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FC InMotion

NEWS & INFORMATION ABOUT GSU'S TRANSFORMATION

April 2013

GSU's First Class Newsletter

Vol.1 Issue 1

Welcome to In Motion – the FC14 Newsletter

In 1969, Governor Richard Ogilvie signed a bill announcing that Governors State University would welcome its first class of students in Fall, 1973. However, the four-year planning process was reduced to two years, and FC73 quickly became FC71. GSU is familiar with speedy transformation!

The words used to describe our current point in history have ranged from “renewal and reinvention” to “rapid renaissance.” No matter what words we use to describe our place in history, one thing remains true: GSU is an extraordinary place with endless potential. In partnership with our community college associates, GSU will be the premier choice for public higher education in Chicago's Southland.



With so many changes taking place in our community it is no wonder some of us feel like we are at the top of the roller coaster crest, just waiting for the wild ride down the hill. The FC14 In Motion Newsletter along with In Motion: LIVE!, a series of meetings running monthly September 2013 through May 2014, is designed to engage the campus community about the changes underway to welcome the First Class of 2014 as we continue to fine tune and refine services and programs that support GSU's Transfer Student population. We need your input into the evolution of this

newsletter by submitting ideas for future articles or questions to include in a FAQ feature that will begin in the May edition. Send an e-mail message to engage@govst.edu with your questions and article ideas. Every effort will be made to get your ideas into print.

High Impact Practices – Our Own Brand of HIPness

*By Randi Schneider
Director of Academic Engagement*

For many of us, the terms “hip” or “hipster” are forever associated with countercultural movements in the 1960s. Now, five decades later, we get memos from “hipsters” about “hips.” As Bob Dylan said, “For the times, they are a’ changing.”

Today, when faculty use the acronym “HIP,” the reference has nothing to do with Greenwich Village and everything to do with what we do at GSU, in the Village of University Park. Intentional strategies that engage students as they achieve important learning outcomes are a national priority at colleges and universities.



Provost Terry Allison coined the moniker “HIPster” to refer to faculty who attended an Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) conference to learn more about strategies that have the highest degree of success in helping students to learn and faculty to teach.

In future editions of this newsletter, and in GSU View, we will further explore these “HIP” strategies. Research associated with High Impact Practices, as well as student success and student learning, forms the foundation of the strategies we're using in developing the cohort model as well, as many other programs/services for students.

HIP approaches include:

- First Year Seminars and Experiences

- Common Intellectual Experiences
- Learning Communities
- Writing Intensive Courses
- Collaborative Assignments and Projects
- Undergraduate Research
- Diversity and Global Learning
- Service Learning, Community-Based Learning

- Internships
- Capstone Courses and Projects
- Peer Mentor Programs

For colleagues anxious to know more about HIPS, click the following link to the AAC&U article titled “High-Impact Educational Practices.” Once linked to this article there are endless avenues to find out more information.

<http://www.aacu.org/leap/hip.cfm>

Getting to Know Our First Year Students – Before They Arrive

By Aurelio Valente
Dean of Students

As a Boston transplant, I can’t help but paraphrase Paul Revere, by declaring “The freshmen are coming, the freshmen are coming!”

Under Dean Reinhold Hill’s leadership, an extremely capable cadre of faculty and staff is serving on the Lower Division Task Force and coordinating efforts to ensure that the University community is prepared for the arrival of our first year students. While the work to prepare for their arrival is daunting, the payoff to our campus culture will be great.

Enrolling four-year students will ensure that the GSU student body has more continuity. As four year students, they will have more time to devote to educationally enriching activities such as internships, study abroad, and undergraduate research. And as educators, we’ll witness first-hand the growth in our students over four years at such formative times in their lives. These are just a few of the experiences that will energize the campus culture as a result of enrolling four-year students.



But do we know “who” they will be? Certainly our FC14 students will be very different than our “traditional” non-traditional students. And those differences will influence how we prepare our courses, our programs, and how we communicate with them. *Oh, and they have parents too!* In a recently published book entitled “Generation on a tightrope: A portrait of today’s college students,” Levine and Dean state that among other examples, today’s traditional college students are walking a tightrope by balancing digital connectedness and personal isolation, a desire to be treated as adults while being more dependent on their parents.

In the upcoming months we’ll explore what our FC14 students might be like, and what the implication might be for designing and delivering a high quality four year education with a series open to the entire community.

Please save the dates for the following events, all of which are scheduled on Wednesdays at 10 a.m.: The *Millennial Student*, by Darcie Campos, on May 22; Book discussion and roundtable review of *Generation on a Tightrope: A portrait of today’s college student*, on May 29; and a presentation by Dr. Diane Dean, co-author of *Generation on a Tightrope: A portrait of today’s college student*, on June 12.

Why Are We Using a Cohort Model?

By Ann Vendrely
Chair, General Education Task Force

How will GSU welcome the new first year students and help them fit into our culture of learning? How can we help this new group be successful? Learning communities will be part of the answer and have been defined by Gablenick et al (1990) as the “purposeful restructuring

of the curriculum by linking courses that enroll a common cohort of students.” A variety of positive outcomes for students have been reported regarding the use of learning communities, such as meeting learning outcomes, perception of support, closer relationships with peers and faculty, more course involvement, higher student retention, better writing, and improved problem-solving skills.

New students entering GSU will join one of three thematic groups which will form a learning community (the cohort). Students within the cohort will take nine credit hours together each term and take an additional six hours independently. These cohorts will have three courses scheduled together for the fall and spring semesters of their first year and the fall semester of the second year. The purpose of the model is to foster a learning community that is supportive of the general education learning outcomes and provides social and academic support to students.

Each of the three cohorts will take a slightly different sequence of courses during their first three terms on campus. Courses are sequenced by semester to ensure that students experience a variety of content areas while having explicit links between the content provided by instructors. The scheduling of cohorts will ensure that participating students complete the courses required for general education in a timely manner. Although they will



have less choice in the topics that they study, they will be assured of enrollment in the courses that they need and will be prepared for upper division courses in subsequent years. All courses in the cohort will be designed to meet Illinois Articulation Initiative (IAI) guidelines that allow transferability to other Illinois institutions.

Much of this work on the cohort model and course sequences was directed by the General Education subcommittee on the First Year Experience. This subcommittee included Jason Zingsheim, Maristella Zell, Gökçe Sargut, Shea Dunham, and Steven Russell. Tune in next time for more information on the themes and courses that are planned for these students.

Reference: Gablenick, F., MacGregor, J., Matthews R., & Smith, B. (Eds). (1990) *Learning Communities: Creating connections among students, faculty and disciplines*

(New Directions for Teaching and Learning, no. 41). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Construction Under Way at Prairie Place, GSU's First On-Campus Student Housing

By Betsy Joseph
Director of Housing and Auxiliary Services

Construction of Prairie Place, the first of a three-phase development of on-campus student housing, has begun. Prairie Place is scheduled to be completed in June, 2014.

The first building will house 296 students in four different styles of units. All units, both apartment and suite style, will be furnished. The apartment style units will have fully-equipped kitchens.

Community space will include floor lounges, study rooms, a classroom, a laundry room, vending machines, a service desk, and community kitchens. Cable and Internet services will be available throughout Prairie Place. A full-time Residence Hall director and trained resident assistants (RA's) will be on the premises at all times.

Residential living at GSU will be designed to provide purposeful activities that integrate curricular and co-cur-



ricular experiences intended to heighten the GSU student experience. Students of all class levels—first year through doctoral candidates—will be eligible to live in the hall provided they are enrolled for at least six credit hours each semester (fall and spring). Enrollment of at

least three credit hours will be required for summer occupancy. Students will benefit from living together in an environment that promotes interaction among the different age groups and experience levels.

Students will be able to submit housing applications online starting in January, 2014. Rates for the 2014/2015 academic year have not yet been determined.

We anticipate rate information will be available in December, 2013.

A housing website (www.govst.edu/housing) and a housing email address (housing@govst.edu) have been created. As we continue our planning for the opening of Prairie Place additional information will be made available on the website and in this newsletter.

Continued Support of Dual Degree/Transfer Students

By Roshaunda Ross

Dual Degree Program Coordinator of Peer Mentoring

Did you know that more than 40 percent of our nation's undergraduate students attend community colleges? It's important to consider that research tells us community college students who transfer to a university have a very high likelihood of earning a bachelor's degree. According to Inside Higher Ed, "71 percent of those transfer students earned a bachelor degree within four years of transferring, with 80 percent either graduating or remaining enrolled." GSU is uniquely prepared to continue that success with future students.

In 2014, GSU will welcome 270 first year students to the family. As we look to the future during this exciting time

of transition for GSU, we will continue to be a university that seeks out and welcomes transfer students of all ages and backgrounds. Our relationship with Chicago area community colleges will continue to thrive. We have been leaders in providing guidance and support to transfer students since 1969, and we will continue to be leaders in 2014 and beyond.

As we look to the future, GSU's Dual Degree Program (DDP) will ensure accessibility for transfer students. DDP

students are given individualized advising and peer mentoring beginning while they are still enrolled at a community college. DDP students learn the unspoken

rules of degree attainment and professional development well before they arrive at GSU.

DDP staff and students are thrilled to support GSU in its FC14 initiatives while continuing to build our transfer student enrollment.

