College Connections Inventory

Connections are an interactive, personal series of events that create a sense of presence. Connected colleges effectively connect with their students and encourage them to build relationships—with faculty, staff, other students—that are essential to student success. Colleges can use this guide to prompt discussions about how well they are connecting with students by considering the extent to which they foster connections through face-to-face interaction and technology. After completing the inventory, discussions can be focused on how these areas can reinforce and inform current work or suggest potential new priorities for your college.

Connections Through Face-to-Face Interaction:

An institution-wide commitment to promoting deeper connections with students through shared experiences, both one-on-one and in groups.

To what extent does your college…	Not at all	Under Discussion	Partial Implementation	Full Implementation
Design experiences to ensure that all students make personal connections with other students, faculty, and staff during their earliest contact with the college?	○	○	○	○
Promote student connections with college services and college services staff by integrating services into courses (e.g., student success courses, FYE courses, etc.)?	○	○	○	○
Create required cohort-based experiences, such as learning communities, study groups, first-year seminars, and the like, to intentionally promote interaction among students?	○	○	○	○
Assign someone to serve as a primary contact for each new student (e.g., another student, advisor, success coach, mentor, etc.)?	○	○	○	○
Ensure that evening and part-time students have access to the services they need at times and in locations that fit their schedules?	○	○	○	○
Provide comfortable, open spaces for students, faculty, and staff to interact?	○	○	○	○
Ensure that all full-time and part-time faculty members have adequate space to meet with students outside of class?	○	○	○	○

Connections Though Technology:

An institutional commitment to providing access to and training on various technologies (social networking tools, course management systems, etc.) and assessing the use of these technologies.

To what extent does your college…	Not at all	Under Discussion	Partial Implementation	Full Implementation
Provide free, easily accessible Internet access throughout the campus?	○	○	○	○

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To what extent does your college…	Not at all	Under Discussion	Partial Implementation	Full Implementation
Provide adequate, user-friendly support for use of broadband and wireless technologies on campus and for online learning?	○	○	○	○
Ensure that students have access to computers for uses related to their studies (e.g., computer labs, loaned laptops, etc.)?	○	○	○	○
Require orientation and training for students on the use of technologies employed by the college, rather than assume that students know how to use them?	○	○	○	○
Provide professional development for all faculty on ways to engage students for academic purposes through Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, or other social networking technologies?	○	○	○	○
Systematically inquire about faculty and staff members' use of various technologies, including course management systems, the Internet, and social networking tools?	○	○	○	○
Systematically inquire about students' use of various technologies, including course management systems, the Internet, and social networking tools?	○	○	○	○
Establish and enforce academic policies regarding acceptable/encouraged and unacceptable uses of social networking technologies and electronic devices during class time?	○	○	○	○
Ensure that online students have access to the services they need at times and in locations that fit their schedules?	○	○	○	○
Ensure that the college's online courses consistently incorporate engagement strategies that promote student-student and student-faculty interaction?	○	○	○	○

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