Umoja Community Supports

Perceptions of the Effectiveness and Usefulness of Statewide Resources

Rogéair Purnell-Mack
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Session Overview

Objective: Inform the strengthening and expansion of Umoja's statewide supports

- Share Phase I evaluation findings
- Gather additional input and feedback on Umoja resources
- Outline plans for Phase II evaluation

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Phase I Research Overview

Participants

- 10 program coordinators
  - Nearly 1/5 of all programs
  - Representative sample
    - Region, Area, College Size, Years of Existence, % AA Students, % AA Transfer Rates
- Methodology
  - 45- to 60-minute telephone interviews
  - Content analysis of transcribed interviews

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Commitment and Transformation

"Umoja changed my life. ... it's changed students' lives, but I think really recognizing how it changes you as a person and connecting to something that's bigger than you and fighting for something that's bigger than you ...And, for me, it's taught me a lot personally about my own history ... that I wasn't taught in school."

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Program: Common Elements

- Learning communities
  - One- or two-semesters
- Umoja-led or supported course work
  - English, math, & counseling common
- Wraparound services
  - Priority reg, tutoring, Village space
- Umoja practices
  - Foundation

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Program Successes & Challenges

Successes

- Student academic progress/outcomes
- Fruitful fundraising
- Securing full-time positions
- "Umojafying" key people, programs, practices

Challenges

- Lack of funding transparency
- Limited support & recognition
- Limited understanding of impact of non-academic issues
- Ability to code and upload data

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Successes

"Our success rates in math [are our greatest success]. … We have really put together a very social justice-based program; however, we have a lot of high success with our math [classes]."

"We were able to honor 19 students who were transferring at the end of this semester…And that included some students going to HBCUs, … UCs, … [and] CSUs."

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Challenge

"[My biggest challenge is the] MIS and the data we've been tracking... That is a challenge because our [MIS] numbers—… they fluctuate. [We are] having to do double work. We're having to track our own numbers, as well as track MIS… Sometimes [the MIS] fields don't work…And so [Umoja students are] not … captured…"

Think-Pair-Share + *Report Out*

- What have been your greatest successes?
    – What resources have supported your success?
- What have been your greatest challenges?
    – How have you addressed these challenges?
    – What additional support do you need to tackle key challenges?

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Umoja Resources & Supports

- Winter Retreat
- Summer Learning Institute
- Annual Conference
- Other Regional Coordinators
- Umoja Days
- Site visits
- Effective practice examples
- Sample pedagogy
- Curriculum
- Case studies

Handout

- Consider the listed resources and supports
- Rate the effectiveness of each resource you have accessed or participated in *over the last year*
- Respond to the open-ended questions

*** *Return completed forms* ***

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Assessment: Resources & Supports

- Majority were positively assessed (70-90%)
  - Case studies and curriculum assessed lower; lack of awareness of these resources
- Suggested improvements
  - Concrete examples of "Umojafication"
  - Fundraising guidance & support
  - Statewide / campus advocacy
  - Gather participant feedback at events

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Recommendations

- Advocacy
  - Recognition and institutionalization
  - MIS coding
  - Accountability
- Communication
  - Transparent decision-making
  - Marketing of resources
  - Clear event objectives/framing

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Recommendations - continued

- Capacity Building & Professional Development
  - Data tracking methods
  - Guided pathways
  - Regional coordinators—role, expectations, structure
  - SLI – two tracks: new and seasoned programs/ staff
- Fundraising
  - Opportunities
  - Grantwriting

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Q & A?

Any additional feedback you would like to share to help strengthen the Umoja Community's capacity building and professional development efforts?

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Phase II: Research Question

In what ways does Umoja affect the overall college experience for Black and African-American students and facilitate these students' ability to successfully navigate and succeed in a college environment?

Phase II: Research

- Qualitative Analysis: Student Focus Groups
  – Umoja vs. non-Umoja experiences
  – Recommendations re: integration of Umoja practices across larger campus
  – Importance of parallel Umoja / Guided Pathways elements to success

- Comparative Quantitative Analysis: MIS
  – Academic milestones and outcomes for Umoja students compared to matched set of non-Umoja peers

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Next Steps

December 2018

- Share today's feedback

January - May 2019

- Conduct focus groups
- Complete comparative analysis
- Draft report

July 2019

- Finalize Phase II evaluation report

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Thank You!

Rogéair D. Purnell-Mack, MSW, PhD
Senior Researcher, RP Group
rpurnell@rpgroup.org
510-541-0418 c

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