**Lisa Brewster Interview**

Learn about inquiry and action teams and how they help college educators continually improve their craft.

**AS** [00:00:00] For today's podcast is a pleasure to have Dr. Lisa Brewster. Dr. Brewster began her higher education career in 1992. During her master's program in speech communications at San Francisco State University in 1999, Lisa moved from San Francisco, where she taught in the communications department at the University of San Francisco, to begin her career as a faculty member at Miramar College in San Diego. During her tenure at Miramar, Lisa has had many opportunities to engage in conversations about the evolution of higher education, serving as the Learning Outcomes coordinator, when SLOs were being introduced to community colleges, as the Basic Skills Coordinator, when California began the redesign of developmental courses, and now with Guided Pathways. As a change agent, lisa takes pride in building a collaborative process where faculty, classified professionals, and managers collectively work together to institutionalize strategies aimed at improving student success and equity. Welcome to the Student Success Podcast, Lisa.

**Lisa Brewster** [00:01:01] Thank you, Dr. Al, for inviting me. It's an honor to be a part of your podcast series.

**AS** [00:01:07] Well, thank you. I always like to start the podcast by asking guests if they wouldn't mind sharing something outside of work, perhaps a hobby or a story or a special talent. So would you, could you share something, please?

**Lisa Brewster** [00:01:21] I am very creative and so I have for many years searched for something that would allow me to have my creative input into it. And so I've done lots of things over the years. But recently, with the invention of the cricket machine and all the pieces that go with it, I've learned to take my creativity and then be able to create something. And so I've worked towards mastering how do I make mugs that go in the dishwasher? How do I make travel mugs and stainless zero water bottles, and how do I make T-shirts? And so I've taken my creativity and I've been able to take photos that I take throughout the years and put them on coasters or mugs or t shirts. I've been able to make banners. And so for me, it's that combination of that creativity and then that output, which I always love, kind of carrying something that I know that no one else in the world has because I was the one who created it.

**AS** [00:02:25] What's a cricket machine?

**Lisa Brewster** [00:02:27] So a cricket machine is you have almost like a Canva account through a company called Cricket, and then you can print almost anything. So stickers or depending on the material, you can engrave and things. And so I started off just with simple things, right? How to create cards and then moved to stickers. And now I've moved to other products. So my family, they get so much stuff that's personalized just towards them. So I have a ball with it.

**AS** [00:03:02] So. Lisa Swag.

**Lisa Brewster** [00:03:04] Lisa Swag, Yes.

**AS** [00:03:07] Do you have any favorites that you have created and perhaps if you have some picks, I can add them to the Shownotes.

**Lisa Brewster** [00:03:14] Yes. So I say I laugh, I get all the ones that are like the mess ups where I'm learning how to do it. But I went to Hawaii and I took pictures of like rainbows and dolphins. And so I figured out how to put them on coasters and then I figured out how to print them and put them on water bottles, stainless steel water bottles. And so I think my favorite, the thing that I'm kind of getting real comfortable with is the stainless steel water bottles. And so figuring out how to wrap it, not to get a seam, and how to design it for the person that I'm making it for.

**AS** [00:03:50] That's wonderful. Thank you for sharing that. You know, I think as educators, we can get so bogged down on the day to day. You know, we don't put in 40 hours. We put in way more than that. And we try to have balanced spend time with family. We try to, perhaps some of us do exercising or whatever. But what you're doing, I think, is really cool because we don't, I don't think we do enough to have that creativity to just sit down for a moment, perhaps draw, sketch or what you're doing. So, Lisa, I first had the experience with Miramar, this is now, gosh, five, six years ago when the Guided Pathways work was starting. There were all sorts of workshops on the assessment that the state provided and to kind of know your baseline where you're at. And I remember, I was at a table and it was Miramar's table, and that was my first exposure to Miramar. And then some years later, just for transparency, I have been coaching Miramar. I was asked to, hey, come over and help us out. And I'm all about just doing the work. Let's do some work. Enough talking, Enough planning to plan and planning to plan more then talk more. Let's just start doing some work. I had explained this concept of developing inquiry & action teams. Colleges throughout the country had developed these meta-majors that are called different things at different campuses. They're called ACPs or CAPs or areas of interest. And I said, well, why don't we form teams around them? I got a process for this. And you, Lisa, you just ran with it. This is the third in a series of podcasts on inquiry and action teams. So we like to learn about Miramar's story with them because the process is agnostic. It's not prescriptive, but it's also not under specified where a team looks at data, not very long, it's already spoon fed to them, the equity, and let's move forward with a data informed purpose statement and action. Let's get an action plan and start doing things. As I like to say, sometimes excellence can be defined by doing the ordinary extraordinarily well. So can you take us through the beginning kind of where was Miramar at that time when I was brought in? What did you do to bring some teams together? Can you explain those teams? And then my follow up question after you explain all of that, will be about the work of the teams. But for now, just where was the campus at and how did you get these teams together? Get the coalition of the willing, as I like to say.

**Lisa Brewster** [00:06:33] That is a lot to unpack. So I'm going to go back just a little bit. Right. So the very first time where you sat at the Miramar table, I was not at that event and actually I was not even involved with guided pathways at that point. So Miramar was fairly toxic and we've had a changing of the guard. So changing in the administration, and when Guided Pathways Initiative started in the state of California, we automatically got this funding in the college itself formed a committee of 35. Now, I did not want to be a part of a committee of 35 to figure out how do we move forward, how do we implement the Guided Pathways framework and what does that look like? It took three years of conversation, and I think the very first time that they met you was in that first three years where they were trying to figure it out. They finally got to the point where they recognized that a committee of 35 wasn't actually going to move anything on campus. And so they needed to really kind of look at how do they create a structure on the campus that will engage people in a conversation. And this happened as we started changing the a senior leadership on campus. And so we started to look at, well, they started to look at how do we actually get a group of people who are going to do the work. And so they put the call out for the very first Guided Pathways team, and that's when I applied and was appointed one of the Guided Pathways co-coordinators. And so at that point it became critical that we really started to look at building community on the campus because if we were ever going to make any change with student success and really look at the data, we had to get people to understand that this was a different approach and a different way of working and it was transparent and we were encouraging people to participate and communicate. So we spent the first six months before we contacted you all really looking at what does the campus, what are the issues that are going to impede us from moving forward with guided pathways, who are the players that we need to engage with in this conversation, and then what is the low hanging fruit or what can we start with, which would be the least contentious on campus? And so we got all excited. We worked with the RP Group and we got a list of what our meta-majors would be, which we called interest areas now called academic and career pathways. And so we started to look at the connection between classes and disciplines and majors and careers. And once we had that, we were really feeling confident that we could move forward to identify what our meta-majors were. And so we planned this whole event and it's a planning summit. We have it every year. There's usually 150 people that attend faculty, staff and administrators. And it was, I think, the Wednesday or Thursday before the event and COVID shut down the entire campus. And so we moved to online and not the actual event because everybody was just reeling and trying to figure out what was going on in the world, but really as a way to survey people, engage people. And when the campus kind of got rolling again, start the inquiry and action process into the meta-majors and then in comes Al. So it was almost kind of simultaneous that we were working on all of this. And Al came on as our consultant to really help us. And that was tremendous. So if I move from there forward, I think that's where we can see the biggest impact in how the Guided Pathways Framework has changed the campus. So we started with inquiry and action in the Interest area success teams, so we called them IASTs and so our meta majors were solid for where we were, but recognizing that we weren't on campus and not everybody was participating, we knew that they would evolve. Disclaimer: They have since evolved a little bit, but we started with what we had and then it was literally reaching out to people and asking them if they would be interested in looking at the data to develop strategies and interventions to increase student success for disproportionately impacted students. So we started with English and math, and that was a very deliberate conversation that we had on campus. And again, you have to remember it was mostly in a very small, small group with the leadership on campus and then the Guided Pathways Committee, which was five people or six people at that time. And so we really started to have conversations and if we were going to move the needle, we wanted the English and math folks who were already working on the basic skills information to really take a look at the data and see if there were other strategies and interventions. So we started with two teams STEM and then also what we've later defined as HALC, which is humanities, arts, languages and communications. And we started the inquiry and action process in that first semester. There was a lot of hand-holding in that first semester, but mostly it was by you, Al, not me. And so as the Guided Pathways Coordinator, there was a very deliberate effort on my part to step back. So if we look at the culture of the campus at that time and still today, there's a lot, there was a lot of and it's decreasing, but there was a lot of mistrust and there was a lot of belief that we had hidden agendas moving forward, trying to change things in a way that would match with where leadership had wanted them to be. And so in an effort to try to build that community and really emphasize the fact that guided pathways was not directed by anyone except for the people who are engaged and involved, and that the framework had certain goals that we were working towards. But there was no plan. And I think I heard it in one of the meetings with you, Al, and other go to Pathways Coordinators, but I often use the analogy that I am building a bridge and they are literally on my heels and I'm throwing the boards down as we're all trailing forward in what guided pathway should be like. And I wanted them to understand that path has not been predetermined. And there are plenty of times that I put down a board and have to pick it up and move it and go another way, because the larger group has decided that they would like to try this intervention. So one of the exciting pieces of guided pathways is these interest area success teams actually worked just amongst themselves. So what did these teams look like? So we started with two teams and each semester we would add more teams so that where they could get the individualized attention from you now as they're moving through the inquiry and action process, but then also have the space and the place to really kind of figure things out. And so the first two teams had five faculty members. One was a faculty lead and they got a little bit more of of a stipend to actually be the lead, and that's to pull together the nodes to make sure people are meeting, to kind of coordinate everything. But the other four faculty were in the discipline, and then we also or the disciplines within the interest areas or meta majors, but we also deliberately put one counseling faculty member on each team to offer a different perspective. And when the teams had a classified professional who volunteered or had asked to participate, we figured out a way to compensate them as well. And then we gave them the time and the space to go through the data. And I love that it was set out that there was only going to be three meetings to look at the data and the prep before myself and the ACP or interest area lead would go through the data and pulled together a PowerPoint and presented to it to the team. And then the team would take that data and they would figure out how do they want to use that data? What does that data mean to their students and what interventions? There was no guidelines except for at the end they had to try some strategy or intervention, and it had to be rooted in the research based on the data. And so those were really the only guidelines. And it was incredible to see how the teams differed, both in their understanding of the data, the strategies and interventions and then the approaches that they took. But as the coordinator who was meeting with them and kind of reading their documents and going through what they were doing, I saw that they were hitting the same thing just in different ways. And so that same thing is they recognized that the biggest concern that we had for our students was that they didn't feel like they belonged to either a community or the college. And so it was, how do we build that community?

**AS** [00:16:09] Thank you for that. The background, and I'll be honest, when I was at that table, what I saw was low morale years ago and I just felt bad. And it was all around. I saw faculty with their shoulders down, administrators. It was just a very interesting culture and, I'm all about, I say this all the time, I say, attitudes and behaviors change, culture begins to change, through the work. You just got to start doing some work. And you did. You got the coalition of the willing, you got those two teams. They started going through the process, now behind the scenes, we're also having weekly settings. We have weekly settings with key leadership. And it's a what I called a problem solving setting. We're working. We got our, we got our plan. We know we're going to support teams. We got, you got other things going on. You're working on your course sequencing program, maps, the website. There was a lot of other things going on, but we met weekly to problem solve. All of the obstacles that eventually come up when you're implementing. So that was really important. Can you unpack a little bit more what the teams did? What were their strategies for those two teams?

**Lisa Brewster** [00:17:28] So I want to before I go into all of that, I want to stop because I want to say since then we still have maintained our weekly meetings with the two vice presidents, and I think that's a critical component to them, seeing what's happening, the concerns that people on the campus are having. But it's also morphed into now where I have weekly meetings with the deans. I have monthly meetings with different faculty groups. I have individual meetings with the vice president. I have counseling, counseling, faculty member that I will start meeting with regularly coming up here soon. So these one on ones have really grown into it's the way I feel like I've become the connector, right? So I've been the center piece that kind of lets everybody knows, like, here's all the things that are going on in the different arenas on campus. Here's how it's affecting or how Guided Pathways is kind of influenced or part of or engaged in, but then also connecting with other programs. So I think at the end of the day, I can honestly say that the Guided Pathways Framework has actually implemented almost every aspect of the college. And so by allowing the leadership team to kind of be engaged and involved and then giving me the space and the place to connect with different people, we've been able to do a lot more than I ever anticipated. But it all starts to with the interest areas success teams, our metaa major success teams. So those two teams met 3 hours a month, two times a month for an hour and a half. And both of them looked at the data and both of them identified that building community is important. Both groups identified that students of color and it was different depending on the different groups, really were not connecting and completing and being successful in the programs. And so they looked at that one issue and they looked at it in two different ways. So the first way I can talk about is what the how or humanities, arts, languages and communications success team looked at is they looked at the fact that we were online, right? So it was 2020 when they started and all of our classes were online and our students were not getting the same information in different classes or building community. So what that group looked at and it had a representative from almost every discipline in that meta major, what they looked at is they looked at how do we connect with our students in a very different way. And they wanted to make sure that there was some sort of individualized attention that was being given to students and then a report back mechanism to the faculty so they could continue to evolve their classes. So they created multiple different projects, but all of them focused around teaching and learning. And so they started to look at surveys that could be given out and how do we give these student surveys to determine who our students are to give them the resources or access to the resources. And then what are things that faculty can do in their classes? So really, it became a professional development for faculty and it included the research office. So as a result, now we have a beginning of the semester, a mid-semester and an end of the year semester survey that we're looking to figure out how can we give this survey to students in our current ACP canvas shells, but then also make it so that students have immediate follow up? So that's something we're working on this semester. The STEM group, they actually looked at building community and they when they looked at their data, they recognized that first of all, their students of color are not successful in their beginning math classes. And so to them, that was a huge red flag because they found that when students couldn't pass that math class, oftentimes they dropped out. So we didn't have the capability at that time to track if the students switched majors, what happened to the level or detail that the STEM group wanted. So we've worked on collecting the research and we've been working with the district on how do we get that data, get it so that we can actually use it in a real time way. And then we also started to look at learning communities. But just so we were doing the pilot and we were looking at it, we actually called them paired courses, not learning communities. And we paired a math class with a personal growth class, but in a very deliberate manner that we actually paired it with the counselor, faculty member who was serving on the success team. So was aware of what the discussions were, we're aware of what the strategies were, had done the research on it. And so we're just waiting for that data to come back. I should have it in February. The second project that the STEM team did in the STEM team was unique. It looked at its data and it said, Oh, wait a minute, we're going to break up into two teams will meet, but we're also going to work on our own and figure this out. So the second team worked on a mentoring program and how did they develop a faculty student mentoring program where they could do multitude of things. Faculty would be assigned students. Students would sign up to participate, and then there would be some sort of conversations that would ensue. There would also be group mentoring events, and they identified three topics, three workshops, and it would be open again. We were all online. So all of these things were being done in Zoom as a result of STEM's work and the I guess the snowball effect of how it really kind of grew. The STEM group went out and wrote a Title V STEM grant for HSIs. And so they're looking at now, how do they continue to grow both of those, the paired courses and the mentoring program. To open it up to more STEM students and then in another separate grant that the STEM group wrote, which was the I3 grant, they actually started to connect with business and with humanities, and they wanted to look at how do we get more of a mentoring program that's going to give our students the opportunity to do real life social justice projects. And so there's a whole different group that's working on that as well. So it's been kind of exciting to see that each of these groups looked at almost the same thing, came up with different approaches or strategies, and then how it's kind of snowballed into the whole campus.

**AS** [00:24:28] Yes, the first team, and beyond the survey, they really focus on the teaching and learning. How do we continually improve our craft in an online environment? And then the second team, as you said, they came up with the two strategies. I think I want to mention that the process in the beginning does sometimes require, not heavy hand-holding, but as a coach, I just want to make sure, because I have these teams going on, I'm so fortunate, I'm so grateful that some colleges have wanted to do this, it's just to ensure that, and it doesn't always go this way, but I just want to make sure it doesn't go into external attributions, like focusing on external things, things that we cannot control. This is where teams get bogged down, by the way. There's data coaching models out there, and there are data coaches that campuses don't even know where to embed them, but when they embed, the conversations are more about the data and why is the data telling us that? And now give me data on what high schools they came from. I always use as an example because it comes up a lot. That has no bearing on anything because you have no control over that. Any time I start to hear any kind of student deficit talk, I kindly challenge it, and focus our attention on what we have control over. And the teams do, after looking at the data, have to do a little bit of research, and the nice thing about documenting their journey is that they can use all or all the content, the research that they did actually for grants. So that's a nice plus. That's what the STEM team did. Now, here's the thing about grants. What I would say is part of this process is to make sure we do the work and sometimes we just cannot wait on a grant because grants are very difficult to secure. So I just want to be clear that we work toward action. But sometimes waiting for a grant is not the best idea, even though you've got a lot of the content there for a grant, but it is a plus that you have it there in case you want to go for a grant. Can you then describe the next group, the next cohort of, and by the way, you're doing a lot of the behind the scenes work to bring the coalition of the willing, right? So the first two teams had that experience and now you created a form, an application to be part of this, the team to formalize who's going to be a part of this. And so what was the next set of teams? And can you unpack a little bit what they did?

**Lisa Brewster** [00:27:02] I can so and I am the behind the scenes working all the time to try to make sure that the teams are connecting, have access to the resources, are moving along in the manner that's going to allow them to have these conversations in a safe environment, but also in an environment that's going to really emphasize student success. I do have to give kudos to our researcher, Xi (pronouced "she"). Because Xi and Laura Gonzales had worked very hard to create a data and equity coaching community or DEACC program, and it was borne out of the Strong Workforce initiative. But so that is where we piloted DEACC, the data and equity coaching community. But they created a phenomenal program where many of the faculty members who were serving on these success teams had actually gone through that DEACC program. And so having access to the data beforehand, they were asked to look at their personal classes that help them, so when they got into these communities, they at least knew how to use our data dashboard and were comfortable with it, had looked at some of the data. So some of the questions, I think were kind of stopped because they were already familiar with it, and then new faculty that were coming on board that hadn't participated in DEACC, that the group, the success team was actually introducing them. So when we got to the next two success teams, which were business and entrepreneurship and social and behavioral sciences and education, we actually had DEACC mentors who were on the team. So those people had not only learned how to use the data dashboard, but were teaching other faculty and staff how to use it. So we got into those groups and it was so funny to see, like all of a sudden we're moving in the same line, right? And I'm feeling like the first two groups are really kind of working on the same basic kind of concern. And then all of a sudden we go, hoo, and we veer off to the right and to the left. And so we started to see that when you have different eyes that are looking at data, you actually have different perspectives. And those different perspectives are what we as a college can use to help our students. And so ultimately we're looking at building community. But if you look at the approaches that were taken, you'll see that community means different people, different things to different people. So when we look at what the business and entrepreneurship really focused on for their success team, they looked at the data, the fact that and by now we were starting to get access to data to how many students were in the ACP's, how many students on their application were marking they wanted to belong to this ACP. And so what business and entrepreneurship team realized is that a vast majority of our students are either undecided or they declare themselves as business majors. But they knew from being in the classroom and teaching those classes that oftentimes students declared business major because that's just what you do. You become a business major, but they didn't know what that meant. So they really focused on and I do have to say the counseling faculty on their team was the career, the career center coordinator. So I'm sure that she had a great influence on this. But what they focused on is how do we get students to explore careers? And then recognize the pathway that they want to go into the business and entrepreneurship. They planned out the next five years, they knew each project they wanted to do, databases they wanted to create. And so they were extremely detailed, recognizing step by step they were going to do things, but starting with the basics. So since we've been looking at how do we actually get students to explore career early on in their education, what does that look like? Is it just business? Is there other courses, introductory courses? You know, how do we give assignments to students? That's relevant in the different types of classes. So their work has actually sparked a much larger conversation and has connected with the Professional Development Office. And we've been offering, like Light the Fire Professional Development or PD program. What social and behavioral sciences and education did is we knew that we needed a way to form a community with students. They started still during the pandemic, so we were still online. And so we started to look at ways like, how do we connect our students? Obviously, Canvas was the easy, natural answer for us because all of our students were on campus. And so social and behavioral sciences spent a great deal of time and developed a fabulous shell, a canvas shell that we've been able to take back to the campus. And we're continuing to evolve that and grow it so that we can enroll every student in the canvas shell. They can communicate through announcements. Students have a way of knowing what's coming up on current campus, how they can get involved, how they can be successful. And then we also have a success coach that we've been able to put, it's a part time employee of the campus, a classified professional that we've been able to put in every ACP as a way to communicate with our students. So they built that canvas shell that's allowed us then to say, okay, let's build a team. And so that's where we are in the next iteration of our success teams, is let's build teams for each ACP and figure out how can we use all the resources we currently have and make it more of a package for our students.

**AS** [00:32:55] So people listening may go, well, you know, our campus is working on online teaching and learning. We have paired courses, yeah, mentoring, we do that, career stuff, communication, we do that. There's a difference between doing something and then doing it well. And because we gave these teams a setting, a time and a place to get important work done, a process and support, the quality of their action plan allowed them to thoughtfully implement. Therefore, helping to increase the quality of that implementation. The other thing that I want to mention is that look how far the campus has come from five years ago. And can you unpack a little bit about how by having these teams and then others hearing about the work and then how this work is influencing broader initiatives on campus? Can you talk about a little bit about the impact of this? I'd like to use the analogy or metaphor, you'll have to correct me. If you have a bowl, a fish bowl of water. Right. But if you add a little bit of dye, like blue dye, just a drop, that will still have an impact. Right. Even though it's not, it doesn't turn it into super dark color fishbowl. Nonetheless, it's turns into very, very light blue. And that's kind of how I like to explain these teams as that as they're working, ultimately, they become these little drops and you get more of the coalition of the willing, and then people see that we're doing the work. It spurs on other ideas. And so can you talk about how this has had an impact on the culture? And then, I remember we had other teams, they weren't all by meta-major. We put together an inquiry and action onboarding team. Right. But before we get to that, can you just explain more about the impact of this process on so many people on campus?

**Lisa Brewster** [00:35:05] I think that's probably the most exciting part of what Guided Pathways is doing for Miramar. And I do have to take a step back and say it's intentionality. So everything was done with intentionality, and the intentionality was how does this become a campus wide, college wide effort and not a select few? How do we use a leadership style that's going to encourage people to want to participate, knowing that their voice and their opinions matter? And so there was intentionality in everything that was happening with guided pathways. And I alluded to this earlier, and I think I said it out loud is that I intentionally did not put myself on any success team as the coordinator. I knew that I would be privy to the information and we had monthly meetings, but it wasn't important for my voice or anyone on the team's voice to be a part of those conversations. It had to come from the faculty members and staff members in that area who wanted to share their ideas, feel like they could freely share their ideas because they're communicating with people they know. That might not sound like an important piece of information, but it was critical for Miramar, because if we go back to the fact that we had a culture of mistrust where everyone felt like things that were done or said could come back to them. We had to create this environment where people felt like they could talk and share, be honest with one another, and that would push the initiative even further. And I love your analogy of the drop a single drop of blue dye in a bowl of fish water or a fish bowl water. Because the truth is, is it we dropped just I don't even know if it was one drop. It might have even been like, you know, a quarter of a drop. And there was a hint of blue. It was definitely not light blue in any way, shape or form. But then that drop or became a half a drop and then it became a full drop. And then conversations started happening outside and it's morphed into something more than I could ever imagine or I could ever make it right. It's not a Guided Pathways done by the Guided Pathways team. It's kind a Pathways framework being institutionalized by Miramar College. And I think that's probably the thing that I'm most excited about, is to get the campus to have these conversations. And again, it's the coalition of the willing, right? And I think we're just moving past the coalition of the willing. And I can't say that we don't have people who still are against because we do have people who are against the change. But change is slow and change is difficult. And change requires right you to be uncomfortable. And some people aren't there yet. But I truly believe that our water is now blue and we are making a difference. And so I know there's different teams working on different projects, and I can honestly say we're in the beginning, I kind of kept my finger on where things were going and what was happening. I can't do that anymore because I know that strategic enrollment management, we had a small, small grant that we got that at least started the ball rolling. And then from that it got taken over by a whole group of faculty members and staff and administrators on campus that are working on a project. And when they shared it the other day, I kind of sat back and, you know, put my hands in my pockets and laughed and said, those are the Guided Pathways goals and objectives and that strategic enrollment management goals and objectives and the alignment between equity and guided pathways which the equity plan was done by a group of faculty, staff and administrators on campus. And again, I, I didn't want to insert myself in a team knowing that I come from a different perspective, but they came up with the same goals and objectives that Guided Pathways has. And it just is so nice to see how all these different facets of the campus are linking back to the initial goal that Miramar College had for guided pathways. And that is how we build community with our campus community, how we build community with our students, and how we increase persistence, retention and completion rates.

**AS** [00:39:57] And at some point, you don't even have to call it guided pathways anymore, right? It's what you do. This is just what we do. We have a student journey framework and we look at our practices within the student journey framework and what can we continually improve, what can we work on and do one or two or three things and do them well. And that's what the inquiry and action team showed, is that we can begin to work together, that we can begin to have conversations where people might feel a little vulnerable, but then ultimately, ultimately they feel safe, and then they come up with ideas that they looked at the research and now they're trying to implement them. And that has a huge impact on the campus so far. If the same group [from five years ago] met again at a table, in my view, I don't think there would be kind of those shoulders down that that head is down, right. I just don't think maybe some still I don't know for whatever reason. Right. But for the most part, I just see a positive, it's just a different vibe. Right? And you just got to keep working on it. When you inherit a particular culture, and I'm not pointing fingers, it's just sometimes we come into a situation and we have, oh, oh this is the culture, all of this mistrust. Oh, we work in silos. That's great. Oh, and, and we just got to create these settings, a process, and just have people do the work. And when they do the work, they begin to collaborate and communicate with others. Are there any other teams or projects that you, as we wind down here, that you would like to share?

**Lisa Brewster** [00:41:42] There's so much going on on campus right now. I mean, down to the the redesign of certain pages of our Web pages. Right. And so there's so much that is happening that at some point the silos are starting to break down. And I'm excited to say that we have really started to look at how do we institutionalize. And I think that's the biggest conversation because if Guided Pathways Framework is going to make a difference, how do we institutionalize things? So that's led to the reorganization of the college. And so moving through deliberately, the Business office, the Student Services office instruction, and how do we reorganize and reallocate some of the positions to make sure that the student success framework, the Guided Pathways framework, is moving forward. And so we have lots of things that are happening. Outreach has really kind of connected more directly with guided pathways. And so one of the counselors is now working in the outreach office, connecting the guided pathways and the outreach office, and it's really outreach and in-reach because they do so much more than just outreach to our local community. And then we also are starting a counseling faculty member success team to really look at and dissect what does it mean to have a counselor embed in the ACP and what does that job description look like and what are, you know, what does that do? So we're really starting to have the deliberate conversations and break down the silos and then ask people honest, their honest opinions of what does this look like. And then I think one of the most important things that we're doing is we're taking a step back. So we continue to have retreats for guided pathways that have 45 or more people in attendance at them. But really looking at here's what we did, here's what didn't work, you know, what's your feedback on it? Where do you want to go? And so we've done that every semester, and I think that's allowed the conversation to even roll and snowball even further is by bringing the intentional, deliberate people in. Have the room having those conversations, asking them to go back out. But I'm not going to lie. So there's a lot of things are still have to be done. There's still faculty and staff that have no idea what guided pathways is. I send out a monthly newsletter. I go to a million meetings. I share what's going on. But there's still some that have no idea. So it's how do we move past the coalition of the willing and how do we broaden understanding and include those people who haven't either wanted to or had the opportunity to or even know of the Guided Pathways Framework and how do we get them involved. So I'm excited for what the future holds. We are doing currently a planning of our ACP roll out from the fall. What went right? What went wrong? What do we need to work on? And so in that we're really making a more deliberate goal of trying to include voices that we haven't heard so far. So I'm hopeful and I'm looking forward to see what Fall 2023 brings about as we start to track the next pilot of new incoming students in our ACP.

**AS** [00:45:14] I'm so proud of the Miramar faculty, the Miramar instructional faculty I worked with, they're just so phenomenal. It's so great to work with. Once we give them that space and there were collaborating and brainstorming. I just love their their energy. I love the fact, I'm so proud of the counseling faculty that were embedded to extent we were able to get Classifed Professionals. And I and I'm also really grateful for the administration, the the willingness to meet weekly. By the way, for listeners, that's not always the case. Just, it was needed sometimes, and it's a very productive meeting. We don't just meet to meet. It's not one of those meetings where it could have been an email because, you know, the college was in a certain spot, right? And we had to move it to another spot to create a more healthy culture. And having those weekly settings where administration to help problem solve things. Were there hurdles? Absolutely. Did we make changes? Absolutely. But at least we were thoughtful and really thinking about that collaboration piece and how to move forward. So I am just so ecstatic about all of this foundational work and where now Miramar is taking it. And obviously, thank you for all of the behind the scenes work. As we wind down here, I just have one more question, Lisa. So imagine someone at another campus is just beginning to take the role of Guided Pathways coordinator and they have a similar situation that you had, mistrust, right? You use the word toxic. And again, it's not to point fingers. There's a level of toxicity and dysfunction everywhere. I don't want this to be a podcast of Miramar is toxic. No, I mean, everybody has their level. It's just you had a very special level a few years back and I just felt so bad, especially for faculty at the time. So anyway, my point is, what advice would you give that person as they try to navigate and implement positive change and help have a healthier culture?

**Lisa Brewster** [00:47:31] I think you have to look at your culture. I think that's an important thing and you have to look at where they are and then you have to look at who you are, right, and your personality and you have to be able to do two things. One, you have to be able to make those connections, individual connections with people. And I say, I went to my friends first, right? So that people that you had those relationships with. And you also have to be willing to say and show that you don't know everything and that you are on this journey with them and that there's no right or there's no wrong. And so even when they were going down a path and maybe I didn't see it or I wasn't sure it wasn't me to judge, it was them to figure out the journey. And I think that was important as well. And the ability for me as the coordinator to take a step back and allow the teams to develop as teams without a coordinator telling them where to go or what to do or what to think. Now, I'm not saying we didn't have monthly meetings with the leads where we were sharing ideas and giving suggestions, but I'm just saying like the actual day to day, it's pretty rare for me to be engaged to the point where I often say on campus, it's not the Lisa show. So it's not about Lisa making the change. It's about how do we get the college to make a change. And then the other thing is. And the people on your campus that are safe, because in the beginning that was the easiest way to move forward was finding this safe people who were the change agents who wanted things to grow. Who were the people who are involved in everything? Those are the people you come to. And I think you draw in. When you go home, remember, it's not a personal reflection of who you are, that this is sometimes going to be a messy, not comfortable change, but that it requires someone who can come back the next day, bounce back, put a smile on or a stern face on, and move things forward in another direction. So I think that's pretty exciting. I did want to share one of the most exciting things is we have what we call now Miramar 2.0 and Miramar 2.0 is widely used on our campus and that is how are we going to shift our college to be student centered. And part of Miramar 2.0 came from the change in the top leadership. But much of Miramar, 2.0 came from the change in the culture. And we can only change the culture if we're willing to invest and not be personally vested, connected, upset when things come back that aren't what we necessarily think are the best because they may not be the best for the college. And we have to recognize we don't know everything.

**AS** [00:50:33] As I've said many times, for colleges to be productive places of learning for students, they must also be for us. This research behind this, actually. And, relationships, relationships, relationships. And the willingness to learn. And that learning is messy. And we're not always going to get it right. And it's not, it's not the opportunity to point fingers, but to support one another and say, okay, that didn't work. What do we do now? Right. It's that continuous learning. And yes, sometimes, Lisa, it is best for the coordinator not to be at certain settings. It is an opitc thing. Right. A symbolic thing. And other places like the other two podcasts on inquiry and connection teams, Margaret Prothero and Rebecca Kaminsky, are in all of the meetings because they had the culture where they can do that. So yeah, you got to know your culture. One of the things actually presidents tell me, like especially new ones, they're like even veterans ones, they'll tell me, I don't even know whether to be in certain meetings because my presence there already gives the impression of a top down or some. I struggled to know what to say exactly because then they think I'm directing things and well, that's another podcast of how I help them navigate that. But the point is there's a lot of optics and you played it smart and you let these teams go through their productive struggle. And now, look, you're moving to, you're at 2.0 now. So thank you so much for for sharing that. Lisa, Thank you for participating in the Student Success Podcast.

**Lisa Brewster** [00:52:07] Again, thank you for having me. I know I absolutely enjoy all of your podcasts, so I was so excited and honored for you to ask me to do a podcast. So thank you.