

“Making the Best Match: Transition Planning to a Two-Year Community College”
&
“Best practices for Transitioning to Four-Year Colleges”

Session 5: April 12, 2012

Learning Objectives: Participants will build and share knowledge about research-based best practices and practical strategies for maximizing student success in the transition from secondary school to two-year colleges and from two-year colleges to four-year colleges.

Pre-Session Directions:

1. Read the three “problems” (on page 3) and think about how you would advise each student. Be ready to participate in an interactive activity during which you will share the most important elements of the advice you would offer to each of the three students. This activity will be completed in small groups at the outset of the session, and is designed to help participants to broaden their thinking in regard to strategies to help students face their challenges head-on and to persist in attaining post-secondary education.
2. Look over the *Session 5 (April 12) Information Sheet* (on pages 4-7) containing panelist “bios” and the six questions to be posed to the panelists during the panel discussion. Complete the “ballot” on the last page, ranking the questions in order of your personal interest in the topic with “1” indicating “most interesting to me” and “6” being “least interesting to me”.

Please turn in your ballot at the registration table when you arrive on April 12th. We will use the input from the group to prioritize the questions so that if we run short of time, the questions of greatest interest to most participants will have been addressed first. Please also think about any questions you may have of our panelists for the “question and answer” portion of the panel.

3. To prepare for the second portion of the session focusing upon the transition to four-year colleges, download the following readings by following the links to the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA) Clearinghouse website where they are posted and read prior to the session:

- *Promoting Student Success: What Advisors Can Do- Occasional Paper #11* by D. Jason DeSousa (Morgan State University, published by National Survey of Student Engagement Institute’s Project DEEP)

<http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/clearinghouse/AdvisingIssues/retention-articles.htm>

- *Taking Student Retention Seriously* by Vincent Tinto (Syracuse University)

<http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/clearinghouse/AdvisingIssues/retention-articles.htm>

4. If you plan to attend the final Professional Development Institute session on May 10 read the “Share Your Challenge” directions on the last page of this packet. At the final session, we will engage in action planning and to learn from “experts” who will be on hand to act as resources to you. On April 12, we will take time to answer any questions you may have about the final session.

Note: As always, we do understand and appreciate how busy you are and know that a few participants will have difficulty completing all of the reading in advance of the session. We hope you know that you are welcome, and encouraged to attend regardless of your ability to thoroughly complete the pre-reading! Should you have questions prior to the session, please contact Kris Lewis or Paul Mack at learning@stlouisgraduates.org.

Additional Recommended Resource:

High-Impact Educational Practices: What They Are, Who Has Access to Them, and Why They Matter by George Kuh (Indiana University- Bloomington)

http://www.neasc.org/downloads/aacu_high_impact_2008_final.pdf



BALLOT

SEE HIGHLIGHTED DIRECTIONS ON PAGE 4

Please rank the questions in order of your personal interest, with 1 being the question “of most interest” and 6 being the question “of least interest”.

_____ **Question 1**

_____ **Question 2**

_____ **Question 3**

_____ **Question 4**

_____ **Question 5**

_____ **Question 6**

Please turn in this ballot at the registration table when you arrive at the session on April 12.

Thank you!

“Problems” for “Pass the Problem Activity”

At the April 12th St. Louis Graduates Professional Development Institute session we will focus on the characteristics and unique challenges facing students attending community colleges. After hearing a bit about the attributes of local community college populations, we will think about advising implications and then hear from a panel of community college faculty members interested in persistence at two-year institutions. In order to prepare for the interactive activity, please read each scenario below and think about how an advisor might approach advising each student. Although you do not need to write out your responses, please be ready to share your strategies at the session.

Problem #1

Jaleel has been enrolled in an Associate in Science degree program at the local community college for one year. The first year he was able to maintain the required GPA, but the second year is filled with courses requiring higher level mathematics and analytical skills. Jaleel has hopes of becoming a chemical engineer, as he is aware that the entry level salaries in this field are relatively high. At his low-performing public high school this aspiration seemed entirely possible, as Jaleel was the valedictorian. Now he has flunked Analytical Geometry and Calculus II and is in danger of failing Engineering Thermodynamics. The new financial aid rules state, *"Students lose their eligibility for aid such as Pell grants if they're on academic probation for one semester and they do not file a successful appeal."* You can see that his GPA will not meet the standard for this semester.

Problem #2

Alma is 19 and a mother of two. Her mother looks after both of the children (who are under three) and receives a childcare stipend from the state. Recently Alma's mother became ill and Alma has missed several classes because of her lack of childcare. Truthfully, she needs to miss more classes to find safe and affordable care, as the nearby providers have long waiting lists. She is an excellent student with aspirations of becoming a speech pathologist. The curriculum is rigorous and fast-paced and even students who are present every day find it a challenge to keep up with the demands of the courses.

Problem #3

When Dan finished high school over 20 years ago, he was interested in computer science and had enrolled in a degree program at the local community college. He was also a proud member of the U.S. Army Reserves, although he never expected to be called into combat. Dan is a veteran of Operation Desert Storm. He has a PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder) diagnosis and is also a recovering alcoholic. In the intervening years since his military service, he has held jobs as a low-wage worker in several warehouses. Since becoming sober, however, he has decided to pursue a career in the computer field once again. Dan has completed most of his “General Education” requirements, but struggles in the major coursework; not because of ability, but because of the “willy nilly” nature of the instruction (his words), and social anxiety about a lack of connection with his classmates.

**Professional Development Institute-
Session 5 (April 12, 2012)
Information Sheet**

Panel Discussion Focus: Community College: "Getting In, Getting There, Getting Through"

Panel Structure: Treasure Shields Redmond will moderate the panel. The six questions (see below) are classroom/campus, city, regional, statewide, and national level in their scope. Questions will be prioritized by participants at the outset of the session in terms of the amount of interest in each topic.

IMPORTANT: Please read the panelist questions on page 7 and complete the ballot on page 2, which follows the information about our speakers and the panelist questions.

Our first presenter and panel moderator, Treasure Shields Redmond is a gifted educator with over a decade of teaching experience. She holds a B. A. in English from Jackson State University, and an MFA in Creative Writing from the University of Memphis, where her specialization was poetry. Ms. Redmond expects to have a conferred doctorate in English Literature and Criticism from Indiana University of Pennsylvania by 2015. She has taught Composition, Literature and Creative Writing at the high school, community college and university level. Presently, she is an assistant professor of English at Southwestern Illinois College.

Our second presenter, Dr. Jennifer Layton McCluskey has a unique and varied background. She has worked at multiple institutions and spent years in the Student Life division, then the Enrollment division, and is now a part of the Academic Affairs division. Dr. McCluskey is the Associate Vice President and Director of the Center for Academic Success and First-Year Experience at Maryville University in Saint Louis, Missouri.

Dr. McCluskey earned her Ph.D. in Education from the University of Missouri at St. Louis, her Master of Science in Education from Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, and her Bachelor of Arts in Speech Communication from Southeast Missouri State University.

About Our Panelists

Ana Cruz, a native of Brazil, completed her graduate work at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville with a Ph.D. in Education. Currently, she is Full Professor of Education and Coordinator of the Teacher Education Program at St. Louis Community College – Meramec, St. Louis, Missouri. In Brazil, she was an Assistant Professor at the University of Amazonas. Ana's research interests include critical pedagogy,

social justice education, multicultural/international education, and Music and Deafness. Ana was the chairperson of the AERA [American Educational Research Association] Paulo Freire SIG [Special Interest Group] from April 2006 to 2008 and, starting April 2012, she takes on a 2-year term as [Academic] Program Co-Chair for the AERA Paulo Freire SIG. In 2008 Ana was invited to serve on the *Founding Scholars' Advisory Board* of the Paulo and Nita Freire Project for Critical Pedagogy, and in 2012 she was invited to become a Founding Member of the International Institute for Critical Pedagogy and Transformative Leadership. At present, Ana is an *International Affiliate* for the International Journal of Critical Pedagogy (IJCP), serves as the *Brazilian Portuguese Articles Editor*, and was the *Managing Editor* of IJCP (Summer 2008 to Spring 2009). She currently edits, with Nita Freire (widow of Paulo Freire), a Special Commemorative Issue of IJCP in honor of Paulo Freire's 90th birthday. Relevant recent publications include: *The perpetual flame of curiosity – Asking questions, seeking answers, and sustaining the passion for teaching* (in press), In R. Lake & T. Kress (Eds.), *We Saved the Best for You: Letters of Hope, Imagination and Wisdom*, Teachers College Press; *A global culture of questioning to confront neoliberalism: Henry Giroux's clarion call for collective agency to sustain a substantive democracy* (in press), *Aula De Encuentro*; and *Paulo and me: A personal narrative of encounters* (2010), In: T. Wilson, A. Colon-Muniz, & P. Park (Eds.), *Memories of Paulo*, Sense Publishers.

(Additional information on Ana Cruz may be found online at: <http://www.freireproject.org/content/ana-cruz>)

Terrence L. Freeman is a Professor of Mechanical Engineering at St. Louis Community College at Florissant Valley and the founder of *TransEd*. He graduated with honors from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute with a B.S. and from Massachusetts Institute of Technology with an M.S. in Mechanical Engineering. He has served as a Research Engineer for Western Electric and Ralston Purina Co. and as Senior Project Engineer for Mallinckrodt, Inc. He completed his Ph.D. in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies with concentration in Higher Education Administration at the University of Missouri at St. Louis. Since entering the field of education, he has served in a variety of positions at St. Louis Community College including Coordinator of the Minority Engineering Transfer Program, Engineering Science Coordinator, and Advisor to the President on Multicultural Affairs.

Dr. Freeman's varied work experiences include managing an urban roller skating rink, conducting diversity workshops for a variety of organizations from elementary schools to the FBI, coordinating youth programs and teaching subjects as varied as mathematics and sociology, in addition to his specialty of engineering. He is a poet, a black belt in tae kwon do, a guest columnist for the St. Louis Post-Dispatch and a proud member of St. Philip's Evangelical Lutheran Church. As a motivational speaker, consultant and presenter he has served the community through a variety of initiatives and has received numerous awards in recognition of his efforts.

(Accessed online 04032012 at <http://www.trans-ed.com/tfreeman.htm>)

Melody S. Gee currently serves as a Developmental Writing Instructor at STLCC- Forest Park. Originally from Cerritos, California, she attended the University of California, Berkeley and the University of New Mexico, and has taught at Purdue University, Ivy Tech College, Saint Louis University, and the University of Missouri - St. Louis.

Her first poetry collection, *Each Crumbling House*, won the 2010 Perugia Press Book Prize.

Her poems and essays are published or forthcoming in *The Collagist*, *Red Rock Review*, *Town Creek Poetry*, *Blackbird*, *Copper Nickel*, and *Crab Orchard Review*, among others. Ms. Gee is a Pushcart Prize nominee, winner of the Robert Watson Literary Prize for poetry, and a 2008 Kundiman Asian American Poetry Retreat fellow.

(Adapted from Ms. Gee's website 04032012 where additional information may be found about her poetry and career at <http://www.melodygee.com/>)

Robert Jones is one of the most decorated scholars to graduate from St. Louis Community College-Forest Park.

Jones was named to the 2007 USA Today All-Community College Academic First Team. He also earned a place on the 2007 Missouri Community College Association All-State Academic First Team and was named the state of Missouri's New Century Scholar. He also was named the 2006-07 Distinguished Chapter President at the Missouri Regional Phi Theta Kappa Conference and was Forest Park's student speaker at commencement.

A longtime St. Louis City firefighter, Jones initially attended Forest Park to take piano lessons. A gifted writer, Jones wanted to write a play. A friend convinced him the best way to compose music for the play was by playing the piano. He planned to take a few piano lessons. What he found at Forest Park changed his life -- he learned about the cultures, perspectives and religious views of students from around the world. He also earned his degree in general transfer studies and attended the University of Missouri-St. Louis' Pierre Laclède Honors College, where he earned his BA in English. He currently is pursuing the Master's and is teaching English at a Forest Park Community College.

And yes, Jones did finish his play. "The Power of Love" was Forest Park's first theatrical production of 2006-07. Proceeds of more than \$1,000 were donated to organizations that offer support to victims of domestic violence.

(Robert Jones, from the web, accessed 04022012:
http://www.stlcc.edu/about/Success_Stories/Robert_Jones.html)

Questions for Panel

1. Which classroom and student-centered best practices and resources, such as the use of learning communities, early warning systems for students in academic trouble, accessible tutoring centers, mentoring, student activities, open door counseling services, etc. would you like to see expanded? Are there some best practices you would like to see initiated? Finally, if you had to eliminate some facet of the teaching and learning culture at the community college level, what might it be?
2. In 2007 St. Louis Public Schools lost its accreditation, and it has yet to regain it. Like many school systems, it has been plagued by low test scores and low graduation rates. How might Community Colleges collaborate with the local school systems to produce more and better-prepared graduates, and thus better-prepared students in the college classroom? What can community colleges do to better assess and intervene with high school graduates who are not academically prepared for college level work?
3. Given the reality that the community colleges are receiving many students who were ill-prepared by their prior experience but have the potential to succeed, how can the community college best assess and support students who need to make up for lost time/ground?
4. Recent data indicates that roughly a third of Missourians have completed some sort of after high school training; whether it is a four-year degree, a two-year degree or a certification of some kind. Three St. Louis Community College campuses ranked lowest in completion rates of the 25 Missouri public 2-year colleges. Meramec, Florissant Valley and Forest Park each graduated fewer than 15% of enrollees after 3 years of enrollment. Which issues that are specific to the state, county and city might explain these rates? What local stressors are unique? What ways might stakeholders address these issues so as to speak to the locale and shared histories of our academic communities?
5. The emergence of for-profit schools as a dominant force among low income students and students of color (two populations community colleges have traditionally served) has been written about in educational publications ad nauseum of late. What are for – profit schools doing “right”? How might community colleges replicate these practices? What can CC’s learn from the models presented by schools such as ITT, The University of Phoenix, etc.?
6. The Obama administration has pledged to invest in community colleges. How might funds be best used to equip a greater share of young people and adults with skills for emerging industries? Beyond financial investment, what else will be required for St.

Louis area community colleges to increase their effectiveness in strengthening the region's workforce of the future.

Share Your Challenge

On May 10, we will have our final session of the 2011-2012 St. Louis Graduates Professional Development Institute. We will engage in action planning. Below you will find a description of the session and the information you will need in order to arrive prepared on that day.

Objectives:

1. Participants will utilize research-based information on best practices in “transition planning” and “supporting first-year students” to create a realistic action plan for their own implementation.
2. Participants will identify additional local resources to access to support their work with transition planning and supporting first year students and/or resources to recommend to the students themselves.

May 10 Agenda

1. A brief presentation linking April and May topics using key findings and concrete strategies from:
How Students Are Making it: Perspectives on Getting Through College from Recent Graduates of the Boston Public Schools- by Sara E. Stoutland, Edited by Ann S. Coles
2. Brief “expert” presentations on improving practice in these areas:
Application Process- Actions to engage students in submitting applications reflecting their assets
Financial Match- Actions to increase student financial literacy or access to funding
Family Engagement- Actions to help families actively support the transition to college
Transitioning to Two-Year Institutions- Actions to help students understand and access needed resources
Building Social and Emotional Skills- Actions to support students facing serious challenges
Building Academic Social and Emotional Skills- Actions to support students with special education (IEP) needs
3. “From Hopes to Plans” Action Planning Activity (Participants will meet with “experts” in Learning Circles to share challenges they will address and write action plans. (Details on page 8.)
4. Sharing of action plans

Preparation for “From Hopes to Plans” Action Planning Activity

1. Think about a challenge you are facing with a particular student or in your work setting that is related to one of the following topics:
 - ***Application Process***- Actions to engage students in submitting applications reflecting their assets
 - ***Financial Match***- Actions to increase student financial literacy or access to funding
 - ***Family Engagement***- Actions to help families actively support the transition to college
 - ***Transitioning to Two-Year Institutions***- Actions to help students understand and access needed resources
 - ***Building Social and Emotional Skills***- Actions to support students facing serious challenges
 - ***Building Academic Social and Emotional Skills***- Actions to support students with special education (IEP) needs
2. Decide upon how you can address the challenge by creating an “action plan”. (See sample of action planning form posted on St. Louis Graduates website for more information.) The scope of the action plan is up to you. It might be as narrow as helping a particular student to find needed financial resources to make college a reality or as broad as implementing a school-wide program to address ways to support ongoing family engagement in the college-going process. The plan should represent the steps you will plan to take to address a challenge that you intend to face during the 2012 summer or during the 2012-2013 school year.
3. ***Once you have decided upon the focus of your action plan, let Kris Lewis or Paul Mack know in person or by sending an e-mail by April 26th to learning@stlouisgraduates.org.***

In this way, we can create and staff the learning circles prior to our session on May 10. We want to be sure our experts are prepared to answer your specific questions.

4. List any questions you have for the “expert” assigned to facilitate your learning circle and list any resources you anticipate needing to locate. Also list resources you are already aware of so that you might contribute to an exchange of ideas with the colleagues participating in your learning circle.

We are looking forward to helping you meet the challenges you are currently facing by putting you in contact with experienced individuals to guide you and resources you can use!