Red Balloon Project
AASCU 2010 Summer Meeting

Focus Question

What are the features of a model four-year institution that has successfully "re-imagined" undergraduate education?

Themes/Areas of Innovation

- Supporting and Sustaining Transformational Faculty Roles
- Implementing Innovative Programs and Structures
- Focusing on Student Learning
- Integrating Ways of Knowing and Learning
- Establishing a Responsive Culture
- Using Technology Powerfully
- Broadening the Focus of a Degree
- Building Powerful Collaborative Processes and Practices
- Engaging All Students in Deeper Learning
- Globalizing the Undergraduate Experience

Supporting and Sustaining Transformational Faculty Roles

- Administrators must remain novices
- Faculty teaching actively and collaboratively
- Robust faculty development program
- Faculty are educated to teach effectively
- Create faculty buy in to a focus that goes beyond content
- Getting faculty to "buy-in" to the need for change
- Identify quality teaching in all formats and rewarded accordingly
- Faculty rewards emphasize what matters
- Train faculty to teach content in relation to other disciplines (relevance) connectedness
- Faculty as "guide on the side" rather than "sage on the stage"
- Faculty devoted to student learning, who see a way to do teaching/learning better
- Some of this (all?) should be fun (for faculty, students)

Implementing Innovative Programs and Structures

- Need robust first year experience
- What is special about four years?
- Break up credit hour courses into smaller learning modules (i.e., three hours into three one-hour blocks)
- Eliminate "four-year concept"
- Enhance the associates' degree and focus universities on upper level BS/BA and graduate degrees
- Degrees without majors
- Degrees will be competency-based
- Program articulation shared student data base
- Degree maps chosen by students with advising discussions
- No required courses; let students choose
- University as one-stop shops to design personal degree programs for success
- Flexibility/multiple pathways mentored creativity
- Learning beyond the menu
- Put problem-solving at the core. Thinking skills to solve new problems
- Eliminate large departments
- "Scale up" classes for math and science: classes in 9 groups of 9; lecture and lab; classes of 81; 2 faculty plus GA/TA plus proctors
- Create a national curriculum

Focusing on Student Learning

- Better outcome assessments
- Focus on student learning outcomes
- Agreement on graduation learning outcomes
- Faculty would take ownership of developing competencies in students
- Student learning centered
- Create a 1 year mediation (bridge program) to help students succeed
- Variety of creative learning communities to connect students to university

Integrating Ways of Knowing and Learning

- True interdisciplinarity
- Place learning in front of disciplinary concerns
- Faculty forced to reach out across disciplines
- Core faculty dedicated to integration of disciplines to model for students and develop curriculum that helps students experience how the sum is greater than its parts
- For students to integrate, we must model integration

- Cross-disciplinary learning
- More people able to work in interdisciplinary ways
- Disciplines drive innovation
- Courses are replaced with multi-disciplinary problem-based modules
- Make methods courses/"ways of knowing" (Gen Ed) in all major areas of study
- Eliminate departmental silos

Establishing a Responsive Culture

- Ensure that voice and ideas of women and other underrepresented groups are integrated into red balloon conversations
- Use "red balloon" as a metaphor for big ideas
- Thoughtful teaching and thinking of content
- A young institution
- Is agile
- Shift emphasis from teaching to learning
- Knowledge shared across campus and across campuses
- Respond quickly
- Institutions foster student desires to excel and learn
- We must be responsive, adaptive, innovative, competitive and entrepreneurial (Why don't we "purchase" University of Phoenix?)
- How to deal with increasing diversity of students

Using Technology Powerfully

- Collect a reading list on technology and its uses for innovation
- AASCU → collaborate with NCAT
- Prepare and improve leadership for changes in technology
- Redesign learning spaces
- Create a website/blog about how campuses are implementing projects
- Technology infused throughout the curriculum
- Technology rich
- Broad acceptance of the quality and value of tech-based instruction
- Purposeful and effective use of technology in student learning
- Connect with the world using real-time technologies
- Technology and people who have the time to know how to use it well
- Multiple modalities
- Flexible learning environments
- Offer multiple methods of instructions/course design
- Uses technology effectively

Broadening the Focus of a Degree

- Coherent general education opportunity
- Develop leadership and civic participation skills
- Experience that integrates curricular and co-curricular learning
- Consider integrating "world of work" factors as they relate to different degrees
- Updated issue-based curriculum supporting disciplinary content

Building Powerful Collaborative Processes and Practices

- Joint meeting among provosts in public, private, and for-profit institutions
- Create collaborative structures and projects with the community (flexible, fluid)
- Assessment and reward that promote collaboration
- Virtual community/collaboration in classes/programs
- Creation of learning communities that serve carried student needs for connection
- Create real collaboration with the K-12 schools to enhance college readiness
- Create regular community collaboration like One-Book-One-Community
- Build communities of students and faculty
- Increase communication between two year and four year institutions
- Students learn through collaborative involvement with other students and faculty in an environment
- Collaborative curriculum design and implementation
- Become real collaborators with your K-12 community
- Figure out how to articulate with community colleges
- Integrated, participatory, interactive content-creative learning facilitated by social media networking tools

Engaging All Students in Deeper Learning

- Extensive student engagement, active learning
- Engage students in transformational educational experience
- Understanding of student population; design, support curriculum geared toward success
- Effective learning → student success
- Metrics to track student success as we collaboratively educate students
- Coursework that solves real problems
- Curriculum redesign to engage students in learning experience
- Examine curriculum for relevance, currency
- Collaborative curriculum design and implementation
- Redesign curriculum using best pedagogical practices that engage students

- A curriculum defined by learning and ability to learn rather than by credit hours or semesters
- High impact courses designed based on research on learning outcomes
- Students as disruptive thinkers
- Students "cheat" on tests by texting
- Acknowledge how today's students learn – avoid replicating how faculty learn(ed)

Globalizing the Undergraduate Experience

- Globalization of the undergraduate experience
- Global learning integrated into all learning
- Global educational experiences
- We need global competence across the curriculum and co-curriculum (many ways to develop)
- Use Skype-type technology to link up in teaching and research with students around the world