

## **All Students Dimension Report**

### California State University-San Marcos

*Foundations Institutions serve all first-year students according to their varied needs. The process of anticipating, diagnosing, and addressing needs is ongoing and is subject to assessment and adjustment throughout the first year. Institutions provide services with respect for the students' abilities, backgrounds, interests, and experiences. Institutions also ensure a campus environment that is inclusive and safe for all students.*

#### **Discussion Notes on Current Situation**

The committee examined how the campus addresses student needs by examining the Student Affairs organizational chart, which identifies the various services and other activities available to students. We did this assuming that the campus has already built a substantial infrastructure designed to meet the needs of students. The chart is available on the Student Affairs Webpage ([http://www.csusm.edu/student\\_affairs](http://www.csusm.edu/student_affairs)).

#### **Identifying Student Needs**

##### **FOE Surveys**

The FOE Student Surveys contained seven questions related to the All Students dimension. The ratings, expressed as mean scores (on a scale of 1-5) in descending order, indicated that students were: treated fairly by instructors regardless of gender/race/ethnicity (4.41), feeling physically safe (4.31), respected by others (4.10), able to freely express beliefs (3.83), academic needs are met (3.82), have a sense of belonging on campus (3.55), and social needs are met (3.45). Overall, the percentage of responders who gave scores of high or very high to these items ranged from 84% for being treated fairly to 51% for meeting social needs.

The FOE Faculty Surveys asked faculty to evaluate the degree to which the campus addresses the unique needs of six subpopulations of first-year students. The responses, in descending order of mean scores (on a scale of 1-5) were: students with physical disabilities (mean 4.10), students with learning disabilities (4.09), athletes (3.84), students with academic deficiencies (3.58), racial/ethnic minorities (3.46), and honors students (2.72). It is notable that the campus has programs that address so some extent the needs of the first five subgroups. Currently the campus does not have a program designed for honors students.

##### **Methods CSUSM uses to identify student needs.**

There are several ways in which our campus currently identifies the academic and social/personal needs of first-year students:

- **Self-identification.** This is by far the most common method. Students respond directly by requesting services and becoming engaged in other activities. This method is effective only

when students are knowledgeable about the full range of services and activities that are available to them.

- Referrals. These may come from parents, high-school counselors, other students, staff, and faculty. As discussed below, it is unlikely that many of these potential sources of referral are aware of the services and other activities that are available to students.
- Chancellor's Office. Every fall semester, the CSU Chancellor's office sends each university a report of the freshman students who need remediation, and which type that is needed- English, Mathematics, or both. The university then sends the report back the next year indicating which students have completed the required remediation.

Another potential way of identifying needs of students is through various applications and surveys that are filled out by first-year students. Among these are:

- California State University Application for Undergraduate Admission. This form must be filled out by every undergraduate applicant. The form requires information on contacts, birthdate, sex, intended major, degree objective, intention to apply for EOP (including family income, family size, and living arrangement), country of citizenship, US citizenship status, military status, test scores (ACT, SAT, and TOEFL), high school academic preparation, and California residency status. The application also requests optional information on ethnic identity, interest in participating in NCAA-sanctioned intercollegiate athletics competition, total annual family income and family size, and educational levels of parents.
- CIRP Freshman Survey This form is filled out during student orientation and is completed by over 90% of first-year students. The survey requests information that is similar to the University Application, but also obtains information on religious preference, personal preferences, activities and values, parental occupation, student career plans, and political and social views.
- National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). This survey, which is conducted annually at hundreds of 4-year institutions across the nation, obtains information about student participation in programs and activities. The results provide an estimate of the degree to which students are engaged in their campus and in their personal development.

Because of concerns over confidentiality, the information provided on these forms currently cannot be used to proactively link student needs with campus services and activities.

## **Addressing Student Needs**

### **Academic Needs**

#### **English and Mathematics Remediation**

Over one-half of first-year students require remediation to continue to their second year. For example, 63% of the students in the 2005-2006 first-year class needed remediation; CSUSM ranked 14<sup>th</sup> out of the 23 CSU campuses in terms of the percentage of students requiring remediation. After the end of the first year, 27% of these students had not fulfilled their

remediation requirements; in terms of remediation rate, CSUSM ranked 22/23 in the CSU. In the past, little was done at CSUSM to improve them.

As a recommendation from a WASC committee, a First Year Academic Support Coordinator was hired to examine in part, the remediation issue. An important finding from his data shows how the mathematics part of the remediation process has the single most significant attrition effect on the first-year freshman retention rate. The importance of informing freshman students about the requirements of the process, starting freshman students immediately in the mathematics remediation classes, and creating a plan to help them navigate and get extra help during the process are all issues the coordinator now addresses. He contacts students directly, makes sure they are enrolled in the proper courses and in general lets them know that they have help and guidance. A proposal is now underway to fund Supervised Instruction courses that will help students by providing tutors and peer helpers, an exciting possibility.

### Writing Assistance

The Writing Center (WC) at Cal State San Marcos offers students from all disciplines an opportunity to get feedback on their writing from trained peer consultants. Consultants work with students at any stage of the writing process, offering strategies, advice, and resources to help the student improve her/his writing abilities. One of the central goals in the Writing Center is to help make better writers, not just better writing. The WC accomplishes this by focusing feedback on the writing process, not just the paper at hand. The majority of the consulting sessions held in the Writing Center are one-on-one. However, the WC also does on-site and small group consulting for the General Education Writing (GEW) program.

The WC advertises to all students through a variety of mediums: A-frames and posters around campus, classroom presentations, flyers passed out during university hour, announcements on InSite, etc. The WC also reaches out to faculty through emails, meetings, and Faculty Center presentations (i.e., New Faculty Institute). Based on recent surveys, it appears that most students are hearing about the Writing Center through their instructors and their friends.

The current policy is that faculty cannot *require* that a student visit the WC—the WC staff try very hard to prevent the WC from being viewed as a place for punishment or a place where only "bad" writers go. The majority of the students who visit the WC self-identify a need/desire for help or feedback, and a handful each semester are referred individually by an instructor (and, even then, it is up to the student whether to come or not).

### Mathematics Assistance

The CSUSM Math Lab (ML) offers free walk-in tutoring services and numerous resources to CSUSM mathematics students and faculty members. Examples of services include assistance with homework, preparing for exams or quizzes, learning how to use all the options on

a calculator, or just wanting to talk about mathematics. The ML offers tutoring assistance for the following mathematics courses: GEM 100, Math 15, Math 050, Math 051 & 051C, Math 115, Math 125, Math 132, Math 160, Math 162, Math 210, Math 212, Math 303, Math 304, and Math 311.

There are several ways in which students find out about the services available in the CSUSM Math Lab (ML). ML services are advertised during the tour that the “O” team gives when new students come to orientation. ML staff visit most GEL 101 classes and talk about services. Additionally, the ML takes part in “Preview Days” in October of each year.

Many students come to the ML through referrals from Math TAs and faculty. Most TAs have direct knowledge of the ML because they have worked there in the past. Adjunct faculty and new mathematics faculty members are contacted by ML staff to inform them about their services and the director of the ML works closely with the Math Department Chair in coordinating class and ML schedules, especially during the summer.

The ML staff works carefully with athletes and a math tutor has a regular weekly session at Clark Field House. The ML director also works with the directors of the SSS and EOP programs, especially Summer Bridge. During the Summer 07 the ML held special sessions for ELM prep every day for a week to help students prepare for the exam.

### Language Assistance

The Language Learning Center (LLC) provides help in the following areas: assistance for students taking language classes; advising and proficiency testing of the Language Other Than English Requirement (LOTTER); and “University Writing for Multiple-Language Students” seminars targeted to students speak a language other than English at home and are worried about their writing skills.

Students find out about the LCC in various ways, including: A-Frames displayed in front of University & Markstein Halls (where most language classes are held); the LLC website, flyers; e-mails to all language students at the start of each semester; visits to all non-Spanish 101, 102, and 201 classes by tutor and/or Director; GEL visits (if invited); and e-mails to at-risk freshmen regarding the one-year “University Writing for Multiple-Language Students” seminars.

WLHL faculty play a role in identifying students who could benefit from LLC services. Each semester, WLHL faculty are sent e-mail messages that include hours of operation, new resources, invitation for class tours, and instructions on how to reserve the LLC classroom. The LLC Director visits the first WLHL faculty meeting of the year. The LLC also does outreach in the form of emails and flyers sent to various staff and advisors, including but not limited to: CoAS, CoBa, CoEd, Nursing, EOP, SSS, CAMP, International, Freshman Retention Specialist, etc. If invited, the LLC Director visits staff meetings. This year, the Director also sent flyers to

all CSUSM staff and faculty regarding the LLC seminars entitled, “University Writing for Multiple-Language Students”.

### Undergraduate Advising

Currently, undergraduate academic advising is undergoing some changes. Centralized in a relatively new location, Craven Hall 1300, it offers easy student access. Much of the advising process has been modernized to offer appointment making on the web, a mechanism for quick email advising questions answered within 48 hours (E-advisor), and an all-new electronic student tracking system, called CI Tracker.

The advising web site also offers an array of information from frequently asked questions, lists of majors, testing requirements, who a student’s advisor is, and ASSIST, which helps students determine if courses they took elsewhere are transferable. Any student motivated to learn more about majors or the advising process can find it on the website, ask via E-advisor, or schedule an appointment.

### Students with Disabilities

The Office of Disabled Student Services (DSS) offers a variety of support services to students with documented disabilities. Students are encouraged to contact DSS regarding the availability of specially adapted equipment, campus orientations, supplemental academic advising, functional assessment, priority registration, testing accommodations, registration assistance and tutoring referral.

Staff members in DSS currently do not have a mechanism to identify disabled students and proactively contact them to provide services. Instead, DSS responds to queries by students or their parents and to referrals by faculty, staff, and others. At one time, the CSU application form had an entry where disabled students could identify themselves. DSS would run a report on the application forms of students admitted to the campus and contact those who indicated a need. Approximately 10 years ago, the Office of Civil Rights forced the CSU to remove DSS indicators from the application. Since then, DSS has no way to proactively identify, contact, and address the needs of disabled students.

The most common way DSS obtains students is through student self-identification or contacts from parents or high school counselors. By the time students are of college age, most of those with disabilities have been previously diagnosed and may know about the services provided them. However, some disabilities develop later (e.g., systemic lupus, migraines) and students may not know they qualify for services. As a result, other identification mechanisms must be used to serve these students.

DSS receives referrals by CSUSM faculty, staff, and others. This pathway is inconsistent. For example, some faculty members frequently refer students while others do not.

It is possible that not all adjunct and tenure-track faculty are aware of DSS. DSS has a detailed faculty handbook at <http://www.csusm.edu/dss/faculty/#intro>; however it is unclear how knowledge of this document is communicated across the campus. For example, DSS is not clearly evident in the Faculty Handbook available on the Faculty Center website; instead, it is available on the “General Information” link on the website.

#### First-generation, low-income, and/or underrepresented minority students

According to the fall 2007 CIRP survey (item #5 in the FOE Evidence Library), approximately 25% of first-year students at CSUSM are first-generation and approximately 20% have family incomes of \$36,000 or less. Many of these students come from Latino families where the native language is not English.

CSUSM has several programs designed to meet the needs of these students. EOP is a state-funded program that provides academic support services for economically disadvantaged, first-generation, and underrepresented college students. EOP’s goal is to graduate all of its students within 6 years. First-year EOP students are a part of a learning community that is monitored closely to make sure they meet all the requirements needed to be retained. EOP supports students until graduation or until they reach 150 units. EOP served approximately 159 total new students for Fall 2007, of which approximately 100 were first-year; most were first-generation. EOP has not been able to serve all eligible students. Last year, EOP served approximately 35% of eligible students.

SSS is a federally-funded program that offers a variety of personal and academic services to students from first-generation, low-income, and disability backgrounds. At CSUSM, approximately 70% of the SSS participants are both low-income and first-generation students. SSS is funded to serve 200 students every year, of which approximately 35 were first-year students; this represents approximately 25% of the number of eligible first-year students. SSS serves students from the time they enter the program until they graduate with a bachelor degree; the length of time for each student varies but is usually anywhere from 2 to 6 years. There is a growing need to serve first generation, low income and/or disabled students at the CSUSM campus

Students self-identify and fill out an application to these programs. Both programs are advertized through AVID in high schools and EOP/TRIO at the community colleges. EOP is involved in various outreach campaigns. On the other hand, federal regulations prohibit outreach for SSS and students can apply only after they have been admitted and enrolled in classes.

#### First-year students enrolled in “gatekeeper” science and math courses

Several of the lower-division math and science courses designed for science majors have a high percentage of Ds, Fs, and Ws. The Supplemental Instruction (SI) program is a model of student assistance designed to help students in such historically difficult classes. SI helps

students master course content while they develop and integrate learning and study strategies. The goals of SI are to improve student grades, reduce the attrition rate within those courses, and increase the graduation rates of students. Supplemental Instruction focuses on tough courses (those with high percentages of D, F grades and Withdrawals) not struggling students.

Supplemental Instruction is currently offered for 15 courses in math and science. Many first-year science majors enroll in SI-supported courses. Participation in SI is voluntary and the schedule of SI sessions for each course is established from surveys conducted during the first week of instruction. The final grades of students who participate in SI average one full grade point higher than non-participants.

### Career Center

The Career Center helps students explore majors and subsequent careers. The Center can also help students get part-time jobs either on campus or in the community. Students self-identify and can either schedule an appointment or drop in during open hours throughout the week. The Career Center has worked with faculty in GEL 101 to establish and evaluate a 2-week career module that includes choice of majors and careers.

## **Social and Personal Needs**

### Financial Aid

With the rising cost of higher education, first year students and parents are increasingly seeking assistance to finance higher education. Within the past three years, CSUSM has experienced a fifteen per cent increase in the overall number of students applying for financial assistance and a nineteen per cent increase in the amount of financial assistance provided to CSU San Marcos students. Typically, first year students will initiate their interest in financial aid services through completion of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) which is a nationally approved application. The FAFSA application is processed through a federally contracted processor. Applicants can request that their financial information be provided to ten higher education institutions and we would receive the bulk of interested students via this application. In addition to the centrally administered application process, Financial Aid & Scholarships staff regularly participates in annual outreach events at local high schools and community colleges. Since the financial aid application process is completed annually, staff will coordinate with local area high schools to conduct financial aid nights and application workshops for potential first year students and parents. In addition, Financial Aid & Scholarships participates annually in a number of outreach events coordinated through Admissions & Recruitment, including outreach to local community colleges. Finally, many first year students are the recipients of outside scholarships which have been awarded by local or community organizations prior to the student's matriculation as a first year student. Since the Financial Aid & Scholarships is the campus contact point for handling payment of these outside

scholarship resources, many first year students will find new sources of assistance available to them beyond their scholarship once they become familiar with the services offered.

It should be noted that the vast majority of first year students who engage with the financial aid process will do so *prior* to their matriculation as a first year student and oftentimes prior to their admission to the university. The application process begins each January for the following fall semester and it is strongly recommended that students meet the priority filing date of March 2<sup>nd</sup> each year. In light of this application timeline, first year students will seek assistance and information from Financial Aid & Scholarships typically during the junior or senior year of high school. It is helpful to keep this in mind as the identification of students seeking financial aid services will be begin well in advance of the student's matriculation. Lastly, the identification of students who may wish financial aid services will oftentimes be initiated by parents rather than students. Since the financing of higher education is typically a "family matter", parents play an integral and active role in the financial aid process of first year students. Parents may oftentimes be the initial contact point for first year students in seeking financial aid services.

Over the last two years, the number of first-year students who applied for financial assistance increased from 409 to 713. (Document # 155 in FOE Evidence Library). In both years, approximately 65% of the applicants were determined to have financial need and in both years approximately 85% of the students with financial need received some level of assistance. The average amount of aid was \$5800 and \$6000 for AY 05-06 and 06-07, respectively.

### Admission and Recruitment

The Admissions and Recruitment Office in conjunction with Outreach Programs are the primary and core functions that would engage first year students in the college-bound experience. Together these two offices form the first and most critical linkages for first year student with the university. Through a variety of planned and targeted outreach activities, Admissions and Recruitment staff and staff from Outreach Programs are typically the first institutional representatives with whom first year students will engage. As such, the initial experience at the recruitment and outreach stage is critical in shaping the context for future first year experiences.

The identification of first year students begins with identifying prospective applicants ("prospects"). Through planned school visits, college fairs and other recruitment activities conducted by Admission and Recruitment, potential first year students will be identified. Admissions and Recruitment targets students in the north San Diego service area and in the southwest Riverside county as the primary service areas to provide recruitment and admission services. Areas outside of these geographic locations may also be included as service areas to reach a larger pool of potential prospects related to specific recruitment and admission goals

(e.g. diversity goals). Through these primary recruitment vehicles, prospective first year students will be identified.

The annual CSUSM Preview Day sponsored by Admissions and Recruitment provides an excellent opportunity to showcase the university to prospective students and parents. The annual event is open to all interested students and parents and provides an opportunity for students to obtain information on admissions, academic programs, financial aid, student life, housing, and other student services. Faculty, staff, and students conduct workshops throughout the day to provide a forum for an exchange of information and guidance on the college admissions and selection process.

Cal State San Marcos has developed a number of agreements with local high schools and school districts which are designed to expand efforts to identify applicants and ensure that recruitment and admissions services are provided to students from these high schools. These agreements (Memorandums of Understanding – MOU) have been established with Escondido School District, San Marcos Unified School District, Valley Center High School, San Pasqual High School, and the Santa Isabel Tribal Agreement. Most recently, a MOU was established with the county of San Diego Foster Youth services to identify and provide college bound services to foster youth in San Diego County. Through these memorandums of understanding, first year students can be identified in order to provide pre-college advisement and services to facilitate the admissions and matriculation of these students at CSUSM.

Finally, an essential component of the Admissions and Recruitment efforts to identify and engage with first year students is through the partnerships with local high schools created by the Upward Bound and Talent Search programs. CSU San Marcos is one of many institutions nationwide that has been approved for participation in these federally funded programs. The Upward Bound and Talent Search programs are administered by Outreach Programs and currently serve four local high schools, Oceanside High School, El Camino High School, Orange Glen High School, and Escondido High School. Through these partnerships with local high schools, potential first year students can be identified at an early stage (grade levels 9 -12) to provide pre-college advising and college prep tutoring services to promote higher education as a viable option and to facilitate the application and admission process. The Upward Bound and Talent Search programs are designed to promote pre-college advising services to first-generation, underrepresented students and to provide guidance and support throughout the college application process. At CSUSM, the Upward Bound program serves a cohort of 60 students and the Talent Search program serves 600 students. As first-year admitted students, many of these students will be participants in other support services such as EOP and SSS to ensure their success as first year students and completion to degree.

In summary, the Admissions and Recruitment Office and Outreach Programs have developed and continue to enhance efforts and partnerships to identify prospective first-year students. These planned outreach and recruitment efforts are designed to maximize the

opportunity for students to engage with the institution at an early stage, to facilitate the application and admission process, and to ease the transition of first-year students to the university environment. Over the past three years, the number of first-time applicants rose from approximately 6500 to 9300, the number admitted rose from 2900 to 6800, and the number who actually enrolled rose from 800 to slightly under 1400 students (Doc # 156 in FOE Evidence Library).

### Registration and Records

The identification and engagement of first year students with Registration and Records typically begins with the registration activities for first year students. As part of the New Student Orientation program, first year students will complete course registration at the conclusion of the orientation. The Registration and Records staff will provide assistance to first year students in course selection and course prerequisite information. Much of this advisement for first year students is completed in conjunction with Academic Advising services. First year students are also identified oftentimes through Registration and Records as a result of testing information regarding the EPT and ELM tests. The test results will be used to provide first year students with guidance on the appropriate course selection for Math and English requirements.

### Veterans Information & Services

Information and services for veterans are available in Cougar Central. Assistance is provided to military veterans and their dependents in obtaining VA educational benefits for which they are eligible. Services available include certification and assistance with procedures. The Veterans Affairs Specialist serves as a liaison between veteran students and the Department of Veterans Affairs, assisting students with the appropriate forms for educational benefits, as well as information about their benefits or educational experience at Cal State San Marcos

### University Village Apartments

First-time freshmen are identified through an application process. Priority is given to freshmen, with 85% of residency as well as efforts being directed to address issues for first-time freshmen, including living/learning programs, faculty involvement, and programming. Some additional needs, for example for athletes and students with disabilities, are identified and addressed as requested.

For students with financial needs, UVA works with Financial Aid; if the student is fully eligible for student aid, application fees are waived.

Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination (race, gender, religion, etc.) so a questionnaire addressing preferences is used. More than 20 questions are asked to set up the best matches (questions include: are you a morning or night person? Are you vegetarian? What temperature

are you comfortable? What types of friendships are important?). All matching is done by hand and takes most of the summer to complete.

### Student Life & Leadership

There is a special orientation for first-time freshmen. Some are EOP, SSS, and CAMP students that come from lower income families or are first generation college students. The disabled students are generally students that have registered with DSS.

The different needs are addressed through different clubs and centers on campus, including LGBTQA, Women's Center, and the Cross-Cultural Center (C3) – this center addresses all areas, including sexual orientation, religion, race, etc.

Orientation Team (O-Team) receives 6 hours of diversity training before orientation so they have a sense of appreciation for the various students that do come to orientation and treat all as individuals. They all come in contact with first-year students.

### Student Health and Counseling Services

SHCS provides health and emotional support for students and is committed to a "Wellness" model that promotes a healthy lifestyle. The staff includes two physicians, a psychiatrist, a health educator, three nurses, a nurse practitioner, three psychologists, and a pharmacist. Services are provided by appointment only.

The Mandatory Student Health Fee provides students access to SHCS throughout the academic semester. Eligibility for service for any semester starts with the first day of the preceding break period and lasts until the first day of classes of the next semester. As of Spring semester 2007, the semester fee is \$65.00, and is automatically included in tuition fees. All currently enrolled Cal State San Marcos students can use SHCS. There are no co-payments to see a counselor or medical provider. Basic visits to the clinic are free to all regularly enrolled students.

Basic visits include the majority of needs, such as colds, flu, sore throats, sexually transmitted disease testing, counseling, and routine lab work. PAP smears, travel vaccines, psychiatry services and non-routine lab tests require a small fee. Extended student health insurance is offered by CSU Health Link through Associated Students Inc. The plan covers medical needs beyond the scope of services provided by Student Health and Counseling Services. Services beyond SHCS scope of care includes: referrals to a specialist, visits to the emergency room or urgent care centers.

### Student Experiences

#### Individual attention from faculty/staff

The National Survey on Student Engagement (NSSE) indicates improvement needed in the quantity and quality of interactions between first-year students and CSUSM faculty, staff, and administrators. In particular, only 17% of first year students reported that they talked about career plans with a faculty member or advisor. Furthermore, 49% of first year students positively rated their relationships with administrative personnel and offices. Both data points are lower than scores reported at Carnegie type equivalent institutions and the average of all campuses included in the NSSE study.

#### Academic support outside the classroom

Nearly 68% of respondents to the Foundations of Excellence (FoE) survey indicated they felt their academic needs were met at a high or very high level, and nearly 25% indicated a “moderate” response. It is unknown if students would rate their experience in a similar fashion toward the close of their first year of study.

Students in the FoE focus groups reported dissatisfaction with Academic Advising on campus. Other studies conducted about Academic Advising indicated that students who saw an advisor were satisfied with their experience; however, many students did not see an advisor during the year due to difficulty in scheduling appointments.

The availability of learning assistance services and supplemental instruction is an important component of academic success in the first year of study. Student visits to the Writing Center and Language Learning Center have remained relatively constant over the last two years. However, students seeking support through the Math Lab have increased by 50% in the last year. The reality that a majority of CSUSM first year students need remediation in Math, English, or both, underscores the need for assistance in these fundamental areas. Nearly 70% of respondents to the FoE student survey agreed or strongly agreed it would be helpful to have academic support services (such as the Writing Center, Math Lab, Academic Advising) available after 5:00 p.m.

#### Opportunities for campus involvement

Opportunities for campus involvement have grown consistently in the last several years. Since summer of 2001, the number of recognized student organizations has nearly tripled from 31 to well over 80 including five social fraternities and sororities. The Clarke Field House/University Student Union, which opened in fall 2003, reported 55,538 student contacts for recreation/fitness activities, and combined planned participation of over 8,000 students for student organization sponsored events for the 2006/07 year. Since 2001, Associated Students Inc. (ASI) implemented a student programming board, intramural activities, club sports, and an excursion program. These activities have added an important component to campus involvement opportunities in that students can choose to simply participate in structured programs rather than needing to fully develop their involvement opportunities themselves.

Staff within and affiliated with the Student Development Services Area in the Division of Student Affairs collaborate to implement Welcome Week activities in the first two weeks of the fall term. Programs include off-campus excursions, recreation events, on-campus social events, cultural events, and a fairly new tradition, “Picnic with the Presidents” co-hosted by the University President and the President of Associated Students, Inc. In addition to workshops highlighting involvement opportunities held during New Student Orientation, these activities are designed to promote student awareness and engagement in co-curricular activities throughout the first year and beyond.

### Inclusive campus environment

According to data collected via the CIRP (Freshman Survey) and by CSU Mentor (student application database), CSUSM students are fairly diverse with respect to ethnicity, religion, income level, and political viewpoints. While this diversity may reflect students attracted by an inclusive campus environment, it may also simply indicate the diversity of college-bound populations in the regions served by the campus.

From the Foundations of Excellence student survey administered in mid-fall semester, nearly 80% of students indicated they felt respected by others to a high or very high degree, and over 68% felt, to the same magnitude, they could express their beliefs without concern about how others would react. Student focus group participants indicated their comfort in expressing their beliefs in class depended on the professor. While some faculty members made the experience intimidating, students indicated most faculty supported the type of open participation students expected of their higher education experience.

CSUSM now offers three cultural centers which seek to increase the inclusivity of the campus environment. The Cross-Cultural Center is sponsored by Student Life & Leadership, and both the Women’s Center and LGBTQ Pride Center are sponsored by Associated Students, Inc. The three centers share a common mission of creating safe space on campus for students whom identify as members of those communities as well as educating the whole campus population about aspects of diversity. Through education and advocacy efforts, they seek to promote safety and inclusion for all members of the campus community.

### Student experiences in co-curricular programs

The New Student Programs area of Student Life & Leadership is in its second year of offering the “SLL Survival Series”. The series includes monthly programs offered during University Hour targeting first-year students and the various academic and personal development hurdles they must negotiate to be successful in their first year of study.

Approximately 500 of our 1358 first-year students (nearly 37%) live on campus in University Village Apartments (UVA). Through the presence of paraprofessional and professional live-in staff and the Faculty In Residence, UVA students have expanded

opportunities for individual attention from faculty and staff as well as increased opportunities for campus involvement in co-curricular programs, student government, and student staff positions. Of the 500 UVA residents, 93 are involved in the San Marcos Experience (SME) learning community which intensifies the opportunities for student engagement with personnel and programs and serves as a resource for academic support outside the classroom. University Village staff strive to promote an inclusive environment, it would be beneficial to gather data which describes residential student experiences systematically.

Several co-curricular programs targeting segments of the first year student population offer individual attention from faculty/staff, unique academic support programming, and seek to promote an inclusive campus environment for students in their programs. Approximately 100 first year students are participants in the Educational Opportunity Program (EOP). EOP reports there were an additional 300 students who met eligibility requirements, but could not be accommodated within the program due to resource limitations. Student Support Services (SSS) is a federal grant funded program in which approximately 35 first year students participated. SSS reports the program is currently over-enrolled by 10% with 220 students total. Staff believe this indicates there is a greater need for services that the program can accommodate. The California Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP) has funding through the US Department of Education to serve 45 students. Similar to reports from staff in SSS, CAMP staff report they believe they have more than 45 students eligible for services for the first time this year.

### **Physical and psychological safety**

Physical Safety- In response to the question on the Foundations of Excellence survey inquiring to what degree students felt physically safe on campus, over 83% of students indicated a high or very high level perception of safety. Focus group participants similarly indicated they did not believe there was as much crime as is faced by other campuses. Data from the CSU system indicates University Police are staffed at similar levels to other campuses in the system. University Police have 2-3 field officers on staff for every shift, and the campus enjoys police presence 24 hours per day, 365 days per year.

Per the Campus Security Act, or Clery Act, an annual report of crimes which occurred on campus is available to all potential and current students, faculty, and staff on the University Police website, and it is also sent to all members of the campus community via email every October. Information regarding hate crimes, sexual assault, and other crimes prevalent on college campuses is presented in print and in a brief presentation at New Student Orientation by the campus Health Educator and University Police.

All first year students are expected to complete an online alcohol education tool, MyStudentBody.com, by November 1 of their first fall semester. Those who do not meet the requirement have a hold placed on their account for the subsequent fall semester's registration. This program is administered through Student Life & Leadership as part of the New Student Programs area. The Health Educator also makes presentations regarding alcohol and other drug

use, safer sex, and other risk factors to student safety in many sections of the General Education Lifelong Learning course (GEL 101) offered in both fall and spring.

Alcohol and other drug prevention programming is conducted on campus and is part of the residential education program in University Village Apartments (UVA). Violence prevention programs are also offered on campus and in UVA, many of which are co-sponsored by University Police. University Village houses over a third of the first-year student class. However, attendance statistics do not identify numbers of participants by academic standing at the university. Alcohol free social alternative programs are also offered within UVA and the Clarke Field House/University Student Union during times traditionally associated with high incidents of alcohol abuse: the first days of residence prior to the beginning of class, Halloween, St. Patrick's Day, Cinco de Mayo, etc.

The campus emergency management system is up to date with many national best practices in the event of an emergency that threatens the physical safety of the campus community. The system includes phones in every classroom which can function as intercoms that can receive alert bulletins from campus emergency management personnel. In Fall of 2007, the campus launched a phone alert system capable of sending messages to home and cell phones of those registered with the service. As of late March 2008, there were approximately 1990 people signed up to receive emergency alerts, and of those, approximately 1800 were students. It is unknown how many first year students are included in the student registrants. In May of 2008, University Police will have a crime prevention officer on staff to facilitate a range of crime prevention activities on campus.

In Fall 2007, the University Hazing Education Team, including staff from Student Life & Leadership, the Dean of Students Office, Athletics, and University Police, was launched. The group presents programming targeting student organizations, fraternities, sororities and athletic teams. Hazing is of particular concern in formal or informal "initiation" or new member activities. While all "new members" may not be first year students, they are certainly common among new member ranks.

Psychological Safety- Students with mental health concerns are attending college with increasing frequency and complexity of cases nationwide. In particular, growing proportions of first year students are enrolling in colleges and universities with diagnosed conditions for which they have already been prescribed medications. Others will experience the onset of psychiatric conditions during the first year, or later, in college. These first year students must navigate transition to college, and many will experience the stress of independent living without the support structures to which they have become accustomed. A recent Chronicle of Higher Education Article states,

"The International Association of Counseling Services, a nonprofit accrediting organization, recommends that colleges have a ratio of one counselor every 1,500 full-time equivalent students. The average ratio, according to 2007 data, was one counselor

per 1,969 students, and 85 percent of counseling centers reported that more students were arriving at their centers with significant histories of mental-health issues” (The Chronicle of Higher Education, February 29,2008).

CSUSM enrollment is 7528 FTES (college year 2007/08 average), and the university employs 2.25 FTE licensed psychologists within our Student Health and Counseling Center. Our ratio of counselors to students is 1:3346 – over 2.2 times the ratio recommended by the International Association of Counseling Services and 70% above the nation-wide average for counseling center staffing.

The Student Health and Counseling Center employs a psychiatrist 15 hours per week. By the middle of the spring 2008 semester, the wait time for a first appointment was at six weeks. Student Health and Counseling (SHCS) was merged from two departments into 1 unit over five years ago. This re-organization has facilitated even stronger working relationships among medical and psychological health provider staffs. SHCS also enjoys a strong working relationship with other Student Affairs units where student concerns often present: University Village Apartments, student life staff, Dean of Students Office (including judicial affairs), University Police, etc.

Since the opening of University Village in Fall 2003, regular meetings of personnel from the aforementioned departments have occurred to discuss individual students or trends in student issues which present current or potential concerns for student welfare. This group can also be activated as needed to respond to a pressing student concern for which there is not a clear protocol or response mechanism. Meetings are convened by the Dean of Students Office.

## **Discussion Notes on Opportunities and Challenges**

### **Identifying Student Needs**

Our campus has a strong set of support services designed to meet the needs of students. However, the workloads of all of the student support centers are immense and not all student needs are met. For example, some students work during the day making access a bottleneck at times. Services offered on a drop-in basis may not be immediate, especially during peak times. Most services recommend making appointments, which requires planning and motivation of the students.

Our campus must improve the way it informs first-year students of the services and opportunities available to them. Most students seek services through self-identification. The campus should respond to this pattern by making it easier for students to learn about and obtain services. Students receive a lot of information during First-year Orientations. However, it is at least as important on an on-going basis to provide them a single source where they can obtain information about these services. Our campus website should be better organized so that all of

the services are listed and available from a single webpage. Currently, our website seems to be organized more according to the institutional reporting chain of the campus rather than by services available to students. This organization makes information on some services difficult to find. One problem realized by the committee is that for first-generation college students and others, even filling out application forms for various campus services can be a daunting task. Many of these students do not have role models or others to help them in the application process and thus may not seek all of the services they need.

Rather than simply reacting to student requests for services, our campus should be more proactive by identifying student needs before problems arise. For example, the CSU Application and the CIRP Freshman survey contains information on students that could potentially be used to identify student needs and to direct students to appropriate services. However, currently this information cannot be used for this purpose.

Faculty, staff, and others are potentially important sources for identifying student needs. To make this mechanism more effective, the campus community should be knowledgeable about the range of the services provided to the students. The Faculty Center informs new tenure-track faculty to the broad range of support services and activities for students during the New Faculty Institute; however, there is no organized and systematic way to educate other instructors, including adjuncts and TAs, on how to identify student needs and how to link the needs to campus services. This deficiency is significant since over 80% of the sections taken by First-Year students are taught by adjuncts or TAs (Document # 70, FOE Evidence Library). Some campuses have adopted “Early-Warning Systems” designed to identify important academic and personal/social needs of at-risk students. Examples are MAP-Works, a commercial system co-developed by Educational Benchmarking and Ball State University (<http://www.map-works.com/>), and “home-grown” systems, such as the system at UNC Greensboro (<http://web.uncg.edu/adv/essi/>). Our campus should examine such systems to determine feasibility of adoption.

### **Addressing Student Needs**

Our committee examined the degree to which our campus meets the needs of first-year students by surveying the existing services on campus. However, there may be some first-year needs that are not addressed by existing services. One such area is the degree to which the campus has involved the family. One-half of the first-year students indicated on the FOE survey that the campus did not or only slightly included their family in their college experience. We regard this as a significant shortcoming. Family involvement is an important factor in the retention and success of all students. Involvement might be especially important for first-generation students. Approximately 20 percent of the respondents to the FOE survey were first-generation college students and their family might not understand the demands and opportunities of university study. Additionally, first-generation families may be less familiar and comfortable

with the workings of the university and may be less likely to engage without invitation and orientation. Our campus should explore ways of proactively reaching out to the families of these students.

An important component in determining the degree to which the campus addresses student needs is evaluation. Our campus provides an array of services designed to help students. All service centers maintain visitor logs that provide information on the number of students served. However, there does not appear to be a consistent effort to determine the quality and effectiveness of these services in terms of how well these services meet the needs of first-year students. Each of these services should have goals and measurable objectives. A plan for ongoing formative and summative evaluation should be used to see how well goals and objectives are being met. Such a plan would help the campus determine areas of improvement and, hopefully, improve the academic performance, retention and the social and personal experiences of first-year students.

### **Student Experiences**

The dimension committee discussed the proportion of first year classes taught by tenured/tenure track faculty vs. by lecturers/adjunct faculty. Statistics from the 2006/07 academic year indicated that among courses with high first year student enrollment, 14% of fall semester sections and 15% of spring semester sections involved a tenure track instructor. Remaining sections were taught by adjunct instructors or teaching associates. The committee was careful to not form any judgments about the quality of classroom instruction offered. However, potential concerns about accessibility for students and awareness of the myriad of academic support services on campus were noted. There appears to be a need for all faculty to become more informed of co-curricular programs and services which support student academic and personal success and retention to the second year.

Data from the National Survey on Student Engagement seems to indicate a need to increase and improve individualized attention from faculty and staff. While students living on campus and/or enrolled in particular success programs have structured opportunities for such interactions, this is likely less than half the first year student population. There is an opportunity to design and support, through resources and recognition, structured elements of the first year program which increase such interaction opportunities.

It seems evident that academic support programs such as learning assistance and academic advising provide important support to student academic success and persistence in the first year. Student feedback and utilization data indicates a need for additional personnel and more varied hours of service in addition to consistent attention to quality in service delivery. It was recommended to the committee that courses that present particular difficulties to students entering their major coursework be targeted for supplemental instruction/tutoring investments.

Further opportunities for increasing first year student success include elements of “intrusive advising” where the university seeks out the student rather than waiting to be sought out when there is a question or crisis. Previously successful tools which could be considered “intrusive advising” include mid-semester evaluations. To the extent it is appropriate, technological resources should be reviewed (PeopleSoft, roadmaps for academic majors) for assistance in building such “intrusive” tools. This would afford academic advisors time to spend with students on academic and non-academic concerns which impact success and retention.

While opportunities for campus involvement have expanded in recent years, the degree to which campus involvement is encouraged by faculty, as well as staff, is unknown. Given the relationship between campus involvement, academic success and retention, an opportunity lies in alliances with faculty which encourage and/or reward student involvement in campus life. Examples could include campus involvement projects required in the General Education Lifelong Learning course (GEL) or campus involvement reflection essays written as General Education Writing (GEW) assignments. There is a great opportunity for development of co-curricular components of First Year Programs as well.

While FoE student survey data offer encouraging information on inclusive campus climate, more information is needed to fully understand the experience of all first year students. A campus climate survey which would enable perceptions of inclusivity to be related to student demographics, including class level, would better inform this discussion and provide data from which intervention programs could be developed. With regard to the needs of disabled students, interviews with the Director Disabled Student Services revealed a priority need for better signage entering campus and on campus allowing students to navigate the campus independently.

### **Physical and psychological safety**

While current opportunities to present safety information are utilized, the degree to which students actually learn these protective messages is unknown. The campus orientation program and GEL curriculum affords the vast majority of first-year students exposure to these topics, but the brevity required by the need to cover so much material in a short amount of time is likely problematic. The new crime prevention officer affords additional resources to these efforts, but the campus must partner with University Police to provide venues, such as in person interactions or via the web, to assist the messages in being heard and retained by students.

For the myriad of physical safety education and harm prevention efforts, there is an opportunity for growth for the campus to assess the effectiveness of current initiatives, expand those that work and redesign those that do not meet current goals.

With regard to psychological safety, the campus is challenged by lack of resources to hire more psychological and psychiatric personnel. At current levels, staff typically are not able to

accommodate student demand and have no time allotted for prevention and education activities outside the Student Health and Counseling Center. It is unknown how many faculty, staff, or students are aware of the resources available on campus. The campus currently has active outreach programs to recruit returning veterans and foster youth to study at CSUSM. Such programs are clearly tied to the university's mission of student access and educational equity. However, given the higher proportion of mental health concerns often presented in these populations, such programs will tax an already overburdened service offered at the university.

Similarly it is unknown to what degree faculty and staff are aware of the process developed to problem-solve particularly complex student behavior cases that don't easily fit a law enforcement or student conduct process. A presentation entitled, "working with Distressed Students" was offered through a collaborative effort by University Police, Student Health and Counseling, Disabled Student Services, and the Dean of Students Office in Fall 2007. Such education and outreach efforts should be increased so that campus personnel have the opportunity to know what resources are available to them and to students negotiating difficult circumstances.

#### **Discussion Notes on Sources of Evidence.**

Please provide the rationale for the task force's judgment and summarize the evidence used. The committee used phone and/or personal interviews with staff members and examination of website to find out about the details of each of the services for students.

#### **Identifying Student Needs**

Student Affairs Organizational Chart:

[http://www.csusm.edu/student\\_affairs/VPSA/Student%20Affairs%20Org%20Chart%2020108.pdf](http://www.csusm.edu/student_affairs/VPSA/Student%20Affairs%20Org%20Chart%2020108.pdf)

Applications & surveys that potentially identify student needs:

CSU Application Form: <http://www.csumentor.edu/>

Annual Freshman Survey FoeTec Evidence library Document #5

National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) FoeTec Evidence library Document #6

FOE Student Survey

FOE Faculty Survey

Examples of early-warning systems

Educational Benchmarking and Ball State University (<http://www.map-works.com/>),

UNC Greensboro (<http://web.uncg.edu/adv/essi/>)

#### **Addressing Student Needs**

The committee used phone and/or personal interviews with staff members and examination of website to find out about the details of each of the services for students.

Student Life & Leadership: <http://www.csusm.edu/sll/orientation/>

University Village:

<http://www.myownapartment.com/universityvillage/community/>

Dimension: All Students

Committee Report

Academic Advising: [http://www.csusm.edu/Academic\\_Advising/](http://www.csusm.edu/Academic_Advising/)  
 EOP: [http://www.csusm.edu/SSS\\_EOP/EOP/](http://www.csusm.edu/SSS_EOP/EOP/)  
 Language Learning Center: <http://lynx.csusm.edu/lc/index.asp>  
 Math Lab: [http://www.csusm.edu/math\\_lab/](http://www.csusm.edu/math_lab/)  
 Trio/Student Support Services: [http://www.csusm.edu/SSS\\_EOP/SSS/](http://www.csusm.edu/SSS_EOP/SSS/)  
 Writing Center: [http://www.csusm.edu/writing\\_center/](http://www.csusm.edu/writing_center/)  
 Career Center: <http://www.csusm.edu/careers/>  
 Disabled Student Services: <http://www.csusm.edu/dss/>  
 Student Health & Counseling Services: <http://www.csusm.edu/shcs/>  
 Financial Aid & Scholarship Office: <http://www.csusm.edu/finaid/>  
 Veterans Services: [http://www.csusm.edu/enroll/vet\\_srvcs.htm](http://www.csusm.edu/enroll/vet_srvcs.htm)  
 Science Supplemental Instruction: <http://www.csusm.edu/obrt/si/>

**Student Experiences**

- FoE Student Survey
- FoE “All Students” dimension focus group
- National Survey on Student Engagement (NSSE)
- Freshman Survey (CIRP)
- “Instructors for High Enrollment FY Courses” table in FoTec evidence library.
- Interviews with personnel from the following units: College of Arts and Sciences (Associate Dean), Centers for Learning and Academic Support Services, Academic Advising, Student Life & Leadership, The Clarke Field House/University Student Union, University Village Apartments, Disabled Students Services, the Dean of Students Office, and Associated Students, Inc.

**Physical and psychological safety**

- FoE Student Survey
- FoE “All Students” dimension focus group
- Interviews with personnel from the following departments: University Police, Emergency Management, Student Life & Leadership, Student Health and Counseling, University Village Apartments, Disabled Students Services, and The Dean of Students Office
- Chronicle of Higher Education, February 29, 2008 edition

**Number and percentage of first-year students who applied for and received financial assistance during AY 06-07 and 05-06.**

**Source: CSUSM Office of Financial Aid.**

<b><u>Academic Year 2006-07</u></b>	<b>First-time Full-time Freshmen</b>	<b>First Year Undergrad (Total Enrolled)</b>
Number of students who were financial aid	<b>713</b>	<b>1,378</b>

applicants		
		<b>% of 1<sup>st</sup> Year Enrolled</b>
Number of students who were determined to have financial need <sup>1</sup>	<b>453</b>	<b>33%</b>
Number of students who received any financial aid <sup>2</sup>	<b>383</b>	<b>28%</b>
Average amount of aid received		<b>\$6,034</b>

<b><u>Academic Year 2005-06</u></b>	<b>First-time Full-time Freshmen</b>	<b>First Year Undergrad (Total Enrolled)</b>
Number of students who were financial aid applicants	<b>409</b>	<b>804</b>
		<b>% of 1<sup>st</sup> Year Enrolled</b>
Number of students who were determined to have financial need <sup>1</sup>	<b>257</b>	<b>32%</b>
Number of students who received any financial aid <sup>2</sup>	<b>218</b>	<b>27%</b>
Average amount of aid received		<b>\$5,805</b>

Notes:

<sup>1</sup> The determination of need begins with an assessment of the family's ability to pay for educational costs through the FAFSA. The expected family contribution is a prescribed federal formula. Financial need is determined as: (CSUSM Fees and other educational expenses) – Expected family contribution.

<sup>2</sup> This number includes only those students who demonstrated need and received aid. This number does not include scholarship only students who had no need but did receive scholarship funds.

**Number of first-year applicants, admissions, and enrollment in the fall 2005, 2006, and 2007 semesters.**

**Source: Office of Admissions and Recruitment**

<b>Fall Term</b>	<b>First-time Freshmen Applicants</b>	<b>First Time Freshman Admitted</b>	<b>First Time Freshman Enrolled</b>
<b>2007</b>	<b>9,290</b>	<b>6,766</b>	<b>1,368</b>
<b>2006</b>	<b>7,855</b>	<b>6,158</b>	<b>1,381</b>
<b>2005</b>	<b>6,586</b>	<b>2,877</b>	<b>806</b>