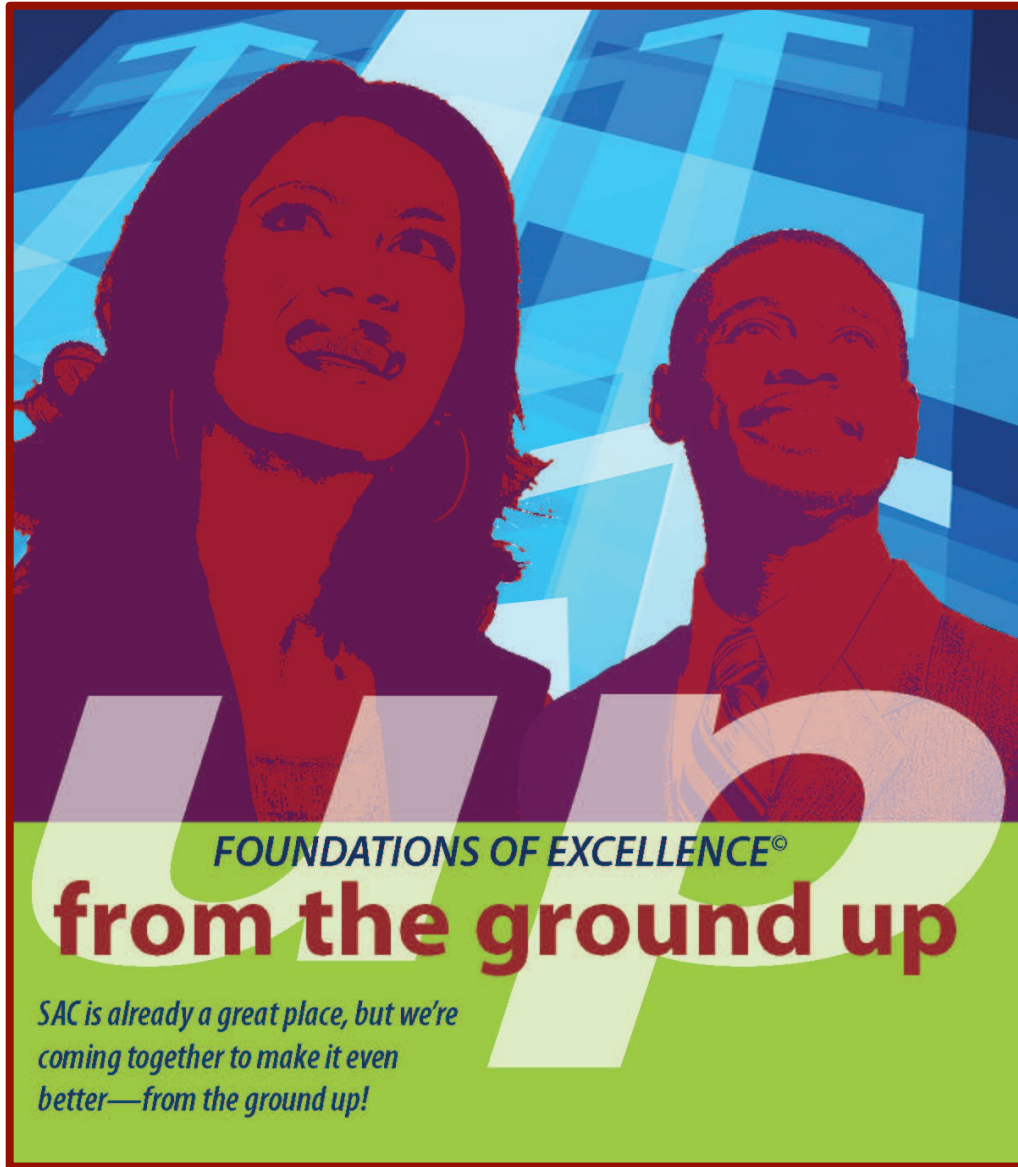




ALAMO
COLLEGES

SAN ANTONIO COLLEGE



**San Antonio College
Foundations of Excellence (FoE) – Transfer Focus
Executive Summary
June 2013**

While SAC's institutional philosophy, both explicit and implicit, asserts that one of SAC's primary functions is to transfer students, the resources to implement this have not been adequately allocated to achieve high transfer rates among SAC students.

Challenges:

- The **Transfer and the Career centers** are in poor locations, too **small, and severely understaffed**; the Transfer Center Website is informative, but not updated often enough; career exploration/guidance only consistently occurs in Student Development classes taken in the first 15 hours.
- **Lack of clarity about Transfer Majors**, with transfer designated as “Liberal Arts” and therefore unable to receive major-specific advising; some **advising favors graduation requirements over transfer requirements; students are not always connected with faculty** in their majors for advising.
- Accurate **information** about transfer is not available to students, staff, or faculty:
 - The new “Alamo GPS” online mechanism, which is the primary tool for degree planning, does not yet include **links to articulation (2+2) plans** at receiving institutions, though this is in the implementation stage now;
 - Transfer agreements available in different areas on our Website are not always up-to-date, and faculty/staff/students don't necessarily know where to find them;
 - **Faculty**, who have been required to take on more advising responsibilities in the last two years, **have not received enough training in core curriculum advising**, much less in advising for transfer or diversity; faculty are not given incentives/rewards for advising; **staff are not trained in transfer issues**; and
 - **Data** which identifies who SAC's transfer-bound students are, which students actually transfer, and from which departments, and how successful they are at receiving institutions is **not routinely collected or analyzed**.
- SAC has **no policies, procedures, or training** that 1) clearly delineate who is responsible **for advising students about transfer** and at what points in their college careers they should receive information; 2) how departments should **collaborate with receiving institutions** to articulate coursework.
- While the SAC administration is committed to academic, gender, ethnic, political and intellectual diversity and offers many opportunities for students to learn about/experience diversity issues/voices, there are **no coordinated institution-wide methodologies that ensure** that every student will obtain **learning related to diversity**; roles and responsibilities for learning around diversity are not clarified. Students do not feel they are exposed to international issues/voices.
- There is **no student organization for Transfer-bound students**, and many students do not know about major-specific organizations/clubs or service-learning opportunities;
- **SAC's success** in preparing students for transfer and successfully transferring them is **not evaluated** in any consistent, institution-wide manner, and not at the department level, but only using overall transfer rates collected for Key Performance Indicator reports.

Six Prioritized Recommendations

1 TRANSFER	<p>1) Transfer Center: The Transfer Center should hire a full-time Director and redesign/relocate the Center to be a more prominent and inviting student-oriented space like the MESA or Honors Academy centers, with space for recruiters and students. The Center should: host workshops on transfer applications, transfer application writing and scholarship searches; put all information relating to transfer on the Center’s SAC webpage, which should better highlight transfer degree plans and explain both how and why students should use them to graduate from SAC and/or seamlessly transfer to a four-year college; maintain its Facebook page; and develop FAQ’s/tips for applying to major receiving institutions, with contact persons for each receiving institution.</p>
2 FACULTY ADVISING	<p>2a) Faculty require significant training, easy access to advising resources, and incentives. The Murguía Learning Institute should train faculty in academic advising with an emphasis on transfer advising, develop a faculty advising handbook and ensure that tools/resources/forms relating to transfer are updated and accessible. Faculty with competency in academic advising would not be trained; attention would be focused on majors where students accumulate excessive hours prior to completing the core curriculum, and on faculty who lack the knowledge/ willingness to advise. A review committee would identify/reward faculty advisors/departments with outstanding records of transfer/completion and hold those with poor records accountable.</p> <p>2b) Clarification of Advising Responsibility: A committee of members from Faculty Senate, Staff Council and College Academic Council must arrive at a consensus vision of student advising and clarify the advising terminology. In a widely-accessible document, the College should define academic advising, counseling, and FTIC advising. The College should identify goals for each type of advising and clarify who does what.</p>
3 DATA	<p>3) Develop a way to identify transfer-bound students who are interested in transfer and their transfer institution of interest. Understanding the true number of potential transfers, (local, Texas, and out of state) would inform policy and help us track transfer patterns and trends.</p>
4 HANDBOOK	<p>4a) Transfer Student Handbook: A faculty and staff committee should write a transfer student handbook that explains the transfer process to students and contains a “Texas Public University Transfer Student Bill of Rights.” This document will explain to students their rights as transfer students from a Texas community college to a public Texas four year institution, including the transferability of the core curriculum and number of credit hours available for transfer. All students would be advised about Web-based Handbook every year in class/advising sessions. The Transfer Center Director would advocate for credit acceptance at receiving institutions.</p> <p>4b) Policies and Procedures relating to graduation, transfer and transfer degree plans need to be clarified by the Deans of PTE, Arts and Sciences and Student Affairs, and made accessible to all faculty, staff and students (e.g. an electronic procedure for obtaining the required signed disciplinary statement from the Dean of Student Affairs for attachment to the student transcripts).</p>

Six Prioritized Recommendations Cont.

5 TECHNOLOGY	<p>5a) Major vs. Degree plan: The major is the only designation in student Banner files. Students on transfer degree plans are recorded as “liberal arts” majors, complicating access to departmental advising. We need to redesign the major designation within the student record system (Banner) to put a new field in student records for a specific degree name as well as major or expand the major field (e.g. “ Associate of Arts – UTSA History Transfer”.)</p>
	<p>5b) Alamo GPS: Currently Transfer or 2+2 degree plans are not uploaded into Alamo GPS; 2+2 degree plans from our ten largest receiving institutions should be loaded into GPS immediately. Over time, all receiving institutions with which SAC has 2+2s should be uploaded into GPS.</p>
6 COMMUNICATION	<p>6a) Improve communication between San Antonio College and receiving institutions.</p>
	<p>6b) Create a Transfer Task Force that includes representatives from receiving institutions.</p>

FoE Implementation Timeline AY 2013-14

Phase/Activity	Target Deadline
Phase I	September 1, 2013
<p>Tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create the FoE Implement Committee of about 12 volunteers including Mona, Johnnie, Tammy, Vanessa, Dave, and Susan. • Outline the major action items that comprise the overall action plan. • Develop a communication plan for the overall action plan and for ongoing communications as implementation unfolds. • Re-launch at Convocation in August. • Celebrate Year 1 Completion in mid-September. 	
Phase II	December 1, 2013
<p>Tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop detailed implementation plans for each major action item. • Conduct a campus/institution-wide mid-year meeting to share key aspects of Phase II plans and update. Celebrate and answer questions. 	
Phase III	March 1, 2014
<p>Tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue working individual action items and providing regular updates to Implementation Committee. • Provide overall status of the implementation plan and progress updates since Phase II. • Identify key action items for next three months. 	
Phase IV	June 1, 2014
<p>Tasks:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver a General Situation Summary including progress since Phase III and challenges. • Reflect with application to the future. • Identify outstanding implementation items. • Detail a plan/timeline for completion in subsequent implementation year(s). 	

