Improving student success, including retention and graduation rates, is a high priority for Portland State University. A portfolio of student success initiatives, including recommendations by the First Steps to Student Success Committee, have been strategically implemented to improve student success. PSU will continue to implement a portfolio of student success initiatives approved by the Provost. Specific actions may include:

Assess the Effectiveness of Existing Academic Policies, Procedures, and Services
Review course registration, bursar's hold and admission deadlines to determine how well these policies and procedures facilitate student success. Where usable data for such review are lacking, implement procedures for collecting and analyzing such data. Develop major declaration as an online process (completed, Provost’s Challenge). Deploy academic petitions as an online processes (ARC completed, 2014, Provost’s Challenge).

Support Early Identification of Students at Risk
Deploy a predictive analytics platform for supporting advising and student success projects at PSU (EAB’s SSC Platform). Expand the use of placement tools for math and writing, and web-based Prior-Learning Survey (existing). Implement Freshmen Registration Project across campus.

Intentional Advising and Charting a Pathway to Degree Completion
First Steps for Student Success and Retention group recommended an intentional advising system for undergraduates. In conjunction, the Academic Advising Council presented an intentional model of advising, including mandatory advising, to Faculty Senate (implemented with the Fall 2010 cohort).

To support the advising initiative, create unified advising records (EAB’S SSC platform chosen as unified advising platform), prescriptive degree maps (implemented), and degree map milestones tracking (completed, EAB SSC Platform) to ensure that the advising initiative improves retention and graduation rates. Established Last Mile Committee to encourage completion by seniors who have dropped out of PSU. Implement the Four-Year Degree Guarantee program.

Improve Communication with Students
A student's first quarter is an important quarter in his or her academic career at PSU. Provide access to critical information on PSU’s homepage and include content for transfer students. Deploy CRM software to manage critical communication with all students.

Student Success Center
It is essential to bring many of the student resources under one roof to facilitate communication between units and enhance student access to the resources they need. Establish a Student Success Center by blending, or co-locating, Advising and Career Services, Finance Help Desk and academic support services. Connect functions of these units with ongoing data collection and structure them to deliver services to targeted student segments.

Address Needs of Students Entering PSU with a High School GPA below 3.0
Freshmen in first-time full-time freshmen cohorts who entered PSU with high school GPA below 3.0 made up about 15% of the Fall 2011 and 2012 cohorts. Compared with students who enter PSU with high school GPA above 3.0, students with lower high school GPA experience lower fall-to-fall retention (3-10%) Align PSU’s institutional capacity to serve underprepared students with the number of students admitted to PSU. Plan and deploy interventions such as mandated testing of skills, required remedial coursework, and learning assistance to keep this student segment on track. Review, articulate and suggest alternate admission pathways using community colleges for students who do not meet PSU’s admission standards.

Address Students’ Financial Concerns
Develop policies, procedures, and work flows necessary to support early identification of students with financial concerns, facing a bursar’s hold, or in financial distress. Implement Four Year Degree Guarantee and a payment plan option (both implemented fall 2014). Create an active focus on addressing students’ financial concerns.
When asked about their top concern as they start PSU, approximately 17-20% of first-time full-time freshmen for whom we have this information report finances as a top concern (we do not have information about top concern for about 30% of the students in these two cohorts). These students have a lower fall-to-fall retention rate than students who express other concerns or students with no information about top concern. For the fall 2011 and 2012 cohorts, about 68% of students with financial concerns returned to PSU the following fall, compared with 73% for students with other concerns.

**Easing the transition to college using Peer Mentoring**
Rethink, remap, and reinvigorate PSU’s peer mentoring system to further support students as they make the complex academic, social, and cultural transitions to PSU from high-school or community colleges. In addition, extend PSU’s mentoring capacity further using web-based social networking tools to reach adult, commuter, and transfer students more readily. Develop special programs for at-risk groups including providing a place to connect with supportive peer mentors who share common backgrounds and experiences.

**Improve the Persistence of Freshmen Living in Residence Halls**
For the Fall 2011 and 2012 cohorts of freshmen enrolled in FRINQ, students who reported living with their parents had higher fall-to-fall retention rates than students who lived on campus or who lived in private apartments. For fall 2011, that rate was 75% compared with 69% and 73% respectively, and in 2012 retention for students living with parents was 79% compared with 67% and 68% respectively.

¡Éxito!
Presidential initiative to initiative to recruit, support, and graduate more Latino students.

**Make Student Success Data Available at Unit Level**
Colleges and departments currently lack cohort based student success information and metrics at department/program, service, and college level (Scheduled for completion Oct. 2014, EAB SSC Platform). Ensure that matrices are developed to serve unit-level needs and to address the persistence, success, and quality of experience of underrepresented students.

**Reduce the Number of Courses with Preponderance (20%) of D, W, F Grades**
Review placement, prerequisites, and “pathways” and to improve student success, and redesign courses when appropriate (EAB SSC, OAI, Provost Challenge Projects). Develop policies and procedures necessary to identify and support students "at risk" of not persisting in a course.

**Manage Capacity of Programs and Course Offerings for Timely Progress to Graduation**
Develop a predictive model of curricular offerings needed for timely graduation of PSU’s undergraduate students.

For additional information please contact:

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