

Forging Alliances between Academic & Student Affairs: Action Strategies for Student Development Professionals

A. *Human Relations & Networking*: Creating Opportunities for Informal, Cross-Divisional Interaction

1. *Dining Invitations*
 2. *Conference Invitations*
 3. *Attending faculty-sponsored events* (e.g., faculty development workshops, faculty lectures, or faculty forums).
 4. *Becoming familiar with the professional and scholarly interests* of individual faculty members so that they may be selectively asked to *contribute their expertise* to collaborative projects (e.g., research studies; grant proposals).
 5. *Becoming familiar with faculty members' avocational interests* so that they may be *selectively targeted and recruited* for co-curricular partnerships that may be especially interesting or appealing to them (e.g., a bicycling professor may be interested in sponsoring a student cycling club).
 6. *Inviting faculty to make presentations on your "turf"* (e.g., invite them to present their research at your staff meetings).
-

B. *Intentional Faculty Consciousness-Raising* about the *Educational Purpose & Value* of Student Development Programming

1. *Making professional presentations to faculty on their "turf"* (e.g., during a faculty-senate meeting or new-faculty orientation).
2. Offering *workshops for faculty* under the auspices of the college's *faculty development program* (e.g., workshops on the social and emotional development of college students, or on the attitudes, values, and interests of today's first-year students).
3. *Writing articles* for on-campus publications that are *read by faculty* (e.g., faculty newsletter), or publish and disseminate a *student development newsletter* containing information on student affairs' work intentionally designed to educate or interest the faculty.
4. Intentionally avoiding use of *language* to describe student development programming that may have "*non-academic*" connotations; for example student "activities" (may connote fun 'n' games); "extracurricular" (may connote a peripheral frill or side show which is far

removed from the institution's main event or central purpose); student "affairs" or student "personnel" (both of which may connote an administrative/managerial focus—rather than an educational one); student "services" (which may connote a custodial or customer-service function—rather than an educational one).

5. When advertising a student development program and co-curricular event, *intentionally articulating its educational purpose, objective, or outcome.*

6. Intentionally constructing a *student development curriculum*—i.e., a co-curriculum with procedures, structures, and written products that *directly parallel* those found in the academic program. For example:

(a) Co-curricular *catalogue* (paralleling the traditional course catalogue) that would contain:

- a mission statement for the student development program,
- educational goals and objectives,
- programs and activities,
- names and educational background of student development professionals.

(This co-curricular catalogue might be incorporated within the traditional college catalogue as a special, clearly identifiable subsection.)

(b) Co-curricular *schedule of events* (paralleling the traditional schedule of classes issued each semester) that would contain the titles, dates, times, and brief descriptions of co-curricular events to be offered during the semester.

(This co-curricular events schedule might be attached to, or included as a separate section within the traditional schedule of classes.)

(c) Co-curricular event *syllabus* (paralleling the traditional course syllabus) that would provide information on the event's objectives, content, and process of instructional delivery.

(d) Co-curricular *student assessment*—for example, ask students after they have experienced a particular co-curricular program or event if that experience contributed to their

learning or development, particularly with respect to the intended educational objective(s) for that event.

(e) Co-curricular *transcript* (paralleling the traditional registrar-issued transcript of completed courses) that formally lists and documents students' co-curricular achievements—both for personal recognition and for future student use when applying to graduate schools and career positions.

C. Creating *Intentional Connections* between Students' Curricular and Co-Curricular Experiences

1. *Learning about the academic curriculum* for the purpose of finding courses or assignments that may connect with existing or to-be-planned co-curricular events.
(Individual student development professionals might be assigned to specific academic departments to serve as liaisons or connection agents between that department and the co-curriculum.)
2. Equipping faculty with *linking modules or model assignments* that they might conveniently use as in-class exercises or out-of-class course assignments *in conjunction with co-curricular events*.
(These linking modules and assignments could be included as part of a very practical, ready-to-use faculty source book or faculty resource guide, which is constructed by student development professionals for the purpose of equipping/empowering faculty with information and strategies for making meaningful connections with the co-curriculum.)
3. *Proposing, teaching, or co-teaching courses* dealing with student development issues—in the classroom for academic credit.
For instance: new-student seminar; senior seminar; interdisciplinary courses with an experiential component (e.g., leadership development).

Administrative Organization Strategies

1. Capitalizing on *naturally occurring or already existing cross-divisional “intersection points”* (i.e., educational or administrative areas/functions where academic and student affairs overlap) to initiate dialogue and stimulate partnerships.
For example:
 - a) new-student orientation
 - b) new-student seminar (“extended” first-year orientation course)
 - c) academic advising (intersecting with career counseling and personal counseling)
 - d) practicums, internships, volunteer (service-learning) experiences
 - e) residential life-based academic programming (e.g., “living-learning” experiences such as tutoring or academic advising conducted in student residences)
 - f) student leadership development
 - g) senior-year experience programming (e.g., collaboration with respect to preparation for career entry and the transition to post-college life).
2. Creating structural, issue-centered opportunities for cooperative interaction between Academic

and Student Affairs professionals by initiating *task forces, ad hoc committees, or joint research projects* to address topics of interest and concern to both parties (e.g., student retention).

3. Organizing a *discussion groups or “critical-moment learning teams”* of faculty and student affairs professionals *after a high-impact event or critical incident* has taken place on campus (e.g., racial incident or student suicide).
4. When making *office assignments*, intentionally placing faculty members and Student Affairs professionals *within physical proximity of each other*—for purposes of promoting dialogue, mutual understanding, and potential collaboration.
5. Arranging for *temporary exchanges* of Academic & Student Affairs professionals (e.g., via release time, load reduction, temporary leaves, or “internal sabbaticals”) for those professionals who would like a change of routine and who would be willing to “cross over” to another division of the college and embrace a different educational task or challenge.
6. Creating and making *joint appointments* to positions that bridge Academic & Student Affairs responsibilities (e.g., Coordinator or Director of the First-Year Experience).

Faculty Recognition, Development, & Reward Strategies

1. Faculty *awards* for contribution to student life (e.g., a “student service award” presented to a faculty member at graduation, convocation, or on “awards night”).
2. Faculty *incentives* for participation in campus initiatives that involve collaboration between academic and student affairs (e.g., mini-grants, travel funds, campus space).
3. Faculty *development* programming to prepare faculty for partnerships with Student Affairs.
4. *New-faculty orientation* programming designed to orient and alert new faculty to opportunities for partnering with Student Affairs.
5. *New-faculty recruitment* strategies designed to recruit and select faculty with an interest in or commitment to student life outside the classroom.