



summer academy

PROJECTS

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PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS

This section includes project descriptions work for all teams attending the Summer Academy. The array of teams attending this year's event is quite impressive, representing a range of institutional type, mission, and size; student demographics; and geographical service areas. The Summer Academy provides a number of networking opportunities for cross-fertilization of ideas across teams and projects. We encourage you to seek out teams doing similar work or those whose work might inform your own.

All participants have much to learn from each other, so take advantage of your time in New Mexico to hear more about each other's work. To give you a better understanding of the programs represented at this year's Summer Academy, we have listed descriptions on the following page.



BUILDING ENGAGEMENT AND ATTAINMENT FOR MINORITY STUDENTS PROJECT

The Building Engagement and Attainment for Minority Students (BEAMS) project is a five-year initiative funded by Lumina Foundation for Education to foster the ways in which four-year Historically Black, Hispanic Serving, and Tribal Colleges and Universities can develop data-based decision making, and increase student engagement and learning. BEAMS enables over 100 minority-serving institutions (MSIs) to use evidence from the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) and other sources to analyze the scope and character of students' engagement in their learning, and implement well-designed action plans to augment student engagement, learning, persistence, and success. BEAMS is a partnership between the Alliance for Equity in Higher Education and the Center for Postsecondary Research at Indiana University, and is managed by the Institute for Higher Education Policy.

MODEL REPLICATION INSTITUTIONS PROGRAM

The Model Replication Institutions (MRI) program aims to increase the representation of minorities in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) by (1) targeting a small number of MSIs poised to make a substantial contribution to increasing the number of minorities who earn STEM baccalaureate degrees and then enroll in STEM graduate programs or enter STEM careers; (2) continuously improving STEM education and undergraduate research at the selected MSIs; and (3) enabling successful projects to serve as models for the recruitment, education and production of quality-trained STEM baccalaureate degree recipients. MRI builds upon the 11 years of success of the Model Institutions for Excellence program by replicating its program components, including pre-college initiatives, student support, undergraduate research, faculty development, curriculum development, physical infrastructure, and graduate/science career initiatives. MRI is facilitated by the Institute for Higher Education Policy to support MSIs represented by American Indian Higher Education Consortium, Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities, and National Alliance for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education and funded by the National Science Foundation.

NATIONAL ARTICULATION AND TRANSFER NETWORK

The National Articulation and Transfer Network (NATN), a national research and policy development resource for both students and school administrators, offers an up-to-date repository of state articulation policies and other key information on transfer issues. It is a growing coalition of top community colleges, and four-year degree-granting institutions working together to place students on pathways of opportunities that lead to advancement and success in college. NATN's mission is to enhance access and success in higher education by increasing the number of transfer students, including historically underserved student populations such as students of color, who graduate with baccalaureate degrees. NATN is accomplishing this goal through three core areas of focus: research, policy, and practice.

As a major initiative of the Alliance for Equity in Higher Education and the Institute for Higher Education, NATN places a strong emphasis on promoting transfer success for students of color. More information about NATN is available at www.natn.org, an online resource for practitioners, researchers, and policymakers interested in transfer research and students, parents, and counselors looking for transfer resources.



BEAMS PROJECTS

Albany State University

The Albany State University learning community BEAMS project begins in fall 2007. The Summer Academy will train new members of our expanded BEAMS team and hone the skills of returning participants. The Summer Academy team primarily includes faculty and decision makers with a direct role in BEAMS project implementation. The experience expands the knowledge base of those directly involved in practical implementation of the BEAMS project, helping them learn best practices for implementation, data informed planning, and data driven evaluation processes. It also gives them valuable experience networking with BEAMS participants from other campuses. These best practices are helpful when refining the design, implementing, and assessing the university's learning communities prior to implementation in August 2007.

Alcorn State University

The goals of Alcorn State University's Student Engagement Program is to create learning communities for student and faculty interaction; enrich educational experiences beyond the classroom; provide service learning opportunities for students by designing a workable partnership between the university and local agencies/businesses for students to shadow those who are already working in their areas of interest; incorporate into the curriculum a transcript of non-academic credit for community service participation coupled with designing a professional portfolio; and assess the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) data to determine significant benchmarks to further enhance academics and campus life for students.

Barry University

The goal of the Barry University BEAMS Project is to enhance freshman minority and first generation students' retention, campus engagement and interaction with faculty through improvement of critical thinking and writing skills that foster academic success and intentional mentoring aimed at promoting academic and social integration. The means for accomplishing this goal include: 1) a critical thinking supplemental instruction (SI) class designed to improve students' efficacy in this area and 2) a faculty-student mentoring program aimed at promoting first-generation students' success and campus engagement during the first year of college. At the Summer Academy, the team plans to finalize the SI class syllabus, mentoring program, and procedures for assessing and evaluating the impact of the intervention on students' critical thinking skills and campus engagement. Participation in the Academy also provides the final opportunity to seek input from BEAMS staff and other institutions with similar interests/projects prior to implementation of the Barry Action Plan in mid-August. Lastly, Barry University plans to seek feedback regarding project sustainability and plans for effecting long-term institutional change.

California State University-Dominguez Hills

The California State University-Dominguez Hills' BEAMS team has various goals for this year's Summer Academy. They include: 1) evaluating the progress made since the Vermont planning meeting and re-energizing its commitment to the next two years of program implementation; 2) focusing on current and past NSSE data to update its five year plan, to be supplemented by its 2006 Family Subsistence Supplemental Allowance data as well as College Student Experiences Questionnaire data from fall 2005 and fall 2006; 3) planning for the transition of the freshman success seminar from being an optional general education course to a mandatory course by fall 2009; 4) considering ways to seek additional funding to continue its efforts; 5) developing a strategic dissemination plan to inform the campus community of its work; and 6) learning best practices from other BEAMS campuses and sharing its successes and challenges with them.

California State University-Northridge

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California State University Northridge (CSUN) is proud of its BEAMS project work so far—the 2005 and 2006 Freshman Connection—but believes it's missing one important component: peer mentoring (undergraduate students mentoring freshmen). Therefore, CSUN would like to refine, expand, and build upon its existing work to include peer mentors. To that end, it would like to examine best practices (including those utilized by other Summer Academy teams) in order to design a peer mentoring program that would work well on the CSUN campus. The school's target population for this effort is Hispanic and African-American males, who appear to benefit least from its work so far (based on the latest retention data available). Its rationale for wishing to incorporate a peer-mentoring program is to build community and student engagement, which extends beyond the freshman year by giving Freshman Connection graduates a chance to give back to the Connection during the following year. Recent work on sophomore persistence by the Institute for Higher Education Policy's Clifford Adelman confirms that freshmen are not the only strategic target for enhanced engagement and persistence. CSUN would like to construct a plan at the Summer Academy, build it during the 2007–08 academic year, and incorporate it into its program beginning fall 2008.

Cheyney University of Pennsylvania

Cheyney University's BEAMS project, that was born out of the NSSE data and refined at the 2006 Summer Academy, focuses on the implementation of new initiatives to promote the success and retention of its students through graduation. Specifically, the school's project focuses on a comprehensive first-year experience program (including a Summer Bridge experience), academic mentoring, and enhanced learning activities as well as the development of learning communities. Social and cultural activities are also set to be enhanced. One of Cheyney University's primary objectives was to acquire a funding source for its initiative. This objective was met, as the university has received a substantive state grant to fund the BEAMS initiative for the next two years. Participation at the 2007 Summer Academy allows the school to refine the BEAMS project through the implementation phase. It has come to realize that funding alone does not provide all of the resources necessary for the successful implementation of its initiative. Human capital and campus wide buy-in are also necessary for the success of its project.

Clafin University

To continue refining and expanding its BEAMS work, Clafin University is going to use the 2007 Summer Academy to ensure the improvement of faculty and student engagement. Mentors, organization implementation, and community service events that involve students and faculty are to sure to help build campus interaction outside the classroom. An action plan to build a bridge between academic affairs and student affairs provides a unified environment, which educates the whole student. This collaborative effort provides access to students' academic success. The 2007 Summer Academy is an opportunity to network with other institutions to share and gain best practices and challenges. Reviews and adjustments to improve action plans can be accomplished; therefore, Clafin University can build upon the BEAMS project to plan for future campus and community actions. Using data and assessment, the Summer Academy provides opportunities to develop strategies for ensuring the achievability of its project. Working as a team and with other institutions will also give it the opportunity to experience and engage in intense dialogue about challenges and successes.



Dillard University

Dillard University's current institutional emphasis is on student success to support its president's commitment to this issue, as she recently appointed a new vice president for student success. The main responsibility of this position is to assess recruitment and retention initiatives. Its NSSE data suggests that Dillard University students are particularly under-engaged in utilizing support resources necessary to assist in meeting their personal, social, and academic goals. Special emphasis is being placed on individual year experience (e.g., first-year, second-year, etc.). Presently, the institution has a first-year experience called Jubilee Scholars. However, data show that Dillard University retains approximately 70 percent of students from freshmen to sophomore year and approximately 35 percent from sophomore to junior year. The institution has also attempted to address retention. On the surface, students use the reason of financial challenges. However, an assessment of academic profiles reflects that students are not meeting the minimum academic qualifications to maintain enrollment. With this in mind, the Dillard University plans to focus on student success as a strategic initiative. Therefore, the BEAMS Team is going to assess and enhance advising for first-year students as well as identify opportunities for provisionally admitted students to participate in academic and social enrichment programs offered on its campus.

Eastern New Mexico University

In 2007, Eastern New Mexico University (ENMU) enters the second year of a BEAMS project that focuses attention on the engagement of transfer, non-traditional, distance, and students of color. A decade of attention to strengthening ties between freshmen and the university has yielded positive results. Now ENMU is focusing on ways to expand that experience more fully after the sophomore year. In year one, the campus community students, faculty, and staff have participated in focus groups. Their observations on what makes students stay has led to the formation of key initiatives that begins fall 2007. The theme of these initiatives is community. From *Meetings in the Major* to *Advising Week*, the campus is charged to begin to put into practice social and academic enrichment opportunities that reflect what it is learning about the needs of its increasingly diverse student body.

Florida International University

Florida International University's (FIU) original BEAMS project was to develop a Virtual Student Center, which is currently in use by its students. The institution's next step is to expand the student support tools it can deliver via the Virtual Student Center. It wants to discover what other BEAMS participants are doing along this line while sharing its Web network with them. Because these resources are online, FIU might be able to share actual links to tools and reduce the need to 'reinvent the wheel.' It also wants to brainstorm new ideas for online services that will increase student engagement and affinity. These elements are especially important as FIU expands its distance learning offerings.



Haskell Indian Nations University

Learning communities for incoming freshmen students has been Haskell Indian Nations University's BEAMS focus. The institution would like to expand its current learning communities' effort to be a three-semester program with an accompanying, progressive curriculum. The program would focus on social and academic skills communities that bridge the gap between beginning college students and upper division students. Its initiative would coordinate both the academic and student service sides of campus, to coordinate both academic and social relationships. Haskell would give students a program that supports them during this critical time of their educational lives. Preparation of freshmen and sophomore students for academic challenges of upper division courses is a critical need for Haskell students. Haskell's NSSE data (2003) indicated a discrepancy between lower-division and upper-division academic challenges. First-year students fell 10 percent below level of academic challenge, compared to 98 percent of seniors. The school interprets this to mean the students need support beyond the first semester orientations and better preparation for demanding academic work required in baccalaureate majors. Plans include credit courses each of the three semesters, study groups, research skills support, tutoring cohorts, and other activities. Haskell wants to cut any gaps in the students' college experience that would lead to dropping out.

Institute of American Indian Arts

The Institute of American Indian Arts' BEAMS team is working to determine how learning portfolios, beginning in orientation, can be integrated into the general education courses as well as courses in the major field of study to enhance learning throughout college and beyond. The team also plans to explore using the same process to assess courses, instruction, and programs.

Inter American University of Puerto Rico-San Germán

In Inter American University of Puerto Rico-San Germán's past participation in the Summer Academy, it was able to design the Campus Learning Center and the Pilot-"Café con Leche." Both were implemented on campus last year. It also wrote a proposal and obtained Title V funds to establish the Campus Learning Center. The school is currently in the redesign, development, and implementation of its Campus Learning Center. Through its participation in the 2007 Summer Academy, the school's team and by extension the campus, plans to work on the selection of an advising, mentoring, and student success model, which could work within its Campus Learning Center.

Jarvis Christian College

The Jarvis Christian College BEAMS team endeavors to provide its campus with new strategies and initiatives to improve retention and increase enrollment. After the 2005 Summer Academy, the Jarvis team focused on the first-year experience and customer service encouraging and promoting a campus-wide retention effort. Its theme continues to be "It Takes an Entire Campus to Graduate a Student." Further, it is the team's goal to learn new strategies and to hear best practices at the 2007 Summer Academy that it can share with administration, faculty, and staff. The school's team plans to use the information gathered at the 2007 Academy, particularly on Learning Communities. Additional information learned from the 2007 Summer Academy is likely to be used to facilitate the implementation of effective retention strategies that focus on the First Year Experience Program and identifying "at risk" students. More specifically, it plans to assess the retention strategies used in the past and compare them to what it has learned to ensure the success of its students. Through efforts at the 2007 Summer Academy, the Jarvis team plans to continue building upon its work by assessing its goals and objectives for a retention plan, by identifying measurable outcomes, and celebrating its success.

Kentucky State University



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The Kentucky State University (KSU) BEAMS project focused on providing a supportive environment for its students to succeed as scholars and responsible, productive citizens. To achieve this, KSU designed an action plan targeting areas of concern identified by students. It worked to reduce a perceived 'run-around' problem by focusing on improving communication between support programs. The institution held academic support summits and set-up a one-stop information center. KSU realized that trying to change an institutional culture takes time and that its project would be more successful if it became integrated into mainstream university planning. It made the project part of institutional discussion at all levels, bringing attention to the way institutional behavior influences students' performance. At the end of last year, the school rolled what was left of its plan into a larger and more comprehensive plan being developed by a University Taskforce on Student Success and Retention. It incorporated lessons from BEAMS including data-based decision making, systematic project assessment, and strong student involvement. KSU is also securing funding for the project. Its goal for the 2007 Academy is to refine the new plan, work out implementation strategies, and consult others working on enhancing the quality of student life and learning on their campuses.

Miles College

The Summer Academy immediately precedes the implementation of Miles College's planned new first-year experience that it is calling "The First Year Academy." Its goal for this summer is to more fully concentrate on addressing the needs of first-year transfers, non-traditional students, and commuters as well as fine-tune the assessment of the First Year Academy components. In the meantime, it is seeking connections to research and plan for the differential in needs as the first year becomes the second year in an effort to sustain the positive assessments of the First Year Academy components. The school's long-term goal is to develop a sustainable culture of engagement and achievement by cascading necessary experiences, beginning with the students who enter in fall 2007.

Morgan State University

Morgan State University's project, "Scholars-in-Service," is derived from the DEEP Conditions of a "living" mission and unshakable focus on student learning. It proposes to extend an existing university mechanism, academic credit for experiential learning, to support campus-based student-led community service endeavors reflecting the university's urban mission. The service-learning initiative has three curricular components: 1) campus-based student-led community service placement; 2) 10-week career development curriculum; and 3) 10-week academic enrichment curriculum for students with a GPA under 2.5. By including intensive career and academic components into the service learning activity, the BEAMS initiative is designed to maximize the opportunity to link the service project to both classroom and career. Morgan State University plans to use the 2007 Summer Academy to further refine the project and make the necessary adjustments to enable it to serve as a vehicle for the incorporation and engagement of transfer students. Simultaneously, the institution is seeking Title III funding to extend its BEAMS work and incorporate transfer students into its targeted population.

New Jersey City University

The 2007 Summer Academy provides New Jersey City University (NJCU) with the opportunity to review the status of its BEAMS project by establishing a forum for the sharing of results and best practices among the various BEAMS cohorts. In particular, as members of the 2005 cohort, a value added component of the 2007



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Summer Academy is sure to be hearing from experienced BEAMS cohorts in relation to successfully navigating institutional bureaucracy, culture, and resource limitation in achieving goals. The NJCU BEAMS project focuses on implementing a series of multifaceted initiatives to increase student and faculty engagement. The strategies were developed to address the unique needs of the school's ethnically and racially diverse commuter population of primarily first generation students and were articulated around the concept of establishing/defining an Urban Learner Centered Model. This model was designed to focus intentionally on the needs and strengths of students and communities from urban locales. The model attempts to integrate and leverage student support services, faculty engagement activities, community service and experiential learning opportunities, learning communities, the fostering of cultural competencies throughout the curriculum and the development of summer enrollment incentives.

Norfolk State University

The Norfolk State University (NSU) BEAMS team continues focusing on the NSSE Benchmark "Educationally Enriching Experiences (E3)." The NSU team is developing a plan to build on previous work and align E3 programs with academic curriculum. Its assumption is that successful E3 programs are not the end in themselves, but a means to enhance student learning. The work done by the team is set to be integrated into the heart of the university enterprise "academics" and thus sustained and enhanced. Based on campus-wide discussions held in the 2005-06 academic year, critical thinking emerged as an orthogonal component linking E3 programs and academic curriculum. The task for the team is to design a systems approach to the development of critical thinking skills in students. Critical thinking skills are scheduled to be introduced early across the general education curriculum to build a solid foundation for more advanced work within each major. Critical thinking is further reinforced in the E3 activities throughout the curriculum. Finally, the students are asked to apply critical thinking skills while solving problems in capstone courses. The NSU BEAMS project is expanding its scope to include general education and major curricula, but, at the same time, the school is narrowing its focus to develop and assess critical thinking skills in students.

North Carolina Central University

The BEAMS project at North Carolina Central University aims to enhance student academic success opportunities through the development of the Comprehensive Academic Success and Enhancement (CASE) Center. The 18 components of the CASE Center have been identified; however, making all 18 components work in concert to improve student success is the focus of the BEAMS project. The team plans to use its time at the Summer Academy to relate all 18 components, to student success using flow charts, organizational charts, enrollment and retention data and trends, and narratives. It is expected in the future that all freshmen students will be admitted into the CASE Center upon their enrollment. The 18 components of the CASE Center are: academic advising, academic support, admissions, bridge programs, campus safety, career placement, community college partnerships/transfers, counseling, first year experience, general education curriculum, health, honors, housing and residential life, learning communities, orientation, student accounting, scholarships and student aid, tutorials, and university testing.

Oglala Lakota College

The Oglala Lakota College (OLC) BEAMS team plans to continue developing its efforts of student recruitment, retention, and completion through services. Oglala Lakota College's BEAMS team is firmly positioned to enhance its plan to develop and improve successful student recruitment, retention, and completion through new strategies of advising and faculty pedagogy relevant to best practices in the literature with assistance of BEAMS' consultants and senior project experiences.



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Our Lady of the Lake University

Members of the Our Lady of the Lake University team plans to use their time at the Summer Academy refining its SafetyNet, model retention program developed last year. While the project was very well received by faculty, the team encountered a number of unanticipated problems during the implementation phase. Some were related to sufficient staff support to provide optimum response and resolution of student problems. Most, however, were related to difficulties with various technologies essential to the program. Team members plan to use their time to “debrief” on what worked well, what needs to be addressed in the coming academic year and how Our Lady of the Lake University can more effectively use information provided by the NSSE data and reports now that it is in its second year of administration. It also plans to develop a second student survey specifically to collect comparison data on the efficacy of several different retention initiatives implemented at approximately the same time as SafetyNet. The Our Lady of the Lake University team also plans to explore how to move beyond its initial focus on entering freshmen and expand to transfer students and its more non-traditional weekend program students. If time allows, it would like to form a partnership with one or more other BEAMS teams to begin to develop plans to BETA test SafetyNet at another institution.

Spelman College

The Spelman College BEAMS project is linked to a reinvigorated Writing Across the Curriculum program in the college, as well as to the development of an electronic portfolio (SpEl.Folio) that students begin in their first year. Campus discussions have begun about how the SpEl.Folio might follow the student through their college career and beyond. The school envisions the project as an intellectual focal point wherein students integrate and synthesize their college experiences, including content related to general education, major courses, and extra-curricular activities. It is planning to use the portfolio to assess student learning outcomes in the core curriculum. In addition to promoting the use of the portfolio beyond the core curriculum, it is inviting academic departments to consider the electronic portfolio as a tool for documenting achievement in the major. During the 2007 Summer Academy, Spelman College intends to explore appropriate evaluation rubrics and develop strategies for increasing faculty buy-in for the SpEl.Folio.

Tennessee State University

This Summer Academy brings the vice presidents of academic affairs and student affairs together in a new collaboration to build on Tennessee State University's (TSU) current service-learning initiatives, by focusing efforts in its First Year Program. The goal is to improve retention of the first-year students. Its original project was to expand service-learning initiatives, engage students in meaningful learning, and provide a pedagogy that would build more caring relationships with faculty. TSU is successfully increasing its students' involvement in service-learning and are assessing the effects on their perseverance and their attitudes toward the university. However, it is adding a new dimension to its project. The culminating activity of student orientation is set to be its first TSU Community Service Day, involving first-year students, working in teams on service projects. Each group of first-year student has a student and a faculty or staff mentor. The work teams participate in an orientation session before Service Day, complete a meaningful work project together, celebrate together after the work, and will maintain contact throughout the first year. At the Summer Academy, TSU hopes to learn how other universities have used learning communities to engage first-year students in the orientation classes.

Texas A&M International University

Texas A&M International University (TAMIU) is committed to developing a culture of learning and teaching. Expanding on that commitment, the institution began piloting learning communities in fall 2005, with two cohorts that included English, history, developmental studies, and freshman seminars. In fall 2006, 11 learning community options across several disciplines were offered. Administration and faculty are both aware of the many benefits learning communities offer students and faculty, and local data confirms national research findings. In fall 2007, all first time freshmen are set to participate in a learning community. Thirty learning communities are scheduled, most of which consist of two disciplines and a freshman seminar. The freshman seminar is intended to be a one credit hour, two hour contact time class, that all freshmen have to take both fall and spring.



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The challenge facing TAMIU is faculty professional development and additional financial resources for instructor positions. It plans to participate in the Summer Academy because of its learning community focus. The school is at a critical point in its planning, and knows from experience that participation in this event enlightens them and strengthens its resolve as it faces the diverse challenges that are sure to come.

University of Houston-Downtown

University of Houston-Downtown's (UHD) approach of having the BEAMS project evolve into the Quality Enhancement Plan and serve as a framework for Achieving the Dream exemplifies the themes established for the 2007 Summer Academy. The interweaving of these initiatives are sure to enhance as UHD gains expertise in aligning university resources to foster and sustain a transformation arising from a culture of evidence and resulting in increased student engagement in the learning process. Several members of the institution's team are also on the University Planning Council that plays a major role in strategic planning and in funding allocations. These individuals have the opportunity to implement the strategies recommended at the Summer Academy. Moreover, all three of the UHD initiatives emphasize the importance of "front loading" resources for entering students. Thus, interaction with Vincent Tinto would expand the vision for transitional programming and for its redesign of the Learners' Community currently in place at UHD.

University of New Mexico

With the recent implementation of a Title V activity devoted to the University of New Mexico's (UNM) 2005 Summer Academy BEAMS project, UNM's involvement in the initiative has entered a new phase. Building on its unique status as the nation's only flagship campus where traditionally underrepresented minority populations outnumber the rest, UNM has developed an "Agenda for the Emerging Majority." The agenda has three major elements: 1) focused recruitment of underrepresented populations, including pre-college mentoring and preparation to bolster equity in college attendance; 2) structured academic support for all ranges of academic abilities from remediation to honors; and 3) culturally-specific structures and services: everything from ethnic centers that support Hispanic, American Indian, and African-American students, to systematic efforts to build a faculty and administration that mirrors the diversity of the student body. UNM plans to use the 2007 Summer Academy to refine strategies in each of these areas, while simultaneously building in articulation with university operations. Its goal is to increase the degree to which this agenda is part of the "standard operating procedure" of its flagship institution.

University of Puerto Rico-Humacao

The University of Puerto Rico in Humacao (UPRH) aspires to recognize, respect, and respond to the student's necessities, fortifying teaching and support services, by means of assessment and continuous research of the institutional offerings. All of this by means of the "Student Success Project." With the Summer Academy, UPRH hopes to be able to: 1) maintain a pertinent curriculum that satisfies the student's necessities; 2) promote a varied and participating teaching and learning methodologies; 3) adjust the support services for the students necessities; and 4) provoke a continuous exchange of ideas, by the interaction of faculty, administrative personnel, and academic managers with students. It plans to spend its time to evaluate and to redirect the project. UPRH also plans to update and align the project with the institutional plans and resources. In addition, it is going to use its time at the Summer Academy to analyze how to settle down as a "student centered institution."



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University of Puerto Rico-Mayagüez

The mission of the University of Puerto Rico Mayagüez's (UPRM) BEAMS project is to develop and implement a coordinated campus-wide initiative to foster student-faculty interaction across the undergraduate experience. The UPRM team has spent the last six months creating awareness about the project through an article in the Web-based campus newspaper and through presentations of the 2005 NSSE results and the project mission to various campus stakeholder groups. Recently, three teams representing faculty members, students, and counselors were formed to assist the BEAMS team in the development of a coordinated set of strategies to improve student-faculty interaction. The 2007 Summer Academy emphasizes themes that are important to the successful implementation of the school's project. Taking into account its limited human and financial resources, UPRM plans to use the sessions and team time at the Summer Academy to determine ways to align current resources and initiatives (e.g., general education, continuous improvement) to ensure integration and sustainability. It also plans to look at the project in the context of accreditation and assessment to use the data collection efforts of these processes to supplement the project.

University of the District of Columbia

The University of the District of Columbia's (UDC) participation in the 2007 Summer Academy is sure to develop its 2005 Summer Academy BEAMS project. It has established the ongoing Myrtilla Miner Professional Development Academy, a refinement of the University Scholar Series first developed in the 2003 AAHE Summer Academy. Despite numerous competing professional responsibilities, the BEAMS team members have coordinated a series of regular professional development workshops for the University of the District of Columbia community, working with the model of "Best Practices" by utilizing the expertise of its own faculty, staff, and students. UDC's goal has been to create a learning community focused on the themes of assessment, teaching and learning, and utilizing technology. Its BEAMS team members are integral members of groups working on the Academic Strategic Plan, University Strategic Plan, Freshman Orientation, Summer Bridge Program, and First-Year Experience. The associate provost for retention, professional development, and advisement has been the school's coordinator, and many of its workshops connect with these initiatives. At the 2007 Summer Academy, UDC would like to use the consultants, resources, and, most importantly, time to develop new workshops and strategies for the 2007-08 academic year, and determine ways to increase participation and integrate its activities with the academic programs.

University of the Incarnate Word

The University of the Incarnate Word plans to focus on target core courses: Developing a Community of Learners for Academic Success. The target core courses were identified from the BEAMS team task forces as an advising strategy for first-year students. The 2007 University of the Incarnate Word Summer Academy project is set to develop a strategic plan for university collaboration and implementation of the target core courses and appropriate assessment measurements for progress in obtaining the defined student outcomes.

Western New Mexico University

The initial goal of Western New Mexico University's BEAMS project introduces a new technology to enhance collaborative learning through its internal portal was successful. All entering freshmen are now routinely taught to use this technology. Faculty members engaged in professional development to learn how to make this portal a communications tool. Now the school needs to focus on the outcomes of this experience and in exploring the possibilities for increasing student engagement in service learning as a strategy for retention.



Winston-Salem State University

Winston-Salem State University plans to use the 2007 Summer Academy to refine and build upon the restructuring of its current BEAMS effort. The focus of its BEAMS effort is having students complete writing prompts or assignments for a cultural event that they have attended that focus on "writing across the curriculum and writing outside of English class." What is Writing Outside of English Class? Writing Outside of English Class is a dynamic interdisciplinary activity designed to stimulate and enhance a student's written communication skills by encouraging them to articulate their reflective thoughts on attendance at various events. Writing Outside of English Class encourages and allows them to develop a personal response to particular events that focuses on everyday experiences in their personal life. Its objectives are to: provide students with an opportunity to use reflective writing to provide their personal response to a particular event; provide students with an opportunity to enhance their written communication skills through an activity outside of a formal course; encourage students to engage in writing that exhibits thoughtfulness, purpose, and discipline; and encourage students to articulate their thoughts through writing that is student-centered and focuses on reflection and the engagement of their personal experiences.

Woodbury University

In 2005, Woodbury University, whose population's comes mainly from low-income minority students, began to make student affairs a full partner in the academic process. This year, because of BEAMS, the two units are linked in a project involving three separate focused learning communities, composed of students, faculty, and staff. Together these groups are considering how Woodbury's students learn inside and outside of the classroom. From this point, the school plans to begin a cooperative process of building a general education curriculum that spans the classroom, campus, and home communities.

Xavier University

In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, Xavier University of Louisiana has been proactive in comprehensive strategic planning. The school's current, and refocused, BEAMS project is based on the first-year experience at Xavier University with goals of enhanced teaching, learning, and retention. Two essential committees have been formed to engage in assessment and strategic planning for development of interim measures and full implementation of it in fall 2008. The opportunity to be in a "retreat" setting with time to concentrate without distractions, network with consultants and colleagues from similar institutions, and hear quality presentations on access and success to provide an inspiring and focused beginning to the collaborative process to lead to success of its First Year Experience Initiative.

GENERAL PROJECTS

New Mexico State University

The Division of Student Success at New Mexico State University works toward integrating the Division's newly developed vision and mission statement in all its organizational units. The overall goal of the Division is to improve the recruitment and retention of all New Mexico State University students. Following a reorganization in fall 2006, the Division was created to bring together units that work directly with students, such as admissions, student health services, living-learning communities, ethnic programs, and financial aid. Although the school serves diverse needs, the student is its customer and service is its goal. With this in mind, the school has developed a shared vision and mission for the Division in spring 2007. At the 2007 Summer Academy, it seeks to integrate that mission and vision into action plans for all its operational units.

New Mexico State University

New Mexico State University-Grants has both traditional students and non-traditional students of color, with similar and unique needs. As a team, it plans to focus on the multidimensional needs of its students and how the institution can support access and success. Specifically, many traditional students are eligible to earn the New



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Mexico Legislative Scholarship; however many, roughly 50 percent, lose the scholarship. The institution's team plans to focus on strategies and interventions to increase the number of students who maintain this scholarship.



MRI PROJECTS

Alabama A&M University

College student retention continues to present major challenges to institutions of higher education. The number of students leaving college without a degree is increasing; approximately half of all entering students are not graduating (U.S. Department of Education 1994). To that end, Alabama A&M University is developing a comprehensive initiative to enhance retention and positive graduation outcomes for its undergraduate students. The retention entails for the student the generation of cultural changes for underexposed individuals, measure development on re-visionary of wrong conceptualized information, guidance to generate new ideas, and professional development for the faculty pertaining to engaging specific-needs students. Also, the school plans to implement curriculum reform and mentoring.

New York City College of Technology

The New York City College of Technology is creating a new coordinated initiative to attract, retain, and graduate African-American and Hispanic male students in the fields STEM. The success of this initiative is set to be rooted in its student-centeredness and its focus on pedagogy. The dual goal of the school's participation in the Summer Academy, therefore, is to develop a comprehensive implementation plan for student support and faculty development. The plan would include setting milestones for the next five years, studying how these two Model Institutions for Excellence model components can be adapted to its institution, developing blueprints for pilot efforts in these two areas, identifying and assigning personnel to task forces to direct each model component, and gathering baseline data to measure the progress and success of these efforts. The school's dedicated team expects to begin implementing this plan as part of the college's overall initiative by fall 2007.

Northwest Indian College

Northwest Indian College (NWIC), a Tribally Controlled Land Grant College, was established in 1978 and grew from a school specializing in aquaculture to a two-year college that offers an Associate of Science degree with an emphasis in Native Environmental Studies. Beginning in fall 2007, NWIC plans to offer a Bachelor of Science degree in Native Environmental Studies. NWIC has a very successful information technology (IT) and robotics program that has three area of emphasis: networking, computer repair and maintenance, Web design, and robotics. This program has an 80 percent retention rate and 96 percent of its graduates either are initially employed in a technology field or attend four-year institutions. The IT program wants to explore two paths: one is to modify and adapt its successful curriculum to create a transfer degree program in computer science, and the second is to use the knowledge gained from the successful IT program to create a Native-based Bachelor of Science degree program in electrical engineering/robotics. Two areas are critical to a successful science/engineering program. The first is to attract qualified Native students that are well grounded in mathematics, reading, and writing. The second is to provide support for those students that are weak in the above skills in such a fashion that their financial aid is not jeopardized nor is their time in college extended much beyond the programs' expectations for graduation.

Paine College



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The focus of the STEM-related project at Paine College is curriculum restructuring to enhance and strengthen the content, activities, laboratory exercises, and pedagogical methods in introductory and upper-level STEM courses in order to create a learning environment that is stimulating, interactive, hands-on, as well as meaningful and useful for students in STEM disciplines at Paine College. Curriculum content and course structure revision is based on desired student outcomes identified by the Student Outcome Model developed by STEM faculty. In order to insure that STEM graduates possess these skill sets, curriculum restructuring includes: 1) incorporation of more problem-based learning assignments to facilitate application of science and mathematical concepts, 2) incorporation of more collaborative assignments, and 3) incorporation of more experiment (research)-based laboratory exercises instead of the traditional "cookbook" assignments so that students develop strong critical thinking and analytical skills. The major objective for the Summer Academy is to identify problem-based and research-related activities and the development of a plan for incorporation of these activities into appropriate STEM courses. Moreover, it is anticipated that the action plan for curriculum restructuring is to be implemented at Paine College during the 2007–08 academic year.

Stillman College

Stillman College plans to work on developing an on-campus Center for Academic Excellence. The center is designed to provide services to increase the number of students being accepted into graduate or professional schools and to enhance student skills to successfully complete graduate or professional schools. Stakeholders representing the academic affairs, student affairs and institutional advancement offices are set to play strategic roles in the development of the center to ensure it is a campus-wide initiative. The center's focus targets improving undergraduate research experiences, student retention, and students' standardized test taking skills. An office for each focus area is scheduled to be developed. 1) The Office of Undergraduate Research to develop rubrics to evaluate senior thesis presentations; re-establish the Journal of the Undergraduate Scholar; highlight student research and presentations; and identify and develop grant proposals to support undergraduate research. 2) The Office of Retention to establish a campus-wide mentoring program for Freshmen and at-risk students, provide peer tutors for student support services, coordinate academic advising activities, track the progress of freshmen and at-risk students. 3) The Office of Standardized Testing to develop presentations and workshops on standardized tests, collect and disseminate testing materials, develop a computerized testing center for student practice tests, collect data and maintain statistics on standardized tests scores, and provide a series of faulty development workshops to assist faculty with writing standardized test questions to be used in course exams.

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi is an emerging institution that seeks to extend its research capacity and infrastructure. The College of Science and Technology has promoted undergraduate research experiences for 10 years. The school's undergraduate researchers are retained, graduated and matriculated into post-baccalaureate programs at higher rates than their peers who were not undergraduate researchers. Thus, a strong program of undergraduate research assists its institutional goals of increased retention and graduation rates. As a result of MRI-catalyzed discussions with its dean who agreed to allocate funds to support a formal Office of Undergraduate Research. The institution's primary goal at the Summer Academy is to discover ways to ensure that the new Office of Undergraduate Research not only succeeds but also flourishes. It is eager to learn how to increase its funding by attracting donors and convincing the provost to support the office.

United Tribes Technical College

The STEM related project that United Tribes Technical College (UTTC) proposes to work on at the Summer Academy assists the college in addressing the several issues. The team plans to leave the conference with a



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comprehensive plan to meet these issues. The challenge is to provide high quality STEM programs. UTTC plans to accomplish this through program development to offer more STEM programs and assessment of student needs especially in the area of the "Digital Natives who are Natives" or the American Indian Millennial Student.

Universidad del Turabo

One of the major priorities of the Universidad del Turabo is to attract and increase the retention rate of STEM students. Statistics provided for the years 2002 and 2003 reveal an average retention rate of 65 percent for science and technology and of 74 percent for engineering. The proposed program has three important objectives first to attract students to seek studies in STEM fields, second to retain them in the selected field of study, and finally to encourage them to apply to graduate studies. To fulfill its goals, the program proposes the creation and institutionalization of a student support center for STEM students. Participation in internships and scientific experiences play a big part of the effort. Scholarships for STEM students are important if the school wants to retain them in the field and motivate them to do research. After students have been exposed to different research topics and disciplines in which they want to be involved the proposed program encourages them to apply to graduate studies. UT also plans to pursue infrastructure development to accommodate new programs and research activities, which require additional laboratory facilities and equipment. Space is needed if UT wants to be successful in becoming a teaching-research Institution.

NATN PROJECTS

The Alamo Area Articulation and Transfer Council

The Alamo Area Articulation and Transfer Council (AAATC) has been developing a training curriculum for a universal instructional model called, "The Transfer Process: From Matriculation to Graduation." The goal is to train academic advisers and counselors at all institutions of higher education in the San Antonio area with the potential to disseminate the training curriculum to the rest of the state. AAATC's mission is to educate its staff about transfer processes and best practices, including standardizing confusing terminology, providing consistent guidance regarding statewide rules and regulations, and other transfer-related initiatives leading to the goal of promoting a culture of transferability. AAATC would like to use this module for all of its institutions' faculty and staff that have direct contact with any transfer student, ultimately creating a seamless transition for all transfer students. Its goal during the Summer Academy is to complete the training curriculum and presentation, develop an evaluation form, and construct a Student Satisfaction instrument.

Bluegrass Community and Technical College

The Bluegrass Community and Technical College (BCTC) Summer Academy team plans to focus its efforts on commuter and part-time student engagement in terms of the transfer process and student success in learning. One of the BCTC Transfer Center Initiatives is the creation a peer mentoring program for BCTC student and university students with special focus on minority students. This initiative is designed to not only improve student transfer rates but also improve student retention and persistence. Focus is also being drawn to minority student involvement in transfer center workshops and transfer center college fairs.

Bronx Community College

Bronx Community College (BCC) is poised to assess and evaluate the success of its initiatives aimed at facilitating transfer and degree attainment, and loop this review into planning for the future. Among points of inquiry for consideration are: 1) effectiveness of the Transfer Center and its programs; 2) articulation agreements' impacted on transfer; 3) student knowledge of articulation agreements; 4) faculty engagement in articulation development and use; 5) congruency between alumni employment and their studies at BCC and senior colleges; 6)



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evaluation of student needs; and 7) ways to deliver and evaluate student support services to increase student use of appropriate resources and services.

California Articulation Working Group

There is no doubt that California's best public universities are oversubscribed. While articulation and transfer is streamlined between the California's community colleges and its public universities, community college students who desire to transfer to MSIs are at a disadvantage, as these institutions are often located outside of California. Establishing articulation agreements and clarifying transfer guidelines help pave the way for a smoother transition for students and ensure that students receive the maximum credit for their academic work. This project aims to: 1) establish effective working relationships with appropriate faculty and administrators from culturally enriched (targeting Historically Black and Hispanic Serving) colleges and universities; 2) establish articulation agreements or transfer guides, as appropriate, with culturally enriched colleges and universities and 3) increase transfer for California community college students to MSIs.

Central Connecticut State University

The chancellors of the Connecticut State University System and the Connecticut Community College System have recently signed a memorandum of understanding designed to result in a system-to-system dual enrollment transfer compact. Central Connecticut State University is proposing the dual enrollment initiative as one means of addressing the system-to-system agreement. The Central CT State Summer Academy team hopes to enhance this project and to explore other transfer possibilities that will coincide with the system-to-system agreement.

The Community College of Baltimore County

The Community College of Baltimore County (CCBC) Summer Academy team's goal is to craft a plan to increase opportunities for under-served, under-represented students transferring to four-year colleges and universities with scholarship possibilities. CCBC is facilitating transfer; providing services and support before, during, and after transfer process; enlarging/ensuring number of college credits to be accepted by receiving institutions; and sharing data among sending and receiving institutions for the purpose of future improvement.

Houston Community College

The Houston Community College (HCC) Summer Academy team plans to redesign its online application process to enable students to make more informed decisions as to their educational objectives. Instead of asking students to decide which workforce or academic pathway suits their needs, HCC decided to focus on broad career clusters that incorporate all academic majors and workforce programs.

Lansing Community College

Lansing Community College (LCC) team proposes to work on two related projects started last year: Project one is the Puerto Rico Project that needs further networking and development. LCC has established and needs to further develop the partnership with the University of Puerto Rico-Humacao for the purposes of increasing articulation between the two institutions and expanding transfer possibilities and unique scholarship opportunities from LCC to a Spanish speaking institution. The second project is the Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU)/LCC/University of Michigan proposal and development in the sciences and engineering Partnership with several HBCU colleges to early identify prospective students wanting to obtain bachelor and graduate degrees in



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STEM fields and those wanting to attend an HBCU and state institutions for graduate studies in sciences and engineering. Working with prospective partners to build scholarships and summer academic experiences at HBCU's and four-year institutions, LCC's objectives include establishing a tiered pathway to pursue sciences and or engineering, LCC/AUC/ Michigan transfer, direct application to Michigan, or direct transfer to HBCU.

Maricopa Community Colleges

Intentional Transfer Success: Policy, Programs and Practices to Increase the Transfer Rates and Baccalaureate Completion for Under-represented Students Problem. Students often have little sense of the purposes of the specific general education requirements or of degree programs holistically. There is a need to align general education requirements and the teaching of courses that meet the requirements so that students fully understand their educations. Maricopa Community Colleges' goal is to provide meaning to the Maricopa Experience by bringing program purposes, teaching and learning, and assessment, into alignment, to create a more coherent and clearly intentional general education experience for students as they move among and between institutions. The institution would like to strategically link this project to national initiatives and measure success in student learning and transfer.

New England Transfer Association

Ensuring that all students have access to baccalaureate level education is the joint responsibility of sending and receiving institutions of higher learning. A major goal of the New England Transfer Association (NETA) is to unite two- and four-year institutions in an effort to identify barriers to baccalaureate level education, practices that help overcome those barriers and encouraging promising initiatives to improve the transfer process for students. The NETA Executive Board has developed a program based loosely on the national Access to the baccalaureate degree study, which encourages higher education counselors and advisors to frankly discuss their own views on transfer attitudes and issues, while listening to how their counterparts on the "other side of the aisle" view the same topics. Discussions have focused on transferability and access; advising for transfer and student support services. The NETA team would like to continue to expand the discussion of transfer attitudes and issues, developing a better understanding of how transfer is perceived and managed throughout the United States. This includes developing policy strategies to learn how to create action plans to help its members advance the cause of transfer on a local, regional and national level.

Shoreline Community College

Shoreline Community College's Action Areas for 2007-08 focuses on developing initiatives to address retention and success strategies for students of color from low income and/or non-traditional populations. One of the action areas focuses on development and implementation of a series of "For Your Information" training sessions to facilitate student development and retention. The college's other action area addresses accountability measures. It plans to implement student learning and development outcomes assessment in student affairs and instruction, utilizing the Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education's Assessment Frameworks. It also plans to utilize the Washington State Community College Framework for Diversity Assessment and Planning for Students of Color to assess its progress in access and academic achievement of students. In addition, Shoreline Community College is developing accountability measure to address the Washington State Student Achievement Incentives Assessment Framework based on identified tipping points of student success. Shoreline Community College plans to use data to evaluate the success of these action areas and to determine the direction and focus of its strategic planning and strategic enrollment management planning processes.



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The University System of Maryland

The University System of Maryland in collaboration with Towson University seeks to develop a marketing plan to enhance the support and transition of community college students to Maryland's four-year colleges and universities. The initial phase of this program involves working in partnership with several select community colleges. The project specifically involves: 1) increasing student understanding of how to effectively connect their two-year community college experience with the requirements of their selected four-year institution, 2) developing comprehensive application deadline calendar, 3) increasing students awareness of support services for transfer ARTSYS, 4) developing a strategy to show that Maryland's two- and four-year institutions are in support of one another, 5) researching and highlighting success stories/strategies for transfer students, and 6) proposing a higher degree of system-wide accountability for the satisfaction of transfer students.