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Advising Logic Model

**FIRST-YEAR EXPERIENCE**

**Introduction**

**Recommended Strategies**

**Background/Opportunities**

**Opportunity 1:** Making all students feel welcomed, supported, celebrated and integrated into the campus is key to their overall academic experience.

**Opportunity 2:** Orientation and Fall Welcome programs are critical opportunities to provide key resources and information students need to succeed.

**Opportunity 3:** First-year students (FYS) can benefit from monitoring and ongoing mentorship to be successful in their courses.

First-Year Experience Goals 1–3: Recommended Strategies

**Goal 1:** Provide ample, high-quality resources for students to develop a sense of community and belonging so they can feel supported culturally, socially and academically.

**Goal 2:** Augment the Orientation and Fall Welcome events to maximize student academic and social acculturation.

**Goal 3:** Develop a digital communications plan to make support services more visible and remove stigmatization from student perceptions of these services.

First-Year Experience Logic Model

**ACADEMIC AND CAREER EXPERIENCES**

**Introduction**

**Recommended Strategies**

**Background/Opportunities**

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**Opportunity 3:** Both systemic support and the built environment need to be strengthened to support learning outside the classroom.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION
In December 2012, at the request of Chancellor Linda P.B. Katehi, Interim Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs Adela de la Torre established the Blue Ribbon Committee for Enhancing the Undergraduate Student Experience (BRC). This report presents the BRC’s recommendations for enhancing the experience of undergraduates as they pursue the timely completion of the baccalaureate degree. The recommendations address four key areas that frame the undergraduate experience:

1. Advising
2. First-Year Experience
3. Academic and Career Experiences
4. Student Life and Co-Curricular Experiences

The report proposes corresponding recommendations for programmatic support within these four areas to fulfill the following targeted aims:

1. Identify challenges and opportunities to improve the student experience.
2. Propose approaches to address the challenges and opportunities.
3. Develop recommendations for implementation of these approaches.
4. Provide metrics to ensure we serve students as effectively and efficiently as possible.

Background/Historical Context
The work of prior committees charged with assessing programs and visions that overlapped with the charge of this Blue Ribbon Committee significantly influenced the BRC’s recommendations. A brief summary of these reports and additional influences provide the foundation from which the BRC developed primary issues of concern and recommendations.

The 2020 Initiative: A Path to Academic Excellence and Economic Opportunity
The 2020 Initiative leverages existing strengths of institutional scholarship while achieving economic vitality through the following overall objectives that intersect with findings in this report:

1. Deliver the benefits of a UC education to an additional 5,000 deserving undergraduates.
2. Provide more international experiences for our campus community to create a more diverse educational climate and prepare future global leaders.
3. Increase financial stability by reducing reliance on the state for funding.

The work of the BRC included assessing the campus’s current ability to meet student needs, and the potential impact changes to enrollment numbers and an increase in diversity would have on the offices providing these services.
Online Student Services and Student Advising Portals

The Student Affairs Office of Technology is developing the Online Student Services portal (OSS), which will streamline and centralize administrative tasks for students by providing registration, financial aid, accounting and other related services online, in one location. The OSS will also provide student life content to students.

The Student Advising Portal is a collection of tools to enable deans’ office counselors and academic advisers to assist students with their undergraduate planning. It includes an electronic student file, GPA calculator, trend analysis, document management system, online forms (with routing), online appointment system and degree certification. There will also be a student-facing component of the portal. In addition to being directly available to students via its own Web address, the Student Advising Portal will be accessible through the homepage of the OSS.

Both the OSS and the Student Advising Portal figure prominently as ancillary support mechanisms across all four priority areas addressed in this report.

BRC Process and Key Themes

In response to a charge by the chancellor, the interim vice chancellor for Student Affairs recruited a committee of 103 faculty, students and staff through a campus-wide nomination process. The group met seven times as a full committee, and four subcommittees of 20-25 representatives met four times each. This report reflects those issues identified as priorities by a majority of the membership across all four subcommittees. Recommendations were prioritized in breakout sessions in follow-up meetings of the entire committee.

A number of common themes emerged as sources of opportunity for improvement across all four priority areas: mental health, advising structure, faculty-student engagement, and Orientation. Below is a brief summary of each issue; with detail offered in chapters referenced at the conclusion of each summary.

Mental Health

Today’s undergraduates are subject to multiple stressors that have resulted in a steady increase of student requests for mental health services on university campuses across the country. These stressors are not necessarily linked to a history of or predisposition to depression or other mental health diagnoses, but may be associated with the issues that confront a young person living away from home for the first time. Students’ first residential life experience on a college campus has many positive outcomes; nonetheless, the mental health needs of UC Davis undergraduate students are significant according to the most recent health assessment survey.¹

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2013 UC Davis Undergraduate Student Health Assessment (N=1,056)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Within the last 12 months:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of respondents</td>
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<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt things were hopeless</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt so depressed that it was difficult to function</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seriously considered suicide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attempted suicide</td>
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</tbody>
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¹ UC Davis Undergraduates, ACHA-NCHA II, Spring 2013
Challenges in accessing adequate mental health support services emerged as a theme throughout the BRC subcommittee and committee meetings. While this issue intersects all four priority areas, comprehensive coverage of mental health services and associated recommendations appear in Chapter 4, Student Life and Co-Curricular experiences (pp. 36–43). Increased staffing and an examination of program structure provide opportunities to improve campus responsiveness to student mental health needs. A key area of need that intersects with the priorities outlined in the 2020 Report is in providing culturally-nuanced services that are consistent with the growing diversity of our domestic and international undergraduate population.

**Advising Structure**
In fall 2012, Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor Hexter charged the Council of Associate Deans (CAD) to form funding priorities for enhancing academic advising. The most notable recommendation in the CAD Proposal addresses one of the greatest challenges identified by the BRC: the campus’s decentralized advising services. This report builds on the CAD Proposal by providing a comprehensive analysis of advising needs and recommendations for action in Chapter 1, Advising (pp. 9–17).

**Faculty-Student Engagement**
Faculty engagement is defined as faculty interaction with students through their roles as instructors, mentors, advisers and campus employers. How faculty fulfill these roles directly influences student engagement, the degree to which students become active participants in curricular and co-curricular activities. Discussions about the importance of increasing faculty-student engagement occurred in all four priority areas, with priorities and recommendations detailed in Chapter 3, Academic and Career Experiences (pp. 27–35). Recommendations include incentivizing faculty engagement with students to increase participation and strengthen the undergraduate experience.

**Orientation**
Freshman and first-year transfer students attend the campus’ two-day Orientation the summer preceding their fall-quarter enrollment. During Orientation, students are introduced to campus programs and resources. Fall Welcome is the official introduction to campus life at the beginning of fall quarter, prior to the first day of classes. Both Orientation and Fall Welcome are opportunities to provide students with key campus information regarding academic and social protocol and processes. While students rate these programs highly on post-event evaluation forms, the long-term impact of these programs, in their ability to influence academic and social development, is a concern to committee members. Discussion and specific recommendations concerning Orientation and Fall Welcome are covered in Chapter 2, First-Year Experience.

**Governance**
The BRC recommends that the vice provost for Undergraduate Education and the vice chancellor for Student Affairs co-chair a BRC oversight committee to ensure timely follow-through on report recommendations. The committee should consist of no more than 15 student, faculty and staff representatives who have the following charge:

1. Review and approve a budget proposal to accomplish goals.
2. Review and advise on allocation and expenditure of funds for program implementation.
3. Approve the identification and appointment of an evaluation team.
4. Approve the evaluation plans presented by the evaluator.
5. Work with affected units to provide feedback based on regular formative evaluations.
Metrics

Readiness for Change Assessment
Readiness for Change is an evidence-based assessment methodology that guides institutions in preparing for and timing systemic change. Assessing readiness for change in preparation for implementation of some of the BRC work plans will help ensure successful transitions to meet the current and future needs of UC Davis’ growing and increasingly diverse student enrollment.

Qualitative and Quantitative Evaluation Strategies
The BRC report provides a work plan to be undertaken by the leadership of specific units and divisions, with recommended timelines. Metrics for measuring the degree of success in meeting objectives will include both quantitative and qualitative data collection relating to student learning outcomes. Quantitative data such as program participation, both absolute numbers and frequencies, will indicate which program enhancements have been successful. Qualitative data collection via surveys and/or focus groups can elucidate the reasons why a specific strategy is or is not effective and reveal opportunities for program refinement. When linked to student learning outcomes, qualitative analysis will help us understand where a specific plan needs adjustment to help students meet their educational objectives. Qualitative assessment will guide the evaluation team’s formative process so we can continually monitor and refine implementation strategies.

Most recommendations for action detailed in this report require further assessment of key issues prior to devising a precise plan for implementation. Some of the issues, such as faculty engagement, course impaction and time-to-degree concerns, have implications beyond the scope of BRC because they are driven by Academic Senate policy and procedures. The BRC Report identifies these areas for referral to the appropriate entity.

Evaluation Process
The BRC recommends engaging an external (to Student Affairs) evaluator to manage the formative and summative evaluation processes in collaboration with the offices of Academic Assessment and Institutional Analysis. This approach ensures objectivity and institutional transparency while maximizing available resources and the volumes of data already collected and analyzed under the auspices of Institutional Analysis. The School of Education’s Center for Education and Evaluation Services is a logical candidate for conducting the evaluation, given the degree to which the center already collaborates with units throughout campus and its expertise in conducting complex educational assessments tied to learning outcomes. Funding resources will be required to staff the evaluation activity.
ADVISING

Introduction
Undergraduate advising is a highly complex effort at UC Davis. Its structure and delivery intersect with the priority needs identified by the Blue Ribbon Committee (BRC) for the other three areas of this report: First-year Experience, Academic and Career Experiences, and Student Life/Co-curricular Experiences. While academic advising is highly influential in determining the quality of the academic experience, every aspect of student life has the potential to be positively impacted by the vast array of advising services offered through Academic Affairs and Student Affairs.

Recommended Strategies
The BRC’s recommendations for strengthening advising services for UC Davis undergraduate students fall within five overarching goals:

1. Realign advising functions to develop a more cohesive, centralized model for delivering prompt, responsive, and individually tailored, yet consistent, advising services to undergraduates.
2. Organize delivery of advising services to address the unique needs of a culturally, socio-economically, and linguistically diverse student population.
3. Support faculty advisers to maximize the quality of advising and improve student interactions with faculty.
4. Use the new Web-based advising portal to support individualized services with technology-based information resources.
5. Structure students’ first- and second-year programs to facilitate earlier and more intentional planning of their curricular and co-curricular experiences.

Background/Opportunities
For each of the four priority areas, each BRC sub-committee (A–D) met for a two-hour discussion session after reading:

- A number of resources covering evidence-based best practices;
- Reports from another UC campus that had recently examined and revised its advising services structure; and
- Survey data reports (UCUES and BRC).

At the conclusion of each round of small group sessions on a priority area, the full BRC met for a two-hour session to prioritize recommendations based on sub-committee findings.

Because advising is perceived as the most complex of the four priority areas examined by the BRC, a small advising work group, consisting of campus-based advising staff and supervisors, was established to assist the committee in vetting proposed actions within the context of established campus systems and structures. This committee included representation from the Council of Associate Deans, which had been charged in 2012 with providing a proposal of recommendations to enhance academic advising to Provost and Executive Vice Chancellor Hexter (hereafter referred to as the “CAD Proposal”).

The following opportunities are priorities in enabling us to provide high quality advising services to undergraduates:
**Opportunity 1:** Increase resources for advising units to meet the need for providing quality advising sessions in a timely manner.

- In some units, the time allotted for academic advising is too brief (15 minutes in certain units), which a number of students on the BRC find insufficient for making critical decisions.
- Students have difficulty rising above academic probation status because there is inadequate recourse through advising services. Many students feel they must navigate the response process on their own.

**Opportunity 2:** Advising services are dispersed throughout colleges, units, and departments, as well as within Student Affairs units. This often creates confusion and misinformation. Decentralized services can be improved with greater campuswide organization and coordination.

- Service delivery, reporting, networking and tracking protocols are all decentralized.
- Communication among different service providers lacks coordination.
- Many students on the BRC expressed that advising processes should take into account the whole student so that life circumstances underlying academic performance can be supported.
- Advising staff positions fall under several payroll classifications, including “___ assistant.” Time is not protected for advising students under some classifications; often positions have other unrelated duties associated with their titles, limiting the number of students staff can advise.

**Opportunity 3:** Staff and peer advisers need more professional and consistent training to enhance advising for all students.

- Established networking resources have been eliminated in the budget cuts, leading to poor or no communication among different advising operations.
- Students receive conflicting information about campus policies and procedures.
- Staff and faculty advisers are not trained to accommodate the varying needs of international students, students with limited English proficiency, low-income students, first-generation college students, underrepresented minority (URM) students, and students with disabilities.
- Common standards for pre-requisite training that provides a professional standard for experience and skills do not exist.
- Continuing education is neither standardized nor required to keep advisers current in best practices.
**Opportunity 4:** Advising units can benefit from more students being aware of their services.

- Students on the BRC reported that services staff members discussed during the session on advising were not adequately visible to students.

- BRC students requested that professional advising services be offered outside of traditional business hours. (Most offices are open M–F between 8 and 5, with some closing as early as 4.) Work and class schedules preclude some students from being able to take advantage of services.

**Opportunity 5:** Academic probation (AP)/Subject to Disqualification (SD) notification and support will benefit from a more centralized advising system. BRC students reported that with better coordination and communication the process of addressing AP/SD notification would be easier to navigate and improve student academic outcomes.

- AP/SD notices are sent to students via email without prior warning or options for support. Because the communications are unclear, students may not respond appropriately or at all. The clarity, meaning, tone and consistency of communications need to be assessed.

- Outlined steps-to-be-taken are confusing to some students. For example, students may seek counsel of “an adviser” as recommended, but they do not necessarily seek an academic adviser. A common student perception is that they may not feel comfortable with the academic adviser. This is, at least in part, because students believe that academic advisers provide a series of steps to be followed without knowing the surrounding circumstances (emotional/life issues) that have caused the decline in academic performance. This disconnect arises from lack of adequate time to meet with the student and lack of continuity (i.e., one adviser assigned to the student for the whole process).

- Students are not assigned to one adviser who follows their case from start to finish. They see multiple advisers throughout the process—especially if the course in question is outside their major or they are undeclared. As a result, students often receive conflicting information from these individuals.

- Many students avoid seeing an academic adviser because they do not feel comfortable or connected with the assigned individual. This is especially true for URM students.

- Students seek academic guidance from advising staff who are not trained or qualified to provide this service.

- The timing of the AP/SD process is detrimental to international students, whose immigration status can be directly impacted by their academic standing if they are dismissed from campus. These students do not have the same options as domestic students (e.g., making up the course or improving their GPA by attending community college).
Opportunity 6: BRC students reported that early advising is critical to student success. Lack of advising is particularly problematic for undeclared students.

- Students make mistakes in selecting courses (don’t complete prerequisites, take courses out of sequence, take classes that won’t fulfill requirements, overload themselves, etc.).

- Students don’t fully engage in opportunities for educational experiences such as research, internships, service, study abroad, and co-curricular activities.

- Students have limited knowledge of, or need encouragement to, access programs and services that could help them be more successful.

- Undeclared students need more guidance in their major/career exploration process. Too many students wait until they are approaching the end of their second year to begin exploration. The longer a student takes to commit to a major, the greater the negative impacts (e.g., courses that don’t count toward a degree, increased time to degree and cost of education, missed opportunities to engage in related, enriching educational experiences).

- Advising provides a regular opportunity to check in with students and to facilitate engagement for students who are minimally engaged or not engaged at all.

Advising Enhancement Goals 1–5: Recommended Strategies

The following section includes each goal and a summary of priority action items determined by the BRC to meet these goals. The CAD Proposal provides the foundation for these goals but relates only to academic advising positions. The BRC recommendations include expanding the CAD Proposal recommendations to encompass all positions that have an advising function.

Goal 1: Streamline/realign advising functions to develop a more cohesive, centralized model for delivering prompt, responsive, and individually tailored yet consistent advising services to undergraduates.

1. Reduce Student-Adviser Ratio
   a. Decrease the number of students who need individual advising by providing certain basic informational services using peer advisers as front-office support in the deans’ and departmental offices.

   b. Provide basic informational services through the Online Student Services portal to reduce the use of advising staff for routine/ frequently asked questions.

2. Streamline Reporting and Accountability
   a. Create a director position that reports jointly to the vice provost for Undergraduate Education and the vice chancellor for Student Affairs.

   b. Through this position, establish a centralized-decentralized model of governance, in which advising staff can respond to the individual needs of their home department or unit while upholding standards common to all advising positions.
Goal 2: Organize delivery of advising services to address the unique needs of a culturally, socio-economically, and linguistically diverse student population.

1. Develop a training module for all advisers to build evidence-based, culturally-nuanced communications skills:

2. Develop service protocols to address the needs of our culturally diverse student population, which, in addition to defined URM populations, includes first-year/transfer students, students with disabilities, first-generation college students, international students, students with mental health support needs, married students/students with families.

3. Establish extended hours for professional academic advising staff to support students who cannot meet during business hours.

4. Establish advising protocol to address delays in declaring majors and supporting undeclared students.

5. Establish online and in-person protocol for early AP/SD warning and clear advising procedures for students to follow when they receive notice. Methods should include models for reaching a culturally diverse student population and supporting the needs of international students.

6. Develop culturally- and linguistically-nuanced communications plan to increase student understanding of advising’s role and benefits; increase visibility of services.
**Goal 3: Support faculty advisers to maximize quality of advising.**

Faculty advising provides an opportunity for every student to engage one-on-one with at least one member of the faculty throughout the academic year. When faculty members are recruited, however, most arrive without any formal training in how to support students in the advising role. The following action items support faculty engagement, including developing faculty competency in the role of adviser. This plan must be proposed through the appropriate campus channels to effect systemic change.

1. Develop mandatory advising orientation training within the colleges for new faculty.
2. Incentivize faculty to increase their participation in advising undergraduate students so individual caseloads decrease and faculty can see the benefits of engaging with students outside of the classroom.
3. Provide faculty with more information about campus support services so that they can make appropriate referrals for additional support.
4. Within the merit/promotion system, incentivize faculty to excel at student advising and/or take on additional student caseload.

**Goal 4: Use new Student Advising Portal to support individualized services with technology-based information resources.**

Development of the advising portal coincides with the implementation of recommendations formed through the BRC for enhancing the undergraduate experience. The BRC raised a number of ideas related to streamlining the timely delivery of information and resources as students require advising services. The BRC supports inclusion of the advising portal as one means to provide such support. Since the portal is under development, continued support and monitoring are needed to ensure it aligns with overall BRC recommendations. Until a director is appointed, it is advisable to continue working through an ad-hoc committee of advisers to ensure this alignment.

1. Develop a computerized support system to complement in-person services with consistent, ongoing student-based information, including:
   a. Electronic advising record that enables other advisers to see notes from prior meetings and enter new data
   b. Front-page advising information services to address FAQs and provide online resources for critical issues such as Academic Probation/Subject to Disqualification notifications and processes
   c. Real-time, interactive degree navigation map based on desired major
2. Develop a communications plan to announce and increase awareness of the Student Advising Portal.
**Goal 5:** *Structure students’ first- and second-year programs to facilitate earlier and more intentional planning of their curricular and co-curricular experiences.*

The BRC discussed the importance of providing students with essential information on how to navigate a large, decentralized research institution and how to optimize their experience at UC Davis. Within their first or second quarter, students need to understand the value of academic advising and engaging in enriching educational experiences (research, internships, service, study abroad, and co-curricular activities). They need guidance on how to explore and select a major, to stay on track for their degree, and to incorporate enriching educational experiences.

1. Publish a resource navigation tool that gives students a year-by-year plan (e.g., A Path to Success).
2. Provide more focused, intentional outreach and advising to undeclared students. Possibilities include directing students to exploratory services for undeclared majors, mandating advising or major/career exploration, and discussing factors that will impact time-to-degree.
3. Integrate essential advising information into existing first-year seminar curricula.
4. Use advising as an opportunity to connect with disengaged students to get them connected/engaged.
5. Provide students with access to personalized academic advising and either strongly encourage or mandate that students meet with an adviser at least once early in their first year.
## Advising Logic Model (1/2):

### Situation

**Opportunities:**
- High student-to-adviser ratio
- Improve communication between units.
- Develop networking opportunities to aid in communications and updating on best practices.
- Provide training for advisers.
- AP/SD process difficult to navigate.
- Improve connections between services offered and visibility/accessibility to students.
- Need for reward structure for faculty
- Need for adviser consistency
- Competing adviser responsibilities

**Recommendations:**
- Assess advising functions to develop more cohesive service delivery model.
- Organize service delivery to address unique needs of diverse community.
- Support faculty advisers to maximize quality of advising.
- Use online student portal to support services with technology-based information.
- Facilitate earlier and more intentional curricular and co-curricular planning.

### Inputs

- Students
- Faculty
- Staff
- $ Resources
- Time to assess situation thoroughly
- Literature review for best practices and determination of metrics
- Executive buy-in/support
- Departmental buy-in/support
- Beta testing/piloting
- Training opportunities

### Activities

- Hire director with joint-reporting accountability to VP and VC.
- Add peer adviser, faculty adviser, and /or professional staff adviser positions.
- Streamline position classification system for all advising appointments.
- Establish core training curriculum/ set minimum core proficiency standards.
- Restore annual conference of best practices for all advising staff, faculty advisers, and peer advisers.
- Develop training in culturally-nuanced communications.
- Extend professional advising hours.
- Establish support for undeclared majors.
- Establish early warning system for AP/SD risks.
- Develop communications plan for diverse student population.
- Develop mandatory advising orientation for new faculty.
- Increase number of faculty advisers.
- Provide faculty with referral resources.
- Develop incentives for faculty participation.
- Establish electronic advising record in student portal, including adviser access to transcript information.
- Provide front-page advising information services to address FAQs, including for AP/SD process.
- Provide real-time, interactive degree navigation map.
- Publish resource navigation tool with year-by-year plan.
- Provide better outreach and advising to undeclared students.
- Use advising to connect with disengaged students.

### Assumptions:
Success in streamlining services will depend on support for reorganization of advising services structure and organization; increased efficiency in delivering information dependent upon successful integration with student portal. Additional resource availability will determine extent to which recommendations can be implemented.
Advising Logic Model (2/2)

**Outputs**

- Student evaluations
- Reduced wait time for advising
- Reported increase in value of advising experience
- Reduced time-to-degree completion OR increased number of students completing degree in four years
- Reduced number of students on AP
- Number of students as peer advisers
- Number of faculty as major advisers
- Increased enrollment in freshman seminars
- Increased number of students who receive advising each quarter
- Reduction in reports of conflicting information provided by different advising sectors
- Web-supported, streamlined academic information and petition process

**Outcomes**

- Students able to monitor degree progress electronically.
- Early alert system warns student of being off track.
- Students able to graduate sooner with fewer roadblocks.
- Students receive basic advising information online/reduce need for advising to issues requiring meaningful appointment.
- Advising staff are able to spend more quality time with students requiring more focused assistance.
- Students who need the most help are served appropriately.
- Electronic advising record enables other advising staff to view whole-student activity/advising history.
- Staff and faculty advisers able to identify potential problems earlier in the process—avoid AP status.
- Students reduce financial debt load.
- Students receive advising support that is more holistic and individualized.
- Students feel adequately served by the institution.
- More students engage in enriching educational experiences.

External Factors: State budget decisions; Academic Senate Approvals
FIRST-YEAR EXPERIENCE

Introduction
Best practices in student engagement is the subject of a wide body of literature, much of which covers general information on evidence-based programs that engage students in support of their academic advancement. A subset of the literature focuses exclusively on the first-year undergraduate experience. All reviewed literature supports:

- BRC-identified priority issues for first-year UC Davis students;
- BRC-identified challenges to meeting these priorities;
- BRC recommendations for enhancing existing programs;
- Redesigning programs that do not adequately address student needs; and
- Establishing programs that are needed but do not exist or have been disbanded.

Recommended Strategies
“First-year experience” comprises the experiences of students who enter the institution directly from high school (freshmen or first-year students) and transfer students, who enter in their second undergraduate year or subsequent years. Transfer students include reentry or returning students: students who began and then suspended their undergraduate education for a period of time and have enrolled at UC Davis to complete their degree. Recommendations for strengthening the first-year experience fall within three overarching goals:

1. Provide ample, high-quality resources for students to develop a sense of community and belonging so they feel supported culturally, socially and academically.
2. Augment the Orientation and Fall Welcome events to maximize student academic and social acculturation.
3. Develop a digital communications plan to make support services more visible and remove stigmatization from student perceptions of these services.

Background/Opportunities
The BRC began its examination of the first-year experience by answering questions on a member survey to illuminate priority concerns. A growing array of studies demonstrate that the best predictor of learning and personal development for students from widely varying backgrounds is engagement, defined as the time and energy students devote to effective educational practices (Kuh, 2008). A primary determinant of student engagement is the way an institution allocates resources and organizes services and learning opportunities to induce students to participate in and benefit from these practices. It should be no surprise that the more students read, write, think critically, engage with faculty, and have meaningful interaction with people from diverse backgrounds, the better their educational outcomes.

A national study entitled Documenting Effective Educational Practice (DEEP) identified institutions that achieved higher-than-predicted scores on the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) and higher-than-predicted graduation rates. Predicted NSSE scores and graduation rates were determined using institutional characteristics such as size, selectivity and location. Among the many institutions demonstrating high levels of student success, 20 diverse institutions were selected for the DEEP study,
four of which were large, public, research-intensive institutions like UC Davis (Kuh, Kinzie et al, 2010). This confirms that, with relevant programs in place, UC Davis can provide an engaging first-year experience for its undergraduates. Furthermore, BRC recommendations capitalize on UC Davis’ research focus by increasing and maximizing the quality of student-faculty interaction through a coordinated undergraduate research experience initiative (See goal 2).

The “Clusters of Effective Educational Practice” identified in NSSE are:

1. Level of academic challenge
2. Active and collaborative learning
3. Student interactions with faculty members
4. Enriching educational experiences
5. Supportive campus environment

These five clusters align with the BRC recommendations and proposed strategies to strengthen the first-year experience:

**Opportunity 1: Making all students feel welcomed, supported, celebrated and integrated into the campus is key to their overall academic experience.**

- Too many students are disengaged or minimally engaged.
- Students have difficulty finding a “home” community in the university.
- Students have difficulty developing or locating support networks to make the interpersonal connections needed to help them cope and succeed.
- Many international students experience cultural and language barriers that impede their capacity to network effectively with campus support units and their peers.
- Commuter students may not have access to groups that meet after class hours/weekends. They do not have the benefit of the residential environment, through which many organized acculturation activities are channeled.
- Students from specific populations (e.g., lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (LGBT); veterans; underrepresented minorities [URMs]; students supporting families; undeclared majors, etc.) may have difficulty finding accepting communities unless they network within the sub-population itself, and some report feeling inhibited in that arena as well.
- Students with mental health conditions can be at heightened risk for feeling alienated/isolated, which would further exacerbate their condition.
Opportunity 2: Orientation and Fall Welcome programs are critical opportunities to provide key resources and information students need to succeed.

- Feedback from students on the BRC indicates that Orientation and/or Fall Welcome pack too much information into too short a time; students feel overwhelmed.

- Student perception is that Fall Welcome activities last only a few days, and then students are on their own to navigate the system.

- “How to Navigate the Research Institution” is a useful freshman seminar but has insufficient slots for all students to be able to participate. Freshman seminars are decentralized and the information taught is inconsistent.

- Most first-year-experience programs are organized through and oriented to residential housing, therefore commuter students do not feel they have access to many of the programs because of limitations imposed by their commute.

- Transfer students have different issues of concern than freshmen. The transfer/reentry orientation program (Reentry Matters) was eliminated during budget cuts and students and staff on the committee appeared to be unaware that there is a replacement program.

Opportunity 3: First-year students (FYS) can benefit from monitoring and ongoing mentorship to be successful in their courses.

- Many first-year students choose courses unwisely and take too many units. This is particularly true of some international students, who feel pressured to complete their education as quickly as possible.

- Early intervention is needed to avoid Academic Probation (AP)/Subject to Disqualification (DS) statuses. FYS are inexperienced with the system and may not understand the threat of AP/SD status until it is too late to correct.

- AP/SD status has higher stakes for international students because of the impact on housing, financial aid, and loss of face within their culture/family.

- Many FYS entering directly from high school have difficulty transitioning to university expectations for academic performance. Study and note-taking skills are weak or non-existent and students may not know how to study in collaborative groups or seek learning communities.

- Students on the BRC reported that they were unaware of, or did not take advantage of, academic support resources such as tutoring and advising centers because they did not know many of these services existed.

- BRC students also reported that many students, especially international students, perceive tutoring as a stigma.
Much discussion took place regarding specific populations of first-year students, including but not limited to: first-generation, disabled, URM, LFBT, married, parent, veteran, international, low socio-economic status, working and commuter. Many UC Davis students self identify with two or more of these populations, and cultural nuances associated with each population necessitate varied strategies to ensure that all students are able to access initiatives that address the priorities identified above.

One of the most important discussions that occurred during the first-year experience review included feedback on Orientation and Fall Welcome. It is important to note that the feedback received during discussion regarding the impact of programs such as Orientation and Fall Welcome differs from student post-session evaluations. Post-session evaluations reflected a high degree of satisfaction with specific Orientation and Fall Welcome events and with the overall experience. In other words, these evaluations reflect student satisfaction with the immediate experience.

Feedback in BRC discussions and surveys reflect perceptions of the long-term impact of these programs, offered by students who have completed their first academic year, and faculty and staff who teach, advise and otherwise interact with students throughout the educational pathway.

**First-Year Experience Goals 1–3: Recommended Strategies**

While the first two clusters that NSSE defines as measures of student engagement (level of academic challenge, and active and collaborative learning) are driven largely by quality of instruction, first-year-experience programs can go a long way in connecting students to the resources they need to be successful both in and out of the classroom.

On any college campus, but particularly in an institution with more than 25,000 undergraduates, the spectrum of personalities is vast. One reality that confronted the BRC is that many students feel uncomfortable taking an active role in engaging with the institution. Cultural values, personality, high school or prior college experience, family background, and a host of unknown factors figure prominently into a student’s willingness and ability to seek out a community and develop a sense of belonging. For many students in three main populations (URM, low-income, first-generation), the first hurdle is to accept that they belong at the institution, that they have earned their place and deserve to thrive. It is therefore vital that the institution develop a strategic plan to engage students by giving them every opportunity to find other students who share common academic, cultural and social interests. Some of the programs already in place on the campus include:

- **Living Learning Communities (LLC):** Students who share common academic and/or cultural interests live in close proximity within a residence hall. In addition to 17 LLCs, there are three living-preference communities that directly address lifestyle preferences (single-gender, quiet and substance-free).

- **Student Community Center (SCC):** The SCC provides a dynamic selection of student life centers and academic support and research services directed primarily at undergraduates. The SCC provides gathering spaces for meetings, workshops, seminars and other group activities that address the life circumstances and interests of a diverse student body, which encourages interaction among the various campus constituencies. Centers residing within the SCC include the Cross Cultural Center; Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (LGBT) Resource Center; Student Recruitment and Retention Center (SRRC); and the Undergraduate Research Center. The SCC also includes outreach offices for the Women’s Resources and Research Center and ethnic studies programs.
• Student Clubs: More than 500 student clubs, including 144 cultural clubs and 76 fraternities and sororities, provide seemingly boundless opportunities for students to engage themselves in activities that instill a sense of belonging to a community.

A 2009 survey of alumni who had graduated within the prior two years revealed that more than 90 percent of students were involved in at least one co-curricular activity on the campus, and this involvement figured prominently into these students’ sense of satisfaction with their academic and overall college experience. Yet, in reality, nearly 50 percent participated at a low level of intensity, and 9 percent of the students did not participate at all. BRC recommendations for student engagement coalesce around the belief that the institution must target its efforts to support the initial transition into an academically rigorous environment.

The following goals and recommended implementation strategies aim to provide first-year students with these resources in an inclusive and supportive environment.

**Goal 1: Provide ample, high-quality resources for students to develop a sense of community and belonging so they can feel supported culturally, socially and academically.**

1. Provide resources to increase and strengthen the availability of living-learning communities, tutoring centers and advising services so they are able to meet the demand for the university’s enrollment of freshmen and transfer students.

2. Increase resources for programs designed to acculturate and support international, first-generation, URM and low-income students.

3. Expand the STEP program to include other students currently unable to participate in the program due to space limitations.

4. Develop a STEP-type program specifically geared toward the acculturation and academic support needs of international students. (This activity is already underway, but the BRC wanted to affirm its value.)

5. Expand and centralize the coordination of First-Year Experience (FYE) programs through the college deans’ offices, in partnership with Student Housing and other Student Affairs units. This recommendation may or may not include the creation of an FYE coordinator and/or oversight committee within Student Affairs or the Office of the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education.

6. Increase the coordination of study groups for students in common classes, especially gateway courses that enroll large numbers of first-year students.

7. Develop a first-year seminar curriculum that offers consistent, basic information on critical institutional programs, opportunities, protocols and expectations for performance.

8. Develop a method of disseminating the common curriculum content to first-year students who are not enrolled in a first-year seminar.

9. Offer separate programs/seminars for transfer students. Examine the current transfer student program against the former ‘Reentry Matters’ program to enhance richness and visibility.

10. Develop a communications plan for FYE that ensures information about available resources (including a list of all first-year seminars) reaches the entire student community, including commuter students who are unable to benefit from services coordinated through Student Housing.
11. This activity should involve social media strategies and the Online Student Services portal, via an interactive navigation system so students can identify the available resources that meet their academic needs. Emphasize the value of first-year seminars in successfully transitioning to a large, research-intensive institution.

12. Develop a method of assessing the degree to which first-year students feel supported and connected to others at UC Davis. Develop intervention strategies for students who do not feel supported or connected.

**Goal 2: Augment the Orientation and Fall Welcome events to maximize student academic and social acculturation.**

1. Use a pre-arrival survey to identify information students are most eager to acquire.
2. Expand information provided in Orientation and Fall Welcome to a freshman seminar curriculum.
3. Structure activities during Orientation and Fall Welcome to build in getting-acquainted and social experiences.
4. Develop an online Orientation video to reinforce and supplement information provided during Orientation and Fall Welcome.
5. Develop a series of digital short videos produced by students for the YouTube channel.

Orientation and Fall Welcome provide the initial opportunity for entering freshmen and transfer students to learn about policies and procedures, as well as opportunities for engagement and support. Feedback from the BRC and student surveys suggests that certain information introduced during these programs be delayed or repeated in the succeeding quarters. The recommended activities seek to use the time available for Orientation and Fall Welcome wisely, and to respond to student feedback that these events tend to overload and overwhelm them with too much information in too short a period.

Many institutions are turning to online videos to supplement their orientation programs. This recommendation helps to address the feedback that students feel overwhelmed by the plethora of information they receive during orientation programs, that information they don’t need immediately can be provided through a different medium, and that critical information can be conveyed with a greater level of detail than a one-time presentation can afford, and can be viewed repeatedly. Student Affairs Marketing and Communications should manage these videos to ensure appropriate institutional branding and professional-level production.
### Goal 3: Develop a digital communications plan to make support services more visible and remove stigmatization from student perceptions of these services.

1. Develop a plan that includes strategic use of social media and other applications popular with students to increase visibility of support resources.

2. Create multilingual/multicultural information resources to reach international and bicultural students. Create messaging that removes the stigma of accessing support services such as English as a Second Language (ESL) courses, tutoring, advising, counseling and learning-skills development.

To increase access to support resources that already exist, it is important to increase awareness of these services and alter student perceptions of their value. BRC responses and student survey data indicate that many students are unaware of the vast array of support resources at their disposal. Students from different cultures have different perceptions of these resources, and many consider the need for support to be cause for embarrassment. The literature suggests that messaging can change student perceptions of services. For example, a math café run by the Student Academic Success Center can become a place where students can raise their performance in math coursework from average to excellent. Developing a messaging campaign supported by technology-based platforms can change both student awareness and perceptions of available resources. A tertiary benefit to this recommendation is increasing students’ ability to form study groups and other support networks by meeting other students seeking the same support at these centers.
First-Year Experience Logic Model (1/2):

**Situation**

**Opportunities:**
- Many students need greater engagement.
- Improve ease of navigation of institution.
- Improve visibility of support networks.
- Develop opportunities for high-quality faculty-student interactions.
- First-year (FY) students need greater support to remain in good standing.
- Many international students are transitioning culturally, academically, and linguistically.
- Transfer students need to engage quickly.

**Recommendations:**
- Provide high-quality resources to develop student sense of community and belonging.
- Develop high-quality faculty-student interactions
- Restructure Orientation/first-year experience (FYE) to maximize academic/social acculturation.
- Nuance programming to address needs of highly diverse student body.

**Inputs**

- Students
- Staff
- Faculty
- Coordinated oversight
- $ Resources
- Literature base for best practices
- Academic Senate buy-in/support
- Inter-unit/interdisciplinary collaboration
- Facilities/housing
- Shared resources
- Culturally nuanced programming and support services
- Culturally-nuanced communications
- Technology (student portal) enhancements

**Activities**

- Increase living-learning communities and study groups.
- Coordinate FYE activities.
- Review Fall Welcome/Orientation for quality of information disseminated.
- Develop common first-year seminar content.
- Offer separate programs for transfer/re-entry students.
- Develop communications plan to address messaging needs.
- Coordinate through ICC undergraduate research opportunities.
- Conduct survey for Orientation/Fall Welcome content.
- Develop YouTube and other videos to supplement presentations.
- Increase SASC resources for STEP and expand programs.
- Establish unit caps.
- Assess level of student connection and engagement.

**Assumptions:** Academic achievement linked to high levels of student engagement.
External Factors: Academic Senate policies highly influential in priorities such as increasing quality of student-faculty interaction. Unit cap policies within majors at discretion of departments; freshman seminars, learning communities, study groups and other engagement resources established at discretion of individual colleges and departments.
ACADEMIC AND CAREER EXPERIENCES

Introduction
A growing concern over the degree to which baccalaureate programs prepare students adequately for a technology-driven, global marketplace pervades today’s higher education community. A national survey of employers reports that one-third of respondents (N=704) rate colleges as “fair to poor” in producing “successful employees” (Fischer, 2013). One of the chief concerns of employers is that students emerging today from America’s colleges and universities are ill-equipped in the “soft skills” areas of interpersonal communications, leadership, and critical analysis needed to solve complex problems (Ibid).

Blue Ribbon Committee (BRC) discussions around student preparedness for the job market reflect the ongoing debate regarding how applied a university education should be, particularly when delivered by a Research One institution. Student representatives on the committee advanced the expectation in their small-group discussions that what they learn in the classroom, while grounded in empirical research, should prepare them to apply knowledge gained to real-life conditions, such as how to develop a new technology or how to reason an argument to effect policy change. While faculty representatives agreed with the notion that students should be able to apply their studies to solving complex problems, they voiced concern over grounding their pedagogical approach in this way, lest the UC education become too applied and vocational in nature. As one faculty member cited, “We don’t just want our students to learn how to be a good employee in a biotechnology company; we want them to become the CEO of the company.”

Recommended Strategies
The pedagogical strategies that support a meaningful undergraduate education offered through a large, public research university framed a number of discussions covering academic and career experiences. In addition to concern over pedagogical approaches and strategies in the classroom, alumni survey results, and BRC group discussions involving students, confirm that UC Davis students believe high-quality faculty engagement is critical to their undergraduate success. BRC members, alumni survey data and the literature on effective educational practice also confirm that students should enrich their classroom learning with purposeful curricular and co-curricular experiences that prepare them well for life after graduation. Findings suggest that undergraduates should maximize opportunities for learning through these experiences so they are able to discern important connections to support learning outcomes.

The campus’ facilities and systemic environment (hours of operation and service, availability of professors and advisers and other support mechanisms) that support student learning were also examined and considered integral to a productive undergraduate experience.

The issue of time-to-degree permeated every discussion among small groups; these concerns also arose substantively in the follow-up, large-group meeting that summarized and further examined the priorities identified in the smaller sessions. The following goals emerged as priorities for action:

1. Provide positive incentives in the merit and promotion process as well as funding initiatives that support high-quality faculty-student engagement.

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2 “Meaningful, substantive interactions between students and their teachers are essential to high-quality learning experiences.” Examples include 1) discussing career plans, 2) discussing ideas or readings outside of class, 3) receiving prompt and extensive feedback on academic performance, 4) discussing assignments and grades, and 5) working with faculty on research, committees, orientation, and student-life activities (Kuh, Kinzie et al, 2005).

3 These experiences could range from internships to research-based campus employment, service-learning, study abroad, living-learning communities (residential communities established for the purpose of sharing common academic and/or lifestyle interests), leadership development, and other co-curricular activities.
2. Support assessment and strategies that will improve communication and pedagogical skill development of all instructors.

3. Strengthen coordination of service-learning and academic internships so students have greater opportunity to enrich their classroom experience with academically relevant work experiences.

4. Improve infrastructure to support student learning (e.g., classroom facilities and housing arrangements that encourage ongoing study and learning).

5. Develop opportunities for high-quality faculty-student interaction to support student success.

6. Develop interventions to reduce prevalence of Academic Probation (AP)/Subject to Disqualification (SD) status, particularly among vulnerable sub-populations.

**Background/Opportunities**

Many challenges confront a large, public research institution in delivering undergraduate education that matches the level of rigor and quality of its research enterprise. Student-faculty interaction is the primary instructional force for undergraduate education. Students look to faculty for inspiration, guidance and academic support. The following concerns represent opportunities for students to gain additional support from faculty to achieve learning outcomes:

**Opportunity 1: Quality of Teaching:** Many students on the committee expressed the impression that some members of the teaching faculty are less accessible because of their focus on research. The system should reward faculty for strengthening their teaching and student-communication skills.

- There are inconsistent learning outcomes across the same courses taught by different faculty in the same departments, or among sections of the same course led by different teaching assistants (TAs).
- Students may leave lectures confused by the material presented and feel inadequately prepared to proceed through the more advanced material that is required for future courses.
- Funding incentives at the departmental level are not ideal for creating optimal teaching environments.
- Different colleges have different teaching load policies, and within departments faculty teaching loads may be influenced by their research needs and course preferences. Greater coordination with actual student interest and major demands could benefit both students and academic units.
- In large institutions like UC Davis, TAs support and teach elements of many courses. Unfortunately, many TAs are not adequately trained in pedagogy and interpersonal communications with students.
**Opportunity 2:** Developing additional enriching educational experiences (curricular examples include research, internships and study abroad) would enhance the educational pathway.

- Students are under pressure to work while going to school, and they want to connect their work experience to their educational experience.
- Students do not recognize the value of engaging in enriching educational experiences and do not plan for these experiences early enough.
- Involvement in research is limited by the students’ awareness of opportunities and willingness to approach faculty as well as by the actual number of opportunities.
- Internship opportunities offered through the Internship and Career Center (ICC) and advertised through the majors are often out of sync; there is no formal system to coordinate ICC and academic unit internship opportunities.
- Many students do not know about the ICC, or do not feel the offerings for internships and employment match/support their academic interests.
- Students feel they must choose between graduating on time and taking advantage of valuable experiences such as study abroad.

**Opportunity 3:** Both systemic support and the built environment need to be strengthened to support learning outside the classroom.

- There are inadequate study venues on campus, particularly after hours.
- More learning communities are needed to connect students with other students who share common academic interests.
- There are inadequate support services such as tutoring, study groups, testing centers, study-skills workshops and laboratory access outside traditional lab hours.
### Academic and Career Experiences Goals 1–4: Recommended Strategies

**Goal 1:** Provide positive incentives in the merit and promotion process as well as through funding initiatives that support high-quality faculty-student engagement.

1. Create an Academic Senate Committee on faculty-student engagement with BRC faculty representation (including a cross-section of STEM, social sciences and HARCs disciplines) to present and examine issues of concern relating to faculty engagement, including departmental funding formulae and the merit and promotion system.

2. Work with the executive vice chancellor and provost as well as vice provost for Undergraduate Education to facilitate faculty-student engagement proposals to enhance the student experience in curricular, co-curricular and informal student engagement opportunities.

**Goal 2:** Examine and support pedagogical skill development of instructors, including faculty and teaching assistants.

1. Academic Senate Committee on faculty-student engagement to work with director of Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning to examine issues of student ability to comprehend classroom instructors.

2. Establish curriculum for freshman/first-year seminar core content that develops student skills in comprehension of unfamiliar accents.

3. To help new students develop basic skills in listening/comprehension in the academic environment, develop a workshop session to launch during Fall Welcome that includes information about new technology support options. This session could be repeated throughout the first year.

4. Develop online resources for instructors and TAs to support teaching strategies that enhance student learning.

5. To improve pedagogical skills in the classroom, further develop and implement instructor and faculty workshops geared toward new faculty and TAs.

6. Explore and determine feasibility of establishing a mandated pedagogical training as a component of faculty orientation and for all instructors and TAs who receive a mean score of 3 or lower for comprehension and clarity values on student teaching evaluations.

7. Develop a TA evaluation section for the course teaching evaluation form to reinforce the need for establishing a mandated TA training policy.
**Goal 3:** Strengthen coordination of service-learning and academic internship opportunities so students have greater opportunity to enrich their classroom experience with academically relevant work experiences.

1. Continue to support the investigation of best practices through participation in the National Institute of Colleges and Employers meetings relating to cooperative education practices.
2. Continue to support clarification of and improved instruction on effective search strategies in Aggie Job Link.
3. Further develop formal internship programs, building on successful pilots already in place.

**Goal 4:** Improve infrastructure to support student learning (e.g., classroom facilities and housing arrangements that encourage ongoing study and learning).

The work plan for this goal involves initiatives that are currently in progress. For example, an initiative is under way to develop new facilities and renovate existing facilities that will provide healthy and productive environments in which students can study both during and after class hours.

Living-learning communities present one means of immersing students more fully into the academic and social experiences on campus; an important, concomitant objective is to provide additional networking opportunities for students, particularly those who are at higher risk for non-engagement.

1. Increase the availability of safe and accessible study venues, particularly after hours. A facilities plan that will address this recommendation is currently under way.
2. Identify locations available for study space and develop a map for the Online Student Services portal that shows all options.
3. Establish a committee of representatives from Student Housing and academic units to expand the number and academic/lifestyle focus of living-learning communities in both on- and off-campus residential venues. Responsible party: co-chairs from Student Housing/Office of the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education.
4. Develop a proposal to expand the living-learning communities based on learning outcomes. The proposal should include formative and summative evaluation components and a proposed budget.
   a. Submit the proposal through appropriate approval channels.
   b. Implement appropriate steps to accept the first cohort of students in fall quarter 2014.
5. Assess the potential to expand hours and otherwise increase availability and coordination of academic and behavioral support services (e.g., library, tutoring, study groups, testing center, study-skills workshops and research laboratories).
6. Convene a committee; include the VP of Undergraduate Education, the director of Institutional Analysis-Student Research and Information (formerly SARI), and the director of Student Affairs Marketing and Communications.
7. Develop assessment needs and tools, and administer assessments.

8. Develop a proposal to address findings, including a budget and evaluation plan with learning outcomes.
   a. Submit the proposal through appropriate channels for approvals process.
   b. Implement the approved programs.

9. Further support the Aggie Job Link system to offer students improved functionality as well as instruction on effective search strategies.

**Goal 5: Develop opportunities for high-quality faculty-student interaction to support student success.**

Faculty-student interaction plays a critical role in transitioning students into an academically rigorous educational environment. A key element is working closely with the Academic Senate leadership and the vice provost of Undergraduate Education to find appropriate incentives for faculty to increase student-faculty engagement.

1. Establish a mechanism to coordinate undergraduate involvement in faculty research.

   This recommendation requires that resources be set aside for the initiative to be coordinated and for students to receive stipend-based compensation and/or course credit for their research. The initiative, including student compensation, can be coordinated through the existing Internship and Career Center. Additional recommendations around increasing faculty-student interaction include the following steps:

   a. Establish a menu of events/workshops for students to learn about potential faculty research opportunities.

   b. Establish an academic/career mentorship program that matches students by culture and gender with faculty in the same discipline of interest.

   c. Hold departmental open houses annually for students to have an opportunity to interact with faculty in a social setting. Include a formal program in each open house, such as a faculty panel discussion around a specific theme, with ample Q&A time for students.

   d. Office hours/communications plan: Devise a messaging campaign that de-stigmatizes office hours as a resource for students to pursue only when they are having academic difficulty. Expand office hours outside the M-F, 8-5 time frame.
**Goal 6: Develop interventions to reduce the prevalence of AP/SD status, particularly among vulnerable populations.**

To reduce the prevalence of Academic Probation (AP)/Subject to Disqualification (SD) status, interventions that focus on early academic enrichment and advising/counseling support are important. UC Davis’ most successful preventive enrichment program is STEP (Special Transitional Enrichment Program). An important factor in STEP’s success is that the students receive ancillary support services through their second year. STEP is currently open to underrepresented minority students. A STEP-type program for international students is under development.

1. Increase resources to the Student Academic Success Center for evidence-based initiatives such as Special Transitional Enrichment Program (STEP) so more students can participate.

2. Expand the current pilot of the STEP program for international students.

3. Establish course registration policies to limit the number of total units or units within a major for which a student may register without prior approval from an academic adviser.

4. Develop an early-warning system for AP/SD prevention. Consider establishing a means of alerting the instructor of record (IOR) when a student’s course grade drops below a certain threshold. The IOR would enter information into the student record system that alerts the student and academic adviser via the new advising portal.
Academic and Career Experiences Logic Model (1/2):

**Situation**

**Opportunities:**
- Develop policies that promote an increase in quality of teaching/faculty-student.
- Develop high-impact activities (internships, research, service-learning, etc.) to support the educational pathway.
- Strengthen systemic support and built environment to support learning outside the classroom.

**Recommendations:**
- Examine ways to incentivize faculty to engage more fully with students.
- Develop pedagogical skills-development training for new faculty/TAs.
- Develop additional living-learning communities and other supportive services.
- Develop high-impact, academically-aligned career exploration activities.
- Develop facilities and systemic infrastructure to support educational objectives.
- Develop interventions to reduce rate of Academic Probation (AP)/Subject to Disqualification (SD) status, especially among vulnerable sub-populations.

**Inputs**

- Faculty
- Staff
- Students
- Facilities
- Pedagogical Training
- Internships
- External collaborations
- Coordinated Oversight
- $ Resources
- Literature base for best practices
- Inter-unit / interdisciplinary collaboration
- Culturally nuanced communications, programs and support services
- Technology (student portal) enhancements
- Assessment tools

**Activities**

- Develop incentives and rewards to increase student-faculty engagement.
- Support pedagogical skill development for TAs and faculty.
- Improve students’ ability to comprehend instruction.
- Develop academic internships.
- Provide resources and structure to increase involvement in research.
- Develop interactive career path exploration database to link internships with educational objectives.
- Increase availability of safe and accessible study venues.
- Expand living-learning communities.
- Assess and respond to identified need for additional academic support centers, workshops, and other services.
- Improve access to academic support services.
- Establish early warning system for AP/SD prevention.

Assumptions: Faculty-student interaction informs quality of undergraduate experience. Career experiences aligned with curricular learning outcomes yield higher employment rates of graduates and increased alumni satisfaction.
### Academic and Career Experiences Logic Model (2/2)

#### Outputs
- Level of student engagement
- Internship database usage
- Level of faculty/TA scores on teaching evaluations
- Level of satisfaction with student-faculty interactions
- Number of students involved in living-learning communities
- Numbers of students in research, service, study abroad, and academically tied internships
- Student satisfaction with time-to-degree
- Student survey responses regarding academic support
- Student GPA within majors
- Alumni satisfaction survey responses
- Internship employer survey responses

#### Outcomes
- Elevated quality of student-faculty engagement
- Improved quality of classroom instruction
- Increased mastery of academic learning outcomes
- Increased participation in enriching educational experiences (internships, research, study abroad, and service)
- Increased four-year graduation rate
- Improved preparation of students in desirable employee soft skills
- Increased employment rate for recent graduates

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**External Factors:** Academic unit / senate support of proposed initiatives.
STUDENT LIFE AND CO-CURRICULAR EXPERIENCES

Introduction
In a 2009, Institutional Analysis-Student Research and Information (formerly SARI) surveyed UC Davis alumni to assess their undergraduate student experiences. The survey results demonstrated that involvement in a curricular activity (activity outside the classroom but linked to an academic program, e.g., living-learning community, service-learning) enriches students’ undergraduate experiences. One significant finding is that there was a positive correlation between level of involvement in co-curricular activities and the degree to which alumni felt they met certain “educational objectives” [sic] established by the Academic Senate. For example, students who participated in student government felt they had developed interpersonal, speaking and leadership skills through these activities, the same areas in which other alumni felt least prepared by their undergraduate education. Regardless of the type of activity (sports, leadership, student clubs, etc.), students who felt connected to the campus through involvement in activities and clubs outside the classroom performed better in the classroom and, as alumni looking back, have a more positive impression of their undergraduate education.

The UC Davis survey reflects best practices for involvement of students in college/university life as presented in NSSE (discussed in chapter 2) and as advanced by the Education Advisory Board (EAB). The EAB provides a series of research briefs that elucidate the benefits, opportunities and challenges of engaging students in an active campus life to enhance their academic experience and promote greater academic achievement. Challenges and priorities for providing an inclusive atmosphere that seeks to engage every student are well documented in these briefs, which survey colleges and universities across the nation. Coordinated delivery of student services underlies successful tracking and further refinement of co-curricular programs.

The Student Research and Information survey data revealed that 91 percent of alumni engaged in at least one co-curricular activity during their undergraduate experience, and 53 percent were highly involved. While these figures are encouraging, the fact that 9 percent of students did not engage as undergraduates means that close to 2,500 students felt unconnected to their campus and did not develop a sense of community during these highly formative years. Nearly half of the alumni surveyed reported they could benefit from increased involvement in campus life.

Recommended Strategies
The following priorities for action identified by the Blue Ribbon Committee (BRC) aim to improve our ability to reach all students in an effort to engage them intensively in campus life. They also seek to enhance co-curricular areas that contribute to meeting the Academic Senate’s educational objectives for the undergraduate experience.

1. Increase availability and awareness of mental health support services so that students are more likely to use them in a timely fashion.
2. Establish programs designed to capture those students who are at higher risk of not engaging in on-campus and student services (e.g., transfer students, first-year commuter students, international students, students with disabilities, and students from underrepresented, marginalized communities, etc.).
3. Establish a system to identify students who are not engaged so they can receive appropriate intervention.
4. Increase and coordinate opportunities for service, leadership, employment and other activities that link co-curricular experiences with student educational and career paths. (This intersects with the Associated Students, UC Davis [ASUCD] Jobs Initiative).
5. Provide a centralized system for students to manage their university life: financial aid, registration, academic warnings, pathway to graduation, campus opportunities for curricular and co-curricular activities, calendar of campus events, etc.

**Background/Opportunities**
Many of the issues concerning student engagement first emerged in the Blue Ribbon Committee’s discussions of the first-year experience. They re-emerged as continuing themes in the large and small-group discussions around student life/co-curricular experiences. The demographics for students who tend to be at higher risk for non-engagement in their first year on campus are the same as those who continue through their undergraduate experience disconnected from available services and programs. Following are the priority areas of concern:

**Opportunity 1: The number of students in need of mental health services is increasing, and mental health services must be adequately staffed to meet the demand.**

- The counselor-to-student ratio requires further examination to determine whether or not it is appropriate for UC Davis.
- The Campus Advising Network (CAN) is one model for reaching underrepresented minority (URM) students but will be inadequate for the number of students in need of assistance as the diversity of the campus continues to grow.
- The campus 2020 initiative prioritizes increasing the enrollment of international students to achieve financial stability, but many of these students are from cultures that stigmatize seeking mental health services.
- Professional mental health service hours are restricted and do not meet the demand for service outside of traditional business hours.
- Greater awareness to reduce stigma and ease of entry into mental health services is needed.

**Opportunity 2: Improving our ability to highly engage students in co-curricular activities is a priority. The same populations of students at high risk of not engaging with the campus in their first year continue to be at risk for non-engagement as they continue in their education.**

- There is no coordinated system for identifying students who are not engaged.
- Many faculty and academic advisers lack the skills to identify and assist students who have trouble engaging with the campus.
- Social networking that supports engagement and academic achievement decreases when students transition from residence halls to off-campus housing.
- Uniform coordination of information resources is needed to ensure visibility to all students.
Opportunity 3: For URM, international, working and commuter students, targeted improvements are needed for outreach and support through enhancement of existing programs with secure funding and relevant changes to practice.

- Support for International Students and Scholars (SISS) is underfunded in its Global Ambassadors program, which links international students with domestic students as near-peer mentors.
- International students do not have a place to live during break; they must stay in otherwise empty residence halls. While student life centers are open during breaks (except on actual holidays), they do not provide the supportive family atmosphere that domestic students are able to enjoy during the breaks and that all students need to prepare for the next quarter.
- Identity-based graduation ceremonies (e.g., lavender and ethnic graduations) and other programs have to be re-justified to ASUCD every year to receive funding, which sends a clear message that these programs are undervalued and misunderstood.
- Veterans, students with families, re-entry students, commuter students and other non-traditional students feel unsupported because program funding has been drastically reduced or eliminated.
- Financial aid, registration and other student services have traditional business hours that restrict access to many of the students in these same populations.

Opportunity 4: Centralizing systems for disseminating information will improve student access to student services, such as billing accounts/financial aid, registration, advising, information about campus events and opportunities for employment.

Many considerations listed in this priority are being addressed to some extent through the development of the Online Student Services portal. Information in this priority and in the recommendations that follow is provided to ensure that the priorities are adequately addressed.

- Students must currently access a separate page/system to view their bill, their loan status, and their payment history, which are often not in sync.
- Information on opportunities for engagement (e.g., campus events, employment, community service, civic engagement, student clubs, student government offices, etc.) is not coordinated. The Online Student Services portal provides a timely opportunity to implement a coordinated system for delivering information and announcements.
- There is currently no central campus calendar that shows students where and when club meetings and other organized events are occurring on the campus.
Student Life and Co-Curricular Experience Goals 1–5: Recommended Strategies
The range, visibility and accessibility of co-curricular activities and services are immediate factors that support the development of the student as a well-rounded, responsible, civic-minded adult.

**Goal 1: Increase availability and awareness of mental health support services so that students are more likely to use them in a timely fashion.**

1. Provide funding to expand models like the Community Advising Network (CAN) program and the Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) unit to lower the student-counselor ratio to the standard for undergraduate campuses.

2. Increase the visibility of CAN and CAPS to faculty and staff so they know when and how to refer students. Include information on CAN and CAPS in faculty communications and/or orientation training. Develop informational campaigns for campus faculty, staff and students. CAPS/CAN directors should work with Student Affairs Marketing and Communications and the Health Happens at UC Davis Advisory Board.

3. Develop a multicultural/multilingual communications campaign (can align with the Health Happens at UC Davis-California Endowment campaign) to de-stigmatize mental health services, particularly for students from international/racial/ethnic communities that are not accustomed to using these services and attach a cultural stigma.

**Goal 2: Establish programs for students who are at higher risk of not connecting with other students or engaging in on-campus and student services (e.g., transfer students, international students, students with disabilities, first-year commuter students, students with families, students from underrepresented/marginalized communities.)**

1. Increase resources for offices/services that support these populations so they can more effectively acculturate, integrate, and support these students.

2. Develop a near-peer mentoring program: choose more experienced students to mentor students who are newer to the campus. Match students of similar backgrounds so newer students can identify with their near-peer mentors. To coordinate this program through an existing Student Affairs unit, more resources will be required.

3. Develop strategies to acculturate and integrate international students more effectively; increase resources to SISS.

4. Establish a formal host program through SISS for domestic students to host international students during holidays and breaks. This can be a feature of Global Ambassadors or a separate program.

5. Increase family-friendly programs so students with families can participate more fully in student engagement opportunities and campus life. This requires establishing a committee to examine such programs and assess the resources needs to develop programs with a track record of success.
Goal 3: Establish a system to identify students who are not engaged so they can receive appropriate intervention.

1. Set up a Web-based vehicle via the Online Student Services portal to poll students about connectedness and engagement at some point in the registration or grade-viewing process.
   - Establish a mechanism to flag responses that indicate lack of connectedness or engagement and automatically bring students to the attention of the appropriate staff.

2. Work with the Academic Senate and Vice Provost of Undergraduate Education to provide training for new faculty to improve their ability to assess student engagement through conversation. Help faculty become more approachable and less intimidating to undergraduates. Include cultural diversity awareness training and culturally-nuanced communication skills.

Goal 4: Increase and coordinate opportunities for service learning, internships, on-campus research-based employment and other activities that link co-curricular experiences with student educational and career paths.

- Create a searchable database of opportunities for service, internships, on-campus employment (including research-based employment) and other co-curricular experiences. Note: Aggie Job Link addresses this recommendation; the BRC recommends supporting this program to continually upgrade/improve on system features.
- Incorporate information about leadership, service and other involvement opportunities into “A Path to Success” and other advising tools.
- Increase opportunities for co-curricular employment by establishing incentives program for prospective campus employers.
- Integrate information on campus involvement into first-year seminars.

Goal 5: Provide a centralized system for students to manage their university life (e.g., financial aid, registration, academic warnings, pathway to graduation, opportunities for service-learning, employment, clubs, etc.)

1. Students must access financial aid information via three different screens, which are often not synchronized, for information about amount owed, payment history, and loan and grant statuses. Integrate this information into the Online Student Services portal so it is easy to locate and in sync.

2. An early warning system for AP/SD was discussed in the First-Year Experience chapter of this report. Integrate an early warning system into the new advising portal.

3. A degree navigator is under development for the new advising portal. This should cover the priority recommendation regarding “pathway to graduation,” and include the ability to enter variables (courses one wishes/plans to take, as well as those taken) to predict impact on time-to-degree.

4. Explore the feasibility of developing a centralized, searchable database for service, employment, clubs and other student life opportunities.
**Situation**

**Opportunities:**
- Need for increased student engagement
- Need for improved faculty communications skills
- Need for network opportunities for students not in residence hall system
- Need for improvement of visibility of information about student-life experiences
- Need for increased engagement of student sub-populations
- Need for increased service capacity/resources for mental health needs

**Recommendations:**
- Establish system to identify students who are not engaged.
- Increase availability/visibility of mental health services.
- Establish programs to capture students at high risk of non-engagement.
- Provide a centralized system for students to manage their university life.

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**Inputs**

- Faculty
- Staff
- Students
- Facilities
- Curriculum
- Training
- External collaborators
- Coordinated oversight
- $ Resources
- Literature base for best practices
- Inter-unit / interdisciplinary collaboration
- Shared resources
- Culturally-nuanced programming and support services
- Culturally nuanced communications
- Technology (student portal) enhancements

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**Activities**

- Integrate programmatic components into student portal: engagement survey/flag system, degree navigator, searchable database of opportunities, early warning system; financial info.
- Develop faculty-student communications training.
- Expand CAN/CAPS capacity and visibility targeting underserved populations (Health Happens).
- Near-peer mentoring program.
- Expanded Global Ambassadors/holiday host program.
- Restore family-friendly programs.
- Increase visibility of programs accessible to disabled students.
- Establish incentives program for campus co-curricular employers.
- Integrate student life/co-curricular info into freshman seminar core content.
- Increase resources for services to vulnerable student sub-populations.

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**Assumptions:**
Academic achievement linked to high levels of student engagement; unengaged students can be identified/counseled; faculty have significant influence on student engagement.
## Student Life and Co-Curricular Experience (2/2)

### Outputs

- Percent of students engaged
- Increased GPA of URM, international and other sub-populations
- Increased level of satisfaction with undergraduate experience in student/alumni surveys
- Numbers of students participating in campus co-curricular employment/activity
- Number of students served through CAPS and CAN
- Wait time for appointments

### Outcomes

- Students enjoy a richer student-life/co-curricular experience in their undergraduate years.
- Students graduate better prepared in all educational objectives established by Academic Senate.
- Students with mental health needs are better supported.
- Students are better equipped to pursue leadership opportunities upon graduation.
- International and URM students feel more welcome, celebrated and engaged in the campus community: retention rates increase.
- Students with disabilities fully participate in student life/co-curricular experiences.
- Student engagement in the campus continues to thrive after students move off-campus and through graduation.

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**External Factors:** Commitment of resources, external collaboration (Health Happens at UC Davis—The California Endowment), College policies for faculty development programs
APPENDICES

CITATIONS


# BLUE RIBBON COMMITTEE FOR ENHANCING THE UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

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<tr>
<th>LAST</th>
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<tr>
<td>de la Torre</td>
<td>Adela</td>
<td>chair</td>
<td>Interim Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs, Professor Chicana/o Studies Department, Director of the Center for Transnational Health</td>
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<tr>
<td>Burtis</td>
<td>Ken</td>
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<td>Professor of Genetics, Faculty Advisor to the Provost and Chancellor</td>
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<td>Constantine</td>
<td>John</td>
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<tr>
<td>Davis</td>
<td>Cristina</td>
<td>faculty</td>
<td>Professor, Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering; Associate Director, UC Davis Clinical and Translational Sciences Center, School of Medicine</td>
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<tr>
<td>de la Peña</td>
<td>Carolyn</td>
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<td>Interim Vice Provost - Undergraduate Education, Professor of American Studies</td>
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<td>De Loera</td>
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<td>Alexander</td>
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<td>Jo Ann</td>
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<td>Young</td>
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**STUDENTS**

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<tr>
<td>Pasek Julia</td>
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<td>Schaeffer Rylan</td>
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<td>Siu Winnie</td>
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<td>Tavárez L. Carolina</td>
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<td>Trotsyuk Artem</td>
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<td>Uglow Katie</td>
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<tr>
<td>Westover Cristina</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zhong Amy</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Advising</strong></td>
<td><strong>Total Average</strong></td>
<td><strong>Average of Fac/Staff/Stud Averages</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>High adviser-to-student ratio. Insufficient quality advising. Long wait times. Feedback from students (2012 UCUES): Make it earlier, more available and more personal. Develop strategies to successfully address these issues. Possibilities: Hire more advisers. Provide more and better information online so advisers' time is more available to students who really need to see them.</td>
<td>1.85</td>
<td>1.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publish a resource navigation tool that provides students with year-by-year plan (e.g., A Path to Success).</td>
<td>1.58</td>
<td>1.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students are unaware of resources or where to go for advising. Provide better triage. Have helpful and knowledgeable frontline help. Ensure students make appointments in correct office.</td>
<td>1.43</td>
<td>1.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support CADs' proposal to create a series of Staff Development and Professional Services (SDPS) introductory advising courses to be completed by all advisers. Include interpersonal skills and cultural competency.</td>
<td>1.64</td>
<td>1.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use advising as an opportunity to connect with disengaged students to get them connected and engaged.</td>
<td>1.43</td>
<td>1.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop some method to ensure that advisers get the recommended training and professional development. Currently there is no accountability.</td>
<td>1.47</td>
<td>1.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advising is decentralized, disjointed, inconsistent and confusing. Feedback from students (2012 UCUES): Make advising more coordinated and less confusing. Provide more training for advisers on information related to other campus programs and services.</td>
<td>1.43</td>
<td>1.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advising is decentralized, disjointed, inconsistent and confusing. Feedback from students (2012 UCUES): Make advising more coordinated and less confusing. Implement strategies to streamline advising, to provide students with consistent academic advising information. Structure appointment systems to permit students to see the same adviser.</td>
<td>1.46</td>
<td>1.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entering undeclared students get little academic advising. Provide more focused, intentional outreach and advising to undeclared students. Possibilities: Mandate advising or major/career exploration. Provide more (or direct students to) exploratory services for undeclared majors. Start working with undeclared students early. Discuss factors that will impact time-to-degree. Communicate with parents.</td>
<td>1.34</td>
<td>1.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural issues impact some students' willingness to seek advising as well as the effectiveness of and students' satisfaction with the advising. Train advisers on these issues.</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>1.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide academic performance information to curricular advisers (those in colleges and departments), including access to grades in each course and GPA.</td>
<td>1.37</td>
<td>1.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International students have different advising needs and require more time. Train advisers on these issues and provide flexibility in advising program to meet their needs.</td>
<td>1.42</td>
<td>1.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrate essential advising information into existing first-year seminars.</td>
<td>1.31</td>
<td>1.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Address inconsistent position classifications for advisers on campus. Establish required skills/competencies and develop consistency in responsibilities.</td>
<td>1.24</td>
<td>1.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support CADs' proposal to develop an annual professional development conference for all campus academic advisors, but broaden the focus to include all campus advisers. Provide additional funds as needed.</td>
<td>1.24</td>
<td>1.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish a more streamlined process to facilitate transfer of credits.</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>1.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advising is decentralized, disjointed, inconsistent and confusing. Feedback from students (2012 UCUES): Make advising more coordinated and less confusing. Establish an advising group for ongoing professional development and to increase communication.</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>0.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>total average</td>
<td>average of fac/staff/stud</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advising is decentralized, disjointed, inconsistent and confusing. Feedback from students (2012 UCUES): Make advising more coordinated and less confusing. Support CADs' proposal to create a senior position to oversee advising. Have that position report to both the vice provost for Undergraduate Education and the vice chancellor for Student Affairs.</td>
<td>0.97</td>
<td>0.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide academic performance information to co-curricular advisers (those in Student Affairs and Athletics), including access to grades in each course and GPA.</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>0.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advising is decentralized, disjointed, inconsistent, and confusing. Feedback from students (2012 UCUES): Make advising more coordinated and less confusing. Support CADs' proposal. Create a senior position to oversee advising that reports to the vice provost for Undergraduate Education. Although not reporting to the vice chancellor for Student Affairs, the position would be responsible for efforts to coordinate academic advising activities with units addressing academic success under Student Affairs.</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>0.54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**First-Year Experience**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>total average</th>
<th>average of fac/staff/stud</th>
<th>average</th>
<th>faculty average</th>
<th>staff average</th>
<th>student average</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students need access to individualized guidance, especially if a student is unable to get needed guidance through automated or Web-based systems. Provide more face-to-face opportunities.</td>
<td>1.56</td>
<td>1.58</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish mechanisms for early identification of students getting into academic difficulty. Consider forming academic intervention teams by college. Develop interventions: strategies to reach out to students and connect them to support services. Possibilities: Collaborate with SASC. Use admission data to support students early in the process. Flag students who may need additional support. Pilot program for gateway and high-risk-for-failure courses (MAT, CHE, BIS). Offer a required concurrent course or study sections.</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td>1.53</td>
<td>1.38</td>
<td>1.71</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transfer, reentry and veteran students are especially in need of better acculturation. Attend to transfer students’ need to acculturate faster and make academic/career plans quickly. Possibilities: offer seminars or transition workshops specifically for transfer students. Expand Special Transition Enrichment Program (STEP) to include transfer students. Ressurect the “Reentry Matters” program.</td>
<td>1.42</td>
<td>1.44</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>1.43</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Too many students are disengaged or minimally engaged. Have advisers talk with students early about the value of curricular and co-curricular experiences and help students incorporate these experiences into their academic plan (study abroad, internship, research, career, leadership, service and other involvement opportunities).</td>
<td>1.37</td>
<td>1.43</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students must feel welcomed, supported, celebrated and assimilated into the campus. They need support networks to make connections that will help them cope and succeed.</td>
<td>1.38</td>
<td>1.38</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emphasize first-year seminars to all incoming students as a way to get to know a faculty member, to interact in an informal setting, and to more successfully integrate into UC Davis.</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>1.35</td>
<td>1.63</td>
<td>1.43</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Through Orientation or other means, provide information to first-year students about academic rigor, what to expect in first-year academics, and how to avoid AP/SD status.</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>1.28</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td>0.84</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask first-year seminar instructors to address academic/cultural adjustment issues: quarter system, large classes, higher academic standards, etc. Provide faculty with core curriculum on URU topics.</td>
<td>1.29</td>
<td>1.27</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>1.38</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Academic Success Center (SASC) services are impacted. Provide more resources to scale up.</td>
<td>1.37</td>
<td>1.23</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>1.62</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop programs or strategies for first-year students to address academic and/or cultural adjustment issues. Help students develop strategies for academic and personal success.</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>1.19</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>1.19</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continue to offer &quot;Understanding the Research University&quot; (URU).</td>
<td>1.25</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>1.38</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students need better acculturation. Re-examine and possibly revamp Orientation. Issues: too much information and yet students lack knowledge of campus resources.</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create systems for interconnectivity (connect students to the many resources already available).</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.19</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First-generation students are especially in need of better acculturation. Develop strategies.</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Faculty Average</td>
<td>Staff Average</td>
<td>Student Average</td>
<td>Total Average</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| 2 = strongly support, high priority                                                                                                                                         | 1.27            | 1.04         | 0.17            | 1.61          | 1.33
| 1 = support, but not a high priority for me                                                                                                                                                       | 1.09            | 1.02         | 0.50            | 1.24          | 1.33
| 0 = neutral                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 0.86            | 0.91         | 0.38            | 0.86          | 1.50
| -1 = don't support, but not strongly opposed                                                                                                                                                     | 0.91            | 0.85         | 0.50            | 1.05          | 1.00
| -2 = strongly opposed, should not be a recommendation                                                                                                                                       | 0.77            | 0.83         | 1.00            | 0.67          | 0.83

- Develop more structured and systematic ways of reaching out to second-year students to deliver and emphasize much of the information they were given as first-year students but were too overwhelmed to take in.
- Develop a centralized system of coordinating first-year seminars so all first-year students can be aware of the opportunities.
- Require or incentivize attendance at workshops for first-year students that present important academic, resource and transition information (passport system, transcript notation, etc.).
- Freshmen living off campus are especially in need of better acculturation. Develop strategies. Possibility: expand Housing's operation to provide services to all first-year students.
- For students not in a first-year seminar, offer the information through programs or videos.
- Too many students feel disconnected. During Orientation build in structured social experiences and getting-acquainted experiences. Have students eat meals and repeatedly connect/reflect/share with the same small group.
- To avoid having so many students overloading themselves (including international students who often do it because of family pressure), limit the number of units/quarter a first-year student can take without adviser approval.
- Centralize and coordinate dissemination of information regarding first-year seminars.
- Have more first-year seminars. Note: We currently offer about 200 with a max class size of 19, but some sophomore students take these classes.
- International students are especially in need of better acculturation. Possibility: If successful, continue and expand this summer’s pilot STEP program for international students, which has a revised curriculum better suited to their needs.
- Revamp the daytime Orientation presentations. Involve students in planning.
- If we lack sufficient staff/faculty for more first-year seminars, offer larger classes with smaller discussion groups.
- Create a position or committee to oversee the first-year experience (FYE program).
- Do a pilot program using graduate students to teach first-year seminars.

**Academic/Career Experiences**

- Insufficient capacity in required courses due to lack of classroom/lab space, funds for salaries and availability of qualified instructors. Successful initiatives already under way. Continue efforts.
- Extend hours of study rooms.
- Communications from the institution, particularly regarding AP/SD are often not understood and influence how students respond or don’t respond. Assess clarity, meaning, tone and consistency of communications.
- Students have difficulty finding opportunities for student employment, internships, research, etc. Develop a searchable database. Include paid and volunteer, credit and no credit. Broaden categories, e.g., Disability Services needs notetakers.
- Help students explore major and career choices by stressing importance of early exploration, campus resources, and experiential opportunities in first-year seminars.
- AP/SD is much more significant for international students because of the impact on immigration status if dismissed. International students with language difficulties are more likely to face dismissal. Need to better assess English language skills and provide more support.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommendation</th>
<th>total average</th>
<th>average of fac/staff/student</th>
<th>average fac/staff</th>
<th>average student</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identify additional locations that could be used for study space. Develop an interactive map for the Web portal that shows all options.</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>1.19</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>0.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current hours of many offices do not accommodate students' needs. Extend office and library hours.</td>
<td>0.97</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Build a discussion of study abroad, internship, research and career opportunities into advising conversations and &quot;A Path to Success.&quot;</td>
<td>0.97</td>
<td>1.04</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>0.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examine retention rates across gender and ethnicity to assess disaggregated evidence of the achievement gap. Develop strategies to address gaps.</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>1.02</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>1.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continue initiative to establish a testing center.</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>1.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offer classes/labs outside the standard times (evenings and weekends).</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educate campus community on the value of study abroad, internship, research and career opportunities.</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>0.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESL students may have more difficulty achieving equivalent GPA to a native English speaker. With access to some co-curricular programs determined by GPA, ESL students are effectively discriminated against because of language difficulties. Identify these co-curricular programs and encourage program staff to reassess the necessity and equity of the GPA requirement</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>-0.13</td>
<td>0.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do a study similar to UCSD (which demonstrated no time-to-degree delay) to determine if study abroad delays time-to-degree at UC Davis. Publicize results.</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>0.35</td>
<td>-0.63</td>
<td>0.67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Student Life/Co-curricular Experiences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommendation</th>
<th>total average</th>
<th>average of fac/staff/student</th>
<th>average fac/staff</th>
<th>average student</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mental health services are critical, heavily used and inadequate for need. Increase funding for CAPS, CANS and psychological services and support. Current counselor-to-student ratio is about 1:1900. Recommended ratio is 1:1200.</td>
<td>1.57</td>
<td>1.43</td>
<td>1.38</td>
<td>1.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explore strategies that will interest faculty and increase faculty/student interaction.</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>1.26</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>1.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students need more opportunities for meaningful work on campus.</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>1.24</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>1.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current lack of integration is a missed opportunity for American and international students. Set up a buddy system to match a domestic student with an international student to help interpret all the policies, etc.</td>
<td>1.08</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>0.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promote peer mentorship to support students of historically underserved and marginalized groups.</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>1.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase funding for centers that support transfer, reentry and first-generation students.</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>1.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current lack of integration is a missed opportunity for American and international students. Develop strategies to better integrate international students, especially students living off campus.</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>1.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategize on how to reach students in need of services whose cultural norms don’t support seeking help and implement those strategies.</td>
<td>1.14</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommit to building communities that engage and support students from historically underserved and marginalized backgrounds.</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>1.19</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>1.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop near-peer mentoring program for students with more experience to mentor those who are newer to the campus.</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase funding for centers that support historically underserved and marginalized students.</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>1.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase funds for student employment and direct some of the funds toward employment in research. Possibility: target juniors as a way to develop faculty-student contact, engage in a high-impact activity, and have employment.</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>1.04</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>1.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Build a discussion of leadership, service, and other involvement opportunities into advising conversations and &quot;A Path to Success.&quot;</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>1.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create a searchable, centralized calendar with events and activities. Student Affairs Marketing and Communications is launching a Student Life calendar this summer. So this recommendation would broaden it to include the entire campus.</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2 = strongly support, high priority
1 = support, but not a high priority for me
0 = neutral
-1 = don't support, but not strongly opposed
-2 = strongly opposed, should not be a recommendation

Mental health services are critical, heavily used and inadequate for need. Increase funding for CAPS, CANS and psychological services and support. Current counselor-to-student ratio is about 1:1900. Recommended ratio is 1:1200.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommendation</th>
<th>Total Average</th>
<th>Faculty Average</th>
<th>Staff Average</th>
<th>Student Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increase opportunities for students with disabilities to participate in club sports and other activities.</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>0.44</td>
<td>1.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensure students get connected, develop community, or feel they belong to or within a program, office, academic department, team, group of students, learning community, job, etc. Develop methods of tracking students’ sense of connectedness. Develop intervention strategies for disconnected students. Help students connect with others who share common identities, needs, or experiences.</td>
<td>0.97</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>1.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To better support reentry students with families, restore family friendly programs to pre-cut levels.</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>1.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Centrally coordinate information about involvement opportunities. Create a searchable database.</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>0.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educate the campus community on the value of leadership, service and other involvement activities.</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explore technology-based tools to increase community feel for courses /departments /majors.</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase funding to SISS to expand Global Ambassador program.</td>
<td>0.66</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>-0.25</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Academic Senate Recommendations**

- Create greater acknowledgement within the merit and promotion system of faculty who show a record of effective instruction. Change faculty split to reward faculty who teach well and are less productive in research to be rewarded for their teaching. | 1.46  | 1.53   | 1.38  | 1.38  | 1.83  |
- Students have insufficient faculty-student contact. Develop strategies to increase contact. | 1.36  | 1.34   | 1.13  | 1.40  | 1.50  |
- Perception: UC Davis is overly focused on research at the expense of teaching and the undergraduate experience. Departments are rewarded for finding ways to teach more students with little regard to the quality of the education. Redesign the departmental funding incentive to hire lecturer SOEs to improve the quality of teaching. | 1.09  | 1.23   | 0.75  | 0.95  | 2.00  |
- Look beyond the traditional research model to significantly increase the number of students involved in research. Possibilities: Service-oriented projects in which multiple students are mentored at the same time. Large-group projects or courses focused on a question or problem (e.g., a campus energy efficiency project). Research seminars for juniors using a real-life, problem-based approach. | 1.13  | 1.22   | 1.50  | 1.00  | 1.17  |
- Re-weight course unit credit for faculty merits/promotions to recognize the value and effort that go into "interactive learning efforts" (i.e., classes that include labs, classes that require more than one hour of faculty time per hour of credit etc). These efforts should be recognized in the merit and promotion system more than they are presently. In essence, the current system penalizes faculty who have lab-based classes vs. those that have lecture-only classes. | 1.10  | 1.20   | 1.13  | 0.98  | 1.50  |
- Establish new-faculty training programs for teaching and advising. | 1.24  | 1.15   | 0.88  | 1.40  | 1.17  |
- Recognize faculty who are involving students in research in the merit and promotion process. | 1.03  | 1.02   | 1.33  | 1.06  | 0.67  |
- Reassess unit value assigned to academic courses and align with other UCs. Work related to academic courses is undervalued in the current unit system at UC Davis. Example: eight-week summer class yields three units. | 1.03  | 0.92   | 0.50  | 1.25  | 1.00  |
- Address issues of instruction comprehensibility: pedagogy support for new TAs, global Engishes, intercultural issues. Increase funding for CETL and other services that address these issues. | 1.03  | 0.88   | 0.75  | 1.24  | 0.67  |
- Develop a method to accurately track how many students are involved in research and the faculty members who are involving them. | 0.80  | 0.85   | 1.17  | 0.72  | 0.67  |
- Establish a series of faculty development workshops. Faculty who receive low teaching evaluations would be required to attend to proceed through merit step. | 0.97  | 0.83   | -0.13 | 1.29  | 1.33  |
- Establish a series of faculty development workshops. Faculty who receive low teaching evaluations would be encouraged to attend. (Note that attendance is optional in this recommendation while the one above requires attendance to proceed through merit step.) | 0.69  | 0.55   | -0.57 | 1.06  | 1.17  |
2 = strongly support, high priority  
1 = support, but not a high priority for me  
0 = neutral  
-1 = don't support, but not strongly opposed  
-2 = strongly opposed, should not be a recommendation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proposal</th>
<th>total average</th>
<th>average of fac/staff/stud averages</th>
<th>faculty average</th>
<th>staff average</th>
<th>student average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Have students complete faculty adviser evaluation and figure the results into the merit/promotion calculation.</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>0.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To increase faculty-student interaction, require first-year students to meet with faculty adviser for sign-off at registration time.</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>0.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moving to a semester system would be very helpful in addressing the overall advising load problem.</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>-0.03</td>
<td>-0.33</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>-0.50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Context:

The Provost has included a series of initiatives for investing in student success as part of his budget update for the next year (see February 11, 2013 letter to Deans and Vice Chancellors). He seeks recommendations from us, in collaboration with Interim Vice Provost Carolyn de la Peña, for additional investments that improve advising within and across colleges and divisions.

The Provost’s request comes during a time when the campus is broadly considering the elements that contribute to student success and what would be needed to prepare for potential growth in the context of the 2020 Initiative. For example, there is a Blue Ribbon Committee of over 100 faculty, staff and students considering the student experience at UC Davis. In addition, the Registrar has assembled 12 administrative units in an effort to create a single portal for students to use. This includes many components students require, including an advising portal.

Viewed in the context of broader campus efforts, it is clear that the Provost’s investment interests in advising are aimed at addressing substantive problems faced in the advising arena across campus. After consultation with Vice Provost de la Peña, it is evident that the Provost is seeking initiatives that are well coordinated between colleges.

Justification:

As leaders in undergraduate education and academic advising, the Council of Associate Deans has been aware of several issues relative to advising on campus. These issues include: 1) high student to advisor ratios that make it difficult for students to access advising in a timely fashion and for the advising community to be proactive (e.g. offering mandatory advising or special advising programs); 2) a highly decentralized academic advising structure in which there is no central accountability for academic advising quality, advisors are hired in a plethora of position classifications without standardization of experience or training and students are confused about where to seek academic advising; and, 3) a lack of professional development opportunities for academic advisors that would establish and reinforce advising best practices.

Proposed Resource Allocations:

Resources are requested to facilitate the development of a more structured model for academic advising and a clear definition of undergraduate academic advising that distinguishes it from the many academic success (tutoring, time management, study skills) and social services offered via Student Affairs. Specific objectives of our request are as follows:

1. Create a senior position reporting to the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education (VPUE) that would bring expertise in academic advising best practices, research on advising strategies and a background in assessment of advising outcomes. This person would be responsible for assisting with developing professional development programs (see items 2 and 3), serve as a resource for advising questions and would develop strategies to track the
outcomes of our academic advising. He/She would also play a very important role in coordinating academic advising activities with units addressing academic success under Student Affairs. Total request = $125,000 per year.

2. Create a series of Staff Development and Professional Services (SDPS) introductory advising courses to be completed by all advisors (new and old). The senior position in item 1 would work with SDPS to develop at least two advanced courses that would be taken as advisors continue. We envision a course being required every 2 years, with continued development of new topics by SDPS with assistance of the person in item 1. Total request = $25,000 per year.

3. Provide support for an annual professional development conference for all campus academic advisors. This would be organized by the person in item 1 with consultation with Council of Associate Deans. The conference would revolve around a new and relevant topic each year. It would be funded by the Provost to support keynote speakers, facilitators, etc. All advising staff would attend. The goal would be continued professional education of advisors and would create a forum for problem solving related to academic advising. Total request = $20,000 per year.

4. Provide additional allocations for academic advising in college dean’s offices and departments housing undergraduate majors. Additional resources are needed to enhance academic advising at the Dean's Offices and in the departments where major advising occurs in many colleges. Each college has different needs and current practices for structuring advising may need revision. The College of Biological Sciences is moving to a centralized model which may work very well for their majors. CAD members will work with their faculty and Deans to consider the best models moving forward and provide a budget estimate by July 1, 2013. Total estimated request = $1,200,000 per year. This is an estimate and will need to be reconsidered in light of increased student populations with implementation of the 2020 Initiative.