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The Missing Pieces of the
Student Attainment Puzzle:
The Student Affairs Perspective

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The Student Affairs Perspective

- Collaborative efforts across the institution to help students achieve outcomes that lead to graduation
- Engaging all educators in their shared responsibility for student attainment of high-quality degrees

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Patience

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Patience

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Patience

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Patience

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“And so, my fellow Americans:
ask not what your country can
do for you – ask what you can
do for your country.”

President John F. Kennedy, 1961

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“ . . . by 2020, America will
once again have the highest
proportion of college
graduates in the world.”

President Barack Obama, 2009

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Toy Story

- Sparklers: SA plays a major role and the college respects and celebrates us



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Toy Story

- A Yo-Yo: SA performs some amazing feats, but we also spend a lot of time going up and down the same piece of string



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Toy Story

- A Slinky: no matter what happens, SA always bounces back – even though people toss it, twist it, and sometimes forget about it



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Toy Story

- A magic wand: everyone is waiting for someone to wave a magic wand that transforms student affairs into



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Toy Story

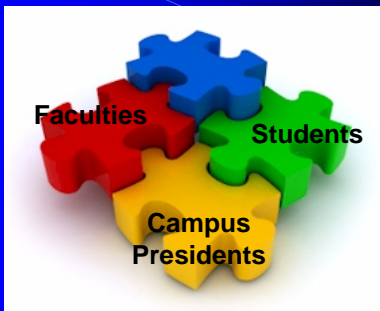
- Turn to the person on your right
 - Describe the toy you selected
 - Share the reason for selecting it
 - Identify any common elements in the toys you selected

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Student Affairs Toy of Choice: A Puzzle with Missing Pieces



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Missing Pieces: Responsibilities of SA

- Student Affairs must be able to demonstrate that
 - Programs, practices, and services have an impact on student persistence and graduation rates
 - Learning outcomes are based on and help reinforce college-wide and classroom-based learning outcomes

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“The most important factor is that transformative learning always occurs in the active context of students’ lives.”

Learning Reconsidered, 2004

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Academic Affairs Needs Student Affairs

- Advising guidelines
- Study skills
- Crisis intervention
- Accommodating student with disabilities
- Strategies for motivating students
- Managing the classroom, and helping students take responsibility for their learning

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Missing Pieces: The Institution

- Colleges and Universities must:
 - Acknowledge the role that non-classroom programs play in increasing student persistence, program completion, and graduation rates
 - Encourage and reward partnerships between academic affairs and student affairs

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Solving the Puzzle

- **Step 1 – Attitude change**
 - Believe in and see ourselves as educators
 - Be learning-centered and data-driven
 - Define the skills we bring to learning, assessment, persistence, and graduation

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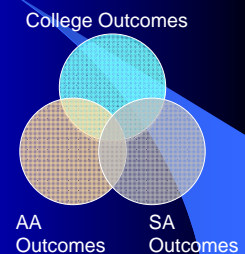
Solving the Puzzle

- **Step 2 – Check the Foundation**
 - Base SA mission and goals on the college's mission and goals
 - Connect and align SA learning outcomes with college and classroom outcomes
 - Design and implement planning and evaluation procedures that are understood and respected by the college community
 - Collect program effectiveness data and use the data to guide decisions

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Solving the Puzzle

- **Step 3 – Connect Student Affairs Outcomes to the Classroom and College**



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Connect SA to the Classroom

Paradise Valley College, AZ

- Together faculty and student affairs staff created iStartSmart for new degree or certificate seeking students who
 - Enroll full time (12 or more credits), or
 - Register for six or more credits and test into one or more developmental courses

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Connect SA to the Classroom

- iStartSmart includes:
 - New organizational approaches such as mandatory placement testing, orientation, goal-setting, advising, and the completion of a one-credit student success course
 - iGoal, a web-based student goal setting experience

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Connect SA to the Classroom

- Preliminary results look promising
 - 92% of iStartSmart students completed the fall 2007 semester
 - 74% of iStartSmart students enrolled for the spring semester
 - Persistence of part-time students participating in iStartSmart is higher than the persistence of PT students not participating in the program

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Students will understand their individual responsibility to work towards just and equitable local, national, and global societies.

Macalester College, Campus Life

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Solving the Puzzle

- Step 4 – Sharing What You're Doing and Gaining Skills
 - Renew commitment to staff development
 - Mandatory professional development plans linked to SA's strategic plan
 - Mandatory in-service training

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The University of Connecticut

Assessment Day

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The University of Florida

Assessment Boot Camp

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The University of South Carolina

IdeaPOP!

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Bottom Line

- Offers programs and services that increase student learning, retention, and completion rates
- Makes data-based decisions that support the college's mission and goals
- Is staffed with competent, learning-centered professionals

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Solving the Puzzle

- **Step 5 – Accountability**
 - Some produce it
 - Some facilitate it
 - Some support it

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Webber & Ehrenberg Study

- \$ Instruction
- \$ Academic support
- \$ Student services
- \$ Research

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Solving the Puzzle

- **Step 6 -- Efficiency**
 - Prepares students to benefit from faculty-directed instruction
 - Assists students to apply what they learn working with faculty to real-life situations
 - Contributes to the achievement of college-wide student learning outcomes

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Solving the Puzzle

- **Step 6 – Efficiency, Cont.**
 - SA must use learning outcomes data to:
 - Identify programs & services that have the most significant impact on learning, retention, and program completion
 - Review, revise, add, or abandon programs and services that do not have a positive impact on students

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Solving the Puzzle

- **Step 7 – Integrate and Align Outcomes**



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Shared Challenges

- Reducing drop out rates in courses
- Motivating students
- Assisting students to improve time management and study skills
- Helping students make meaning of and take responsibility for their learning

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Fear

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Strategies to Combat Fear

- Write position papers
- Host seminars on topics important to faculty (teaching and learning styles, cognitive development, classroom assessment techniques, etc.)
- Participate in faculty orientation and mentoring programs
- Present at faculty meetings

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Strategies to Combat Fear

- Needs analysis data from faculty and students
- Outcomes data on all programs and services
- Evaluation from faculty and students on SA programs and services

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“Learning in the Division of Student Affairs”

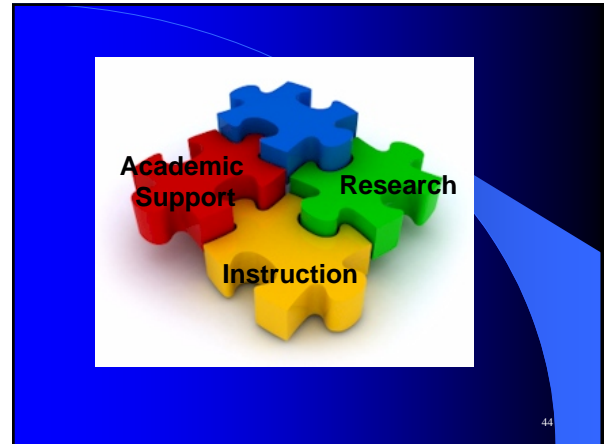
Oregon State University, Student Affairs Assessment Council

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Review of Steps

- Step 1 – Attitude Change
- Step 2 – Check the Foundation
- Step 3 – Connect Outcomes
- Step 4 – Sharing What You’re Doing and Gaining Skills
- Step 5 – Accountability
- Step 6 – Efficiency
- Step 7 – Integrate and Align Outcomes

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The Student Affairs Perspective

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