CSUB LINES OF INQUIRY

Rv. 8-20-2018

As a result of CSUB’s years long self-study in preparation for the WSCUC reaffirmation, the WSCUC Steering Committee led a process whereby the institution identified areas of improvement before the WSCUC visit. The areas identified below are the result of evaluation, discussion, and debate among students, faculty, and staff that were part of the CSUB Reaffirmation Team, which was comprised of over 45 members of the CSUB community. These CSUB Lines of Inquiry are presented to the Senior Leadership for the purpose of continuous improvement.

Inclusive Institutional Planning

CSUB used an inclusive and collaborative planning model to establish a broadly owned, campus-level strategic plan in preparation for the last WASC reaccreditation review. The broad set of goals and objectives in this strategic plan reflected CSUB’s mission to advance its vision of excellence while serving the educational needs of its region. This plan was widely regarded as an “organic” plan and updated in 2008 and 2011. However, at this time, there is growing concern on campus that the strategic plan may not be guiding decision making. This may be a result of poor communication. CSUB recognizes the need to develop a better system for collecting data, analyzing results, and communicating findings related to each goal and objective in the strategic plan to the university community. It is expected that all divisions on campus will provide evidence to demonstrate that the strategic plan is driving their processes.

Data/Evidence-Informed Planning and Decision-Making

As a goal, CSUB values the practice of data/evidence-informed planning and decision-making as guided by a common campus-wide set of principles and planning documents. This includes a planning and decision-making process for transparently communicating the use of data/evidence in planning and decision-making, including in resource allocation which is continuously updated and disseminated in an accessible manner to all members of the campus community. CSUB will seek to improve organizational structures and data-generating practices to facilitate decision making in all matters within the context of the changing institutional and higher education landscape.

Financial Transparency

Commencing with the 2017 academic year, CSUB voted to include the Vice President of Business and Administrative Services on the Senate Budget and Planning Committee. This inclusion was fostered to create additional opportunities for mutual exchange of budgetary information between faculty and the CFO. Additional concerns that we will address as an institution will be to provide, publicly, timely information about the University's finances; and share information regarding how financial resources are being managed in accordance with best business practices.

Student Learning and Teaching Effectiveness

CSUB made remarkable advances in creating a culture of assessment during the last fifteen years. Every department developed program learning outcomes to align with the university learning outcomes for all students. Formal assessment results were used to implement curricular modifications and improve student learning. However, for various reasons including leadership change, semester conversion, and general education transformation, some members of the university community now feels that assessment is NOT being used widely to improve teaching and program effectiveness. During the next several months, CSUB will schedule additional recurring assessment workshops and training institutes to ensure that student
learning outcomes are measured and that the findings are used to improve standards of performance across every department and program.

**Educational Objectives and Graduation Rates**

CSUB has closed the achievement gap for under-represented students. However, its six- and four-year graduation rates for first-time freshmen and its two- and four-year graduation rates for transfer students remain below the desired level. Improving graduation rates requires both short- and long-term solutions. In preparation for its WSCUC review, CSUB will **outline and begin implementing strategies for improving graduation rates by working with the Graduation Initiative Committee.** The campus will also make public all data related to the graduation initiative, including student learning.

**Student success**

Currently, campus policies are applied equally across all student groups. However, there is some concern that international and transfer students may not be aware of the types of services that are available to them on campus including advising, which may impede their educational progress. CSUB will **strengthen its efforts to promote the success of all students including international and transfer students.** As a university that serves many transfer students, CSUB will provide a smooth and seamless transition for transfer students.

**Program Review**

CSUB has a stellar program review process that starts with a reflective self-study and culminates in a memorandum of understanding for an action plan (MOUAP), which is jointly approved by the program, the Dean, and the Provost. The MOUAP was developed as a means for making data-informed decisions for resource allocation across programs. At this moment the university community is concerned that the final step in the program review process, the MOUAP has not been rigorously completed. This, in turn, has fueled the perception that the program review process has less meaning. During the next several months, CSUB will **close the loop on the program review cycle by completing outstanding MOUAPs.**

**Faculty Excellence**

A regular review of research and creative activities indicate that faculty are doing good work, but there is a gap in how this body of scholarly output is being advertised and made available to the larger community, including alumni. CSUB will **intensify its efforts to promote and advertise faculty research and creative activities including those scholarly activities that involve students as co-participants.**