Institution-Wide Partnerships to Enhance Student Service Quality

New ways of working in partnership, Oral

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Abstract:

In the current competitive and globalised higher education market, higher education institutions are increasingly being called to account for the quality of education and student experience that they provide. Service quality is one of the primary forces underlying competitive performance in the sector and, as such, must be situated at the forefront of strategic and operational planning and implementation. This presentation shares the University of Tasmania’s Vision for Student Service Quality and maps progress of the Vision since its establishment in 2014 against the desired outcomes. The Vision articulates a customer-centric student service model in which service quality is reliant on four key factors of influence, or Enablers: People and Capability, Physical and Virtual Spaces, Business Processes and Systems, and Evaluation and Business Intelligence. All of the Enablers are positioned within the broader student experience context, to ensure that students’ academic and graduate outcomes remain at the fore as the expectations and needs of students are considered. Fundamental to the success of the Vision is the need for whole of institution collaboration and investment in the Enablers, where institutional partnerships across organisational boundaries within the University together build effective practices and support strategies to enhance service quality. In this presentation, we describe the student service model and factors that underpin the Vision, examine the University’s current institutional performance in relation to student experience and service quality, and discuss the critical nature of cross-institutional partnerships for a vision of student service quality to succeed.

Biography:

Jane Skalicky is an Education specialist, having obtained her PhD in the Faculty of Education at the University of Tasmania in 2009, and has a research focus on student success in higher education. For the past ten years, Jane has held senior leadership positions at the University of Tasmania with both strategic and operational responsibilities in areas related to student learning, engagement and well-being. Currently, she holds the position of Associate Professor and Director of Student Retention and Success in the Student Experience portfolio of the University’s Academic Division. The position sees her leading a team of academic and professional staff and student leaders working across the University campuses to provide language and academic skills development, academic transition programs, career and leadership
development, and student advice and support, as well as a range of peer learning and engagement programs for all domestic and international students.

Stephanie Taylor is the Executive Director of the Student Experience portfolio at the University of Tasmania with strategic responsibility for the provision of high quality student experience and services across the institution. Working in partnership with the Academic Colleges, University Divisions and students, the portfolio spans the delivery of a broad range of services and initiatives which underpin the student experience including wellbeing, leadership, career development and employability, first and second tier student service and information, Indigenous student support, learning skills, student orientation and first year transition, engagement and events, sport and recreation and student living.