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Focus of remarks on role of faculty in retention.

Basic problem of talking to faculty about retention:

1. Is a focus on minimum standards—a C minus and a pulse, ability to fog a mirror
2. Need aspirational standards instead. I believe what we need to be asking is not what faculty can do to retain students but instead to give them an outstanding learning experience, an outstanding introduction to college, the first year.
3. Faculty perceive, correctly so, focus on retention to be a business model, a further example of the corporatizing of the academy
4. Retention focus says nothing about what people learn, can do as a result of college, value added
5. Retention focus viewed as a lowering of standards, dumbing down
6. Retention viewed by faculty as “not my job”. They don’t get up in the morning saying: “I can’t wait to get to campus to retain students today!”
7. Faculty have often been entirely left out of campus conversations about retention, and efforts to improve it. Instead, been left to academic administrators and student affairs officers—and the worst idea of all: a director of retention.

But, faculty do recognize importance of retention as public policy goal, importance for the nation, state, and institution.

Faculty do care about student success. They care for students. That’s why many got into the profession in the first place.

Faculty at public institutions in IN are now becoming aware of funding formula shift in IN to reward institutions for completers

Faculty do understand importance of laying a good foundation in first year, and importance of first year to their upper division majors and specialties.

And there is much that faculty can do to enhance student persistence and institutional retention rates. And that is what I am going to talk about as core focus of this talk. So here goes.

Note: is no single magic bullet in this list. Is the combination and synergy within that is key.

1: put your best students in positions of influence over other students. Research on impact of college on students shows two most influencing variables within the collegiate environment on student decision making, growth, development and learning are: 1) other students; 2) the faculty.

Use of peer leaders, peer teachers, advisors, etc. They can be the heavies. Say things you can't get away with and do things you can't get away with. They can also be invaluable feedback loop.

2: Consider incorporating SI into your most challenging courses. On the theme of feedback, probably best structure I know for feedback loop from students to faculty that can help us improve our teaching is process called SI. What is the secret sauce to SI. (Tell story of what it is and how founded). Key is to have one of YOUR outstanding students from upper division course lead SI session and then bring back student feedback to you. Reference IUPUI adaptation to SLA

3: Demystify what it takes to be a successful student in your course! Can't assume students know how to learn from you. How to study for your exams, meet your expectations. Have to teach them the study skills they need for your course. Good campus partners to help you learn how to do this are your "developmental educators"

4: Encourage/require students to seek assistance.

5: Promote out-of-class student/faculty interaction.

6: Encourage/reward students for joining a co-curricular organization

7: Facilitate/convene student study groups

8. Take your role as an academic advisor seriously and avail yourself of advisor professional development activities: student satisfaction levels with academic advising correlate with engagement and retention

9. Teach a First-Year Seminar and recommend your students take one!

10. Teach in a "Learning Community"

11. Get involved in service learning.

12. Consider advising a student organization.

13. Support Student Affairs Efforts to help students

14. Learn what your campus knows about your students: your IR and Assessment colleagues are collecting lots of data and insights into your students—avail yourself of this interesting information and see how you can use it for decision making about what you are doing with students.

15. Volunteer to serve on your campus's Retention Task Force, First-Year Advisory Committee, or Foundations of Excellence self study

16. Create a Pygmalion Effect: recognize that students rise (or fall) to fulfill your expectations.

17.Create a Hawthorne Effect: do your best to sincerely persuade them you are using the pedagogies you practice in order to increase their learning

18.Use active and experiential learning pedagogies: Remember, these students prefer and seem to learn more from pedagogies that involve caloric expenditure: talking, doing, moving, making, creating.

19.Get involved in new student orientation

20.Make sure there is a complementary orientation at your unit level

21.Get involved in Summer/Common Reading program(s)

22.Make sure there is some kind of co-curricular organization/activities for students in your major/department

23. Make sure there is a retention plan/conversation at your unit level and for consideration in departmental meetings.

24. Work to get the kinds of faculty practices suggested above incorporated into departmental criteria for tenure and promotion.

25.Believe that good teachers are made, not born: Take advantage of professional development activities for faculty to help you better understand students of today, how they learn vs how you learn.