

## **History**

In Spring of 2010, the Learning Council was developed from discussions that originated in the Basic Skills Committee. The committee was organized and formal structure was put into place under the Leadership of Scott Sandler and Edward Cervantes as facilitators, and Dr. Kathleen Rose as Administrator. The Learning Council is a sub-committee of the Academic Council; and according to BP and AP (4600) report to both Academic Senate and the Presidents Council.

## **Mission Statement**

Learning Council is an advisory group committed to the development, promotion, and advancement of a student success agenda for prospective and enrolled students at Gavilan College. The Learning Council recognizes that there are varying definitions of student success. Learning Council will create an in-depth forum for discussing various categories of student success, identifying existing and new pathways, and creating a campus climate unified behind the goals of student success. Our primary method would be to find ways of minimizing barriers to student success, and making recommendations based on discussions and findings from external and internal best practices and research. The Learning Council is committed to the following: 1) To promote a collaborative community of inquiry, awareness, and change around learning by means of bridging Student, Academic, and Administrative Affairs. 2) To identify and address barriers to student success to increase persistence and retention levels of the college. 3) To foster and promote opportunities for Faculty and Staff Development to meet the diverse needs of our students. 4) To explore and implement various pedagogies that meet students' diverse socio-cultural learning needs. 5) To empower members of the campus community in becoming advocates for learning. 6) To create a safe, welcome, inclusive campus environment centered on student success, empowerment, and engagement. This mission is embedded in the Gavilan College mission statement and reflects the shared beliefs and values of faculty, staff, administrators and students.

## **Overview**

This last year (13/14), the Learning Council was co-facilitated by Susan Sweeny and Dr. John Lawton-Haehl under the direction of Dr. Kathleen Rose. Learning council continued to use Focus Inquiry Groups (FIGS) to complete work focused on student success. Student participation remains central to the work of the council, as is membership and participation from all staffing levels and disciplines.

All members are genuinely committed toward student success; and the goal of the council continues to be to create collaborative and inclusive dialogue about student success. The members understand the needs of students and they actively engage to ensure that true change occurs.

Given that the Learning Council highly values respect, each member is treated with equality regardless hierarchy or role. In addition, the Learning Council counts with representation of all campus constituency groups including full-time and part time faculty, students, support staff, administrators, and supervisors. This diversity in the membership and combined skills and

talents are fundamental to producing results. Members of the Learning Council report being energized by the “can do” attitude of the group. The members are present and attentive. There is a unique collegiality that is actively open to the ideas of others.

The Learning Council continues to be an advisory board for the management of our campus’s Title V Hispanic Service Institution Grant. The facilitators for the Learning Council actively recruit staff members from each grant, department, and program on campus to present current activities to the council to facilitate development of collaboration on campus.

Recommendations were made based on discussions and findings from external and internal best practices to minimize barriers and support student success at Gavilan College. In response to these recommendations, the following Focus Inquiry Groups (FIGS) were formed this year.

### **FOCUS INQUIRY GROUPS**

#### **Tutoring Support Services FIG**

The tutoring support services group’s purpose is to provide a joint effort in creating excellent tutorial support services at Gavilan College. The group seeks to provide students with the necessary resources to be successful in their coursework while supporting the efforts of faculty and staff.

Efforts started by the tutoring support services groups continued throughout the academic year. Shared meetings for tutors to meet with human resources were implemented. The majority of the areas that offer tutoring utilized a common tutor-training course. Advertisement delineating the colleges tutoring support continued to be produced and distributed across campus.

#### **The Legislative FIG**

The Legislative FIG has focused their work on following and planning for the changes in SB1440 and SB1456 as their primary goal. The work of this FIG (SSSP) has been moved to the District and will be carried out by a Task Force developed and assigned by Dr. Rose.

#### **Instructional Improvement FIG**

Based on a challenge from the Counseling Department in Spring of 2013, last Fall the instructional improvement group started meeting to take up the question of integrating student services into the instructional classroom. Realizing that it first had to educate itself, the group met with student services representatives including Financial Aid, Admission and Records, Assessment, Disability Resource Center (DRC), Tutoring, Early Alert, and the Student Success Center to ascertain where links might be made.

Four activities that came out of the Fall meetings were:

1. The creation of an electronic support services flyer for inclusion with course syllabi.
2. The creation of Department expectations handout for Math instructors.
3. The decision to pilot financial aid workshops in the classes of interested instructors.
4. A meeting with Hartnell College to share ideas about integrating student services and instruction.

At the end of the Fall, there was interest in the creation of common practices for Basic Skills instructors such as using Early Alert and having a semester visit from a counselor. As there was concern about the direction these activities should take, especially with the implementation of SSSP, the decision was to convene again in the Fall of 2014 once some of the new procedures were in place.

### **VETERANS FIG**

The Veterans FIG is designed to promote a successful transition from military to civilian and academic life in order to ensure student Veterans' success and retention in a one-stop setting Veterans Resource Center. The Veterans Resource Center (VRC) has dedicated space that provides support and camaraderie in a safe and welcoming environment. The Gavilan College Veterans Council was formed in Fall 2011 and established as a working sub-committee of the Learning Council with the goal of fostering awareness of student Veteran's needs for the college community, working with the Student Veterans Club in an advisory role, and assisting with the Veterans Voices Project and Events. The Council has been learning about the needs of student veterans by attending conferences and training classes, but most importantly by listening to our own student veteran's experiences on campus, both academically and socially. Using this information, the Council hopes to expand service and provide a positive campus climate for student veterans to achieve their academic pursuits.

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#### **2013-2014 Goals:**

1. Obtain permanent, dedicated, centrally located space for the Veterans Resource Center (VRC).
2. Expand services for student Veterans.
3. Build Veterans Council campus membership.
4. Advocate at state level for allocation for VRC.
5. Establish Goals for 2014-2015

#### **2013-2014 Accomplishments:**

1. Secured dedicated space for the Veterans Resource Center in LI 109. Move date: May 27, 2014.
2. Developed and printed VRC informational tri-fold.
3. Expanded monthly campus mobile services provided by the Santa Cruz VA Mobile Vet Center including: readjustment counseling, benefits counseling disability rating assistance. "On Demand" VA team was assembled to respond to student Veterans crisis' including suicide prevention, crisis counseling and establishment of on-going readjustment counseling and housing assistance for homeless Vets.
4. Monthly campus visits were provided by the Mobile Medical Van for basic exams (sick call), prescription refills and enrollment in the VA Health Care System.
5. Held Veterans Success Workshop for students on Academic Dismissal. Partnered with Financial Aid and the Counseling Department during College Hour for the event. 20 students attended.
6. College-Wide publication of Vets Council Minutes.
7. Represented Gavilan College's Veterans Resource Fair at the American Legion, Gilroy Post #217 on May 3, 2014.
8. Secured donations for the VRC:
  - a. Gilroy Rotary \$1,000
  - b. Carmel Doll and Toy Group \$1,000
  - c. American Legion, Gilroy Post #217 \$250.00

#### **2014-2015 Goals:**

1. Move into new space May 27, 2014.
2. Plan "soft opening" for student Veterans.
3. Plan Grand Opening November 2014.
4. Work with committee to implement California Reads Project: "What it's Like to go to War" campus wide.
5. Discuss Guidance 210 section for Vets only.
6. Seek support for dedicated Veterans Counselor.
7. Seek official designation of VRC to a Division/ Dean.
8. Expansion of Vets Council.
9. Continue to solicit donations for the VRC.

#### **Student Veteran Graduates:**

**Steve Grace**

**Associates Degree Community Studies: Secured full-time job with Santa Cruz Vet Center as a Readjustment Outreach Technician.** VA/VRC Work-study, Vets Council Member, Veterans FIG Member Learning Council, Vets Club.

<b>Braulio Moreno</b>	<b>Associates Degree Business: <i>Accepted to UC Santa Cruz School of Business Fall 2014</i></b> VA/VRC Work-study, Vets Council Member, Veterans FIG Member, ASB Senator
<b>Andrew Herrin</b>	<b>Associates Degree: Administration, Psychology, and Spanish: <i>Accepted to San Jose State University, Fall 2014 with major in Criminal Justice.</i></b> VA/VRC Work-study, Vets Council Member, Veterans FIG Member Learning Council
<b>Chris Ramirez</b>	<b>Associates Degree: Liberal Arts Natural Science.</b> VRC Work-study, Vets Council Member.

The Veterans FIG is deeply appreciative of the support we received from Dr. Kinsella, John Pruitt, Dr. Rose, and the Learning Council to secure dedicated space for the Veterans Resource Center.

### **Learning Council/Communication FIG**

2014 Year End Report

The Communication Focused Inquiry Group has worked diligently this past academic year to complete projects carried over from previous years and to identify needs associated with the communication of ideas and resources across all of the college campuses. Guided by a dedicated group of faculty and staff, the group has seen much of its work for the past few years finally come to fruition.

Members:

- A. Chair: Blanca Arteaga
- B. Interim Chair: Ellen Waddell
- C. Lynda Kerr
- D. Stacey Porteur
- E. Doug Martin
- F. Kyle Billups
- G. Jan Berstein-Chargin
- H. Katie Day

The FIG saw success with its long-term projects:

**Completed:**

The Student Email Accounts project required the work of multiple departments and staff. It was completed and in service as of April 1, 2014. It is expected that general use will begin to grow with registration for classes in the next few weeks.

The mobile phone app (application) was a long-term project that involved using an aspect of the MyGav software and adapting it to use with our system. For a time, the software did not

work, but the issues were finally corrected and placed into service early 2014. Students are to be advised during orientation about the availability of the app, and its use.

The availability and use of Google Voice has long been a focus of the group. Many of our students do not have internet connections readily available to them outside of the campus. Also, since 70% of our faculty is adjunct, they do not have office locations or campus phones where students can leave a message. Thus, they must give out personal contact information if they are to address student needs. Google Voice offers a viable alternative that is free to users. The FIG worked with the TLC to create training materials for Adjunct Faculty orientations, yet use remains minimal. The FIG has requested a workshop during Staff Development Day August 2014 to train faculty and staff, and implement the service campus-wide. At this point, the FIG believes they have done what they can do to promote the use of the app. This project will be considered completed once the workshops are held this coming fall.

#### **Going forward:**

The Centralized Meeting and Minutes project continues. The FIG is attempting to unify all information regarding routine meetings and the minutes that occur on campus on one central webpage. The FIG has contacted all committees to gather which take minutes, and who is willing to have the information shared online (internet or intranet).

The Centralized Calendar is also an ongoing project for the FIG. The software for the calendar is now in use, but there is a need for internal policy management and methods to be identified and used before there is increased use of the page. With more research, an appropriate procedure should be developed for implementation. Once the details are dealt with, the packaging and communication of the calendar combined with training will be the final step.

The last project active for the next academic year will be the Adjunct Mentoring Project. The FIG is interested in supporting the efforts of the committee currently developing the program. Once the committee has identified the needs of the project, the FIG projects it will help with website design and content, as well as communication of the program.

#### **On Hold:**

The group had been working for the past year on a project titled Ask Gav. Due to the priority of other projects, this has been placed on hold indefinitely,

The Steps to Success project remains a priority for the college as a whole, but the Communication FIG will be unable to support it in the near term due to the departure of Dave Phillips and overall workload in MIS.

Gavilan*eduit* is a phone application now available for download. Students can use it to receive ASB discounts on products and services in the community. The Welcome Center could also promote if given posters/resources. The FIG suggests a webpage link to the Gavilan College application for integrated use. However, the FIG needs additional information in order to

promote use of product. Of main concern is the lack of local services on the app.

In conclusion, the Communication Focused Inquiry Group believes the priority of projects going forward models the college values and serves its mission to be transparent with the communities it serves, and to use innovative ways to communicate with students with the aim of preparing them for success in a fast changing world.

### Year End Report: Food Pantry FIG

#### Food program update (5/21/14):

The pilot program has been operating for a total of six weeks. Food boxes put together by St. Josephs and delivered by a St. Joseph's volunteer have been distributed to 10 Gavilan College students each week. The food is distributed Monday afternoons in the former JPA parking lot. We have worked on getting improved signage; in particular a sandwich board was purchased so the project is not borrowing the security sandwich board.

Several weeks not all of the boxes were picked up on time, but all the boxes were distributed to other students in need. A process for distributing the left over boxes was developed whereby extra boxes are distributed to students on the waiting list.

We would like to continue the pilot project through summer and into fall. The goal would be to demonstrate the viability of Gavilan College as a Food Bank distribution site, thus enabling more students to participate.

A student survey was administered to better understand how well the pilot is functioning and its impact on students ( $n=7$ ).

#### How much do you agree with the following statements about the food distribution program:

Answer Options	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
The food distribution I got was of a high quality.	0.0%	40.0%	60.0%	0.0%
The food distribution was convenient for me.	0.0%	0.0%	80.0%	20.0%
The food distribution can help reduce my stress about access to food.	0.0%	0.0%	80.0%	20.0%
I knew what to do with the food in the boxes.	0.0%	0.0%	40.0%	60.0%
Overall, I am satisfied with the program.	0.0%	0.0%	80.0%	20.0%

#### Comments:

- What do you want more of: *Oranges, Cucumbers, Fruit, Organic food.*
- What do you want less of: *Cabbage, Bad food, The food I got so far half was moldy or slimy, cabbage, cookies.*
- What are some benefits to you as a student? *Keeps food in my fridge. Saves money... Lots of money, I do get addition fruits and veggies for me and my son, It*

Figure 1: Volunteer placing food box in student's car.



*comes in handy with my son's school lunches, I get free food. Its easy for me to get it.*

- *Suggestions to improve program: Food on the bottom is often smashed. Bananas go bad very fast and have picked up almost rotten bananas before. Bread seems to go moldy in less than two days... it would be nice to have fresher food.*



### **Habits of Mind (Fall 2013-Fall 2014)**

#### **Fall 2013 Activities**

##### **1) Developed and disseminated new Habits of Mind Theme: Communication.**

Areas of focus in our Communication theme included managing impulsivity, e-mail etiquette, effective small group communication in the classroom, thinking and communicating with clarity and precision, listening with understanding and empathy, etc.

Communication theme was determined based on a campus-wide Spring 2012 Survey. Respondents were asked to identify what characteristics or habits were most needed on our campus in order to develop student success. There were approximately 100 respondents. As a group, the HoM FIG looked at and categorized responses to find what was surfacing from the collective voices in the survey. We found that out of all the issues, time was of greatest concern. Time management was, therefore, our first theme in Fall 2012. The second most predominant response was effective communication.

##### **2) Developed Webpage with videos, etiquette rubric, and links connected to the theme of communication.**

Posts on our HoM Communications page included links for supporting students in effective conversations with instructors, tips for e-mail etiquette, advice for starting a conversation, and general strong communication skills for students. A rubric for Discussion Board contributions, which included an etiquette component, was posted in order to support online teachers. Videos from Denise Besson's *Communicate!* series were also posted. Video topics included: paraphrasing, mindful/mindless listening, You/I phrasing, and Shifting vs. Response.

##### **3) Unveiled the Habits of Mind Communications Challenge:**

In an attempt to create a "buzz" on our campus revolving around the theme of communication, we created a Communications-themed challenge. This was also done as a way of getting more students directly involved in these discussions. All members of our campus community were encouraged to submit a project to promote and highlight a particular aspect of good and/or

effective communication on a college campus. Respondents could use any medium of their choice (poster, video, skits, panel presentations, etc).

13 videos were submitted for this challenge, 12 of which were from students. Topics included effective communication practices for working with second language learners, non-verbal communication, communication for working with Vets, issues of gender and communication, inter-cultural communication, etc.



An acknowledgement ceremony took place on December 6<sup>th</sup> in the North/South Lounge. This event was an opportunity to recognize all participants, as well as view and share highlights of projects. Judges included Kathleen Rose, Dana Young, and Stacey Porteur. Prizes included GavGear and recognition of participation certificates.

#### **4) Student Success Lives Here Symposium**

On Friday, November 1<sup>st</sup>, members of our HoM FIG presented at the 3CSN sponsored event, “Student Success Lives Here” at Yuba College. This event was attended by approximately 100 participants from various colleges throughout Northern California. At this event, several colleges presented on student success initiatives and the inspiring work being done around Reading Apprenticeship, Curricular Redesign and Acceleration, and Habits of Mind. We shared our Habits of Mind webpage and activities. The presentation looked at how we formed and developed Habits of Mind. We discussed work we have done on our campus around Time Management and Communication.

### **Spring 2014 Activities**

#### **1) Developed and disseminated new Habits of Mind Theme: Speak For Yourself To Get What You Need.**

In response to our Spring 2012, our Habits of Mind FIG developed our third theme around self-advocacy: “Speak For Yourself To Get What You Need.” Self-Advocacy issues include knowing what resources are available on our campus, support for talking with instructors/counselors and getting what you need from such conversations, conflict resolution, financial aid workshops/support, communication with support services, looking at role of student government, knowing your rights/principles of community, etc. We came up with broad categories to help us frame our discussions, activities, and areas of inquiry around self-advocacy:

1) Go Ahead and Ask (What): this can include knowing what resources are available on and off-campus, knowing your rights, knowing that it's okay to ask, finding your voice, etc.

2) Find Out (Where/Who): this can include finding who and where to go to for support, finding out about what you need to know before you even set foot on campus, etc.

3) Follow Through (How): this can include such things as finding your voice, getting what you want out of an office visit, applying what you learned to get what you need, taking ownership of learning, etc.

**Habits of Mind**  
**Speak for yourself to**  
**get what you need!**



**Go ahead and ask.**



**Find out.**



**Follow through.**

GAVILAN COLLEGE

In our first month, we focused on outreach. We scheduled appointments with the student groups to get more students invested and to have them help create some student-centered activities--some of which can take place during College Hour. Student groups that we reached out to include the Communications Club, Rambassadors, Puente Ambassadors, and ASB. One result of our efforts was to gain two student members of Habits of Mind: Tony Fernandez from the Communications Club and Dina Sanchez from the Rambassadors.

**2) Created and Facilitated the Johari Windows Event:**

In an effort to find out more about the resources that our students know about, Habits of Mind developed and adapted an event based on the Johari Windows. The event took place on Tuesday, March 25th from 12:30-2:00 between the Trio and Mesa buildings. Students filled out and responded to questions on colored index cards. There were four "windows" (categories of inquiry) for this event:

- a) What resources do you know a lot about and believe are widely known by others?
- b) What resources do you know about, but do you think may be unknown to others?
- c) What resources on campus may you have heard of, but know very little about?
- d) What resources on our campus do you believe are needed?

Student responses were publicly displayed on large sections of foam board. Responses remained for several hours for students to look at. This event was widely publicized and well attended (over 100 students).



During this event, students ate pizza and listened to Gavilan musicians. The music portion of this event was arranged and facilitated by Samuel Sotelo. During musical breaks, Teresa Widdowson asked students what they wished they knew before coming to Gavilan. This video is something that will be developed in Fall 2014.

Responses were recorded and have been shared with Learning Council and at the Student Services Division meeting. Sections will also be shared at our Professional Development Day.

### 3) Unveiled Weekly “Did You Know” Slides:

Based on contributions from student support services, faculty, and administrators, Habits of Mind have posted weekly “Did You Know” slides. These slides were adapted with permission from Santa Rosa Junior College. On each slide, we are sharing with students timely information to support them, resources and services that are available on our campus, and motivational quotations or advice. These slides are being posted weekly onto our Gavilanlearn page by Sabrina Lawrence, our Gavilan Distance Education Facebook Page, our Gavilan Facebook Page, and our Habits of Mind page.

**GAVILAN COLLEGE**

**Did You Know?:** Many scholarship applications are due *March 14, 2014.*

**Check this Out:** The Writing Center is sponsoring Personal Statement workshops *March 10, 3:00-4:00,* and *March 11, 4:00-5:00.*

**Get motivated:** “The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams.”  
—*Eleanor Roosevelt*

**Habits of Mind**

#### **4) Developed Webpage**

This semester, we posted and share our Did You Know Slides on our site, along with video contributions from Communications students. These videos were created by students in Ellen Waddell's Small Group Communications (CMUN 10) class. There were done as part of a class project and shared with our campus through Habits of Mind. Video topics included Small Group Communication, Self-Advocacy and Non-Verbal Cues, Talking to a peer, an instructor, or staff member, Self-Advocacy Listening Skills, Bullying, and Peer to Peer Conflict Mediation.

#### **5) Presentation at Mission College**

Gavilan College and Cerritos College presented at a 3CSN event at Mission College. This event served as an orientation to Habits of Mind. The event took place on April 25<sup>th</sup> from 9-12. Gavilan shared an overview of Habits of Mind on our campus, as well as placed an emphasis on hands-on activities that can be done in the classroom in order to better support and promote Habits of Mind.

#### **Looking Forward: Fall 2014**

In Fall 2014, we will be continuing with our Self-Advocacy theme. A number of projects are being planned for this coming semester.

They will include, but are not limited to the following:

- a) Creation of an Ask Me ("It's Okay To Ask") campaign
- b) Creation of a "Virtual Tour" of our campus
- c) Developing a video with Teresa Widdowson: "What do you wish you knew before coming to Gavilan"?
- d) Coordinating with faculty and staff to create workshops (e.g. Conflict Resolution, E-mail Etiquette, Communication Styles, etc.)
- e) Johari window event (now being called "Inquiry Window") for Faculty/Staff
- f) "Did You Know" slides for faculty/staff

#### **College Hour FIG**

In Fall term 2013, The College Hour FIG met several times to review uses of College/Common hour on a variety of campuses nation-wide. We developed proto-type schedules with suggested uses for ASB clubs and faculty and shared these prototypes with Learning Council, ASB and ICC (inter-Club Council). We also worked with the Writing Skills Center and shared their schedule as well. Due to difficulty scheduling meetings, the FIG did not meet regularly in Spring 2014.

The FIG wishes to continue to help gather information/data about College Hour uses and success from this term in Fall 2014. We are actively seeking additional faculty/staff members.

### **Part-Time Faculty and Student Success FIG**

This FIG investigated part-time instructional issues and providing insights about practices and trends that research indicates is expected to impact Gavilan Student Learning, Analysis of the most current data available from the CCCCO is located on the iLearn Learning Council site. After examination of the data and focus of the FIG it was decided it will be redirected. The student success focus will be blended into the Instructional Improvement FIG and the work condition issues will be taken to the Academic Senate and Union to continue research and discussion.

#### **FIGS for FALL 2014**

- A. Information and Referral
- B. Gavilan College Fresh Mondays Food Pantry
- C. Habits of Mind
- D. Communication
- E. Student Services
- F. Instructional Improvement

