



# Talking SENSE

Published by the Center for Community College Student Engagement



## “10 for 2010” Resolutions for Engagement

*Throughout the coming year, let's all resolve to...*

### **CONNECT** with Students

Students are our reason for being. This year, take the time to greet your students, ask them about their concerns and challenges, ask them to partner with you in making your college even better. Make service a priority and help everyone on campus see their role in making connections with students. This may involve doing things in new and creative ways—stretching people into new temporary roles—but everyone, especially your students, will benefit.

### **#2 DEVELOP** Faculty and Staff

Help faculty members develop new and engaging approaches to teaching and learning. Encourage staff to share resources and ideas. Consider a membership in NISOD and send a team to the NISOD Conference; offer campus-based workshops based on Elizabeth Barkley's new book, *Student Engagement Techniques: A Handbook for College Faculty*; attend the 2010 CCCSE Workshop where Barkley will be the featured guest; and/or host faculty and staff networking events, providing valued occasions for informal conversations. Even in these difficult economic times, providing staff and faculty with learning opportunities is critical for their continued growth, increasing their value to the college while helping them feel valued by the organization.

### **#3 INQUIRE** with Curiosity

Make 2010 your “Year of Curiosity.” As Albert Einstein once said, “The important thing is not to stop questioning.” Serious inquiry about student engagement and success is a quintessential undertaking in an academic environment, enabling us ultimately to define more clearly our opportunities and challenges.

### **More Data, Great Savings!**

Commit to participate in both *SENSE* and *CCSSE* in the same academic year or in the same calendar year and receive a 20% discount on both survey administrations.

*This offer is designed to help colleges to plan and budget effectively across years, so prepayment is not required. Member colleges will be billed for each survey administration during each survey's normal billing cycle allowing payments to be spread across fiscal years while still earning a substantial discount.*

*A complete list of membership options, pricing, and terms & conditions are available at: [www.ccsse.org/sense/join](http://www.ccsse.org/sense/join) Have questions or concerns? Contact CCCSE College Relations Coordinator Karla Fisher at [fisher@ccsse.org](mailto:fisher@ccsse.org) or 512-232-8247.*

### **#4 ASSESS** Engagement

In 2010, make data collection a priority. CCCSE provides a variety of ways to measure student engagement. From first-year students with *SENSE* and institution-wide assessment with *CCSSE* to faculty perceptions through *CCFFSE*, ours is the largest data set on community college educational practice in the world. We are here to help colleges assess educational quality, recognizing areas of strength and pinpointing areas for improvement, and monitor improvement.

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## Entering Student Institute Inspires MN College President to Organize Statewide Data Workshop

Century College President Larry Litecky appreciated the method behind the 2009 Entering Student Success Institute (ESSI) so much that he couldn't keep it to himself.

Located in White Bear Lake, MN, Century College serves almost 9,000 students, actively participates in

the Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP), and has maintained a focus on entering students for years. Still, Century wants to do more, specifically to increase student retention and persistence rates, especially for students who test into developmental courses.

This desire prompted Litecky to travel with a team from Century College to ESSI, an annual event designed to help colleges understand and act upon their results from the Survey of Entering Student Engagement (*SENSE*), the Center's newest national

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### #5 ENGAGE With Data

There are many ways to engage with colleagues and with data. Host a *CCCSE* training event at your institution and transform your data into active, measurable goals. Bring a team to the Entering Student Success Institute (ESSI) or a statewide student engagement workshop. Attend a NISOD webinar from the comfort of your office. Participate in regional ACCT events and assist board members in learning more about their role in supporting efforts to strengthen student success.

### #6 SHARE Promising Practices

Community college practice isn't a competition. We can learn from one another, both as individual educators and as institutions. Share your experiences with your colleagues. Reach out through professional organizations. Stay on top of promising practices via *CCCSE* publications, *Community College Journal*, and other relevant periodicals.

### #7 FOCUS for Results

This year, choose to approach one persistent problem with new eyes. Have a strategy session, appoint a task force, look carefully at pertinent data that paint a complete picture, and allow alternate options to surface. Don't settle for these familiar mantras: "that will never work here" or "we've already tried that and it didn't work." Allow for the possibility of a solution rather than be constrained by the same problem year after year.

### #8 CHALLENGE the Status Quo

Doing things the way we've always done them doesn't make for great results. It is the consistent mining of data, sustained communication, and ongoing collaboration that yields the best results. Reach for excellence—when looking at your college's results, ask "how good is good enough?"

### #9 SUPPORT Constructive Dialog

Bring colleagues together to talk about data depicting student engagement and student success. In the new year, look for opportunities to provide support for courageous conversations among faculty and staff, making it both safe and valued for people to openly share their experiences and ideas.

### #10 ACT on Fact

The hardest thing to do is start. Accountability means we have to assess the situation honestly, without rose-colored glasses. It is the end of the first decade of the new millennium. Will your college be continuing into the 21st century with strong student learning outcomes, engaged faculty and staff, and a record of continuing improvement in student success? Make this year your college's year not to move mountains, but to start!

survey of effective educational practice. While attending ESSI 2009 in Sante Fe, NM, Litecky and his team reviewed their *SENSE* data and charted a course for improvement on Century College's work with entering students. Their plan centered around the following priorities:

1. Develop first-year academies to create an academic focus for entering students
2. Develop a focused, cohesive first-year experience program (with particular emphasis on the first term of enrollment)
3. Identify the top 10 highest enrollment courses for first-term students, and analyze those with the greatest attrition. Inform those departments, and develop action plans to increase student success within those courses.

The Century College team also presented breakout sessions about initiatives focused on entering student success already in place at their college, including GPS LifePlan, a holistic advising program that has been widely adopted by other institutions.

In addition to implementing the team's strategies from ESSI last summer, Litecky also conducted an on-site in-service for faculty. Thus far, Litecky is pleased with the progress at Century since ESSI.

"The initiatives we began at ESSI have become the central focus of our current academic year (2009-2010)," Litecky says. "Our faculty raved about how substantive the college's in-service days were and provided a great way for everyone at Century to identify the role they want to play in making entering students successful."

Building on this success, Litecky will help facilitate an ESSI-inspired workshop in March for more than 30 institutions from the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities System. Teams representing those institutions, guided by staff members and associates of the Center for Community College Student Engagement,

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**Larry Litecky**

President  
Century College (MN)

**Your entering students are trying  
to tell you something important.  
Are you listening?**



*SENSE* helps colleges understand students' experiences in the first critical weeks of college.

We ask; they respond. You hear from your students what they need.

**The *SENSE* 2010  
Registration  
Deadline is  
April 3, 2010**

[www.enteringstudent.org](http://www.enteringstudent.org)

will delve into their results from the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (*CCSSE*). The statewide institute adopts many of the strategies that make ESSI effective, including:

- ★ A team-based approach: colleges are encouraged to send up to five team members (and must send not fewer than three) for a flat fee;
- ★ Participation of CEOs in the team's intensive work;
- ★ Required "homework" in advance of the Institute;
- ★ Time dedicated to facilitated work with colleges' survey data, as well as institutional data; and
- ★ National experts serving as "resident faculty" to provide collegial support to colleges' efforts.

Like Century, your college may want help exploring your *SENSE* and/or *CCSSE* results and what they mean for your institution. While registration is closed for ESSI 2010, colleges are encouraged to plan and budget now for ESSI 2011 to be held March 27-29, 2011 in Santa Fe, NM. Registration opens February 1, 2010, at [www.enteringstudent.org](http://www.enteringstudent.org). To watch video interviews of past participants, visit our YouTube channel at: [www.youtube.com/cccevideo](http://www.youtube.com/cccevideo).

Additionally, on-site college workshops dates are currently available for 2010. Call 512-232-8247 for information and pricing.

## College Continues Work on ESSI Goals to Improve Entering Students' 'Front Door' Experience

### *Executive Council Approves Suggestions Focused on the Entering Student Population*

Just six months after a team from Chipola College (FL) drafted an action plan at the 2009 Entering Student Success Institute (ESSI), their proposed initiatives are beginning to gain momentum on campus as demonstrated by a recent QEP/Title III update in *Chipola FACTS*, the college's monthly effectiveness factsheet. The update cited plans for initiating an intense campus-wide focus on entering student experiences.

"The emphasis started during our August Back-to-School Workshop with Dr. Angela Oriano-Darnall [CCCSE Assistant Director for *SENSE*] from the University of Texas and is now continuing as we develop specific, affordable strategies which we can implement," says Dr. Sarah Clemmons, vice president of instruction and student services.

The discussion continued during a faculty meeting in September, with a focus on Chipola's current policy allowing late registration. Clemmons asked for special recommendations about this issue from the four individuals who attended ESSI, an annual 2½-day intensive workshop during which college teams analyze their *SENSE* results and institutional data with the assistance of resident faculty and data facilitators.

Chipola's ESSI team members reported back to colleagues in October with an analysis of the impact of late registration for the last three fall semesters, student and faculty suggestions for improving the "front door," and the group's top priorities listed in its ESSI Short-Term Action Plan.

### ***Join us at these upcoming events...***

***League Innovations Conference***  
*Baltimore, MD • March 28 - March 31, 2010*

***AACC Annual Convention***  
*Seattle, WA • April 17, 2010 - April 20, 2010*

***AIR Annual Forum***  
*Chicago, IL • May 29 - June 2, 2010*

See more upcoming events online at:  
[www.enteringstudent.org](http://www.enteringstudent.org)

## SAVE THE DATE

### ***Annual CCCSE Workshop***

June 1, 2010 • Austin, Texas  
**FREE for Member Colleges**

As part of an ongoing collaboration with the National Institute for Staff and Organizational Development (NISOD) at The University of Texas at Austin, the Center for Community College Student Engagement will host the **2010 CCCSE Workshop** at the Four Seasons Hotel from 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. on Tuesday, June 1, 2010.

This year's workshop will feature special guest speaker **Dr. Elizabeth F. Barkley**, community college faculty member and author of *Student Engagement Techniques: A Handbook for College Faculty*.

The Center is committed to helping colleges use data to inform decisions, improve programs, and embrace practices that promote student engagement, learning, and retention. This annual workshop is offered FREE as a special service for member colleges. Other registrants of the NISOD International Conference are welcome to attend for a nominal fee. **Save the date and watch for more information on the *SENSE* website:** [www.enteringstudent.org](http://www.enteringstudent.org)

Center staff members will also present sessions throughout the NISOD conference. The NISOD conference will be held May 30 - June 2, 2010 in Austin, Texas. Learn more at: [www.nisod.org](http://www.nisod.org)

The action plan initiatives—which include an overhaul of registration and advising processes, faculty and staff development centered on entering students, and changes in new-student orientation—have been approved by the college's Executive Council.

"These recommendations form a good beginning for our plans for the future," says Clemmons. "We will continue to receive recommendations from the faculty at large and other staff as we try to improve the 'front door' and help our entering students persist and succeed."

To learn more about the college's efforts for improving the "front door" experience, read *Chipola FACTS* at: [www.chipola.edu/planning/November%202009.pdf](http://www.chipola.edu/planning/November%202009.pdf)