Shaping the Vision for the Future of the Division of Student Affairs
GTSC Case Study

Challenge

The Division of Student Affairs had experienced a variety of changes including some functions moving to other areas of the Institute. The Vice President of Student Affairs had recently left the organization and an interim leader was in place. This presented an opportunity to reestablish the value and focus of the Division of Student Affairs and gain clarity about how the Division could make a unique contribution to the Institute.

Service / Solutions

Strategic Consulting was asked to assist in developing a proposed future focus, purpose, goals, and potential structure of the division by gathering input from a range of stakeholder groups. The objectives of the project were to:

- Gain broad stakeholder input to understand the perceived value, impact, and unique contribution of Student Affairs to students, their families, and the Institute.
- Identify and document the inter-dependencies and interactions between Student Affairs and other units across the Institute.
- Engage stakeholders in creating a shared vision for the future of Student Affairs.
- Gather selected leadership and key stakeholder perspectives to define the ideal focus, functions, structure, location, and reporting relationship for Student Affairs.

Impact

The summary report provided to the Institute senior leaders articulated key themes collected through the visioning process, along with options for moving forward. An evaluation of the value of our services showed that:

- The focus group process gathered critical perspectives from stakeholders.
- The survey tools enabled the gathering of actionable feedback.
- The summary report provided information about the most important organizational opportunities.

Steering Committee members noted that the most significant value of our services was:

- “They articulated the needs of the division and made it clear what impact could be made by the division if we had enough resources.”
- “The expansive inclusion of many different people across all areas: students, faculty, staff, parents, etc.”
- “Giving members of the division the opportunity to share and highlight concerns.”

The visioning process also resulted in changing the name from Division of Student Affairs to Division of Student Life to better reflect the future direction of the Division.

Quoted in the student newspaper, Vice President and Dean of Students John Stein said, “The visioning project offers the division a blueprint for the future. It also reaffirmed the good work and value of the staff in the division. We will use the report to plan the future as we collectively set priorities for our work with students.”