

# ***Redesigning America's Community Colleges***

## **Discussion Questions through Chapter 6 and the Conclusion**

### **Introduction**

1. What societal changes precipitated the attempts to reform community colleges? (pages 1-7)
2. What have been some of the reform attempts? Why haven't they been successful? (pages 7-12)
3. What is the *cafeteria model*? (pages 12-15) Where do you see this at San Jac?
4. What 4 areas does the Guided Pathways model address? (pages 16-18)

### **Chapter 1: Redesigning College Programs**

5. What are the pitfalls of the cafeteria model? (pages 21-28)
6. Why are articulation agreements sometimes not effective? (pages 29-30) Have you dealt with such issues in your division/department?
7. How does the cafeteria model inhibit learning? (pages 31-33) Do you see this at San Jac? Explain.
8. What is *active choice* and *default curriculum* and how do they work in the Guided Pathways model? (pages 36-41)
9. Of the example institutions given, is there any one model that might work best at SJC? (pages 41-50) Have you seen other models at San Jac that help students succeed through a program of study? Explain.

### **Chapter 2: Guiding Students**

10. What is the typical intake process in the cafeteria college? (pages 52-54) Do parts of the intake process at San Jac fit this description? Explain.
11. How are advising-related services and student success courses hampered by the structure of the cafeteria model? (pages 55-67)
12. In your division/department, how could you leverage in-person advising and student success courses using the Guided Pathways model? (pages 68-70)
13. Discuss the advantages of E-Advising systems. (pages 70-76)
14. Of the example institutions given, is there any one model that might work best at SJC? (pages 76-79)

### **Chapter 3: Rethinking Student Instruction**

15. The authors discuss academic challenges that are common among students at open-access colleges. (pages 81-85) Do you see these challenges in San Jac students? Do you see others?
16. Two distinct approaches to college teaching have been identified by researchers: knowledge transmission and learning facilitation. Discuss each approach. (pages 85-88)
17. How does the cafeteria college support the knowledge transmission approach? (pages 88-90) What challenges does this create in your division/department?
18. The authors raise issues regarding services such as tutoring, supplemental instruction, learning communities, and flexible online course options. (pages 90-97) Have you faced some of those issue in your division/department?
19. Four approaches are suggested in the book to help a college integrate the learning facilitation approach into every course in the curriculum. (pages 97-116) How could you use these suggestions to move toward the learning facilitation approach in your division/department?

## Chapter 4: Helping Underprepared Students

20. What are the major problems with standardized placement tests for developmental education? (pages 119-126)
21. How is instruction in developmental education different from typical academic courses? (pages 127-129) Where have you observed this at San Jac?
22. How could developmental education be tied with academic courses to provide an on-ramp to programs of study? (pages 129-132) Are you aware of successful attempts at San Jac?
23. How can placement tests be customized for different programs of study? (pages 129-132) How would this work in your division/department?
24. What other measures could we consider for developmental/academic placement? (pages 129-132)
25. What problems do accelerated classes address? (pages 132-135) Have you dealt with such problems in your division/department?
26. What are *meta-majors*? (pages 135-137)
27. What is a *high-expectations, high-support* model for developmental education? (pages 137-139)

## Chapter 5: Engaging Faculty and Staff

28. What does student-centered instruction look like? (pages 153-154) Where do you see this at San Jac?
29. Why is it crucial to analyze relevant data when questioning current practices? (pages 154-156) Where do you see this at San Jac?
30. How can we establish some room for exploration and still help students stay on track? (pages 154-156) How would this affect your division/department?
31. How can we use the power of cross-functional teams to create student pathways? (pages 156-159) How would this work in your division/department?
32. What three types of professional development are most useful to faculty and staff working to improve programs and instruction? (pages 156-159) What types of professional development do you think would be most helpful in your division/department for faculty and staff working on pathways?
33. How can we effectively incorporate part-time faculty into the pathways model at SJC? (pages 168-171)

## Chapter 6: The Cost of Redesign

34. According to the information in Chapter 6, how have community colleges {using the “cafeteria model” of education} historically reduced costs? Has San Jacinto College implemented any such policies and/or procedures? How effective have they been? (pages 173-175)
35. According to the text, what are some of the cost and benefits of Guided Pathways? (pages 175-184)
36. What is “performance funding?” Can performance funding lead to barriers for student success? How is San Jacinto College impacted by such funding? (pages 185-188)
37. What does it mean to “unbundle” instructional and credential-granting activities? How might this lower costs? There is little research into the effectiveness of such practices; however, what are some possible consequences of such an approach? (pages 193-197)

**Conclusion:** Based on the material contained within this book and on the subsequent discussions that have taken place throughout the semester, respond to the following:

38. Identify the key differences between the “cafeteria” model of higher education and Guided Pathways?
39. Are the programs at SJC designed to help students to enter further education and employment in fields of importance to our region?
40. How can SJC effectively map programs to facilitate completion {degree or transfer}?
41. How can we at SJC make sure that students know what courses they should take and in what sequence?
42. Are the courses critical for success in each program clearly identified?
43. How can we ensure that everyone in the college takes ownership of his or her part in transitioning to a Guided Pathways model of education?