

## **Themes from Discussions**

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Table 10 - A Student-Centered University: From Passive to Active Engagement

### **Create a culture of student engagement through required experiences.**

Show importance of student engagement through requiring student engagement activities within courses. For example, identify large/intro courses within colleges and recognize/reward faculty who facilitate experiential learning through student engagement in their courses. In addition, make student engagement an integral part of a desired skillset for new faculty hires.

### **Create a culture of student engagement through a consistent student-focused message.**

Make every interaction with students meaningful by creating a culture where all stakeholders on campus “speak the same language” when it comes to advising and student engagement reinforcing our focus on students, their holistic well-being (not just courses to take) and meaningful engagement. Are there a small number principles/talking points that all (many) across units and offices (academic affairs and student affairs) can integrate into their interactions, e.g., How are you? What’s working well? What co-curricular activities are you involved in? Etc. Simple questions but if all ask these, it sends a powerful and uniform message and creates culture.

### **Create a culture of student engagement through connecting the dots.**

Can we utilize a centralized system, like Starfish, to house information from admissions related to student engagement (from applications) that all advisors and other relevant parties see automatically when meeting with students? This will enable individuals an easy way to have a meaningful conversation with a student that is relevant to that student (and we speak with a cohesive voice as a university).

### **Create a culture of student engagement through meeting where students are at.**

Be mindful of the varying needs of groups of students for retention purposes.

- Create creative and flexible solutions for advising and support for such groups as undecided students and changers. Understand the needs of sub-groups of students who fall into these categories, for example, students who didn’t get into majors they sought admission to. Build in systematic mechanisms to guide these students into other majors. Build on existing successful practices, e.g., utilizing peers at major fairs for undecided students, identify exploratory tracks for students to select.
- Build in early experiences with a major (benefits the retention of students who know what they want to study)—the Theatre program is a good example of this.
- Create opportunities for students to have “advising” conversations with faculty in a more relaxed atmosphere, e.g., chats about majors with faculty from across the university in the ballroom, to learn about the various majors. Start with student questions/interests.