HOLISTIC STUDENT SUPPORT REDESIGN (HSSR)

The Connecticut State Colleges and Universities Holistic Student Support Redesign working group (HSSR, originally named Support Architecture) was charged by Jane Gates, CSCU Provost and Senior VP Academic & Student Affairs, on July 3, 2018. This Guided Pathways (GP) group was led by Gayle Barrett and Michael Buccilli, and included co-chairs Tamika Davis and Heidi Zienie, along with dozens of staff, faculty, and administrators from across CSCU. The group reported to the Guided Pathways Task Force.

HSSR Charge

As part of the Guided Pathways work in CSCU, the HSSR working group was charged with exploring and making recommendations on best practices for implementing academic advising models, monitoring student progress, designing a common first-year experience for students, and developing wraparound services to address external factors that impede a student’s ability to meet their educational goals.

HSSR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- The HSSR team created and recommended a Holistic Case Management Advising (HCMA) policy and accompanying staff report, which defined a new case management advising model based on data from national best practices, local expertise, and broad stakeholder feedback including students, faculty, staff, and administrators. The HSSR team along with a ten-member steering team met regularly over a period of nearly two years to shape the HCMA model. This work was supported by partners at Jobs for the Future and Achieving the Dream.
- The HSSR team included in the HCMA policy and staff report three key elements for monitoring student progress:
  - Adding additional Guided Pathways Advisors to reduce caseloads from the current 760 to 1 ratio to a proposed 250 to 1 ratio
  - Requiring that every degree and certificate-seeking student creates a personalized academic and career plan
  - Procuring and implementing a student success technology platform to enable Guided Pathways Advisors to engage in strategic, sustained, and proactive monitoring
- The HSSR team and other stakeholders undertook a broad review of technology platforms and created a technology scorecard that will help inform the RFP process for procuring a student success platform.
- The HSSR team established competencies for Guided Pathways Advisors who will be hired under the HCMA model.
- The HSSR team, along with the CSCU Choice Architecture working group, established a First Year Experience working group, which completed development of the new course College and Career Success (CCS 101).
- The HSSR team, along with the CSCU Choice Architecture working group, established a Program Maps and Academic/Career Plans (Maps and Plans) working group, which developed a draft protocol for a map template to be used with aligned programs, including elements that will aid in a clear path for student decision making such as program information and outcomes, workforce connections, and transfer to four-year institutions.
- The HSSR team, along with the CSCU Office of Strategic Initiatives, Sponsored Research, and Outreach as well as nonprofit organizations, worked to identify the most common non-academic barriers to student success, including food insecurity, housing insecurity, transportation, childcare, and access to mental/behavioral health services.
This was informed by a community college assessment of food resources conducted in November 2017 and CSCU’s partnership with the Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness that culminated in a July 2018 report finding that 17% of CSCU students are homeless or housing insecure.

In addition, members of the HSSR team worked in partnership with the CSCU Office of Strategic Initiatives, Sponsored Research, and Outreach in the development of a survey geared to assess how colleges are currently addressing non-academic barriers for students. Findings from this survey helped inform conversations with various stakeholders, including CSCU Deans of Student Affairs, counselors at the community college campuses, and organizations that serve the needs of students currently, such as the JED Foundation, the Connecticut chapter of the National Alliance for Mental Illness (NAMI), the United Way, Foodshare, CT Food Bank, Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, the Partnership for Strong Communities, and the Office of Early Childhood.

NEXT STEPS

- HSSR team leads, along with the Vice President of Enrollment Management and the CSCU Success Center, will develop a process to scale the HCMA model across all twelve college campuses over a three-year period.
- HSSR team leads, the Vice President of Enrollment Management, the CSCU Success Center, and related stakeholders will complete the RFP process for the procurement of a student success technology platform.
- HSSR team leads, the Vice President of Enrollment Management, the CSCU Success Center, and related stakeholders will complete the RFP process for the procurement of a vendor to co-develop, deliver, and maintain HCMA training.
- The Vice President of Enrollment Management and her team, with support from the CSCU Success Center, will lead the hiring of Guided Pathways Advisors to carry out HCMA model.
- The College and Career Success (CCS 101) course is ready to be moved through the appropriate curricular governance process and can potentially be included as an option in the proposed General Education Core for the one CSCU community college.
- The Maps and Plans working group, along with the Vice President of Enrollment Management, the CSCU Success Center, and other stakeholders will be convened during the college transition to begin exploration of the design of student-facing program maps with the assistance of a design team or consultant.
- The CSCU Office of Strategic Initiatives, the CSCU Success Center, and the Vice President of Enrollment Management and her staff will continue the momentum surrounding the assessment and development of wraparound services for students. The Lumina Foundation is currently supporting a consultant to assist CSCU in assessing a baseline of current services and philanthropic support has also been received to assess the viability of childcare centers on campuses.

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 Holistic Student Support Redesign 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.

Jane Gates
CSCU Provost and Senior VP Academic & Student Affairs

03.11.2020

Conclusion Date