



Call for Case Studies Aligning Institutional Support for Student Success: Case Studies of Sophomore-Year Initiatives

The National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition invites you to share initiatives designed to support students in the second year of undergraduate study (i.e., college sophomores). Traditionally, institutional supports for student success (e.g., high-impact educational initiatives) have been concentrated in the first and senior years, though attention to the sophomore year has increased over the last two decades, with institutions designing major and career-focused initiatives, leadership development programs, academic advising, academic support, retention initiatives, and residence life programs among others with second-year students in mind. Beyond simply describing initiatives designed to support second-year students, the proposed volume hopes to showcase innovative institutional efforts to align student success initiatives throughout the college experience.

The volume is concerned with demonstrating both horizontal and vertical alignment with respect to sophomore-year initiatives. Horizontal alignment suggests that the strategies used to assess learning and achievement are based on what has been taught and on the learning objectives students are expected to meet. In other words, horizontal alignment in the sophomore year would suggest congruence exists in the stated institutional objectives for second-year students, the educational experiences designed to serve them, and the strategies used to assess those experiences.

Vertical alignment takes a broader view, assuming that what students learn in one lesson or course prepares them for the next learning experience. Educational experiences are purposefully structured and logically sequenced so that students gain the knowledge and skills to progressively prepare them for more challenging, higher-level work. This framework assumes that sophomore-year initiatives would build on learning experiences of the first college year while also preparing students to enter their major coursework, complete their degrees, and move into employment settings or advanced study. A vertical alignment framework acknowledges that the end goals of undergraduate institutions are not achieved by frontloading supports at college entry or in the final year of study but rather through the intentional design of progressive learning experiences throughout college.

Aligning Institutional Support for Student Success: Case Studies of Sophomore-Year Initiatives is part of the National Resource Center's Research Reports on College Transitions series. As such, preference will be given to cases supported by high-quality assessment. While pilot programs and experiences designed to serve small populations provide useful models, cases describing established programs

servicing a large segment of the second-year population on the campus will be given preference for publication. Other considerations in selecting cases for publication include evidence of cross-functional collaboration in the design and delivery of sophomore-year initiatives and of innovative approaches to ensuring vertical and/or horizontal alignment with respect to programs for second-year students.

The deadline for submissions is September 10, 2018. Only complete submissions, adhering to the guidelines, will be considered for publication. If you have questions about the publication, the guidelines, or the appropriateness of your initiative or assessment design, please do not hesitate to contact us. We look forward to receiving your submission in the coming months.

Submission Guidelines

Case studies should be approximately 2,700 words, excluding tables and figures, and follow the suggested template:

- » Description of the institution and its students (approximately 150 words)
- » Description of initiative and its connection to institutional objectives for second-year students (approximately 1,000 words)
- » Description of assessment methods (approximately 250 words)
- » Description of assessment findings (approximately 1,000 words)
- » Insights into alignment for student success (approximately 250 words)

Details on what should be included in each section follow.

I. Describe your institution and its students (approximately 150 words)

In this section, please include:

- » Full name of institution and city/state where it is located
- » Institution type (two-year/four-year)
- » Institution control (public/private/proprietary)
- » Commuter or residential campus
- » Number of FTE undergraduate students
- » Institutional definition of sophomore and percentage of undergraduates meeting this definition
- » Undergraduate student demographic information including gender balance, % of students over age 25, racial/ethnic makeup (please be sure to provide details about

% of each race/ethnicity) and the % of students who are first-generation (please be sure to include how you define first-generation students)

II. Describe your program/initiative (approximately 1,000 words)

In this section please include:

- » Title of program
- » Length of time offered at your institution
- » Connection of the program/initiative to larger institutional objectives for sophomore students
- » Major goals/objectives of the program
- » Administrative home and descriptions of cross-functional or interdepartmental partnerships
- » Which students are served by the program (e.g., exclusively sophomores, some sophomores and other students)? Please be sure to clearly define "sophomore" or other labels as they apply to your initiative.
- » Program specifics (e.g., what are the program elements)

III. Assessment Methods/Design (approximately 250 words)

We encourage submissions of qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-method assessment. In this section, please include a concise description of the:

- » Assessment objective(s) / question(s)
- » Assessment design (e.g., sample selection, data collection method(s), type(s) of analysis)

IV. Assessment Findings (approximately 1,000 words)

In this section, please include:

- » Outcomes (e.g., retention, course completion rates, student learning, academic skills, engagement, use of services, student/faculty interaction, curricular innovations, social integration, GPA, satisfaction with institution, leadership)
- » If research is quantitative, highlight statistical data with significant findings. A limited number of tables and figures can be included to illustrate findings.
- » If research is qualitative, describe major themes illustrated by selected quotes, document excerpts, observational records, and/or other relevant data.

V. Alignment for Student Success (approximately 250 words)

In this section, describe how the program builds on the institutional objectives for the first college year. Similarly, describe how the program supports objectives for the junior/senior years or, in the case of two-year institutions, supports transfer to a four-year institution or entry into the work force.

Submission

Case studies can be submitted online at <https://form.jotform.com/NRCFYESIT/sophomore-case>. The deadline for case submission is **September 10, 2018**.

Review Process

Submissions are reviewed by members of the National Resource Center editorial staff and external reviewers. Review takes approximately 8 to 12 weeks. The National Resource Center requests that any work submitted for consideration not be submitted to another publisher while it is being reviewed.

Acceptance

Upon acceptance of the case study, the National Resource Center will enter into a publication agreement with the author(s). Anticipated publication date for this volume is July 2019.

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