Portland State University

PSU Speaks, Event Summary

About

The vision of this movement is to elevate student success at Portland State University by realizing meaningful improvements in undergraduate graduation and retention rates and to provide the support students need to reach their goals. PSU believes that students succeed when caring faculty and staff, who believe in the transformative power of a college degree, connect them to opportunity and support.
About the event

The purpose of the PSU Speaks, Join the Student Success Conversation poster session was to engage the campus community in an effort to capture stakeholder ideas and suggestions on the vision and scope of the four areas of focus: Persistence, Academic Success, Affordability, and Student Experience. Additionally, feedback was solicited on Using Evidence for Impact and Equity, how student success is defined, in addition to providing space for general feedback.

Marketing and Outreach
- Student Success Effort Newsletter email campaign
- Individual outreach to stakeholders across campus
- myPSU
- Currently
- Virtual Viking
- Flyers posted across campus

Next Steps
- This report will be shared with the pillar co-chairs, Leadership Council as to be incorporated in the student success work.
- This summary also be made available to the attendees of the event as well as the broader campus community.
- To ensure that students are able to provide their feedback on the student success work, the posters will be displayed in various spaces across campus at the start of Winter term.

Student Success Definition

*Poster content viewed by attendees:*
Portland State University defines student success as our commitment to ensuring that students have the opportunity to achieve the goals for which they came to PSU. That commitment includes our focus on:
- Increased degree attainment, including higher persistence and graduation rates;
- Improved experience at the university, including a ‘sense of belonging’ and connection to PSU;
- The development of skills and knowledge critical to success, including critical thinking, problem-solving, communicating, and collaborating in diverse teams;
- A transformative experience that serves as preparation to engage with real-world problems and enhance engagement with communities;
- Learning outcomes that increase opportunity post-graduation, including progression to careers or post-graduate programs

*Responses:*
- Be Nice PSU
- Addition to third bullet point: “…including critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, and collaborating in diverse teams…” and cultural competency (understanding other cultures and the global world.)
  - Response: Yes!!
Value and honor of hard work
• Drop “for which they came to PSU.”
• Increasing opportunity
• More professors and GAs with phone or more flexible office hours
• Great definition! Also--degree/goal attainment without crippling debt, and within a reasonable time period.
• Diversity and identity
• Wellbeing/whole student
• More work study or student work positions
• Instead of professor office hours create community “office” hours. Professor facilitates conversations. Plan events on student breaks between classes in order to create community.
  ○ Response: YES!
• Learning overall is also very important to me. (Course quality and meaningful classes.)
• Suggestion: Replace “have the” with “take advantage of” (“...our commitment to ensuring that students have the opportunity...”)
• “Belonging” needs to be modified to the principles of the participants in the group
• Staying true to being an access institution
• Integrate job finding in Capstone classes
  ○ Response: Great idea! Also making internships a requirement for more majors could help.
• This is a definition of our commitment to student success, not what student success is. What is the definition or goal of student success? (Is this a wording problem or needs more thinking?)
  ○ Response: Good point! Perhaps we could have different definitions of student success for students, faculty/staff, and for the PSU institution. It can look very different from group to group (e.g.)
    ■ PSU: student retention, and graduation, cost, etc.
    ■ Professors: Academic success, engaging, learning, etc.
    ■ Students: Career preparedness, debt, learning

Student Success Definition: definitions shared by the community prior to the event

Responses:
• Making hardship funds more public and available through all departments.
• Including safety.
• Improve campus safety.
• Consider community/restorative justice methods to addressing safety concerns.
• Promoting advocacy and active discussion opportunities with administration.
• We care about paying bills and ensuring we can keep our dreams.
• Students could give a rats a** about the degree, we just want to start our life.
  ○ Response: Yes, I agree that career preparedness and being able to achieve our goals are very important and mainly why I’m going to college.
Student Ideas

Responses:
- Student success for me would be having a sense of belonging at PSU; looking around and identifying with my peers.
- More engagement and volunteer opportunities at resource centers and collaborations between them.
- Fulfillment + purpose = success
- Promote mental wellness: get more faculty using SHAC mindfulness moment initiative
- Use OERs
- Stop insisting art and graphic design students buy brand name supplies and expensive computers.
- More GA positions in student affairs on campus. Connect with PACE, ELP programs.
- Providing resources and activities for wellness through guest speakers in the classroom. Ex) SHAC, resource centers, ASPSU, clubs and relate to class topic if possible.

PILLARS

Student Experience - Poster Content
Strengthen PSU’s commitment to students by enhancing and creating outstanding spaces, services and experiences.

VISION
Poster content viewed by attendees:
The purpose of the Student Experience Pillar is to strengthen PSU’s commitment to students by enhancing and creating outstanding spaces, services, and experiences. By doing this, we hope to increase the sense of belonging, student engagement, and satisfaction. We think these are key factors in student self-agency and persistence, particularly for students who might feel marginalized in their educational experiences.

Student Experience Community Feedback

Responses:
- Let’s try and equip a staff full of people of color and different identities. Why would I want to be taught largely by a group of people who don’t represent culture
- Maybe our school would be full of actual diversity
- Diversity and inclusion (retention) of faculty and admin at all levels
- Let’s celebrate who we are: Vets, transfers, gritty, and not try to be any other institution
- I enjoy live music from other cultures. More of this, please
- More banners on campus to beautify, convey emotional support, call attention to all members of the community: alumni, students, faculty, and staff
- How are students “welcomed” into their department? How do they know they belong? (This got two “YAY” responses from others)
- We can use career interest as a way to faster community same models at other universities for “career community models”
PSU has been great with welcoming diversity (race, culture, gender inclusivity, orientation, ability level, and age). I hope that it will continue to do so :)  
What is the vision for the online student experience? This space may be more accessible for non-traditional students.  
Quick tip: When a professor publishes multiples articles discussing how “colonialism is good” and that we should “bring it back” and that “to be Black in the US is to have hit a jackpot,” FIRE HIM

SCOPE

Poster content viewed by attendees:

- Comprehensive understanding of what influences persistence most directly and in terms of sense of belonging and outside of the classroom experiences
- Physical spaces (such as classrooms, amenities, safety)
- Services (focus on business services and services in colleges/schools)
- Library as a center of learning
- Campus Identity

Responses:

- There is a lot on here about physical environments and not much about co-curricular experience relationship with faculty and staff, programs and events, leadership opportunities, etc.. This is a huge component to the student experience
- Should we have FR facial recognition on campus?
- More opportunities for students to feel a sense of pride or ownership behind campus decisions and development
- Cultivation student leadership in administrative decisions
- Commuter center
- Capstone fair
- Writing Center
- UNST Mentor Session
- Learning Center
- Multi lingual FRINQ and SINQ lab
- Hiring diverse, more faculty
- We are PSU, let’s be our own thing and not try to keep up with OSU and UO
- OMG! YES! We have so much to offer as a unique institution serving a unique non-traditional population
- Remodel the Library
- Plans to fully renovate Smith
- Need new Smith building
- Learning center- Hub for coaching, tutoring, etc.
- More advertisement of the various services available to students (eg. SHAC, Mind Spa, WRC, and more).
- Renovate Cramer- busiest building
- Stop increasing fees and changing fees for everything. Students feel nickle and dimed.
- Housing and jobs take students away from campus linked to affordability. Identify ways to keep students on or near campus
- Engage Alumni who work on campus as a “Champion” or “Friend” for students needing extra emotional support and to help them identify and access resources like career center, advising. Help instill notion of alumni network and community early in students career. Builds morale among campus and personnel.
- Ways to cope with imposter syndrome
- More and better speakers. It shocked me how few speakers we have compared to other institutions.
- Connect students to undergraduate research opportunities early on (through transfer services, etc.) to help them find a “home” or community on campus through participation on research.
- Identify the non-cognitive factors that predict success at PSU
- Lots and lots of windows and open space
- Clubs and student groups were vital to my academic success and mental well-being
- Does this include the academic experience as well? How does this overlap with the other pillars (academic success)? Important to define the scope here!
- What about a mentor system for every student? Mentors can be students, staff, graduates, etc.
- Add high quality digital spaces and experiences.
- In response to top comment: This is what I was going to say. High quality well-based resources and supports for online students.
- Conference and travel funds for students - student matriculation fee
- Provide “free snacks” for students as done by CLAS
- Create safe, quiet spaces where commuter students can recharge through meditation or napping
- Modify the Library so its more of a central hub- especially now that FMH is open
- More silent study spaces
- Renovate the Library, its the academic center on campus
- It may not be possible to determine if spaces are really safe for all intersectional identities but brave spaces can be co-controlled
- Look at OMSI “trailhead” approach to provide access to community resources
- Work with multi-cultural centers for intro to academia to normalize going to college
- How can we promote intercultural connections? American and multilingual
- Centralized resources that break down barriers and reduce how often we shuffle people around to get what they need.
- Like the learning center ^
- Wellbeing
- Cultural competency is imperative (part of WWL programs and more)
- Repurposing campus spaces
- Renovate Library
- Work with the city to build more partnerships through city solutions, events, marketing, and promotion. Tell our story to the city so that everyone is talking about us really

PROJECTS
Current Project Responses:
- Programs and events that bring people together
- University success, residence halls
● Co-curricular opportunities and student employment through UHRL, SALP, academic programs, CREC, etc.

● URHL provides 2 physical spaces called University Success that are open until 10pm and staffed by trained peers to provide support, late at night, in the hall. Run by UHRL

● Resident director staff plan and execute intentional quarterly, large scale programs with matching outcomes rooted in building community - UHRL

● UHRL assesses academic and social engagement for every single resident living on-campus create plans for follow-up from that data. Ran by UHRL

● On-campus employment - co-curricular development, opportunity.

● Living on campus provides students with a community of people striving towards student success goals. Research shows students that live on campus do better academically and are more engaged.

● Work hard

● Student feedback initiatives - Kara Hayes

● Student Success Communications Project

● RHA- viking days

● Supporting the cultural resource centers and highlighting cross-programing

Past Project Responses:
● Undergraduate persistence

Using Evidence for Impact and Equity
Employ data analysis, predictive analytics and data visualization to improve decision quality and assess investments and progress toward goals. Ensure that equity is a core focus of all analyses.

VISION
Poster content viewed by attendees:
The purpose of Using Evidence for Impact and Equity is to employ data analysis, predictive analytics and data visualization to improve decision quality, and assess the impact of proposal ideas and projects. Critically, we will ensure that equity is a core focus of all analyses and that we facilitate clear definitions of the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that will be used to guide and inform progress in student success.

Responses:
● Great idea. I know that PSU periodically holds surveys and focus groups. It would be great if PSU would contribute to and follow the idea of “nothing about us without us” for things that affect students.

● Make sure equity, inclusion and diversity is included in the institutional mission.

● Your KPI has to be based upon culturally rooted success stories dealing with black Americans. Consult black (???) for African-Americans in various industries that want (???) social justice and became industry C-level executives.

SCOPE
Poster content viewed by attendees:
- Develop student success metrics/KPIs for use across the institution.
- Create centralized and accessible way(s) for the university community to view metrics/KPIs.
- Develop, implement and utilize a theory of change for the Student Success Effort.
- Support the development of institution-wide student success goals/targets.
- Develop a “student success factbook” with definitions and clear data points.
- Evaluate outcomes through the continuous improvement framework.
- Consider developing additional metrics

Responses:
- Incentivize student participation, give a reason for students to release info for study. Tuition benefit?
  - Response: I know that some focus groups/surveys enter students into a drawing for gift cards.
- Not sure metrics should be the same for all students. Different goals!
- Metrics requires that they are continuously measured and that something is done.
- Tableau--give users access to easier to use dashboards.
- Fact book will be important. Great idea!
- Love centralized! Yes, missing component now.
- I would like to talk about this more from a student fee and equity perspective.

PROJECTS
Current Project Responses:
- Persistence and Graduation dashboard.
- UNST prior learning and end of term evaluations as well as ALL the great assessment
- Rowanna does.
- Enrollment funnel
- Investigating course number order, registration selection and success and persistence.
- Preparing model investigating success vs. time of class and time of student registration.
- Institutional conversation model currently tracks resident engagement and interest on campus as well as resources students may utilize: UHRL.
- Percentage of students in cluster class for major or other reason.
- Persistence and grad DM reports for every area to use.
- I love data.

Persistence
Proactively identify students throughout the academic year who are encountering barriers, and connect them with services and resources. This work will also seek to use data from individual cases to inform and address systemic issues.

VISION
Poster content viewed by attendees:
The vision of the Persistence Pillar is to proactively identify students throughout the academic year who are encountering barriers, and connect them with services and resources. This work will use data from individual cases to inform and address systemic issues. We will utilize data analytics and
predictive capabilities to build on case management and related strategies that have been successful at PSU and other institutions.

Responses:

- Love the focus on case management.
- Consider possible student negative connotation of “case management” as an organizing structure.
- Keep international students in mind when considering obstacles to success. Their challenges often differ greatly from domestic students.
- Great idea! If certain topics were destigmatized (e.g. mental health), it would also help open more conversations.
- It will be important to gather data so non-academic cohorts can be analyzed. Thinking specifically about international students and what support they need.
- How to identify before failure/struggle and retain/support student dignity.
- Video tape the experience of the individual in order to identify those “barriers.” Oxford did this approach and it was successful.
- How, if at all, will the admissions process reflect this commitment to persistence? What is the role of recruitment/admissions in the effort?
- Custom myPSU would provide more tools and personalization to understand your status and objectives.
- Case management for students with emergency financial need.
- How can approaches be individualized and culturally responsive and sustaining?
- Please take a critical lens and consider the cultural replication of oppressions possibly “baked into” the A.I.
- Persistence is more connected to academic success than this current definition.
- PSU students are different. How can we make sure the predictive data is PSU-specific?
- Track international student persistence specifically.
  - Reasons for transfer.
  - Leaving before graduation.

SCOPE

*Poster content viewed by attendees:*

- Learn from and recognize effective case management already in use at PSU.
- Identify practices that promote student success and identify gaps in existing resources.
- Develop a case management model that scales across PSU and leverages data to identify students who are the most likely to benefit from proactive interventions.
- Identify resource needs to support such a model.
- Implement and scale the model (if adequate resources are available).
Responses:

- Response to first bullet point “Learn from and recognize effective...”: Yes. DOSL, advising, UHRL.
- Use systems (EAB) already in place to support students across the board. Help them persist!
- There are so many “case management” systems in place already, would be so great if some could be consolidated.
- One stop portal for folks/students to easily identify resources! Maybe the financial wellness team.
- Faculty need to see themselves as part of the case management team. Work in concert with others to do wraparound for students who need it.
- Instead of “case management” it should be totally (?) relational and collaborative.
- Start from an assets lens vs a deficit mentality.
- Incorporate well-being. Mental and physical health.
- Expand the writing center!
- Mentor session registration campaigns
- Universal design needs to inform process of innovation to include all.
- Every student is N=1 (?) Each student matters.
- Have small focus groups with departments (non-academic) who are working with student cases. How do they track and compile information?
- Faculty as mentors, but more teaching load means less mentoring opportunities, especially among NTTF.
- Learn to address early attendance problems and refer to advisors (department roll via Google Docs_ and find a way to talk to struggling Freshman week 3 of term.
- Is there a way to ask faculty for a midterm prompt to identify student concerns?
  - Response: Great idea! If it were an anonymous survey, it could help reduce anxiety. Some students may not be comfortable with going to office hours.
- For this case approach to work we need to rebuild an environment where advisors, etc. and faculty all respect the positive role each plays--and believes all working for the better student experience.
  - Response: and peer support systems.

PROJECTS

Current Project Responses:

- Student Legal Services
- SHAC
- Care Team
- Sounds like our CSN
- Multi-lingual FRINQ-SINQ Lab
- International Student and Scholar Services
- Identifying and refer of missing Freshman registration to advisors in UNST.
- UNST peer mentor program and faculty focus on core and support for students.
- Residence Life’s live-on staff crisis response and follow up: UHRL
- CIRR: Committee for International Retention and Recruitment
- Student groups with cultural identity in STEM: e.g.) SWE, WE in CS, SHIP, NSBE
- Presidential education international conversation model for live-on students: UHRL
- Student group reinforcing disciplinary e.g.) Viking motor sports, aerospace society, steel bridge CAT
Other projects from UHRL were referenced in academic support projects and engagement projects:

- Assessment of residential student engagement and early alert/outreach for those students.
- Intervention for students on academic warning/probation
- Progress reports for all our staff and some students. Students are asked to meet with professors week 5 to get feedback about grades.

**Affordability**

Address affordability for PSU students by identifying the total cost of attending PSU, improve students’ financial wellness, and develop more effective ways to leverage financial aid, scholarship and remissions.

**VISION Responses:**

- Break down the individuals further! Example- undocumented students cannot get financial aid = bank loans. Most bank loans do not fund dreamers
- More emergency funding available as rash award.
- More TA/GA/RA funded positions
- Laundry services should be made more affordable. At Oregon State University, laundry services are free
- Money should be accompanied with other support success, such as mentorship may be $x mentors
- Establish cohort model and block in-person scheduling to M/W or T/R or F/S or line with online as fill for schedule problems
- Advising helps freshman plan whole first year schedule with the constraints included
- Schedule whole year in Jan/Feb
- Identifying students missing Gen Ed
- Do we really need our students to buy their books?
- Efficiency in filling classes- have what students need when they need it
- Perhaps having personal finance/ budgeting as part of gen. Ed
- Prioritizing affordability being at the top most level of budgeting. PSU must lower admin costs and pass the savings on to students.
- Let students know about scholarships, though their academic advisor. Resource center, financial aid office, financial wellness center. Have scholarship information more accessible
- I pay $480 a month for a meal plan which is poorly honored. If I wanted hotdogs, pizza, and poorly cooked meat I could make it at home for a fraction of the cost. This is a scam
- Create a space where students don’t feel poorshamed.
- Tuition lock once a student has been admitted to PSU their tuition is “locked” for 4 years (no increases)
- More online classes at reduced cost
- Help students navigate the system. Especially for the first generation students, there are lots of barriers.
- Stop all printing! Save money, trees, and FTE. Including paychecks-everyone on ACH
- Reassess online learning fees. And/or make transparent what value students are getting for that extra money.
- Scholarship GA/TA support for retention
SCOPE

Poster content viewed by attendees:

Tuition and fees
- Address fees structure and how fees are communicated to students
- Review remissions process
- Reduce time to degree completion
- Review tuition structure
  - Differentials
  - Academic incentives
  - Special programs
- Clear communication on expected cost

Resources
- Affordable housing
- Subsidized, at cost meals
- No cost or low cost textbooks
- Emergency grants
- Food insecurity

Responses:
- Parking is expensive, provide better transport subsides, like OHSU
- Open source textbooks. For this great initiative to happen widely we need to: make this peer reviewed publications count for P&T
- Importance of providing scholarships as promised- international student athletes that were “wed” to PSU but ended up not getting what they were promised.
- Return to plateau pricing for credits
- Improve support for graduate students: more teaching assistant opportunities
- Not sure this scope includes grads too? Make it explicit.
- Reduce or remove online fee. It can be a big burden. Students taking online classes aren’t using as many on-campus resources but have to pay more.
- Can PSU create more low cost and close housing for students
- Review appropriateness of existing fees
- New catering is expensive. Work with PSU eats to provide more affordable meals
- If we pay enormous amounts for a dining plan, I shouldn’t feel starved.
- Allow choice for things like meal plans first year and gym fees
- Add a mascot crows=sell swag to support student remission
- Meal plan change and in cost requirements, etc. Can be difficult for freshman and low income students
- More low/ho cost textbooks would be great. Also, more transparency with where the tuition is going would be appreciated. It seems like each year tuitions increasing.
- Affordable housing- there is a need. Combine housing development with private investment and get this done.
- Hire less admin/VPs
- How can we secure more emergency funds for students who need help getting to graduation
- Lower textbook costs as well as make programs to help students understand and find resources for managing costs over the long-term
- Increase support and funding for the open textbook projects to lower textbook costs for students
- Try a regressive tax structure approach on tuition and fees. It has been proven to possibly resolve
PROJECTS

Current Project Responses:
- Give day campaign for emergency fund scholarships
- College specific and program specific emergency funds
- FWC
- CISFS food insecurity work - free food market
- PSU wide emergency fund - still making system to equitable disperse funds
- Idea: focus on environment and people around PSU that we effect, like homelessness
- Reuse room
- Food pantry
- Not mentioned yet, open academic resources basically free textbooks mostly
- Case management model for students with financial aid
- SLS served PSU students up to 1 million in legal fees by assisting legal issues
- Address the digital divide. Notebooks for students? Check out?
- Death to matric fee! Students do not understand it. Very unwelcoming
- Create a student laptop assistance for students who cannot afford to purchase

Past Project Responses:
- Consociated video platform OIT and OAI
- Self-serve streaming and capture classrooms
- Put more resources into quality and consist of online classes, better tools and resources to make synchronous activities possible, resources and support online
- IP all student supports have web-based support available - advising, counseling
- Meet students in the tech they are using.

Academic Success
Realize PSU's potential to be a model of academic excellence through the achievement of equitable outcomes, culturally responsive curriculum, and an innovative, engaging and student-centered pedagogy.

VISION
Responses:
- Excellent and improvered research that inspires
- We need university-wide graduate writing/communication support.
  - Grad communication center.
  - Non-credit school writing center.
- ^YES
- How will you manage accountability with curriculum changes
- Provide bias training that is required for faculty
- Have all faculty promote OER's and clear/reduce textbook costs
- Stronger academic communication around Gen-Ed goals
- Create more on-campus jobs. Students want to work where it's convenient
- Faculty success and student success - art related
- How does OAI tie into Student Success Effort?
- How does the work of the Diversity Action Council tie into the Student Success Effort?
- Diversity in education perspective
SCOPE

Poster content viewed by attendees:

Curriculum
- Focus on courses that impact many students
  - Reduce DFW rates
  - Focus on equity gaps
  - Visibility to current state ("denormalize")
  - Growth Mindset and Belonging

Assessment
- Student experience in the classroom
  - Learning outcomes (Assessment is needed with focus on DFW/grades)

Resources
- Academic Support outside of the classroom

Responses:
- Eliminate courses with more than 100 students
- How will you support/require this in graduate programs?
- Courses and assignments need to focus on being meaningful and applicable to students’ goals, experiences, and passions
- Yes! Critical thinking and academic writing and communication! UNST is great at this! Expand and elevate these courses!
- We need this for grad students too!
- Think about how to fold-in trainings on these issues with Adjuncts
- We need an undergraduate research center on campus to help with this. Help students engage with undergrad research opportunities early. Will academics, such as sense of communication, change student ideas about future careers and develop their identities as scholars. So many benefits
- Curriculum needs to help students diversity engage their agency,
- Include interventions for the toxic stress/time/self-management that lead to issues with academic integrity.
- Consider the impact of curricular changes
- Consider strategies other than training:
  - Celebrate
  - Support
  - Fund
  - Decognive
- If we promote high impact practice, we can support marginalized student success

PROJECTS

Current Project Responses:
- Student experience project
- Fix course evaluation. It’s a mess online? Paper? Ad-hoc?
- Reducing academic misconduct rates for international students
- For residential students- academic success coaching for FY students living with us. Meet with a coach 5 times a term. Marketed towards conditional admits. Run by UHRL
- For residential students - students on academic warning are required to meet with peers for academic success coaching. They meet about 6 times a term, run by UHRL
- Weekly events called success series for residential students. Focused on different areas of specific for FY and upper cluster transfer. Run by UHRL
● For residential students- 3.0 club- 6 week workshop series for FY students. Geared towards conditional admits. Work with SHAC, REC, FWC. Run by UHRL
● Assembly of student engagement and quality of life survey. Home grown early alert system for residential students focusing on social and academic engagement department-> UHRL
● FYE-FRINQ: learning community assistant partnership [living learning communities] UHRL
● IELP to PSU Pathways Programs- UG and GR
● Second year experience (Living Learning Community) dedicated building for second year students. Community focuses on the needs of our second year students and community to building connections to PSU, faculty, and Portland. UHRL
● Transfer specific events, programs and support for students living on-campus. Through peer support space called University Success. Run by UHRL
● All UHRL student employees meet with professors during week 5 to get academic feedback. Students in our coaching programs also participate.