



Framing Student Success at Riverside City College

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Keys to Planning a STEM Education Proposal

- Assemble the team
- Open the dialog
- Determine the focus*
- Gather the data*
- Develop the plan
- Design the plan implementation
- Adjust the plan



Assemble the Team

- Be as broad as possible for the early planning phase
 - If you know your focus will be on one department, get a variety of folks from that department
 - If you think you might include multiple departments, get folks from each
 - Don't JUST include department chairs, the usual suspects
 - This is an opportunity to mentor new/young faculty in grantsmanship
- Be diverse regarding the college entities represented
 - Counseling, student services, library, tutorial services, divisional/academic dean, Vice President of X/Y/Z, Institutional Research, A&R, administrative support staff, equity committee
- Who are you missing?



Open the Dialog

- Invite the team to recommend ideas
 - Where are you not serving students well? Are there resources/access issues that interfere with student success? Where are your pressure points?
 - To a certain extent, the longer the list the better
- Solicit ideas as a group, but be sure to address your team entities individually
 - What do faculty want/need to focus on? What does students services want/need to focus on? What are the financial/physical space realities?
- You may realize you have more questions than answers at this point



Determine the Focus

- Hopefully, as you organize the ideas, you will find themes
 - Ex: access to resources (physical access, financial access, time-of-day access) is limited
 - Ex: motivation, participation, engagement is lacking/hampered/not cultivated
 - Ex: gateway course has a high DFW rate
- Be sure the focus aligns with your institution/division/department strategic plan
- Consider the urgency of the main themes
- Now you need to identify the core team
 - Be sure to include the go-to types of folks



Gather the Data

- What do you know about your students?
 - Ex: access to resources: When do they access resources? How do they access those resources? Where do they access resources? If they don't access them, why? What resources do they access- if not the ones you want them to?
 - Ex: motivation, participation, engagement is lacking/hampered/not cultivated: Who does participate in campus activities? How did they get motivated? What kinds of outreach do you have? Is that missing a part of your population? Are you engaging them where they are or where you want them to be?
 - Ex: gateway course has a high DFW rate: Which populations are succeeding? Which are not? Can you identify a pattern from a prerequisite course/AP test?



Gather the Data

- Is there data you cannot get easily?
 - If so, how could you go about getting it, find a proxy?
- Look at the educational literature
- Institutional Research is CRITICAL and AMAZING
 - This step often takes a while. Be clear about what you want (but including IR in your discussions will allow them to help shape the request)



Develop the Plan

- You have identified your focus, you have looked at your data
- What needs to be done to change the status quo?
 - Expand hours, add tutors, rethink cohorts, professional development
- Be sure to include the appropriate administrators
 - Academic support services, business and financial services, academic affairs
 - You will need buy-in to enact your project
 - In particular, the closest administrators to you
- If the plan will impact entities not already aware of the project, bring them in



Design the Plan Implementation

- Identify metrics
 - To increase something, you must know what your current level is
 - Be ambitious, but realistic
- Think about short-term, long-term metrics
 - Short-term- these may be straight forward
 - Ex: % successfully completing a course, # attending tutoring, mean GPA after the intervention
 - Long-term- these may be trickier
 - Ex: % graduating, % declaring a major in STEM, retention as STEM majors
 - Is there something that can be used as a proxy?



Design the Plan Implementation

- Identify timelines
 - Be sure there is enough planning/design time (there never will be)
 - Think about the data you will need to collect and the institutional timelines
 - If you need IR to pull a bunch of data for you when your institution's strategic planning is in full-throttle, it might be complicated
- Identify partners (if not already)
 - Define roles and responsibilities
 - If cross-institutional, administrator conference is often warranted
- Be ambitious, but realistic



Adjust the Plan

- Be prepared to make adjustments
 - The best laid plans of mice and men...
- There will be parts of your plan that are somewhat inflexible, but know what parts are flexible
- Sometimes it requires pivoting in ways you didn't imagine
 - Remember to bring in entities that will be affected by the new plan
 - This is where administrator participation/awareness is critical
- Adjustment doesn't mean failure- it means you have learned
- Surround yourself with smart, creative people



Thank you!

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