Student Support Services Work Group

August 25, 2014, 1 p.m.
Lowden Hall 304

Eric Weldy (NIU), John Coffin (ECC – phone), Paul Crawford (NIU), Kaitlyn Curta (HBR), Amy Franklin (NIU), Jacque Mecklenburg (HBR), Kelli Sinclair (WCC – phone), Flecia Thomas (MCC), and Debbie Pixton (NIU)

30 Day Action Items

- Financial Literacy
  - Review the web research and interview with Randi Napientek (NIU Financial Cents)
  - Need more information
    - Conversation with Econ Illinois later this week
    - NIU Financial Aid does some things for incoming students, but could be more especially for first generation college students
    - Cash Course is used as part of the TRIO program at WCC
  - Even with what we have, there seems to be lots of room for this group to make an impact

- Peer Mentoring
  - Website review – interesting that there are so many programs for first year students but not for second year or transfer students
  - Flecia Thomas will draft a description of a model with NIU at the core and tentacles to other institutions with liaisons who are trained in mentoring, starting with mentors for transfer students

- Advisors and Counselors
  - More information needed to proceed. Hold on this topic and focus on financial literacy and peer mentoring activities for now.

- Students’ Destinations after High School
  - Data on this should be available from ISBE and ICCB in October. Hold on this activity until then.

Recommendations – Twelve Month Activities

- Build financial literacy in the region
  - Document best practices and resources for developing financial literacy in parents and students of all ages across the P-20 continuum; make a list of recommended links for high schools and community colleges to post on their websites and share with staff who regularly interact with students
  - Consider new ways to communicate with students where are concerning their finances; include a video component where past students share their stories (successes and challenges)
  - Partner with the Alignment of Standards for Accelerated Student Opportunities to include a financial literacy/financial aid literacy component into career exploration
Build the network of trained peer mentors
- Identify students at NIU to serve as mentors to students at community colleges and high schools (especially underserved populations)
- Provide programs to teach students about personal responsibility as a key factor in college and career success
- Consider a regional peer mentoring conference, consisting of – sessions filled by an RFP of faculty, staff and students; a keynote speaker; a panel of students who have served as peer mentors

Next Steps

- Modify financial literacy survey and send to the group for feedback with meeting notes
- Identify milestones and set a timeline for the 12 month activities
- Inventory financial literacy and financial aid links on NIU, school district, and community college websites
- Create a “cheat sheet” for students regarding people with parallel functions from the community colleges to NIU faculty and staff to deconstruct the educational jargon that can get in the way of helping students
- Send a contingent to the National Mentoring Symposium hosted by Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPI) conference October 11; registration deadline is Saturday, September 20 ([http://symposium.uc.iupui.edu/Home.aspx](http://symposium.uc.iupui.edu/Home.aspx))
- Set meeting dates following the September 3 meeting for this work group

Meeting Materials
Please feel free to send links to documents that you recommend for this group to Debbie Pixton (dpixton@niu.edu) for posting at www.niu.edu/p20network.