Taking Stock Survey:
Understanding the Experiences of Students’ First Year

The Early Experience Assessment Committee
Primary Objective:

Assist students early in the semester and ultimately improve student retention

• Inform meaningful conversations with Resident Assistants and other Support Network staff
  – Discuss topics such as transition to CSU, adjustment to being away from home, residence hall life, courses, campus resources, etc.
• Provide early feedback to guide students earlier in the semester
• Inform and create a support network for each student
Secondary Objective:

Track new students’ experiences in relation to their student success outcomes

- Use subpopulation gaps and patterns to inform policies, initiatives, and opportunities that will provide more positive experiences for students
- Examine psychosocial data in relation to student success outcomes
- Provide a foundation for the beginning of longitudinal data collection and comparison of first year students
Population: All first time students (FA15-FA17)
  - First time students (new and transfer) who live off campus
  - Web-based survey (15 mins) sent out 4th week of first fall

Respondent counts and response rates by term

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>On-Campus First Years</th>
<th>Off-Campus First Years</th>
<th>Off-Campus Transfer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FA15</td>
<td>4,201 (92%)</td>
<td>55 (23%)</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FA16</td>
<td>4,394 (91%)</td>
<td>54 (23%)</td>
<td>160 (13%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FA17</td>
<td>4,374 (91%)</td>
<td>89 (39%)</td>
<td>329 (35%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>12,969</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>489</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Instrument Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th># of Items</th>
<th>Variance Explained</th>
<th>Cronbach's Alpha</th>
<th># of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Homesickness*</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>60.48%</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>8,603</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment to Staying at CSU</td>
<td>6.12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>49.69%</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>12,394</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Concerns*</td>
<td>3.63</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>60.23%</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>12,667</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determined to Succeed</td>
<td>5.88</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>48.5%</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>12,852</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State of Mind</td>
<td>5.18</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>47.7%</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>12,873</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Adjustment</td>
<td>5.70</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>58.65%</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>12,869</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flourishing</td>
<td>5.97</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>44.0%</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>4,275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grit-S**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perseverance of Effort</td>
<td>3.87</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>29.0%</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>4,363</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consistency of Interest*</td>
<td>2.92</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>4,363</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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1. The Flourishing Scale (Diener et al., 2009)
2. The Short Grit Scale (Grit-S) (Duckworth & Quinn, 2009)

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*Negative constructs, items scored in support of construct

Note: Psychometric properties listed are based on First Year, On Campus respondents, which were used to construct factors

All items, except Grit-S items, were asked on a seven point agreement Likert scale (1) = Strongly Disagree - (7) Strongly Agree;

**Grit-S items were asked on a five point Likert scale: (5) Very much like me - (1) Not at all like me
Commitment to CSU

- I'm committed to completing my degree at CSU
- If I could do things over again, I would still choose to attend CSU
- I would recommend CSU as a place to go to school
- I intend to return to CSU in the spring
- I will most likely transfer to another institution before graduating*
- I'm confident that attending college was the best decision for me
Determined to Succeed

- No matter what obstacles are placed before me, I'm confident in my abilities to succeed
- I feel I can handle most things that come my way.
- I am confident that I will succeed at CSU
- By working hard I can almost always achieve my goals
- When I fail at something, I work harder to succeed the next time
- I am able to make a plan when a challenge arises
- I am able to ask for help when needed
• Financial obligations are interfering with my ability to focus on my academics
• College expenses are causing a strain on my family
• I feel confident that I will be able to pay for next semester's tuition and fees*
• I often feel worried about paying for college
• I have concerns about my ability to pay for my college education through graduation
• I feel homesick
• It is hard being away from my home, family, significant other, and/or friends
• My homesickness is affecting my ability to engage at CSU
• I feel I am adjusting well to CSU socially
• So far this semester I've been able to make friends with other students
• So far this semester I've been able to connect with others who share common interests with me
• CSU is meeting my expectations socially
• I feel that I am a part of the CSU community
• I am emotionally healthy
• I'm generally optimistic, even when things are difficult
• I feel that I cope with academic stress in a healthy way
• Sometimes I feel hopeless
Flourishing

• I lead a purposeful and meaningful life
• I am a good person and live a good life
• I am optimistic about the future
• I feel competent and capable in the activities that are important to me
• My social relationships are supportive and rewarding
• I am engaged and interested in my daily activities.
• People respect me
• I actively contribute to the happiness and well-being of others
Perseverance of Effort
• I am diligent
• I am a hard worker
• I finish whatever I begin
• Setbacks don't discourage me

Consistency of Interest
• I have been obsessed with a certain idea or project for a short time but later lost interest.
• I often set a goal but later choose to pursue a different one.
• I have difficulty maintaining my focus on projects that take more than a few months to complete.
• New ideas and projects sometimes distract me from previous ones.
Associations between Student Success and Taking Stock Constructs
A student, on average, is 58% more likely to be retained to their second fall with every unit increase in their Commitment to Stay score.
Predicted probability of third fall persistence by average construct score

- A student, on average, is 82% more likely to persist to their third fall with every unit increase in their Commitment to Stay score.
A student, on average, is 31% more likely to achieve good academic standing at the end of their first year with every unit increase in their Determined to Succeed score.
A student, on average, is 21% more likely to complete 30 credit hours at the end of their first year with every unit increase in their Determined to Succeed score.
A student’s first fall GPA, on average, is .08 points higher with every unit increase in their Determined to Succeed score.
Student Characteristics by Construct

Significant construct differences by first generation status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Determined to Succeed</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment to Stay</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Concerns</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Adjustment</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State of Mind</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homesickness</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flourishing</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perseverance of Effort</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consistency of Interest</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: FG = First Generation
Significant construct differences by racially minoritized status

- Determined to Succeed: RM 5.9, Non-RM 5.9
- Commitment to Stay: RM 6.1, Non-RM 6.1
- Financial Concerns: RM 3.5, Non-RM 3.9
- Social Adjustment: RM 5.7, Non-RM 5.7
- State of Mind: RM 5.1, Non-RM 5.2
- Homesickness: RM 3.8, Non-RM 3.8
- Flourishing: RM 5.9, Non-RM 6.0
- Perseverance of Effort: RM 3.8, Non-RM 3.9
- Consistency of Interest: RM 2.9, Non-RM 2.9
Significant construct differences by Pell recipient status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>Non Pell</th>
<th>Pell</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Determined to Succeed</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment to Stay</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Concerns</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Adjustment</td>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State of Mind</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homesickness</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flourishing</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perseverance of Effort</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consistency of Interest</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• Students are 58% more likely to be retained their second fall with every one unit increase in their Commitment to Staying response

  – Females are 66% more likely
  – Males are only 48% more likely

  – Students of a non-minoritized race/ethnicity are 64% more likely
  – Students of a minoritized race/ethnicity are 45% more likely
Results Summary

- **Freshmen Retention and Third Fall Persistence**
  - Significant: All constructs except Grit
  - Strongest: Commitment to Staying

- **Good Academic Standing at end of First Year**
  - Significant: Commitment to Staying, Determined to Succeed, Social Adj., State of Mind, Homesickness
  - Strongest: Commitment to Staying and Determined to Succeed

- **30 Credits Hours Completed at end of First Year and First Fall GPA**
  - Significant: Commitment to Staying, Determined to Succeed, Social Adj., State of Mind, Financial Concerns
  - Strongest: Determined to Succeed
Results Summary

• Commitment to Staying at CSU, Determined to Succeed, Social Adjustment and State of Mind constructs are positively and significantly predictive of all five-student success metrics.

• Homesickness and Financial Concerns were each significantly related to three and four metrics respectively.

• GRIT was not a significant predictor and Flourishing was only significantly related to freshmen retention.

• Results can help to better understand students’ success and can be used to target students early on that may need additional assistance.