

Presenters & Contact Information		
<p><b>Cody Clements</b> <b>University of Utah</b> Center for New Student &amp; Family Programs Graduate Assistant for First Year Programs Email: <a href="mailto:cody.clements@utah.edu">cody.clements@utah.edu</a></p>	<p><b>Emma Clark</b> <b>Weber State University</b> Student Involvement &amp; Leadership Coordinator of Student Programming Email: <a href="mailto:emmaclark@weber.edu">emmaclark@weber.edu</a></p>	<p><b>Mikaela Mokofisi</b> <b>Salt Lake Community College</b> First-Year Experience Advisor Email: <a href="mailto:mikaela.mokofisi@slcc.edu">mikaela.mokofisi@slcc.edu</a></p>

**Welcome Week & Activities in the First Semester (Roundtable Discussion)**

**Notes from Discussion:**

**Challenges/issues/questions institutions face around Welcome Week/Days:**

**In summary, 3 overall challenges emerged:**

**1) Marketing 2) Ownership and 3) Strategic Communication (i.e. timely & relevant)**

- Who owns it? “Ownership” around “Welcome Week” – how can the “ownership” of Welcome Week be **shared** among offices that promote or host events for students in the first three to six weeks (or even among Academic Affairs)?
- Creating a more seamless and centralized opportunity for students to get engaged, connected and involved on campus.
- Little to no communication across departments that host “welcome” activities. Who’s marketing these events? How can we reach our students to share the same message?
- How do we increase campus partner involvement to alleviate this?
  - **Q2. for table discussion - What marketing strategies have worked, how can you let students know about events?**
  - The accessibility of it, where its located, is it being advertised, who sees it or knows about it?
  - SLCC and other institutions have multiple campuses, not enough resources or staff becomes an issue to host welcome events across.
  - Communication: everyone doing everything (yet in silos), every department trying to do everything and splitting the attendance or attention of students.
  - Concerns about the saturation rate and so much is happening for students at this time. How will students actually use all of this in these next few weeks? Leads us to...What do students really need? Then learning how to serve those different audiences and still through larger groups/ case management and not individualized; how to support and impact MORE students especially during this time.
    - **Answer/Response:** We (and students) want more **strategic & centralized** messaging and communication. How do we utilize or better involve campus partnerships to assist in achieving this? ... the need to provide timely and relevant communication that is also geared toward ‘individual’ student needs and support given (*an example was: stress vs. depression*) – but how can we provide “holistic” support to a student when institutions

do not have the infrastructure (i.e. staff) to provide such individual support – how can we seek to provide “holistic” support amongst large student populations?

- How are we assessing the NEEDS OF THE STUDENT, how do we know what students really need when they don’t know themselves & How do we help students actually “target” what their needs are?
  - **Answer/Response:** a participant at her institution allows parents to fill out a form of sorts considered a “*Questions/Help/Assistance Form*” for parents to ask for assistance for their student, available to be able to avoid FERPA, yet their institution noticed the request forms were mostly coming in from students themselves – asking for support and assistance – rather than coming from their parents. So students ARE seeking out support, trying to identify where they can go/what they should do, to get the support they need. They found this successful for students to identify their challenges and being proactive/working to get them resolved.

#### **What TECHNOLOGIES/APPS are being used to centralize communication for students?**

- Utilizing apps to assist in dispersing “Just in time” information - Institutions face the “firehose” effect –combating this with apps. One institution is trying an app. Utah Valley University – called “**Guide EAV**” – been using it for a year, others have used “**Guidebook**” – these technologies are able to push out notifications and information, calendars, checklists reminders, etc. but institutions just weren’t finding it as useful or even used by students. Most students were definitely downloading the app., but students were NOT really using it too much.
- **OrgSync** LDS Business College & SLCC did not have much success with this, believed institutions should use a medium that is better centralized or use a tool that students are ALREADY USING— like twitter & snapchat
- SLCC is looking at utilizing **CANVAS** to centralize information, resources and checklists, because students HAVE to check canvas for class assignments and since they are already on there, begin to put messages and important info. up there.
- Another institution is using **STARFISH** – students can “raise their hand” in Starfish.

#### **What is working?**

**Emma’s Example on Central Washington:** Central Washington University’s 1st Six Weeks Program:

<https://www.cwu.edu/orientation/sites/cts.cwu.edu.orientation/files/documents/First6Weeks17.pdf>

- **Q5. for table discussion - How do we communicate campus-wide, the importance or critical factor in a students early weeks of the semester and its impact on enrollment (especially to faculty and staff)?**
  - Answer/Response: Get upper administration on board (i.e. AVP’s, President) to communicate campus-wide efforts needed in Welcome Days -- have them encourage the entire college to get on board or to better understand the significance of a students critical first 3-6 weeks of any new semester.

### **Involvement of Faculty & the classroom:**

- From SLCC example – (bringing ‘Welcome Week philosophies’ inside the classroom) Utilize faculty senate or faculty sub-groups and educate them on the significance of welcome week, they then tailor how welcome week looks like in the classroom, allows us to be more intentional in working with faculty—getting faculty support especially within the CLASSROOM will help get Welcome Week onto a “next level.”
- **“Tuesday Tips”** at Weber State University for Faculty, an email every Tuesday giving just 2 simple tips that show how faculty can help support a student. Look to transition this same model to STUDENTS -- You can utilize these 2 simple tips with students – goes back to the conversation about Gen Zers that are NOT reading long emails—give them quick, short, “snackable” tips for success.

---

### **Other Resources – Examples from the presenters:**

Taking Student Retention Seriously: Rethinking the First Year of College:  
[http://nhcuc.org/pdfs/Taking\\_Student\\_Retention\\_Seriously.pdf](http://nhcuc.org/pdfs/Taking_Student_Retention_Seriously.pdf)

Here are a couple of first-year convocation ideas and information:

Kennesaw State University has a web page dedicated to this event, with a short video that helps kind of paint a picture of the purpose and feeling around it. <http://uc.kennesaw.edu/programs/fyts-convocation/index.php>

And here is UVU's description of their event <http://www.uvu.edu/firstyear/events/>  
UVU President Matt Holland highlighted this event as part of their focus on academic excellence in his recent presentation at the USHE Counselor Conference.

Central Washington University's 1st Six Weeks Program:  
<https://www.cwu.edu/orientation/sites/cts.cwu.edu.orientation/files/documents/First6Weeks17.pdf>

### **Student Success Management Procedure: First-Semester Expectations Checklist Timeline -** Timeline of events

- Creating an effective timeline to set up students for a successful semester
- Incorporating “Welcome” events as “to-do” list items that can encourage student attendance
- Include these “to-do” checklist items as a first-year/first-semester traditional 16-week semester term -- outlining a week-by-week “what I should be doing this week” “what are my expectations this week”
- Include this checklist inside First-Year Orientation Handbook, An assignment sheet or contract within a first-year seminar course or college success course(s), or hand-out at the New Student “Welcome/Kick-off” event
- *“When and how to introduce or incorporate this ‘management procedure’ to first-year students? – is it something embedded into the first-year seminar, given at convocation, orientation or in a one-on-one advising session?”*