

COMMITTEE MEMORANDUM

TO: Education and Student Affairs Committee, Board of Regents, State of Iowa
FROM: Diana Gonzalez
DATE: June 1, 2005 *ASN*
SUBJ: Best Practices in Student Retention Strategies at the Regent Universities

Recommended Action:

Receive the report.

Executive Summary:

In December 2004, the Education and Student Affairs Committee requested a report describing student retention strategies at the Regent universities that are considered "best practices" among peer institutions.

Existing
Environment

The Regent universities have a long history of developing and implementing retention strategies that are directed at supporting students to acquire skills that will assist them to persist to graduation. This philosophy is reflected in the institutional strategic plans and performance indicators.

Retention Rates

For the entering classes of 2003, the one-year retention rates ranged from 81.4% to 84.6% for the Regent universities. By the end of their sixth year, approximately 66% of the entering freshman classes had graduated from the Regent university at which they began.

Factors Affecting
Retention

Previous national and state studies, as well as the Regent universities' own experience, have demonstrated that the following factors contribute significantly to the retention rate:

- ◇ Student input factors of entering freshmen (high school rank, ACT scores, socioeconomic status):
- ◇ Institutional environmental factors (housing, advising, orientation, extracurricular activities, support services); and
- ◇ Academic standards factors (major field requirements, core curriculum requirements, development courses, grading practices).

ACT Study

In 2004, ACT engaged in a comprehensive study of student retention practices in post-secondary institutions. That study resulted in a report called “What Works in Student Retention?”

Best Practices Identified in ACT Study

According to the ACT report, “retention practices responsible for the greatest contribution to retention in four-year public colleges fall into three main categories:

- ◆ Learning support, including supplemental instruction, comprehensive learning assistance center/lab, reading center/lab, summer bridge programs, and tutoring programs.
 - ◆ Academic advising, including advising interventions with selected student populations, increased advising staff, academic advising centers, integration of academic advising with first-year transition programs, and centers that combine advising and counseling with career/life planning.
 - ◆ First-year programs, including freshman seminar/university 101 for credit, non-credit freshman seminar/university 101, learning communities, and integration of academic advising with first-year programs.”
-

Comparison of Institutional Practices to ACT Report

This report provides a comparison of retention practices at the Regent universities to the best practices described in the ACT report. On pages 7-30, the Regent universities present examples of their retention strategies that fit under the categories defined by the ACT study.

It is important to remember that not all of the Regent universities’ current retention practices are easily grouped into the ACT study categories or that the ACT study includes all best practices. Furthermore, retention strategies typically work in a multi-modal approach, a combination of strategies work more effectively than a single strategy.

Link to Strategic Plan:

This report addresses Objective 1.1.2 in the Board’s Strategic Plan – continue to improve efforts to recruit, enroll, and retain a qualified and diverse student population.

Background:

The ACT study identified 82 intervention strategies that contribute to retention. The survey was mailed to more than 500 four-year public colleges. The information provided in the report represents responses from approximately 45% of the four-year public colleges that were contacted.

Programs with
Greatest Impact
on Retention

The retention strategies identified on pages 7-30 are grouped around the programs with the greatest impact on retention, as described in the ACT study. It is obvious that the Regent universities use a broad array of retention strategies to provide support to their students so that they persist to graduation. In many cases, the Regent universities have developed unique retention strategies consistent with their mission and their student population, consistent with what John Gardner¹ describes as the responsibility of the institution to foster student success.

Institutional
Narratives

This report also includes brief narratives from the Regent universities (pgs. 4-6) that highlight their specific retention efforts and planned activities.

¹ Executive director of the Policy Center on the First Year of College at Brevard College.

ATTACHMENT A-1

Best Practices in Student Retention at The University of Iowa

Several of the interventions that ACT labels “best practices” for retention have been in place at The University of Iowa for decades. For example, Iowa is unusual among its peers in having a large professional advising center to serve freshmen and other special populations (open majors, premed and prelaw students). Similarly, our Writing Center is the oldest such center in the United States, and we had a residential learning community (Language House, now called International Crossroads) long before they became popular.

During the 1990s, Iowa increased its focus on retention by developing several other residential learning communities and by starting a block scheduling program called “Courses in Common.” We also started our program for recruited students who do not meet regular admission standards (IowaLink). It was also in 1995 that Iowa developed its Four-Year Graduation Plan at the request of the Board of Regents. The 45% of new freshmen who signed up for the plan in its inaugural year has grown to more than 75% in recent years and four year graduation rates have grown from an average of 33% pre-plan to 40% now.

Since 2000, however, there has been a flowering of retention programs that was spurred by the report of a task force on “Persistence to Graduation.” The central insight of the report was that graduation rates reflect two different factors. The first is the speed with which motivated students can move through the system. The University’s commitment to the Four-Year Plan through good times and bad has created an environment in which course availability is not allowed to become a factor in slowing students down. This has required creativity and commitment from departments and colleges, but the positive impact is there for all to see.

The second factor is the degree to which students who enter the system are retained. The Task Force made the important point that, at Iowa, the six-year graduation rate is mostly determined by attrition. After six years, close to 35% of an entering cohort have left Iowa permanently, setting a cap of 65% or so on our six-year rate. Once this fact was clear, we began immediately figuring out what we needed to do to decrease attrition. This focus spawned an array of special programs, each intended to affect a different segment of the student body.

Our College Success Seminar has proved to be effective in helping freshman students who are placed on probation after their first semester get back on track. The College Transition Course helps new freshmen learn the ropes and find a personal place at Iowa during their first semester. Residential Learning Communities have increased in number and now appeal to students with widely varied interests. First Year Seminars have been created to draw strong students into an understanding of research and scholarship and we have created placement tests, added new (nonremedial) courses, and begun offering supplemental instruction groups to help students do better in difficult math and science programs.

Our work on retention is not finished. In the next several years we will develop new links between Academic Advising and Career Services after both organizations move into the new Pomerantz Career Center. This will help open majors move forward with their educations and career plans. We will also be reorganizing our University Honors Program (now housed in the new Belin-Blank Honors Center) to help prevent loss of the most highly talented students who enter as freshmen. And we will continue to evaluate new initiatives to make sure that we are making progress toward our strategic goals.

ATTACHMENT A-2

Best Practices in Student Retention at Iowa State University

At Iowa State University the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost and the Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs collaborate effectively to develop and deliver a variety of programs and activities that are designed to enhance student success, retention, and graduation. This strong partnering at the central administrative level enables a holistic approach to services and programs that are well-coordinated, effective, and efficient in addressing the issues surrounding transition from high school to college, academic success, and the development of personal and career oriented life skills.

In this report the programs and activities are summarized in categories that have been developed by ACT Research and termed “Best Practices – What Works in Student Retention.” As demonstrated in the report, the retention strategies and tactics that are in place at Iowa State include all components identified as best practices by ACT, as well as some additional elements that go beyond those of ACT.

Some of the programs and activities that are noteworthy at Iowa State, that exemplify the Academic Programs and Student Affairs partnership, and that are particularly successful in enhancing student success are:

- ◆ Learning Communities, with nearly 50% participation by first year students
- ◆ The Academic Success Center, offering a comprehensive array of programs and approaches to academic and personal success
- ◆ Coordinated approaches to academic advising, career counseling, orientation, and targeted intervention
- ◆ Residence hall programs that incorporate learning and life skill development
- ◆ A continuing commitment to improving student success including the to-be-constructed Hixson-Lied Student Success Center and the recently established University Retention Task Force

ATTACHMENT A-3

Best Practices in Student Retention at the University of Northern Iowa

Though the template format for this reporting provides a convenient way to organize and encompass the various programmatic efforts focused on student retention (as named in the ACT report “What Works Best in Student Retention?” and other such reports); it may miss the mark in helping to describe longer-term cultural transformation that explains the high level of success in student retention at UNI. In a January 2005 Report titled, “One Step from the Finish Line: Higher College Graduation Rates are Within Our Reach”, the Education Trust recognized the University of Northern Iowa as an institution that has significantly higher overall graduation rates than its peers. UNI was then selected as one of twelve institutions nationally to host a study team in March 2005 whose purpose was to understand and document UNI’s unusual success in student retention and graduation rate outcomes.

The Executive Summary of the study team’s report indicates that UNI’s success in retention and graduation rates is due more to the themes that permeate the institution, guiding both long-term planning and individual student engagement than to individual programmatic efforts such as those described in the “ACT Best Practices Report”. The report refers to four broad themes of intentionality identified during the UNI visit: a commitment to planning as a guide to behavior and action, a commitment to student engagement and graduation, a commitment to engagement of faculty and staff in the vision of the institution, and a commitment to assessment. The report concluded that UNI’s uniqueness and explanation for its success in retention and graduation rates lies in the fact that the institution is “truly a learning organization” that engages the entire campus community in its vision and core values.

Though the attached template lists, as requested, many “best practice” retention activities and programs; the Education Trust report, we think, provides a more accurate explanation for UNI’s success in retention.

ATTACHMENT B – BEST PRACTICES
WHAT WORKS IN STUDENT RETENTION?

“Several retention practices at high-performing (retention and degree completion) four-year public colleges differentiate those colleges from low-performing colleges².”

ADVISING INTERVENTION WITH SELECTED STUDENT POPULATIONS

University of Iowa

College Success Seminar: A group advising intervention offered as a one semester hour, ungraded course to freshmen who are placed on academic probation after the first semester. The goal of the seminar is to examine the motivational and academic sources of the students’ failure to achieve and to provide opportunities for the students to get on track. Participants return to good standing and are retained at a higher rate than non-participants (+16% for good standing and +13% for retention, respectively.)

Academic Planning Services: This program offers academic counseling to students who are first generation, low income, have a physical or learning disability, or are minority students affiliated with the Office of Support Services Programs. Counseling focuses on University policies, study skills, problem solving for academic and personal issues, financial planning, and program planning.

Iowa State University

Students in Academic Difficulty. The most systematic intervention is with students who are identified as potentially being in academic difficulty at mid semester. The registrar collects C-, D, and F midterm grades and nonattendance notifications from instructors on the midterm list and reports this information to students and their advisers using AccessPlus. In addition to returning the midterm list, the instructor is responsible for informing the class of the basis on which midterm grades have been submitted. The purpose of midterm grades is to provide the student and adviser with a timely warning that the student’s academic performance to that point in the course may be lower than desirable. Students who receive midterms are encouraged to discuss their academic performance with the course instructor and their adviser. Advisers typically review midterm grade lists and contact students who are at particularly high risk of developing serious academic problems if midterm grades persist. Students may then be subsequently referred to the Academic Success Center or other academic support services.

Targeted Early Intervention. In some departments, new students identified as “at risk” academically prior to their enrollment at ISU (first year or transfer, identified by ACT/SAT, high school rank, or GPA) are offered assistance such as learning teams with reduced total credits, specifically selected courses (to include courses with faculty particularly known to work well with freshmen), and other academic support services. Efforts are underway to refine approaches to identifying students who are at risk of not meeting academic expectations for good standing, particularly first, and to a lesser extent second, year students. In addition, students with nonacademic problems or with academic difficulties stemming from personal reasons/situations are referred by advisers to the student counseling service.

Students with Financial Need. Students receiving financial aid who earn less than a 2.0 cumulative GPA after 4 semesters have their aid revoked. To support and retain these students, the Academic Success Center collaborates with Financial Aid whereby students can have their funds reinstated if they enter into a contract requiring them to participate in the “Journey to Success Program”.

² ACT – What Works in Student Retention, Four-Year Public Colleges

- ◇ Of the 62 students who had contracts with the Academic Success Center Fall 04, 63% (n=39) were eligible to continue with Financial Aid.
- ◇ The students in "Journey to Success" (FA/ASC) program increased their average semester GPA from 1.48 in Spring 2004 to 1.87 in Fall 2004.

First Generation Students from Iowa

- ◇ Student Support Services. Federal TRIO program designed to improve the retention and graduation rates of college students who qualify as first generation, low income, and/or students with disabilities. Students in the program receive academic and personal advising, tutoring assistance, cultural enrichment activities, and financial aid/scholarship information.
- ◇ Hixson Scholars. The Hixson Opportunity Awards program utilizes a first-year seminar, the College Student Inventory from Noel-Levitz, and the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator to assist in the early identification of students at retention risk. The multiple contacts with students assist in the transition to college and establish a positive support network with program staff and peer leaders. Hixson scholars have a 94% average first-year retention and 74% six-year graduation rate.

Students of Color. Several structured programs are offered through Multicultural Student Affairs to support and enhance the success of students of color. The Multicultural Visions Program (MVP) is a four-year scholarship and seminar program for students from Iowa. Carver Academy recognizes students of color from across the nation through a four-year scholarship program.

Non-Registered Returning Students. After the close of registration for an upcoming semester, a list is generated by college, of all students who are eligible/expected to return the following semester who have not completed the registration process. Colleges and/or departments then follow up with the non-registered students to encourage them to register and to assist them in resolving issues that may have caused them to otherwise be unable to return.

University of Northern Iowa

- ◇ Early Warning System – helps identify at-risk students
- ◇ Probationary System – limits academic loads of students in academic difficulty
- ◇ Sixty hour and no major letter – channels undecided students to academic advising
- ◇ Special Support Services Attendance report forms (TRIO) – monitors at-risk students
- ◇ Center for Academic Achievement – promotes individualized tutoring and advising
- ◇ Athletic Academic Advisor – monitors academic progress of student athletes and provides academic advising and referral for student athletes
- ◇ Minority Student Retention Specialist – provides support for minority students
- ◇ Honors Program – monitors academic performance of Honors students
- ◇ Advising Services – provides advising/programming or coordination with other student services offices for students in transition: deciding students, first-year students/transfers, students changing majors, international students, nontraditional students, students reassessing their current academic situation (probation/suspension/readmission)
- ◇ McNair Program – provides advising and academic support for McNair scholars, students from under-represented groups who are interested in pursuing graduate education

INCREASED ADVISING STAFF

University of Iowa

The Academic Advising Center (AAC) provides professional academic advising to most entering Liberal Arts and Sciences freshmen, some entering transfers, open majors, pre-professional students, and non-degree/special status students. Since FY00, AAC has increased its number of advisers by 3 FTE. All AAC advisers have either masters or doctoral degrees in student development or a relevant disciplinary area. Staff members are provided on a case load basis with a normal caseload of 300 students/adviser.

Collegiate and Departmental Advising is provided for Engineering students, early admit students in Business and Nursing, and advanced students who have declared a nonselective major or gained entry into a selective major. Colleges and large departments have professional advisers who work with students on program requirements while faculty members advise students on career-related issues. Small departments may rely entirely on faculty for advising or may hire and train graduate students to advise undergraduates.

Iowa State University

Advising Resources. The resources devoted to academic advising and student counseling are evaluated on a regular basis, and when appropriate, reallocations of resources to increase or redistribute faculty and professional advising staff are made. Over the last several years there has been a general trend to increase the number of professional advising staff members to better address non-disciplinary aspects of advising. Faculty members continue to provide advising, but their advice is more focused on career planning and disciplinary oriented advice with professional staff focusing more on the logistical and academic regulatory aspects of advising. Advisors also assist students in identifying opportunities for internships, experiential learning, and permanent employment.

Career Related Advice. Career Services Coordinators also provide a wide range of services to students within their colleges. Typical services would include workshops and individual assistance with portfolio development, resume writing, cover letters, interviewing skills, etc. Career forums which host professionals in relevant careers are common across the university. Within learning communities, career services staff also have assisted with field trips, and reviewing of students' career goals, etc.

University of Northern Iowa

- ◆ PAIR (Peer Advisors in Residence) and PEER (Career Services Peers) programs in the residence halls, Maucker Union, College of Education, College of Business Administration, College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, and College of Natural Sciences.
- ◆ The Colleges of Education and Business Administration have established college-level academic advising centers. Several academic departments, including Biology, Industrial Technology and the School of Health, Physical Education, and Leisure Services employ their own advising specialist.

COMPREHENSIVE LEARNING ASSISTANCE CENTER/LAB

University of Iowa

The **University of Iowa Writing Center** is the oldest such center in the US. It is run by the Department of Rhetoric and serves all students. The services, which are free, include an enrolled program in which students commit to two 50-minute sessions per week and an appointment system in which students can arrange for a single 30-minute session on a specific topic. The Writing Center also provides guidance on reading and listening skills. (History, Business, and Engineering have specialized Writing Centers for their students.)

The **Mathematics Tutorial Laboratory** (run by the Math Department) is available to all students. The Math Lab's goal is to support student efforts by providing an environment where they may receive one-on-one help from knowledgeable tutors. There are also computer applications and other resources to develop and enhance their understanding.

The **Gerdin Athletic Learning Center** is a comprehensive lab serving student athletes, student assistants, pep squad members and other students associated with athletics.

Iowa State University

Academic Success Center (ASC). This Center is a collection of services, programs and expertise designed to enhance student learning and academic performance. The ASC includes academic consulting for study skills, individual and group tutoring, peer led study sessions (Supplemental Instruction) and accommodations for students with disabilities.

- ◇ Academic Learning Lab. The Learning Lab is an individualized service for students to enhance skills to be successful such as time management, note-taking, reading, test-taking, test anxiety, memory, and other study-related issues. Colleges and academic departments may refer students who are struggling academically. While the focus is on academic success, a comprehensive, holistic approach is taken. A variety of handouts and assessment tools are available for students in the office and our website.
- ◇ Disability Resources. Disability Resources provides services and advocacy to nearly 800 students with documented disabilities, including learning disabilities who have registered with the office. Services available to students include: accessibility advice, referral, academic accommodation requests, technology services, educational resources and programming, and career services. The philosophy of Disability Resources is to partner with faculty and departments to ensure effective and reasonable accommodations for students.
- ◇ Psychology 131 (Academic Success Course) (35 sections annually, 850 participants). This one-credit course, offered each semester, helps students develop a variety of learning issues. The course covers topics such as study strategies, time management and budgeting.
- ◇ Supplemental Instruction (62 sections annually, 4988 participants). Student staff facilitate regularly scheduled study sessions three times a week for selected, difficult 100 and 200 level courses. Students participating in SI earn significantly higher course grades (2.69) than non-participants (2.41); the difference is maintained when controlling for entering characteristics (n = 5020 and n = 11,368 respectively). The rate of course grades C-, D, F and Withdrawals are lower for SI participants than non-participants (19% compared to 30%).
- ◇ Tutoring Services (2737 tutees, 1100 weekly tutoring groups annually). Tutoring is a centralized program to support course learning. Population specific programs utilize this centralized service such as Student Athlete Services, Women in Science and Engineering. Most tutoring occurs in consistent groups of no more than four students; tutoring sessions are held for two or three hours per week.

University of Northern Iowa

- ◇ Math Lab – provides individualized tutoring and support for mathematics
- ◇ Writing Lab – provides individualized tutoring and support for writing
- ◇ Center for Academic Achievement and Special Support Services (TRIO) – provides support for at-risk students
- ◇ Computer Consulting Center – provides technical support, consulting and instruction for students
- ◇ Reading and Study Strategies programs, workshops and free classes
- ◇ Tutoring Services, Ask-a-Tutor program
- ◇ Supportive seminars in Academic Services
- ◇ Departmental tutoring programs including Mathematics, Chemistry, Accounting and Economics

INTEGRATION OF ADVISING WITH FIRST-YEAR PROGRAMS

University of Iowa

The **Academic Advising Center** (AAC) is deeply involved in planning and staffing Iowa's first-year programs. Academic advising begins at **Orientation** and continues through a series of meetings during the student's first year. Students are assigned to an academic adviser depending on the student's area of interest and the adviser's area of expertise. Academic advising is mandatory at Iowa, which means that students must meet with their academic adviser or faculty adviser before registering for classes.

AAC also runs and staffs a number of programs for first-year students (e.g., freshmen and new transfers). **Courses in Common** is a block-scheduling program for freshmen that helps build community by grouping students in classes. The **College Transition** and **Transfer Transition** courses offer extended orientation plus counseling and advising opportunities. **IowaLink** is a special program for recruited students who do not meet regular admission standards. All these programs are described more fully elsewhere.

Iowa State University

First Year Integration. Students who are enrolled in learning communities with programmatic foci typically receive advising that is well integrated with the learning community experience. Students who are enrolled in more intensively structured programs, such as engineering have programmatic advising that is well-coupled with their academic programs and career goals. The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences is initiating a new program of coordinated interest groups for first year students that will couple advising with interest exploration. In addition there are many career exploration and disciplinary orientation elements that form integral components of first year courses.

Hixson Scholars Seminar. The one-credit Hixson Seminar is designed to provide an introduction to life and resources at Iowa State University and an orientation to the functions of the Hixson Opportunity Award Program. It is a course designed to help Hixson Award recipients adjust to college life, develop a better understanding of themselves, and develop a better understanding of their learning processes. The course provides a support system for examining difficulties associated with the first-year college experience in an atmosphere that is less formal than traditional college courses. Students meet in a large group lecture and in smaller recitation groups.

Greek Community. The Greek Community governing councils, through advising from the Office of Greek Affairs, sponsors a program for new members of the Greek Community each fall called, *Went Greek, Now What?* Eighty percent of new Greek Community members attend the four hour program and attend sessions on time management/study skills, risk management, leadership and values.

University of Northern Iowa

- ◇ The freshmen and transfer orientation program coordinates closely with Advising and Career Services, the advising centers across campus and faculty advisors to insure students have a smooth transition to the University. Students are advised and register for their first semester of classes during those sessions.
- ◇ By design the structure of advisor assignment is an advising first year experience. Advising and Career Services, in cooperation with academic departments, identifies Freshman year advisors who are assigned students during summer orientation. Specific events take place during the academic year for both students and advisors to move students into a final decision about a major before they register as a sophomore. Events such as Major Fairs and departmental group meeting days are strategically planned during the school year.
- ◇ Advising Services supports, facilitates campus-wide advising events:
 - ❖ Freshman and transfer orientation advising
 - ❖ Pre-registration Major Meeting coordination for academic departments
 - ❖ Exploring Majors Fair
 - ❖ New faculty and hall coordinator advisor training
 - ❖ Coordinates freshman advisor assignment in academic departments
 - ❖ Coordinates an Advising Council composed of faculty and staff advisors (meets 6 times/year)
 - ❖ Coordinates a Peer Advisor in Residence Program in the residence hall system

CENTER THAT COMBINES ACADEMIC ADVISING WITH CAREER/LIFE PLANNING

University of Iowa

As of Fall 2005, the **Academic Advising Center** and the **Career Center** will be co-located in the new **Pomerantz Center**. Although Academic Advising and Career Center staff work together in providing the College Transition course and in co-referring students to one another, the two offices are currently on opposite sides of the river, making it less likely that students will actually follow up on referrals. Once the offices are just a floor apart in the same building, we expect that even freshmen will begin to explore the career advising and placement resources that are available at the Career Center.

Academic Advising has also worked with the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences's **Division of Interdepartmental Studies** and with the Colleges of **Nursing** and **Pharmacy** to provide timely and appropriate advising for those many students who want to be nurses or pharmacists but who are unlikely to be admitted to these selective colleges. The goal of this collaboration is to help these students find other pathways into health-related careers.

Iowa State University

Academic, Career, Life Planning. The Academic Success Center described previously also provides coupling with services in the Vice-President for Student Affairs and Student Counseling Center to provide an integrated approach to academic/personal/career life planning through a variety of advising and counseling services. Members of the Dean of Students Office (DSO) assist students in working through issues including academic and personal concerns, personal emergencies, and how to most successfully understand university policies and procedures. DSO staff members also provide assistance in understanding the University Judicial system. Many departments and majors also include career planning and professional development components as integral elements of third and fourth year courses in the major.

University of Northern Iowa

- ◆ The Office of Academic Advising and The Career Center merged to become Academic and Career Services and is now located in the Integrated Student Services Center.
- ◆ Advising and Career Services helps students develop meaningful educational plans and skills to reach life and career goals through: academic and career development, self-exploration, decision making, and assistance in making academic and career transitions from entry to exit at UNI. Program examples: Major Decisions Workshops, Career Decision Making credit course, assigned advisors for all Undecided students, web based career decision tools, e-mail newsletter for students and advisors: *Your Advising Times*, in office Career Library, mock interviews, Cooperative Education and Internship program, resume and job search assistance, Career Fairs, Camp and Rec Fair, Spring Job and Internship Fair, National Educator Expo.

SUMMER BRIDGE PROGRAM

University of Iowa

Before 1995, Iowa offered a summer bridge program for recruited students (athletes, performing artists, and Economic Opportunity Program students) who did not meet regular admission requirements. That program was abandoned because its effect did not persist beyond the summer. Once the semester started and the special oversight stopped, most participants quickly fell out of good standing and either left or were dismissed. The bridge program was replaced in Fall 1995 by a year-long program called IowaLink. This highly successful program is described in the section marked "Other."

Iowa State University

Iowa State offers several types of intensive orientation and summer bridge programs.

Destination Iowa State. Destination Iowa State is the beginning of the experience as a college student for many first year Iowa State University students. Destination Iowa State provides important last-minute opportunities to assist the transition to college life. Faculty visit with in-coming students about academic success, there are sessions on how to navigate the campus and where to go for assistance, and there are opportunities to meet new classmates.

Summer Trial Admission. Selected freshmen who do not meet Iowa State University's class rank/test score requirements are offered the opportunity to enroll during the summer session on a trial basis. These students must complete two three-credit classes (six credits total) and achieve a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.0 with no grade below a C-. Students who meet this requirement are allowed to continue their Iowa State enrollment for the fall semester. (This program must be completed at Iowa State University.)

Summer Bridge Program. APEX (Academic Program for Excellence) offered through the Multicultural Student Affairs Office provides an opportunity for students of color to enroll in summer courses prior to the traditional start of an academic year fall semester.

University of Northern Iowa

- ◆ Summer Orientation for first-year students and parents
- ◆ Jump Start – special orientation for minority and students with special needs
- ◆ Classic Upward Bound (TRIO) – regional support program for minority and first generation high school students to encourage pursuit of degree programs
- ◆ Upward Bound Math and Science (TRIO) - state-wide support program in the math and sciences for minority and first generation high school students to encourage pursuit of degree programs

CREDIT/NON-CREDIT FRESHMAN SEMINAR/UNIVERSITY 101

University of Iowa

The **College Transition (CT)** course was first offered as a two semester hour S/F graded course in Fall 2002. About 1200 freshmen enroll each fall. Student satisfaction runs very high. Class sessions focus on topics such as defining college culture, discovering university resources, refining study skills, taking tests, identifying personal values, exploring self-motivation, and setting goals. The course is set up in small sections with a premium on classroom discussion and writing. Assignments emphasize self-reflection and improvement. Although students who take CT tend to be less well prepared for college than those who don't in terms of high school rank and ACT scores, follow-up has shown that CT takers do better than others on measures such as retention to the second year and freshman grade point average.

First Year Seminars are offered through a program organized by the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. Seminars focus on research topics chosen by faculty and are intended to help students experience the value added by attending a research university.

Iowa State University

First Year Transition. Most of the colleges and many of the departments and/or majors at Iowa State offer either required non-credit or one credit freshman seminar or orientation courses. In addition, Psychology 131 is a one-credit course, offered each semester, that helps students deal with a variety of learning issues. The course covers reading and study strategies and tactics, time management and test taking. In addition, all students are required to take a course that introduces them to the learning resources available to them through the Parks Library.

- ◆ Compared to students with similar entering academic characteristics, students enrolled in Psychology 131 had a **higher first year retention rate** than similar students not enrolled in Psychology 131 their first fall semester. (Fact Book data on retention by ACT, HS Rank categories).
- ◆ Compared to students with similar entering academic characteristics, students enrolled in Psychology 131 had a **higher four-year graduation rate** than similar students not enrolled in Psychology 131 their first fall semester. (Fact Book data on graduation rates by ACT, HS Rank categories).
- ◆ Students enrolled in Psychology 131 have significantly lower entering academic characteristics (2000 ACT 22.3 compared to 24.9, High School rank 66.3th percentile compared to 76.2th percentile) but **are retained at the same rate**.

Community of Color Orientation. A day-long program designed to help entering students of color build community with each other and the university. Additional students identify resources and increase awareness of challenges they may encounter at ISU.

University of Northern Iowa

- ◆ Academic Services offers a non-credit free "Effective Study Strategies" and Speed Reading course.
- ◆ Strategies for Academic Success is a study strategies course offered as an elective and targeted for at-risk students.

RECOMMENDED COURSE PLACEMENT TESTING

University of Iowa

The University of Iowa requires that all students take an online **math placement** test before coming to Orientation. The University also offers an online **language placement** test for all students wishing to continue in a language that they studied in high school. For students wishing to pursue a science program that requires chemistry, we require a **chemistry placement** test, also online. The goal of all these placement tests is to encourage students to enroll in the correct level of their college course, avoiding levels that are either too easy or too difficult. Placement testing is used for placement only, not for exemption or course credit.

Iowa State University

Course Placement. As a routine component of orientation, students take placement assessments in math, English, and foreign languages, as appropriate for their proposed curricular objectives. The results of these placement assessments are used to advise students on appropriate initial course registrations in the respective subject areas.

University of Northern Iowa

- ◆ The Modern Languages department uses placement testing for language courses.
- ◆ ACT scores are used to determine placement for mathematics and composition courses.

PERFORMANCE CONTRACTS FOR STUDENTS IN ACADEMIC DIFFICULTY

University of Iowa

The University of Iowa does not have a formal program of performance contracts, although contracts may be used by individual colleges on a case by case basis for determining whether a student may return from dismissal early or may receive retroactive withdrawal from previous coursework.

Iowa State University

Academic Probation. Students are placed on academic probation status as a warning that their academic progress is not satisfactory and that they should take steps to improve their academic performance to avoid dismissal from the university. Students who are placed on academic probation are directed to seek assistance in academic improvement from such sources as academic advisers, instructors, the Student Counseling Service, and the Academic Success Center. Students who do not perform at a satisfactory level while on academic probation may be dismissed from the university for academic reasons.

Students dismissed from Iowa State for academic reasons may apply for reinstatement using a set of established procedures. Students who are reinstated must accept the requirements stipulated by the college's Academic Standards Committee, including submitting a plan for academic success that identifies the causes of the poor academic performance and demonstrates the actions that the students has taken to avoid or eliminate those causes.

Performance-Based Scholarships. Students whose scholarships require the student to maintain a certain grade point average may enter into a contract with the Academic Success Center to meet with academic consultants and/or enroll in Psychology 131 (Academic Success Course). First-year and other classifications of Hixson Scholars who are unable to attain a 2.00 cumulative grade point average meet with staff and design a semester plan for academic achievement that includes determination of academic obstacles, regular meetings, grade updates, and goal planning.

University of Northern Iowa

- ◆ Performance Contracts may be used in Student Support Services, the Center for Academic Achievement, or by the Athletic Academic Advisor.
- ◆ The Committee on Admissions and Retention determines academic performance expectations on an individual basis when a student is readmitted after suspension.
- ◆ Students on probation are required to meet a minimum GPA standard.

RESIDENCE HALL PROGRAMS

University of Iowa

The mission of **Residence Life Programs** is to enhance the academic experience of residents by providing critical learning opportunities not available in the classroom. Residence Life Programs champions educational opportunities and is committed to preparing its students to be leaders in an ever-changing, diverse society. Based on a needs assessment model, residence hall programs emphasize social interaction and academic and career explorations. The programs presented focus on educationally-purposeful activities that address three key areas: academic achievement/career development; personal development; and social development programming emphasizes an experiential approach and recognizes the fact that everyone is responsible for his or her own lifestyle and actions.

Iowa State University

Integrated Residential Academic Experience. Living on campus at Iowa State University is an integrated learning experience. We work to help students gain leadership experience, community awareness, and, of course, academic achievement. Supporting the academic mission of Iowa State University is a task the Department of Residence does not take lightly. The goal is to provide students with the tools they need to make the most of their academic experiences at Iowa State University, and opportunities such as learning communities and resident academic programs are available to all resident students. Residence hall programs include residential learning communities, supplemental instruction, computer labs, tutoring, support staff, a comprehensive website and map of all campus academic resources, and multicultural support groups.

University of Northern Iowa

- ◆ Super Six – a program where staff focus on the first six weeks of fall semester to help a new student feel connected to their community and to the institution
- ◆ Shared Space Agreements – new roommate pairs are required to fill out a “roommate agreement” and houses are required to fill out a “house agreement” outlining common expectations/behaviors, etc.
- ◆ PAIRs – Peer Advisors in Residence – provide student-to-student advising. Students are better informed about academic matters at the institution
- ◆ 2-Year Advantage – Students can sign a two year contract which “freezes” room and board rates for two years, while still having flexibility in choices for the second year.
- ◆ UNI residence halls have a strong emphasis on community with the expectation that staff is available to students.
- ◆ Dining programs offer a variety of serving venues and choices to meet the wide range of interests and needs for today’s college students.

EXTENDED FRESHMAN ORIENTATION FOR CREDIT

University of Iowa

The **College Transition** course described previously functions as an extended freshman orientation and is, in fact, collaboratively offered by the Academic Advising Center and the Office of Orientation Services. Among the many activities that are orientation-like, students work in groups to visit important campus resources. They also receive an introduction to the Library and to the Career Center. Especially in the first few weeks of class much time is spent discussing the ways in which college is different from high school and providing students with experiential activities that will help them break the ice about visiting a professor or attending cultural and social events on campus.

In addition to orientation, however, the course also provides students with academic strategies for note-taking, high-level studying, matching study methods to testing methods, and academic problem solving. Our goal is that students will leave the course knowing the ropes on campus and having adjusted their high school study methods to the new rigors of college.

Iowa State University

First Year Seminar and Interest Groups. At Iowa State this occurs via for-credit and non-credit freshman seminar courses that are typically linked to the college, department, or major. The first year student interest groups that are being initiated are also a form of extending orientation into the first semester and beyond.

University of Northern Iowa

None.

ACADEMIC ADVISING CENTER

University of Iowa

The **Academic Advising Center** (with about 35 professional advisers) is the advising home for most freshmen and many transfers until they are ready to be switched to major-department advising in the sophomore or junior year. AAC also advises pre-law and pre-medicine students (as an adjunct to their department advisers) throughout all four years.

Each student advised at AAC is assigned to a specific adviser, based on the student's declared major. Because advising is mandatory at Iowa, each student must meet with his or her adviser before registering for the next semester. But since advising is more than registration, students are encouraged to develop an ongoing relationship with their adviser. Advisers typically recommend 2-3 appointments each semester during which they talk with students about adjustment to college, study skills and habits, majors, course selection, and career exploration. The University of Iowa is unusual among its peers in supporting a professionally staffed central resource.

Iowa State University

Advising Structure. All colleges and most departments have either a formal academic advising center or academic advising coordinator as a stand alone office or as an integrated part of a more comprehensive undergraduate programs office. The University Academic Advising committee provides a forum for the discussion and resolution of advising issues, as well as the dissemination of information about successful advising practices.

University of Northern Iowa

- ◆ Advising Services coordinates and facilitates three areas:
 1. University-wide advising
 2. Advising for students in transition (orientation advising, undecided students, nontraditional students, students reassessing their academic situation)
 3. Majors/Careers: Students deciding, changing, adding/dropping majors, minors and certificates
- ◆ Advising Services develops relationships with faculty and staff to enhance referrals for students in academic need. Advising Services serves as a safety net for all students and is a resource for advisors in all disciplines.
- ◆ The Colleges of Education and Business Administration have their own advising centers.

LEARNING COMMUNITIES

University of Iowa

Iowa offers eight **Residential Learning Communities** (RLC) in which freshmen may choose to live with students who share their academic and career interests. These include: Honors, International Crossroads, Women in Science and Engineering, Men in Engineering, Business and Entrepreneurship, Health Sciences, Performing Arts, and Iowa Writers. Although all students living in residence halls have an "RA" (resident assistant) on their floor to provide programming intended to help students adjust to college, RLCs offer additional mentoring, programming, faculty contact, and social experiences. Analysis of retention data indicates that living in an RLC improves first year retention by 8.7 percentage points even when high school preparation (HS rank and ACT) is factored out.

Students who do not choose a RLC may still participate in a less structured learning community by signing up for **Courses in Common**. This is a block-scheduling program in which small groups of students take two or three courses together. For example, they may be scheduled for common sections of rhetoric, psychology, and introduction to Islam.

Iowa State University

Learning Community Organization. Learning communities were first established at Iowa State in 1995 and currently there are almost 50 learning communities and nearly 47% of our entering first-year students participate. At Iowa State a learning community is a small group of students who generally take two or three courses together and who may live together (or near each other) in the same residence hall. Almost one-third of the learning communities offer a residential living environment for their students, and over 130 upper-division students are employed as peer mentors to work with students in the learning communities. Peer mentors organize out-of-class activities, ranging from study groups to social events. Learning and fun! Students get involved with a cohesive, supportive group, but not exclusively - learning communities are just one part of the total college experience.

Learning communities are effective. Students in learning communities:

- ◆ reported greater satisfaction with the overall quality of instruction, overall quality of classmates, and overall experience at Iowa State,
- ◆ earned significantly higher first-term GPAs than non-LC students,
- ◆ have six-year graduation rates that are nearly 15% higher than non-learning community students,
- ◆ were more likely to remain in college after one, two, and three years at Iowa State (6 to 9% higher first year retention), and
- ◆ reported greater satisfaction with: support, encouragement, or advice from faculty; opportunities to interact closely with faculty; opportunities to work collaboratively with other students; and opportunities to develop or participate in study groups.

University of Northern Iowa

We piloted, over three years, a learning community model with three linked courses and an attached student support component. This required considerable attention to student scheduling and faculty effort to work together in course design and instruction as well as the support of our student services colleagues. We ran four control and four treatment groups (classes) each semester during three semesters. The result was no statistically significant difference in retention. We concluded that other factors at work at UNI likely make this less critical in our environment than it obviously is at other universities.

The Honors program provides a learning community for Honors students.

SUPPLEMENTAL INSTRUCTION

University of Iowa

Supplemental Instruction (SI) is a technique in which undergraduate students meet in voluntary, cooperative, peer-assisted learning groups. It is typically used to help students in difficult science and math courses. In SI, undergraduates who were previously successful in the course are trained to be SI facilitators. Facilitators do not teach the course material, but rather help students correct group misconceptions, explore study skills, and keep the group on task. In other words, SI facilitators help students teach one-another, making the learning process active rather than passive.

Supplemental Instruction is used at Iowa in a variety of Chemistry and Biology classes that are required for engineering and pre-health science students. Results from Fall 2004 indicate that students who participate in SI are enthusiastic about the benefits of the program (ratings of 4.75 and above out of 5) and attend in large numbers. In terms of outcomes, grades for SI participants averaged about .40 grade points above grades of those who did not attend.

Iowa State University

Supplemental Instruction (SI) is a nationally recognized academic support program offering free, regularly scheduled study sessions for selected difficult 100-200 level courses. SI sessions are facilitated by "SI Leaders," undergraduate students who have previously taken the course and demonstrated academic competency in the subject area.

Key Elements of SI at Iowa State

- ◆ SI provides an opportunity for students to learn how-to-learn while learning what-to-learn
- ◆ Participation in SI is voluntary, free-of-charge, and open to all students in the course
- ◆ SI leader attends all lectures for targeted course
- ◆ SI leader is trained in group facilitation methods and general learning techniques
- ◆ SI program is supervised by a trained professional staff member from the Academic Success Center
- ◆ The program is only offered in classes in which the academic department supports SI
- ◆ SI sessions begin the 2nd week of classes after students have given input as to when sessions will be scheduled
- ◆ The SI leader facilitates and encourages the group to process the material rather than acting as an authority figure who lectures to participants
- ◆ Students participating in SI earn significantly higher course grades (2.69) than non-participants (2.41); the difference is maintained when controlling for entering characteristics (n = 5020 and n = 11,368 respectively)
- ◆ The rate of course grades C-, D, F and Withdrawals are lower for SI participants than non-participants (19% compared to 30%)

University of Northern Iowa

- ◆ 170:050 Career Decision Making – Assists students with the process of self-assessment, discovering and declaring a major and matching majors with careers and experiential opportunities.
- ◆ Academic Services provides supplemental instruction in selecting Liberal Arts Core courses. These are announced in the class with voluntary participation.

TUTORING PROGRAM

University of Iowa

Free Tutoring Labs and Tutoring Programs: University of Iowa Writing Center; Math Lab; Statistics Lab; Engineering Tutoring Program; College of Engineering Writing Center; Business Writing Center; Spanish Writing Center; History Writing Center; Computer Science Help Lab.

New Dimensions in Learning: Offers free tutoring to students who are first generation, low income, have a physical or learning disability, or are minority students affiliated with the Office of Support Services Programs.

Tutor Referral Service: Puts students wishing to hire private tutors in contact with qualified upperclass and graduate students.

See Also Supplemental Instruction: previous section.

Iowa State University

Tutoring Program. Iowa State provides quality tutoring for the majority of undergraduate courses. We offer both small group tutoring, which consists of 2-4 students, and individual tutoring. Tutors, hired for both their knowledge and ability to communicate, work with students to identify problem areas and misconceptions about the course material, provide frequent feedback, and work towards creating self-motivated, independent students. Over 2700 students work with a tutor weekly in 1100 groups annually.

Students opt to get a tutor for a variety of reasons ranging from academic survival to gaining a competitive edge in their classes. We understand that and we also understand cash flow is often a concern. We believe the low cost of tutoring at Iowa State is responsive to this concern.

University of Northern Iowa

- ◆ Student Support Services and the Center for Academic Achievement offer tutoring services in a variety of academic areas as needed.
- ◆ Math Lab
- ◆ Writing lab
- ◆ Professors provide individualized tutoring for students who need additional academic support
- ◆ Reading Strategies programs, workshops and free classes
- ◆ Tutoring Services, Ask-a-Tutor program and Supportive seminars in Academic Services Departmental tutoring programs including Mathematics, Chemistry, Accounting and Economics.

READING CENTER/LAB

University of Iowa

Although Iowa does not have a stand-alone reading lab, the tutors in the UI Writing Center are available to help with reading. For example, to help a student better participate in class discussion, a Writing Center tutor might help the student tackle a reading assignment by assigning a hypothetical response paper in which the student is asked to organize the reading content and later discuss it with the tutor. Students can also work on comprehension by reading, writing about, and discussing short articles from the magazines or books in the Writing Center with their tutors.

Iowa State University

Learning Skills Development. Psychology 131 is a one-credit hour course dealing with learning issues as well as a variety of reading and study strategies and tactics from time management to test taking. It is offered each semester. A special section is available for returning adult students. Class size is limited to 20 students to allow for group interaction as well as individual attention. Psychology 131 is offered fall and spring semesters. Class topics include: Time, Memory, Reading, Notes, Tests, Diversity, Thinking, Writing, Relationships, and Health.

University of Northern Iowa

- ◆ Reading assistance is provided by Academic Services which includes one-on-one assistance, workshops, and peer assistance in reading and study strategies.

OTHER

University of Iowa

- ◇ Beginning in 1995, Iowa began the **IowaLink** program, a year-long intervention intended to provide skills training, mentoring, and oversight for recruited students who are not regularly admissible but whom we believe can succeed at Iowa. These students include student-athletes, musicians, dancers, and other performing artists, and economically disadvantaged students who show academic promise. IowaLink teaches students how to approach university work in an academic seminar and provides contextualized practice through a modified supplemental instruction program. The success of the IowaLink program can be measured by a first-year retention rate that exceeds that of the overall student body.
- ◇ **Online@Iowa** is a one semester hour course (graded S/F) that is intended to teach students the basics about using Iowa's electronic resources. This course has been recently revised by our Academic Technologies group and serves both to introduce students to content and to reinforce university policies about appropriate use, intellectual capital, and other legal and ethical issues involving technology. Because many resources for students are now on-line, we believe that the Online@Iowa course helps freshmen begin to take responsibility for their own learning and problem solving.

Iowa State University

University Retention Task Force. A Presidential University Retention Task Force has been established and broadly charged with gathering and analyzing additional data regarding student retention and academic success and recommending approaches to enhance student retention and success.

Subject Area Help Rooms

- ◇ Economics Help Room
- ◇ Math Help Room, 449 Carver Hall
- ◇ Physics:
Physics 101, 111, 112, 19 Physics Hall
Physics 221, B54 Physics Hall
Physics 222, 83 Physics Hall
- ◇ Accounting/Finance Help Room, 2137 Gerdin Business Building
- ◇ Chemistry Help Room, 2112 Gilman Hall
- ◇ English Writing Center, 306 Ross Hall
- ◇ Foreign Language Resource Center, 312 Pearson Hall
- ◇ Sociology Help Room, 120 East Hall

Writing Center. The Iowa State University Writing Center's goal is to help students succeed. It is placed where students can receive help with writing assignments in one-on-one session(s) and small-group session(s). The Writing Center is free and open to ALL ISU students. It is not just for English majors; however, only papers written for English department assignments will be accepted.

The Center has writing tutors who can help: brainstorm ideas for a paper; improve organization and use of detail; learn proofreading techniques; build resume and business writing skills; document sources properly; improve research and general writing skills.

The Writing Center staff will not proofread papers; it will offer suggestions and advice on proofreading techniques. We cannot guarantee an "A" on every paper, but we will help students improve their writing skills. Students are expected to prepare questions for the tutor to address and bring the assignment sheet.

Multicultural Student Affairs (MSA) and Multicultural Liaison Officers (MLO). In collaboration with the student services personnel in the Division of Student Affairs and the MLOs in each college, MSA provides and shares leadership in the holistic development of students of color. The following is a list of services and programs related to retention:

- ◆ Welcoming new students of color and helping them make transitions to ISU, e.g. Community of Color Orientation (COCO), Student of Color Convocation (SOCC), Student of Color Overnight Retreat (SOCOR), and Education Open House and Dine with MLO in the College of Education;
- ◆ Advocating and providing assistance for students with their academic, social, cultural, financial, and personal difficulties, e. g. assistance for tutoring cost, emergency loans, dinner discussions with campus leaders, MSA monthly outings, Friday Nites @ Clyde's;
- ◆ Matching students mentors, e.g. MSA Peer Leaders, ALANA Ambassadors in the College of Education;
- ◆ Getting feedback and information on diversity related issues, e.g. Community of Color Town Meetings;
- ◆ Referrals for students to get involved in development and leadership opportunities, e.g. NCORE/ISCORE Project (National Conference on Race and Ethnicity/Iowa State Conference on Race and Ethnicity), Multicultural Leadership Summit, Big XII Leadership Conference, MAASU Conference (Midwest Asian American Students Union);
- ◆ Providing students with scholarship and internship opportunities.

Greek Community. The Greek Community has 50 chapters, all having individual scholarship programs for their members. The Greek Community GPA is consistently higher than the ISU Undergraduate GPA. The Greek Community governing councils sponsor an Academic Recognition night each semester. Approximately forty percent of the Greek Community students attend. Students nominate professors for recognition (20-40/semester). Chapters are recognized for top GPAs, most improved GPAs and outstanding academic programming.

Chapter scholarship programs include:

- ◆ Executive Officer responsible for scholarship programming
- ◆ Study groups for similar majors
- ◆ Customized scholarship programs for individual members below membership grade requirements
- ◆ Incentives and recognition for Dean's List, Honors, Most Improved GPAs
- ◆ Collaboration with the Academic Success Center
- ◆ GPA requirements to hold leadership positions

University of Northern Iowa

In a January, 2005 Report titled, "One Step from the Finish Line: Higher College Graduation Rates are Within Our Reach", the Education Trust recognized the University of Northern Iowa as an institution that has significantly higher overall graduation rates than its peers. UNI was then selected as one of twelve institutions nationally to host a study team in March, 2005 whose purpose was to understand and document UNI's unusual success in student retention and graduation rate outcomes. The study team concluded that UNI's success in retention and graduation rates is due more to the themes that permeate the institution, guiding both long-term planning and individual student engagement than to individual programmatic efforts such as those described in the "ACT Best Practices Report". The report refers to four broad themes of intentionality at UNI: commitment to planning as a guide to behavior and action, commitment to student engagement and graduation, commitment to engagement of faculty and staff in the vision of the institution, and commitment to assessment. The report concluded that UNI's uniqueness and explanation for its success in retention and graduation rates lies in the fact that the institution is "truly a learning organization" that engages the entire campus community in its vision and core values. (See attached Education Trust Report Executive Summary).

Though the attached template lists, as requested, many "best practice" retention activities and programs; the Education Trust report, we think, provides a more accurate explanation for UNI's success in retention.

- ◇ Program of Study provides an on-line planning tool for students and advisors
- ◇ Reduction in LAC from 47 to 45 credit hours
- ◇ Library Orientation is offered for all interested students
- ◇ Multicultural Coordinating Committee provides leadership for retention activities for students of color
- ◇ Liberal Arts Core (general education program) course enrollments are monitored to insure consistent course availability
- ◇ A Capstone course in the Liberal Arts Core has been revised and expanded.
- ◇ Advising Services provides:
 - ❖ *Referral Resources* used by the campus community for appropriate referrals
 - ❖ *New Student Handbook* and *Transfer Handbook* used by first year students
 - ❖ Faculty Web Advising Guide
- ◇ Academic Services
- ◇ Assessment activity focused on student satisfaction and needs assessment
- ◇ "Students First" orientation, which considers programs, services and processes from the student point of view
- ◇ Efforts to track and increase student employment on campus
- ◇ Concerted effort to get student services on-line

PLANNED ACTIVITY

University of Iowa

- ◆ The Academic Advising Center is beginning to talk about a new course for the sophomore year that focuses on choice of major and career planning. Iowa does not put pressure on students to choose majors right away. As a consequence, about 40% of new freshmen enter with an “open major.” One purpose of a sophomore course would be to help students find majors that suit their interests and abilities. A second purpose of the course would be to help all students link their interests and majors to careers and help them begin to plan for internships and eventual job searches or for applying to graduate school.
- ◆ Although no firm plans have been made about the form of the class (face-to-face versus online), we hope that bringing Academic Advising and the Career Center together in the new Pomerantz Center will encourage collaborations that make career planning part of the four-year experience rather than something that is left for the senior year (or even later).

Iowa State University

New Student Success Center. A new Hixson-Lied Student Success Center is being planned and construction will be completed in early 2007. The new facility will include academic resources for all students and some that are designated for use by student athletes. The center will include academic counseling, tutoring, testing, study, and meeting facilities as well as a resource library and computer labs.

Greek Community. During Fall 2005 the Greek Community governing councils and Office of Greek Affairs is expanding the new member program *Went Greek, Now What?* to include programming for house directors, chapter advisors, chapter corporation boards, emerging leaders and graduating seniors (*Graduating Greek, Now What?*).

University of Northern Iowa

- ◆ Integrating Academic Services, Center for Academic Achievement and Student Support Services in the East Gym after renovation.