

Final Report of the First-Year Experience Task Force
Submitted by Co-Chairs Susie Brubaker-Cole and Mark Hoffman
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INTRODUCTION

The First Year Experience Task Force is pleased to submit this report in response to our charge to “bring innovation, creativity and vision to the first-year experience at Oregon State University.” Over the past six months, we have studied premiere first-year experience programs in the country; we have used a web-based comment form and multiple community listening sessions to collect information about current strengths and challenges in OSU’s first-year programs from students, instructors and professional faculty; and we have studied OSU institutional data on existing first-year programs and recent student success patterns. While our timeline was relatively short, our inquiry was broad and deep, and we are pleased to submit this **renewed design for OSU’s first-year experience**.

This report is above all else a call to integrate our programs and services for first-year students **by design** and not to leave the cohesion and integration of their learning to chance. Our students’ earliest experiences at OSU should be much more than a check-list of requirements, a series of isolated interactions, or a menu of disconnected options. Our new students will thrive here to their fullest when we increase the degree to which we actively foster and reinforce learning and development across all spheres in which our students interact, from classroom to advisor’s office to residence hall to library and beyond.

The approaches proposed in the pages that follow may appear radical in that they aspire to integrate students’ experiences in ways that do not necessarily align with traditional higher education structures and organizations. Our recommendations ask us collectively to put the transitional needs of new freshmen, our youngest and least experienced community members, at the center of how we define our work and organize ourselves. At the same time, these recommendations have a conservative vein in that they reflect the deep consideration the Task Force has given to longstanding successful programs and deeply held values at OSU. Many readers will see how these recommendations build considerably upon previous efforts to reform and improve undergraduate experiences, including work of Faculty Senate committees, the academic advising community, the University Council on Student Engagement and Experience, and START and CONNECT reviews. There may also be readers who were unaware of challenges in the current OSU landscape that our Task Force has uncovered. The goal of the Task Force was to conjoin previous improvement recommendations (many of which have yet to see their day for implementation) with successful recent reforms from other similar campuses across the nation, and then to ensure that the recommended structures and programs advance the unique character of what it means to become a thriving, engaged OSU student. The Task Force members believe that these recommendations hold the best promise for our institution to rise above our peers and regional neighbors. We also believe that over time they will influence more students who seek an intensive, transformational college education to apply and enroll at OSU because of the distinctive -- and, we hope, exciting -- nature of our first-year experience.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Integration and Coherence: OSU Baccalaureate College

The Task Force charge asked us to develop “a compelling vision of how Oregon State University should best be configured to deliver optimal support and structure for a coherent first-year experience.” A recurrent theme in Task Force internal discussions and campus-wide listening sessions was the lack of coordinated, integrated learning experiences across students’ time at OSU, but especially in the critical first year. Research universities, with the breadth of disciplines and educational programs they encompass, are necessarily complex organizations with highly segmented and differentiated structures. While this may serve many aspects of undergraduate education well (certainly the upper-division years of the major), campus stakeholders we spoke with view the current compartmentalized nature of first-year student experiences as a significant handicap to fostering broad student success. Beyond the summer START sessions and some CONNECT orientation events, OSU students generally encounter little in terms of shared intellectual and community experiences. At the same time, instances of inconsistent information, limited access to key programs, and lack of awareness of and contact with key resources and university messages are far too common. We found particularly strong sentiment across campus that OSU falls short in delivering:

- a) common, shared academic and social/cultural experiences that build a sense of belonging and integration within the OSU community
- b) strong messages about what the Task Force termed “college knowledge”: what the habits, practices and activities are that enable students to thrive and excel; what resources students should avail themselves of in order to bolster their success; what the signature educational opportunities are and how to plan for and access these according to individual goals and interests
- c) broad encouragement of exploration and discovery for majors and the Baccalaureate Core, and smooth, facilitated transitions from one major to another.

Recent cross-campus efforts have made some progress toward overcoming segmentation and inconsistency, notably through changes to START and CONNECT orientations, the new first-year Skills requirement in the Baccalaureate Core and collaborations across academic advising units. We are nonetheless far from delivering what we would consider a high-impact first-year experience. The Task Force believes that is due partly to problems with our organizational structure and partly to the need for new or enhanced components to our first-year experience. We will address organizational issues presently and new and renewed components in the subsequent section.

We recommend creation of a new organizational structure to oversee OSU’s first-year experience called the OSU Baccalaureate College: a close confederation of programs and people and a one-stop, central academic resource designed specifically to meet the needs of new students as they transition to OSU. This recommendation builds upon that of the University Undergraduate College recommendation set forth in 2003 by the OSU 2007 Student Experience Core Planning Team [see Appendix A]. Baccalaureate College will **lay the foundations** for students to create integrated, coherent and personally meaningful educational programs across their four-plus years at OSU. It is highly likely this structure will lead to increases in first-to-second year retention rates by providing centralized, navigable support for student success. It will oversee integration across the recommended FYE enhancements listed below, providing proactive and supportive interactions so that students will develop personal connections with key

people who share consistent approaches and messages about OSU student engagement. All first-year students will belong to this college and, through it, will understand OSU's high expectations for academic engagement and will know how to access opportunities and resources to achieve this. Baccalaureate College's leadership should include a dean, with a seat at the Provost's Council, who will oversee the vision and implementation of the first-year experience, and who will provide leadership for the professional and teaching faculty associated with the college (see below).

Baccalaureate College will encompass the functions and services of first-year advising, orientation programs, the Academic Success Center, early alert programs (such as mid-term grade alerts), undergraduate research, service learning opportunities, the Writing Center, residential education, and other student service units (*e.g.* CAMP, SSS, EOP) that focus on the formation of strong academic pathways for new students. In order to attend to the transitional needs of underrepresented minority students, the Task Force revisited the recommendations of the 2012 UCSEE regarding minority student success and concluded that the Baccalaureate College should also encompass satellite services within the cultural resource centers through the proposed cultural center retention specialists [see recommendation A-1 in Appendix B]. Staff in the various Baccalaureate College areas will belong to the College's Faculty (see below) and will interact frequently through cross-unit working groups in order to facilitate familiarity, accessibility and coordination of services throughout the first year. New levels of collaboration will create a more integrated approach to the holistic development of students.

Sophomore, junior and senior students will, of course, continue to access many of these services throughout their OSU years, thanks in large part to intentional exposure and familiarity cultivated through advising and residential programming during the first year.

Baccalaureate College will also serve as the nexus for key first-year curricula, including key first-year Bacc Core courses and first-year experience courses. Baccalaureate College will have a Faculty comprised of, along with professional faculty from the units listed above, instructors from the key first-year courses. The Faculty will be convened periodically for cross-pollination of teaching approaches, coordination of learning across classes and with co-curricular first-year experience components, and other professional development relating to first-year student success. Working closely with campus faculty development units, Baccalaureate College will serve as a facilitator of teaching faculty's engagement with the specific developmental and learning needs of new students (see "Faculty and Curriculum Development for Large Introductory Courses" below for further discussion of this component).

An initial emphasis on the needs of freshmen will be a critical point of departure, but, as the College evolves and develops, it may expand focus to other cross-cutting areas in undergraduate education, including sophomore year experiences and experiences that contribute to educational enhancement in the upper-division years. We propose one exception to this approach to incremental development. We view Baccalaureate College as a natural centralized location to house a new Transfer Student Center that will draw upon the resources housed within the College to facilitate transfer students' introduction and integration into the university's academic culture. [See Appendix C—2012 UCSEE Transfer Student Subcommittee Report]. We urge addressing transfer student needs in this same effort.

Educational Enhancements

I. Residential Education

Themed Experiential Learning Communities within Residences: Following successful models at the University of Washington, SUNY-Stony Brook and our own Weatherford Hall, and in recognition of new imperative of our 2013 live-in requirement, we propose to create themed living-learning communities in OSU's residence halls with the goals of 1) facilitating student-to-student and student-to-faculty connections around shared intellectual interests and 2) bridging residential and academic components of the student experience. Under leadership of a faculty member with expertise in the themed area and working in partnership with a new UHDS programming staff position (an assistant director specialist in academic programming), clusters of floors within a residence hall will have an academic theme, potentially mirroring one of the Bacc-Core playlists, and associated experiential learning opportunities through programming and community events. The themes will serve as areas of academic and social interest that will help unify students and will provide for the development of organic student cohorts. Themes should be determined through the advice of current students, but example themes that we feel reflect strong OSU values and probability of appeal to new students include: sustainability, social justice, wellness, creative arts, leadership and global experience. While the themes should be interdisciplinary in nature and not exclusive to any one major or program, they should have a clear academic anchor in an academic unit that creates a natural link between faculty and the residential community. Experiential learning will be a major component of each themed community's activities. Some for-credit opportunities linked the theme's experiential learning should be made available. While students will not be required to take classes linked to their residence hall theme, residence staff and academic advisors will strongly promote opportunities to pursue the learning theme through existing coursework, drawing upon the Bacc-Core playlists for guidance as well as first-year experience courses specifically linked to the residence theme. If this proves successful as a pilot, the university should pursue more formal, "high-end" curriculum-linked living-learning communities, as recommended by the Baccalaureate Core *Ad Hoc* Review Committee [see Appendix D] in its 2011 "revitalization" blueprint for general education at OSU.

Student Academic Staff Position: We propose to create new junior/senior-level, live-in student staff in each residence to provide academic leadership, programming and services for residents. Responsibilities include prescriptive advising, academic programming, individual student mentoring, academic coaching and success skills consultations, organization of study groups, and promotion of academic resources and opportunities (such as experiential learning). In this way, the residences will serve as satellites to the Bacc College central academic services in a way that is highly accessible and integrated with students' "home life" in the residences, as well as their after-hours schedules. These student academic staff should be supervised by the Academic Success Center but work hand-in-glove with all other residential staff (student and professional).

First-Year Skills Requirement, Large Gateway Course and First-Year Experience Course Clusters: As a means of creating stronger social/academic links, first-year skills requirements classes, as well as first-year experience courses, will be strategically linked to students living in residential themed communities. Seats in particular sections of these courses will be reserved for those living within particular themed communities with the intention of allowing cohorts to form organically through these clustered classes. This may require major rethinking of current housing assignment processes. The new student academic staff role described above would be responsible for organizing study and review groups for these common courses.

II. First-Year Experience Courses

All first-year students will be required to enroll in one fall-quarter first-year experience course chosen from a selection of options, including courses restricted to a major or those that are open to all

students. Courses will align with a set of common learning outcomes much like the model currently used for WIC and DPD courses. These courses will also follow a certification process similar to WIC courses wherein course proposals must demonstrate how the courses fulfill common learning outcomes. While the Task Force has not defined these outcomes in detail, the UCSEE's 2009 "Best Practices Course Outcomes for First-Year Experience Courses" should be considered in this determination. There is consensus among the Task Force that "college knowledge" and college-level learning skills should feature prominently. By "college knowledge," we mean foundational knowledge about the structure and purpose of an OSU education (learning goals, requirements and options for fulfilling them), the resources students may access to meet faculty expectations (tutoring, academic coaching, to name a few), effective study and learning practices that match college-level learning methods and modes, and key resource people and offices where they may seek help and referral. These courses would serve as the foundation for the development and adoption of a common language and college-knowledge base for student success at the institution. All courses would participate in a Baccalaureate College early alert system that identifies students in difficulty (academic or personal) and ensures that students are connected to help. The university will provide intensive faculty and curriculum development resources to support instructors and promote high-quality teaching and learning to that fulfills the common learning outcomes and that is specific to the first-year student context.

III. Academic Advising and Promoting a Culture of Exploration

All first-year advising will be delivered through the centralized advising office within Baccalaureate College. Students will be required to meet with an advisor quarterly, and will be assigned to a specific advisor for the entirety of the first year. Students will enter OSU with a preliminary academic interest (which could be either a discrete major or a disciplinary cluster areas such as natural sciences, social sciences or arts/humanities), and be matched with advisors within the Baccalaureate College who specialize in these fields and have direct links to affiliated majors/colleges. Baccalaureate College advising will promote broader exploration and seamless transitions during changes of major/area of study. In alignment with the First-Year Advising Learning Outcomes developed in 2011, it will practice a holistic approach to fostering student success and development and address the full spectrum of students' exploration and engagement opportunities including connections with majors and colleges. This point is critical: one responsibility of Baccalaureate College advisors will be to guide students toward engagement opportunities in academic programs/majors. At the end of each academic year, Baccalaureate College will work with colleges and academic units to celebrate students' successful completion of the first year and facilitate transition to the new advising home in an academic unit for those students who have decided upon a major.

Attending to Evolving Student Needs

I. Faculty and Curriculum Development for Large Introductory Courses

The Center for Teaching and Learning, in partnership with colleges and departments, will provide focused professional and curriculum development to support improved learning and engagement in large introductory courses. Large enrollment introductory courses are especially challenging and uninspiring learning environments that undercut first-year student engagement and success. To effect substantial change in the educational experiences of first-year students, we must not only look to bolster co-curricular programs and services but also to reform curriculum and pedagogy to be reflective of all students, with special consideration for underrepresented students [see recommendation B-1 in

Appendix B: 2012 UCSEE Final Report]. Recent successful models have created faculty peer learning groups in which faculty share expertise and new approaches toward improving student learning and success, such as in the current CTL Global Learning and Hybrid Course Development faculty learning communities. Highest impact may be attained by creating a request for proposals for course redesign funding to the 25 highest freshman enrollment courses at OSU and the top 10 failure-rate courses.

II. Expanded Hours of Student Services: Campus offices directly serving students, such as academic advising, financial aid, career counseling, health services, and academic support, should expand and/or shift hours of operation beyond 5pm to attend to the realistic demands of students' lives. These direct services may best be centralized in an after-hours service center, serving as a centralized satellite location for these services crucial to student success. Personal counseling services to attend to issues of crisis or emergency will be available on a 24-hour basis. Currently, the search for relevant student information is problematic, as it is focused on organizational structure instead of student personal need, as echoed by the 2012 UCSEE report [Appendix B]. For more prescriptive needs, we recommend more transparent web design and information placement, in addition to enhanced web search functionality, to facilitate students' discoveries of relevant information through their own investigation.

III. Cultivation of Campus Traditions:

Currently students are not able to articulate university-wide traditions that help promote a sense of community and fun at the institution. We propose creating a student-led group, advised by a faculty or staff member, responsible for cultivating and sustaining traditions and culture that enhance the sense of community, curiosity, and whimsy on campus. Because of the desire to have these traditions adopted and sustained by students, we are not elaborating further on what these traditions may encompass as these ideas should be generated by students.

Student Experience Core Planning Team

Final Report

January 27, 2003

Submitted by Susan Shaw and Larry D. Roper, Co-chairs

Executive Summary

The OSU 2007 process provided a wonderful opportunity for colleagues from across our campus to think, create and plan together. The process was energizing, while also being laden with challenges. We found ourselves wrestling with our desire to dream and our responsibility to acknowledge reality. In the end each satellite team reconciled its challenges and advanced what we believe to be the best thinking we can offer for the next generation of work to enrich the Student Experience at Oregon State University.

The Student Experience Core Planning Team (SECPT) began work in November of 2002. We began our conversation prior to the inception of the OSU 2007 initiative. At the time we began working together, we were doing so as a way of building partnerships among student service professions, in hopes that we would be better prepared to deal with an uncertain future. Our initial conversation focused on defining a charge for our work, establishing a set of guiding principles, and identifying important questions to consider. From our “invitation to participate memo”:

The group is asked to create at least one possible option for the community to consider for a redesigned student service delivery system. In accomplishing their work the group should consider:

1. *What are the core principles around which we should design/align our student services;*
2. *A general design structure (no need for detailed planning);*
3. *How student services will act in support of the academic mission of our university;*
4. *Ways to achieve cost savings, relative to our current approach;*
5. *Ways to enhance the use of technology;*
6. *Ways to enhance the quality of service to students;*
7. *Ways to bring greater attention to students as the primary focus of our efforts;*
8. *How to emphasize addressing the diverse needs of students as important in how we organize to do our work; and*
9. *Ways to align staff to achieve greater effectiveness, efficiency and collaboration in achieving our educational goals.*

Please consider the following questions in preparation for our retreat:

1. *What do we define as “Student Services”?*

2. *What programs should we include in the redesign?*
3. *What organizing principles do we want to apply in our redesign?*
4. *In what ways do we want/need to challenge the constraints of our current paradigm?*
5. *What policy issues might get in our way as we approach redesign?*
6. *If you could independently construct a redesigned student services program for OSU what would it look like?*

Charge

1. The charge to the Student Experience Planning Team pertains to the comprehensive Student Experience – specifically programs, services and activities that support student success and quality of life at OSU.
2. The goal of the Student Experience Planning Team is to explore all aspects of the Student Experience and to recommend an alignment of services, programs and activities that will best address the needs and expectations of current and future OSU students.

Guiding Principles

1. Focused on student success
2. Services should be responsive, efficient, convenient and flexible and reflect commitment to a level of excellence.
3. Promote and support the education and development of service providers, colleagues and students.
4. Create organizational structures that foster interdependence between students and professionals that acknowledge the degree to which we are partners in the construction of the student experience.
5. Effective communication with student and professional colleagues across the University.
6. Provide feedback and input mechanisms that allow the student voice to constantly inform our structures and programs.

Subsequently, we identified and defined focus areas within which functions, programs and services should be aligned. These focus areas came to constitute the satellite teams within our Core Planning Team. They are: Academic Success, Advising, and Access, Assessment, Career Development & Student Employment, Community and Student Development, Diversity, Enrollment, Healthy Campus Community, Housing and Food Service, and International. While each team engaged in significant work and ultimately produced outcomes that have the potential to enhance the quality of student experience at Oregon State University, our report will not include recommendations from all satellite teams. The reports and work of the satellites teams not included in this report will be included in another document. Namely, the Career Development & Student Employment, Healthy Campus Community, and International each offered recommendations and initiatives that we are capable of moving forward without direction from the 2007 Steering Committee, the Provost, or the President.

The recommendations included in this report offer focus on the general theme of enhancing the student experience and increasing the potential for student success. The Student Experience Core Planning Team is forwarding recommendations organized within three general areas: *Access and Student Success; Customer Service and Infrastructure, and Assessment.*

Access and Student Success

A significant dimension of each Student Experience Satellite Team's work was a focus on the matter of student success. The dominant theme in their conversations was identifying approaches to enhance the success of Oregon State University students. The recommendations that follow would represent significant changes in the way we are organized and the possible impacts that we have on student success. The recommendations focus on three areas: academic, diversity and campus climate; and access and retention. Our group believes that it is imperative that our University increase our focus on academic advising and support to students during the first two years of their undergraduate experience. The recommendations below offer two alternatives to this goal - and Academic Success Center or the establishment of a University Undergraduate College. The creation of an Academic Success Center includes consideration of constructing such a center as part of the new Reser Stadium expansion project; this concept was offered by Bob DeCarolis and discussed by satellite team members. The group also explored the organization and effectiveness of Oregon State University's diversity programs and services. As the recommendation below suggests, we believe that we can significantly increase our impact if we were to align offices and programs that serve under-represented students. The group's recommendations for a new organizational structure would increase the number of populations served and provide a more coherent structure. We believe these challenges would allow for more effective service and facilitate greater student retention. We also believe that changing structure and emphasis in our Enrollment area will enhance the accessibility of the University and increase retention. An issue of major concern to students is paying for college. We believe that better aligning financial services functions will make the experience less daunting and more responsive to the needs of students. The same belief informs our recommendation to realign the management of student academic records. A change of this nature would have great impact on the quality of service to students and faculty. Student success and retention will be dramatically influenced by greater attention the first-year residential experience. Voluminous research supports the importance of a quality residential experience in the retention and success of undergraduates. Our recommendations emphasize our support for freshman students living in residence halls or other residential environments that reflect commitment to academic success.

Customer Service and Infrastructure

Our University operates, manages and maintains a large inventory of residence halls. While many view these facilities as physical structures, we cannot lose sight of the fact that they serve as "home" for some of our students – places where the pursue friendships, academic success, and learn valuable life skills. The satellite team that explored housing and dining issues did so from a holistic perspective, looking at structural and educational issues concurrently. They forwarded a number of recommendations directed at bringing needed attention to long-term structural issues that, if addressed, will enhance our ability to provide positive living-learning environments for future Oregon State University students. The recommendations focus on responding to deferred maintenance needs and developing alternative approaches to our traditional approaches to financing residence hall construction. The group also addressed customer service issues, specifically creating a structure that will allow us to effectively manage the provision of food

service. This recommendation offers a partnership approach that will allow for the effective management of future growth of service and vendor relationships.

Assessment

The assessment satellite team offers a very straightforward recommendation – that we establish a centralized assessment office. This group’s report addresses the need that we have to answer the accountability challenges that internal and external stakeholders pose for us, as they seek to know whether our programs and services are producing outcomes. We believe that a more focused and aligned approach to assessment will serve us well as we enter an environment where accountability and the need for data will only increase.

Student Experience Recommendations

Access and Student Success Recommendations

- 1) **Create a centralized Academic Success Center (ASC) to bring together:**
 - **Advising for all undeclared undergraduates**
 - **Tutoring (referral and information, academic success specialists)**
 - **Academic Success Courses**
 - **University Testing**
 - **First year experience program**
 - **Centralized information & referral through the ASC website.**
- 2) **Create a University Undergraduate College committed to the development of students throughout their university/academic career with an emphasis placed on the student’s first two years at Oregon State University. Leadership for creating this College should come from the significant evolution of Student Affairs, and additional contributions from Academic Affairs and Student Services.**
- 3) **Create a Vice Provost of Diversity and Multicultural Education to provide institutional leadership and accountability for campus diversity initiatives.**
- 4) **Create a new Student Financial Services unit around the student perspective of “paying for college”.**
- 5) **Move curriculum processing and implementation functions from Academic Programs to the Registrar’s Office.**
- 6) **Make student access a primary focus for the University, under the leadership of the Enrollment Management Division.**
- 7) **As of Fall 2005, all entering OSU freshmen students of traditional age (18-20), and who are single, should be expected and strongly encouraged to live in University approved housing (i.e. UHDS residence halls or cooperative houses; or qualified**

fraternities and sororities) for their first year. While this should not be an absolute requirement, it should be a stated University expectation, backed by a clear and consistent message from Admission & Orientation, Marketing, academic and student affairs staff, and faculty, including University Housing and Dining Services and Greek Life staff. As of Fall 2005, recruitment of any new students into nonqualified fraternity and sorority houses should be deferred to winter term of the student's freshmen year. In addition to approving only qualified Greek housing for freshmen, OSU should clearly discourage freshmen from living in nonqualified Greek housing. As of Fall 2005, OSU should neither support nor provide resources for pre-fall term or fall term recruitment of freshmen by nonqualified fraternities and sororities. Those fraternity and sorority houses that qualify as OSU approved housing by Fall 2005 should be listed by Oregon State University as "approved" for housing freshmen students.

Customer Service and Infrastructure Recommendations

- 8) University Housing and Dining Services and the Memorial Union at Oregon State University should continue to administer housing and food services as self-operated (University) enterprises throughout OSU. Any proposal for long-term (i.e. 12 months or longer) use of contractors for provision of housing and food services on the OSU campus should be administered by a joint venture of University Housing and Dining Services and the Memorial Union working in consultation with Conference Services, Intercollegiate Athletics, Alumni Affairs, and other stakeholders. The purpose of this joint venture is to produce consistent, sustainable, top tier housing and food service for our University.
- 9) OSU, in conjunction with OUS and the State of Oregon, as well as in consultation with the appropriate departments and offices, should develop a comprehensive plan by November 2003 to address all deferred maintenance in University-owned (UHDS) housing. This plan, to be included in the 2005-11 biennial Capital Construction budget request(s), should include full funding for all deferred maintenance in University-owned housing.
- 10) OSU, working in conjunction with OUS and the Oregon Department of Justice as necessary, should develop a plan of action, including an approved RFP (request for proposal) template, for auxiliary departments (such as UHDS) to creatively collaborate with private businesses (e.g. developers) and other University and off-campus nonprofit entities (e.g. Corvallis School District, OSU Bookstore, Inc., OSU Parking Services.) to construct new University housing and dining facilities. These may include the development and construction of multi-purpose facilities.

Assessment (Accountability and Quality) Recommendations

- 11) Develop a comprehensive and coordinated structure that allows OSU to intentionally assess needs, satisfaction, climate, and outcomes of programs and

services at an institutional level - to increase accountability and improved effectiveness. Roles will include consultation, coordination, and contribution to/for the university. This recommended office will be housed in the renamed Office of Institutional Research & Assessment so that we can create a resource for the academic, student experience, extension/distance learning, and business/financial decision makers of OSU.

Academic Success, Advising, and Access

Vision

Students at Oregon State University shall have access to tools that may be necessary for them to succeed in their educational endeavors and which promote a lasting attitude of inquiry, openness, and social responsibility.

Mission

To provide academic support and services designed to enhance student success, satisfaction, and retention.

| Issues/Goals | Metrics |
|---|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. We need a comprehensive approach to academic success (advising, tutoring, supplemental learning, support for under-represented groups, etc.)2. We need consistent quality in advising across the OSU campus We need to ensure strong and appropriate academic advising for undecided students | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Increased retention rates2. Increased graduation rates3. Decreased numbers of students on AW/AP/AS4. Ongoing assessment of academic support services5. Increased collaboration and alignment of academic advising campus-wide6. Increased awareness of campus resources7. Increased satisfaction with academic services |

Issue

Due to OSU's decentralized academic structure, students experience uneven access to services critical to their academic success. These services include advising, tutoring, academic success courses, testing, first year experience, career development, and information and referral.

In order to provide access to these services, OSU needs to:

- Increase collaboration and alignment of academic advising campus-wide.
- Adapt to changing student demographics.
- Provide support for increasing numbers of under-prepared students.
- Foster a campus climate that is inclusive of students with diverse learning styles.
- Increase opportunities for professional development for faculty, staff, advisors, and students.

Goal

To provide accessible centralized academic services for all students to optimize their learning experience from first year through graduation.

Community and Student Development

The subgroup has reached consensus and is recommending that the most effective mechanism to positively impact the development of the undergraduate student is to establish an undergraduate university college. To that end, the subgroup recommends the following:

| Issues/Goals | Metrics |
|---|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. We need to increase our capacity to be responsive to the needs of future generations of students.2. We need to increase the number and percentage of students engaged in on and off campus community service.3. We need a clear definition of the student outcomes we are attempting to achieve/promote. | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Increase our ability to track service to the campus and community.2. Progressively increase the amount of community service performed by students. |

Recommendation

Create a University Undergraduate College committed to the development of students throughout their university/academic career with an emphasis placed on the student’s first two years at Oregon State University. Leadership for creating this College should come from the significant evolution of Student Affairs, and additional contributions from Academic Affairs and Student Services.

Specifically,

1. The learning objectives of this college are centered on the development of “The Profile of an Ideal Undergraduate” created by the Curricular Issues Group and include:
 - Ability for critical thinking and problem solving
 - Experience working in interdisciplinary teams
 - Communication skills in writing, speaking and media
 - Awareness of and concern for international issues
 - Awareness of multiple perspectives and concern for diversity
 - Sense of societal responsibility
 - Community service and citizenship under girded by outreach and internship experiences
 - Ability to respond to the marketplace
 - Sense of membership in an ongoing community of scholars at OSU that would develop into a desire for lifelong learning

In addition, a previous study that focused on the “Well Developed Student” was also incorporated into the development of this “new College” model.

2. The College will seek to enhance and enrich the undergraduate experience for students during their first two years at OSU by implementing a curriculum beyond the current FYE/Odyssey experience (e.g. Odyssey II and III, freshman interest groups, community service and service learning, residential theme housing, an academic success center, undergraduate research opportunities). Teaching resources for this new college will primarily come from the professional faculty ranks.
3. The College will have a set of professional standards for engaging students in their development. Fundamental is the notion that the development of the student is everyone’s commitment and responsibility.
4. The College will have performance indicators and evaluations that reflect this set of professional standards.
5. The College will have a faculty/staff training and accountability model for working and interacting with students including: a professional conduct code, ethical standards and practices, cultural competency training and guidelines.
6. The College will have sustained conversations, focus, and strategic planning relative to student and community development.
7. The College will commit time and resources for specific self-assessment and institutional assessment tools/instruments (e.g. CIRP, NSSE).
8. The College will develop an SIS database for documenting student assessment, involvement and progress (e.g. co-curricular portfolio, co-curricular transcript).
9. Recommended units to be housed in the University Undergraduate College:
 - Student Affairs
 - Academic Advising (Academic Success Center)
 - Student Orientation and Retention (SOAR)
 - First Year Experience (FYE)

Process

Members of this sub-committee engaged in a process to better understand what it will take to positively affect the development of the OSU student as well as the entire OSU community. The subcommittee utilized a multi-method approach to this process highlighted by the following:

- data collection and feedback from current students, staff and faculty.
- analysis and review of previous work (e.g. the well-oriented student).

- research on the best practices among peer and aspirant institutions.
- review and analysis of current OSU service delivery, structure and relationships.
- one day-long retreat focusing on past, present and future thinking on this subject.
- thinking about the future and its impact on student and community development:
 - o What will students need?
 - o Where do we want to go and what do we want to look like?
 - o How do we sustain innovation?
 - o What will our communities look and behave like?
- review of current assessment practices and determination of future assessment needs.
- made commitments to future conversations.
- identified collaborative concepts within other subgroups:
 - o Curricular Issues
 - o Faculty/Staff Development
 - o Academic Success, Access and Advising

Issues/Problems/Challenges/Questions

Throughout the process of developing a strategic vision for the future of student and community development at OSU, a number of issues, problems, challenges and questions emerged. The following list includes many of the issues that OSU will need to address for the OSU 2007 process:

- **defining the OSU student of 2007 (and beyond) and what s/he will want and need in order to be a successful student, community member and world citizen.**
- a clear and shared definition of community.
- a clear and shared understanding of the developmental needs/issues of OSU students and the role that each department, unit and service provider has in this process.
- the need to develop a process for sustained conversations on student and community development at OSU.
- effectively partnering student affairs/service with teaching faculty in collaborating on student and community development tasks and issues.
- our ability to adapt to change (technological, demographic, environmental, political to name just a few).
- how do we locate and identify “gaps and overlaps” in our service delivery.
- facilitating “difficult” conversations about the way we have and currently do things versus the way we ought to do things in the future.
- accountability and acknowledgement with regards to reinforcing the existing Campus Compact (as this is currently a Student Affairs document, this would need to be adapted to fit campus wide) and the recommendations set forth from OSU 2007.
- the need to develop a comprehensive orientation and on-going training program for all individuals and units on campus that interact and serve students regularly.

Metrics for Community & Student Development (CSD)

As we develop a better understanding of the student and campus community, the following measurements of performance are offered for consideration.

1. *Building a sense of belonging.*
Increases in the retention rates of all students with particular focus on the freshman year as well as targeted populations of historically underrepresented and/or oppressed groups (e.g. students of color, LGBTQ, women, out of state students, students with disabilities, nontraditional students, internationals, etc.).
2. *Building a community of scholars.*
Positively impacting the GPA of students and targeted populations; increases in the number of academic grants and competitive awards (Truman, Rhodes, Fullbrights); increases in the number of students engaged in community service and academic service learning activities, as well as increases in the participation in specific service opportunities upon graduation (Teach for America, Peace Corps, AmeriCorps).
3. *Building sustainability.*
Increases in the enrollment, participation and retention of students and specific populations of students (e.g. nontraditional students, distance learning students, students of color, LGBTQ, internationals, students with disabilities, etc.); improvements in physical access.
4. *Building an engaged and involved community.*
Increases in the involvement and participation of students in campus activities, leadership opportunities, community service hours and overall civic engagement.
5. *Building campus affinity.*
Increases in alumni involvement; students who are deeply connected with OSU; alumni satisfaction with their OSU experience.

Data Collection (What We Looked At)

To set the context for the groups' recommendations it is important to document the type, amount and quality of information collected throughout the process. Hopefully, this information will be helpful for current practice in addition to the OSU 2007 process.

Relational Matrix: Developed a matrix of student service units and their contributions to identified desirable student outcomes. The subcommittee examined the contributions from two separate perspectives, where students **learned** the desired skill and where the students **applied** the new skills. In the process, subcommittee members:

- conducted follow up interviews of service unit staff.
- charted/documenting "gaps and overlaps."
- began to document the time frame for service delivery and/or approach to each student outcome.

Subcommittee Retreat: During a daylong retreat a **time line** was developed and discussed which illustrated where we are presently in the relation to university history. The creation of the university organization, telecommunications, Measure 5, and other notable events were placed on the time line by each member of the group and provided a context for discussion about how we have evolved over time and, hopefully, where our challenges will be in the future.

Future Thinking: These efforts inspired future thinking by the subcommittee to explore specific trend analysis on the future of higher education, climate for change, environmental impact, and demographics to name just a few.

Community Engagement

To date, we have engaged the following groups in order to gain additional input and understanding of our work as well as to determine specific points of alignment and potential conflict with our recommendations:

- Curriculum Innovation Subgroup of the Curricular Issues Group
- Faculty and Staff Development Subgroup of the Institutional Unit Management Group
- Academic Success, Access and Advising Subgroup of the Student Experience Group

The Profile of an Ideal Undergraduate

In order to gain much-needed alignment, the following profile of an ideal undergraduate was incorporated from the Curricular Issues Group and include:

- Ability for critical thinking and problem solving.
- Experience working in interdisciplinary teams.
- Communication skills in writing, speaking and media.
- Awareness of and concern for international issues.
- Awareness of multiple perspectives and concern for diversity.
- Sense of societal responsibility.
- Community service and citizenship under girded by outreach and internship experiences
- Ability to respond to the marketplace.
- Sense of membership in an ongoing community of scholars at OSU that would develop into a desire for lifelong learning.

The interactions that foster the outcomes (i.e. learning objectives) from “The Profile of an Ideal Undergraduate” became the basis of the CSD planning process. The challenge of creating a methodology for delivery of these outcomes is that the opportunities for engagement and interaction number into the thousands. These developmental interactions are literally possible at any time and in any setting. They occur in off-campus environments, private residences, private offices, hallways, coffee shops, restaurants, lounges and public forums. They occur whenever and wherever students, staff/faculty, and community members engage in thoughtful interaction.

The inventory conducted by the CSD 2007 group of OSU units providing the bulk of the developmental experience confirmed that developmental opportunities between staff and students occurs in one-on-one settings as well as in group settings. Most often these opportunities are staff-student, but can also be faculty-student, or even student-student combinations. As a result of our methodology, it is critically important that OSU obtain continuity in understanding the developmental goals from office to office and staff member to staff member. We can best accomplish this by creating a system for sustaining conversations about the developmental experience for OSU students between those practitioners who are responsible for guiding students through the developmental sequence. The sustained conversation is a tool for expanding our common language and growing our combined skills, so that students experience their growth and development during their first two years they spend at the University in a more uniform manner.

APPENDIX B: 2012 UCSEE Report on Underrepresented Minority Student Retention and Success

Final Report and Recommendations of the 2011-12 UCSEE: Underrepresented Minority Success
Submitted to Provost Sabah Randhawa

June 28, 2012

Susana Rivera-Mills and Susie Brubaker-Cole, UCSEE co-chairs

Executive Summary

The University Council on Student Engagement and Experience discussed current strengths and challenges in the educational experiences of underrepresented minority students at OSU, as well as national best practices in promoting student success. The Council proposes fifteen recommendations to improve educational outcomes for underrepresented minority students, identifying four recommendations as priority actions: 1) Create new retention specialist positions in cultural centers; 2) incentivize curriculum redesign and pedagogy enhancement in key courses; 3) create new leadership in colleges to promote high-impact practices and to ensure access and inclusion for underrepresented students; 4) shore up DPD program implementation to ensure that courses fulfill the true program intent.

- I. Introduction and Survey of the Current Landscape, page 1
 - II. Overarching Principles for Recommendations, page 2
 - III. Recommendations, page 3
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I. Introduction and Survey of the Current Landscape

The 2011-2012 University Council on Student Experience and Engagement (UCSEE) investigated the current academic and social climate for underrepresented racial minority (URM) students at Oregon State University. This investigation sought to better understand the context surrounding current enrollment, retention, and graduation rates of URM students. The conclusion to this investigation includes recommendations for action in order to better support the success of this student population.

The Office of Institutional Research provided the UCSEE with institutional data on URM students from Fall 2000 to 2010 in order to see the change in enrollment, retention, and graduation rates of these students. Since 2006, enrollment of URM students has increased by roughly 63%, from 2,361 students in 2006 to 3,845 in 2011. While the URM student population grows on campus, the first-year retention rate and 6-year graduation rate fall behind that of their white peers. The first-year retention rate has fluctuated over the past ten years, with the highest retention rate being 80.4% in 2005; the rate in 2010 was 77.1% as compared to 82% of white or multiracial students. Disparities exist in the graduation rates for URM students and white students. The most recent 4-year graduation rate correlates with students who entered the institution in 2007. Of those URM students, 26% graduated within 4 years and 55.4% graduated within 6 years. Of those white students who entered in 2007, 31.9% graduated within 4 years

and 61.7% graduated within 6 years. The Council intended to examine opportunities to equalize the graduation and retention rates of URM students with those of white students.

As a part of this investigation, we invited professional faculty from targeted retention, engagement and support programs for URM students. Two offices, the Educational Opportunities Program (EOP) and Intercultural Student Services (ISS), serve a large percentage of the URM students at OSU. EOP was established in 1969 following the Black Student Walkout as a state-funded program to attend to the academic success of at-risk populations, including URM students. The program supports students through academic counseling services, developmental course offerings with restricted enrollment to ensure a smaller class size, workshops, and limited scholarship offerings. The budget for EOP has decreased by some \$160,000 during university-wide budget cuts since 2005. EOP works in collaboration with the September Scholars Bridge Program, which serves new students transitioning into college from high school. September Scholars also helps to fund two of the 10 course sections offered through EOP. The EOP program currently serves approximately 400 students annually.

Intercultural Student Services (ISS) serves prospective and current students, providing outreach and recruitment to students considering OSU and resource support to students attending OSU. The office changed from the Minority Education Office (MEO) in 2007 to Intercultural Student Services, consolidating the four MEO offices with the Women's Center, the LGBTQ Student Services Office, and Diversity Development. Today, there are seven professional faculty members in ISS, each serving a specific population of students (with the exception of the Coordinator of the Cross-Cultural Mentoring program, who serves both students and staff). ISS projects roughly 30% of all the URM students actively engage with the office. Though staff additions have been made as the URM student population increases, the budget remains lower than in years past. (See Appendix A for a report from ISS and EOP on recent program history.)

While these are the two primary programs serving the general URM population, there are other programs that support URM students. The College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP) annually serves roughly 30 new freshman students from migrant backgrounds. It is a federally-funded program that provides students with transition classes into the university, academic counseling, and cultural opportunities. Student Support Services (SSS) is a federally-funded TRiO program that serves roughly 180 OSU students who have at least one of the following barriers to education: first-generation student, from a lower socio-economic status, and those who have a disability status. While URM students are represented in the SSS population, it serves students who are not considered URM students. Minorities in Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Related Sciences (MANNRS) serves URM students pursuing study in agriculture and other related sciences. It provides support through mentoring programs, resource connection, and professional development opportunities. The Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation (L-SAMP) is funded through a grant from the National Science Foundation and supports students, URM and women, who do not traditionally major in the hard sciences and engineering through mentoring, study tables, and resource connections. Lastly, September Scholars Bridge Program, funded through the Academic Success Center since 2009, is a summer and fall transitions program for students moving from high school to college who may have a number of identified barriers to success in higher education. This program serves a diverse student body, some of whom are considered URM students, through a residential summer bridge program, academic counseling, a developmental class over summer and fall term, and cultural opportunities.

II. Overarching Principles for Recommendations

The Council has defined four overarching principles that cross-cut the specific recommendations for better supporting URM success, detailed in the next section:

- Investments and program enhancements should seek to build new capacity and new approaches within existing URM-serving units (rather than create new units or infrastructures); proven approaches from one office or program should be strengthened and replicated where appropriate.
- We should create opportunities for closer collaboration, alignment and cross-pollination among existing URM-serving units to ensure strong institutional messages and efficient use of resources. As an example, there is great potential for increased synergies between EOP/CAMP/SSS in Academic Affairs and ISS in Student Affairs that would serve to strengthen the individual programs and services within these units. Wherever possible, successful approaches should be replicated and propagated across offices and programs.
- URM student success is a product of broad campus climate issues and cannot be isolated within one realm of students' experiences. Action must be taken to affect the overall campus landscape by addressing the student realm, faculty and staff realm, and OSU broader community realm (including families and statewide Oregon communities). While recommendations below address these three areas separately, the Council views them as interdependent and intertwined in producing positive, successful and sustained overall student experiences.
- Student demographics are evolving -- as are common configurations of diversity and equity. This evolution includes issues around increasing numbers of students reporting more than one race, the importance of first-generation college status, and the projected growth of Latino populations, to name a few. OSU must remain nimble and responsive to this evolution, ensuring that program design, scalability, and assessment approaches reflect and anticipate the evolving terrain.

III. Recommendations

A) Serving our Students

1. **PRIORITY RECOMMENDATION** Infuse the cultural centers with academic success and retention ideas and resources. Create new professional faculty Retention Specialists modeled on the successful positions in LSAMP and Academic Affairs programs. Retention Specialists will collaborate with Academic and Student Affairs units to develop and deliver programs with responsibilities to include:
 - overseeing academic support services in the centers (tutoring, academic coaching, supplemental instruction)
 - facilitating peer mentoring with upper-class students and student engagement in high-impact practices such as experiential learning and leadership opportunities
 - encouraging delivery of courses, cohort groups and learning communities within the centers
 - conducting individual student outreach and success monitoring
 - assessing retention and success programming within the centers.

Given that Latino students are the fastest growing demographic, there is a particular need for additional expertise working with Latino populations.

2. Expand cohort models and bridge opportunities that foster peer connections, connections with campus faculty and professional staff, and access to resources. Students who experience early community connections, including contact with professorial faculty and the university mission, feel a stronger sense of belonging and are more likely to utilize resources and persevere if difficulties arise. Many successful cohort-based programs exist, and this model should be expanded and scaled up to serve more students. The Council perceived potential for expanded cohort participation through EOP, ISS scholarship programs, thematic areas such as leadership or public service, and colleges and departments, to name a few.
3. Redesign online information delivery to improve accessibility for students and families. The current OSU website is fragmented and difficult to navigate due in part to the emphasis on organizational structure, rather than student needs. Students should not need to understand OSU's organizational structures to find information. It was suggested that a survey or focus group be conducted to understand the information needs of URM students and families regarding admissions, financial aid, resources/support, and opportunities. Beaver Job Net provides a robust model that should be considered as an example for the creation of a central database of scholarship opportunities.
4. Provide more consistent, systematic and accessible data on students as they progress through OSU and interact with different programs and curricula. This should include the impact of programs on different student populations (for example, participation in study abroad and undergraduate research disaggregated by race), as well as data on success rates of different student demographics in key gateway curricular areas. Disaggregated campus-wide data should be readily available on the web, and individual units should have access to custom reports that are generated at regular intervals for longitudinal comparison.
5. Continue to pursue additional scholarships and non-loan-based financial support for students. Financial stress is a major factor in URM student attrition. We should also seek to expand opportunities to create strong student development, belonging and student-friendly work schedules through campus employment. National and local models for enhanced, development-rich student employment should be replicated.

B) Developing Our Faculty, Staff and Academic Units

1. **PRIORITY RECOMMENDATION** Expand investments in incentivized curriculum redesign and pedagogy enhancement that target key gateway courses and courses with high failure rates. To effect substantial change in the educational experiences of URM students, we must not only look to bolster support services but also to reform curriculum and pedagogy. Recent successful models have created faculty peer learning groups in which faculty share expertise and new approaches toward improving student learning and success, such as in the current CTL Global Learning and Hybrid Course Development faculty learning communities. Highest impact may be attained by creating a request for proposals for course redesign funding to the 25 highest enrollment courses at OSU and the top 10 failure-rate courses. In addition, data on D, F, W rates in courses should be disaggregated by race/ethnicity to ensure that the university addresses areas where URM students have historically struggled.

2. **PRIORITY RECOMMENDATION** Create leadership within each college -- at least 50% FTE -- dedicated to promoting and expanding participation in high-impact educational practices (such as experiential learning) and underscore pro-active outreach to URM populations in the position responsibilities to ensure access and equity of participation. These efforts should be tied to academic advising units within each college.
3. Restructure new faculty and staff employee orientations to include meaningful discussion about interacting with diverse student populations.
4. Redefine job responsibilities, rewards and recognition structures for existing and new employees, namely for professorial and professional faculty who explicitly aim to advance student success/engagement and evolving diversity initiatives. This should include greater emphasis on diversity and student success in job functions reflected in position descriptions, PROF reviews and P&T evaluations.
5. Design and offer expanded training and professional development programs focused on diversity issues for existing employees. Ideally these will be embedded in regular structures such as faculty retreats, training days and regular unit meeting structures. Because of the key role of advisors in academic units, advising groups should engage in regular professional development in working with diverse student populations and ensuring inclusive, welcoming environments.
6. Focus future Provost-hire faculty positions on advancing equity and diversity in undergraduate education and include discrete student success and engagement responsibilities in position descriptions.
7. Expand opportunities for faculty development around issues related to classroom climate, cross-cultural interactions, and globalized and diversified curricular content.
8. Create better structures to engage existing and future TFDI hires in ongoing diversity enhancement activities and provide needed support and administrative resources to carry out position expectations in a systematic way. As a starting point, create a cohort of TFDI hires that meets regularly and is supported by administrative resources to foster synergy across members' individual diversity activities and advance larger-scale group initiatives.

C) Building Communities on and off Campus

1. **PRIORITY RECOMMENDATION** Shore up DPD program implementation to ensure that courses fulfill the true program intent. Minority students continue to report that behaviors and remarks by fellow undergraduates lead to negative, hostile learning environments. The DPD curriculum is intended 1) to advance all undergraduates' understanding of the structures, systems, and ideologies that sustain discrimination and the unequal distribution of power and resources in society and thus 2) to foster a more equitable and inclusive university community. Specifically, the Council recommends the following steps to ensure that all students benefit from meaningful, rigorous DPD course experiences:
 - Require DPD instructors to complete DPD training. It is estimated that currently only 32% of students who take DPD courses at OSU are learning from an instructor who has completed the DPD training.

- Create opportunities for ongoing training and discussion in a faculty community/cohort. At the same time, provide advanced training for faculty who have completed the initial DPD program but wish to continue developing and sharing their skills.
 - Review current DPD syllabi and assess student learning through Baccalaureate Core Committee channels to ensure alignment with DPD learning outcomes
 - Assess efficacy of current AAOT and transfer policies and practices as they relate to DPD fulfillment. Nearly 20% of all DPD credits earned in the 2010-2011 academic year were through transfer or AP credits.
2. Increase engagement of statewide faculty (Agricultural Experiment Station, Extension, Forest Research Lab) in connecting OSU with minority communities statewide as a means to build trust and to translate OSU culture to families and students. The pilot effort between PHHS and extension holds great promise for building these bridges between extension, undergraduate education, and local communities and families. It will be critical to foster collaboration between enrollment management, minority serving support units, academic programs and extension as we build this new function and outreach capacity.

APPENDIX C: 2012 UCSEE Transfer Student Subcommittee Report (final report forthcoming)

APPENDIX D: Baccalaureate-Core *Ad Hoc* Review Committee Blueprint for General Education

<http://oregonstate.edu/senate/committees/other/bcr/reports/VitalizationofGeneralEducationatOregonStateUniversityMembers.pdf>