



The BEAMS Beat

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Dear colleagues,

The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) each year publishes its annual survey results. The 2004 Annual Report is now available online at <http://www.indiana.edu/~nsse/html/report-2004.shtml>. This year, promising findings include an increase in the number of seniors who are involved in service learning and of seniors who have serious conversations with other students about different social, political, and religious views. For all students, 37% do community service or volunteer work, and at some institutions up to 50% of students say that their institution substantially contributes to developing a deepened sense of spirituality.

You may be more interested in other outcomes, such as how much time students spend in selected activities, this year interpreted by a deep learning scale that considers higher-order learning, integrative learning, and reflective learning. A chart showing the number of hours per week spent on preparing for class, working on campus, participating in co-curricular activities, and relaxing and socializing reveals that the top quartile of deep learners spend five more hours per week in preparation for class than those in the bottom quartile. About 33% of deep learners reported reading five or more books for personal enjoyment or enrichment during the school year as compared to 17% in the lower quartile. You'll find other intriguing information through this analysis of data through the added lens of what we know about deep learning.

The annual NSSE report also describes a new tool available to institutions: the NSSE Accreditation Toolkit. This kit offers ways to use NSSE information in regional accreditation processes. In the toolkit you can find student engagement results mapped on to your own regional accrediting standards.

The report is replete with examples of institutions that have developed effective practices. In his "Message from the Director" remarks and his article for *BEAMS Beat* beginning on page 7, George Kuh reports outcomes of another AAHE/NSSE project, Documenting Effective Educational Practices (DEEP). Kuh reports, for example, on two ways that DEEP schools channel student time and energy: first, they teach students how to take advantage of institutional resources and require certain students to participate in orienting activities; second, they "make available to students *what* they need *when* they need it." Practices from Ursinus College, Winston-Salem State University, California State University-Monterey Bay, and University of Texas El Paso are among those that illustrate those points.

For more about the findings from the DEEP Project, sign up for the DEEP session at the 2005 AAHE National Conference on Higher Education in Atlanta, March 17-20. A free three-hour session by practitioners and researchers from the project will go into detail about practices that you might want to adapt for your campus. See the sidebar on page 8 for more details about this opportunity and the article on page 6 for more about the conference.

Progress reports from the first BEAMS cohort indicate that you, too, are developing effective practices to address the issues of engagement and learning (see article on page 4). All BEAMS members are encouraged to share your progress with all BEAMS campuses so that we can continue to learn from one another. Use the WebCenter to let others know what you are doing.

Happy holidays to each of you and all best wishes for the New Year from your BEAMS staff!

Barbara Cambridge
Director, BEAMS

For the 2005 Cohort

2005 Cohort Plans for Spring Administration: Tips for Maximizing NSSE Participation

For institutions participating in the 2005 cohort, the upcoming NSSE administration is an integral component that serves as the foundation of your future BEAMS work. Getting the most out of a standard NSSE administration involves being proactive from the day a campus registers through the survey administration period to analyzing, sharing, and discussing the results long after students complete the survey. We encourage you to approach your NSSE administration as a three stage

process:

1. Alert key campus constituents (i.e., faculty, student leaders, campus mail staff, etc.) prior to the spring survey about NSSE and how the information can be used,
2. Actively attempt to boost response rates during the spring administration, and
3. Put the data to productive use after your results are back in mid August.

Campus contacts can strategically prepare for the spring administration in the following ways:

- Prepare a strategy for boosting response rates early (don't wait until March when the response rate may already be low).
- Make students, faculty, and staff aware that the NSSE survey is underway by including articles in the student paper, putting flyers in campus mailboxes, making announcements in class, and in other ways.

Schools that carefully plan to optimize the survey administration and design ways to act on the findings tend to be more satisfied and make more productive use of their investment and their student engagement data. For more information on ways to maximize

your NSSE administration, go to the [NSSE website](#) or contact Brian Bridges at NSSE.

Regional Meetings for 2005 Cohort Campuses. 2005 Cohort campus representatives can discuss ways of preparing for NSSE administration at one of three regional meetings planned in early 2005. The scheduled meetings are as follows:

- [NEW ADDITION] January 21, 2005, noon-3 p.m., Woodbury University, Burbank, CA: Hosted by a 2005 Cohort campus, this meeting offers a convenient location for campuses on or near the West Coast.
- February 10, 2005, 4-5:30 p.m., Jackson Marriott, Jackson, MS: This meeting is in conjunction with the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators Conference, February 9-12, 2005, at Jackson State University.
- March 17, 2005, Atlanta, GA: This regional meeting occurs before the AAHE National Conference on Higher Education and in conjunction with the pre-conference DEEP event.

BEAMS covers travel expenses for one representative from your campus working group. A campus may send additional members at its own expense. To sign up for a regional meeting, email Jason Williams, BEAMS project assistant, at jwilliams@aahe.org.

Brian Bridges to Host First BEAMS Chat on the WebCenter

Beginning in January 2005, BEAMS project staff will host a monthly online chat on the WebCenter to discuss topics important to participant work in the project.

Brian Bridges, BEAMS associate director at NSSE, will launch these chats with a discussion of the 2005 NSSE administration. Held January 13, 2005 from 3-4 p.m. EST, this online chat offers opportunities to ask administration-related questions of Brian and discuss the administration process with others in the BEAMS project. While 2005 Cohort campuses are specifically urged to join, others wishing to share experiences from past administrations are welcome to participate.

Additional chats will be scheduled each month, with topics focused on supporting your work in BEAMS. To offer ideas for future chats or volunteer to co-facilitate a chat, contact Lacey Leegwater at lleegwater@aahe.org.

Reminders for 2005 Cohort

Campus Reflections: The first Campus Reflection for the 2005 Cohort is now available on the WebCenter. A separate email has been sent with instructions for completion. Due January 14, the reflection calls for a list of campus working group members and information on how your campus is preparing for NSSE administration.

Summer Academy Reminder: 2005 Cohort campuses will attend the 2006 AAHE Summer Academy.

For the 2004 Cohort

2004 Cohort Begins Preparing for the Upcoming AAHE Summer Academy

The 2005 AAHE Summer Academy will be held July 13-17 at the Snowbird Ski and Summer Resort in Snowbird, Utah. Campuses in the 2004 Cohort will bring five-member teams, funded by the BEAMS project, to work on projects stemming from their 2004 NSSE results. Team members will work throughout the Academy to craft a realistic action plan for change. A number of resources including plenaries, workshops, designated team working time, and a range of Summer Academy “faculty” will be available to the teams to support action plan generation. BEAMS consultants will also be designated to work with groups of campuses before, during, and following the Summer Academy.

Confirmation of participation needed by the end of January. For planning purposes two documents are needed from your campus. By January 28, 2005, your campus must send a letter co-signed by a senior administrator confirming that your institution will be sending a five-member team to the Summer Academy. The second document is a registration form for the Academy that will be available to your team in early January. Due in February 18, this form asks for a list of team members, the focus of your Summer Academy project, and other information related to your Summer Academy preparation. BEAMS staff and assigned consultants will use your submitted information to provide feedback on your team composition and project focus and to plan for sessions at the Summer Academy.

NSSE Provides Interpretation Assistance for 2004 Cohort

Now that 2004 cohort schools have received all their data, NSSE staff will soon contact them to help interpret the means and frequencies, benchmarks, and engagement index in conjunction with each other. This interpretation aid will assist institutions in identifying a focus for the Summer Academy project description that will be submitted to AAHE in February. Carla Morelon, NSSE project associate, will contact schools soon to arrange these calls.

Regional meetings to support team preparation. Representatives from campuses in the 2004 Cohort have the opportunity to plan for the Summer Academy in the company of project staff and other campus representatives through a series of regional meetings. During these events, participants will discuss data interpretation, identification of a project focus, team composition, and other important tips for a successful Summer Academy experience. Upcoming regional meetings for the 2004 Cohort include

- [NEW ADDITION] January 21, 2005, 10:30 a.m. – 1 p.m., Woodbury University, Burbank, CA: Hosted by a 2005 Cohort campus, this meeting offers a convenient location for campuses on or near the West Coast.
- February 3-4, 2005, National Center for Higher Education, Washington, DC: Held in conjunction with the 2003 Cohort's Mid-year Meeting, participants can learn from experiences at the 2004 Summer Academy.
- [NEW ADDITION] February 13, 2005, 2-5 p.m., University of Central Florida, Orlando FL: As part of the Regional NSSE Users' Workshop, this regional meeting will link representatives from the 2004 cohort with other NSSE users. For more information about the workshop, see sidebar on page 6.
- March 17, 2005, Atlanta, GA: This regional meeting is being held prior to the AAHE National Conference on Higher Education and in conjunction with the pre-conference DEEP event.

BEAMS covers travel expenses for one representative from your campus working group. A campus may send additional members at its own expense. Indicate interest by selecting a meeting on your December Campus Reflection or contacting Jason Williams at jwilliams@aahe.org.

First Campus Reflection for 2004 Cohort Now Past Due

The 2004 Cohort is finishing its first campus reflection. These reports provide feedback on ways campuses are using 2004 NSSE data and preparing for the 2005 Summer Academy. Many campuses still need to submit a report, so please do so immediately. Regular reporting is important for sustaining project work and providing project staff valuable information for supporting campuses and sharing best practices. In order for your Campus Reflections to be useful to our joint work, these reports should be submitted by the appropriate due date. Late submissions delay the feedback process and inhibit cross-campus learning and support.

For the 2003 Cohort

Progress in Implementing Action Plans Reported by the 2003 Cohort

Campuses in the 2003 Cohort have made much progress in implementing action plans. While only a small portion of the campuses' fall success stories are listed in this piece, teams will report progress at the 2003 Cohort Mid-Year Meeting in February. Information from that meeting will be shared in full with other cohorts in the spring.

Building Campus Buy-in. For most campuses, work following the Summer Academy began by building buy-in from various campus constituencies. Knowing how important administrative buy-in is for a successful plan implementation, Texas A&M International University's working group scheduled an appointment with the campus president for the day after the Academy to debrief him on the experience and garner much needed support. For teams like Jackson State and the University of Puerto Rico Humacao, administrative support and prompting have been key to developing a more refined and realistic action plan once back on campus. Other institutions focused on increasing faculty, staff, and student knowledge of the team's work by holding meetings with various campus groups. For example, the CSU-Pueblo team conducted customer service training sessions for faculty and staff to increase the quality of student services. Western New Mexico incorporated faculty and adjunct training in campus technology as part of the institution's regularly held Assessment Convocation, and Kentucky State, through its Academic Success Campaign, held a summit of representatives from various student, faculty, and staff groups, including the student program Peers Empowering Peers, to discuss "improving and centralizing academic support services."

Seeking Best Practices and Securing Funding. In addition to building buy-in, many campuses have used the fall academic term to gain additional insight into promising practices or to garner financial support before plan implementation begins. To enhance steps taken at the Summer Academy, the University of Texas at San Antonio spent much of the fall exploring possible models for building strong writing, quantitative, and critical thinking skills into its curricula by visiting regional universities. The North Carolina A&T and Prairie View A&M teams have generated prospectuses for their action plans to share with donors for funding in order to support the full range of activities included in the plans. Each team will reassess funding at the start of the new year and begin implementing action plans accordingly.

Examples of Fall 2004 Outcomes. During the Summer Academy, some teams worked on projects to be fully or partially implemented in the fall. For example, UT Permian Basin implemented a "Learning Framework Course" for entering freshmen and is now exploring tools for assessing the effectiveness of the course and securing financial support for sustaining it in the spring. The Voorhees College team successfully argued for the Fall 2004 addition of honors courses in mathematics, English, history, and humanities, all of which are using the team's active and collaborative learning approach. Norfolk State put in place a number of activities identified in its Summer Academy plan including a NSU Service Learning Center and an assessment plan for the Service Learning Center and for the NSU Center for Global Education.

Common Obstacles. Many campuses shared concerns of finding time in team members' busy schedules to meet regularly. To overcome this obstacle, Fayetteville State is using technology to stay connected between face-to-face meetings;

Interested in returning for a second Summer Academy?

After last year's very successful Summer Academy, many 2003 Cohort teams approached us about returning to the 2004 Summer Academy. We are happy to announce that space will be available for some teams to return. This Academy, however, must be paid for by your institution. Applications are available online at www.aahe.org/summeracademy and are due by January 15. Space is limited, though, so get your application in early!

the CSU Fresno team is now reporting to another campus committee to build additional accountability; Pontifical Catholic adjusted its original implementation timeline to realistically reflect team members' schedules; and Adams State added more team members to share implementation responsibilities. Another obstacle faced by campus working groups was member turn-over. Some teams experienced change in project coordinators, while others lost key members of the Summer Academy team or extended campus working group. CSU, LA has worked to fill vacant posts by individually approaching campus deans about the importance of this work to the campus to build additional administrative commitment. Campuses have developed multiple strategies to keep BEAMS work on track.

Project staff are excited by all the good work begun following the Summer Academy and look forward to supporting it through campus visits, Campus Reflections, the Mid-Year Meeting in February, and the WebCenter. Please continue to report your progress so that others can learn from your work.

The 2003 Cohort's Mid-Year Meeting is Scheduled for February 2005

One representative from each 2003 Cohort campus will meet in February to discuss the team's progress toward action plan implementation. The Mid-Year Meeting will be held in Washington, DC at One Dupont Circle and the Radisson Barcelo Hotel. The meeting will begin with a reception and dinner at 5:30 p.m. on February 3rd and end by noon on February 5th.

At the Mid-Year Meeting, campuses will report progress toward action plan implementation, participate in sessions targeted to help teams overcome common obstacles, and learn about other national projects and organizations that might influence current work. Through their Campus Reflections, 2003 Cohort teams identified a range of topics for discussion including building faculty, student, and administrative buy-in; creating more collaboration across BEAMS campuses; identifying effective culturally-affirming approaches to student learning and assessment; and expanding faculty development to support action plan implementation. Representatives from the 2003 Cohort will also share with 2004 Cohort members their experiences at the Summer Academy

The BEAMS project will cover travel expenses for the designated representative. An additional member of the campus working group is welcome at the institution's expense. To make hotel reservations, call the Radisson Barcelo Hotel at (800) 333-3333 no later than January 13, 2005. This cut-off date is firm, so please call soon. Request the AAHE BEAMS Meeting to be added to our room block. A deposit will be required to hold your room; however, it will be refunded upon arrival. BEAMS will reimburse additional travel expenses following the meeting. The name of your campus's designee should be included in the January Campus Reflection.

2003 Cohort Campus Reflections

The 2003 Cohort finished its first reflection in November. A second campus reflection is now available on the WebCenter and is due January 14. A separate email was sent to the cohort outlining reporting needs. This reflection will help team representatives and project staff prepare for the February Mid-Year Meetings.

Regular reporting of progress in BEAMS is important for sustaining project work and providing project staff valuable information for supporting campuses and sharing best practices. In order for your Campus Reflections to be useful to our joint work, these reports should be submitted by the appropriate due date. Late submissions delay the feedback process and inhibit cross-campus learning and support.

General Project Information

AAHE Builds a Diverse Pool of Consultants to Support BEAMS Institutions

AAHE has invited a group of higher education experts to work with BEAMS campuses in designing action plans to improve student learning, to conduct site visits to institutions implementing action plans, and to represent the project nationally.

Some confirmed consultants include:

- James Anderson, vice president and associate provost of institutional assessment and diversity at Texas A&M University and BEAMS Advisory Council member;
- T. Jaime Chahin, dean of the College of Applied Arts at Southwest Texas State University and former chair of the AAHE Hispanic Caucus;
- Richard Chavolla, independent consultant and former associate director of the American Council on Education's Center for Advancement of Racial and Ethnic Equity;
- Estella Lopez, vice chancellor of academic affairs at Connecticut State University;
- Betty Overton-Adkins, vice president for academic affairs at Spring Arbor University and a member of the AAHE Board of Directors;
- Hazel Symonette, senior policy and planning analyst in the Office of Student Affairs at the University of Wisconsin, Madison; and
- Vasti Torres, associate professor of education and student affairs administration at Indiana University Bloomington.

This group of consultants represents diversity of experience, role, and institutional affiliation. AAHE continues to welcome others to support the wide range of projects being undertaken by BEAMS campuses. Visit the AAHE website at www.aahe.org/BEAMS for a full list of BEAMS consultants.

BEAMS consultants have begun site visits to the 2003 Cohort campuses to support successful action plan implementation. These visits will continue through the end of the 2004-05 academic year. Similar visits will be held for subsequent cohorts following their Summer Academy experience.

Campus-to-Campus Visits Available for All BEAMS Campuses

Collaboration across campus teams is a central component of the BEAMS Project. Campuses learn from each other's experiences and draw strength from others support. Currently, the project provides many opportunities for campuses to collaborate:

- Through regional meetings and Mid-Year Meetings, campus representatives meet others in the project to discuss new stages of project work, report progress, and discuss common concerns;
- At the Summer Academy, campus teams brainstorm solutions to project-related concerns, discuss common issues, and learn best practices with other cohort teams; and
- Through the WebCenter, teams can share success stories, report obstacles for feedback and support, and offer resources that are helpful to others.

Through institution-to-institution visits, campuses have an additional opportunity to collaborate with colleagues in BEAMS. Each campus has available for its use up to \$500 for one representative to visit another campus in the project. These funds can be used at any stage of the campus's work in the project. Possible purposes of the visit include

- observing structures, practices, or campus roles to learn for campus/project work;
- participating in a campus-based meeting or conference on the topic of the campus's project; and
- sharing draft of plans for feedback or critique.

A campus must notify project staff and complete a pre-visit questionnaire prior to making plans for the visit. The campus representative must also submit with its travel receipts a post-visit report outlining learning from the visit. To discuss a possible campus visit, contact Jason Williams at jwilliams@aahe.org.

NSSE Users Workshop for SACS Campuses

The NSSE Regional Users' Workshop hosted by the University of Central Florida (Orlando), Feb 13-14, 2005, provides a forum for participants to exchange ideas on their use of NSSE; become more proficient in using results for SACS accreditation self-studies and institutional improvement initiatives; communicate results to different audiences; consult with NSSE staff members; and gain insight into educationally effective practice. This is an additional opportunity for BEAMS campuses to interact with a cadre of experienced and new NSSE users, as well as NSSE staff, to further their use and understanding of NSSE data.

For more information: <http://www.iub.edu/~nsse/workshops/2005/welcome.htm>

AAHE's NCHE Offers Opportunity to Share Innovative Practices

BEAMS participants are setting the trend of thoughtful use of information in decision-making that positively affects student learning. You are, therefore, precisely who should attend the 2005 AAHE National Conference on Higher Education titled "Rallying the Trendsetters in Higher Education."

In Atlanta, Georgia, on March 17-20, you can hear Derrick Bell, activist, lawyer, teacher, and writer; Blenda Wilson, president of Nellie Mae Educational Foundation; Omar Blaik, senior vice president of the University of Pennsylvania; and James B. Hunt, former governor of North Carolina. Forums include topics like the impact of Pell Grants on American society, a journalists' roundtable on public perceptions of higher education, and meeting global needs for quality in higher education. A forum on student success and institutional effectiveness is right on topic for those of us in BEAMS. Multiple roundtables, posters, and concurrent sessions offer a wide array of topics and perspectives.

You are cordially invited to participate in the National Conference where you can meet faculty and administrative colleagues from across the country and from other countries. You can come to BEAMS gatherings but also meet new colleagues who care about the quality of student learning and the institutions that support that learning.

If you register as a single participant by February 1, 2005, you get a \$50 discount. If you register as part of a five-person team by March 1, 2005, you each receive a \$50 discount. Members of AAHE have significantly lower registration fees than non-members. For more information, visit the AAHE website at www.aahe.org/National/2005.htm. If you'd like to discuss the conference, please call Barbara Cambridge at 202-293-6440, ext. 760.

Reception for BEAMS Participants at the 2005 AAHE National Conference

All BEAMS participants attending the 2005 AAHE National Conference on Higher Education are invited to the BEAMS reception from 7:30-8:30 p.m., Friday, March 18, following the conference's Opening Reception. At the reception, you will meet BEAMS participants and project staff and learn more about each other's work in the project.

Some “DEEP” Insights into Supporting Student Success at BEAMS Campuses

A research team organized by the NSSE Institute for Effective Educational Practice at Indiana University recently completed a two-year study of 20 strong performing four-year colleges and universities through the Lumina Foundation for Education funded Documenting Effective Educational Practice (DEEP) project, a partnership between NSSE and AAHE. All the schools met two important criteria that connote student success in college. That is, they had higher-than-predicted graduation rates and higher-than-predicted scores on the National Survey of Student Engagement. Four of the institutions selected for Project DEEP are BEAMS participants. They are California State University Monterey Bay, Fayetteville State University, University of Texas at El Paso, and Winston-Salem State University.

The BEAMS institutions in DEEP are especially noteworthy because of the clear pathways they set to encourage students to participate in programs and events that help them succeed academically and socially. They intentionally teach their students early on how to take advantage of institutional resources for their learning. To ensure that students take advantage of these resources, the DEEP BEAMS schools *require* students to participate in certain activities, such as summer advising and orientation, substantive welcome-week events in the fall, and learning communities. Second, they make available to students *what* they need *when* they need it. Faculty and staff members identify students at risk and assiduously follow up with intensive advising and other mechanisms that enable students to mark their progress over the course of the first year. Some abbreviated examples illustrate how various pathways and events can add to success of learners.

Teaching Newcomers

As with other DEEP schools, BEAMS institutions send their prospective students clear messages about the institution’s mission, values, and expectations. They offer pre-college opportunities for students who need a head start in adapting to college. For example, Creating Higher Expectations for Educational Readiness (CHEER) is Fayetteville State’s summer transition program that helps students acquire the academic skills and social confidence they need to succeed in college. CHEER students receive scholarships to cover the cost of the three-credit MATH 121, Introduction to Algebra course.

Winston-Salem State University’s pathway to success starts with its First Year College (FYC). Most FYC offices and programs are housed in one building near the center of campus, conveniently placing most sources of academic support for new students under one roof. All new and transfer students with fewer than 30 credit hours must enroll in one of three new-student adjustment courses. One distinctive twist is designating certain sections for students interested in specific majors. Faculty members teaching these sections also serve as academic advisors and “mentors” for the first academic year. Student services professionals teach sections for undecided students. The FYC instructors receive pre-service training and meet every other week to discuss how the course is going and to share ideas.

California State University-Monterey Bay (CSUMB) introduces its new students, including transfers, to the flow and substance of academic and social life through the Freshman-Year Experience Seminar. Students design an Individualized Learning Plan (ILP) that guides their studies throughout the baccalaureate experience, and they are expected to periodically update the ILP to respond to their changing educational and vocational goals. One key reflection point is the required major-specific ProSeminar 300 in the junior year.

One of the University of Texas at El Paso’s signature interventions is UNIV 1301, a transition to college course taught by an instructional team of a faculty member, peer leader, and librarian. Classes are small, making it possible for students to work frequently with others and to get to know their classmates in a setting that values active and collaborative learning, the cornerstone of the UTEP experience. Instructors emphasize active-learning techniques including “open forums” and group projects. UNIV 1301 instructors, along with the peer leaders, meet with

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each student in their classes twice during the fall semester to review the student's academic progress; they typically follow up with their students the next semester to monitor their performance.

Aligning Resources with Student Needs

Showing newcomers what they must do to succeed in college is necessary but not sufficient. An infrastructure of support is also critical, including early warning systems and redundant safety nets. For example, Fayetteville State's Early Alert System depends on an intricate network of faculty, mentors, academic support units, and University College and Career Center staff to identify and assist students in academic difficulty. Faculty members teaching 100 level courses are paired with University College staff, while those teaching courses at the 200 level and above work with colleagues at the Advisement and Career Services Center to intervene when needed. Within the first two weeks of the semester, all faculty teaching freshmen-level courses receive a roster indicating the mentor (usually the instructor of the First-Year Seminar course) for each first-year student. Faculty use this information to contact the mentor and the University College to alert them about students experiencing difficulty. Mentors, in turn, contact students and determine whether additional referrals are needed. CSUMB, UTEP, and WSSU have their own effective variations of early warning systems and redundant safety nets. You can learn more about them and other informative aspects of these schools by visiting the WebCenter and reviewing the presentation by Jillian Kinzie and Jason De Sousa at the 2004 AAHE Summer Academy:

http://webcenter.aahe.org:80/chef/access/content/group/beams/Presentations%20from%20the%202004%20Summer%20Academy/Summer_20Academy_202004_20DEEP_20Kinzie_20and_20De_20Sousa.pdf

Promoting Student Success Is Much More Complicated Than This

These are just a few of the many initiatives we found at the BEAMS schools and the other Project DEEP colleges and universities that help put students on a pathway to success by involving them early and often in effective educational practices. Some of the guideposts that mark these paths are tied directly to the academic program, such as first-year seminars, regular advising meetings, and capstone courses. Others are woven into the institutions' social fabric, such as convocations that raise aspirations and celebrate academic achievement. These institutions are unmistakably intentional about periodically reminding students about the resources and services available to help them succeed. Additionally, they tailor their efforts to meet the needs of their students. Each institution sets standards according to what is reasonable, given students' educational backgrounds and aspirations, and provides the support—remedial, supplemental, or enrichment—that students need to meet these standards.

Creating pathways to success is one of a handful of integrated, complementary conditions we found operating at the DEEP colleges and universities. While we do not claim that these schools are the 20 "best" in the country, they all have in place numerous policies and practices that are worthy of emulation in other settings with appropriate adaptations. Most important, the programs and practices they offer are of unusually high quality and touch large numbers of students. We describe these noteworthy efforts more fully in *Student Success in College: Creating Conditions That Matter*, which will be available from Jossey-Bass and AAHE in Spring 2005.

George D. Kuh,
Chancellor's Professor and Director
Center for Postsecondary Research
Indiana University Bloomington

DEEP Pre-Conference Event at the AAHE National Conference

March 17, 2005, 1-4 p.m., Atlanta Marriott Marquis Hotel, Atlanta, GA

This session, entitled "DEEP Learning: Lessons from Twenty Campuses," will explore findings from DEEP, including strategies from the 20 campuses featured in a new book to be launched at the NCHE. Only the first 100 registrants will be accepted, so be sure to sign up for this meeting when you register for the AAHE National Conference at www.aahe.org/National/2005.htm.

The BEAMS Beat

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About BEAMS

BEAMS is a five-year initiative fostering the ways in which Historically Black, Hispanic-serving, and Tribal colleges and universities using National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) can develop data-based decision making and increase student engagement and learning.

BEAMS serves over 100 four-year colleges and universities from the Alliance for Equity in Higher Education. Each institution commits to analyzing the scope and character of their students' engagement in learning and to implementing well-designed action plans for improvement of engagement, learning, persistence, and success. The project offers five primary ways for campuses to move toward these institutional goals:

- Data on the student experience from the National Survey of Student Engagement
- Design of action plans at the AAHE Summer Academy for initiatives to enhance student engagement and learning
- Collegial support for implementing action plans
- Web-based support throughout project participation
- Opportunities to report nationally on campus initiatives and successes

Campuses administer NSSE at least twice during the project. Consortia of BEAMS campuses generate action plans based on NSSE data at the 2004, 2005, and 2006 AAHE Summer Academies. They interact and disseminate their learning throughout the project.



BUILDING ENGAGEMENT AND ATTAINMENT OF MINORITY STUDENTS

For more information about BEAMS visit <http://www.aahe.org/BEAMS> or the BEAMS site on the AAHE WebCenter at <http://webcenter.aahe.org/chef/portal>.

AAHE Welcomes Jason Williams to BEAMS

Jason Williams joined the BEAMS project staff as AAHE's BEAMS project assistant in November 2004. As a recent graduate of Georgetown and a native Washingtonian, his interest in public policy and the role of minority-serving institutions is an important addition to the BEAMS work. Welcome, Jason, to this exciting project!

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