Two Roads Met in a Yellow Wood:
Faculty and Student Affairs Perceptions of Student Success

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Our Plan

1. Acting!

2. Overview of the Research Study

3. Case Studies – Making it Real

4. Student Perceptions of Faculty and Student Affairs

5. Faculty Perceptions of Student Affairs

6. Q & A

7. Phase III
History of the Research Project

- Phase 0 - Content review of SSASO titles, portfolios and reporting lines
- Phase I - Interviews with SSASO, focus groups with SAS staff (managers, directors & front-line)
- Context: 5 colleges and 9 universities across Ontario, Canada
- 292 Participants
In Phase I

Student Affairs and Services staff were asked to depict and describe their institution's organizational structure and approach to supporting student success.
We heard some of this
But also a lot of this

Lack of Understanding
Literature on Faculty/Student Affairs Interactions

- Emphasis on **cultures of collaboration between faculty and student affairs** to support/enhance student success (AAHE, ACPA, NASPA, 1998; Keeling, 2006, 2009)

- **Collaborations/Partnerships** can aid student transition, increase student engagement, and **improve student learning** (Kezar & Lester, 2009; Whitt et al., 2008)

- **Qualities of successful collaborations** (Kuh et al. 2005; Magolda 2005; Schroeder 2004)

- **Cultural difference/competing values**, create **barriers to collaboration/cooperation** between faculty and SAS (Blake 1979; Love et al., 1993; Seifert et al., 2011)
Sample & Data – Phase II

- Interviews & focus groups with senior admin, faculty, student affairs and services staff, and students
- 4 colleges and 9 universities across Ontario
- 354 total participants, 46 Senior Admin, 109 SAS staff, 127 students and 72 faculty participants
- Participants were asked for 2 types of data
  1. Depictions/drawings of how their institution supports student success
  2. Descriptions/examples of their efforts in supporting student success
Data Analysis

1. Data were transcribed
2. Overarching domains developed
3. Explicated codes
4. Reviewed & coded visual data from individual faculty
5. Categorized based on interview and visual data
6. Split and reviewed for consistency of coding approach

(Bagnoli, 2009; Clark-Ibanez, 2004; Crilly et al., 2006)
Case Study Activity

Break into small groups (5-6) to discuss one of two case studies:

1. Developing Staff to be Excellent Service Providers AND Educators
2. Collaborating Broadly Best Meets Student Needs

Tasks:

• Read ‘The Situation’
• Work your way through both the ‘Reflection’ and ‘Critical Contemplation’ components
Students felt supported when . . .
... they were able to make a personal connection with faculty.

I got an email from one of my professors … saying I've got a spot on my research team if you want to join us in the Fall. Honestly, there were two reasons I came back that Fall, and that that was one of them [Female, University].
... faculty helped them make community/career connections.

One of my profs ... sets up opportunities for us to go to court ... Things above and beyond the classroom [Female, University].

A [faculty member] asked me what I wanted to do, and ... when an opportunity came around, she actually offered me a position to go to study in New York for two weeks [Male, University].
... when SAS staff, peers or technology helped them navigate the institution.

I kind of feel like you need to know someone to get involved. ... That is what gets people involved as opposed to being like there is this website, you can go read it there. Having a connection with somebody where you feel like you might be able to ask questions to get more information [Male, University].

We've got the online program, which I love -- we can get all our marks, our grades and everything. Our teachers post assignments... like, our teachers really use it [Female, College].
Group 1: Little or no Awareness
Group 1: Little Awareness

Well this is where things kind of get interesting [with student affairs]. Are they considered peripheral, second class? I mean I don't know, they are on the map ... somewhere in here, yeah, ... I don't even know. I might not have them as strongly on my map here as they are not coming up as too dominant [Male, College].
Group 2: Basic Understanding

- Counseling
- Financial Aid
- Registrar
- Peers
- Students
- Faculty
- Admin
Well … I certainly see faculty and library staff working fairly closely together … although I think sometimes there are faculty who are not using library staff as many as effectively or efficiently as they could. Student development office? My experience has really been that we don't have very much to do with [them] unless there is a student who needs an accommodation … that's been most of my experience [with student affairs] [Female, University].
Group 3: Recognizing (some) Connections
Group 3: Recognizing (some) Connections

Faculty are a big part of their lives. Probably where they land first if they have issues, even if they are registered with a service department they still land in a faculty office first. It's really important how we deal with that first interaction. We have an academic responsibility, and a human responsibility too. We draw a fine line between not being counselors, because we are not. We are academic advisors if they have those issues and we have very good services if their issues are of a different nature [Male, College].
Group 4: Shared Responsibility
Group 4: Shared Responsibility

When it comes to students, the boundaries [between faculty and SAS] are really not very rigid. Depending on what we need, we break the line based on the student's needs. So it is not uncommon for two areas, or three areas to come together to focus on student needs. The students are at the centre. There are lots of the typical solid lines connecting programs and services, but I think we have a lot of broken lines... we can be really flexible in terms of optimizing what our students do and experience [Female, University].
Why Faculty Knowledge Really Matters

[I need to know what is available to me ahead of time] Because it's hard to know exactly when you're in the middle of a crisis what services are available, what you can access, what resources we can bring in, so at that level and just with students more generally, it's about getting to know the university [Female, Faculty, University].
Summary: 4 Types Living in 1 House

- Senior Leaders: Recognizes Connections
- Basic Knowledge: Shared Responsibility
- Little to no awareness

Recognizes Connections
Shared Responsibility
Considering Values: False Dichotomies?

Program/Service Development

Collaboration

Student Affairs & Services

Faculty Knowledge Creation

Teamwork

Autonomy

Doing

Thinking

Collegiality
Three (and a half) Takeaway’s

- Intentionally collaborate with faculty, students and community partners and experience the benefits of shared resources, staffing, space and knowledge.
  - How do SAS create cross-functional teams and encourage (non)institutional members to become co-constructors in the development and delivery of services?

- Connected students are successful students.
  - How are relationships between students and faculty; students and SAS, and students and technology facilitated on your campus?

- Consider how new/existing faculty are made aware of programs and services to support student success.
  - Who in the faculty and who in SAS are responsible for creating awareness and understanding of student success programs and services?
Phase III

- Purpose: Examine the relationships between measures of institutional context with student persistence, graduation and grades.

- Institutional context includes:
  - Staff and faculty members’ awareness of and engagement with institutional programs and services designed to support student success.
  - Perceptions of the institution’s culture around supporting student success.

- The first round of Phase III data collection will commence in February 2014.
Thank you to all of our partner institutions, participants and funders.

We appreciate your support.
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Q & A