

QEP Topic Conversations: Admissions, Registrar, Advising, Graduate & Professional Studies (04.16.09)

- One of the greatest concerns expressed during this conversation had to do with the need to assist our students – especially incoming students – with basic academic skills. It was suggested that perhaps some type of summer program might be in order to assist students with said skills.
- One participant mentioned the need to catch students with deficiencies in this area very early on; more specifically, early identification with summer registration. Perhaps combine academic issues with those more tied to personality. We might do well to check instruments used by other institutions which have done something of this nature already. Above all, there is a need to be pro-active and to focus on early intervention with respect to said deficiencies.
- Picking up on these points, another participant referred to one of Lewis University’s programs, which has a kind of “early morning system.” We might re-envision and/or re-organize such a system to “catch” students prior to mid-term, which is when we currently do our best to intervene on behalf of students who are struggling academically. It was noted that this is obviously tied to CBU’s mission.
- Discussion then turned to a general concern with respect to access. It was suggested that perhaps a series of on-line tutorials, developed by faculty and students who are especially good at this sort of thing, might be worth pursuing. Moreover, the flexibility this may afford would serve our Graduate and Professional Studies students as well, and especially well. Such on-line “advising” may take the form of writing, math, critical skills, etc. This would not necessarily be limited to students who are “at risk” but, rather for the entire student population.
- The kinds of concerns and recommendations highlighted thus far encourage a sort of peer review system which, obviously, would be all to the good, since students themselves are often more than willing to offer help and provide aid and assistance.
- Faculty support is absolutely essential to “sell” this type of tutorial “system” or program, since it would convey the kind of information that faculty members want conveyed to their students.
- Finally, it was noted that providing academic services has a number of different forms and faces and that, consequently, the on-line tutorials would be only one component of a much larger and more comprehensive “system” of opportunities for our students to receive the help they most need. Above all, it was emphasized, we should not be looking for quick and/or easy answers to larger and more complex questions; again, there is a clear need to be more comprehensive in our approach to and concern for meeting the needs of our students.

(Participants: K. Wildman, M. Nabors, T. Dysart, P. Wilson, T. Comer, J. Simmons, S. Vincent, R. Harrington)