August 7, 2017

TO: Administrators, Faculty, and Staff

FROM: Karen Miller, Ph.D., Provost/EVP, Access, Learning and Success

SUBJECT: Second Semester Pathway Class

Our data shows that the first semester First Year Experience (FYE) program significantly improves student success and completion rates. To build on the success of FYE, the College and the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) organized a team of faculty, staff and administrators to develop a FYE second semester class called the Second Semester Pathway as another success experience for first-year students. The group has been working diligently over the summer to design and implement the program, which will begin in fall 2017. As we approach the end of the summer semester, I am pleased to update you on the work of the College-wide summer scale up team.

The design of the Second Semester Pathway is progressing and we are near finalizing our first semester of implementation, and below is some essential information that we would like to share:

What is the Second Semester Pathway class?
The Second Semester Pathway class is a course that will build on the activities in the first semester of FYE, which includes new student orientation, new student convocation, and the GEN 1070 course. The Second Semester Pathway class will provide these benefits to students:
1) Exposure to faculty and/or industry professionals in their career pathway;
2) Research and exploration of their chosen major and career;
3) Connection to peers in their academic pathway;
4) Completion of a full DegreeWorks academic plan;
5) Connection to services and resources to aid in personal and academic success; and
6) Assistance of a Faculty Advocate who will serve as a mentor and coach through degree completion.

The Second Semester Pathway class aligns with our focus on providing students with clear pathways to degree completion and connection to careers. This focus is also evident in the design of the College’s new online catalog, which is now organized into nine pathways/meta-majors. Second Semester Pathway class will be similarly organized around these pathways:
Who will teach the Second Semester Pathway class?
Faculty who participate in this program will teach the Second Semester Pathway class that is closest to their discipline. Faculty are not required to be an expert in all areas of the meta-major or career pathway, but they should have an overall understanding of their discipline/career pathway and know where to direct students for help along their journey to completion.

What assistance will Faculty Advocates provide?
The Faculty Advocate will be a faculty mentor and someone who the student can consistently reach out to with questions. The Faculty Advocate will connect with librarians, counselors, and career center staff to ensure students are provided with relevant resources and continue to follow their academic plan.

Who will participate in the Second Semester Pathway class?
First-year, credit-earning students enrolled in Spring 2017, Summer 2017 and thereafter will be required to participate in the Second Semester Pathway class. This includes full-time and part-time students. A student must complete the First Year Experience (GEN 1070) course before enrolling in the Second Semester Pathway class.

Will students pay for the Second Semester Pathway class? Will it be covered by financial aid?
The Second Semester Pathway class will be a one-credit course. Tuition and associated fees will apply to the Second Semester Pathway, and it will be eligible to be covered by federal financial aid. There is no textbook for the course. For the inaugural fall 2017 class only, the College will cover the cost of the class, and it will be free to students.

Will the Second Semester Pathway class be offered at every campus?
For fall 2017, limited sections of the eight career pathways will be offered College-wide, and these courses will be guaranteed to run. Beginning Spring 2018, pathways will be offered at campuses where there is sufficient demand.
When will the Second Semester Pathway class be available for registration?
Academic deans are currently placing the courses on the schedule and recruiting faculty to teach the Second Semester Pathway courses. Courses will appear on the schedule beginning August 4.

I look forward to providing you with additional updates in the coming weeks. FAQ’s for faculty, staff, and students are being developed and will be shared as soon as they are available. Further, the FYE website will be updated with details about the Second Semester Pathway class. We appreciate your patience and support as we continue to design and implement this exciting experience for students.