Meeting with VPs of Student Development, 10/2/2014

**1. How does Student Development contribute to the liberal education of students, preparing them for their lives beyond college as informed and engaged citizens, productive employees, ethical beings, etc.?**

Our mission and learning outcomes are posted on the website. Student Development achieves some of those outcomes through programming and initiatives. Some are connected to academics – critical thinking, diversity issues. Others are less connected, like spiritual growth.

Learning outcomes are related to the mission and the learning outcomes of CSB/SJU. We demonstrate that in Program Review, every five years. We have assessment in place to demonstrate those learning outcomes.

Student Development includes athletics, counseling, career services, student activities, campus rec, security, intercultural and international student services, campus ministry, upward bound, orientation, health promotion, campus conduct, student human rights, student discipline. Almost everything outside the classroom for student life. Institute for Women’s Leadership, men’s development institute. Student senate advising.

Departments within student development focus on certain outcomes – for example, campus ministries is involved in spiritual development, which is also part of the residential experience at CSB.

We have significant impact on student growth and development, more on some than others because everything is voluntary. Big impact on the culture of the institutions. We can look at personal growth over four years, data from surveys that Jon McGee collects.

Residential life – we house students within cohort groups, first two years especially. Can design programs to target different cohorts, focus on growth and development over four years.

Intentional programming in residence halls for each cohort. Documents are on the website. Career exploration program on every single floor at SJU in the first year. At CSB, the focus is on community living. Respect for persons, leadership for the common good, developing a meaningful life purpose. FYRE – first year residential experience. Transition, social connections, understanding campus resources. Volunteer future, fair for first year students to learn about resources. Sophomores focus on choosing a major, preparing for study abroad, internships. Upper class programs focus on life skills, finding a faith community, understanding how to sign a lease, car payments, eating and dressing on a budget, etc.

Ongoing assessment in each department, external reviewer every five years. Commitment to conducting assessment, trying to find out that we are making a difference. Does a residential experience make a difference? Living on campus, career services helping prepare them not just for a job but for a changing work environment

Gender is a huge piece of our work, piece of everything that we do. Colleges for women and colleges for men, student development is really where that takes place.

More work recently on compliance issues, sexual misconduct. Academic affairs and student development have to come closer together on this. Cant’ have optional programming. Part of new common curriculum.

**2. Are there ways you would like to contribute more or differently to liberal education?  If so, how could the Common Curriculum support and/or contribute to that work?**

How can we do a better job of teaching faculty what we do in student development? We have some very intentional theoretical models for student development and learning.

How can we better shape the first year experience, not just leaving it at Orientation? We would like a unified first year experience that reflects learning both within and outside the classroom. Redesign FYS. We are so far behind our aspirants in first year experience.

See John Gardner, University of South Carolina – First year experience model. We have FYS which is an academic experience. First year experience looks at the holistic needs that a first year student has. A lot of private liberal arts colleges have a first year experience curriculum that is not optional, one that is taught between student development and academics. One possibility is learning to speak up, helping our students succeed better.

Our retention rates are quite high – could we improve them even more with first year program? Especially now as we’re facing demographic changes. Areas where we are least strong with retention, need to get ahead of the game.

First generation students are 33% of our population. We need to figure out which students we really need to target – socioeconomic differences are most important.

Education abroad – faculty become student development people – deal with crises. It’s just another day at work for us. We could work with faculty to further that.

We can help with intercultural competence, learning, development. Intercultural directions council. Partner in and outside the classroom. How do we become a campus that’s more open to a more diverse student population. How do we instill that in our students? Think tank for the institution, what would it look like, how would we know if we achieve it? In partnership with a new curriculum.

We are a college for men, and a college for women – the onus is on Student development to carry Benedictine values and gender. We would like more faculty cooperation on that. Do I think about what it means to teach at a college for men and a college for women? Do I notice how it affects classroom discussion, leadership roles in the classroom, assignments. Issues of inequity in work on group projects.

How could we better communicate what we do with the faculty? New faculty orientation? Who to call, to reach out to.

Student development can be a key partner in planning a sequential four year experience.