



Connect Collaborate Innovate

A Newsletter From The Provost's Office

COLLABORATE

Collaborate. I and many others in the College have been heavily involved in collaboration this past month as many stalled initiatives started once more. My 'favorite' is the Florida Pathways Institute. A team led by Dr. DeLuca applied for and was accepted to be part of the State's push to better guide students. It is not that we hadn't been moving in this direction anyway, but we know that many students come to FSW without a

clear idea of what they want to do both academically and for their future careers. FSW's Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) submitted for the 2012 reaffirmation developed the first-year student experience that included both academic and career advising components in addition to the critical thinking focus, nevertheless some students need additional support to stay on path. The Florida Pathway Institute was set up by the

Florida Department of Education to bring State Colleges together to share ideas and help each other. Two of our employees - Maisy Adams and Dr. Amanda Sterk - are Pathway Navigators, assigned to help other Colleges as they move through the Institute's step for building more robust pathways. Our Navigators are Kristen Anderson from the State College of Florida and Stefanie Waschull from Santa Fe College. The institute



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lasted for two days (Zoom, of course) and consisted of national speakers interspersed with team activities. It was a good thing that our team is kept on task by Dr. Christy Gilfert, as the plethora of ideas could have easily led me down many a rabbit hole. My main take away was that we should start helping students as early as orientation (or before) to connect with a broad area of interest, and then develop events – collaboration with faculty as well as staff - that help them narrow their focus semester by semester.

The past two days saw a number of administrators collaborating with our colleagues from the 'Great

28' – the 28 State and Community Colleges that make up the Florida College system – and the Florida Department of Education. I may be stretching the term 'collaborate' for some of the events; the 78 'deck' of PowerPoint slides that made up Thursday morning's three-and-a-half-hour session didn't allow for much back and forth. Some background may be helpful here: the 28 institutions support a number of "Councils" that allow us to discuss common issues and provide feedback to/gain insight from the Florida Department of Education (and through them, the State Legislatures). The



Provost, deans and I typically attend the Council of Instructional Affairs (Florida's own CIA) and/or the Council of

Workforce Education (CWE). The former tends to concentrate on the Associate of Arts issues while the latter focuses on



AS and our baccalaureate degrees. The Council of Student Affairs bring together, well, student affairs leaders; and the Council of Presidents, the President. There are additional entities such as the Learning Resources Standing Committee and MISATFOR (the Management Information Systems Advisory Task Force) that also meet. All these entities help us enact State law, provide input into those laws, as well as share best

practices. And now for something back on task: The long list of issues that arose in CIA at the meeting this week included: statewide funding of our libraries and distance learning services, system-wide reviews of baccalaureate and workforce associate degree programs, textbook affordability, mathematics general education course, AS General Education, Florida Pathways Institute and the big, new

State initiative Get There. This latter initiative aims to increase enrollment in Career and Technical programs, providing student with direct access to careers as well as an alternative route to a four-year degree (there is a push for more AS to BS articulation agreements). However, the most thought-provoking presentation for me came in the welcome by Dr. Jonathan Gueverra, President of the College of the Florida Keys. He challenged us to stop thinking of our current environment as 'virtual', defined by one online dictionary as 'something that exists in essence but not in actuality' (we are actually teaching, aren't we?); that education should change to allow students to engage when they are ready rather than on our timetable. Certainly, the on-demand aspects of education expanded rapidly these past few

months with students more able to access librarians, tutors and faculty during office hours at a distance (I nearly said virtually) and I think that many areas are seeing that the new systems put in place are effective. Our Academic Success department recently surveyed students using their services: 98% agreed it was convenient to connect to FSW's remote tutoring session, with 64% preferring, or having no preference, regarding remote sessions (46% wanting to get back to face-to-face interactions).

Collaboration continues dominate the conversation in the Libraries too. As our new Director of Libraries, Dr. Richard Hodges stated, "In an effort to encourage

cross disciplinary collaboration and improve awareness of its substantial electronic resource offerings, FSW Libraries recently launched its Librarian Liaison Program. This program pairs FSW Research Librarians with each of the College's five Schools. The focus of the program is to help teaching faculty gain a better understanding of the abundance of resources offered through FSW Libraries. Liaison Librarians consult with teaching faculty on course projects and assignments and get feedback from teaching faculty in the selection of library databases". As always, I strongly encourage having a major assignment within courses that integrates a research component. I find

students tend to remember the presentation or paper long after all of the other facts have faded into the background, and the activity provides the skills needed for the student to become the self-learner. I should note that, in this 'new normal' the Librarians are available at a distance though multiple technologies (more info at fsw.edu/library).



The lights are in the libraries, but our faculty are available on demand remotely too

And finally, I wanted to mention the Rapid Credentialing grant. The College was awarded \$782,218 to support students in programs that lead to industry or college certifications in less than 18 weeks. The collaboration of our deans, associate deans, directors, faculty and staff allowed us to quickly put together the applications and we are now awarding scholarships in credit program such as EMS and Audio Tech as well as providing free or low-cost continuing education,

industry certification courses such as QuickBooks and waste water treatment.

So, collaborate has been the focus of so many of us over the last month. It will also continue to dominate the conversations as we move forward with our new QEP: Transdisciplinary Communication.



Pre-COVID 19 EMS students during emergency simulation



Dr. Martin McClinton hails from the United Kingdom and was the Dean of the School of Pure and Applied Science at Florida SouthWestern State College from 2015 to 2019. His recent promotion to Vice Provost occurred in Fall of 2019. He really enjoys Dilbert cartoons.

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