Toward a Center for Academic Planning and Exploration

A report from the Center for Students in Transition Working Group

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Toward a Center for Academic Planning and Exploration

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Our working group proposes the establishment of a Center for Academic Planning and Exploration\(^1\) in order to achieve two aims critical to advancing excellence in undergraduate education and the achievement of our University retention and graduation objectives. The first is to provide targeted, “high-touch” academic transition support for those individual students and undergraduate cohorts (totaling more than 3750 students during the first year) that will most benefit from such assistance. The second is to provide and/or coordinate campus-level engagement opportunities for students in academic transition. The mission of the Center is to assist students in transition to move from ineffective or unstructured academic exploration to structured opportunities facilitating development of the knowledge, skills, and habits necessary for successful and engaged educational planning that will put them on the path to graduation.

The primary aim of both forms of support is to develop educational partnerships with students navigating the transition to college life by engaging them in participatory exploration. Working in close collaboration with its collegiate and campus partners, and operating with a “shared responsibility” model of student support, the Center will provide the undergraduates it serves with structured pathways to move as quickly and effectively as possible to the focused exploration and provisional academic choices which are a necessary step toward full and informed commitment to their academic goals.

In order to maximize the University’s return on investment, we recommend the Center focus its cohort support efforts on those transitioning student groups most likely to benefit in measurable ways from the efforts of a centralized campus unit. Although many cohorts might be considered for such support, our analysis indicates three groups should be selected at the outset:

- Strongly Undecided Students
- Transitioning Students (undergraduates considering options between/among Colleges)
- Competitive Major Students

As is described in greater detail below (please see “Projected Costs, and Size and Retention Characteristics of Student Populations Served”), each of these student groups depresses our retention and graduation rates, and each could measurably benefit from academic transition support not easily provided by individual Colleges.

Because many students who might benefit from participatory exploration of their educational options are not included in the student cohorts above, our working group feels it is also important for transitioning students to have an opportunity to self-identify and access Center services designed to guide undergraduates through the stages of career and major exploration by means of engagement opportunities and reflection. We also believe college and campus support units should have the opportunity to refer undergraduates who might benefit from the Center’s services.

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\(^1\) The working group considered a number of possible names for the Center, none of which seemed clearly preferable to all others. The Center for Academic Planning and Exploration (CAPE) is therefore offered as merely a provisional suggestion.
UNIQUE FEATURES AND BENEFITS OF THE PROPOSED CENTER

- **Addresses current unmet student need**
  The Center identifies subpopulations of students with identifiable needs not sufficiently addressed at present. These students will benefit from more intensive, “high touch” services.

- **Provides additional student services professionals to focus attention on students most in need of support to reach institutional goals**
  The Center provides a means for the campus to invest in new advisors and other professionals to focus on student groups that measurably depress our retention and graduation rates, while maintaining effective services in the colleges and elsewhere. The return on the investment can be measured by the impact the new services have on the success of the targeted student groups.

- **Makes visible a commitment to undergraduate student success at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities**
  The Center forms an integral part of a strong architectural statement the University is making with its recently-funded Science Teaching and Student Services Building. This is a bold declaration to students and to the broader public that the University is here to serve our undergraduates. The Center adds to that very visible message by demonstrating a commitment to student success, regardless of College of enrollment and regardless of the student’s final choice of academic program. It signals a definitive end to an era in which students could “fall between the cracks” without being noticed.

- **Provides a model of integrative services addressing the multiple needs of the individual student**
  It is increasingly evident that all available resources of the University must be fully utilized, strategically aligned, and integrally coordinated to support the optimal success of our students. The advising and counseling staff in the Center will be generalists with respect to their knowledge of the University and its curricular and co-curricular offerings; at the same time, they will be specialists in working with students who match the profile of the targeted audiences. Center staff members will work in partnership with the other services available at the University. A student’s pathway to academic success may require the contributions, for example, of a career counselor, a financial aid advisor, a mental health counselor, a study abroad specialist, and a faculty advisor in a major department. The Center will work intensively with each of its undergraduates to put together the most effective “team” to share responsibility with that student for reaching his or her educational goals.

- **Establishes a collaborative staffing model**
  The Center will contain a core staff of professionals, but that core group will be supplemented both by staff members with joint appointments in the Center and in another student services office and by personnel “on assignment” for a specific period of time from other student services offices. This will deepen the knowledge of those in the Center and will, over time, deepen the knowledge of staff throughout the campus. In addition to furthering the campus’ progress toward a single student services enterprise, this collaborative approach to staffing helps develop campus-wide expertise, familiarity with best practices in student services, and important opportunities for the professional growth of advisors and counselors. This model also facilitates serious research about student success and how to support it, as the campus seeks to base its services upon measurable results and careful assessment.
TERMS USED IN THIS PROPOSAL

The Center for Academic Planning and Exploration seeks to address key student needs that are currently under-served or entirely unmet on the campus as a whole. Identifying and quantifying these needs and the strategies for addressing them requires the use of a few specialized terms. For purposes of this proposal, we will be employing the following distinctions:

- **Students in Transition** (inclusive category)
  Although all successful undergraduates undergo a transformational educational experience to a greater or lesser degree, we employ the term *students in transition* to refer to those undergraduates whose decision-making process would benefit from targeted assistance in navigating the various phases of adaptation to the University’s educational environment and requirements (see below for more detailed discussion).

- **Strongly Undecided Students**
  Using advising contacts and surveys such as those already in place in CLA, this group can be identified relatively early in a student’s freshman year; this group would include those students who said “I want to major in so many things; I am not sure how I will ever make up my mind” in answer to CLA’s “Tell Us About Yourself” survey. We estimate this group to be approximately 5% of the University’s freshmen population each fall, or about 260 students. They tend to break down into two groups, those who (a) are completely undecided because they have no idea what they want to major in, or (b) are completely undecided because they are interested in a broad range of majors that cannot be easily categorized under a single heading. In both cases, the student’s aspirations either span multiple colleges or are not aligned with any particular college.

- **Transitioning Students** (service category)
  Used as a service category, this term indicates one of the three primary cohorts to be assisted by the Center. “Transitioning students” refers to prospective intra-campus transfer students (ICTs) – those undergraduates considering options between/among UMNTC colleges. These would constitute the Center’s largest service subpopulation, with about 2285 applicants each fall and 919 applicants each spring. With the Access to Success (ATS) program beginning fall 2008, it is possible the number of fall applicants could drop, but it is difficult to say at this time since (a) many of CLA’s currently-admitted fall 2008 ATS students are not CLA-centric, and (b) many of CEHD’s admitted fall 2008 freshmen have not indicated a specific major or subplan of interest. For these students, the Center would help bridge the transition from one college to another.

- **Competitive Major Students**
  These students can often be identified upon admission; they fall into this category when their

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2 Based on respondent data collected from CLA’s First Year Survey from 2006 and 2007, extrapolated to the entire UMNTC NHS population for the fall 2007 cohort. We note that the Center should work with the colleges to coordinate or develop a similar campus-wide survey in order to further develop our understanding of this student group and its needs.


4 Average of spring 2007 and spring 2008 (post-GC).

5 At a recent meeting to discuss the proposed Center with CLA undergraduates, several students who are considering educational options that span multiple colleges said that a Center which provided cross-college support (in addition to collegiate support) would give them a place to ask questions about educational interests that did not fall neatly into any single collegiate category. We note that although we suggest starting with ICTs, with additional funding and resources, the Center might well also serve a broader transfer audience in the future.
aspirational major (the degree option they really want to pursue, whether declared or undeclared) is mismatched with the college of enrollment and the aspirational major is known to have competitive admission (such as a pre-IT/CBS student enrolled in CLA). With Access to Success beginning fall 2008, the vast majority of students from this population will be enrolled in CLA, comprising ~11.8% of the freshmen class, or about 324 students. This group merits particular attention inasmuch as some academic programs pose considerable admission problems, even with appropriate academic preparation. Further, students preparing to transfer into such programs are known to have low retention rates compared to students whose aspirations are in agreement with the programmatic offerings of their college of enrollment.

- **Participatory Exploration**
  Drawing on an extensive review of the relevant professional literature, we use the term participatory exploration to designate the particular blend of developmental and academic engagement best suited to further the educational and social integration of students in transition. As is true of our students more generally, we want these undergraduates to take an active, informed, and reflectively intentional role in planning the totality of their educational experience. This approach to vigorously involving students in the full range of their curricular and co-curricular decisions requires them to identify, understand, and align their values, goals, academic strengths, and life plans with their educational decisions in such a way that each informs and shapes the other. In order to foster the degree of self-knowledge and institutional familiarity required by participatory exploration, the advising, counseling, and support model here advocated is necessarily “high touch” -- meaning that it is centered on proactive interpersonal relationships built over time and situated at the intersection of individual student developmental and educational needs.

- **Shared Responsibility**
  Shared responsibility is intended to refer to an educational partnership model founded on simultaneous collaboration across multiple interpersonal and institutional dimensions. From the developmental-educational perspective, responsibility for undergraduate success is shared among students and their advisors, counselors, and faculty. From the institutional perspective, responsibility for student success is shared both by undergraduates and by the various campus and collegiate agencies that support them. In order for a shared responsibility model to work, the partnerships which drive it must be both symmetrical and focused. The partnerships should be symmetrical inasmuch as all parties should have equal access to conversations about the aims, roles, responsibilities, and effectiveness of the collaboration(s) involved. The partnerships should be focused inasmuch as the commonalities and distinctions among the various roles and responsibilities of the collaboration(s) should be clearly spelled out.

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*6 As derived from second-year retention data for CLA, broken down by declared major/subplan, wherein a student subpopulation is deemed “at risk of attrition” when the percentage of students retained from the first year to the second is below 85%.

*7 For these students, the Center’s role may vary from major to major, depending on existing collegiate and campus resources (e.g., the Health Careers Center for pre-health sciences students). As part of a concerted effort to avoid redundancy and to advance a systemic approach to assisting students in transition, we urge strong collaboration with all units serving competitive major students. It is important to note that this group is broken out separately from ICT students (see above) because they are a large, noticeably at-risk subgroup of ICTs, and require focused programmatic offerings in addition to more generalized ICT outreach.*
THE MISSION

The mission of the Center is to assist students in transition to move from ineffective or unstructured academic exploration to structured opportunities facilitating development of the knowledge, skills, and habits necessary for effective and engaged educational planning that will put them on the path to graduation.

Overview

The University has made tremendous improvements in student support over the past decade—enhancing advising and career counseling in many colleges, and creating University-level programs and policies such as Welcome Week, the 13-credit policy, the midterm alerts system, Access to Success, and the University Honors Program. These and related efforts further the goal of providing integrated, seamless support that helps students connect with the University and take advantage of its full range of options. They also advance our pursuit of campus-wide learning and development outcomes to optimize student education at all levels of the undergraduate experience.

The results of such improvements in policies, programs, and support have been impressive, enabling our campus to increase the four-year graduation rate from 17.9% in 1997 to 44.9% in 2007. But in order to stay on pace as we advance toward our campus goal of achieving a 60% four-year graduation rate with the incoming class of 2008, we will need to invest in the next generation of systemic improvements in undergraduate support.

Based on our review of the relevant professional literature and an analysis of both the successes achieved on this campus and the graduation enhancement work yet remaining to be done, we believe our priority undergraduate support service investments to address currently unmet needs ought to be aimed at helping students in academic transition. These students require dedicated assistance in order to more quickly identify, plan for, and enter a path toward graduation. We note that special attention should be devoted to the transition needs of our diverse student populations and that robust, multilateral campus-wide partnerships are critical to achieving our goals of protecting access to education while enhancing academic persistence and excellence. In order to help students in transition to move as swiftly as possible from the ineffective or unstructured academic exploration that hampers the progress of those who are of particular concern to the proposed Center, a dedicated core of advising and counseling “generalists” working in close cooperation with collegiate and campus partners needs to provide these undergraduates with structured opportunities to understand and develop their academic strengths, to identify their educational and life goals, to plan for success, to connect with people and resources facilitating that success, and to begin making measurable progress toward degree. Although a multitude of internal and external barriers may confront students in academic transition, some of which (such as cultural or workplace obstacles facing diverse student cohorts) may pass beyond the scope of services that can be provided by the campus, actively engaging students in developing a fuller understanding of their strengths and opportunities at the University is a necessary first step toward maximizing student success.

Toward this end, our working group proposes the establishment of a Center for Academic Planning and Exploration to work collaboratively with the colleges and relevant campus offices to achieve two aims advancing excellence in undergraduate education and the achievement of our University retention and graduation objectives. The first is to provide targeted academic transition support for those individual students and undergraduate cohorts that will most benefit from such a Center. The second is

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8 The 1997 four-year graduation rate is calculated from the UMNTC’s 1993 NHS cohort; the 2007 rate from the 2003 NHS cohort.
to provide and/or coordinate campus-level engagement opportunities for students attempting to move through the decision-making processes associated with adapting to successful undergraduate life.

**Modeling Students in Transition – the Role of Participatory Exploration**

Inasmuch as college serves as a transformative experience, all undergraduates are students in transition. As the diagram below indicates, successful undergraduates navigate the interrelated processes of separation, transition, and incorporation either sequentially or in combination.

The above diagram represents a synthesis of the best practices outlined in retention, graduation, and transition support literature reviewed by our group (see the Students in Transition Select Bibliography). In applying this model to the needs of students on our campus, we advocate developing pathways of engagement designed to connect with undergraduates in the various phases of transition to University life. In this context, separation is a period in which students work free of those aspects of their pre-U of M life that might hinder entrance into the social and academic spaces of higher education. Transition is a period in which students begin to explore the new curricular and co-curricular options available to them through their role as undergraduates. For many students, this is a difficult and ambiguous phase involving searching questions about their identity and goals. Chickering and Reisser survey much of the existing developmental educational literature in their monumental *Education and Identity* (2nd ed., 1993) and conclude that college students undergo pivotal changes over the course of their undergraduate career that shape the extent to which they are successful or otherwise in adult life. Among other attributes, Chickering and Reisser suggest that successful undergraduates develop competence, establish their identity, develop a life purpose, and build their integrity, and that such development is a necessary component of student success. None of these changes can occur, however, unless students first navigate separation and transition. Incorporation is a period in which, having negotiated the first two phases, students begin to assimilate what they have learned in preparation for their resumption of life outside the University.

Although all students navigate these three periods, the work of the Center will focus on those cohorts and individuals with unmet transition support needs in order to successfully negotiate one or more of the above processes. The mission of the Center to assist these undergraduates can best be achieved by working with our campus and collegiate partners to provide students in academic transition with structured pathways to move as quickly and surely as possible from ineffective, poorly informed, or unstructured exploration of their educational options to the focused exploration and provisional
academic choices which are a necessary step toward full and informed commitment to their academic goals.

While remaining attuned to alternative approaches to student success such as those advanced by Tierney and Rendon – undergraduate support models that are especially important for work with diverse student populations, our working group believes the Center should employ a support strategy adapting key components of Tinto’s and Astin’s Student Integration Model in the context of Bean and Eaton’s student development theories. All of these writers emphasize the importance of academic and social integration to undergraduate success. (Please see “Appendix 1, Overview of Retention Models,” for a review of the key retention models considered by the working group.)

Adapting such models of persistence to the specific needs of our student cohorts, the Center will employ an educational partnership model focused on student engagement strategies designed to lead students from participatory exploration of their educational options to informed curricular and co-curricular choices. The participatory exploration process is reflected in the figure below.

THE CENTER MODEL

Background
The Center will operate according to principles that are consistent with (1) best practices in the fields of academic advising, career counseling, and student support, (2) key findings of the final report of the Undergraduate Student Support Task Force (February, 2006), and (3) with the President’s and Provost’s vision for the proposed new building to replace the current Science Classroom Building, referred to in the current capital request as the Science Teaching and Student Services Building.

The Undergraduate Student Support Task Force established three foundational principles to guide its work: (1) put our students first; (2) embrace the critical value and importance of diversity to guide policies and strategies that promote student success; and (3) provide an education that is, itself, based on research and scholarship. This proposal has been developed in line with the same foundational principles.
Putting our students first is a major theme that has been emphasized by successive University administrations going back to 1992 and President Hasselmo’s initiatives on undergraduate education. Successive initiatives under Presidents Yudof and Bruinicks continued this emphasis upon improving the undergraduate student experience. The Student Support Task Force was one element of the University’s strategic positioning process designed to help the University meet its goal of becoming one of the top three public research universities in the world. University leadership has consistently reiterated the view that this goal is not achievable without providing an extraordinary undergraduate student experience, and that this extraordinary undergraduate student experience depends upon state-of-the-art student services.

The Task Force called for additional investment in advising and career services but did not make detailed, specific recommendations about what kind of investment would be most useful. An implementation group, the Student Support Advisory Committee was organized in October of 2006 and has been working since that time on all of the original Task Force recommendations.

The proposed Center is consistent with the broad values of both the original Task Force and the work of the various teams associated with the Student Support Advisory Group. A summary of the relevant scholarship and theoretical models that will inform the work of the Center has already been provided.

The University faces a unique opportunity, however, that adds to the potential value of the Center. Several years ago campus leaders recognized the need for a student-oriented building on the site of the current Science Classroom Building. An early report (April, 2006) articulated the vision that a new building would “take full advantage of being at the epicenter of student traffic for the Minneapolis campus, being on the bridgehead and with close proximity to Coffman Union and the mall.” Operating assumptions adopted early on stressed that the services in the building would be student-centric rather than office-centric, which is to say that the services would be designed around identified student need rather than designed around the convenience of currently existing offices or administrative structures. Furthermore, the services should embrace a rich combination of one-stop, transactional services and opportunities for more intensive, personalized advising and counseling services. Further discussions led to the current conceptualization of the building as involving four floors, with classrooms and student services distributed on each of the floors. The first two floors will focus on transactional services of the sort currently available at One Stop in Fraser Hall. The upper two floors will focus on more individualized kinds of advising and counseling, with space for such group-oriented activities as workshops, classes, and collaborative student projects. The proposed Center would occupy space on those two upper floors. Significant other space (on the upper two floors) will be devoted to career services (including space for on-campus interviews) available to all students but designed to complement existing career centers in St. Paul, on the West Bank (Carlson), and on the East Bank (Career Center for Science and Engineering and ETC Services for Education students) as well as space for Service Learning, Community Involvement, and Literacy Initiatives and space for the University’s Student Engagement Initiative. This student services space is being designed to be flexible, with the understanding that the specific services that are most needed in this location may very well change over time.

This design plan facilitates several interrelated synergies. The location of multiple services in one building will assist in the provision of genuinely integrative services not currently found elsewhere on campus. The high volume of traffic circulating in the building (due to One Stop and the classrooms) combined with the high traffic walking past the building (given the bridgehead location and proximity to Coffman Union) provides a visibility to the integrated services available in the building. This visibility is important to students as we seek to send the message that their success is a central concern of the University. It is equally important in its message to the broader public: that we value student
success and that that notion of success is connected with the transition we expect all students to make through pathways of engagement to meeting the learning and developmental outcomes identified with student success.

**Principles to Guide the Operation of the Center**

(1) All services are designed and offered to be helpful to the diverse needs of all the students enrolled at the University of Minnesota Twin Cities campus. All undergraduate students will have access to the Center’s services, although as described below, some subpopulations of students will be especially recruited.

(2) Services are to be designed on a partnership model, so that multiple resources of the University can efficiently be brought to bear upon each individual student. Opportunities for partnership will be especially important among the various services housed in the building, so that the vision for the building can be realized.

(3) Services are to be designed in a way that increases overall campus effectiveness in helping undergraduate students succeed. Staff structuring (see section below) will facilitate staff development across the campus. The research mission (see below) will similar enhance staff development across the campus. Furthermore the proposed partnership model will ensure sharing of good practices across departments and colleges.

(4) Services are designed to be attractive to students. Considerable effort will go into “marketing” these services to students and to the campus at large, with the result that students will want to engage in these services, since there will develop a general consensus that good things happen in “that building” to the students who go there ready to do their part.

**Center Staffing Model**

The proposed Center will be staffed by a core of professional “generalist” advisors. These advisors will specialize in acquiring the broad-based knowledge to work with students with the full range of interests that can be satisfied at the University. Consequently, they will have knowledge of all majors and programs and will specialize in helping students find a match between their interests and the many diverse resources of the University. For example, if an undecided student identifies working with children as an important interest area, the advisor will be able to help the student think through the program options they might consider (Child Development in CLA; Youth Studies in CEHD; various individualized degree program). The advisor will also realize that there are important engagement opportunities that will certainly be relevant to the student (for example, service learning and internship experiences working with children). Furthermore, the advisor will recognize that the student has also perhaps identified an area of possible career interest and will facilitate that discussion as well. The advisor, in keeping with the principles of the Center, will continue the academic program planning with the student, but will simultaneously facilitate the student’s connection to engagement advisors and career counselors for exploration in those dimensions of the student’s life planning.

In addition to the core staff, our proposed model envisions that a second set of professionals in the Center at any given time will be individuals with split appointments between the Center and collegiate and departmental advising offices. These split appointments will be individually negotiated and will
generally last for one to three years, so that, over time, larger numbers of professional advisors throughout the campus will have the professional development opportunity to participate in the activities of the Center. They will then be able to bring the acquired experience and knowledge back to their “home” units, thus facilitating the campus-wide learning described above. For example, an advisor from the Learning Abroad Center might spend a year half-time in the Center. While undergoing the training that would be expected of any advisor in the Center, they might well specialize in work in the Center particularly related to their background and experience. This would enable them (as well as the Center) to focus on developing further expertise on how study abroad programs can facilitate better decision making among undecided students. It would also facilitate Learning Abroad Center expertise on how to advise undecided students on the selection of a study-abroad program.

Service Delivery Methods

A variety of methods will be used to deliver the services of the Center. The Center will participate in decision making about the combined Resource Center for all services on the third and fourth floors of the building. Print and on-line resources related to student choice, life planning, engagement opportunities and so on will be available to students on demand. Staffing for the Resource Center will include professional and student staff who will be available during open hours to assist students in using the resources and getting started (or furthering) their planning processes. We believe the establishment of a common Resource Center available to the career office, engagement office, and the Center for Academic Planning and Exploration will not only support the interest of students, it will further the research, training, and best practices agenda of the Center itself.

As is outlined below, individual appointments will be available as they are needed for challenging student situations. A key finding of the Student Support Task Force is that many students currently do not receive the intensive, individualized support they need to be successful. A key goal of the Center is to help make sure this support is provided for students in the identified subpopulations. Perhaps the key word to emphasize here is “intensive”; if a student has just learned that they have not been admitted to their academic program of choice and, in fact, have virtually no chance of being admitted in the future, we expect that student to engage in intensive work with an advisor (perhaps meeting once a week for several weeks), our expectation is that the student will actively participate in a learning process that will require him or her to do outside work (meet with a career counselor, identify a relevant engagement activity, and so on) during the time they are working with their Center advisor.

Small-group programming will also be offered that will include appropriate student group projects, workshops, and courses. For example, a “homework assignment” for a student working with an individual advisor could be to attend a workshop on engagement planning; of course, that workshop would also be open to other interested students who may not be working with an advisor in the Center.

Finally, there will be an important communications component to the work of the Center. The need for effective marketing has already been mentioned as has the communication of learning to staff and faculty throughout the campus. But as successful methods of working with students are discovered or refined, these results will find their way into new materials for students, including perhaps print materials as well as web-based information.
Targeted Student Support Populations

In order to maximize the impact of its efforts, the Center will focus its cohort-based work on students with unmet transitional support needs whose exploration of their degree options is not yet sufficiently intentional. As both our review of the professional literature and our campus-wide conversations indicated, these undergraduates tend to employ one of two types of unhelpful academic exploration. Some students engage in unstructured or ineffectively broad exploration, while others embark on excessively narrow or unrealistically focused exploration. Based on our analysis of how it can most effectively serve such undergraduates in the context of advancing retention and graduation goals, we suggest that the Center direct its inaugural cohort-based work toward three groups of students in transition, each of which is comprised of undergraduates using both types of unhelpful academic exploration. The student groups are:

- Strongly Undecided Students
- Transitioning Students (undergraduates considering options between/among Colleges)
- Competitive Major Students

Types of Service that Might be Offered by the Center

The hallmark of service to all students who visit the Center will be developing a personalized plan that makes sense for each individual student. Some students may be guided to participate in only one or two of the listed types of service, whereas other students may be guided toward multiple opportunities.

Regardless of the particular service engaged, a key feature of the Center will be its capacity to provide students in academic transition with generalist advising support including appointments, group work, classes, and other special programs. Through the efforts of the Center, students will have the opportunity to meet with advisors who are crossed-trained with multiple majors or departments in order to equip them to discuss multi-disciplinary and multi-collegiate options. The professional focus of these broadly-trained generalists will be developmental advising with special attention paid to the particularities of each of the targeted student groups.

The Center will offer a range of types of services:

- **Individual appointments**
  An initial intake assessment will be conducted, so that redundant services are avoided and collaborative efforts optimized. The goal in individual sessions will be to develop an individualized academic action plan. This will allow the student to create exploratory goals and objectives based upon enhanced self-understanding. Follow-up appointments and referrals will be required to determine the viability of identified preliminary major choices. The goal, reached over the period of several intensive sessions—each building upon the previous meetings—will be an academic action plan that can be incorporated into GradPlanner and other planning tools and activities.

  In a sense, the advisor will create a highly structured and rigorously personalized syllabus blending educational and developmental goals that will require ongoing accountability from the undergraduate. The syllabus will include some subset (perhaps all) of the following possibilities:
1. the taking and interpretation of various assessment instruments
2. guided investigative research into possible academic programs or careers
3. exploratory informational interviews that connect students with faculty and professionals in the field
4. guided reflection on the process and the results of the various “assignments”
5. referral to any of the other Center resources, such as workshops, courses, or peer mentor programs
6. referrals (and follow-up on the part of the student) to other campus partners, facilitating an integrative approach to working with students
7. referrals back to primary collegiate and departmental advising offices

- **Group workshops**
  Workshops will be designed and facilitated by Center staff, sometimes with the collaboration of other advisors and counselors from the rest of the campus. Some will focus on exploration of certain kinds of program and career options (e.g., pre-law, public services careers, business). Other workshops will be presented on such topics as choosing majors, principles of life planning, moving from undeclared to prepared, and so on.

- **Exploratory studies courses**
  These self-assessment courses, taught by Center staff as well as by advising and career counseling partners from the rest of the campus, will emphasize student development in the context of educational options at the University. They will assist students in decision-making, self-assessment, academic exploration, and career planning, and would be required for some types of more focused transition support services. As needed, they may also include material and the developmental and educational advantages of learning outside the classroom and other kinds of engagement activities. They will, of course, be informed by the information about and good practices related to the targeted student groups.

- **Peer mentor programs**
  Peer mentoring can be used to support these students in multiple ways. The Center’s mentoring programs will avoid common mistakes that have been identified in the professional literature. The Center’s programs will be designed so that advanced student mentors deliver a developed and articulated curriculum to younger students, helping these students learn the largely unwritten rules of academic success. Through these mentor programs (and in other ways as well) the Center will work to encourage students to create an undergraduate culture of collaboration, participation, and contribution by developing a website or wiki collecting effective exploratory strategies, networking tips, and similar materials for the use of current and future students. It is possible the Center may want to employ social networking technology for students in academic transition.

**Center Engagement Mission**

The engagement mission is to guide students through the stages of career and major exploration via engagement opportunities and reflection, with an emphasis on the shift from ineffective or unstructured exploration to the advanced stages of focused exploration, tentative choices and commitment. This typically occurs in the sophomore year, but the Center would assist any student interested in transition support.
Students who access the engagement function of the Center would work with the relevant staff and programming to receive guidance and support in designing an intentional pathway of engagement based on student interest areas such as leadership, global experiences, community service and service learning, diversity, environment, etc.

Example A: Doneka has come to the Center as a “strongly undecided” student. She would like to explore experiential options to help her clarify her interests. Doneka describes herself as a “people person” and enjoys working with others, especially young people. Doneka wants to learn about the options that exist that would give her some practical experiences working with youth to see if this is really a good fit for her.

Example B: Kyle is a second year student who plans to major in economics. He also has an interest in the environment. Kyle is looking for ways that he can work on environmental issues and gain real life experience that relate to economics.

In both scenarios, the students would schedule an appointment and/or walk into the Center and receive the services described below.

Possible engagement-centered services or delivery methods could include:

- General planning and tutorial support for the Graduation Planner, specifically utilizing the engagement planning functionality
- Structured reflection opportunities including group reflection models, peer reflection models designed to assist students in identifying skills and competencies gained via engagement opportunities, and to make connection with learning that occurs in the classroom
- Programmatic responsibilities including campus wide programs and workshops to promote planning, reflection and engagement opportunities
- Centralized support for the diverse range of mentoring programs across campus

Center Research and Analysis Mission

Data-informed decision-making is a necessary component of exceptional service delivery. Informing practice with current research findings helps ensure that resources are employed to optimum effect and that our service models are state of the art and that staff expertise is in line with student needs. For these reasons, we believe the Center should have a strong research mission. The work of the Center will be driven by best practices derived from cutting edge national work and also from an active, internal research agenda. Student development, retention, and graduation research findings will establish the groundwork for determining best practices. The Center will be charged with taking a critical look at everything it does to ensure that programs and services are exerting a positive impact on student satisfaction and retention/graduation rates. An integrated research mission will guide the work, place the Center in the national spotlight, and model the practice that a rigorous research focus is inherent in best practices. Center staff will be expected to participate in the research efforts of the Center and to bring findings to their colleagues in the colleges.
Enhancing staff excellence is necessary but not sufficient to drive our campus core success outcomes. We also need to know how to apply staff expertise to maximum programmatic effect, and that should be one of two guiding purposes of the Center’s research and analysis agenda. The other is to design, support, and enhance an information-rich decision environment that is principle-centered and outcomes-focused. In order to produce such an environment, we must meet three key challenges. The first is to develop strategies and processes that will move us from data to information as quickly as possible. The second is to originate and/or assimilate new knowledge that will optimally position us to contextualize and apply data-driven information to student transition support needs. The third is to communicate our research and analysis-related conclusions and questions broadly and effectively in order to build the many partnerships that are necessary to move from insight to action. The table to the left maps sample research, analysis, and application efforts in the Center against the background of their related challenges and purpose.

Set in this context, Center research and analysis projects can be organized into two broad categories, each of which should be balanced against the other:

- **Qualitative analysis** which moves inductively from data to general conclusions in order to build models and theories (*model building*)
- **Quantitative analysis** and investigation which moves deductively from the models and hypotheses in which it is grounded toward particular conclusions which allow it to validate or disconfirm those hypotheses (*model testing*)

Using these approaches, research focused on student transition and student engagement will be at the core of the Center’s research activities. The research agenda should be driven by the goal of implementation of research findings to establish best practices. Research topics might include how to best work with students who have issues of prolonged indecisiveness about selecting a major, inappropriate decision-making, and poor social and academic integration. In addition, the Center should study the relationship between student engagement and student success, issues and challenges of the sophomore year experience and the efficacy of offering integrated career planning and advising services. And finally, the Center should work to ensure our transition support of students of color and traditionally underrepresented student groups is targeted, effective, and working in collaboration with collegiate and campus support efforts for these undergraduate cohorts.

We acknowledge that transition issues can impede student success and graduation rates. Research conducted at the U of M indicates that strongly undecided students, those moving between colleges who are uncertain about where to find help, and those in highly competitive majors are at higher risk of dropping or stopping out, thus delaying or preventing graduation. The goal of the research arm of the Center is to implement the most effective strategies for bringing students in transition to degree completion.
Finally, it should be an expectation that the Center remain fluid and nimble in its ability to respond to and anticipate new research agendas. Issues that impede retention and graduation today may be different in ten years. The Center should be at the forefront in spotting trends and issues that impact student success. It should be positioned to be a ready-response enterprise that keeps an eye to the future while at the same time maintaining a focus on variables that affect current student success.

OUTCOMES, VALUE, & PROJECTED COSTS

**Key Success Indicators**

The working group discussed a number of metrics which could be used to evaluate the success of the Center’s services, practices, and research:

- **Retention & graduation rates**
  First and second-year retention rates (primarily second-year retention rates – the key point of transition for most of the Center’s students), and four, five, and six year graduation rates.
- **Student satisfaction**
  As measured by point-of-service surveys and the University’s Student Experience Survey.
- **Student learning & development outcomes assessment**
  As measured by detailed student feedback from a random population sample, and perhaps longitudinal analysis of advising notes.
- **Appointment/walk-in attendance**
  Measured by front-desk staff.
- **Advisor contacts**
  The number of email/phone contacts recorded in the advising notes system.
- **Targeted outreach behavior correlation**
  For instance, the percentage of an outreach cohort contacting the Center (or perhaps the student’s college) within a certain time window after the outreach has been conducted.
- **Workshop/seminar attendance**
  As collected by some workshop/event attendance tracking mechanism (i.e., Crimson’s Workshop Administration Module).
- **Published/presented peer-reviewed research**
  At related conferences or in applicable written publications in higher education and/or institutional research.

**Value Added**

With nearly 3800 students in various stages of collegiate transition each year, the Center will provide an environment in which such students can leverage both the broad-based expertise of “generalist” advisors and the program-specific knowledge of collegiate advisors (who would split time between the Center and their home college through a “Visiting Advisor” program). As such, the Center is well-positioned to assist students in making the transition from one college to another, maintaining a level of continuity unavailable in the University’s current student services environment.
Projected Costs, and Size and Retention Characteristics of Student Populations Served

We offer the following table as a starting point for estimating the cost of the Center. Advising and career counseling salaries vary across the campus, as do support personnel costs, and it is possible that the expanded demands of the generalist positions will command a correspondingly higher salary than is associated with entry level advising. In any case, we urge that salaries for Center staff be competitive with those of their campus colleagues. The figures for advising and counseling staff assume a $40K base (the counseling staff should probably be somewhat higher), and those for support personnel assume a $32K base. Given the specific skill sets sought for the advisors and counselors, however, it seems likely those costs may actually be significantly more.

Please Note: Throughout the consultation and planning process there was strong consensus at all levels that the Center for Academic Planning and Exploration requires significant investment in new advising and career counseling lines in order to improve undergraduate support. Because reallocating existing resources would introduce gaps in service, redistributing existing resources, whether collegiate or campus-level, is inconsistent with the goals of the Center and will not position us to move closer to our graduation and retention targets. The estimates below, therefore, are intended to reflect new incremental investments. Please also note that, because the administrative relationships with other units projected for inclusion in the building are not yet known, we have not included administrative costs in these estimates.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Center for Academic Planning and Exploration</th>
<th>Salaries and Fringe – Recurring</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>19 advising/counseling FTE – these include all advising lines</strong></td>
<td><strong>$52,160 for base &amp; fringe; $991,040 subtotal</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2 Support personnel for front desk support</strong></td>
<td><strong>$42,464 for base &amp; fringe; $84,928 subtotal</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Space – One-time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Furniture: $?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paint and carpet: $?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desktop computers, laptops, printers, etc: $?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phones, window shades, addl. Etherjack connections, office signage, etc: $?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTAL: $

The estimated number of students who would make up the Center’s primary target audiences are given as follows:

- **Strongly Undecided Students**
  
  For the past two years, CLA has conducted a survey of first-year students which includes a question asking how they feel about their major selection. Of the respondents who said "I want to major in so many things; I am not sure how I will ever make up my mind" (5.1% of the survey population, or 35 students), only 74.3% of the original cohort remained at the beginning of their third year. For all other responses, the average second year retention rate was 84.1%, nearly ten percentage points higher. Given the stability of the survey's answer
distribution over a two-year period (a standard deviation of only 1.2%), and extrapolated to the entire 2007 UMNTC freshmen population, an estimated 260 students fall into this category. 9

- **Transitioning Students** (service category)
  Students who were not admitted to the college for which they applied are much less likely to earn a degree in 4 to 6 years [59.2%, 350 of 591 students] than either (a) students who did not attempt to transfer away from their college of admission [72.8%, 3822 of 5250 students], or (b) students who successfully transferred to another UMNTC college [76.8%, 2028 of 2642 students].

  Students who remain in their college of admission are much more likely to graduate in 4 years than those who attempt to transfer out - successful or not. 47% (2468 of 5250) of those who remain graduate in 4 years or less while only 33.5% (884 of 2642) of successfully transferred ICT's and 24.7% (146 of 591) of unsuccessful ICT applicants do.

  The rate of attrition or graduation after 6 years is much higher for unsuccessful ICT applicants (40.8%, 241 of 591) than either the successful ICT applicants (23.2%, 614 of 2642) or students remaining in their admitting college (27.2%, 1428 of 5250).10

- **Competitive Major Students**
  The three core subpopulations of the competitive major students consists of students in pre-health sciences (5.8%, or 978 of 16924 students), pre-IT/CBS (5.4%, or 909 of 16924 students), and pre-business (3.1%, or 525 of 16924 students). On average, students in one of these 3 subpopulations make up 14.3% of the freshman population each fall.

  Of the pre-health sciences students, only 70.1% remained after the second year (compared to 79.5% for all other students).

  Of the pre-IT/CBS students, only 71.5% remained after the second year (compared to 79.4% for all other students).

  Of the pre-business students, only 69.1% remained after the second year (compared to 79.3% for all other students).11

In the first year of operation, the Center’s total student population is therefore an estimated 3788 students. In the second year, this number will most likely increase as the strongly undecided and competitive major student populations continue their contact with the Center into the second year. Considering 3788 as a lower bound on the Center’s student population, and assuming a “high touch” student/advisor ratio of 200-to-1, approximately 19 advising FTE will be necessary in the first year.

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9 Source: Second-year retention statistics generated from CLA First-Year Survey responses, 2006, administered to fall 2005 NHS enrollees. See Appendix 3 for more detail.

10 Source: Fall 2000/2001 UMNTC NHS student cohorts; only those retained after the first year. See Appendix 3 for more detail.

11 Source: Fall 2000-2003 UMNTC NHS, year 2 academic plan/subplan used to identify students in each subgroup, excludes GC. See Appendix 3 for more detail.
ABOUT THIS REPORT

Working Group Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11-14-07</td>
<td>Center for Students in Transition Working Group charge delivered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-14-07-present</td>
<td>Semimonthly working group meetings held</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02-05-08</td>
<td>Coming to a Common Vision Retreat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02-28-08</td>
<td>First Meeting with CLA First Year Focus Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03-10-08</td>
<td>Meeting with CLA Transfer Student Advisory Board &amp; with transfer advisor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03-17-08</td>
<td>Town Hall meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>03-21-08</td>
<td>Meeting with ICT group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03-27-08</td>
<td>Second Meeting with CLA First Year Focus Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04-10-08</td>
<td>Working Group recommendations presented to Associate Vice Provost Koch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05-01-08</td>
<td>Working Group recommendations due to Provost Sullivan</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Working Group Process
In November 2007, Associate Vice Provost Laura Coffin Koch appointed a working group to investigate and provide recommendations for a center to serve students in transition, a recommendation that came out of the original task force report for student support as part of the strategic positioning process (see Appendix 2 for charge). In preparation for this work, the working group conducted extensive research on national models including those at Indiana University, Ohio State University and the University of Cincinnati, as well as current research and literature on advising, mentoring, engagement, student services and the sophomore experience. Data was reviewed from the Student Experience Survey (formerly Student Exit Survey) as well as gathered from the College of Liberal Arts first year student survey. Finally, task group members spoke with University staff and students to gather input on perceived needs and services of such a center.

Working Group Members
Chris Kearns (chair)  Student Services, College of Liberal Arts
Carl Brandt           Career and Community Learning Center, College of Liberal Arts
Carole Broad          Student Services, College of Education and Human Development,
                      AAN Representative
Mark Bultmann         Student Services, College of Education and Human Development
Colin Delong          Student Services, College of Liberal Arts
Andy Howe             Office of Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost
LeeAnn Melin          Office of Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost
Patti Neiman          Exploratory, Transition and Career Services, College of Education and Human
                      Development, CDN Representative
June Nobbe            Office for Student Engagement and Leadership
Mark Taylor           Student Services, College of Liberal Arts
Meaghan Thul          Student Services, College of Liberal Arts
Jean Underwood       Office of the Dean, College of Biological Sciences
Leslie Zenk           Office of Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost

What we learned from the research and data
Peer institutions with services for transitioning students are relatively new and tend to serve students in an academic capacity who can be identified in one or more of the following categories: undecided
(have not declared a major), sophomores, probationary, high-demand majors, or below a particular number of credit hours. The University of Cincinnati’s Center for Student Success in particular includes an Exploratory Studies program which allows students to self-select into a program that works to help them declare a major through a series of intensive, required advising appointments. Generally students indicate a desire for a balance between academic advising and developmental advising as well as a balance between generalized and individualized information – they do not perceive their academic and non-academic lives as separate, but rather as one complete college experience.

What we learned from students
Informal meetings with current undergraduate students were held on as indicated above. The first year focus group, which consisted of some 10 students, represents a subset of CLA’s freshmen advisory board, and like the Transfer Student Advisory Board, has been meeting with collegiate representatives throughout the year to discuss possible improvements to student services (albeit the groups only met on the dates indicated for specific discussion of the Center itself). Students told working group members that they: 1) want to maintain a solid relationship with their collegiate advisors, 2) want help when they are undecided, and 3) find it sometimes difficult to locate various support services and, in such situations, don’t know where to go for help.

What we learned from staff
On February 5, 2008 the working group facilitated two breakout sessions during the Coming to a Common Vision Retreat for academic advisors, career counselors, and student affairs professionals. These sessions of approximately 40 participants each were used as an opportunity to share information regarding the efforts of the working group as well as to gather feedback from staff regarding what they would find most valuable in the Center; a feedback form was also provided to participants to allow for anonymous comments (n=19) Following the Retreat, a subsequent Town Hall meeting with over 40 participants was held on March 17, 2008 to share the progress of the task group and to gather additional feedback from constituencies.

Themes that emerged from these breakout sessions included: 1) an overwhelming sense that elements of this Center could help people in their work, particularly for students who are undecided or need to do some exploring regarding career and/or major options; and 2) work in the Center must not be duplicative with what is already done successfully in the colleges, and that the purpose of the Center be clearly defined in a way that is also integrated with students’ collegiate advisors. Academic advisors and career counselors also expressed various populations that could benefit from such a Center, including pre-professional students and students who are considering transferring to another college or program within the University.
Appendix 1: Overview of Retention Models

Our working group reviewed a number of articles and websites related to graduation, retention, and students and transition. R. Denise Meyers provides a succinct overview of retention models in her 2003 study, *College Success Programs*:

**THEORETICAL MODELS OF RETENTION**

One of the most prominent theoretical models has been Tinto's Student Departure Theory, in which he states that academic integration (the student's academic performance) and societal integration (participation in college life) are the keys to persistence of college students. Students who are unable to connect with either the academic or social subsystems of their institutions are more likely to leave.

Astin's "I-E-O" (Input-Environmental-Output), or Student Integration Model, assesses the impact of various institutional environments and experiences by determining whether students grow or change under varying environmental conditions. Astin believes that the individual plays a central role in determining the extent and nature of growth according to the quality of effort or involvement with the resources provided by the institution (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991, p. 51).

Bean and Eaton base their Psychological Model of college student retention on four psychological theories: attitude-behavior, coping behavioral (approach-avoidance), self-efﬁcacy, and attribution, or "locus of control." They state that the factors affecting retention are ultimately individual, and that individual psychological processes form the foundation for retention decisions (Bean & Eaton, 2001, p. 73). Additionally, they believe that, given an understanding of these psychological processes involved in developing academic and social integration, an institution can create programs and environments that increase academic and social integration and increase student success (Bean & Eaton, p. 78). Successful retention programs such as learning communities, freshman interest groups, tutoring, mentoring, and student orientation rely on psychological processes (Bean & Eaton, p. 73).

For students of color, the integration into the institution's environment, as well as academic success, can be very difficult, especially at majority White institutions. Also, much of the existing research on student retention was conducted before minority students became a "critical mass" on college campuses (Rendon, Jalomo, & Nora, 2000). Consequently, the research often was based on White male students (Tierney, 1992; Belenky et al., 1986) and hence produced a "monolithic view of students devoid of issues of race/ethnicity, culture, gender, politics, and identity" (Hurtado, 1997).

Tierney posits an alternative model based on cultural integrity and Bourdieu's notions of cultural capital, which explains how social class inﬂuences transmission of educational inequality (Tierney, 1999). He argues that the widely accepted theory that college participation is a "rite of passage" where academic and social integration is required for student persistence, misinterprets anthropological notions of ritual and holding consequences harmful for racial and ethnic minorities (Tierney, 1992). He offers his model of "cultural integrity" as an intervention for those students who are most at risk of departing from college: lowincome, urban, Black, and Hispanic youth (Tierney, 1999); one which develops ways of afﬁrming, honoring, and incorporating the individual's identity into the organization's culture (Tierney, 1999). He cites Deyhle's (1995) study that also suggests that Native American children who were secure in their traditional culture and identity—that is, those who refused to accept either assimilation or cultural rejection—were more academically successful in school than their culturally insecure peers.

Likewise, Rendon's (1993) study found that minority and nontraditional students could be
academically successful without total disconnection from their culture, through "validation": those actions and outcomes that communicate to students, either directly or symbolically, that they have the capacity and competence to complete college successfully. Validation refers to actions taken by persons other than the student, and has the following dimensions:

- It is an empowering, confirming, and supportive process, initiated by validating agents, that helps move students toward academic and interpersonal development;
- Validation is a developmental process, not an end;
- Validation is most effective when offered early in the student's college experience, immediately after the student arrives on campus;
- Validation can occur both in and out of class (Terenzini et al., 1996).

Each of the above theories on student departure recognizes that students come to college with a number of characteristics, experiences, and commitments, and that the institution itself has certain characteristics. Upon entry to college, each of the models attempts to describe the ways in which the student and the institutional environment interact with one another to form and re-form student attitudes, behavior, and commitments (Thayer, 2000). All these theories can be utilized to create a successful retention program based on the particular profile of the student population and the specific institutional mission and goals.

--R. Denise Meyers. *College Success Programs* (The Pathways to College Network, 2003), pp. 5-6
Center for Students in Transition

The proposed Center for Students in Transition is a direct response to one part of Recommendation 3 in the Task Force on Undergraduate Reform: Student Services report:

Establish a center that provides advising and support services for students from any college who are exploring majors and career/life goals, making transitions between colleges, or who need general “just-in-time” advising and effective referrals in a central location. The intent of this center is not to diminish the connection between students and their advisors, but to offer assistance to those students who might otherwise fall through the cracks.

Creating this new Center for Students in Transition would provide a much-needed resource for the large number of undergraduates whose academic plans are not fully formed when they begin at the University. Ensuring that these students have the best possible information and support from the beginning should help students make better decisions about their academic plans and increase timely graduation. The proposed Center would support and strengthen the work of all s on this campus, providing them with a place to refer students, rather than pushing them to work outside their area of expertise.

In addition, locating this Center in the proposed Science Classroom/Student Services Building would allow for the creation of a truly integrated life planning resource center for students, bringing together academic advising, career counseling, and student engagement programs and thereby fostering a coherent program for students' academic and personal development.

Key student groups who would be supported by the Center include:

1. Students who are planning to transfer from one college at the University to another. In recent years, the number of students completing such a transfer has averaged around 1700 annually, not counting those who began in General College/General Studies. These students would benefit from the opportunity to work with advisors who are fully knowledgeable both about students' current college/major and their proposed destination, and who can help them explore all options to make sure their chosen transfer program is the best fit for them, so they don't end up transitioning yet again.

2. Students who are very undecided about their major, and would benefit by concentrated advising that would be tightly integrated with self-exploration, and with exploration of all major options at the University and possible career paths. While we do not have a firm headcount of these students, anecdotal evidence would indicate that a significant number of entering students fall in this category, and the availability of advising focused on helping them with their decision-making process could help speed their progress at moving into their majors and graduating.

3. Students who are very focused on a competitive-admission major and do not have a well-developed backup plan. Of particular concern here are the increasing numbers of students who enter the U believing that they will be able to transfer to the highly competitive majors in health sciences, engineering, or design, and who, when denied admission, are left with no "plan B," and a year or two of coursework and many thousands of dollars invested in a plan that they cannot attain at the University of Minnesota. It is critically important to intervene early with these students and help them develop realistic alternatives; otherwise, we risk losing them altogether.

While collegiate advising offices currently serve students in each of these categories, their chief expertise and focus is on the majors within their own college. College advisors may not have the
expertise or the time needed to intervene effectively with transitional students, to help them understand the University as a whole and all their options here, give them a good sense of how a wide variety of majors might fit with their long-term career goals, and push them to be realistic about their chances for competitive majors and to develop backup plans.
Appendix 3: Students in Transition Select Bibliography


Cuseo, J. (2002). Organizing to collaborate: A taxonomy of higher education practices for promoting interdependence within the classroom, across the campus, and beyond the college. Stillwater, OK: New Forums Press.


Colton, G. M., Connor, U. J., Jr., et al. (1999). Fighting attrition: One freshman year program that targets academic progress and retention for at-risk students. *Journal of College*


