Ashland Student Forum Notes
September 18, 2008
Attendance – 26 students
Admin: Bob Meyer, Mimi Crandall, John Will, and Kim Olson

➢ Handouts: Student Survey, Core Trends, Establishing Goals, Strategic Goals/AQIP, and 7th Ranking brochure.

➢ Input was given by students in response to the following questions:
   1. In your view, how can WITC best serve you as a student?
   2. Why did you choose WITC?
   3. In the future, what would you like to see WITC do differently?

   a. Financial Aid
      A student who came from Florida said it was hard to get financial aid for school. There needs to be more financial aid for living expenses. Another student who came from Minnesota noted that there were a lot of hoops to go through. One student suggested that the process for getting federal and state grants and loans should be streamlined. Another noted that in the fall it was hard to find staff who were able to admit students to the college (it was a busy time of the year).

      Bob Meyer noted that if students are having difficulty getting financial aid and loans they should document their stories for Bob to take to the legislators. Bob Meyer talked about the Wisconsin Technical College System Budget proposal.

   b. Foreign Language Classes
      Students are interested in having foreign language classes. A Business Management Program student would welcome the opportunity to learn any foreign language.

   c. Programs: Courses Offered via IP Video vs. Classroom Experience
      One Ashland student wants the Finance program; however, because of the feasibility of it for the college, he takes his courses via IPV. There is some value in the classroom experience.

   d. Students Need a Computer Orientation/Workshop
      It was noted that all courses have some computer-based aspect to them. All students need to have computer skills; however, students begin school with different levels of computer skills. There are problems for students in online courses when they aren’t computer savvy. Taking an online course is a lot harder because you can’t ask questions like you can in the classroom. You have to able to have personal interaction with other people.

      Bob Meyer noted that instruction can’t all be online, there has to be some face-to-face too.

   e. Youth Options
      An Ashland High School student is at WITC Ashland by way of the Youth Options program.

   f. Marine Repair Technician – Equipment and Software
      Students are working on the older equipment (boat motors) and one student wants to work on the newer equipment (access to newer engines to tear apart). Students need manuals for the big motors. There is a need for more software to troubleshoot new engines and students would like a discount on the software. There is a need for more in-depth training for new motors.
g. **Advertising**
One student asked if we did any advertising for WITC as he didn't know anything about us. It was suggested that program-specific information (Marine Repair Technician) be included in the trade magazines. John Will noted that if we have worker shortages we need to communicate better about having the programs for those areas.

Students talked about the ways they heard about WITC and made suggestions about how to advertise as follows:
- Students found out about WITC because of Google (Web searches).
- An Ashland resident, this student knew about WITC by word of mouth. He suggested that WITC just needs to keep getting their name out there for people to hear. An occasional advertisement on the radio would be good. WITC is a sponsor at the races.
- A student worked with a WITC Ashland student and got to know the system that way.
- A brochure and the Web helped one student.
- A WITC instructor came into the high school and shared information.
- Second generation.
- Local library.
- A student who was in the 4-year system came back to the technical college.
- WITC college recruiters would give testimonials at the Ladysmith High School to get students thinking about programs they might want to go into. WITC and UW-BC staff would come into the high school during the lunch hour with brochures (pamphlets on admissions, program list, etc.) and answer questions.
- Guidance Counselors.
- One student wanted to live on his own to get his own experience; however, he also wanted to stay closer to family and friends.
- A student who was out of work talked to the instructors and it has been a fantastic fit. The student-teacher ratio is incredible and the instructors are very approachable; smaller class sizes (20) are much better than large class sizes (300). He never thought he'd have a personal relationship with an instructor.
- Instructors know who you are. If you are struggling with something they will try to help you out (they are very caring).

h. **Internships**
Internships should be blogged to students as they are a plus.

i. **Additional Out-of-Pocket Costs for Marine Repair Technician Students**
One student noted that he has to go Beaver Dam for Mercury Motor Training and asked if the cost for this be included in the program fees ($300). Mimi Crandall noted that there are dollars available through Student Senate.

j. **Daycare**
One student asked why there isn’t any daycare for single parents who need to get an education. One student had to wait until her children were older to come to school.

k. **Additional Funding for Work Study**
Additional funding for federal work study is needed. Work study is one student’s only source of funding. The current work study wage is $8.50 and students can get up to $1,000 per semester (no adjustment for inflation has been made).

l. **Student Fitness Programs**
Students would like a workout facility on the campus. Other students asked if WITC could partner with local gyms (SNAP Fitness, Curves, and Chequamegon Health & Fitness Center) so that students could receive a discount.
m. **Positives**
   This is a wonderful school! Students get a job interview. Everyone who comes to school here gets a job!

n. **WITC Students to Talk to High School Students**
   It was recommended that WITC students should go to the high schools to talk to students about programs.