CHOICE ARCHITECTURE
The Connecticut State Colleges and Universities Choice Architecture working group was charged by Dr. Jane Gates, CSCU Provost and Senior VP Academic & Student Affairs, on July 3, 2018. This Guided Pathways (GP) group was led by Dr. Francine Rosselli-Navarra (MCC) and Professor Heidi Zenie (TRCC), and included co-chair Dr. Kimberly Sorrentino (GwCC), along with dozens of staff, faculty, and administrators from across CSCU. The group reported to the Guided Pathways Task Force.

CHOICE ARCHITECTURE CHARGE
To use Guided Pathways practices and existing expertise in the CSCU community colleges to design and recommend policies and practices that facilitate student retention and completion through encouraging early choice and removing student success barriers. The Choice Architecture team will help implement systemic change related to all four Guided Pathways principles: Developing coherent academic paths, creating meaningful learning experiences, helping students select an academic/career path, and helping students stay on their path. This work requires collaboration with the Support and Recruitment Architecture subgroups as well as the creation of specialized work groups. Specific tasks include but are not limited to: Organize existing academic programs into meta-majors, design a common first year experience for students, develop a protocol for academic program and discipline groups to use in mapping programs to end goals, and use evidence to foster culture change surrounding behaviors predictive of academic success (e.g., 15-to-finish, completion of college level math and English in the first year).

CHOICE ARCHITECTURE ACCOMPLISHMENTS
- Reviewed, revised, and approved charges for all work groups under the Choice Architecture team.
- Initiated thoughtful and informed conversations, both within team meetings and on their home campuses, to advance the Guided Pathways principles of helping students select a program of study early in their academic journey, promoting student attainment of early momentum metrics, and creating meaningful learning experiences for students.
- Drafted, and submitted to the Guided Pathways Task Force (GPTF), a policy recommendation regarding Areas of Study for the merged community college. The policy recommendation was informed by best practices in Guided Pathways reform, examples from model institutions, and input from CT community college students. The policy recommendation was affirmed by the GPTF and the College Consolidation Implementation Committee (CCIC) and, in March of 2019, approved by the Board of Regents (https://www.ct.edu/files/policies/1.20%20Policy%20on%20Areas%20of%20Study.pdf).
- Drafted, and submitted to the GPTF, recommendations regarding accelerated terms for CT State Community College. These recommendations were informed by national research and best practices and affirmed by the Guided Pathways Task Force. The recommendations were submitted to the CCIC and interim President for CT State.
• Supported and engaged in professional development in teaching and learning, including the first ATD conference on Teaching and Learning, Focused Online Collaborative Interactions (FOCI) courses sponsored by the Dana Center, and locally sponsored presentation.

• Supported the Program Maps & Academic-Career Plans work group in the development of a set of Guided Pathways Program Mapping Guidelines to be used by faculty and staff in aligning curriculum for CT State Community College. These guidelines are distributed to all faculty and staff to assist them in incorporating Guided Pathways principles and practices into their aligned curricula. (https://www.ct.edu/files/pdfs/Guided%20Pathways%20Program%20Mapping%20Guidelines.pdf)

• Supported the First Year Experience (FYE) work group in the development of a common and academically rigorous first year seminar course consistent with Guided Pathways principles and practices.
  o The FYE team completed the design of the three-credit College and Career Success course (CCS 101) for CT State Community College in Fall 2019. This course includes a focus on student success and career exploration; the course culminates with the creation of an academic and career plan. The FYE team met regularly over a period of nearly two years to design this course.
    ▪ The course was informed by Guided Pathways principles and backward designed to ensure that students develop the knowledge and skills to establish and achieve their academic and career goals.
    ▪ The course outcomes were carefully crafted to serve as a foundation for students to begin to develop core general education competencies, such as critical thinking and information literacy.
  o The FYE submitted a statement in support of CCS 101 recommending the following:
    ▪ FYE/Student Success departments and faculty move the course through their campus curriculum approval process and begin teaching this course at their respective colleges.
    ▪ Academic administrators support the scheduling and staffing of the course.
    ▪ Academic programs include this course in their newly-aligned curriculum for one college.
  o The recommendations of the FYE work group were affirmed by the Choice Architecture and Holistic Student Support Redesign teams.
  o GP Leadership tasked the FYE work group leads with compiling a policy recommendation regarding CCS 101 for CT State. The policy recommendations, supported by the staff report, were approved by the BOR in June 2020. (https://www.ct.edu/files/policies/1.18%20CSCC%20College%20and%20Career%20Success%202010 1.pdf)

• Supported the Alignment and Completion of Math & English (ACME) work group in the development of recommendations regarding policies and practices that facilitate student completion of college level math and English within the first year and facilitate the alignment of the appropriate math and English requirements with programmatic, transfer, and workforce needs.
  o Under the auspices of the ACME work group and facilitated by national experts from the Dana Center at the University of Texas at Austin, faculty, staff, and administrators from the community colleges and state universities worked from May 2019 through May 2020 to:
investigate national best practices to improve math/English alignment and completion, with particular attention to practices for placement, models of remediation, appropriate gateway courses, math transfer pathways, and K-12 and CT employer partnerships

- identify specific barriers to math/English alignment and completion within CSCU using our own system data
- use national research on best practices to identify effective solutions to the problems and challenges students face in attempting to complete transferable math and English
- develop evidence-based recommendations to address barriers and improve math/English alignment and completion

- Recommendations from the ACME workgroups provided the foundation for placement, remediation, and transfer and applicability policy recommendation developed by the CSCU Provost, her staff, and the ACME leads. This policy recommendation is consistent with Guided Pathways principles and practices and was designed to complement existing student-centered and equity-focused reforms for CT State Community College, such as eliminating the application fee and implementing holistic case management advising.
- The policy recommendations were affirmed and submitted to the GPTF. The policy recommendations were affirmed by the GPTF and the CCIC. The recommendations at the time of this conclusion were submitted to the BOR Academic and Student Affairs committee.

CONCLUSION

The Academic and Student Affairs Division of the Connecticut State Colleges and Universities System Office is deeply grateful to all leads and members of the Choice Architecture team and all other parties involved for dedicating their time and expertise to complete the working group charge and for the achievements listed herein. The efforts of this team will have positive impacts on students across the state of Connecticut.

[Signature]

Working Group concluded by Dr. Jane Gates,
CSCU Provost and Senior VP Academic & Student Affairs

April 23, 2021

Conclusion Date