



Los Medanos College
Institutional Development for Equity & Access
Theory of Change & Assessment Planning Meeting #1

Meeting Notes

February 19, 2009

Meeting Purpose:

In this first of four meetings, BTW clarified roles and responsibilities, reviewed the scope of work and discussed IDEA's purpose and the key problems it is addressing.

In Attendance:

Rosa Armendariz, HIS Grant Activity Director
Karl Debro, AVID Coordinator and Instructor
Joellen Hiltbrand, Faculty English Department, Academic Senate Representative
Erlinda Jones, Faculty Child Study Department
Linda Kohler, Classified Staff
Natalie Lizardo, Student Representative
Newin Orante, Interim Dean of Student Development
Tue Rust, Math Instructor
Humberto Sale, Research Office
Jamila Stewart, Student Representative and Classified Staff
Michael Yeong, Faculty English Department
Jennifer Curry Villeneuve and Sheila Nickolopoulos, BTW *informing change*

OVERVIEW OF THEORY OF CHANGE & ASSESSMENT PLANNING PROCESS

Jennifer introduced the project and the purpose of the Theory of Change (ToC) process, which will clarify why IDEA exists. The ToC will clearly articulate the problems that IDEA is addressing, the strategies it is using to achieve its goals and what outcomes it expects to see. The ToC is intended to align the work of IDEA because sometimes great strategies aren't the right fit for the problems that a group wants to address. The ToC process will help to anchor the other work that IDEA is already involved in (EEO, Student Equity Plan, and Diversity Scorecard). BTW will work with IDEA to plan accordingly, so that IDEA's work and research are aligned.

At the end of the process, IDEA will have a clear visual depiction of its work—a tangible product that can help IDEA succinctly describe what it does and plan for the future.

Jennifer asked the group to discuss any initial concerns and hopes based on what committee members know so far.

Concerns

- Considering that change can take considerable time, how will we know that IDEA has been successful in three to five years?
- The complete invisibility of queer students and staff/faculty on campus is a problem.
- There is always a personnel resistance to change; how can IDEA confront that?
- Legitimizing discourse on discrimination is a challenge; there needs to be a shift within the institution before the conversation can take place.
- Problems are systemic, so as IDEA tries new strategies and adjusts them, how does IDEA then adjust the ToC model?
- IDEA has taken ownership of the EEO and the Student Equity Plan; perhaps this charge is too great and IDEA is taking on too much.

Hopes

- Strategies should be powerful enough to inspire us to make sacrifices.
- The efforts of IDEA will be reflected in the efforts of other committees; IDEA can connect, influence and collaborate with other committees on campus.
- IDEA's work will influence the school's educational master plan; it is due for revision and perhaps this could trigger that. Hopefully, IDEA's work will be reflected in the master plan.
- Instructors will embrace the work of IDEA and put it into action.
- IDEA will develop a new language that will create a new culture for how we interact and understand one another because language is the window to culture.
- IDEA's work will demolish the power structure that has been in place for the past 30 years. There are 5-6 people that make decisions on campus and it can be hard to include new perspectives.
- People's perception of issues of equity will shift and there will be more of a shared vision than what currently exists. This new vision will also be part of the operating policy of the institution.
- Queer (LGBT) people should feel physically, emotionally and intellectually safe on this campus.
- This could become a model for how similar institutions address and work with equity issues.

LMC IDEA THEORY OF CHANGE

Purpose Statement

The group commented on a draft purpose statement provided by BTW based on previous IDEA documents. The discussion that followed included:

- The purpose statement is not a vision statement (that is the ultimate impact statement); it is the scope and charge of IDEA.

- IDEA advises and inspires solutions that will be developed and implemented by departments. IDEA is not the go-to on all equity and diversity issues but will assist others on campus to create solutions. IDEA will advise but it does not hold decision-making authority. IDEA intends to help others institutionalize the practices and create systems of accountability (specifics of implementation will be articulated in strategies).
- The purpose statement should be accessible to colleagues and students.
- The currently language is very academic and takes out some of the humanity.
- At the retreat, IDEA decided to focus on LMC policies, so the purpose statement should reflect that.
- Language in the purpose statement would be consistent with California trends such as student learning outcomes (SLO).
- IDEA wants to keep in mind a global vision of education and where students are going in the world as professionals and as responsible, thoughtful citizens.
- The purpose statement should be realistic about what can be done on campus.
- The statement should have some heart in it and envision a transformation of education. Educational attainment is not just about grades and jobs but about realizing full human potential and creating caring individuals with a strong sense of value and worth who are capable of transforming society.
- The bigger the vision, the more concrete the steps need to be to get there.
- A proposed revision to the purpose statement is: “The purpose of the IDEA Committee is to analyze structural/institutional inequities at Los Medanos College and to work in collaboration with institutional groups in order to facilitate development of solutions guided by research that directly impact students.”
- Terms to be defined: inequity, equity, access, diversity, equality, multiculturalism and education.

Problems

The draft problem statements were reviewed and discussed. The problems should align with the purpose statement; there are a lot of problems that are not within the scope of IDEA.

- There are different perspectives about the role of leadership on campus. The problem is that the institution has not figured out how to engage students and help them have a voice. It is the institution and not the student that is failing. IDEA wants to increase the number of voices engaged in dialogue about equity and access.
- The guiding principles of the school need to evolve to reflect its current constituents and contemporary issues; the founding principles are outdated.
- One problem is the lack of mechanisms and entry points. A structure for community involvement (students, faculty and staff) does not exist. The community does not feel that there are avenues for participation or that their participation is valued by decision makers. There are too few meaningful relationships, regardless of the entry point.

NEXT STEPS

Any additional comments on today's materials should be sent to BTW by the end of the day on Tuesday, February 24. The group meets again on Thursday, March 5 from 1:30-3:30. BTW will send a revised ToC graphic on February 26 to solicit feedback from the group. The next meeting will focus on problems and strategies. The April meeting will focus on outcomes and assessment pieces. That meeting will address how other planning efforts on campus, like the Equal Employment Opportunity Plan, Student Equity Plan and the Diversity Scorecard activities, relate to IDEA's work.