



WICHITA STATE  
UNIVERSITY

CENTER FOR COMMUNITY SUPPORT  
AND RESEARCH

# Report For WSU Office of Transitions and Orientation/ Office of Student Success

## Strategic Planning

October 28, 2014

Staff members and stakeholders of the WSU Office of Transitions and Orientations and the WSU Office of Student Success met Sept. 26, 2014, for strategic planning.

### Summary and Major Themes

Participants recommended that in light of recent staffing changes and to further their missions, the Offices of Student Success and Transitions and Orientation should be combined under one director. The preferred name for the new office is the Office of Student Success.

Participants recommended an organizational structure with a director, an assistant director, and appropriate managers and coordinators.

Participants strongly support a continued partnership with the Office for Student Money Management and the Military and Veterans Student Center.

Continuing to define this office and its work is a high priority. The definition must align with the University.

Engaging more faculty more deeply is a high priority.

The next level of strategy and design work is best done by task forces. For example, a revamped WSU 101 could be assigned to a task force of three to four Office of Student Success /Office of Transitions and Orientation staff plus one or two outside stakeholders.

### Timeline

Participants created a timeline of the two offices and their work, looking for themes, for what to take forward from their history, and for what they are ready to leave behind.

### Themes

- Change
  - Usually reactive
- Have done good things
  - Some have lasted a long time
    - Supplemental Instruction
  - Retention has increased
- Commitment to student success
- Not a lot of evaluation or work around best practices

### What is essential/unique/deserves conservation? (Take forward)

- SI and tutoring
  - Successful
  - Data driven
  - Has faculty buy-in
- WSU 101, college specific
- Getting students excited about being college students
- Required participation
- Graduation Partnership – including evaluation
- Financial literacy and education
  - Even if no grant
- Orientation
- Peer mentorship – students helping students
- New strategies for faculty buy-in
  - For example, integrating in general education requirements
- Military and Veterans Student Center
- Increasing number of faculty involved, supporting

### What doesn't work / doesn't fit / is not our style?

- Management style that once an idea is assigned it's settled and done
- Not studying sufficiently
- Retention Council charge
- Limited communication “trickle”
- Redundant communication / decision-making
- Tutoring structure
- Physical spread

### Mission Audit

Participants reviewed the two offices' mission and vision statements. The statements scored high enough that revising them does not need to be on the immediate priority list. Mission statement writing could be a helpful process in the spring semester or next academic year as the combined Office of Student Success/Office of Transitions and Orientation office further defines its work.

### Reactions to the mission and vision statements

- Too long! / Not long enough
- Paragraph vs. bullets
- Neither is tied to retention
- Mission is 'here's what we do' not what we aspire to do
- Needs work on "can be understood by those the organization serves"
- Vision doesn't include me as a student
  - Why do we need to be recognized nationally? (May reflect Kansas Board of Regents request)
- Is it about us or the students?
- One mission statement is tied to the University strategic plan
- Values should be concrete and foundational; not behavioral characteristics
  - Google is a good model

### Strategic Directions

Accepting for now that the mission statements describe their work effectively, participants were asked what they do or need to do in order to fulfill the missions:

Serve prospective students

Serve new students

Keep established students here

- The one stop for academic support
- Supplemental Instruction

Serve international students

Problem solving – what gets brought to us by students and faculty and what we discover. Triage, *e.g.*, student employees.

- Generating new options

Supporting faculty

"Be all end all"

Be seen as leaders on campus and have good relationships/networks

Make sure people know what we do

Collaboration

Define student success

Define transitions – What and whom are we transitioning? For how long?

Assessment

- Use needs assessment and Graduation Partnership document

Program planning

Program implementation

Participants were also asked what they do not do:

Formal academic advising

Financial Aid counseling

## Plan of Work

By combining and refining some strategic directions, participants were able to create a general plan of work that includes for most areas a general description of what is needed, one or two high priority items for moving this forward, and a list of tasks and projects associated with the area. Many tasks and projects support more than one strategic direction.

<b>Strategic direction</b> Define student success and student transition		<b>What this entails</b> Answers to: What is our unique role in contributing to success? How do <u>we</u> help students Achieve their definitions of success? Stay? Do well? Graduate? Be happy? What and whom are we transitioning? For how long? Define student success in a way that everyone “gets it” Build on students’ strengths – maximize their capacity/potential <b>What’s missing</b> Overall definition
<b>Who</b> All staff	<b>Will do what</b> Hold meetings to discuss this	<b>By when</b> End of fall 15 semester.
<b>Who</b> All staff	<b>Will do what</b> Respond to administrative directives and align with University mission	<b>By when</b> End of fall 15 semester – <b>COMPLETED AND ONGOING</b>
<b>Who</b> Director	<b>Will do what</b> Pass definition/plan up the line	<b>By when</b> End of fall 15 semester
<b>Who</b> All staff	<b>Will do what</b> Continue and complete strategic planning process	<b>By when</b> Beginning of spring 16 semester

<b>Strategic direction</b> Serve academic needs of students		<b>What this entails</b> Supplemental Instruction Tutoring WSU 101 Success Plans
<b>Associated tasks</b> Transition Tuesdays 101 – developing and teaching Supplemental Instruction Study skills presentations Tutoring Success plans / exceptions WSU Reads: common read Military and Veteran Student Center Mentoring Student Early Alert System		
<b>Highest priority objective</b> Reorganize tutoring services		
<b>Who</b> Assistant Director and Program Coordinator for Academic Success Programs	<b>Will do what</b> Look at current process and streamline. Automate more of the process to ease tracking and data collection.	<b>By when</b> End of spring 2015 semester – <b>COMPLETED</b>
<b>Highest priority objective</b> Establish funding and staffing for Military and Veterans Student Center		
<b>Who</b> Director	<b>Will do what</b> Propose staffing changes to Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs	<b>By when</b> Beginning of spring 15 semester – <b>COMPLETED</b>
<b>Other objectives</b> Increase Supplemental Instruction offerings		
<b>Who</b> Assistant Director for Academic Success Programs	<b>Will do what</b> Look at other campus structures, determine what would work best at WSU	<b>By when</b> End of spring 15 semester – <b>COMPLETED</b>

<b>Strategic direction</b> Serve students through developing social skills and opportunities		<b>What this entails</b> Peer mentoring WSU 101 Orientation	
<b>Associated tasks</b> Orientation for students Orientation for parents WSU 101 WSU 102 Train students Transition workshops Military and Veteran Student Center Mentoring			
<b>Highest priority objective</b> Implement and expand digital marketing for orientation			
<b>Who</b> Assistant Director for First Year Programs	<b>Will do what</b> Explore other campus best practices, look into the use of Guidebook, enhance website, record activities throughout year	<b>By when</b> Beginning of fall 2015 semester – <b>COMPLETED</b>	
<b>Other objectives</b> Assess student needs for transition workshops			
<b>Who</b> Assistant Director and Program Coordinator for First Year Programs.	<b>Will do what</b> Complete needs assessment with current first year students.	<b>By when</b> End of fall 2015 semester.	
Create system to follow up with 101 students			
<b>Who</b> Director	<b>Will do what</b> Consider other campus models and look to expand mentoring by Peer Leaders.	<b>By when</b> End of spring 2016. <b>THIS CHANGED WITH THE CHANGE TO FRESHMAN SEMINAR.</b>	

<b>Strategic direction</b> Life skill development for students		<b>What this entails</b> Activities of daily life Time management Organization Personal financial literacy and education Success plans WSU 101
<b>Associated tasks</b> Develop and teach WSU 101 Office of Student Money Management / MyCollegeMoneyPlan.org Supervise 100+ students: Supplemental Instruction leaders, tutors, Transition Mentors, Peer Leaders, Peer Financial Coaches Military and Veterans Services: Campus expert, Dept. of Defense/Memorandum of Understanding Train students: Supplemental Instruction, tutors, Peer Financial Coaches, Transition Mentors, Peer Leaders Mentoring Black and Yellow Club		
<b>Highest priority objective</b> Expand Transition Mentor staff		
<b>Who</b> Director and Assistant Director for First Year Programs	<b>Will do what</b> Expand marketing and nomination process.	<b>By when</b> Middle of fall 2014 semester -- <b>COMPLETED</b>
<b>Other objectives</b> Implement Transition Mentor training course		
<b>Who</b> Director and Assistant Director of First Year Programs	<b>Will do what</b> Explore options with Career Development.	<b>By when</b> Beginning of spring 15 semester – <b>COMPLETED</b>
Improve student staff training		
<b>Who</b> Assistant Director of First Year Programs	<b>Will do what</b> Review other campus training programs, look at National Orientation Directors Association best practices and hold regular meetings with staff.	<b>By when</b> Beginning of spring 15 semester – <b>COMPLETED</b>

Evaluate WSU 101		
<b>Who</b> Director	<b>Will do what</b> Continue to look at data and work with Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs and General Education Committee on change to Freshman Seminar.	<b>By when</b> End of fall 2015 semester. <b>THIS CHANGED WITH THE CHANGE TO FRESHMAN SEMINAR</b>
Diversify funding sources for Office for Student Money Management /MyCollegeMoneyPlan.org		
<b>Who</b> Director	<b>Will do what</b> Research additional/independent funding opportunities with Foundation. Request funding from Provost.	<b>By when</b> End of spring 2016 – ON GOING.



<b>Strategic direction</b> Make sure people know what we do		<b>What this entails</b> Marketing to faculty Identifying how to assist faculty Making it easy for them Marketing to students  <b>What's missing</b> Message Process
<b>Associated tasks</b> Presentations to faculty and presentations to staff Presentations to student organizations Presentations to advisors Outreach events Marketing: ideas, events, promos, materials, online		
<b>Highest priority objective</b> Define our office so that we know what message(s) we want to share		
<b>Who</b> Director	<b>Will do what</b> Work on new staffing and office organization	<b>By when</b> End of spring 2016 semester -- <b>COMPLETED</b>
<b>Other objectives</b> Develop marketing identity message		
<b>Who</b> Director and staff	<b>Will do what</b> Redesign and streamline message on web, printed materials and promo items	<b>By when</b> End of spring 15 semester – <b>COMPLETED</b>
Create consistent talking points		
<b>Who</b> Director	<b>Will do what</b> Use streamlined message to create talking points page for all staff to use. Create End of Year Document to share with constituents.	<b>By when</b> End of fall 2015 semester
Marketing strategy, including how to get the message out		
<b>Who</b> Director	<b>Will do what</b> Create marketing strategy and coordinate participation in marketing events, including a social media campaign.	<b>By when</b> End of fall 2015 semester

<p><b>Strategic direction</b> Collaboration</p>	<p><b>What this entails</b> Faculty engagement Faculty support Be seen as leaders on campus Have good relationships and networks Working across divisions Developing partnerships Be flexible and say yes</p> <p><b>What's missing</b> Faculty—referrals, the message that we are interested in working with you, events, use of faculty Fellows</p>	
<p><b>Associated tasks</b> Staff meetings: Supplemental Instruction grads, Transition Mentors, inter-office, all staff, 1:1 Staff development: conferences, site visits Adult learning committee WSU 101 committee Exceptions committee Orientation committee Academic Operations Council Advisor Council Retention Council Recruit student employees: Supplemental Instruction leaders, Peer Financial Coaches, Peer Leaders, tutors, Transition Mentors Community support: United Way Community support: Consumer Credit Counseling Community support: Veterans Affairs/Veterans of Foreign War/Legion Community support: Unified School District 259 and colleges Collaboration: Event services Collaboration: Career Development Collaboration: Student Involvement Collaboration: Student Health Services Collaboration: Diversity &amp; Inclusion Collaboration: Counseling and Testing Center Collaboration: Financial Aid Collaboration: Honors Collaboration: Advising Collaboration: Registrar's Office Communication: Faculty, staff, students, administration, other (Registrar's Office, Student Involvement)</p>		
<p><b>Highest priority objective</b> Get formal faculty buy-in</p>		
<p><b>Who</b> All staff</p>	<p><b>Will do what</b> Outreach events and daily interaction.</p>	<p><b>By when</b> Throughout all semesters. Significant improvement by end of spring 2015 semester.</p>

<b>Who</b> Director and Assistant Directors	<b>Will do what</b> Visit department meetings	<b>By when</b> End of spring 2015 semester – <b>COMPLETED</b>
<b>Who</b> Director and Assistant Director for Academic Success Programs	<b>Will do what</b> Work with Faculty Senate	<b>By when</b> End of fall 2015 semester – <b>COMPLETED</b>
<b>Who</b> Director and staff	<b>Will do what</b> Lunches with faculty	<b>By when</b> End of spring 2016 semester
<b>Other objectives</b> Expand faculty buy-in by working with friendlies/allies		
<b>Who</b> Director and all staff	<b>Will do what</b> Explore ways to expand programs (double number of Faculty Fellows) to departments that have fellows, Supplemental Instruction faculty, etc.	<b>By when</b> End of spring 2016 semester – <b>COMPLETED</b>

<b>Strategic direction</b> Planning and assessment		<b>What this entails</b> Use needs assessment and Graduation Partnership document Continuous learning cycle: plan -> implement -> assess -> revise -> implement Identifying needs and planning for them
<b>Associated tasks</b> WSU 101 syllabus and lesson plans, teaching WSU 101 Program planning (logistics) and development (concepts and creation) Budget review and planning: Supplemental Instruction, Morgan Grant, College Access Challenge Grant, Student Success, Transitions and Orientation Program evaluation services and assessment and evaluation reports Create assessment tools Collect data		
<b>Highest priority objective</b> Develop evaluation tools to measure services and programs		
<b>Who</b> Director and Assistant Directors	<b>Will do what</b> Conduct program evaluations in each area to gather qualitative data.	<b>By when</b> End of spring 2015 semester – <b>COMPLETED</b>
<b>Other objectives</b> Gather and reintegrate data (new and existing)		
<b>Who</b> Director and Assistant Directors	<b>Will do what</b> Post relevant retention data to website, automate data in Academic Success, automate data in First Year Programs, and begin to formulate reports in the Office for Student Money Management.	<b>By when</b> End of fall 2015 semester
Determine what we want to measure		
<b>Who</b> All staff	<b>Will do what</b> Review what we know and have, determine what we need to measure to align with university retention goals.	<b>By when</b> End of spring 16 semester
Develop reports with outcomes		
<b>Who</b> All staff	<b>Will do what</b> Explore ways to officially report data	<b>By when</b> End of spring 16 semester

## Consultant Observations and Questions

There are several items about use of data, developing evaluation strategies, and following students. If this has not been a consistent practice in the past, what will need to change in the offices' culture to become more data-driven? What ways of working might you need to give up, speed up, or slow down?

To achieve your purposes, collaboration is essential. At the same time, you have an extraordinarily long list of collaboration partners. Maintaining that many relationships takes time. Which potential partners are most critical, and how can you prioritize your relationships with them?

The perceived need to get and keep faculty attention is shared by many factions on the campus. Which segments of faculty do you really need to buy in? What is it about the way you work that makes it so difficult to capture attention? From the perspective of faculty, what is it about your offerings that merits their attention?

## Next Steps

1. Review this document and determine who will be responsible for moving forward each of the high priority objectives you plan to work on this academic year.
2. Immediately provide recommendations for the combined office's structure "up the line."
3. Continue the process of defining this work and your role in it.
4. As it makes sense, expand the plan of work into a more detailed strategic and operational plan, adding tasks and measurable objectives.

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