1) **Introduction**

2) **Prompt One**

   How can we foster engagement with new and returning students to ensure they stay connected with the resources they need to be successful in their academic goals?

   a. **Staff Approach and Student Needs**
      i. What can individuals do?
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      i. What can individuals do?
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      i. What can individuals do?
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3) **Prompt Two**

   How can we identify and support students who are in danger of failing, going on academic probation/dismissal, and/or dropping out?

   a. **Staff Approach and Student Needs**
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4) **Facilitators and Note Takers**
Introduction

As part of SCC’s first annual summer workshop series, fifty-seven classified staff members gathered together with administrators and faculty members to discuss possible ways in which we can contribute to the success of SCC students. We broke into seven groups, each with roughly six participants, one note taker, and one facilitator. Each group was given two prompts. Prompt one asked, “How can we foster engagement with new and returning students to ensure they stay connected with the resources they need to be successful in their academic goals?” Prompt two asked, “How can we identify and support students who are in danger of failing, going on academic probation/dismissal, and/or dropping out?” Four themes emerged from the discussion: staff approach and staff needs, information and resources, programs and services, and orientations, workshops, student groups, etc. Some of the responses focus on things that individuals can do, while other responses focus on things that SCC, as an institution, can do to help improve student success. The following report is intended to reflect the comments, ideas, and suggestions offered by the participants in this charrette. We encourage all SCC employees to take advantage of this resource guide.
PROMPT ONE

How can we foster engagement with new and returning students to ensure they stay connected with the resources they need to be successful in their academic goals?

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A. Staff Approach and Student Needs

What can individuals do?

1) “Many of us are the first point of contact for students – if [students] aren’t greeted warmly, they may never come back.”
   a. “A welcoming smile helps, eye contact—connecting the technological part with the human part is important.”
   b. “Be kind, compassionate, and accommodating.”
   c. “Be non-judgmental, aware, and patient.”
   d. “Listen—validate feelings. Be emotionally available.”
   e. “If they see that you care, they will come back.”

2) “Ask [students] questions to find out how to help them.”
   a. “It’s sometimes surprising what students don’t know.”
   b. “It needs to be safe to ask a question, always.”
      “Lots of students who were incarcerated are afraid to ask questions.”
   c. “New versus returning may have different needs.”
   d. “Single parents need specific information.”
   e. “How do we deal with irate students?”
   f. “Approach students who look lost.”

3) “Help students help themselves.”

4) “Call to find information instead of sending student away.”

5) “Walk students to different department, if possible.”

6) “Remember names; check in with students.”
   “Say ‘hi, I remember you;’ it lets students know they are recognized and welcome.”

7) “Build relationships with others [colleagues] in a professional/business way and then give them the opportunity to do something fun, relaxing together to strengthen those relationships.”
8) “Keep in mind that the person you are dealing with may be homeless, desperate, trying to get out of a bad situation.”
   “Tell students to let professors know that there are issues (homeless, for example).”

9) During the most stressful times of year (first week of the semester and during finals), I have a small dish of candy on the counter. It helps ease tensions when stressed students (or faculty!) come in. Word to the wise – get hard candies, because people are more likely to take only one, and the supply will last longer. And it’s less likely to feed the office staff’s collective chocolate addiction.

10) Give students options if the answer seems to be “no.” If their course substitution is denied, tell them they can try submitting a syllabus or more thorough outline of the course for the faculty member to consider. If the class they’re trying to get into is full, look at a schedule with them or tell them to see what else is required in their major that they could maybe take instead. Sometimes the answer really does have to be “no,” but once you’ve worked here for long enough, you start to learn when there are alternative ways of getting to what the student needs.

B. Information and Resources – From Us to Them

**What can individuals do?**

1) “Know the college (so you can share)”
   a. “Staff needs to learn where everything is around campus. Using primary landmarks can help to show students where to go. Murals on buildings might help to identify those places.”
   b. When we don’t know the resources, “it’s hard to help students.”

2) “Know your area (so you can guide)”

3) “Connect on behalf of students (make a phone call and help students make connections)”

4) “The buck stops here!”
   a. “Help a student outside your description.”
   b. “Walk with students (or have a map ready at hand if you can’t leave your position)” when “we don’t have the answer” to their question.
   c. “Tell students if they don’t get the answer they need to come back.” “Walk [students] through…our website…”
d. “We need to help students understand how to fill out the application online.”
e. “Students need more verbal help. They aren’t used to reading a lot of handout information—Learning curve from high school where everything was done for them.”

5) “Connect students to the expectations of the school they want to transfer to or of the career they are interested in.”
   “Get students connected to career goals.” — CAREER CENTER

6) “Students often take the wrong classes and need help selecting them.”
   “During the first week of the semester, print a copy of the class size report each morning. When students come by saying they couldn’t get into a class, this makes it easier to steer them to one with open seats.” (In division offices, etc.)

7) “Give students better explanation regarding DROP issue around payments.”
   “Many students don’t know what is expected of them,” regarding payments, drops, etc.

8) “One of our tutoring labs has a small supply of ‘free’ school supplies for students: pens, pencils, scratch paper, folders, those calendars you get in the mail soliciting donations, etc. Most of the faculty and staff in the division know about it, so they’ll bring things by when they clean out their offices at home, for example.”

What can the institution do?
1) We need “Better online tools”
   a. Social media
   b. Videos
   c. Live chat
   d. Twitter
   e. Online assessment
   f. DE has some good information about what to expect in an online class (http://www.scc.losrios.edu/online/what-to-expect/). We have a lot of online classes, and faculty frequently comment that students are unprepared for what an online course requires. We’ve added this link to the very top of the web page showing the schedule of orientations for online classes, so that students can’t help but see it when they look up their class’s information.
2) “An appointment reminder system for students would help.”

3) Cheat sheet, handouts, maps, etc.
   a. “Getting started’ brochure.”
      i. “Triage is easiest when resources are right at hand.”
      ii. “Library has one” – a handout that gives details about the campus
   b. “Having handouts and online help targeted to specific groups (new, reentry, etc.)”
   c. “Everyone should have access to a resource list (medical, housing, etc.).”
      “Michael Poindexter could put together an accurate resource list to be distributed around campus.”
   d. “Have a staff directory with phone number and job descriptions so you could send a student directly to a person you know.”
      “We have a spreadsheet listing all full-time faculty phone numbers, email addresses, and office hours posted outside the division office that student can refer to. People will often take a photo of it with their phone to save the information.”
   e. “We’ve created a set of flyers to get students steered into the right major/career path. There is a flyer for each discipline in the division.”
      (See the Business Division Office for more information.)
   f. “We’ve created another set of flyers with a suggested sequence of courses for each major in the division. It takes into account prerequisites, whether courses are offered every semester or only once/year, and tries to create an even unit load across four semesters.” (See Sarah Eyanson for more information.)
   g. “We post the start/end/drop dates outside the division office and in our Faculty Information Sheet (for faculty to include in their syllabi). We’ve started adding a row underneath called ‘What this means for me.’ For example, the row under ‘Last Day to Drop Without Notation on Record’ says, ‘If you drop after this date, you will get a W on your transcript. This could affect Financial Aid, etc.’”
   h. “Use the ‘Community Resources’ booklets put together by CalWorks and flyers about campus resources (Tutoring via LRC, Student Services Resources and Programs via the PIO, etc.) to create a bulletin board in a high-traffic area. Students can anonymously get information on resources they may need.”
   i. “Ask for posters from different offices that advertise their services (SCC 411, Career Center, Library, Transfer Center, etc.) and post them in
classrooms. You’ve got a captive audience if the lecture is boring and there are no windows in the room.”

j. “Also have a small table outside the division office with copies of flyers from around campus. The Transfer Center is really good about sending us flyers for their various workshops. We also have a couple of flyers created with feedback from our advisory committees that give advice for getting through the job hunt process and on what employers look for in good (or bad) employees.”

k. “The room numbering in our building is confusing. We’ve created directional signs and tape them up by each of the entrances and staircases at the start of each semester. The header reads ‘LOST?’”

l. “The course substitution process is very cumbersome and inconvenient to students.” Better instructions for this process are needed.

4) “Create a list serve or online system to share problems between departments and offer solutions.”

C. Programs and Services

What can the institution do?

1) “Have a place for students to go where they can get info…”

   a. “Touch screens in kiosks around campus to facilitate completing tasks instead of always sending students to B153.”
   b. “Need more signage on campus.”
   c. “College hour – announcements in the quad (SAC).”

2) Promote the Career Center more effectively

3) More library resources to “help students learning how to use computers.”

4) “Make better use of existing resources.”

   a. High School outreach
   b. Summer success
   c. 411
   d. Mentors
   e. Student ambassadors

5) “Mental health resources need to be more readily available.”
“We are on the front lines with mentally ill students (and homeless people, who are not students).”

6) “Just have at least one day each week (or ½ Saturday) when services are offered past 6:00pm. Maybe M/T or W/T would work.”

7) “Increase staffing, decrease bureaucracy.”
   a. “How do we deliver quality service with our current limited staff.”
      i. “Staffing ability to complete iSEPs is negatively impacted by limited staffing.
      ii. “PM classes have been cut.”
   b. “We need to learn how to balance the loads of paperwork with face-to-face service in doing our jobs and helping students.”
   c. “Need longer hours for counselors, especially at West Sac and Davis” because “counseling is frustrating for our students — hard to get appointments,” and “not just during the day.”
      i. “Use Google Hangout for counseling”
      ii. “Maybe have live chat hours for general questions.”
      iii. “3CMeNow – videoconferencing”
   d. “We need a mental health counselor.”
   e. “Financial aid — accessibility lessened when ATB was discontinued.”

8) “Open design student services — rather than filtering through counseling.”
   We need to be aware of possible problems created when “Admissions and Records separates from Financial Aid,” and find solutions.

9) “Reintroduce the SARS early alert system year after year so faculty members are more accustomed to using it.”

10)“Faculty could add structure to office hours, possibly do drop-ins for issues taking 10 minutes or less, and require appointments for more in-depth issues.”

D. Orientations, Workshops, Student Groups, etc.

What can individuals do?
1) Staff and Faculty
   “Suggested FLEX topic for faculty: how to make better connections with students and reaching them about services on campus.”

What can the institution do?
1) Required orientations, “in person, for new and returning students.”  
   a. “Stronger orientation for older and returning students”  
   b. “Re-entry program (used to have one)”  

2) “Walking tour [or map] of all of the tutoring centers or resources areas.”  
   “Scavenger hunt in which staff signs off.”  

3) “Student workshops, orientations, etc.”  
   a. “Low attendance for workshops to help students—how can we market this better?”  
   b. “Give students credit for attending” [HCD classes, etc.]  
   c. “Students don’t respond to contact through SARS.”  

4) “Make ‘Financial Aid 101’ mandatory.”  

5) “More training for staff on orientation, the process.”  
   a. “Cross training”  
   b. “Online orientation for staff and faculty to familiarize them with other department and services,” so the employee can “gain a contact person” in each department.  
   c. “Clearer understanding of what each department does and has to offer.”  

6) Student Ambassadors  
   a. “Classroom visits from support groups.”  
      “Get faculty on board.”  
   b. “Provide more student help so students can talk to other students about issues.”  
   c. Student Ambassadors “wearing a t-shirt walking around the quad to help students.”  
      “Each area could have an ambassador.”  
   d. “We need to better define the role of student ambassadors in B153.  Use the ambassadors to personally walk students to B153 to make sure they get there and connect them with another person once they are there.”
PROMPT TWO  How can we identify and support students who are in danger of failing, going on academic probation/dismissal, and/or dropping out?

A. Staff Approach and Student Needs

**What can individuals do?**

1) “Be proactive – at the first sign of an issue, intervene.”
   a. “It needs to be IN PERSON – SARS is too impersonal”
   b. “Older students often don’t go online and they will be in the line for one-on-one help.”

2) “If students look puzzled, take the time to see if they need help.”

3) “Watch for warning signs (e.g., spotty attendance)”

4) “Cultural Sensitivity — ask permission before offering help.”

5) “Don’t be scared to have a real conversation with a student. Take time to ask how they’re doing. Students need to feel welcome.”
   “Careful listening”

6) “We need to seize the opportunity to mentor students when they stop by the office, especially incoming freshmen. Informal mentoring.”

7) “Learn how to treat each other well — employee to employee, office to office.”
   IBA training

8) “How do we identify those students who never come into an office and who are struggling, those who never seek out services? — Is it possible to identify students through PeopleSoft?”

**What can the institution do?**

“Provide cultural sensitivity training — maybe a flex topic.”

B. Information and Resources

**What can individuals do?**
1) “All staff should have business cards. These can be used with students so they will know where to find them.”

2) “Redirect students to talk to faculty about issues, not just to staff or Dean.”

3) “Make the big picture clearer. Connect the dots between money, academics, processes, and requirements.”
   “This is everybody’s job!”

**What can the institution do?**

1) “It would be helpful if classified employees mentor students based on career interests; match up students with employees who have jobs that are of interest to those students.”

2) “Urge managers to make Connections mandatory for new employees and for others to go every three years. Make Connections available for student assistants as well.”

3) “Can the SOS newspaper be earlier instead of only after midterms?”

**C. Programs and Services**

**What can the institution do?**

1) “Students often come to college thinking of tutoring as a sign of weakness. We need to take the stigma out of tutoring and any special help.”

2) “Use colored lines on sidewalks and hallways to direct students to important services — as in a hospital.”

3) “Setting up tables at the beginning of the semester and at mid-semester.”

4) “Have a budget to pay for time to spend with students in crisis.”

5) “Make the student college success class mandatory.”

6) “Formal mentoring through Summer Success Academy.”

7) “Short classes — 3 or 4 weeks.”
D. Orientations, Workshops, Student Groups, etc.

**What can individuals do?**

1) “Have student ambassadors ask students about their experiences, what is easy, what isn’t.”

2) “Peer mentoring.”

3) “Faculty could give students an option to take a test or write a paper.”

**What can the institution do?**

1) “We could have an orienteering exercise with campus partner you don’t usually work with. Go and find a marker with your GPS — on campus. It would be a way to learn to work with somebody else — and to learn the campus better.”

2) “We could have forums for student organizations to give feedback about the college, so we can get to know what they’re thinking and what they need. They could have a given topic — student charettes. A virtual forum might also be something to consider.”
Facilitators and Note Takers

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