San Jose State University Action Plan
2016 Institute on High-Impact Practices and Student Success
June 21-24, 2016 Los Angeles, California

Core Team:
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Background:

San Jose State University (SJSU) sits at the heart of one of the most culturally, ethnically, linguistically and economically diverse regions of the nation. The significance of this demographic characteristic of our institution cannot be underestimated. By virtue of the worlds they come from, a large portion of our students cannot access the traditional kinds of capital that have facilitated "success" in many other higher education contexts. And so it is incumbent upon our campus to recognize the assets students bring with them, and to create the kinds of educational experiences, broadly defined, that will permit them to develop those skills and dispositions to excel and thrive as they translate their studies into whatever journeys they opt to pursue. We strive to draw on those assets and provide a meaningful college education that expands options and possibilities for a population of students who are extraordinary in many senses: many are the first in their families to attend university; many juggle significant work and family responsibilities while navigating their way to a degree; a majority of our students represent minority populations who are underserved elsewhere in higher education.

Our campus already has in place a good deal of the curricular and co-curricular infrastructure to "deliver" on our goals, but our collective efforts to date have been somewhat piecemeal. At this juncture, we are poised to build upon these efforts and to articulate and implement a campus-wide plan to support student success that is intentional, cohesive, synergistic and sustainable. In addition, due to our new leadership, we are in position to place high-impact practices, or HIPs at the forefront of the discussion and change underway on our campus.

In cultivating a more intentional and cohesive culture of HIPs at SJSU, we hope to address in particular the following four challenges:

Challenge #1: The graduation and retention rates of all our students have been improving. However, the rate of increase is less for our students who are historically underserved, specifically Latino/a, African American, and Vietnamese students. The achievement gap for these students is widening at SJSU.

Challenge #2: Our 2014 National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) results indicate our students rate the frequency and quality of their interactions with faculty as significantly lower than other California State University (CSU) campuses, other comparable schools, and the NSSE overall average. For example, the report indicated that few faculty and undergraduates work on co-curricular activities together (17% of FY and

21% of SR). Only a little over half of our faculty (54-57%) recognize the importance of student attendance at campus activities and events.

Challenge #3: Given the complex and often silo-ed nature of our institution's organizational structure, it has traditionally been difficult to collaborate across divisional lines. These challenges are being overcome, as the Divisions of Academic Affairs and Student Affairs have worked together to create a campus-wide strategic initiative for student success. This initiative delineates four "pillars" of support: promoting college readiness, providing timely and high quality advising, promoting student engagement, and addressing the problem of bottleneck courses. The particular programs and activities that flow from these initiatives need to incorporate HIPs to support our most at-risk students and to reduce the achievement gap.

Challenge #4: The density of tenure/tenure track faculty on our campus is currently below the mean for our state system. Just above 50% of the teaching on our campus is done by contingent faculty. This presents particular challenges in that lecturers tend to have a very high turnover rate, spend limited time on campus, and see few opportunities or incentives for professional development.

Project Description and Goals:

In what follows, we outline a plan to increase students' active and intentional involvement with their studies and with the world at large, and to achieve educational equity across our campus. We see student participation in HIPs as a powerful tool for enhancing their engagement and helping them learn to address unscripted problems at the intersection of social and natural environments. We see faculty and staff participation in HIPs as a powerful vehicle for enhancing their skills as educators, their passion for their work, and for their professional vitality. Below, we enumerate a set of activities designed to bring this agenda to fruition. (Primary responsibility for leading or completing these activities will be assumed by the entire Core Team, or by individuals, as named, below. Other members of the SJSU community will be drawn in to the activities, as warranted.)

1. Analyzing and mapping current use of HIPs to identify strengths and potential synergies and collaborations.
   a) Analyze faculty Google survey data (clarify faculty expertise in which HIPs). Summer 2016 (Amy and Stacy).
   b) Solicit nominations of faculty HIP experts from department chairs. Summer 2016 (Amy).
   c) Collaborate with the Office of Research on the undergraduate research database. Fall 2016 (Stacy).
   d) Conduct focus groups with faculty to understand their definition of HIPs, how they view the connection of HIPs to student success and educational equity, and

what they see as barriers to integrating HIPs into their classes. Fall 2016 (Core Team).

e) Conduct focus groups with students to understand their definition of HIPs, what they see as barriers to participating in HIPs, and understand what would help them to see meaning in HIPs and to incentivize participation. Fall 2016 (Core Team).

f) Create and maintain a sustainable campus database of faculty engagement in HIPs. Fall 2016 (Core Team).

g) Create and maintain a sustainable process to review and tag curriculum using specific HIPs. Fall 2016 (Core Team).

h) Work with the African-American and Latino/a Student Success Task Forces and with the Asian Pacific Islander Faculty and Staff Association to identify impediments to engagement and success for these student populations. Fall 2016 (Core Team).

2. Leveraging existing institutional and analytic structures to track participation in HIPs and build a foundational assessment plan for HIPs.

a) Align HIPs assessment with Student Affairs tracking and assessment of co-curricular engagement. Fall 2016 (Stacy).

b) Create a foundational HIPs assessment plan where the metrics are defined through conversations with faculty on why we want to engage in HIPs. Fall 2016 (Core Team).

c) Collaborate with each college's assessment team so that we track HIP opportunities at first-year, mid-college, and senior year. Fall 2016 (Stacy).

d) Determine whether the Koret funded Student Data Warehouse is a means of tracking and assessing HIPs. If not, establish another means with IT. Fall 2016 (Stacy).

e) Collaborate with IEA to put in place assessment plans for classes in the S4 database, writing intensive (define the General Education courses), capstone, study abroad/FLP, and undergraduate research cohorts (e.g., McNair Scholars Program, Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation, Maximizing Access to Research Careers: Undergraduate Student Training in Academic Research, CSU Program for Education and Research in Biotechnology). Utilize the metrics identified in the "Student Engagement" pillar to evaluate these practices. Fall 2016 (Stacy).

f) Identify a subset of relevant NSSE, FSSE, and Campus Climate survey questions to incorporate into the assessment of HIPs. Fall 2016 (Core Team).

3. Establishing a leadership team to ensure that the growth of HIPs is sustainable.

a) Build upon the momentum of the AAC&U Team, securing an official "charge" from campus leadership. Fall 2016 (Core Team).

b) Add, as warranted, to this group, to create a HIP steering committee. Fall 2016 (Core Team).

c) Identify the scope of work of this group, which will likely include collecting evidence of HIPs linked to our four pillars with consideration to student outcomes, providing support to craft the university's next strategic plan, and identifying long-term "eyes on" HIPs sustainability. Fall 2016 (Core Team, with input/direction from campus leadership).

4. Creating a campus-wide plan for promoting awareness of HIPs that aligns with the campus strategic initiative for student success.
   a) Disseminate weekly "Tips about HIPs" emails to faculty to raise awareness of student engagement, educational equity, and HIPs. Fall 2016 and on-going (Amy and Stacy).
   b) Archive these strategies on a blog open to comments. Fall 2016 and on-going, 2016 and-ongoing (Amy).
   c) Work with the Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs to identify areas where HIPs could be incorporated into the curricular review process, program planning, accreditation, and other program processes. Fall 2016 and on-going (Amy and Stacy).
   d) Map HIP activities to University Learning Goals and Program Learning Outcomes. Fall 2016 and on-going (Core Team)
   e) Host college wide discussion sessions on student engagement (college specific NSSE), student success and educational equity (college specific graduation rates and achievement gaps), and the benefits of HIPs. Fall 2016 and on-going (Core Team)
   f) Identify existing professional development opportunities for faculty and staff where discussion of HIPs can be interwoven. Summer 2016 and on-going (Amy and Stacy).
   g) Draw upon faculty and chair survey data bases to identify "HIP mentors" and create a process to facilitate others' engagement (modeled after the "Coffee with a Professor" program, provide support to faculty as they mentor peers about incorporating specific HIPs into their teaching and their interactions with students). Fall 2016 and on-going (Amy and Stacy).
   h) Incorporate discussion of HIPs in Center for Faculty Development sponsored events, such as "Teaching & Learning" and "Course Prep Marathon" sessions. Summer 2016 and on-going (Amy).

5. Adopting, expanding, and strengthening targeted HIPs on our campus in ways that do not rely on assigned time and that could be enhanced through assigned time.

Note: All of the actions items in this group are designed to be implementable in the next academic year without additional resources to Student Academic Success Services or the Center for Faculty Development. However, the HIP efforts could obviously be scaled to a larger extent with additional resources. So a primary action item in this area is:

Work with the new Student Success Development officer to develop proposals to enhance funding for faculty-student engagement in high impact practices. These will include faculty and staff support, needed technology and assessment infrastructure, and operating expenses for more resource intensive HIPs . Fall 2016 (Stacy and Amy).

Co-curricular planning (Student Affairs structure and events themselves already exist - communication and structures to facilitate collaboration across divisions is still needed)
   a) Create promotional material to raise awareness about the academic benefits of participation in co-curricular activities. Summer 2016 (Stacy and Amy).
   b) Improve campus-wide event scheduling, including changing the university events calendar. Spring 2017 (Stacy).
   c) Create a mechanism to regularly communicate with faculty with the goal of increasing the number of courses that incorporate one or more campus events. Fall 2016 (Core Team).
   d) Create a mechanism to sustainably bridge the gap between Student Affairs and Academic Affairs to enhance collaboration on and incorporation of co-curricula and curricula activities. Fall 2016 (Stacy).

Service Learning and Capstone Courses (particular areas of strength on our campus)
   a) Communicate the strengths and success of our service learning expertise internally and externally. Fall 2016 (Stacy and Amy).
   b) Utilize the CSU service learning database to catalog service learning classes. Fall 2016 (Core Team).
   c) Create a database of capstone courses, experts, and existing assessment done on these (such as through program accreditation). Fall 2016 (Core Team).
   d) Build out our assessment plan for all HIPs using service learning and capstone courses as templates. Spring 2017 (Core Team).
   e) Create a means of assessing and sharing the impact on faculty engaged in these activities in terms of morale and professional development. Fall 2016 (Stacy and Amy).

Active Learning and Problem/Project Based Learning (relatively easy to implement in most courses; infrastructure to facilitate this exists within Center for Faculty Development and Student Academic Success Services unit)
   a) Create promotional material for faculty on research showing the benefits of active and problem based learning on the impact of learning content. Fall 2016 (Stacy and Amy).
   b) Provide faculty with discipline specific resources and examples of active and problem based learning. Fall 2016 (Stacy and Amy).
   c) Create learning communities of faculty to experiment and share ideas and experiences. Spring 2017 (Stacy and Amy).

d) Create mentorships with identified experts and interested faculty. Spring 2017 (Core Team).

e) Identify institutional and college level barriers to scaling these strategies. Spring 2017 (Core Team).

Coordinated Instruction and Integrated Knowledge (past experience with this sort of effort leads us to appreciate the number of players and units that must be coordinated as this HIP is planned and implemented)

a) Connect and support faculty who want to offer cross-course learning communities. Fall 2016 (Stacy and Amy).

b) Create programs, such as faculty learning communities, to assist faculty in offering jointly-designed, shared assignments across two or more courses, guest lecturing, and cross-disciplinary projects that work toward complex solutions to unscripted problems. Spring 2017 (Stacy and Amy).

c) Implement scheduling practices that facilitate concurrent course offerings. Fall 2017 (Stacy).

d) Coordinate with the GE Pathways initiative to strengthen interdisciplinary links across our GE course offerings. Spring 2017 (Core Team).

e) Coordinate with the GE Pathways initiative to link courses with co-curricular offerings that speak to our pathway themes (i.e., Sustainability, Global Engagement, and Creativity). Spring 2017 (Core Team).

Barriers to Accomplishment:

- We anticipate that our existing faculty HIP experts will be the usual "engaged" faculty. To make significant impact on student success we need to draw in the broader faculty, including a higher number of lecturers.

- While most faculty at SJSU are committed to their students and to their work, relatively few have much experience reflecting on their practice systematically, or viewing their teaching through an educational equity lens. Many do not seek to create any sort of systematic alignment between their work in the classroom and these initiatives. Moreover, some of our faculty lack an understanding and appreciation of HIPs relative to students success and engagement in learning.

- Only a limited portion of the budget is available for discretionary projects and initiatives.

- Our model of allocating resources and accounting for faculty time makes interdisciplinary and collaborative work for faculty difficult.

- We are transitioning to a new President and a new CFO as well as sunsetting our strategic plan.

- Many of our students commute to campus, work off campus, and have other barriers that need to be addressed to increase their engagement outside of class time.

- Many of our students are first generation college students who may be unaware of the benefits to them of engaging in high impact practices.

Opportunities for Support:
- There will be budgeted resources allocated for the Four Pillars of Student Success Initiative (and HIPs is explicitly referenced in the Student Engagement pillar).
- The university has hired a new development officer focused on student success who begins in July. We will engage with her to find HIP funding through foundations and donors. Opportunities such as naming rights for centers would greatly facilitate the progress of this initiative.

Engagement Plan for Stakeholders:
- The stakeholders are faculty, students, Student Affairs staff, and Academic Affairs and Student Affairs leadership teams.
- We will share this action plan with the Academic Affairs Leadership team (AALT), the Student Affairs Leadership team (SALT), the Senate Executive committee, and the incoming president.
- Raising awareness among faculty and students about the benefits of co-curricular activities, active learning, and interdisciplinary learning is built into the action plan.
- Outreach to faculty to engage them in conversations about student success, educational equity, and HIPs is a main component of our action items.

Our efforts to draw in more faculty (full-time and contingent faculty) will involve addressing the three groups on our campus as linked to current interest in HIPs: (1) HIP experts, (2) those who are interested in learning about and possibly incorporating HIPs into their work, and (3) those who are resistant or otherwise not interested in entertaining alternative ways to engage with their students. Work with these faculty groups will consist of:
- providing training to HIP experts to enable them to serve as formal or informal mentors to other faculty;
- providing professional development support for novice faculty in effective ways to define HIPs for their discipline and strategies to implement and evaluate HIPs within their courses; and
- discussing incentives for faculty participation in HIPs activities and implementation.

Engagement with students will consist of:
- raising awareness of the value of HIPs by using our own faculty as models. We can provide students with examples of the 'HIP trajectory' of our own HIP experts and show how participation in HIPs contributed to faculty journeys to success.
- conducting focus groups with students to identify ways we might be guided by student understanding of and access to HIPs. In this process, we can highlight

links between HIPs and student outcomes and identify incentives of interest to students (e.g., badges or points similar to gaming).

The core team will need to evaluate the outcomes of these activities to ensure that the campus develops student-centered methodologies for implementation.

Critical to our engagement and communication strategies is the continued cross-dialogue between the Divisions of Student and Academic Affairs. Core team members will endeavor to identify key intersections between the two divisions as related to increasing HIP engagement and will develop strategies to break down barriers that may exist. Key challenges may include identifying personnel who work on the strategic HIP initiatives (in terms of workload) and developing coordinated plans that allow for equitable input from both divisions.

Communication Strategy:

Our proposal includes plans for sustained communication with all parts of our campus, including brief, informative, memorable messages, and cross-divisional campus dialog.

- After hosting focus groups with faculty and students, we hope to better understand resistance to and misunderstandings of HIPs.
- The first step in our communication plan will be to develop data-informed talking points tailored to the interests and concerns that faculty and students identify.
- Working with Associated Students on market resources, we plan to use new media and engaging graphics to promote the benefits of HIPs to both students and faculty.
- We also plan to facilitate opportunities for our HIP experts to stimulate and lead on-going conversations.

Evidence of Success:

Our plan rests on developing and deploying a number of structures and processes that will undergird the curricular and co-curricular experiences we propose. We will be able to claim success once we have assembled the building blocks delineated in our action plan and once we have data demonstrating the impact of the HIPs on the larger goal of advancing educational equity on our campus. *Success indicators will include:*

- *Creation of an assessment plan, including a suite of valid and sustainable assessment metrics* to chart the use and impact of HIPs. Many of these metrics will align with existing campus initiatives, most notably our Student Success pillar on Student Engagement. In some cases, we will be able to co-purpose existing metrics and tools. In others, we will need to create new indices and tools.
- *Creation of HIP activities* as delineated in Goal 5. This will entail working with faculty to develop or modify existing instructional activities. It will also entail creating linkages between curricular and co-curricular activities.

- *Increased faculty participation in HIP-related professional development activities*, and subsequent *incorporation of HIPs into their teaching*. We expect to also find *increased professional vitality and enthusiasm for teaching among participating faculty.*

- *Increased student participation in HIPs,* both overall, and on the part of URM and first generation students. We will draw from institutional data (enrollment in courses designated as Service Learning, or explicitly paired), attendance data (gathered at designated co-curricular events) as well as student and faculty reports of in-class activities.

- *Greater proportion of students responding affirmatively to the NSSE items indexing engagement* with course content, with peers and with instructional faculty, both overall and for URM and First Generation students in particular.

- *Greater proportion of students responding affirmatively to the NSSE items indexing the meaningfulness of their education* as it relates to their personal and professional identity, both overall and for URM and First Generation students in particular.

- *Closing of the achievement gap.* As we noted in the opening of this plan, our ultimate goal is to create an educational context and culture that promotes educational equity and achievement for our entire student body. We will deem our particular efforts a success if we observe greater rates of persistence and swifter progress to degree, and if we can link these changes to participation in the kinds of curricular and co-curricular opportunities we have outlined above.

Conclusion:

This action plan grew out of a cross-divisional, interdisciplinary team effort. It draws on our existing educational and administrative strengths and expertise. It is a pragmatic and hopeful response to the challenges we face in our efforts to provide outstanding educational opportunities to an extraordinary student population. SJSU has many assets, most notably the diverse backgrounds and experiences of its students, and the resourcefulness and dedication of its faculty and administration. As the plan circulates, evolves, and takes flight we hope it builds on those assets and retains the boundary-crossing spirit and institutional pride that realized it.