



October 21, 2010

Dear Participants in the Discovery Café,

At the end of our Graduation Initiative Discovery Café, a number of people shared with the group the “next steps” that they were committing to in order to help us reach our graduation goals. Mine was to communicate back to you about the morning’s discussions and what would come out of it. Since the Discovery Café, we have developed a list of the 55 “bold steps” that participants proposed on the sheets posted around the Grand Salon and rank-ordered them by number of votes. As the Graduation Initiative Steering Committee looked over this list, we recognized that, while some specific steps received a relatively large number of votes, there was a great deal of overlap across all the suggestions. Thus, we were able to identify several key themes which are listed below:

- 1. Information resources**—Clearly the participants believed that CSUSM needs to do a better job of connecting students (and others) with available information. The idea of a **concierge** who would direct individuals to various campus resources received the largest number of votes from participants. In addition, an FAQ website was a well-received idea as were calls for additional on-line support for students for both academic and non-academic issues and more information and connection for transfer students.
- 2. Intervention for success**—Participants in the Discovery Café believed that we could do more to proactively help students, especially those who are struggling with academic and non-academic issues. The idea of an **early warning system** came up in various forms among the identified bold steps.
- 3. Engage students in campus through employment and student life**—We recognized that keeping students on campus is a high priority, whether through providing more opportunities for **employment** (and developing them through that employment) or providing more **campus-based activities**.
- 4. Cohort/community**—This theme came through with the calls for expanding university success courses (“GEL”), developing such courses for transfers, and looking for mechanisms to create **cohorts**—such as expanding our **learning community program** at both the upper and lower-division.
- 5. Mentoring for students**—Although the campus presently has the faculty mentoring program for a group of transfer students, there was interest in expanding what we do in this area.

6. **Data collection and dissemination**—In order to better serve students, we need more information about them more widely distributed and we need to be collecting and analyzing data about both our successes and failures.

The Graduation Steering Committee has begun to identify next steps to address these themes and, over the coming weeks, as we define those goals and timelines, we will be communicating them with you.

Thank you again for your participation in the Discovery Café and for your many contributions to our students' success. We will keep you posted and invite your further participation as the Graduation Initiative progresses.

Best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Emily F. Cutrer". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "E".

Emily F. Cutrer

Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs

EFC/mab

Attachment

CSUSM Graduation Initiative Discovery Cafe

Friday, September 24, 2010

Reference # ~ Not Ranking	"Bold Steps"	# Dots
1	Create University Concierge (centralized info hub)	38
2	Hire, develop and engage student assistants	26
3	Expand GEL for ALL students (including transfers); learning community or cohort based options	17
4	Expand successful student success programs to all student populations: intrusive support; additional online support	16
5	Create cohorts and learning community (based on what we know from TRIO, SSS, EOP, CAMP, Joint Doctoral Program)	15
6	Create (expand on existing) Learning Communities for FY students	15
7	Create CENTRAL point for student support (to help distressed students in non-academic issues that are affecting their academics), so: an ombudsperson for life circumstances – LIFE COACH!!	14
8	Centralizing First Year Experience	14
9	Supply faculty, lecturers and staff with resources to support students in need on front end	13
10	Use "cohort/learning community/study group" model to keep students together (both first-year and transfer students – support each other, "belonging", easier to advise / get classes)	13
11	Improve transfer student experience – Transfer Center	13
12	Increase resources for students with economic/family/emotional problems (childcare/social worker/centralized HELP, etc.–1- 800-XXX-XXXX and/or web button)	12
13	Expand campus employment opportunities for students	12
14	Develop a forum for sharing of resources with faculty, staff and administrators	11
15	Launch transfer student initiative: survey second year; checkpoints	11
16	Create an "early intervention hot-line" that faculty and staff can use when they identify a student who needs an early intervention. (Also students!)	10
17	Expand and formalize mentorship (peer, staff and faculty) programs	10
18	Upper-division "GEL" ("Campus Connect") in the major: help students to learn about resources; help students to find jobs (career & community connection); staff & alumni to be involved)	9
19	Campus-wide mentoring program	9
20	Establish a cultural awareness training and sensitivity program	9
21	Establish K-12 articulation with high schools – faculty-to-faculty	8
22	Strengthen human relationships – students at the center	7
23	Improve communications: FAQ or "Did you know?" on web page; human contact on phone and first contacts (who are <u>informed</u>).	7
24	Identify early warning systems – get to them before it's too late.	7
25	Create a Student Assistance Program (similar to EAP for faculty & staff) maybe using community volunteers?	6
26	Alert students early	5
27	Expand campus life to include weekend services and events	5
28	Technology / online interactive "referral" specialist	5
29	Centralization of campus resources info – students & parents, faculty & staff	4
30	Make data accessible to all campus constituents	4
31	Provide support for lecturers who teach 1st year students	4
32	Infuse graduation initiative into student groups – peer support	4
33	Engage in ongoing, purposeful tracking, follow-up and outcomes assessment	3
34	Further expand access / outreach programs: increase preparation; address underrepresented student groups	3

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Reference # ~ Not Ranking	"Bold Steps"	# Dots
35	Conduct exit surveys for graduating students (What worked? Helped? Etc.)	3
36	Research best practices in use of cohorts to support/socialize students WITHIN context of <u>OUR</u> students.	3
37	Make GE accessible	3
38	Leverage technology (don't forget human contact!)	3
39	Key intervention plan: "O" → what follows orientation?; FY transfer students	3
40	Clarify statistics as retention vs. graduation, freshman vs. transfers, etc.	2
41	Provide better information to students about what programming at CSUSM they have access to.	2
42	Provide services for students taking courses at non-traditional times / settings (earling morning, late night, weekends, online, Temecula, etc.)	2
43	Each faculty / staff member to become a "resource finder/provider"; role model for students	2
44	Use technology to track data: Are students getting info? Which programs are working? Or, are not working?	2
45	Make available resources known to faculty and lecturers	2
46	Study success	2
47	Connect students with community college transfer centers to increase student success	2
48	Ombudsperson / Student Advocate	2
49	Breaking through internal barriers through process improvement initiative	1
50	Mentor students	1
51	Push information	1
52	Ramp-up and broaden formation of learning communities (faculty involvement; create belonging)	1
53	Spread the word about campus success stories.	0
54	Accessible, affordable and flexible childcare for students (and other services)	0
55	We need to know the profile of our students! Who are our students?	0