TO: Student Success Team  
DATE: September 13, 2007  

The following plan for action comprises projects (1) endorsed by the Student Success Team (SST) and in process, and (2) projects identified in small- and large-group discussions at the SST Retreat in July 2007. The SST Executive Committee considered the ideas generated at the retreat and determined short-term priorities (i.e., projects that can be done quickly and soon and/or do not require new or expanded funds to initiate or implement) and long-term priorities (i.e., projects that require time to design and implement and/or require new or additional funding). This plan is organized according to those priorities.

I. SHORT-TERM PROJECTS

A. SHORT TERM PROJECTS IN PROCESS SEPTEMBER 2007

1. Define Student Success  
Task: We’ve talked about student success – research at UI and elsewhere, priorities and challenges we face, goals and aspirations for our students -- as a Student Success Team for almost a year; the time is right to reach consensus on what ‘student success’ means for The University of Iowa. The definition should be concise, measurable, and meaningful to all relevant audiences, and will be used as a basis for plans and decisions for assessment, programs, policies, practices, and resource allocation.  
Involves: Student Success Team Executive Committee (SST Exec) and Student Success Team (SST)  
Taking the Lead: Tom Rocklin, Elizabeth Whitt  
Process and Timeline: 8/30/07: Draft definition to SST; 9/7: Deadline for SST feedback; 9/7-10: Revisions; 9/13: Distribute to SST Exec for consideration/adoption and discussion about dissemination strategies; 9/14: Announce definition at SST meeting; Fall ’07: Dissemination; venues and methods TBD.

2. The “Message Project”  
Task: Research on effective environments for undergraduate student success demonstrates the importance of clear and consistent messages about what the institution expects of students – about “what it means to be a successful student here.” Research and discussions about students’ experiences at Iowa indicate a lack of such a message here. Creating and implementing a consistent message about “what it means to be an Iowa student,” then, is an important foundation for our student success efforts.  
Involves: SST Exec, SST, Executive Enrollment Management Committee (EMC); dissemination: beyond these groups.  
Taking the Lead: Tom Rocklin, Elizabeth Whitt  
Process and Timeline: July 2007: On-line survey to entire UI community: “What messages should be communicated to current and prospective students about what it means to be an Iowa student?”; 8/1-15: Analysis by CRUE RAs of survey responses from 2300 students, faculty, staff, and administrators; final report 8/17; 9/7: Draft message complete; Discuss draft message and strategies for obtaining feedback and commitment: 9/12 Executive Enrollment Management Committee, 9/13 SST Exec, 9/14 SST; Fall 2007: Continue to develop the message and commitment (e.g., Council on Teaching; Associate Deans/Directors; EPC; UISG; VPSS directors; Admissions; Academic Advising Center; etc.).

3. Identify, Inventory, and Communicate Opportunities for Student Engagement  
Task: Identify and inventory opportunities for student engagement; develop and disseminate a comprehensive, one-stop resource for opportunities for student engagement. Two aspects of this are underway: (1) a leadership inventory being conducted by OSL, and (2) an expanded inventory of involvement opportunities as part of the HLC Self-Study (OP Research Assistants). A committee to complete a comprehensive inventory and develop the one-stop resource will be composed of SST members.  
Involves: SST; OP Research Assistants, Ashley Asel and Sherri Edvalson; OSL (on leadership): Kellie Jo Karnes, Tara Edberg.  
Taking the Lead: SST Committee; Chair to be appointed from SST volunteers.  
Process and Timeline: 10/1: Charge to the Committee; Chair and Committee to be recruited from SST volunteers (‘menu’ of opportunities provided at SST meeting 9/14); 11/30: Final report to SST; HLC Self-Study Inventory due 9/15; OSL inventory of leadership opportunities due ?; Implementation Spring 2008.

4. Friday Classes
Task: Research indicates (1) a correlation between Friday classes and reduced consumption of alcohol by students, (2) UI offers substantially fewer classes on Fridays than other days of the week, and (3) the 'Thirsty Thursday' tradition is alive and well (so to speak) at Iowa. Substantial support (e.g., SST, CLAS, TCOB) exists for increasing the number of undergraduate classes offered on Fridays.
Involves: Office of the Provost, undergraduate colleges.
Taking the Lead: Tom Rocklin
Process and Timeline: Summer and Fall 2007: meetings with relevant units and groups; Proposed changes effective Fall 2008.

B. SHORT-TERM PROJECTS TO BE INITIATED FALL 2007

5. “Pick One”
Task: Data from RISE and SST conversations indicate (1) the importance of student engagement for persistence and satisfaction and (2) concerns about the extent to which first-year UI students are taking advantages of opportunities to get involved in out-of-class activities. Discussions at the SST retreat generated widespread support for a “Pick One” effort: Encourage new students – at Orientation, at the beginning of the fall semester -- to “pick one” co-curricular or extra-curricular activity with which to get involved.
Involves: Academic Advising Center, Orientation Services, Housing, Admissions, SST.
Taking the Lead: SST Committee; Tom Rocklin will appoint someone from one of these units to serve as chair.
Process and Timeline: 10/1: Charge to the Committee; Committee to be recruited from SST volunteers (‘menu’ of opportunities provided at SST meeting 9/14); 11/30: Final report to SST; Implementation Spring 2008 for incoming class of 2008.

6. Communicate Messages about Student Success
Task: Everyone in the UI community is involved in some way in student success. Although the SST, the Office of the Provost, and others have highlighted the importance of undergraduate student success at UI, it’s time to generate strategies to bring the entire community into the conversation by communicating widely (1) what matters for student success and (2) the roles that everyone can play in fostering conditions for student success.
Involves: SST, Human Resources, Office of the Provost, Student Services
Taking the Lead: SST Committee; Chair to be appointed from SST volunteers.
Process and Timeline: 10/1: Charge to the Committee; Committee to be recruited from SST volunteers (‘menu’ of opportunities provided at SST meeting 9/14); 11/30: Final report to SST; Implementation Spring 2008.

7. Identify, Inventory, and Address Barriers to Student Success
Task: As important as identifying and communicating opportunities and strategies for student success is identifying and addressing aspects of the University (e.g., policies, programs, structures, practices) that can inhibit student success.
Involves: SST, at least at the outset.
Taking the Lead: SST Study Group; Chair to be appointed from SST volunteers.
Process and Timeline: 10/1: Charge to the Study Group; Committee to be recruited from SST volunteers (‘menu’ of opportunities provided at SST meeting 9/14); 11/30: Initial report to SST; Final report due February 1, 2008; Implementation Open.

II. LONG-TERM PROJECTS

A. LONG-TERM PROJECTS IN PROCESS FALL 2007

1. Research and Assessment
Task: Expand UI capacity and programs for research and assessment regarding student success, including (but not limited to) student experiences and outcomes. Aspects of this effort are in process: learning outcomes assessment in undergraduate majors and the SST Research Coordination Council (RCC), chaired by Joyce Moore.
Involves: Research Coordination Council; Office of the Provost (Tom Rocklin, Elizabeth Whitt, Ashley Asel, Sherri Edvalson), Center for Research on Undergraduate Education (CRUE) (Co-Directors: Ernie Pascarella and Elizabeth Whitt, Doctoral Research Assistants)
Taking the Lead: RCC; Office of the Provost (Tom Rocklin, Elizabeth Whitt)
**Process and Timeline:** RCC: July 2007: Charge to the RCC from Tom Rocklin; August 2007: Initial RCC meeting to begin setting an agenda; Interim Report: Open; Spring 2008: Administration of the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) and the ACT Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP). **Outcomes Assessment:** Fall 2007: Tom Rocklin will appoint a “Core Assessment Team” (of faculty and staff) to move forward processes of outcomes assessment in undergraduate majors and in cocurricular experiences; June 2008: UI joins the Assessment Academy of the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association (application accepted 8/07).

2. **Task Force on Learning Communities**

*Task:* Evidence from RISE demonstrates a positive correlation between involvement in a learning community in the first year at UI and persistence into the second year. In response to this information, a Task Force on Learning Communities was initiated by Tom Rocklin in Spring 2007. The Task Force was charged with identifying successful practices in undergraduate learning communities, assessing current UI contexts for expanding learning communities, and initiating a proposal for a ‘scalable’ program of learning communities at Iowa.

*Involves:* Task Force on Learning Communities; Office of the Provost; SST Exec

*Taking the Lead:* Pat Folsom, Assistant Provost for Enrollment Services, Chair of the Task Force

*Process and Timeline:* 7/31/07: Phase One report done; 8/07: Phase 2 implemented, final report due 10/07.

B. **LONG-TERM PROJECTS TO BE INITIATED FALL 2007**

3. **Task Force on First-Year Experiences (FYE)**

*Task:* Research and UI and elsewhere confirms the critical role the first college semesters for student success. Conversations about, and interest in, (1) extending new student orientation beyond the traditional 2-day summer experience and (2) expanding formal transition experiences to a greater proportion of the first-year class than currently is the case (e.g., approximately 1000 new students are enrolled in College Transitions in Fall 2007) have taken place for several years. Of the ‘top priority’ actions discussed at the SST Retreat, this action generated the most support and the greatest sense of urgency. Discussions at the retreat also advocated encouraging increased faculty engagement in student success initiatives, particularly those for first-year students; identifying ways to use, and encourage, faculty expertise should be part of any effort to study and address FYE at Iowa.

*Involves:* Office of the Provost, Admissions, Orientation Services, Academic Advising Center, Housing, Student Life and Student Services, undergraduate colleges, SST.

*Taking the Lead:* Task Force on First-Year Experiences; Tom Rocklin will appoint Task Force co-chairs (from academic and student affairs) and collaborate with the chairs on naming Task Force members.

*Timeline:* 9/13: SST Exec will discuss scope and charge for the Task Force; 10/1: Charge to the Task Force; 10/1: Chair and membership appointed; Interim report due December 15, 2007; Final report due February 1, 2008.

Implementation: Open.

4. **“One Community, One Book” Project**

*Task:* For the past year, the SST has talked about ways to expand student and community engagement in activities that have a positive impact on student success. A theme in these conversations, as well as in the RISE study and the sub-committees involved in the University’s reaccreditation self-study, is the need for community-wide programs that join students, faculty, and staff in educationally-purposeful activities. The Center for Human Rights has sponsored a “One Community, One Book” project that can be expanded to include the entire university community.

*Involves:* SST Committee; Downing Thomas, Director of the Center for Human Rights, will chair the project.

*Taking the Lead:* Downing Thomas

*Process and Timeline:* 9/07: Charge to the Committee: to propose structure, tasks, funding for the project; Committee to be identified by Downing Thomas, as well as recruited from SST volunteers (‘menu’ of opportunities provided at SST meeting 9/14); 11/30: Final report to SST; Implementation: Fall 2008.

5. **Create a Comprehensive Early Intervention System for Students in Difficulty**

*Task:* Develop proposal to create comprehensive, coordinated system of identifying and responding to students in difficulty (academic, social, judicial, personal, etc.). Includes study of current practices, needs assessment, environmental assessment.
Involves: Office of the Provost, Academic Advising Center, Housing, Student Life and Student Services, Counseling Center, Public Safety, undergraduate colleges, SST.

Taking the Lead: SST Committee; Chair to be appointed from SST volunteers.

Timeline: 10/1: Charge to the Committee; 10/1: Chair and membership appointed from SST volunteers (‘menu’ of opportunities provided at SST meeting 9/14; Interim report due December 15, 2007; Final report due February 1, 2008. Implementation: Open.

C. LONG-TERM PROJECTS TO BE INITIATED AFTER FALL 2007 (depending on SST priorities):
The following long-term projects were identified as priorities at the SST Retreat and by the SST Executive Committee. Given the number of projects already in process and already identified as priorities to initiate, additional feedback will be obtained from the SST on 9/14/07 about how and when to proceed with any or all of these.

Expanding Opportunities for/Use of Peer Educators
Task: Identify ways to expand use of undergraduates as peer educators (advisors, mentors, research assistants, TAs); includes consideration of training of peer educators; we’ve also talked about some form of SI in this context. Develop proposal for implementation.

Involves:
Taking the Lead:
Timeline: TBD

Develop and Implement Healthy Traditions, Rituals, and Ceremonies
Task: Identify, and develop proposals to implement, traditions, rituals, and ceremonies to foster and support student success (e.g., Opening Convocation, celebration of completion of first year/rising sophomores)

Involves:
Taking the Lead:
Timeline: TBD

Expand Recognition and Rewards for Engagement
Task: Study ways to expand recognition and rewards for engagement in ‘what matters for student success’ by students, faculty, and staff; to include consideration of scholarships for incoming and continuing students. Develop proposal for implementation.

Involves:
Taking the Lead:
Timeline: TBD