

Trinity Together

Best Practice

12/28/2020

Name of Best Practice: Senior Seminar

Contact Information:

Teckla Johnson 651-734-3835, teckla@thewatershedcenter.com

Anna Carson 530-902-2731, anna@thewatershedcenter.com

Overview of Best Practice

Problem:

- No class that was directed at promoting, implementing and supporting work-based learning opportunities.
- Counseling Department had to use core classes to speak to seniors.
- No class that promoted life skills such as personal finances.

Change:

- Implementation of a Senior Seminar class at Trinity High School.

Impact:

- In partnership with Trinity Together, the senior seminar provides a platform for students to engage in internships and job shadows. In fact, the course requires students to participate in an internship, and we had several potential placements speak to the class, and 14 interns this semester. The Counseling Department is able to use this class to target seniors for FASFA and scholarship completion, and other important senior year activities. Further, this course helps to teach students about life skills such as personal finance and budgeting - an area that many students identified as needing more direction on.

Key Details

Length:

- Each class is designed to last 2 semesters. This particular course lasts 90 minutes, and this can be helpful if an instructor would like to build in time for students to do work-based learning.

Setting:

- Senior Seminar classes are designed for seniors in a classroom setting. While the size of the class has no bearing on what content is delivered, the size and receptiveness of the community will dictate how many students can be supported in work-based learning opportunities.

Activity:

Trinity Together

Best Practice

12/28/2020

- Trinity Together began conversations with the school and counseling department. We also set up informal meetings between key staff and alumni of Senior Seminar classes that occurred on different campuses in order for the alumni to talk about the benefits with decision makers. Trinity Together provided the new instructor with course outlines from other schools/programs and currently works with that instructor to coordinate opportunities between students, and businesses in the community. Trinity Together also works to coordinate this program through Shasta College Worksite Learning so that students have the ability to earn college and extra high school credits. A high school instructor teaches the course 2-3 days a week and makes decisions on classroom content.

Reasoning:

- Senior Seminar is an ideal course for a high school as it blends community needs with the high school and student needs. There is so much content that can be taught in this course to prepare students for "real world" activities.

How Do You Know Your Practice Worked:

- 14 students participated in an internship this semester, which is a record number during the school year. We were also able to bring students into contact with potential worksites early on, using the classroom as a presentation platform. Earlier than in years past, students were able to be matched up with a placement. We also know that this course exists in other schools, and they report better quality scholarship applications and greater community engagements among students do to service requirements.

Necessary Tools:

- Attached is a syllabus for an established Senior Seminar course at Hayfork High School.

Tips for Implementation:

- Senior Seminar is a great way to build a link from school to community. The ability to engage students in community activities with service opportunities and internships is valuable to both businesses and students. If you have a community partner who is willing to collaborate with you and set up these opportunities, it is helpful for the instructor. Because Senior Seminar courses are not unheard of, you will have access to a lot of pre-existing material and should take advantage of it.