UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO DENVER

CHANCELLOR’S ACTION TEAMS

FINAL REPORT SUMMARIES

May 18, 2017

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Advising Action Team Report Overview

Academic Advising Action Team
Sarah Fields, CLAS (Chair)
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Sam Kim, Student Retention and Success
Linda Brooker, Business School
Leo Darnell, CAP
Corey Edwards, OIT
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Jenn Park, CU South Denver
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Brian Schaeffer, Registrar’s Office
Sandy Snyder-Mondragon, SEHD

In September 2016, the Chancellor’s Working Group on Undergraduate Advising recommended 12 things that might be done relatively quickly to improve undergraduate advising with the primary goal of increasing student retention and graduation rates. Since December of that same year through the present, subcommittees of the Advising Action team have worked to evaluate and, if appropriate, implement those 12 items as described below under “Short-Term Action Items.”

In addition, the Advising Action Team strongly recommends that the institution explore the following long-term, major initiatives:

- Hire additional advisors to move the institution closer to recommended student-to-advisor ratios across all schools and colleges. This is a must.
- Create and resource a university-wide Transfer Center to help recruit transfer students, coordinate relationships with community colleges, and evaluate transfer credit quickly (proposal attached).
- Create the position of Advisor Leader (exact title and rank TBD but recommend fairly senior). This Advising Leader would be the primary contact for all undergraduate advising units and the final word on all transfer evaluations and processes. Currently each advising office reports to a different dean and ASAC reports to VC Cardenas; the result is a degree of isolation which can create different practices and approaches to transfer credit application as well as occasionally conflicting information. A central leader with the authority to enforce standard practices and communications would be helpful, as would the ability to communicate as an equal with the Deans. Further this person would lead a group to evaluate best practices for advising generally and create a long-term vision for CU Denver advising.
SHORT-TERM ACTION ITEMS

The following items are not listed in priority order. The full reports from each of the 12 subcommittees are attached as appendices.

Recommendation 1: Reiterate Institutional Commitment to Equity Scorecard Report for Retention and Completion

Actions to date:
- Goal: to explore how to increase retention and graduation rate of underrepresented student populations
- Identified proportion of, retention of, and graduation rates of traditionally underrepresented minorities on campus

Recommended future action:
- Support and coordinate Summer Bridge programs
- Support TRIO and EOP (EOP would like funding to hire 2 additional retention and outreach specialists)
- Encourage diversity in hiring faculty and staff
- Support President’s Diversity Fund
- Promote scholarship support for undocumented students as well as other underrepresented student populations

Recommendation 2: Standardize Undergraduate Degree Plan Documents

Actions to date:
- Utilized the recommendations from the Working Groups to create standardized undergraduate degree plan documents
  - The degree plan documents allow some flexibility to accommodate each major’s needs
  - Page 1, side 1- CU Denver Core
    - This must look the same for every major and contain the same information
  - Page 1, side 2- University and School/College Graduation Requirements/Policies
    - University Graduation Requirements/Policies must be the same
    - School/College Graduation Requirements/Policies editable by each School/College
  - Page 2, side 1-2- Major requirements and sample 4-year graduation plan
    - This is editable by each school/college/major; however, strive for consistent look
  - Page 3- Advising Checklist
    - Completely editable for each major, this needs to work for each major
    - All degree requirements should be included

Ongoing action:
- Sent documents to EAB to organize and look ‘pretty.’ EAB currently has documents.

Recommended future action:
- Receive documents back from EAB
- Meet with each school/college/major/advisors to discuss the new Standardized Undergraduate Degree Plan documents and gain buy-in
• Create goal to start using documents, should coincide with a new catalog year
• Organize the editing efforts each year, and keep and maintain a central repository that is easily accessible to students
  o Distribute to relevant offices such as Admissions Office, Transfer Admission Center, ASAC, CU Denver website
• Ensure all advising units are continually using, and adhering to, the Standardized Undergraduate Degree Plan documents
• A webmaster should create and maintain a website where every undergrad degree is linked to a degree plan (e.g., [http://www.ctcd.edu/academics/programs-of-study/a-z-programs/](http://www.ctcd.edu/academics/programs-of-study/a-z-programs/))

**Recommendation 3: Create “You are Near Graduation” Communication**

**Actions to date:**
• Determined current college/school practice and learned that nothing is standard
• Proposed workflow process through Starfish for standard communication
• Met with EAB to discuss how SSC could work with this and subcommittee learned of other EAB practices that might be more useful than an isolated email

**Recommended future action:**
• Work with EAB and SSC platform to create a university-wide near-to-graduation campaign following experiences and processes of other EAB schools

**Recommendation 4: Standardize Catalog Due Date**

**Actions to date:**
• Reviewed policies, processes, and publication of catalog

**Recommended future action:**
• Institutional respect for and strict adherence to deadline dates
• Create advisory committee to review and approve rare exceptions to dates
• Establish catalog working committee
• Align all CU Denver calendars to same annual start date (suggest Fall semester)
• Evaluate catalog software needs

**Recommendation 5: Advising Website Updates**

**Actions to date:**
• An advising website has been live since fall 2015
• Goal of subcommittee was to make the website more robust and dynamic
• Worked with EAB for feedback on the site

**Recommended future action:**
• Hire a full-time staff member who could oversee the daily maintenance on this site as well as the timeline and the Transfer website; this person would also coordinate communication between all advising offices
• Expand website to include degree sheets, roadmaps, and degree planning tools
• Expand website to include most recent policies most relevant to students (drop/withdrawal, Medical Withdrawal, etc.)
• Publicize website
• Create welcome videos and other communications from each advising office
Recommendation 6: Admissions Communications: Goal to understand what is being sent to admitted students

Actions to date:
- Learned what materials are sent out

Recommended future action:
- Create a Microsoft OneDrive for Undergrad Admissions and all schools and colleges to share info sent to admitted students
- Create a master timeline of all communications sent to admitted students
- Establish the EAB proposed university-wide Communications Committee

Recommendation 7: Comprehensive Timeline for Students

Actions to date:
- Created Google Calendar with all student relevant dates at https://calendar.google.com/calendar/embed?src=o9vid5ok6hleffve5busmo0tig%40group.calendar.google.com&
- Created a Student Reader’s View timeline (see appendix)

Recommended future action:
- Attach these links and calendars to the Advising websites as well as the proposed Transfer website and assign updates to proposed position of advising/transfer webmaster

Recommendation 8: Standardize Add/Drop Forms and Procedures

Actions to date: New university wide standard drop procedure will begin fall 2017

Ongoing action: Subcommittee has volunteered to continue to try to work to create a standardized add form and procedure for the university.

Recommendation 9: Degree Audit Communication/Improvement

Actions to date:
- Meetings with various constituents and users to understand breakdowns in communication and to build trust
- Identified challenges of Registrar’s Office (RO) authority over system but lack same depth of content knowledge (faculty) or applicability (advisors)
- Identified structural/organizational inefficiencies
- Implement Optimal Character Recognition (OCR) software [scheduled May 22, 2017]

Recommended future action:
- Provide RO additional resources
- Implement in RO two-person check-off process for all new transfer courses
- Promote good relationships between RO and advising staffs (the RO’s primary clients in many ways) in part via regular meetings
- Articulate and form applicability rules for top 20 feeder schools
- Blueprint optimal business process for processing all transfer courses/credits from start-to-finish
- Promote consistency in transfer applicability by giving greater but not exclusive authority to RO to route CU Denver Core classes
- Use more i-flags as blanket rules
Recommendation 10: Advising Survey: Goal was to create standardized survey for all students who are advised for quality control and evaluation of concerns

Actions to date:
- Completed draft of exit survey

Ongoing action:
- Seek approval of all advising offices
- Implement survey and evaluation by Fall 2017

Recommendation 11: Holds/Service Indicators (SI)

Actions to date:
- Identified negative SIs
- Worked with EAB to begin to share and address through SSC platform

Recommended future action:
- Create glossary for negative SIs including directions on how students can resolve
- Evaluate negative SIs and use only as needed

Recommendation 12: International Students

Actions to date:
- Evaluated process of communicating with and registering first-time first-year international students (FFIS)
- Created communication flowchart and collected sample communications
- Goal to promote earlier registration of FFIS
- Created clear communication and expectations to FFIS regarding when and how to register

Recommended future action:
- Create clear communication and expectations for advising offices for consistency of communication
- Standardize academic advising for FFIS across schools/colleges prior to arrival on campus (via skype or zoom)
- Encourage all international students to register for each semester by specific deadlines
- Each advising office should have an International Liaison as point of contact for OIA and clearance for communications
Improving Student Transfer from Colorado Community Colleges

Community College Pathways Action Team (CCPAT)

Margaret Wood, CFD (Chair)
Raul Cardenas, Student Affairs (Leadership Liaison)
Krista Busch, CAP
Ritu Chopra, SEHD
Camden Farmer, Registrar’s Office
Sarah Fields, CLAS
Zoe Fisher, Auraria Library
Quintin Gonzalez, CAM
Tyler Hensley, CAM Student
Bruce Janson/Maryam Darbeheshti, Engineering
Abby Muro, Transfer Admissions
Genny Parker/Lindsey Gullicks rud, International Admissions
Ron Ramirez, Business School
Lori Ryan, Education and Human Development
Rey Salvidrez, Student Government Association
James Speed, Educational Opportunity Programs
Alana Jones, International Affairs
Mary Lovit, Liberal Arts and Sciences
Executive Summary

Community College Pathways Action Team Charge:

Take action on recommendations of the Community College Pathways Working Group with the goal of implementing activities that will help CU Denver create a more transfer affirming culture and build functional transfer friendly policies and processes. Ultimately, we hope that more graduates from the five metro area Colorado community colleges, will be able to transfer with greater ease, thrive in their college experience, and achieve their goals of earning a bachelor’s degree because of the work we do.

Recommendations of the Community College Pathways Working Group (Fall 2016):

1. Recreate the Transfer Admissions Center web site;
2. Assure that transfer credit, applicability, equivalencies, and longevity policies are coherent and consistent; and
3. Create a transfer student center with comprehensive services.

Projects Undertaken by the Community College Pathways Action Team (Spring 2017):

1. Transfer Student Center Proposal
2. Clarifying Program Pathways on the Transfer Admissions Center Web Site
3. Colorado Community College Transfer Student Snapshot
4. “Our Students” Data Sharing with Colorado Community Colleges
5. Embedded Advisor from UCD at CCD
6. Community College Advisor Workshop
7. Collaborative Grant Opportunities Research
8. Reverse Transfer Notification
9. The Student’s Perspective: CO CC Student Focus Groups

Broad Recommendations CCPAT (Spring 2017)

1. Prioritize transfer student success by developing a Transfer Student Center to centralize services for transfer students and coordinate efforts and initiatives related to transfer students.
2. Make it possible for Colorado community college students to use Transferology to understand both the transferability and applicability of their courses on demand by conducting a major project aimed at creating applicability rules for all of the courses taught at all of the Colorado community colleges.
3. Seek to create clear pathways to degree attainment by exploring the development of meta-majors in collaboration with community college partners.
4. Seek to create clear pathways by effectively communicating existing pathways on the Transfer Admissions web site.
5. Build systematic, robust transfer partnerships with the 5 metro-area community colleges through purposefully created meetings, workshops, and activities on all levels of the university.
6. Provide tailored transfer advising, orientation and other services to support the special needs of transfer students.
Description of CCPAT Action Projects

Transfer Student Center Proposal

The Community College Pathways Action Team, in collaboration with Sarah Fields of the Advising Action Team, drafted a proposal that would help CU Denver to coordinate and bring together some of the efforts around transfer student success.

The CU Denver Transfer Student Center would expand the already significant work of the Transfer Admissions Center and would help students who transfer (or are considering transferring) to the University of Colorado Denver with navigating the academic and cultural landscape of a public, urban, research university. The Transfer Student Center would focus on supporting a successful transition, helping transfers build connections and community, and provide institutional leadership on transfer student issues and concerns.

From the student’s perspective, the Transfer Student Center would serve as the front door of the university; a place where they would have easy access to transfer specialists, advisors, admissions counselors, financial aid professionals, registrar/degree audit specialists, school/college faculty mentors, and peer advocate leaders, all focused on transfer student success in a single location. The transfer professionals in the center would work as a team with each student to assure a smooth and expeditious transition to CU Denver.

From an institutional and administrative perspective, the Transfer Student Center would serve as a central location for work related to building structured and enduring relationships with community colleges; exploring and experimenting with innovative pathways; understanding patterns of transfer student success; and facilitating articulation agreements.

Colorado Community College Transfer Student Snapshot

There are persistent and pervasive misconceptions among faculty, staff, and administrators about transfer students. The CCPAT decided to combat this situation and to raise awareness about Colorado community college transfer students by creating what we hope is an engaging infographic powered by accurate information about Colorado community college transfer student demographics and success (Appendix E). Raul Cardenas, Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs will circulate the infographic to key academic and student affairs offices across campus. We hope that the infographic will spur conversations and challenge common assumptions about our Colorado community college transfer students.

“Our Students”: Data Sharing with Metro Area Community Colleges

The CCPAT hopes to contribute to fostering inter-institutional relationships by instituting a data sharing process between CU Denver and our Colorado community college colleagues. The CCPAT worked with the Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness to create the format and organization of Community College Profiles. These profiles include information on student demographics, preparedness, performance, application numbers, admission rates, enrollment, full-time/part-time status, retention rates, graduation rates, and majors. The Office of Institutional Research and Effectiveness will automatically generate these reports each year and send them to the Office of the
Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs. The VCSA will distribute them to community college administrators. We hope that these reports can become the basis of shared discussions between key players in the transfer processes at our metro area community colleges and key players on our campus.

Embedded Admissions Counselor

Abby Muro at the Transfer Admissions Center is working to build strong transfer partnerships by developing and implementing a labor/resource sharing project that requires UCD and CCD to jointly invest in shared support services that benefit transfer students. This not only helps to reinforce institutional bonds it also provides crucial services that are essential to transfer student success. Beginning in the Summer of 2017 an Admissions Councilor from the University of Colorado Denver will staff the Career and Transfer Center at the Community College of Denver for 20 hours per week.

Collaborative Grant Opportunities Research

The CCPAT asked the Office of Research Development and Education (ORDE) to conduct a fund search for grant opportunities that would allow us to focus on improving transfer student experiences and success and work collaboratively with community college partners. We identified three promising funding streams based on the fund search and we identified an additional funding possibility from an article on Inside Higher Education web site. These have been forwarded to appropriate personnel.

Reverse Transfer Notification

The CCPAT has developed a strategy to boost participation rates in the Degree Within Reach Program of reverse transfer so that more students will be awarded the degree they have earned. Currently there is no outward facing indication on student records or the student portal regarding eligibility for this program. Camden Farmer in the Registrar’s Office has developed a procedure where the records of eligible students are flagged with a service indicator indicating their eligibility for this program. This service indicator will be visible to both students and advisors. If a student is awarded a reverse transfer degree their student record in Campus Solutions will be marked with an attribute indicating attainment of this degree.

Student’s Perspective: Focus Groups with CO CC Transfer Students

Members of the CCPAT conducted two 90-minute focus groups with Colorado community college transfer students to gain a greater insight on how students perceive the transfer experience. On April 27, 2017, Ritu Chopra, James Speed, and Abby Muro conducted a focus group with community college transfer students who have attended CU Denver for at least a year. This focus group was conducted to gather information about Community college transfer student adjustment to CU Denver. This information will be used to support the development of training for new Transfer PALs who (hopefully) will be working in Student Life.

Next Steps Communication – Transfer Evaluation Complete

Camden Farmer in the Registrar’s Office has created a communication that will be sent to students once their transfer credit evaluation and applicability to CU Denver core has been completed. This communication outlines: (1) how to view the credit in the degree audit system; (2) how to interpret the application of credits that CU Denver accepted; (3) How to request any further review of their credits for
application. The communication will be sent to the student through the COMGEN functionality of Campus Solutions using automated functionality.

Specific Recommendations of CCPAT Action Team

Prioritize Student Success

✓ Create a Transfer Student Center to centralize services for transfer students and coordinate efforts and initiatives related to transfer students.
✓ Hire more staff for the Transfer Admissions Center
✓ Hire Transfer Team members for the Registrar’s Office to improve turnaround time Transfer Evaluations.
✓ Feature Community college transfer issues at the annual Undergraduate Symposium to highlight importance of Colorado community college transfer students, their needs, support needed, and how best to work with them.
✓ Communicate from the top of the administrative ladder consistent messages that the success of Colorado community college transfer students is important to us as an institution. More generally, that teaching and the work that we do with students is significant and valued.
✓ Develop an external transfer advisory board comprised of advisors from feeder two-year colleges that meet regularly.
✓ Develop an internal advisory council comprised of staff involved with the admissions and advising of incoming transfer students that meet on a regular (monthly) basis.
✓ Create scholarship and aid targeted specifically to transfer students.
✓ Ask programs to develop course schedules that would allow transfer students to complete degrees by taking only evening courses.
✓ Conduct focus groups/market research to better understand transfer student choices and challenges.

Create Clear Program Pathways with Aligned High Quality Instruction

✓ Make it possible for Colorado community college students to use Transferology to understand both the transferability and applicability of their courses on demand by conducting a major project aimed at creating applicability rules for all of the courses taught at all of the Colorado community colleges.
✓ Expand the Inter-institutional Registration program to the other metro area community colleges so that students can complete courses at CU Denver that are necessary for their program but not available at their college.
✓ Design TAC web site with accurate, easy to access information about program pathways.
✓ Identify programs that do not have Articulation Agreements or Transfer Guides and request that they create a pathway for students.
✓ Explore the development of meta-majors at CU Denver in collaboration with Colorado community colleges.
✓ Appoint a single administrator/faculty member that is the lead articulation officer for the university.
✓ Improve communication across the campus between advisors, the Registrar’s Office, administrators at schools and Admissions.
Design unconventional pathways, as necessary (Appendix – Promising Practices)
  o Identify universities/colleges that are developing “academies” on community college campuses’ and evaluate the potential of developing similar programs.
  o Identify universities/colleges that are developing “university centers” on CC campus to evaluate the potential of developing similar programs.
  o Consider how we could use “university center principles” to expand programs onto the Denver South campus.

Provide Tailored Transfer Student Advising

✓ Assure that Transferology is fully functional and able to provide course credit and applicability to ensure that transfer students will receive consistent and timely course equivalency reports with the offer of admissions, or soon thereafter.
✓ Hire a Admissions Counselors who can serve as an embedded resources on community college campus’
✓ Conduct a comprehensive survey of formal and informal transfer policies at the university, school/college, and program levels with the goal of creating more standardized university wide policies.
✓ Have the Transfer Admissions Center open on weekends and evenings for transfer (adult, working) students.
✓ Encourage prospective transfer students to choose a major before transferring and work with community colleges to help students explore academic and career options
  o Alter admission policy to require that transfer students declare a major before application considered.
  o Outline the steps that would be necessary for the development of meta-majors and identify key players involved in the process
✓ Provide high-quality, timely advising to students before they transfer
  o Evaluate presence of CU Denver advisors at CC campus’ and determine if a stronger presence might be helpful (i.e. having a full time CU Denver adviser at each campus).
✓ Enhance orientation program that is exclusively for incoming transfer students.
✓ Offer face-to-face option for transfer students in the Spring as well as the Fall
  o Make transfer orientation mandatory (but if you make it mandatory it must be meaningful and effective)
✓ Support the development and implementation of Transfer PALs and Transfer Experience
✓ Develop a “one-stop-team” that visit the primary feeder colleges that offer on-site advising, course evaluation, admission, and financial aid for students at that college.
✓ Ensure that the current telecommunications program plan in place for transfer students throughout the enrollment funnel is adequate.
✓ Put a systematic communications plan in place for transfer inquiries.
✓ Put a systematic communications plan in place for transfer accepts
Build Strong Transfer Partnerships

✓ Pursue grant opportunities with partner community colleges
✓ Develop student ambassadors for transfer students
✓ Organize regular meetings with administrators and faculty around targeted transfer topics.
✓ Create opportunities for faculty from CU Denver and two-year faculty in similar disciplines can gather to discuss curricular and articulation issues (program-to-program discussions).
✓ Continue to share data in the form of “Community College Profiles” with area CCs.
✓ Request that the 5 metro area community colleges provide names and addresses of “transfer-eligible” students who have reached sophomore status.
✓ Request the names of Phi Theta Kappa (honor society) members at CO CC.
K-12 PIPELINE DEVELOPMENT ACTION TEAM
FINAL REPORT

Submitted by:

Kelly Hupfeld, Chair (SPA)  Rachael Kuroiwa (CAP)
Margarita Bianco (SEHD)    Marjorie Levine-Clark (CLAS)
Joann Brennan (CU South Denver)  Dominic Martinez (AMC Diversity and Inclusion)
Leanna Clark (University Communications)  Jason Robinson (K-12 Outreach)
Michael Ferrara (CLAS)  Tanida Ruampant (CAM)
Anthony Fontana (Admissions)  Kevin Seeber (Library)
Kate Goodman (Inworks)  Catherine Wilson (Admissions)
Cindy Gutierrez (SEHD)
Executive Summary

This report is submitted by the members of the K-12 Pipeline Development Action Team, who worked during the spring 2017 semester to begin the implementation of recommendations of the Chancellor’s K-12 Pipeline Development Working Group. The Working Group was charged with developing ideas for how CU Denver could become the “university of choice” for more Denver-area high school graduates.

Given the breadth and complexity of their charge, the Working Group's recommendations spanned nearly all academic and administrative aspects of the university. In particular, the Working Group recommended that CU Denver better coordinate and leverage its K-12 outreach efforts; develop new programming and pathways to attract students from targeted metro-area subpopulations; partner with schools and colleges in strategic recruiting initiatives; and develop messaging to promote CU Denver strengths and dispel misconceptions.

The Action Team focused its work on several high-priority recommendations, using subcommittees that met over the course of the semester to make progress on each topic. On May 15, the Action Team convened as a whole to review the work of the subcommittees and determine recommended priorities for the continuation of this work. We summarize critical recommendations and important ongoing work next; many important other initiatives and areas for potential investigation appear in greater detail throughout this report.

As an overarching body to coordinate K-12 outreach and pipeline efforts, the Action Team has facilitated the creation of a new K-12 Outreach Coordinating Council. The council will provide strategic oversight and offer guidance to academic units with a goal of ensuring that outreach experiences are nested within a larger strategy of coordinated contact and engagement with prospective students. The K-12 Outreach Coordinating Council will be a critical mechanism for aligning the programs and initiatives that make up the K-12 pipeline to CU Denver, and ensuring that the pipeline is seamless and strategic. Tracking of student outreach participants, identification and targeting of critical feeder schools and other strategic efforts are critical to ensuring that local students have a sustained, positive interaction with CU Denver that strengthens their view of CU Denver as a preferred destination.

Priority Action Items: The Action Team recommends the following next steps, which represent the most critical needs and time-sensitive opportunities related to the pipeline to the university.

- A strong campus- and college-level mandate for the work of the K-12 Outreach Coordinating Council to ensure faithful participation from all partners, together with resources needed to adapt the participant tracking system used by the Anschutz Medical Campus to the downtown campus.
- Support for a new campus-wide STEM center, focused on K-12 STEM outreach and research, in the form of funds for administrative staff and assistance in/support for negotiating cooperative agreements between academic and administrative units to support center operations. Staff support would enhance the impact of committed funds from CLAS for center programming.
- Resources to develop an external-facing searchable website to promote CU Denver K-12 programming.
• Human and IT resources to quickly and efficiently implement Slate as the platform for undergraduate recruiting and admissions information, absolutely critical for the ability to coordinate targeted recruiting strategies.
• Campus leadership support for an organized effort to recruit, retain and nurture first-generation students, through a separate office serving first generation students, an expanded charge to student services offices in the Office of Diversity and Inclusion, and/or strengthened college-specific programs, with appropriate resources.

Ongoing Work: Beyond the short-term action items, the Action Team is also continuing to gather information and work on several other longer-term, but also important, initiatives. Some of the continuing work of the Action Team will be undertaken by the K-12 Outreach Coordinating council. Beyond the council’s specific focus, pipeline and recruiting efforts are complex, and many needs remain. To this end, the Action Team is requesting a formal charge for a subgroup of interested members to continue work on key initiatives in this area. Areas of focus, all arising from the Action Team’s work this year, include the following.

• Design and development of pilot #CUDenverWorks programs with interested units to match major-relevant paid positions with students who need to work.
• Development of procedures to support an increased pool of career-relevant work-study and internship positions to benefit all students
• Identification of partner programs open to guaranteed graduate admissions tracks and development of policies and procedures for recruiting and admissions.
• Exploration of novel honors programming beyond the existing University Honors and Leadership Program.
• Development of a pilot program for CU Denver students to serve as Lynx Ambassadors in metro-area high schools.
• Coordination with the Scholarship Campaign Steering Committee and other partners to identify scholarship opportunities and needs related to pipeline and recruiting efforts, both generally and for targeted populations (e.g. honors students, first generation students, and dual enrollment participants).
• Expansion of CU in the City messaging to include specific school/college campaigns and campaigns for identified student subpopulations.
• Exploration of ways to facilitate the development targeted recruiting initiatives and partnerships with schools and colleges, including possibly expanding Admissions and K-12 Outreach staff to include a dedicated targeted partnerships coordinator.
Unmet need for financial resources is one of the top reasons for lack of student persistence. After an intensive collaborative process throughout the summer of 2016, the Chancellor’s Working Group on the Strategic Use of Scholarships and Financial Aid made recommendations in the fall of 2016 to assure that scholarship resources are being strategically used to meet the needs of our students, to attract and retain students who can most benefit from them, and to make the case for raising significant new resources. The Working Group divided these recommendations into three classifications: BETTER, SMARTER and BIGGER. The Chancellor charged this Action Team with working throughout Spring 2017 to carry the work forward in a timely manner. As a result, this Action Team launched several of the recommendations that the Working Group suggested start immediately, and it has launched few of the recommended longer-term initiatives as well. The remainder of this report is organized as follows: for each item, we first state the Recommendation from the Working Group then summarize the action-to-date from the Action Team, and conclude with future planned or recommended actions.

**BETTER**

**Recommendation 1:** Create or invest in a dedicated scholarship portal that houses all scholarships available, a simple scholarship application for students, online scholarship review for faculty and external committees, and notifications to award recipients.

**Action to date:**
- Action Team members evaluated and discussed adoption of the AcademicWorks scholarship platform (Attachment #1). This package has been previously adopted by CU Boulder and recently purchased for use at UCCS.
- This Action Team strongly recommends adoption of AcademicWorks that includes dedicated OIT support and an administrative liaison to ensure system prioritization to enable effective rollout of the AcademicWorks platform (Attachment #2). **We recommend proceeding quickly with the**
purchase and implementation of AcademicWorks, allowing enough time to get our scholarship data entered with a goal of having it up and running by November 2017.

**Future Action:** The adoption of AcademicWorks will bring together all of the action items from the “BETTER” category, which focuses primarily on internal processes. It provides a venue for the compilation of data on all scholarship opportunities, will facilitate revision of the uniform application and adoption of a uniform timeline. An AcademicWorks Implementation Advisory Group (or Scholarship and Financial Aid Advisory Group – hereinafter Advisory Group) should be convened, with leadership designated from Student Affairs and representation from Scholarship Services and Programming, Advancement, Financial Aid, Student Success Partnership staff, School and College staff, faculty and students to finalize and garner campus-wide support for the adoption of a uniform application and deadlines for applications and awards.

**Recommendation 2:** Create scholarship database and assign responsibility -- Provide one-time funds for staff to gather all information about all scholarship opportunities, requirements, funding sources, awarding processes, etc. and available resource, restrictions, and use in one place. Create a system so that information is maintained on an ongoing basis.

**Action to Date:**
- Developed database fields to provide information utilized in the current student scholarship portal system and necessary AcademicWorks data.
- Action Team leadership garnered support for the data-collection effort through discussion with Deans and appointment of a point person for each School and College.
- Scholarship Services and Programming, with input from the Office of Advancement, compiled initial spreadsheets to create a draft database of more than 1300 scholarship items (Attachment #3) to be completed by appointed School and College staff.
- An introductory meeting with the School and College point-people has been convened and completed data will be submitted by July 1.

**Future Action:** The Office of Scholarship Services and Programming is leading data collection efforts. This activity requires substantial effort by staff from each School and College and often from department representatives, and it is being accomplished with existing resources. Once complete, the Scholarship Assistant Director will consult with point people and the Advisory Group to complete a data-maintenance plan. Personnel needs for ongoing data maintenance by Scholarship Services and Programming will need to be assessed.

**Recommendation 3:** Develop uniform scholarship application that allows for searches of the scholarship database and notifies students of the scholarships for which they are (potentially) eligible.

**Action to Date:**
- The uniform application currently resides in the student scholarship portal.
- This spring, the SRO conducted automated searches to determine student eligibility for scholarships and results were posted in the entry to each student’s portal.
- Letters were generated for individual students and provided to Schools and Colleges for distribution to students.
Future Action: These efforts will not be fully effective until all appropriate scholarships are in the database. At that time, the uniform application will be revised and improved to capture common requirements for scholarships and grants in consultation with the Advisory Group.

Recommendation 4: Establish and meet timelines. Convene a strategic group with representatives from admissions, financial aid, scholarships, faculty award committees and student government to determine the most effective timelines. Set and meet review, award, notification and posting deadlines for maximum student information and efficiency. Appropriate awards should be made early in the spring semester to incentivize admission acceptances and retention of continuing students. All of this should be done with information about what our competitors/peers are doing.

Action to Date:
- Current timeline has been compiled (Attachment #4).
- In discussions with the Student Success Partnership, the Scholarship Services and Programming and Advancement Offices developed a recommendation establishing uniform scholarship award dates for Fall, Spring and Summer Sessions campus-wide. Such award deadlines will be beneficial in many ways, including:
  a. Ability to assure students that scholarship award notifications will be made on an established date, so that students can plan and manage their financial aid.
  b. Provide the Office of Advancement with scholarship awardee names on a regular, pre-determined schedule so that the Office can plan and manage donor stewardship.
  c. Professionalizing the activities of the Student Success Partnership and providing it with the opportunity to streamline and improve the awarding process.
  d. Those overseeing individual scholarships are encouraged to conform to major campus deadlines (with exceptions on an as-needed basis) to facilitate timely posting of awards for optimal student response and the ability for Financial Aid staff to complete overaward review and award modification in a timely fashion (Attachment # 5).
- Financial Aid and Scholarship staff are being included in Student Success Project communication and scheduling portal.

Future Action: This timeline will be reviewed by the Advisory Group participants to evaluate workflow and student experience. Best practices should be incorporated into a final timeline with sensitivity to circumstances of our student population and campus. This group should communicate with internal constituents in a timely fashion and garner campus-wide support for adhering to uniform deadlines.

Recommendation 5: Staff up to develop all services and oversight of performance/participation based scholarships. Invest one-time funds to hire three additional personnel to reinforce Financial Aid and Scholarship Resource Office, with top priority on scholarship support personnel. Focus on expanding SRO to a staff of five), to include four scholarship advisors. Immediate need on scholarships side to develop wrap-around services, build scholarship community, student development, and more personalized experience for students.

Action to Date:
- Existing (previously) vacant positions in the Scholarship Services and Programming have been filled.
Future Action: Our recommendation remains from the initial Working Group Recommendation to increase Scholarship Services and Programming staff by one to reach the level of four scholarship advisors. This would allow Financial Aid staff to return their focus to efficiencies and implementation of strategic Financial Aid initiatives and would provide Scholarship staff to promote intended growth in the scholarship-cohort community concept.

Recommendation 6: Organize student services groups to provide “one stop shopping” for students where they can access advising, financial aid counseling, scholarship advising, and other support services seamlessly. Maybe it is a technology solution with a remote team or a co-located team.

Action to Date:
- Collaboration within the Student Success Partnership incorporates financial well-being as a targeted student-success outcome and includes financial aid and scholarship staff as Student Success Partnership team members.

Future Action: Incorporate financial aid and scholarship staff members in planning and rollout during this transition-planning phase of the Student Success Partnership.

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Recommendation 7: Assign responsibility for locating work-study employment. This could be accompanied by increases in paid internship opportunities. Discussions should include Student Employment, Career Services and Experiential Learning. (Note: The work of the Scholarship and Financial Aid Action Team focused on increasing work-study opportunities to provide better services to students. The internship focus was a larger part of the K-12 Action Team.)

Action to Date:
- In keeping with research indicating that campus employment in general and work-study in particular, improves student success, we look to increase on-campus employment opportunities.
- Information sheets are being created as a collaborative effort between the Career Center, the Job Location Development (JLD) Program, and the Scholarship and Financial Aid and K-12 Action Teams.
  - For work-study eligible students
  - For potential work-study employers
  - For job listing once employers are identified

Future Action: A summer campaign will be undertaken in collaboration with K-12 Action Team to expand on-campus employment opportunities and list them in Handshake, the student employment platform. A longer-term goal is to recruit off-campus employers if Federal work-study funding stabilizes. The current instability requires that we evaluate the number of work study jobs relative to available Work Study funds.

Recommendation 8: Pilot recruitment scholarships for out-of-state/international graduate (and undergraduate) students to increase yield in programs with capacity.

Action to date:
- Initial proposal for non-resident Master’s program pilot scholarship developed (Attachment #6)
• Completed financial evaluation in collaboration with the Office of Budget and Finance and gained approval for substantial investment to recruit new non-resident Master’s students for Fall 2017.

• Pilot underway – one scholarship per Master’s program; acceptances to be completed by May 30, 2017.

• Programs are required to report out on scholarship decision-making (and control-group applicants). Conservative statistics from preliminary data indicate:
  o Approximately 71% of programs that have completed the process have an acceptance.
  o Approximately 64% of extended offers to date have been accepted (compared with average non-resident acceptance rates of 25% and 35% for international and domestic out-of-state admissions without scholarship offers in previous years).

Future Action: The Action Team will coordinate the final collection of data and conduct analysis to determine the proportion of offers accepted and the attendance rate of acceptances and provide a final report. To understand recruitment effectiveness these data will be compared to AY18 non-recipients and all AY17 accepted students. Collaboration with the finance staff will help determine the financial effectiveness of the pilot program for possible future funding. This report will be shared with the Graduate School, Deans and CU Denver leadership team.

**Recommendation 9: Pilot retention scholarships (i.e., summer scholarships for students 1-2 courses below expected credit hours)**

**Action to Date:**

• Summer 2017 Advance Grant pilot underway (Attachment 7) – applications, enrollment and eligibility completed May 15: [http://www.ucdenver.edu/student-services/resources/CostsAndFinancing/FASO/Learn/FAQs/Types/Pages/Summer-Financial-Aid.aspx](http://www.ucdenver.edu/student-services/resources/CostsAndFinancing/FASO/Learn/FAQs/Types/Pages/Summer-Financial-Aid.aspx)
  o 83 qualified applicants applied for the Summer Advance Grant.
  o This is within the planned summer scholarship budget and no students will have their grant request declined due to lack of funds.
  o Approximately 75 currently meet enrollment criteria for the Summer Advance Grant. Final numbers will be provided once summer classes begin.

• Plan for ongoing evaluation. (OIRE staff have been consulted regarding data availability and evaluation strategy.)
  o Compare those who qualify (in the Credit Hour range) with those just outside of the credit hour range (and to last year’s students)
    ▪ Summer attendance and GPA (August 2017)
    ▪ Retention to fall semester (September 2017)
    ▪ Attendance next summer (June 2018)
    ▪ Progression to graduation

Future Action: An evaluation team consisting of Action Team member(s) and OIRE staff will gather and analyze data as noted in the evaluation plan above. Collaboration with the finance staff will help determine the financial effectiveness of the pilot program which will inform possible future funding. These results will be shared with the Office of Advancement Scholarship Campaign Manager, appropriate administrators in Student Affairs and the CU Denver leadership team.
Recommendation 10: Develop a system and process for updating/maintaining database and ensuring awards. Assign responsibility to ensure full award of all scholarships and aid.

Action to Date:
- Adoption of Academic Works as a scholarship management tool will catalyze this.

Future Action:
- Develop a process for continuous updating of scholarship opportunities with input of point people in Schools and Colleges under leadership of the Scholarship Office Director.
- Coordinate with Finance Office and Office of Advancement to assure up-to-date funding availability at least annually.
- The Office of Advancement and Scholarship Office will collaborate to produce annual reports of scholarship use and recipients.

Recommendation 11: Create case for donor support and work with creative/communications partners to build a long-term scholarship fundraising campaign. Examples of possible scholarship opportunities would be #CUDenverWorks (work study, paid internships and career-linked student sponsorship) and scholarships designed to improve retention and completion and student engagement. Other scholarship opportunities include

Action to Date:
- Concurrently with the Action Team’s activities, the Office of Advancement is planning CU Denver’s comprehensive scholarship fundraising campaign, to launch during CY2017. As part of that planning:
  - A Scholarship Campaign Steering Committee has been established and a Campaign Manager Identified.
  - Academic Works will provide streamlined access to scholarship award recipient data, which will support the campaign.

Future Action: Results of pilot and scholarship evaluation will be provided to the Office of Advancement. Initial evaluation of overall student need will inform Steering Committee priorities.

Recommendation 12: Designate a proportion of additional tuition to scholarships and aid to reach award levels that are commensurate with our peers. Comparison of CU Denver’s cost and aid data provided by OIRE with that of its 11 peers reveals that although the cost of attendance is the second highest of the peer group, our performance in providing scholarships and aid is in the bottom 1/3 in all categories. Specifically, CU Denver provides 54% of its students with assistance in the form of federal, state, local and institutional grant aid. This is compared to an average of 79% of students receiving aid at our peer institutions. In addition, the average amount per award ($6,030) is lower than all but one CU Denver peer.

Action to Date:
- The proposed new budget model allows for future strategic discussions that could lead to adding new revenue to boost investment in institutional financial aid.
Future Action: We recommend that this approach remain a priority until CU Denver is at least at the median level of our peers. Levels of overall need of CU Denver students and financial support available from our peers should be provided to the Scholarship Campaign Steering Committee.

Concluding Notes: There are important recommendations of the Chancellor’s Working Group for the Strategic Use of Scholarships and Financial Aid that were beyond the scope of this Action Team. We recommend that the following recommendations are prioritized for future action.

1. **Create a graduate stipend and tuition (scholarship) program so that all graduate students who are employed** as Teaching Assistants receive a stipend or salary as well as a tuition waiver. This should increase our competitiveness in attracting top-level graduate candidates.

2. **Evaluate staffing in Scholarship and Financial Aid Offices.** Although we recommend hiring additional staff to work in the scholarship area, full evaluation should be made once AcademicWorks has been implemented and process streamlining has been achieved. Staffing needs may become apparent through the Student Success Partnership activities.

3. **Expand financial aid literacy** in the first year (orientation or first-year-seminar) to help students and families understand the value of their education, cost repayment options and lifelong financial management skills. In addition, ensure that it is available to families of first-generation students.

4. **Use new data analytics tools to target students most at risk and motivated by financial assistance and evaluate all new scholarship and financial aid programs through measurable outcomes.** Understanding the effect of these programs should inform long-term permanent investments. Use these data to understand which students are affected and the necessary threshold amounts to use scholarships and aid to better serve our students with financial need, change outcomes and create additional revenue. These efforts should be combined with the system of academic analytics in the Student Success Partnership.