December 6, 2010

Current Status of Campus Retention & Student Success Initiatives at BHSU

Center for Academic Success:

The Center for Academic Success is a student-centered, service-oriented office focused on ensuring student persistence and success. The mission of the center is to offer students a central service for advising, tutoring, testing and course placement with a bottom-up approach and direct student intervention. The center provides assistance and information to all students, faculty, and staff in an effort to facilitate academic success, student persistence, and student level of satisfaction with the university experience. A few of things they do on a daily basis include:

- Monitoring PASS (Program for Academic Success) Early Alert System--electronic alert system responding to faculty alerts (The Center for Academic Success fields and respond up to 500 alerts from faculty and staff each semester) Student absences, poor/minimal academic performance
- Call List--electronic list of non-registered students whom we can call to ensure timely registration for the next term; students name go off the list once they register
- Ask an Advisor website--info./resources for both students and faculty regarding effective advising practices
- ARTISTS (At-Risk Trackers Intervening for Student Transition & Success)--weekly case meetings focusing on at-risk students and appropriate interventions, as well as discussion of relevant policy updates impacting interventions
- Early Registration Scholarship
- Periodic "To-Do" and "Checklists" to inform first-time students and update all students on midterm and spring semester actions
- Initiated their first Bridge Program this summer for restricted-admission students—students who are academically unprepared and underprepared were encouraged to attend, early intervention for students to become fully informed of status and expectations, as well as resources to support them were presented.
- Probation contracts—list of specific objectives drawn up early each semester with students on academic probation
- Mandatory advising for all first-year deciding students as well as student athletes
BHSU also has:

**GS-100 Course**
GS-100 is a one-hour class team-taught by Student Life professionals which qualifies as an elective for all majors. The primary purpose of this course is to help students transition successfully to the university. The course helps to familiarize students with campus resources and facilitates their engagement in the university experience. Through group discussions students develop critical thinking and social interaction skills to prepare them for academic environment. Students become active participants in the university community. Course content includes the following: access to resources; introduction to college policies; information regarding the role of the academic advisor, student support services, and university academic requirements. This course includes a combination of class discussion, reflective thinking and writing, individual and group work projects, and a large-group service-learning project.

**Course Objectives**

- Students will learn how to find and use resources for answering questions or solving problems.
- Students will acquire interest in learning more by asking their own questions and seeking answers.
- Students will acquire skills in working with others as a member of a team.

**In-Hall Advising Nights**
Just prior to registration time each year informal “advising nights” occur in the residence halls in an attempt to help students prepare/register for their next semester classes. Advising nights are particularly successful because several faculty and staff members agree to help our residential students with this effort. Many positive comments are typically expressed (from students, faculty, and staff) about the value of these advising sessions. Typically, advising teams of 3-4 faculty/staff members spend an evening in a residence hall visiting and advising students. For most of our freshmen students, spring semester registration marks the first time that they are “on their own” to build their own class schedule and register…they have many questions. Pizza and sodas are provided at free of charge.

**TRiO**

BHSU has had a long running and successful TRiO program that focuses on first generation students, students with disabilities and low income students. This program provides academic advising and support programs for students it engages. Historically, students participating in the TRIO program have progressed at higher rates than the general population of students.

Specific example:

*Student Support Services*
The three main objectives that they work toward and the most current stats SSS have compiled are for 2008-2009. Here are BHSU’s three performance objectives and their results,

- Seventy percent (70%) of eligible SSS participants will persist toward completion of the academic programs in which they were enrolled. Results for 2008-09: 81% of our SSS participants were retained from the fall semester of 2008 to the fall semester of 2009

- Eighty-five percent (85%) of all SSS participants will remain in good standing (cumulative GPA of 2.0 or above) each year. Results for 2008-09: 86% of our SSS participants achieved good academic standing.

- Thirty-five percent (35%) of SSS participants will have graduated from the university within six years of initial enrollment in the program. Results for 2008-09: 38% of the SSS participants in our 6-year cohort group graduated from BHSU.

These results show that all three performance objectives were not only met, but exceeded.

Also a part of the TRiO family is Upward Bound program and BHSU has had Upward Bound on Campus since 1968.

**Other Programs that have been instrumental with retention and student success:**

**Honors Program** offers special challenges and opportunities to a select number of academically talented and highly motivated undergraduates from all three colleges of the University. The Program encourages its members to enrich their educational experience, to fulfill their academic potential, and to engage in community service.

**Writing Center** has a mission to help students become a better writer. Rather than offering editing services, they work with you to strengthen *all* aspects of your writing process to help you gain confidence in writing and in the texts that you produce.

**Math Assistance Center** provides individual and group support to ensure all students at Black Hills State University can succeed in math.

**Center for American Indian Studies** is a very active center that strives to meet the needs of their student population of 256 students (4,722) which is about 5% of the campus population. The CAIS also initiated its first Summer Bridge Program which was a very intensive week long orientation. It was offered the week leading up to the first day of school. The CAIS also conducts one-on-one student interviews and focus groups to identify needs and supports. The CAIS is also in the process of establishing a mentoring program.

BHSU is continually developing learning communities that increase student engagement, and develop programs that encourage student / college interaction and it is a campus wide effort.

**Living Learning Communities**

**Service Learning/Civic Engagement**
From our Notes:

Enrollment Management Team
Fall Orientation
Counseling Center
International Program
Reduced number of conditional admits from xxxx over the past 4 years (Joe Valades has the data)
Request Joe’s Retention Study from 2007
Karen Mortimer – Faculty Development
Curtis Card & Karen Mortimer – Math Project