Innovative Practices and Fruitful Collaborations:
In Support of Curricular Coherence and Integrative Advising
AAC&U - January, 2017

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The Plan for Today

Overview of our project

Reports from three partners: Allegheny College, Denison University, and The College of Wooster.

Our other partners: Kenyon College, Oberlin College, and Ohio Wesleyan University

Our fiscal agent: The Five Colleges of Ohio Consortium

What we have learned and hope to learn

Discussion

Our project is supported by a grant from The Teagle Foundation
Our Project

• Guiding Vision: Student-Centered

• Key parts
  • Structuring Curricular Connections
    • Connecting Courses
  • Finding and Sustaining Connections
    • Online Mapping Tools
  • Focusing on Students
    • Integrated and Integrative Advising

• Assessment
Collaboration

Key to our work:

- **Essential Structure**: The Workshop
- **Campus Workshops**
- **Multi-Campus Workshops**
- **Essential Mode**: Communication
Allegheny Gateway: Expand, Integrate, and Apply

Challenge: Integrate curricular and co-curricular and engage faculty in the life of the Gateway
Concentrations

Faculty/staff help students engage in the robust integration of the curricular and the co-curricular, to generate a cohesive educational experience.

• Peace & Conflict
• Science & Society
• Law & Policy
• Inequalities
• Health & Human Condition
• Food Studies
Concentrations: aspects

• Student-centered (vs. faculty/curriculum centric)
• Creative (re-)deployment of existing resources and programs
• Light-touch on structures & requirements
• Interdisciplinary, integrative, and narratival
• Problem-based
• Attitudinal shift in an approach to the curriculum
• Responsive to the challenge of LA’s preparation for career & life
Possibilities

- Helps articulate the transformative power of the liberal arts
- Generates alternative modes of inquiry (incubators), hybrid academic work, and unique, collaborative possibilities
Integrative Advising

Advising that promotes integrative learning by helping students, plan, connect, and reflect on learning experiences.

Integration produces coherence.
Advising Circles

- One-credit course in students’ first semester taught by their advisor, focused on transition to college
- Builds relationship between advisor and advisee
- Focus is on how to learn (and integrate) in college
Advising Circles

What has worked:
• 75% of first year class enrolled
• 86 (of ~220) faculty have been trained and taught and AC since grant began
• Faculty tell us the AC experience changed their advising
• 90% of students who had an AC would recommend them
• Improved retention

Challenges:
• Scaffolding advising over 4 years
• Handing off advisees from AC to major advisors
• Assessing impact of AC and integrative advising on students’ conception of coherence
• E-portfolios?
Mentorship

Mentorship is...
A sustained, personal, and mutually selected relationship between a more experienced faculty or staff person and a student.

Mentorship...
• Extends coherence beyond the curriculum to all learning experiences
• Involves staff members who cannot be academic advisors
• Can give focus to learning in employment situations, etc.
Curricular Coherence & Integrative Learning

• ARCH (Academic Registration and Creative Horizons)
  Launched 2010 and enhanced
Curricular Coherence & Integrative Learning

- E-Portfolios (Launched 2013 and enhanced)

About

Hi! My name is Alyssa Emery and I am a current junior Music Education major at The College of Wooster from Brunswick, Ohio. At Wooster, I’m involved in a range of activities, including the Wooster Chorus, Delta Theta Psi, COWBelles a cappella ensemble (co-music director/vice president), and the Wooster Scottish Nationals Quidditch Team. I also work as a tele-counselor and tour guide for Wooster’s Office of Admissions and as a music theory tutor for the Department of Music. I enjoy volunteering weekly at West View Healthy Living Center. I’m really excited to work as a student ARCHer and help welcome the College of Wooster class of 2020!
E-Portfolios Successes and Challenges

• Created during ARCH
  • (100% of students had portfolios with substantive content)

• Sustainability
  • First-Year Seminars (25% of FYS faculty actively used the portfolios)
  • Majors (8 Departments integrated into the major)

• Top-Down Design
  • Lack of buy-in from faculty and students
Electronic Advising Tool

- Bottom-Up Design Project

- Goal: Help students find and make connections in the curriculum

- Survey Results
Curricular Revision
Lessons Learned

• What worked

• What didn’t work

• Why talking about both matters
Back to the Workshop Structure
Discussion

• Do you know how your students see coherence in their education?
• What has your institution done to enhance curricular coherence?
• What structures has your institution created to enhance curricular coherence? Have they worked?
• What are your experiences using technology to enhance curricular coherence and student learning?
• What multi-institutional collaborations have you tried? Have they worked?
Thanks!