Transition Project Update – February 2011
Liz Smith, Director, Transition

1. Pathways

2010 Cohort
The first cohort of University Certificate students completed their course on December 3rd, 2010. Of the 21 students, 15 successfully completed the Cert IV component with 13 students offered guaranteed entry to CSU. The breakdown of faculties applied to by the successful applicants is as follows:

- Arts 2
- Science 7
- Education 8
- Business 1

2011 Cohort
In 2011 the Pathway program is being offered in Wagga and Bathurst as well as Albury. The contact list for the outbound campaign included all students who had applied unsuccessfully to CSU courses listed in the guaranteed entry list for the pathway course. This included approximately 600 students. The contact centre commenced the outbound campaign on January 24th and completed calls on January 31st. A detailed spreadsheet prepared by the Contact Centre outlining student responses in attached. The report from the web based component of the campaign is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EMAIL ACTIVITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>611 emails sent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 emails bounced</td>
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</table>

- 124 clicks recorded from the email so far, as follows:
  - 117 clicks through to UCGS course brochure
  - 4 clicks to CSU homepage
  - 2 clicks to web version
  - 1 click to facebook group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEBSITE ACTIVITY</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The email has generated very high quality csu website visitors:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- 7.39 average page views (site average is 4.5)
- Over 9mins average time on site (site average is less than 5mins)
- High conversion rate of 25.25% (site average is 1.29%) That is, 25.25% of the visitors from the email either clicked on the Application form or clicked to call the contact centre button.
Applications to date are:

- 9 Bathurst
- 4 Wagga
- 18 Albury

With 5 students applying for on campus accommodation (3 x Bathurst and 2 x Albury)

2. Orientation

A separate update on orientation activities has been provided by Student Services (attached).

3. The STAR (Student Transition and Retention) Plan

All academic leads have now been appointed with Support STARs being interview later this week. Evidence of change is already apparent due to the program, in areas such as orientation, assessment and monitoring students at risk. The STAR team is meeting this week to determine the evaluation metrics to be used for the program.

Issues that have been identified early in the process include:

- Lack of DE orientation activities,
- Inexperienced casual staff teaching first year subjects,
- No formal induction program for casual staff,
- Early access to subject outlines and res school and text book information.

4. Student Success Team

Recruitment

The Student Success Team (SST) recruited 13 student casuals late in 2010. Positions were advertised in course forums for the 7 STAR courses, as well as in student employment forums and through posters around the Bathurst campus. We received 29 applications from students from a very diverse set of backgrounds and faculties. The students who have been recruited reflect this diversity, with students from all 4 faculties and ranging in age from 19 to 62.

Training

The SST received a two-day training course in late January 2011. Before they attended the training, they received a pre-training package of reading on the support services available at CSU. The training was conducted at the SEP offices in Bathurst and covered a range of topics including:

- Support services available at CSU,
- Handling difficult conversations,
- Privacy of information, and
- How to use the Talisma system.
The training was confirmed through a series of role plays, allowing SST members to carry out all tasks in an actual work environment and situation. All students picked up the training quite well and applied it to the role plays. The training was further validated by the work of the SST in the first week of operation.

**Operation**
The SST commenced calling commencing students on Monday 24 January. In the first week of operation, the team made 170 successful calls and sent 150 emails to students they were unable to contact. This equates to a call rate of 4.8 resolutions per hour. It is expected that this rate will increase as students gain even more confidence with the system.

Students were very happy to receive a call. Many commented that it was the first contact they have had with the university since they accepted their offer. In many cases we briefly talked to students’ parents when they answered the phone. Parents seemed relieved that there was a system such as this in place to support students with their transition.

Issues repeatedly bought up in calls in the first week included:

- When interact sites and timetables would be available,
- Textbooks,
- Scholarships, and
- On campus accommodation.

**5. Aspiration/Partnerships (HEPPP)**

**CSU Partnerships Advisory Board**
The next meeting of the board has been scheduled for 15 March in Wagga.

**ASPIRE**

**Schools**
10 schools have been invited to participate in CSU’s Regional ASPIRE – Trangie Central School, Tottenham Central School, Tullamore Central School, Trundle Central School, Yeoval Central School, Peak Hill Central School, Portland Central School, Kelso Public, Denison College Kelso, Red Bend College, Forbes.

UNSW will support Dunedoo Central School, Baradine Central School, Binnaway Central School, Coonamble Public School, Coonamble High School and Tullibigeal Central School.

All Central Schools (excluding Portland) belong to the Western Access Program where connected learning for senior curriculum is in place. This will provide a platform to develop ASPIRE to include flexible delivery of workshops and allow for online support.

**Workshops and visits**
In-school workshops have been offered and dates are to be confirmed. On-campus activities have
been offered throughout the year. These include Yr 5/6 Xplore Day, Yr 9/10 Taster Days and Student Shadowing for Yr 11/12s.

The Regional ASPIRE Team for in-school visits will consist of two or four of the following CSU staff - Equity Officer, ISS personnel, Careers Advisers, Program coordinator, Student Central staff member. In school activity will include presentations to students from Kindergarten to Year 12.

Forward planning is complete for school visits and workshops, costs of resources, travel etc have been accounted for within the ASPIRE budget. Resources are being developed in consultation with UNSW for all activities.

**Ambassadors**
Training dates are set and recruitment advertising will start this week, to be completed by end of March. It is anticipated that 30 CSU student ASPIRE Ambassadors will participate in the on-campus activities.

**Support Staff**
A Program Coordinator (ASPIRE) will be recruited from a pool of 19 applicants, by the end of February.

**PICSE (Primary Industries Centre for Science Education)**

**Schools**

15 schools from the Riverina region have been invited to participate. Ardlethan Central School, Ariah Park Central School, Ashmont Public School, Berellan Central School, Ganmain Public School, Griffith East Public School, Griffith High School, Griffith North Public School, Griffith Public School, Grong Grong Public School, Junee North Public School, Junee High School, Junee Public School, Leeton High School, Leeton Public School, Marion Catholic College, Mount Austin High School, Mount Austin Public School, Narrandera High School, Narrandera Public School, Parview Public School, St Brendan’ Primary School, St Joseph’s Primary, Tolland Public School, Wade High School, Wagga Wagga Christian College, Wagga Wagga High School, Wamoon Public School, Whitton Public School.

**Science Education Officer**
Emma Wordsworth has been appointed to the role of SEO, based in Wagga Wagga. She has a strong background in science teaching both in DET and TAFE, has good local knowledge of agricultural industries and has experience in working with low SES students.

Emma has made good contacts with academic science based staff at CSU as well as research staff from Industry and Investment NSW.

**Orientation to PICSE**
SEO spent a week in Tasmania at UTAS PICSE activities (5 day camp for year 11 students and Teacher professional development workshops). S Rogan visited UNE and participated in their PICSE steering committee meeting and met with Prof David Russell, Director PICSE.

Both E Wordsworth and S Rogan will attend the National PICSE SEO Conference in Hobart in February.
Steering Committee
SEO has identified those to be invited to the Steering Committee. Its first meeting will be in May with Prof Russell to attend.

DEEWR reporting and funding

Advice from Planning and Audit regarding HEPPP funding is as follows:

*The Participation Component for 2011 is being “figured out” now – but given overall allocations to the fund it should be about twice the $2,060,770 received for 2010*

*The Partnership Component for 2011 will be the amount paid for 2010 ($355,505, base payment) plus any amount won in a two-step competitive bidding process. Expressions of Interest will be called for in the next few weeks, potential projects will be put to the minister, followed by the call for a full bid for selected projects.*

A joint submission is being prepared with UNSW for the expansion of ASPIRE using HEPPP B funds. (2.6 million to CSU over 2 years to expand to 5- ASPIRE schools).

**Question: Should the submission be unsuccessful, should we use Part A funds to expand the ASPIRE program?**

DEEWR have also released their draft reporting format for HEPPP funding (attached). A CSU response to the submission is being prepared for Feb 8th.

6. Review of Indigenous Support and Transition

On the basis of the review prepared by Professor Herbert, the Faculty of Education is leading a project to investigate the development of an enabling program for Indigenous students. The first meeting is scheduled for March 14th.

7. ALTC Project

CSU are collaborating with Deakin and QUT on an ALTC funded research project: Effective teaching and support of students from low socioeconomic backgrounds: Resources for Australian higher education.

This research project will contribute to enhancing the learning and experiences of students from low socioeconomic status (LSES) in Australian higher education. The research will identify and document successful initiatives and create a new, easy-to-use and adaptable set of resources to assist institutions to effectively implement policies, programs and practices to facilitate the success of students from LSES
backgrounds enrolled in higher education institutions in Australia. A key feature of this research project will be the development of a distinctive framework that embodies an Australian conception of inclusive teaching in higher education. The project will focus on effective approaches to teaching and supporting students who come to university with greater diversity in preparedness and in social and cultural capital. The findings will be applicable to a range of higher education contexts and to enhancing the experience of all students, irrespective of background. See below story (The Australian, December 8, 2010)
No student ought to be left behind

ANDREW TROUNSON

DRIVEN by government targets and financial incentives, universities are recruiting more students from disadvantaged and poorer backgrounds. But keeping them there, and positively engaged, will require a reassessment of teaching practices.

In a bid to provide universities with practical advice on successfully teaching students from diverse and less privileged backgrounds, the Australian Learning and Teaching Council has awarded a $220,000 grant to a project that will develop a practical framework for policy and practice.

Project leader Marcia Devlin of Deakin University said it was about ensuring an inclusive curriculum that embraced all students rather than singling out some for special needs.

"It isn’t about remediation or fixing the students. It is actually about universities doing things in a way that includes everybody, not just in ways that suit an elite group of students," Professor Devlin said.

Feedback from non-traditional students suggested the enthusiasm, availability and approachability of teachers was the key to their success at university.

Teachers also needed to be explicit in explaining assessment requirements and prepared to be flexible in granting extensions where needed.

Such feedback highlighted a need for more training of academics in teaching and learning. Professor Devlin said the trend in the sector towards creating teaching-focused academic positions was a step in the right direction.

She said it was a mistake to think that greater reliance on new technology could substitute for more and better teachers.

"Technology is important, it can be very helpful and needs to be used by very skilled teachers who have constant professional development, but it isn’t the magic bullet," she said.

Professor Devlin rejected suggestions that inclusive teaching meant dumbing down the curriculum. She said such a view erroneously associated being underprepared for university with a lack of intelligence or motivation.

"There is no evidence that teaching well means dumbing down the curriculum," she said.

The research team also includes Judy Nagy from Deakin, Sally Kift and Karen Nelson from the Queensland University of Technology and Liz Smith from Charles Sturt University.