

**Sonoma State University
Graduation Initiative
Bi-Monthly Report
December 17, 2010**

Core Implementation Group (CIG)

The CIG met for the last meeting of the semester and further developed SSU's Graduation Initiative Action Plan. A matrix has been developed as a means of tracking the various initiatives under the broad categories of: academics, academic logistics, student life, and communication. This matrix will allow CIG to track initiatives in the following manner: what we are currently doing; implementation plan for reform or change; assessment strategy; timetable and benchmarks; findings; recommended changes; and responsible individuals. We hope that utilizing this matrix will allow CIG to track all aspects of the various initiatives underway and yet to begin.

Planning has also begun on Student Feedback Week scheduled for April 2011. The data analysis subgroup is reviewing and refining the student feedback questionnaire and will provide its recommendations to CIG at its first meeting in the Spring 2011 semester for review.

A subgroup was also formed to develop a proposal to submit to the Chancellor's Office for funding for the AAC&U Institute's "High Impact Practices and Student Success" to be held in Vermont in June 2011.

The following is a summary of the various activities to support retention and graduation conducted during the Fall 2010 semester:

Academics:

First Year Programs: A First Year Transitions Work Group has been meeting throughout the semester to coordinate the panoply of first year transition course offerings (e.g.,

Freshman Interest Groups (FIG), First Year Experience (FYE), Educational Mentoring Teams (EMT), MOSAIC, EOP Academy, and Hutchins Liberal Studies). In anticipation of a large freshman class in Fall 2011 (nearly 1900), this group is looking at ways to continue to address transition needs for our incoming first year students.

Early Start Initiative: SSU submitted its Early Start Proposal to the CO and is awaiting response in January to its proposal and to the concerns articulated within that document.

A major new initiative in the area of remediation launched this year is our new English 100A/B, a cohort model “stretch” program for English. Initial assessment results from the first year will be utilized in developing an appropriate Early Start curriculum for SSU students coming in to the English “stretch” program.

GE Reform: A major revision to SSU’s GE Program in Area A (Communication and Critical Thinking) and Area C (Arts and Humanities) was approved by the Academic Senate in Spring 2010 for implementation in Fall 2011 for the entering freshman class. The General Education Subcommittee, working closely with the departments in the School of Arts and Humanities, has approved a substantial number of courses for the new GE program and will continue this work in the Spring 2011 semester. Beginning in Fall 2011, SSU first time freshmen will be taking a more integrated Area A and Area C curriculum.

Academic Logistics:

Block Registration: SSU has continued with its successful implementation of automated (cms) block registration in Fall 2010 by automatically registering the English 100A stretch program students into their Spring 2011 English 100B course. Over 500 students were pre-registered into these classes. We anticipate continuing with block registration in

Fall 2011 and have identified a number of issues that will be resolved in the area of scheduling in order to improve the block registration processing.

Degree Audit: SSU's degree audit task force continues to meet to address some final implementation issues and to develop a training schedule for academic departments identified as needing support. Student utilization of the degree audit is substantial and its accuracy has been improved.

Advising: The VP for Student Affairs and Enrollment Management (SAEM) has convened an Advising, Career and EOP (ACE) Redesign committee to look at improving the structure for lower division, undeclared and GE advising. That group (joint membership of SAEM staff and Academic Affairs staff and faculty) has developed a tentative plan for redesigning the current ACE Advising Center. The plan will be fully vetted in Spring 2011 through SAEM, Academic Affairs, and faculty governance.

Wait List: For Spring 2011 registration, SSU conducted a pilot utilization of the CMS wait list. Several departments are participating (Mathematics and Statistics, Chicano and Latino Studies, Chemistry, and Computer Science). As a result of the pilot, during Pass 1 and Pass 2 registration, two courses were identified with large numbers of students on the wait list and additional sections were opened. We look forward to a fuller implementation of wait lists for Fall 2011.

Webinars and Conferences:

Members of CIG, as well as interested faculty and staff, attended two CSU sponsored webinars in the Fall semester: *High Impact Practices* and *Retaining Remediated Students*. Information from these seminars was shared at the CIG meeting. Finally, SSU will be sending a 20-member team (faculty, administrators, and staff from Academic Affairs and

SAEM) to the AAC&U's Annual Meeting and Pre-Conference Workshops in San Francisco, January 26-29, 2011. The teams have been divided into four subgroups: Interdisciplinarity and Freshman Experience; Curriculum and General Education; Faculty Development; and Liberal Arts Education and International Challenge. These groups have pre-selected the workshops and events that they will each attend at the annual meeting. Group meeting time has also been set aside during the conference for SSU participants to meet and discuss what they are learning. SSU attendees will discuss what they have learned in the Spring 2011 at a series of presentations for various groups. Among the 20 participants, six are members of CIG. We believe that the information we gather at AAC&U will prove invaluable to SSU as we move forward with a variety of initiatives that enhance academic quality and the overall educational experience of our students.