vastly diminished or bankrupt. And so we will form a group to search for answers to the serious issues we face. We hope many of you, regardless of your role or your point of view, will volunteer to help us guide the college to a better future. As Lee

Harris, author of *Civilization And Its Enemies*, describes the lesson of Socrates: “Wisdom begins with a confession that we are certain about nothing and that every statement we make risks being found to be wrong at a later date and is subject to revision by us in light of this finding.” So I ask you, as we begin this self-examination in this year of our Middle States Accreditation Decennial Assessment, to step forward, to participate in a search for the best solutions we can discover, to address our problems with intellectual honesty and integrity, and to create a vision of the best future for our college we can imagine. Stay tuned!

This fall’s Colloquium again focuses on student success, this year addressing faculty and innovative teaching. Today’s round tables will permit a valuable exchange of information about what has worked to promote student learning and student engagement. I am hopeful that this might begin an even broader campus conversation about what we mean when we say ‘student success.’

A companion initiative to our focus on student success is our commitment to the Phi Theta Kappa “completion” challenge. In May 2011, Dr. Beth Smith, Treasurer of the Academic Senate for California Community Colleges, noted that a strong case could be made for course completion as the single measure of student success. She argued:

With all the complexities of community college existence in the 21st century, using one simple and easily understood measure of student success makes sense and is prudent. Using course completion as the single measure puts the energy and attention where it belongs: in the classroom. When the focus is on the classroom, then faculty can maintain standards and rigor for course completion and stay in the driver's seat regarding any notion of student success. Instead of counting everything under the sun, count what counts. (May 2011, ASCCC, www.asccc.org)

Now, there is clear research evidence that students who enroll at a community college and complete an associate degree have a much greater likelihood of obtaining a baccalaureate degree and success in the world of work than those who transfer earlier or who drop out.

It is doubtful, however, that we will ever see the day that we will come to define one single measure or one and only one component for measuring student success.

Let us posit that four essential outcomes of higher education conceptually align with the idea of student success: Academic, Economic, Social, and Metric. Let's then discuss each of these four essential definitions of student success for a moment to see if you might be tempted to extend your conversations beyond

today's round tables to a fuller conversation about your larger concerns and beliefs about the purpose of the educational enterprise (our College) and its intended outcomes.

Some say student success is primarily an academic matter; some say it is an economic issue; others contend that success is fundamentally a social issue; while yet others feel success can be precisely measured with the appropriate metrics or data bases.

The round table discussions today fall mainly into the first group and suggest that student success is primarily an academic matter. This is probably the most comfortable orientation for academicians and for academic institutions that believe almost everything meaningful that happens on a college campus happens in the classroom (and in its extensions—in the library, the labs, and the tutorials, and now, it appears, on Google and Facebook!). This is the underlying premise of Dr. Smith's argument (above) that course completion is the essential measure, the building block of educational success, and it is also the underlying premise of today's round tables—that we can increase overall success by sharing individual classroom success stories.

We have come to call this contribution to student success by the name “best practices,” a truly pragmatic approach that considers anything within the realm of

teaching/learning that “works” to be worth considering. In 2012, the folks from the University of Texas at Austin who survey community college student engagement, the CCSSE team, identified several promising practices for student success based on their annual survey. They suggest: Assessment and Placement, Orientation, Academic Goal Setting and Planning, Guided Registration, Accelerated or “Fast-Track” Remediation, First Year Experience, Student Success Courses, Learning Communities, Monitored Class Attendance (with alerts and interventions), Experiential Learning, Tutoring, and Supplemental Instruction ... all academic strategies designed for fuller engagement and then, it is supposed, greater success.

A strong focus in this academic orientation toward student success is the entire concept of developmental learning, the belief that we can set an academic standard for college entrance, test students to see if they meet that standard and, if they don't, remediate their deficiencies within a reasonable period of time in order to enable course completion, persistence, and graduation. This has been an underlying academic assumption since the inception of open-admissions community colleges for the past fifty years, an assumption according to some that has proved to be seriously flawed. In its comprehensive study, *Remediation: Higher Education's Bridge to Nowhere*, the Complete College America Research

Group echoed the theme of many other remediation studies over the past several years and concluded that:

Sadly, remediation has become higher education's bridge to nowhere. This broken remedial bridge is travelled by some 1.7 million beginning college students each year, most of whom will not reach their destination. It is estimated that states and students spent more than \$3 billion on remedial courses in 2011 with very little student success to show for it.

The researchers for this study have three major suggestions for fixing the broken bridge:

- Strengthen high schools and student-preparedness with State Common Core Standards;
- Get students into credit-bearing courses as soon as possible by ending traditional remediation and using embedded remediation or co-requisite models instead;
- And keep your eyes on the prize: graduation or productive alternative default programs for students not ready to commit to degree persistence.

On the other end of the academic spectrum, we find the process of learning outcomes assessment, which looks at the measurement of student learning with tools other than grades and both defines and measures learning with these tools.

While a student's future in higher education is determined academically by his or her grades, an institution's worth is measured by learning outcomes which are currently the preferred academic measure of student success used for institutional accreditation. While there is an ongoing effort by the state and federal governments to standardize the requisite skills and measurements tools, accrediting agents have thus far allowed colleges and universities to determine their own outcomes measures, as long as these measures fall within traditionally approved parameters.

There are some evaluators of the condition of higher education in America, however, who focus more heavily on economic matters than on academic matters as measures for success. The *raison d'etre* for community colleges and open universities was, for years, *access*, and the idea was to bridge the economic barriers to higher education by making it available for all. To enable access, we saw the growth of both the Financial Aid industry in the form of state and federal grants, gifts and loans, as well as private foundation subsidies, establishing the economic definition of a successful student as, primarily, one who could afford to access higher education. The assumption is, presumably, that once accessed, success will follow. The argument went that a student denied entry to a college or university for financial reasons must be seen as a "failure," that is, as someone not given a chance to improve his or her learning and thus cash in on the eventual

economic reward of a better job with a higher salary. The value of higher education is thus measured, eventually, by a graduate's earning power.

There is also much discussion of both the excessive cost of higher education as well as the need for more and more tax dollars to sustain public higher education, not to mention increasing tuition and the mounting burden of student debt and doubling interest rates. All of these are factors in the economic definitions of academic success or failure, and they often precede or obscure academic discussions. The conversation goes this way: "You go to college and somehow you graduate and get the degree. Then you go on to become a CEO," overlooking entirely the fact that neither Bill Gates nor Steve Jobs graduated from college! The question of learning is not often mentioned in this success model.

Hard-core critics of the funding of American education maintain that government has tried to use education to solve economic inequities. In her book on *Schooling in Capitalist American*, Jean Anyon, maintains that:

. . . The flagship education policies of the Bush and Obama administrations have counted on education to solve the problems of unemployment and increases in poverty.... Race to the Top, and its antecedent No Child Left Behind, are policy substitutes for economic reform. But more education does not often translate into more and better jobs.

In 2006, the occupational demands of jobs required that only 27.7 percent of the workforce have a college degree or more. The Department of Labor predicts this share will rise by one percentage point to 28.7 by 2016.... In 2005, one of six college graduates was in a job paying less than the average salary of high school graduates. Between 8.8 and 11 percent of people with a bachelor's degree in FY 2011 earned just above the minimum wage...Even the education levels of welfare recipients are higher than ever.

For Anyon, the economics of higher education is clearly political and, in addition, is misguided in that it fails to take into account the real employment outcomes of degree acquisition. As a recent article from USA today put it, "College education has been way oversold and is often a waste of time. [Also] . . . having access to easy money, via student loans" often just creates gratuitous debt without measurable offsets.

In a recent study seeking to define student and institutional success criteria developed by the Voluntary Institutional Metrics Project and funded by the Melinda and Bill Gates Foundation, the following five success measures were established:

Repayment and default rates on student loans—revealing whether students who've graduated can get a job that allows them to repay their education loans;

Credits earned —showing progress toward and completion of a certificate or degree, including critical cost points;

Cost per degree— consisting of the costs for an institution to produce a degree; (President Obama's latest higher education concern.)

Employment outcomes for graduates—indicating a student's ability to find employment and increase earnings after graduation; and

Student learning outcomes—telling how effectively an institution delivers and assesses the learning required for a given credential and facilitates comparisons of various institutions' credential quality.

The study eventually found it impossible to gather consistent data on the final item on the list, student learning, the one academic measure considered, and so was forced to provide information on the other four items, all economic in nature and concerned with loan repayments, degree progression costs, and graduates' incomes. I will get to the metrics involved in this report's conclusions in a minute, but the implications of these criteria are distressing if one has a purely

academic viewpoint as they reduce educational success to a wholly economic set of facts.

Perhaps the most dire economic view of higher education economics was recently summarized in an article in *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, reporting on a Moody's Investor's Service report on the economic future of public higher education. The article states:

. . .the data overall put public colleges on a path to economic oblivion. 'The developing trend of expense growth outpacing revenue growth is unsustainable,' said Emily Schwarz, an assistant vice president at Moody's, in a statement touting [their] report.

This alarming prediction will certainly serve to nudge public colleges and universities even closer to the adoption of a new business operating model that seeks a balance of revenue and expenditures and profit margins wherever possible...a path OCC has been on for several years now.

Yet a third way that higher education success is viewed is through a social lens, most commonly defined as a holistic approach to students. This approach maintains that one cannot deal with students unless the entire spectrum of student needs is embraced by the college or university.

A recent study at the University of Wisconsin-Madison sponsored by the Association of Community College Trustees is entitled *Clearing the Path to a*

Brighter Future and defines the ideal college experience as what it calls a “single stop by design.” Students are seen as “single stop social services clients” and are provided a myriad of services and benefits as part of their college enrollment, including, but not limited to: Legal Services, Financial Counseling, Food Stamp access, Health Insurance access, Public Cash Assistance, Unemployment Insurance application assistance, Child Care, Housing and Utility Assistance, and Tax Preparation, to name some of the major services offered by Single-stop Schools.

This approach emphasizes the use of technology to create a scalable platform that can reach a large number of students and enable campus coordinators to help them with a large number of services. LaGuardia Community College in New York and Miami Dade University are both hefty supporters of this approach. Madeline Pumarega, President of Miami Dade at the Wolfson Campus, says that Single Stop has “enabled the campus to change the culture of how we’re serving a student.” She elaborates: “If you can get folks who serve your students to feel passion about serving them, knowing this tool is now available, then you start the buy-in process. It’s cool.” Needless to say, there are persistent attempts to link this total-support approach to student success. Preliminary measures are encouraging to participants. SUNY has reported that the annual first-year retention rate for Single Stop students is at about 73% as opposed to 70% of its general

student population. This difference is significant when one considers the at-risk nature of much of the population that comprises the Single-Stop demographic.

This holistic approach often cites the confirming CCSSE statistic that only 13% of students leave college for academic reasons while 87% leave for reasons related to their life situations.

The fourth approach to measuring student success is the metric approach, the method that attempts to reduce as much about higher education success as is possible to data and data tables and then to use that data to create success targets, success models, and comparative data to measure success both within and among colleges and universities. The most frequently-used tools for this method are designed to compile data that we are used to reading about, such as: enrollment statistics, retention numbers, persistence to degree timelines, number of degree completers, and the academic programs within which degrees are completed most frequently. Most of these numbers are required by the state and federal government to be collected, retained, and reported on at scheduled times. While few benchmarks have been set and very limited funding differentiation actually results from these metric outcomes, the concept of performance funding has been consistently proposed and, on occasion, fully implemented over the past fifty years.

The Gates Foundation study I mentioned earlier, fully entitled *A Better Higher Education Data and Information Framework for Informing Policy: The Voluntary Institutional Metrics Project*, was initiated for the following purpose: “To find a limited but powerful set of key metrics (measurements rather than standards) that would provide a more comprehensive picture of higher education for federal and state policy makers.” This may be a polite way of saying that the study was initiated to help formulate benchmarks against which schools might be measured and/or compared. The metrics that this group identified had six goals to achieve:

- To provide a holistic picture of each institution;
- To be applicable to both two-and-four-year degree-granting institutions;
- To be applied across all institutions, regardless of their missions or delivery models;
- To enable an input-adjusted approach that considered student-body characteristics;
- To use, to the extent possible, data being already collected but not necessarily analyzed in the most beneficial way; and
- To inform and assist policy-makers in decision making.

The group concluded that for both policy decisions and for decisions about institutional practice, these five data bases should be the drivers of all institutional decisions and thus, *de facto*, be the ultimate measures of institutional success.

Well,

1. Who gets to select the metrics?
2. Who gets to write the dictionary that defines the data?
3. Who gets to analyze what the data means?

And, perhaps, the hardest question of all to answer: Who gets to set the cut scores? As any researcher will tell you, the parameters and the conclusions are only as good as the data is accurate, complete, and comprehensively analyzed. And as any academician will tell you, there are some things about learning that simply cannot be measured numerically.

This, as I see it, brings us back to where we started from. Perhaps the bean counters have gone mad and by trying to count “everything under the sun” wind up counting what doesn’t count. We have come a very long way from the three R’s to a national concern about higher education where every minute of the day somewhere, somehow, someone or another cares about: student learning, course completion, best practices, curricular management, pedagogical innovation, student

engagement, orientation, testing and placement, fast-track remediation, student success courses, tutoring, supplemental instruction, access, financial aid, educational costs, loan interest rates, student debt and loan default, jobs, salaries, degree costs, student services, counseling, housing, child care, student insurance, food stamp assistance, applications, enrollments, retention, persistence, graduation, transfer...and what have I left out? How about youth, happiness, laughter, love, a sense of belonging, trees, grass, flowers, nice buildings and abundant hope?

I hope you will continue these conversations among yourselves long after today's workshops are ended and make Ocean County College the beneficiary of your insights. I hope you will join the guiding coalition we will form this fall and engage in the dialog on our strategic initiative. Seriously, when we call, please join the conversation and help this wonderful institution retain its commitment to the code of honor of all civilized endeavor as we search for strategies for Ocean County College's future success.

Thank you, and good luck!

And now let us focus on matters of specific interest about our College:

From Don Doran, Vice President of Student Affairs, comes the report of an exciting initiative:

Don says, that students who transfer from community colleges to four-year institutions having already earned either a certificate or an associate degree are more likely to make it to the finish line, especially if they plow straight through rather than taking time off, according to a report released on Tuesday by the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center.

Those who completed certificates or associate degrees before transferring had a better chance of coming out with a bachelor's degree: 72 percent of them earned B.A.'s, compared with 56 percent of students who had moved on without a credential.

It is important for our students to realize that completing a degree or certificate greatly enhances their odds of successful attainment of a bachelor degree. With this in mind, Ocean County College will partner with Phi Theta Kappa and the Student Government Association in the first ever community college Completion Challenge. This state-wide campaign will take place on all community college campuses throughout the academic year.

The program will highlight the advantages of degree completion and encourage students to sign a completion pledge indicating a desire to complete an Associate's degree or Certificate program before transferring to a four-year institution. The week of October 21, 2013 will feature a series of events to

promote awareness of degree completion including a College Completion Rally/Convocation which will include recent Ocean graduates who will share their experiences after graduating from Ocean County College.

All faculty, staff and administration are encouraged to become engaged in these activities as our students strive to build a supportive culture of college completion not only here at Ocean County College but also throughout the state. Here with us today are our students Rebecca Lazerson, Chris Lembo, and Marisa Dickson, members of the Executive Boards of the Tau Iota Chapter of Phi Theta Kappa and the Student Government Association, who will distribute pledge cards to faculty, staff and administration. (Please stand.) Signing this card indicates your commitment to fostering and encouraging a culture of completion here at Ocean County College.

Don also adds the following items of note:

- The Displaced Homemaker state grant received an additional \$64,000 this year to increase staff and services.
- Ocean County College has been selected to host the NJCAA National Women's Soccer Championship in 2014, 2015 and 2016.

- The Office of Multi-cultural Services has been renamed to the Center for Access and Equality to provide additional support services for a growing diverse student population.

Thanks, Don.

From Sara Winchester, Vice President of Finance and Administration, we get the following news:

The former Recruitment Office is now the Admissions Office. This change is intended to make it clear to potential students and their families that this is the area to contact for information and guidance regarding admission to Ocean County College. Admissions is part of the Enrollment Management team which has been established to pull together all the departments that recruit and enroll the incoming student and ensure that we are providing the best student service possible. The Enrollment Management team, led by Dr Norma Betz, is actively engaged in the implementation of several new technologies including Datatel Recruiter, a customer relationship system as well as scanning and linking systems designed to eventually eliminate the dreaded paper file. The Enrollment Management team consists of the following Departments (please stand):

- The Admissions Office, Art Criss, Director of Admissions
- Registration & Records Office, Elizabeth Clements, Registrar

- Advising Center, Anna Regan, Director of Advising
- Financial Aid Office, Eileen Buckle, Director of Financial Aid
- College Relations, Jan Kirsten Executive Director of College Relations

We are delighted to have this team in place and look forward to continued improvements in student services.

Thanks, Sara.

Richard Strada, Executive Vice President for Instruction, reports as follows:

In the Office of Academic Outreach and School Relations, Eileen Schilling and her staff, on August 2, hosted 45 area superintendents, supervisors and teachers at a workshop given by Dr. Laura Goe from ETS on Measuring Teachers' Contributions to Student Learning Growth. Dr. Goe has written and researched extensively on the topic of utilizing Student Growth Objectives. We were very excited to be able to share her expertise with Ocean County educators who will now routinely set and assess Student Growth Objectives as part of the new teacher evaluation system beginning this school year.

Additionally, Eileen hosted 160 plus teachers from NY, NJ, CT and PA in 11 subject workshops during the annual Advanced Placement Summer Institute held August 12-15, 2013.

We continue to expand Dual Enrollment courses at area high schools. Next year, we will begin offering Pre-calculus I & II to high school students at Central Regional High School and we are adding Elementary Italian I and II and Anatomy and Physiology I & II at Point Pleasant Beach and are beginning to offer Calculus I and General Physics I to high school students in Manchester.

In the realm of E-Learning and online articulation, we are currently working on future agreements with Penn State World Campus, American Public University, and Norwich University, and continuing to explore additional partnerships.

And, OCC has also embarked on an initiative reaching out to the Middle East institutions with its online programs and courses. This fall, Maysa Hayward, the Dean of e-Learning Faculty, will be participating in the Study USA Fairs in Cairo and Alexandria, Egypt, organized by America-Mideast Educational and Training Services, Inc. (AMIDEAST) from October 10th to the 15th. The fairs allow U.S. institutions to interact with a wide variety of well-qualified students, with promotion focusing on the leading schools and colleges in two cities: Cairo, with over 7 million people, and Alexandria, the country's second largest city and an education hub. E-Learning is targeting three areas: high school students, college level students, and people needing CPE services.

Thanks, Richard.

From Academic Affairs, Vice President Jianping Wang reports:

- Academic Affairs will strengthen our first-year experience for all OCC students. The development of a specific first-year student advising program by integrating faculty advising through the ACAD 155/Student Success course is well under way. More efforts are being planned to partner with the Advising Office to improve and expand student advising services by further engaging teaching faculty in the process.
- Second, strategies to address the high percentage of D, F, W grades in our highly enrolled gatekeeper courses are being developed. Through our newly created Center for Teaching Excellence, faculty members will be sharing both their successes and challenges in the classrooms.
- Third, we are working with two companies to experiment with different ways to improve the delivery of developmental education. We have seen some very encouraging signs of success and hope to finish the pilot by the end of the fall semester.

Thanks, Jianping.

Dr. Jim McGinty, Executive Vice President of Operations, reports that, over the course of the summer, over 100 Toms River Police Department officers utilized our Nursing Building for an Active Shooter scenario. This potential lifesaving training benefits both the College and the Police Department. Through Security

Chief Bob Kumpf, our relationship with the Toms River Police has been strengthened, and the officers are now familiar with the campus should we need them.

Dr. McGinty also shared that the Gateway Building will be open for business for fall classes. The building is absolutely beautiful. I encourage you to take the time to walk through this newest addition to our campus, which is a testament to the strong partnership we have with Kean University. The Gateway Building Dedication Ceremony has been scheduled for Wednesday, October 2.

There are a few important items to share with you as we occupy the building:

- Access by car to the building is via Parking Lot #1 only. Due to construction, the road off Lot #2 toward the ball fields is closed to all vehicle and pedestrian traffic.
- The classrooms have state-of-the-art technology. I encourage the faculty to attend the workshop being presented by IT on the use of the new technology so it is used to its fullest capacity for the benefit of our students. Additionally, each classroom will have a stylus for use on the white board. The stylus must stay in the classroom so your colleagues will have it when they are teaching in the same room.

And please listen carefully to this...

- All faculty offices and labs have proximity locks.
- Faculty with offices in the building must use their College ID to unlock their office doors, the faculty lounge, and the mailroom. Be advised, the office door will automatically lock behind you, so it would be wise to wear your ID around your neck or keep it on your person. If you do not have an OCC ID, stop by the Security Office to get one.
- The lock installer is currently programming each office lock. If you need to get into your office before your lock is programmed, there will be someone with an override key to let you in your office.
- All classrooms are key locked but will be kept unlocked.
- Parking will be an issue. Because of an extensive permitting process, the County was not able to complete the gated Faculty Parking Lot nor Parking Lot #5, the largest of the two student lots. Student Lot #6 is complete with 210 parking spaces, which will be used for faculty and students on a first-come, first-serve basis. Please also note that fire regulations prohibit parking on the circle in front of the building.

As with all new facilities, there will be issues that need to be addressed, but be assured they will be. Please be patient during this process, but do report any issues to Wendy Giarrantana in Gateway Room 309 or Dr. McGinty.

Thanks, Jim.

From the Steering Committee for the college's Institutional Self-Study, I have been asked to remind you that the third open hearing on the Self- Study Draft Report is scheduled for this afternoon from 2:00 to 3:00 PM in the Black Box Theater. While edits can be sent by email directly to Janet Hubbs (jhubbs@ocean.edu), those of you wishing to enter into discussion of any aspect of the Self-Study are invited to attend this afternoon's hearing. Additional hearings are scheduled for September 9 and September 15.

Employee of the Year:

Lastly, it is with a heavy heart this year that I announce the winner of the Employee of the Year Award. As many of you are aware, Stephanie Miller is this year's recipient. This is information that is usually kept a secret in order to surprise the winning employee. However, upon learning of Stephanie's death, we felt that sharing the fact that she had been selected as Employee of the Year would be a source of some comfort for Stephanie's family and for her fellow employees.

Stephanie joined the Ocean County College family first as a student and then, on March 7, 1983, as an employee. Stephanie held two degrees from OCC— an Associate in Science and an Associate in Applied Science. She held a part-time clerk appointment and then moved to full-time Senior Records Clerk, Principal

Clerk, Admissions and Records Office Technician, Office Manager of Student Records, and then Registration and Records Office Manager.

Stephanie was the ideal employee—hard-working, knowledgeable, and known to all as the go-to person for student data information. She was scrupulous and accurate and cared very much that every student's record was a precise reflection of the student's achievement.

It is thus with sadness but also with an acute sense of the rightness of this tribute that I present this year's employee of the year honors to Stephanie Miller. Bridget Root, Office Manager of Registrations, will accept the award for Stephanie Miller and ensure that Stephanie's family receives it.

Thank you. Have a great fall semester!