Global Trends in Developing, Facilitating and Evaluating Co-Curricular Activities in Higher Education

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Dr. Doris M. Ching served the State of Hawaii and University of Hawaii (UH) in diverse and challenging roles. Before her appointment to the office of Vice President for Student Affairs, she served as middle school teacher, associate professor and associate dean of education, and assistant to the UH President. Throughout her career, she increased the quality of education, improved campus life, and advocated for success of all students in secondary and higher education.

As vice president and advocate of success of all students, Dr. Ching promoted the rights of students; initiated and guided the development of more than a dozen new programmes for students; and upgraded and expanded existing services to meet the changing needs of UH students. She was instrumental in the design and building of the Queen Liliuokalani Center for Student Services at the University of Hawaii at Manoa, which brought the many services for students into one prominent campus location. Each year, the Dr. Doris Ching Endowed Scholarship provides financial support to students at all UH campuses.

Dr. Ching served on national boards and commissions of Golden Key International Honour Society, Western Interstate Commission on Higher Education, Leadership Education for Asian Pacifics, North American Interfraternal Foundation, Asian Pacific Islander American Scholarship Fund, and on accreditation teams of universities in California, Hawaii and Guam. She served on numerous local civic boards and commissions and received dozens of local and national awards. She received the Bachelor of Education and Master of Education from UH and Doctor of Education from Arizona State University. She was the first Asian American president of the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) and the NASPA Foundation. She continues to serve as mentor to hundreds of students, faculty, staff and colleagues in administration across the United States of America.
Recent directions in developing, facilitating and evaluating co-curricular activities are not new concepts. What characterizes them as current global trends is the intensity with which they are now being considered. Outcomes-based assessment has evolved as one means of evaluating programmes and demonstrating quality in higher education. Student satisfaction surveys alone are no longer sufficient in addressing the public’s demand for assurance that college graduates are prepared for life with meaningful careers and skills to contribute to a better society. While the form of quality assurance varies among countries around the world, the global trend of demonstrating quality and value in higher education is prominent.

Educators are increasingly recognizing the value of co-curricular activities to student success. Researchers have documented evidence that a student’s active engagement in campus activities and civic involvement is essential to the student’s total college experience and development as an educated person. The co-curricular programme’s importance in students’ educational success inspires new ways to strengthen collaboration and partnership of student affairs and academic affairs. Greater opportunities are now presented for co-curricular programmes in higher education to take more significant and active roles in student learning. Some co-curricular programmes are at new, higher levels of inclusion in the teaching and learning process.

Among the numerous models of integrating co-curricular activities in teaching and learning, some programmes have especially shown to enhance student learning outcomes in meaningful ways, such as service learning, student leadership training; student engagement in campus life; new student orientation; and other activities outside the classroom that impact institutional effectiveness. The public’s call for evidence of quality learning is requiring institutions of higher education to pay closer attention to strategic planning and programme evaluation. Examples of the development and assessment of co-curricular programmes that have enhanced student transformative learning and had an influential role in advancing the institution’s academic mission will be cited.