TARGET AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT OF A COMPREHENSIVE FIRST-YEAR EXPERIENCE PROGRAM

TARGET AREA #1. NEW-STUDENT ORIENTATION

National data continue to reveal that students are most “at risk” for attrition during their first year of college. New-student orientation may be the only opportunity for institutions to reserve and devote all its campus resources and attention to one class—entering first-year students. Consequently, new-student orientation programs have the potential for shaping students’ important “first impression” of the college and have been found to promote the retention of first-year students by (a) enhancing their social integration into the college community, (b) improving their college coping skills, and (c) increasing their knowledge and utilization of campus-support services.

Furthermore, if a convocation or formal induction ceremony is included as part of new-student orientation, a powerful “rite of passage” can be created in which students perceive the beginning of college as an event of developmental significance, and experience a sense of unity or belonging that comes with entry into a new community.

Institutional self-assessment questions relevant to this focus point include the following:

1.1 Before first-year students begin classes, does the college provide a substantive orientation program during which time new students are oriented to people (not just buildings), and given the opportunity to interact meaningfully with peers, faculty, and support staff?

1.2 Are new students exposed to experienced and trained peer orientation-week leaders as part of the orientation process?

1.3 Is new-student orientation required or optional? (If optional, what percentage of entering students participate in it?)

1.4 Does new-student orientation include a component designed for students’ parents and family members that involves discussion of the role they can play in supporting first-year student adjustment and success?

1.5 Are college faculty and academic administrators involved in the planning and delivery of new-student orientation, ensuring that the program has both an academic and student life focus?

1.6 Do first-year students experience a celebratory ritual at college entry—e.g., a convocation or induction ceremony—at which time the college formally welcomes new students into its “community”? 
1.7 Is orientation *extended* into the critical first term by means of a *freshman-orientation course* or *new-student seminar*? (If so, is the course *required* or *optional*)? (If optional, what *percentage* of full-time and part-time students *enroll* in it?)

TARGET AREA #2.

**ACADEMIC ADVISEMENT**

National survey research indicates that this is the *#1* area of *student dissatisfaction* with the college experience (other than campus parking and cafeteria food). Advising has also been the *#1* target area of administrators who are attempting to improve *student retention* at their college. Moreover, research indicates that college students are very confused about what they should *major* in and what *careers* are associated with different college majors. For example, about 50% of all entering college freshmen are “undecided” about their college major and one-half of the remaining 50% who have allegedly “decided” on a major when they first enter college eventually change their mind. In fact, recent studies suggest that most college students change their mind about their major at least three times before graduation.

Thus, it appears that the vast majority of first-year students need effective, personal academic advising and career counseling because final *decisions about majors and related careers* are typically made *during* the college experience, not before it. For any institution claiming to provide a first-year experience that is “high quality,” it must provide students with personalized advisement needed for linking their present academic experiences with their future life plans.

Institutional self-assessment questions relevant to this focus point include the following:

2.1 Is each first-year student *paired* or *matched* with a *personally-assigned* academic advisor?

2.2 When *registering*, *adding*, or *dropping* courses, are first-year students require to *confer* with, and obtain a *signature* from an academic advisor?

2.3 Do academic advisors *only* engage in course scheduling, or do they provide comprehensive *developmental academic advising*—i.e., personalized advising that relates students’ present academic experiences to their future life plans, and connects students with key campus-support professionals who can most effectively address their present needs and facilitate realization of their future plans?

2.4 Is special academic advising support provided for *undecided* first-year students?

2.5 What is the average *student:advisor ratio* for first-year students?

2.6 Does the college engage in any practices or procedures that are *intentionally designed* to increase the *frequency* of student-advisor contact?
2.7 Are group advising sessions offered periodically, whereby students with similar academic or career interests (e.g., sociology majors) are advised together in order to promote peer support and collaboration with respect to academic and career planning?

2.8 Are trained peer advisors available to support and facilitate the academic advising process?

2.9 How are academic advisors recruited and selected to ensure that they have the competence and commitment needed to effectively advise first-year students?

2.10 Is a substantive advisor orientation, training, and development program provided for academic advisors of first-year students?

2.11 Are advisors evaluated and provided with individual feedback on the quality of their advising?

2.12 Are advisors individually recognized and rewarded for high-quality academic advising?

2.13 Does the college engage in program evaluation of its academic advising system?

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TARGET AREA #3.

THE CURRICULUM

The undergraduate curriculum has been criticized repeatedly for being fragmented, disjointed and lacking coherence. In particular, the general education component of the college curriculum has been characterized as a dizzying array of “distribution requirements” which are taken “smorgasbord style”—a little of this and a little of that with little sense of connection among general-education courses (breadth requirements), or connection between general education courses and specific courses in the student's major (depth requirements). At some colleges and universities, general-education requirements may actually be fulfilled by taking a variety of very narrowly-focused, esoteric courses which represent the specialized research interests of the faculty rather than a true “core” curriculum—i.e., courses that every educated college graduate should experience because of their pervasive relevance for all humans and all careers.

Institutional self-assessment questions relevant to this focus point include the following:

3.1 Does the college curriculum include a first-year seminar designed to provide new students with a meaningful beginning course which gives a preview or overview of, and introduction to the general education curriculum, along with the rationale for its requirements?

3.2 Is a first-year seminar required of all new students so they have at least one common learning experience during their first year of college?
3.3 Does the design and delivery of the first-year general education curriculum reflect a coherent plan for learning, whereby first-year courses are purposefully connected and sequenced in relation to subsequent courses, thus providing a meaningful beginning or introduction to the college curriculum?

3.4 Have faculty from different academic disciplines collaborated to develop a shared view of the general education curriculum that is focused and thematic?

3.5 Does the first-year curriculum contain any interdisciplinary general-education courses that are designed to integrate different academic disciplines, or which are team-taught by faculty from different disciplines?

3.6 Does the college offer a true “core” curriculum for first-year students—i.e., a set of specific courses that all new students take regardless of their particular academic major of field of interest, thus ensuring a common or shared learning experience for all entering students?

3.7 Are groups of first-year students given the opportunity to co-register for the same block of courses during the same academic term so that they can develop “learning communities?”

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TARGET AREA #4. ACADEMIC SUPPORT SERVICES

National surveys indicate that “fear of academic failure” and “help with academic skills” are among the most frequently cited concerns of beginning college students. Additional research suggests that students who earn good grades during their first term are far more likely to continue in college and graduate than are first-term students who do not experience initial academic success. Furthermore, decisions to stay or leave have college have been found to correlate more strongly with first-year students’ academic achievement than with their pre-enrollment characteristics.

Additional research demonstrates that (a) students generally under-utilize academic support services, particularly those students who are in most need of support, and (b) students who do seek and receive academic assistance experience enhanced academic performance and academic self-efficacy (i.e., sense of perceived control and expectations for future academic success).

Taken together, these findings strongly suggest that first-year students who receive learning assistance from academic support services during the first year of college are more likely to be retained and achieve higher levels of academic performance.

Institutional self-assessment questions relevant to this focus point include the following:

4.1 Is special high school-to-college transitional support provided for academically at-risk students before they encounter a full load of college courses (e.g., summer bridge or summer transition program)?
4.2 Are the basic skills of all incoming students assessed at college entry in order to diagnose their academic preparedness and to place them in courses or programs that are commensurate with their entering levels of skill development?

4.3 Are support services made highly visible to first-year students (e.g., pictures and campus phone numbers of support professionals advertised in campus flyers, posters, newsletters, or the college newspaper)?

4.4 Is institution-initiated action taken to deliver support services intrusively to first-year students through such practices as: (a) bringing support services to students on their “turf” (e.g., providing workshops in student residences or the student union), (b) integrating support services into the classroom (e.g., student-service professionals as guest speakers in class; peer tutors invited to class), and (c) requiring, or providing students with strong incentives to take advantage of support services (e.g., as a course assignment or as a condition for registration or graduation)?

4.5 Is there an effective communication and referral system in place whereby classroom instructors routinely refer students in need of academic assistance to support service professionals and classroom instructors who, in turn, receive feedback about whether referred students actually act on the referral—and, if so, what type of support they received?

4.6 Is there an early-warning or early-alert system in place whereby first-term students receive feedback about their progress (grades) at midterm—so corrective action can be taken before final course grades are determined?

4.7 Is peer tutoring readily available to first-year students, in which experienced and trained students provide them with academic assistance?

4.8 Is supplemental instruction (SI) available for “high-risk courses” (i.e., classes with historically high attrition rates and/or low grades), whereby a student who has completed the course and done exceptionally well—re-attends the class—and helps novice learners during additional (supplemental) class sessions that are regularly scheduled outside of class time?

4.9 Are credited “stepping-stone” courses available to prepare first-year students for courses in which there are repeatedly and unusually high rates of failure or withdrawal?

4.10 Are adequate academic-support services available to meet the special needs of students with learning disabilities and physical challenges?

4.11 Is an academic mentoring program available to first-year students whereby they are mentored by more experienced college students, faculty, staff, alumni, or community volunteers—e.g., career professionals or retirees?

4.12 Do academic support professionals provide instructional faculty with diagnostic feedback (e.g., via academic-support service newsletters, presentations or workshops for
faculty) about the types of academic assistance that first-year students typically need or seek, and common errors in new students’ approach to learning that are witnessed in academic support settings?

4.13 Are all first-year students introduced to the library during their first term, either as part of new-student orientation or during a first-term course (e.g., new-student seminar or introductory English course)?

4.14 Does course-integrated library instruction take place in the first year, whereby students learn information search, retrieval, and evaluation skills within the context of specific course content or course assignments (e.g., research paper or group project)?

TARGET AREA #5.
THE CO-CURRICULUM (STUDENT DEVELOPMENT SERVICES)

Research indicates that student involvement in campus activities and student life outside the classroom contributes significantly to their (a) social integration into the college community, (b) satisfaction with the college experience, (c) persistence to graduation, and (d) leadership qualities after graduation. Furthermore, alumni often report that their most meaningful and memorable college-learning experiences occurred outside the classroom.

Thus, out-of-class student experiences entail much more than “extracurricular activities” and an active “social life.” Quality colleges design their co-curriculum with the clear intention of providing students with powerful experiential-learning opportunities and retention-promoting peer interactions.

Institutional self-assessment questions relevant to this focus point include the following:

5.1 Are numerous and varied co-curricular opportunities available on campus that are designed to promote student involvement, especially in the following areas: (a) student participation in college governance, (b) campus employment—e.g., work-study, (c) internships—on and off campus, (d) volunteerism (service learning), and (e) student clubs or organizations—including opportunities for students to initiate and create new ones of their own choosing?

5.2 Are educational objectives explicitly constructed for co-curricular activities, and are these activities delivered with the deliberate intention of promoting learning and development?

5.3 Are co-curricular opportunities visibly and “intrusively” promoted on campus and are students aggressively recruited to participate—e.g., “activities periods” designated and reserved at times when no classes are scheduled; personal invitations from peer leaders, academic advisors, faculty, or student development staff; individual mailings or phone contacts?
5.4 Are incentives or recognition provided for co-curricular involvement, such as (a) free food, prizes, or privileges for participants—e.g., priority parking or priority registration, (b) participation required as course assignments or designated as extra-credit opportunities, (c) awards events or ceremonies recognizing student contributions to the co-curriculum, and/or (d) student involvement experiences documented on an official co-curricular or student development “transcript”?

5.5 Are there meaningful connections forged between students’ in-class and out-of-class learning experiences—i.e., Is the planning and delivery of the curriculum and co-curriculum designed and coordinated to produce mutually reinforcing or synergistic effects on student development?

5.6 Is there a campus-based program in place that provides meaningful service-learning (volunteer) experiences for students that is integrated into the curriculum? (If yes, what percentage of the student body has some service-learning experience by the conclusion of their first year of college?)

5.7 Does the college provide varied and meaningful internship opportunities or cooperative education experiences that are linked to the students’ intended or declared academic major? (If yes, do first-year students have the opportunity to participate in these programs—either to gain real-world experience relating to their intended major, or to explore their interest in different careers?)

5.8 Does the co-curriculum include peer networking and peer support programs in which more experienced student paraprofessionals are trained to facilitate new students’ social and emotional development during their critical first year of college life (e.g., peer mentors, peer counselors, peer residential advisors)?

5.9 Are leadership opportunities available to first-year students—as part of an intentionally designed and cumulatively sequenced leadership development program?

5.10 Are the leadership accomplishments of first-year students formally recognized or rewarded by the college?

5.11 Are first-year residential programs intentionally designed to create an educational, “living-learning” environment in which there is meaningful student development programming and where academic experiences are integrated with residential life? (For example, are any or all of the following available in student residences: computer access, peer tutoring, academic advisement, faculty office hours, seminars, colloquia, classes, test-review sessions?)

5.12 Are on-campus residential opportunities maximized for “at-risk” students, and are these students strategically assigned to particular residences, residential floors, or residential advisors in an attempt to enhance their retention, academic achievement, and personal development during their first year of college?
5.13 Are roommates assigned strategically to campus residences in a deliberate attempt to maximize student learning and development?

5.14 Does the college have in pace a carefully constructed set of policies regarding first-year student membership in campus fraternities and sororities, and first-year student participation in fraternity or sorority-sponsored events?

5.15 Does the college display sensitivity to first-year commuter students when designing and scheduling co-curricular experiences, such as (a) scheduling activities at times that are conducive to commuter participation—e.g., early morning or early evening, (b) communication strategies for keeping commuters in the loop—e.g., commuter message boards, newsletters, hot lines, or web pages), (c) campus place or space for commuters to socialize and network—e.g., commuter lounge, and (d) special activities targeted specifically for commuters (e.g., commuter appreciation day)?

TARGET AREA #6.
FACULTY-STUDENT CONTACT OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

Postsecondary research has consistently revealed that college students’ success is influenced by the quality and quantity of student-faculty interaction outside the classroom. Such contact and interaction has been found to correlate positively with (a) student satisfaction with the college experience, (b) student retention, (c) academic achievement, (d) personal and intellectual development, (e) critical thinking, and (f) educational aspirations—such as decisions to pursue advanced (graduate) education. Similar positive correlations between frequency of student-faculty contact and cognitive growth have been reported for first-year transfer students.

Despite these well-documented positive outcomes, the frequency of faculty-student contact outside the classroom is decreasing in higher education because faculty are spending more of their non-teaching time in the pursuit of research and publication, leaving out-of-class contact with undergraduates to student affairs’ staff.

Institutional self-assessment questions relevant to this focus point include the following:

6.1 How many office hours do faculty make available to students per week? (Does the college have a stated policy about the minimum number of weekly office hours?)

6.2 Is it common for faculty to give their home phone number or home e-mail address to students?

6.3 Are college faculty involved in providing academic advising to first-year students on a one-to-one basis outside the classroom?

6.4 Does the college have intentionally planned programs, structures, or procedures that are explicitly designed to promote student-faculty interaction outside the classroom?

6.5 Does the college offer a faculty-student mentoring program?
6.6 Are there faculty-student research teams or teaching teams at the college, and are qualified first-year students eligible to participate?

6.7 How many faculty-sponsored student clubs and organizations exist at the college?

6.8 Does the college actively encourage, recognize, and reward faculty for out-of-class involvement with students in general, and first-year students in particular?

6.9 What is the full-time to part-time faculty ratio at the college? (Note: This question is included because research indicates that part-time faculty spend less time on campus than full-time faculty—due to other work commitments—and, as a result, are usually less available to students for out-of-class interaction.)

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TARGET AREA #7. 
ADMINISTRATIVE LEADERSHIP, POLICIES, & PRACTICES

Research strongly suggests that student retention and achievement is promoted at colleges where there is administrative commitment to creating a student-centered and learning-driven environment in which college policies, procedures, and decision-making are driven by their potential for promoting student learning and development—rather than by bureaucratic tradition, administrative convenience, or institutional status-and-prestige seeking motives.

At quality colleges, administrators devote their time and resources to campus initiatives that focus on student development, while adopting administrative procedures that are intentionally designed to promote a “staying environment” and a college community that is educationally purposeful, caring, and celebratory. A quality first-year college experience, in particular, is characterized by the administrative principle of “front loading”—reallocation and redistribution of the institution’s best educational resources to serve the critical needs of first-year students.

Institutional self-assessment questions relevant to this focus point include the following:

7.1 Do high-level administrators demonstrate visible support for first-year programs by their presence at first-year programming events, by comments made during formal addresses, and in written statements or documents (e.g., college memos, position statements, strategic plans)?

7.2 Do administrators provide the necessary resources (human, fiscal, and physical) to support a viable, high-quality college experience for first-year students?

7.3 Does the administration encourage creative thinking and support initiatives designed to improve the quality of college life for first-year students?

7.4 Are first-year programs “built into” the institutional budget and administrative structure of the college (e.g., organizational blueprint or flowchart), thus enhancing their prospects for long-term survival?
7.5 Do administrators provide *incentives* for faculty and staff to promote their involvement in first-year programs and initiatives (e.g., stipends, mini-grants, release time, travel and professional development funding, administrative or student assistance)?

7.6 Does administration support *professional development* of faculty and staff in areas relating to *student retention and student success*?

7.7 Does administration *recognize or reward* faculty and staff contributions to first-year students (e.g., meritorious performance awards; letters of commendation; credit toward retention, promotion, or advancement)?

7.8 Is their administrative encouragement and support for college *rituals* designed to build *campus community* and increase *institutional identification* among first-year students?

7.9 Has the college made a commitment to offer *multiple and meaningful work-study* (on-campus employment) opportunities to *economically disadvantaged* students that are designed to (a) help them afford college, (b) promote their retention by connecting them to the institution, and (c) enable them to gain real-life work experience?

7.10 Has the college developed a “*red-flag*” procedure or system for identifying and connecting with students who show signs that they are *intending to leave* the college (e.g., failure to pre-register for next term’s classes; failure to reapply for financial aid; failure to renew residential life agreement)?

7.11 Does the college acknowledge first-year student achievement by means of an end-of-the-year *congratulatory letter* or *ceremony* for students who persisted to *completion of the first year* in good academic standing, with *special recognition* for those students who achieved *academic excellence* or made significant contributions to *student life* during their first year at college?

7.12 Has the college made a commitment to promoting the adjustment and success of first-year *transfer* students by adopting policies and procedures that facilitate their transition, such as:

© offering a *transfer-student orientation* program or *transfer-student convocation* to welcome new transfer students and integrate them with native students;

© allowing *junior transfers* the opportunity to live on campus in student residences with *juniors and seniors*—versus limiting their options to freshman dorms or off-campus housing;

© providing transfer students with the opportunity to apply for campus housing and to register for classes *at the same time as native students*—as opposed to automatically placing them last on the list;

© *designating* a particular member or group within the college community (e.g., staff member, faculty member, or cross-functional committee) to be in charge of coordinating orientation and transitional support programs for first-year transfer students—as opposed to letting this responsibility “fall through the cracks” of an administrative structure that is not explicitly designed to meet the needs of new
students who enter the college after the freshman year?

TARGET AREA #8.

INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT

Historically, college quality in American higher education has been defined simply in terms of institutional “reputation” and student “selectivity.” Consequently, colleges and universities have not engaged in extensive institutional research on the actual impact they have on student outcomes (learning and development), or how students change as a result of the college experience. For any college to be deemed “high quality,” it should attempt to assess institutional impact on student outcomes, and use the results of this assessment as feedback for improving its programs and services—as part of an ongoing institutional process of continuous quality improvement.

Institutional self-assessment questions relevant to this focus point include the following

8.1 Do recruitment publications and practices accurately portray the characteristics of the college to prospective first-year students and explicitly encourage campus visits?

8.2 Are data gathered periodically from first-year students at college entry in order to serve as a basis for subsequent student tracking, and as a baseline for comparison with data collected from students at later points in their college experience—thus providing a longitudinal data base for use in value-added or talent-development assessment?

8.3 Are first-year programs evaluated to assess the degree to which their actual operations are consistent with their stated objectives and with the stated mission of the college?

8.4 Does the college engage in ongoing, systematic, quantitative and qualitative assessment of campus offices and services that are used frequently by first-year students?

8.5 Are assessment data gathered on college personnel who interact regularly with first-year students, and are these data used to provide personnel with specific and timely feedback that is designed to promote professional development and continuous quality improvement?

8.6 Is assessment information obtained from students actually used as feedback to promote continuous program improvement? (If yes, what changes in first-year programming has the college made in response to assessment-driven feedback?)

8.7 Are satisfaction surveys of first-year students conducted to assess their perceptions of the quality of specific college programs and offices, and are comparisons made between the perceptions of first-year students who return for the sophomore year—versus those who depart?
8.8 Is qualitative research conducted with first-year students to assess their needs and their feelings about the quality of the first-year experience (e.g., freshman focus groups)?

8.9 Is assessment routinely conducted to determine what percentage of first-year students withdraw from the college and at what time during the first year these withdrawals take place?

8.10 Are withdrawing students who are eligible to return to the college apprised of their option to do so and what procedures they are to follow for re-admission?

8.11 Are surveys sent to students who have withdrawn from the college in order to assess their reasons for departing?

8.12 Is assessment of student satisfaction and student retention conducted with respect to different student subpopulations (e.g., commuters, ethnic and racial minorities) and students enrolled in different academic programs (e.g., math, science, humanities)?

8.13 Are sophomores surveyed or interviewed to assess their retrospective perceptions of how well the college’s first-year program facilitated their transition from high school to higher education and prepared them for their second year of college?
TOP-TEN PROPERTIES/PRINCIPLES OF EFFECTIVE FIRST-YEAR PROGRAM DELIVERY

1. STUDENT-CENTERED: The program is oriented toward, focused on, and driven by a genuine concern for the needs and welfare of students (rather than by institutional habit/convenience, or the needs/desires of faculty and staff).

2. INTENTIONAL (PURPOSEFUL): The program is deliberately designed with the conscious intent of implementing research- and theory-grounded principles of effective student learning and development, i.e.: (a) active involvement—program delivery promotes student “engagement” (depth of involvement) in the college experience, and (b) social integration—program delivery promotes frequent, high-quality student interaction with other members of the college community (peers, faculty, staff), thus serving to socially “connect” students to the institution—providing them with a sense of community membership.

3. PROACTIVE: Early, preventative action is taken that addresses students’ needs and adjustment issues in an anticipatory fashion, i.e., before they eventuate in problems that require reactive intervention.

4. INTRUSIVE: The college initiates supportive action by reaching out to students and bringing or delivering the program to students (rather than passively waiting and hoping that students will take advantage of it), thus increasing the likelihood that the program reaches all (or the vast majority of) students who would profit from it.

5. DIVERSIFIED: The program is tailored or customized to meet the distinctive needs of different student subpopulations.

6. PERSONALIZED: The program is delivered in a manner that recognizes students as individuals, and makes them feel personally significant.

7. COMPREHENSIVE (HOLISTIC): Focuses on the student as a “whole person,” and addresses the full range of academic and non-academic factors that affect student success.

8. DURABLE: The program is institutionalized by being “built into” the organizational structure/blueprint and annual budget of the institution, thus ensuring that the program has longevity and is experienced perennially by successive cohorts of students.

9. COLLABORATIVE: The program involves cooperative alliances or partnerships between different organizational units of the college—which work in a complementary, interdependent fashion to increase the program’s capacity for exerting a multiplicative or synergistic effect on student success.
10. **EMPIRICAL (EVIDENTIARY)**: The program is supported and driven by assessment data (both quantitative and qualitative) that are used *summatively* to “prove” program impact or value, and *formatively* to continually “improve” program quality.

**NINE PRIME TIMES FOR FIRST-YEAR PROGRAM INTERVENTION**

**PROACTIVE**

1. *Summer Transition/Summer Bridge Programs*
2. New-Student *Orientation & Convocation*
3. *Extended-Orientation Course* (New-Student Seminar)(Student-Success Course)
4. *Early-Alert/Early-Warning System* (e.g., absenteeism reports during first 4 wks.)
5. *Midterm-Grade Reports* (e.g., at 7-8 weeks into the semester)
6. “*Red Flag*” Procedures (e.g., failure to pre-register or renew financial aid)
7. *Exit Interviews/Surveys* (administered during the process of withdrawal)
8. *Already-Withdrawn/Departed-Student Surveys* (conducted after withdrawal)

**REACTIVE**
1. INTENTIONALITY & COMPREHENSIVENESS

*Commuter Student Awareness/Programming

*Continuity Throughout First Year:
  ◦ Summer
  ◦ Fall
  ◦ Winter
  ◦ Spring
  ◦ Summer

*Curricular Coherence (Integration/Core)

*Customized (Campus-Specific) Materials

*Faculty-Student Contact

*Goals/Objectives of Program Explicitly Stated

*Holistic Focus (including social, emotional, ethical, vocational)

*Intensiveness of First-Year Seminar (i.e., # of contact hours; instructor:student ratio)

*Intrusiveness (Institution-Initiated Support)

*Mission-Driven/Linked

*Peer (Student-Student) Interaction (e.g., via learning communities)

*Peer Leaders Involved

*Re-Entry Student Awareness/Programming

*Student-Student Interaction

*Process Emphasis (Pedagogy/Nature of Program Delivery)

*Residential Life Component

*Transfer Student Awareness/Support
2. ASSESSMENT

*Underrepresented Student Awareness/Support

*Comparative (Norm-Referenced vs. Other Institutions) Assessment

*Classroom-Based/Course-Embedded Assessment

*Co-Curricular Assessment

*Data Responsiveness/Data-Driven Decisions

*Entry Assessment

*Exit (Outcomes) Assessment

*External (Independent/3rd Party) Assessment

*Historically Referenced Assessment (evidence of institutional improvement/progress)

*Internal Assessment by:
  ◦ Students
  ◦ Faculty
  ◦ Staff
  ◦ Peer-Leaders
  ◦ Alumni (Retrospective Assessment)

*Outcomes Defined

*Qualitative & Quantitative Assessment

*Student Needs/Expectations Assessment

*Student Progress Assessment (e.g., early alert)

*Student Satisfaction with Offices & Services

*Student Self-Assessment

* Subpopulation Analysis

3. ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT

*Administrator Involvement in Program Planning and/or Delivery

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*Awards/Rewards* Provided
*Committee* Established to Coordinate/Direct/Evaluate Program

*Faculty/Staff Orientation, Training, & Development* Provided

*Fiscal Resources/Budget Line* Established

*Incentives* Provided

*Position* Established to Coordinate/Direct Program

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4. CROSS-FUNCTIONAL COLLABORATION

*Coordination across Faculty, Student Life, & Academic Support Services*

*Partnering among Faculty Across Disciplinary Lines*

*Partnering between Faculty & Student Service Professionals*

*Partnering across Department/Divisions/Units for Program Assessment*

*Partnering Department/Divisions/Units for Program Delivery*

*Partnering Department/Divisions/Units for Program Planning*

*Partnering Department/Divisions/Units for Resource Sharing*

*Structural Interdependence* between Academic & Student Life:
   ◦ Organizational positioning (administrative report lines)
   ◦ Geographical positioning (campus office locations)

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5. BROAD IMPACT ON TOTAL STUDENT BODY

*Attention to Both Highly Successful & Struggling 1st-Year Students*

*Incentives* for Student Participation (e.g., to increase percentage of student body involved in co-curricular programming)

*Required* Program Participation (e.g., first-year seminar offered as a core requirement)