UC Davis ADVANCE Roundtable: Fostering Inclusive Excellence

Academic Excellence & Interventions: Our UC Experience

by Miriam Hawley
Richard Karash
Systems Perspectives LLC
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Miriam@SystemsPerspectivesLLC.com Richard@SystemsPerspectivesLLC.com

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Our work has been in:
- Performance & Excellence
- Change, Improvement, & Learning
- Personal Satisfaction & Well-being

... In a wide range of settings
Our Objectives

- Share our experiences and findings in this work in academia, especially at UC campuses
- Raise new possibilities for ADVANCE’s cultural interventions
- Examine interventions in a larger context of change, improvement, and learning
- Refine our notions of systems and how a systems view can support ADVANCE
- Consider what other knowledge, practices, and disciplines can be helpful
SP Model for Academic Excellence

- Quality of Students
- Reputations: National and International
- Excellence in Scholarship, Publication, Teaching, and Service
- Quality of Faculty and Staff
- Clear and Transparent Processes

For: Department, Division, Area Levels
Positive Patterns in Academic Units

Supportive Patterns/Factors
- Commitment to each other
- Being in present moment
- Collective Culture
- Listening. Sense of being heard
- Honest, respectful conv.
- Checks own thinking
- Curiosity. Reduced sensitivity
- Flexibility, open to change
- Leadership

Effective Practices
- Check-in; every voice heard
- Norms exist and are followed
- Norms periodically adjusted
- Leaning into tensions
- Personal reflective practice
- Group reflection time
- Exec Coaching for leaders

Supporting Disciplines/Skills
- Clarity of vision
- Using aspiration as an energizing force (ref. Senge)
- Mental Models (ref. Argyris)
- Team Learning & Dialogue
- Systems Thinking (ref. Senge)
Negative Patterns in Academic Units

Inhibiting Patterns/Factors
- Leaders unprepared for roles
- Culture of Individual performance
- Aggression, disrespect
- Race, status/heirarchy, gender, & culture issues unresolved
- Holds own thinking as “truth”
- Rigidity. Disengagement
- Lacking transparency
- Limited communication, holding back
- Not listening, feeling not heard
- Being in past: anger, hurt, fear
- Taking everything personally

Team Intervention Approaches
- Leader and group sign-up to address
- Interviews: Build relationships. They feel heard & experience good listening.
- Get away: Retreat, Off-Site, 1-2 days
- Introduce norms, and hold accountable
- Work on listening and speaking effectively
- Find common ground in aspiration
- Bring out unseen mental models
- Reflect back their picture, the system they are creating with their actions. Help group see self as a system. Break out of blame.
- Make choices, promises, & requests.
- Followup.

Supporting Disciplines/Skills
- Same, but at a basic level:
  - Clarity of vision
  - Using aspiration as an energizing force (ref. Senge)
  - Mental Models (ref. Argyris)
  - Team Learning & Dialogue
  - Systems Thinking (ref. Senge)
Discussion

• What are the key characteristics of an effective ADVANCE intervention?

• What should we be doing in high-performing departments to conserve and expand their ability to forward the ADVANCE agenda?

• How to add a collective agenda to a system that has been focused on individual success?
Thank you!