

# Summary of Comments on College Brain Trust Reports and Administrative Documents

Compiled by Shawn Dry, Academic Senate College Chair  
Endorsed by the Academic Senate on October 24, 2013

This document contains a summary of comments on the College Brain Trust reports and administrative documents that were shared with the college on July 16, 2013. The comments have been compiled from two sources: discussions held by Academic Senate standing committees in September and October 2013; and open forums held in October 2013 on each campus and moderated by an Academic Senate campus chair. The Academic Senate endorsed these comments by a unanimous vote at its October 24, 2013 college meeting.

The comments are presented in a summary fashion and are organized by report. I have retained all original documentation should the specific provenance and original wording of any comment be required.

## Child Care Assessment

- Some attendees recognized the financial necessity of eliminating or reducing the budget deficit created by the operation of child care centers.
- Concern was expressed over the process by which the decision to close the child care centers was made.
  - Was sufficient effort made to gather input from all relevant interested parties?
  - Were the suggestions made by the staff at the centers addressed, e.g. increased marketing?
  - Why did the administration not attempt to implement the CBT recommendations for improvement before making the decision to close the centers?
- The impact upon students with children and no other means of child care was a major concern. Why could the centers not have been phased out gradually to allow these student parents to make other arrangements? Could not the closures have waited until the projected potential arrangement with Oakland Schools had been pursued?
- Along these lines, attendees expressed concerns about OCC being run as a business rather than an educational institution serving its community.

## Administration comments:

The discussions regarding the future of the Child Care Centers at Oakland Community College were ongoing for many years. It is the responsibility of administration to determine when adequate research and discussion has taken place on an issue and make a final decision. This decision was based on:

- alignment of resource allocation with the core mission of the college
- changes in the availability of privatized childcare services since the original need arose decades before.
- student survey data available through Institutional Research
- financial viability of the Centers
- the options presented in the CBT reports followed extensive community consultation

The administration is satisfied with the timing, level of discussion, exploration and data considered in making this decision.

## Integrated Planning

- There was agreement that planning should be integrated and that plans should ultimately support the mission and vision of the college and be accompanied by a consistent planning cycle.
- Attendees strongly asserted that the creation of both the Integrated Planning Model and the plans themselves should be a collaborative rather than a top-down process. Mechanisms to enable the participation of the entire college community in the creation of both the planning model and the plans are essential to both the quality of the plans and their approval by the college community.
- Attendees disagreed with statements in the CBT report suggesting that neither planning nor the mechanisms to plan existed or were effective before 2012. The College Planning Council and Senate's College Academic Master Plan Committee worked for years to create the foundation upon which the current planning process exists.
- While attendees appreciated the CBT statement that college faculty and staff should be involved in the implementation of the Educational Master Plan, they also asserted that similar involvement should exist for the creation and improvement of the EMP.

### Administration comments:

While years were invested in creating the former planning process, unfortunately, it was not designed to include the elements of integrated and resource planning necessary to ensure its success. The core of the new integrated planning process is the EMP which was created through a college-wide discussion spanning two years.

Best practices and standard planning protocols which embody the following are the foundation for our new integrated planning process:

- Consistent alignment with the College's Mission, Vision and EMP
- Shared consciousness – plans speak to each other
- Integrated measurement system for all plans
- Common process elements for all plans

This shift in resource allocation to support the EMP is a significant cultural and process change and will be subject to continuous quality improvement.

## Data Capacity and Culture of Evidence

- Attendees agreed that data collection and use were essential to the planning and implementation process.
- Many questions and concerns about data were raised.
  - The need for data to support decisions must be universally applied in order to avoid the appearance of arbitrary decision-making.
  - Are data collected by IR the only ones that will be used to support planning and implementation?
  - What is the most effective means of sharing data with the institution? Can the Academic Senate presentation process be adjusted to make sharing data there more effective?
  - Some attendees shared their own personal experiences when data had been misused or misinterpreted.

- A common suggestion from the forums was the creation of an Academic Senate data committee to investigate the questions and concerns raised about data collection and use and to work with the administration to resolve them.

**Administration comments:**

Data collection and use is essential to the implementation process. The administration stands behind the integrity of our institutional planning and research work and will continue to provide educational opportunities regarding data and its usage to the entire college community. The workshop, “Demystifying Data” held on September 27<sup>th</sup> was the first of such educational opportunities. The data discussed arises from national standards.

**Benchmarking and Key Performance Indicators**

- Attendees recognized the value of using appropriate institutions as benchmarking guides and establishing appropriate KPIs to measure progress.
- Attendees again asserted that college community involvement in the selection of benchmarking institutions and KPI development will be vital to ensuring quality and creating understanding and buy-in. The preference expressed was for inclusive, participatory processes rather than top-down administrative ones.

**Administration comments:**

OCC has learned from several cycles of refinement in determining performance metrics. Student success outcomes will be selected that align with the national accountability outcomes designed for community colleges (e.g., VFA), including progression through developmental coursework and completion. Further, it is the intent to benchmark our results with comparable institutions based on institution size, type (multi-campus) and community setting (e.g., rural, suburban). These nationally recognized best practices will assure that the College continues to understand our students’ success in a meaningful way.