The Role of the Registrar in Student Learning Outcomes
“The Undiscovered Country”

AACRAO Annual Meeting
Philadelphia, PA
Tuesday, April 2, 2012
1:00-2:00 PM
Session ID 185
Tour Guides

Facilitator:  
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Michigan State University

Presenter:  
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Georgia Institute of Technology
Session Rules of Etiquette

- Please turn off your cell phone.
- If you must leave the session early, please do so as discreetly as possible.
- Please avoid side conversation during the session.

Thank you for your cooperation!
Topics

- Background
- Learning outside the classroom
- Learning outcomes
- Core curriculum (General Education) learning outcomes
- Current context for the RO
- Connecting the dots
- Role of the Registrar in contributing to student learning
- Thoughts on assessment
- Closing Thoughts
Georgia Tech Basic Facts

- Public
- Fall 2011 enrollment: Undergraduate – 13,948; Graduate – 6,993 (20,941 total)
- Located in Atlanta, GA
- Programs/presence in France, Ireland, China, Korea, Italy
- 25 staff members in the Registrar’s Office
- RO reports to Vice Provost for Enrollment Services who reports to Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs
- Usual array of functions, with the exception of classroom scheduling
The Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education *Self-Assessment Guide for Registrar Programs and Services* includes a statement on the role of registrar programs.

- “The overarching role of the registrar is increasingly that of an educator, defining student needs through learning outcomes and identifying assessment strategies that involve innovative learning techniques including those provided through distance education. The registrar wears multiple hats and must juggle many roles on a daily basis, serving as collaborator, connector, initiator, and a prominent leader within the institution. The standards that follow, in addition to providing basic functional guidelines, are designed to assist the registrar to navigate and respond to the complexity of issues and ever-challenging assigned duties.”
Student Learning Outside the Classroom

Student Learning Outside the Classroom: Transcending Artificial Boundaries

by George D. Kuh, Katie Branch Douglas, Jon P. Lund and Jackie Ramin-Gyurnek

“This Report summarizes the research on the contributions of out-of-class experiences to valued outcomes of postsecondary education, including (a) cognitive complexity (e.g., critical thinking, intellectual flexibility, reflective judgment); (b) knowledge acquisition and application; (c) humanitarianism (e.g., interest in the welfare of others); (d) interpersonal and intrapersonal competence (e.g., self confidence, identity, ability to relate to others); and (e) practical competence (e.g., decision making, vocational preparation) (Kuh, 1993). In addition, out-of-class experiences linked to persistence and educational attainment also are discussed.”
WHAT CONDITIONS FOSTER STUDENT LEARNING OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM?

The following institutional conditions encourage students to use their out-of-class experiences to educational advantage:

- Clear, coherent, and consistently expressed educational purposes;
- A guiding institutional philosophy that values talent development as a primary goal of undergraduate education;
- Complementary institutional policies and practices congruent with students' characteristics and needs;
- High, clear expectations for student performance;
- Use of effective teaching approaches;
- Systematic assessment of student performance and institutional environments, policies, and practices;
- Ample opportunities for student involvement in meaningful out-of-class activities;
- Human scale settings characterized by ethics of membership and care; and
- An ethos of learning that pervades all aspects of the institution.

HOW CAN INSTITUTIONS ENHANCE STUDENT LEARNING?

...(a) to break down the barriers between various units (e.g., academic departments, administrative services, student affairs) and
(b) to create situations in which students examine the connections between their studies and life outside the classroom and to apply what they are learning. ..

WHAT CAN ACADEMIC AND STUDENT AFFAIRS ADMINISTRATORS DO?

Senior institutional officers help create an ethos of learning when they send consistent messages about the complementarity of in-class and out-of-class...

HOW CAN ARTIFICIAL BOUNDARIES BETWEEN CLASSROOMS AND OUT-OF-CLASS EXPERIENCES BE TRANSCENDED?

...For this to occur, **faculty, administrators, and others must challenge students and each other to view learning as continuous and contagious** in the biology lab, library, academic advisors' office, residence hall lounge, place of employment, student union, community service, and playing fields.

Learning takes place inside the classroom, outside the classroom, in various ways, and should permeate the institution, including service and administrative units.

- What exactly are learning outcomes?
- What do they do?
- How does the general education program fit into all of this (more on this later)?
Mt. San Antonio College:

“Student Learning Outcomes is a means to determine what students know, think, feel or do as a result of a given learning experience. In this process, the outcomes are determined by the department, program, or unit members. Assessment of the outcomes allows them to discover if the students are, in fact, learning what they are expected to learn. The use of assessment results stimulates discussion and directs activities that can improve instructional delivery and/or support systems.”

Source: http://www.mtsac.edu/instruction/outcomes/
Mt. San Antonio College:

The goal of General Education Outcome (GEOs) is to improve general education curriculum to the ultimate benefit of our students. It is through general education that the college fulfills its mission to provide quality transfer, career, and life-long learning programs that prepare students with the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in an interconnected world.

GEOs are statements that define the knowledge, skills, and perspectives acquired by students who satisfy our general education requirements.

Source: http://www.mtsac.edu/instruction/generaled/index.html
Current Framework

- There has been and continues to be significant research and publication about student learning outside the classroom, how it happens, and why it’s important.
- There has been and continues to be significant research, conversation, and publication about student learning outcomes, defining them, assessing them, etc.
- So, how is student learning being discussed in the context of the Registrar’s Office? Where and how are these references appearing?
Learning Outcomes: Office of the Registrar

At the conclusion of the Office of the Registrar primary interventions:

**KNOWLEDGE**
- Students will know the deadlines and fees required for graduation.
- Students will know the CSUMB degree requirements (ULR, GLO, MLO).
- Students will know the documentation required to apply for graduation.
- Staff will know the limitations to the Withdrawal policy.
- Staff will know the petitioning process.
- Staff will know the limitations to the Repeat policy.

**SKILLS**
- Students will know how to access and produce a degree progress report.
- Staff will have the ability to effectively communicate with students, faculty, and all other stakeholders.
- Staff will have the ability to process EO 1037 exceptions.
- Staff will have the ability to utilize available resources.

**DISPOSITIONS**
- Students will be more likely to apply for graduation on time.
- Staff will be more likely to make suggestions for improved business practices.
### Learning Outcomes and Primary Interventions Alignment Matrix: Office of the Registrar

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<th>Professional Development Training</th>
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During Fall 2009 and Spring 2010, the Registrar’s Office and Advising Center will work together to ensure students who require Math and English remediation are given every opportunity to complete these requirements. The goal is to increase the completion rate by 10% for Fall 2009 first-time freshman (FTF) admits requiring remediation by the end of their first year of enrollment. We will focus on remedial math for the Fall 2009 admits.
Learning Outcomes:
- GET Video Tutorials will prepare new 2010 Fall First-Time Freshmen:
  - To learn how to navigate GET
  - To learn how to prepare for registration in the GET system
  - Will feel prepared to register for classes by learning how to add, drop, and swap classes using GET
Connecting the Dots

- Where does all of this leave us or lead us?
  - Philosophical questions about the role of the registrar now and in the future
  - Thinking differently about "teaching moments" we have with students
  - Thinking differently about our office operations
  - Thinking differently about staffing & training
Impacting Student Learning

Indirect:
- Support of curriculum committees
- Support of committees that set academic rules and regulations
- Support of committees that establish and review general education requirements and assessment of learning outcomes
- Scheduling classrooms
- Deploying technology to deliver RO services and information
- Providing essential services efficiently
- Providing excellent customer service
- Support of academic advising
- Support of enrollment services areas
- Disseminating information effectively

Direct:
- “Teaching moments” with individual students or groups of students
- Mentoring or guiding students who are serving on committees with you
- Assisting student committee members with drafting proposals or documentation to support a particular position on something
- Assisting students with preparing presentations for committees, academic senate meetings, etc.
- Influencing behavior, helping students understand responsibility for their behavior
- Treating work-study students as the help that you need, but also as learners who can gain valuable experience and knowledge from working in your office, train and invest in them
A Different Path

- Looking at this from a “service provider” point of view...
- Looking at this from a “rules enforcer” point of view...
- Looking at this from a “data hound” point of view...
- Looking at this from a “technology hound” point of view...
- Looking at this from a registrar as “educator” point of view...
A Different Path

- Looking at this from a registrar as “educator” point of view...
- Thinking beyond the indirect influence to the direct influence that we can have on student learning

For me, this was about stepping outside of my usual frame of reference.
Georgia Tech’s Core Curriculum

- Learning outcomes for Core Curriculum (General Education) areas
- This was a context that made sense to me, this was the path that I wanted to follow
- But, which ones would be practical?
Learning Goal A1: Communication
Student will demonstrate proficiency in the process of articulating and organizing rhetorical arguments in written, oral, visual, and nonverbal modes, using concrete support and conventional language.

Learning Goal A2: Quantitative
Student will demonstrate the ability to apply basic elements of differential and integral calculus to solve relevant problems.

Learning Goal B: Institutional Options
Student will be able to develop algorithms and implement them using an appropriate computer language and will understand algorithmic complexity and reasonable versus unreasonable algorithms.

Learning Goal C: Humanities, Fine Arts, and Ethics
Student will be able to describe relationships among languages, philosophies, cultures, literature, ethics, or the arts.

Learning Goal D: Natural Sciences, Math, and Technology
Student will be able to demonstrate the ability to obtain, analyze, interpret, and criticize qualitative observations and quantitative measurements to explain natural phenomena and to test hypotheses.

Learning Goal E: Social Sciences
Student will demonstrate the ability to describe the social, political, and economic forces that influence social behavior.
Learning Goal F: Lower-Division Major Requirements
It is expected that there will be 18 hours of lower division requirements in each major.
Constitution and History Requirements
The Georgia law as amended March 4, 1953, requires that before receiving an undergraduate degree all students pass an examination or a comparable course in United States and Georgia history/constitution. See the Catalog for a list of courses that meet the Constitution and History Requirements.
Wellness Requirement
All undergraduate students attending Georgia Tech must satisfactorily complete a wellness requirement (HPS 1040 or equivalent).
Learning Goal I: US Perspectives
Student will be able to describe the role of diverse interests and groups in shaping the history, politics, society, or institutions of the United States.
Learning Goal II: Global Perspectives
Student will demonstrate the ability to describe the social, political, and economic forces that influence the global system.
Learning Goal III: Critical Thinking
Student will be able to judge factual claims and theories on the basis of evidence.
Learning Goal A1: Communication
Student will demonstrate proficiency in the process of articulating and organizing rhetorical arguments in written, oral, visual, and nonverbal modes, using concrete support and conventional language.

Learning Goal III: Critical Thinking
Student will be able to judge factual claims and theories on the basis of evidence.
Intersections
Learning Goal A1 – Communication

Student will demonstrate proficiency in the process of articulating and organizing rhetorical arguments in written, oral, visual, and nonverbal modes, using concrete support and conventional language.

- Opportunities for the RO to influence this area (intersections):
  - Work-study students
  - Student petitions
  - Student regulations committee
  - Membership on standing committees, *ad hoc* committees, and work groups
Work-Study Students

How?
- Assign meaningful work
- Perform official or unofficial performance evaluations
- In developing job descriptions, keep in mind your Core areas
- Provide training
- Implement a feedback loop as they graduate or do not return

Examples:
- Imaging center – communicating with staff about the process for handling documents
- Front service bay
- Phone bank
- Walk-in customer service survey
- Testing new technology applications
Student Petitions

How?
- Review petitions as they are submitted
- Critique for content and clarity of information
- Ask students to resubmit as needed with instructions for improving the document

Examples:
- Selective withdrawals – clear explanation for why courses were affected differently
- Readmission after academic dismissal – what has changed, making a convincing argument that he/she is ready to return
Student Regulations Committee

How?

- Serve as a mentor and guide for the student representatives on the Committee
- Assist in drafting proposed language for the *Catalog*
- Help them understand what issues faculty will have with what is proposed; how to understand other perspectives on an issue

Examples:

- Policy on Dead Week (Week Preceding Final Examinations) – new policy for SRC approval & Senate presentation
- Replacement of Student Bill of Rights with Faculty-Student Expectations policy – new policy for SRC approval and Senate presentation
Technology Applications

How?
- Meet with students (change in philosophy – engage not scold)
- Discuss current usage of software by Tech students
- Discuss what kinds of gaps the software products intended to address in our system
- Update them on current status of Banner and future plans
- Update them on emerging technology related to our vendors
- Develop a plan for on-going communication

Examples:
- Course Off - improves class search function and maps out tentative class schedule; met with student to talk about how we can facilitate and on-going discussion with students
- Easy Reg (similar to Course Off) – OIT/EIS director and I met with student to talk about how to incorporate it officially and how to engage in on-going conversation – on-going dialogue
- Other ideas from students about registration and related functions
Learning Goal III: Critical Thinking

Student will be able to judge factual claims and theories on the basis of evidence (at Georgia Tech, we do not have courses that meet this requirement, rather we have a “critical thinking” plan and we are still developing the assessment procedure).

- Opportunities for the RO to influence this area (intersections):
  - Assessment (walk-in survey) – collection and analysis of data used to make decisions
  - Trimester *ad hoc* work group – engineering a new academic calendar
  - Registration task force – using data to inform decisions
Walk-in Survey

How?
- Provide a brief training session for conducting the survey
- Explain generally what information is being collected and why
- Continue discussion with the student workers after the report is available to ensure they see the end product

Examples:
- Explain the general purpose of the survey as part of the overall assessment plan
- Review survey questions with students and get input
- Explain the roles of the RO and the Assessment Office in the process
- Discuss how the results have been used in the past
How?
- Actively engage students in the conversation:
  - identify all areas of the Institute that would be impacted by the change
  - identify all existing rules and regulations that would have to be reviewed and addressed
  - examine UG vs. GRAD concerns
  - understand the intricacies of setting the academic calendar

Examples:
- Fall Recess (two days in October) versus study days before finals
- Length of class sessions with a shortened term
- Federal financial aid definitions
- Faculty contracts
- Summer Session as a viable third term
Registration Task Force

How?
Task the student members of the group with:
- using data to understand average course loads by level by term
- using data in the system from Phase I and Phase II registration to see what it reveals about student behavior

Examples:
- Class hoarding problems, at both levels, why it occurs and how to mitigate it
- What would the impact be of changing the calendar, opening registration for an extended period of time rather than in phases?
Is it form or substance?

- We’ve always been involved, in some way, with student learning, whether we described it in those terms or not.
- There have always been “teaching moments” whether we were thinking in those terms or not.
- We’ve always been providers of service, data, information, technology applications, etc.
- In pushing out information to students, in responding to their questions, and in helping them solve problems, we’ve always helped them learn.

- Is the indirect support of student learning all that we should be about?
- Have we explored thoroughly enough what it really means to be a provider of “education” or “learning”?
- If we focus on general education learning outcomes, can we see ways in which we can directly interact with students to help them be better prepared for life?
- As we push out information and services, how do we go about making those interactions more educational rather than merely mechanical?
Assessment

How can we assess our effectiveness in this area, whether we focus on direct or indirect influences?

- Exit survey for work-study staff that addresses what learning has occurred from the work-study student point of view
- Work-study training materials that include quizzes for each segment
- Output of Student Regulations Committee, specifically about student-initiated changes in policy
- Number of engagements in each academic year we have had with students related to registration and other technology applications
- Registration task force outcomes, specifically those that were student-initiated or student-recommended
- Build questions into our existing survey instruments (5-year comprehensive survey of students)
How can we assess our effectiveness in this area, whether we focus on direct or indirect influences?

- Document and review staff service to student groups on campus (some serve as advisors or mentors to them)
- Review videos and other training materials with student volunteers to determine if we are getting the desired message across in an effective way
- Volunteer for FASET leader selection and training process each year to:
  - make sure the Registrar’s Office is part of that process and is aware of what is being provided in the way of information and training for these students
  - review the rate and types of problems in the registration clusters to determine where gaps may exist
- Engage in unofficial performance evaluations with work-study & student staff

Our assessment plan for each year will have one goal in it related to this area – these will change depending on where we are in our assessment cycle and what other things are happening in that year.
Questions for the future:

- Are we likely to become more educators than service providers, more so than we already are?
  - If so, what does that mean?
  - How will this shape our profession?
  - In what ways might this manifest itself?
  - How will rapidly changing technology affect our roles as both?
  - What do we need to be thinking about operationally?
Student Learning Outside the Classroom: Transcending Artificial Boundaries
George D. Kuh, Katie Branch Douglas, Jon P. Lund, Jackie Ramin-Gyurnek
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