

# “Big Ideas” Funding Proposal One-Time Non-Base Investment Proposal: Step 2

*(Please limit the proposal narrative and attachments to 10 pages)*

Proposal Name: Sophomore and Transfer Success Program

1. Provide a description of the project being proposed. (5 points)

Create a Sophomore and Transfer Student Success Program to increase the retention of those two specific populations. This request does include a fixed-term staff position. Program may include Honor societies/programs, transfer student organization, transfer admission events and other recruitment activities, sophomore/second year experience class or workshop, career development activities focused on sophomore needs. The needs of the students in these two populations differ from individual to individual—the university needs someone to identify their needs and focus on serving these students.

2. Describe how the project will drive positive transformational change. (5 points)

Currently the resources for these two populations are limited and navigating the campus and resources can be overwhelming and confusing. FYE offers many resources to new first-year students and their success in the transition from high school to college but students’ needs change as they progress into their sophomore year. There isn’t a lot of “centralized” support as students become sophomores.

Likewise, transfer students are required to attend a brief one-day orientation program (as opposed to a two-day new first-year student program) but there is also not any “centralized” support for transfer students as they transition to our university.

These two populations have not been well-served and providing specific services to these populations will increase their success and retention. The students will feel more cared-for as upperclassmen.

3. Explain how the project addresses student recruitment, retention, persistence, and/or completion or one or more of the 12 Challenges. (10 points)

The sophomore retention rate has received attention on campus and nationally over the past several years as the next big drop in retention rate. Providing specific programs and services to cater to the sophomore students’ specific needs will improve the sophomore to junior year retention rate. Many of the programs and services geared toward sophomores could also be marketed toward new transfer students, as many of them are in their sophomore year. Providing sophomore and transfer student services could also be used as a recruitment tool since many institutions do not have such programs.

4. Describe the impact this project will have on students and/or others whom we serve. (10 points)

Not many institutions across the country offer these types of programs or services but there is a growing trend to provide services for sophomores. The needs of sophomores have been recognized and many label it the “sophomore slump”. Students in this stage often feel lost or

forgotten having been given lots of attention during their first year but left on their own to navigate their second year.

This is also an opportunity to provide better services to our transfer student population. There is a required orientation program for transfer students, however not much support is provided after that. They are expected to navigate the campus resources and services on their own.

By providing this group of students with services and support, they will feel more cared for as upperclass students rather than forgotten. They will be less likely to fall through the cracks.

5. Identify the "SMART" outcomes for the project (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound). (5 points)

- The sophomore to junior retention rate will increase by 3% by Fall 2014.
- The transfer student show-rate (after orientation) will increase by 2% by Fall 2014.
- Upperclass students will experience an increased level of satisfaction with the institution. Level of satisfaction can be measured using the NSSE survey, specifically the benchmark results of effective educational practice including the Supportive Campus Environment and the Enriching Educational Experiences.

6. Discuss what this project will do for the university that warrants the investment. (5 points)

A higher retention rate results in more revenue for the university. Creating unique programs and services for sophomores and transfer students may also provide opportunities for name recognition for the university since there are few of these programs offered nationally, indirectly affecting recruitment.

7. Describe how the activities generated by this project would be sustained after one-time funding has ended, or if applicable, explain why the project does not need to be sustained. (5 points)

This project does need to be sustained but there is currently no plan in place to accrue revenue for such a program or service. Permanent funding will continue to be requested after the one-time funding has ended. There is a functional need on this campus for a funded program and position for these two specific populations. The current level of staff is no longer sufficient to add these job functions to the current workloads. The campus has recognized the need.

8. Budget (5 points):

Outline the funding requested using the categories listed below. Please identify any additional or matching funds that may be available to support the project. Please note, budget revisions beyond 10% total change from the initial proposal require approval. Budget revisions of more than 20%, constitutes a major change in the project scope and will not be approved.

	FY12	FY 12 Matching Funds	FY13	FY 13 Matching Funds	FY14	FY13 Matching Funds
Personnel						
Unclassified Salary (in-load, overload)			37,763		37,763	
Classified Salary						
Fringe <sup>a</sup> (Classified and Unclassified)			11,329		11,329	

Graduate Assistant Salary					
Graduate Assistant Tuition Reduction/Waiver <sup>b</sup>					
Non-Salary					
Student Help			7,000		7,000
Purchased Services/Travel Expenses	2,000				
Supplies and Materials			4,000		4,000
Building Improvement/Construction Costs					
Equipment			1,000		1,000
<b>Total Budget Requested</b>	<b>2,000</b>		<b>61,092</b>		<b>61,092</b>

<sup>a</sup> Note: All current employees must be paid fringe benefits. Fringe should be estimated based on salary and position classification: Unclassified 30%, Classified 37%, Adjunct 7.65%.

<sup>b</sup> Estimated Tuition Reduction/Waiver for full-year enrollment: Masters \$5,858, Doctoral \$10,000.

9. Identify any special considerations or needs required for this project (e.g. physical space, contractual obligations, IT support, or collaborations with/implications for other units). (5 points)

This program and position would need to physically be housed within an office. Due to the collaborative nature of the position, it would likely need to be housed within First Year Experience or the Career Development Center.

10. Provide a project timeline outlining key tasks, milestones and dates for completion. (5 points)

March 2012 – Sophomore/Transfer Coordinator position posted

July 1, 2012 – position hired; start date

Fall 2012 – gather data; needs assessment of populations; plan programming and services

Spring 2013 – implement programs; continue to assess

Fall 2013 – continue programming and assessment; evaluate to implement changes

Spring 2014 – continue programming and assessment; evaluate to propose for continuation of funding or end program and services.

## **Note on Advising Proposals:**

**The following proposals are all submitted on their own merit, and each of them would make an enormous difference for academic advising at Minnesota State Mankato. Together, they address most of the main recommendations of the 2010-11 Advising Taskforce and provide a complete concept for the improvement of advising at our University.**

### B 11 (Big Ideas; Jason Westman et al.): Academic and Advising Gateway

Bringing together the Center for Academic Success, student support services, disabilities, and possibly also counseling and FYEX in a single location would not only allow most of the offices that help first year students to be successful to work closer together, it would also reduce the “run around” that students often bemoan - there would only be two main locations for them to look for answers: the CSU/Wigley first floor complex with the Hub, Cashier, Financial Aid, and the Registrar, and the proposed Advising Gateway.

### B37 (Big Ideas; Nicole Dose et al.): Sophomore and Transfer Success Program

Creating a program and advising unit specifically for sophomores and incoming transfer students would give us great intervention options to improve retention and perseverance during the critical second year after which we see especially worrisome drop-off rates at our campus.

### B39 (Big Ideas; Claudia Tomany et al.): Improving Advising: Realizing the 2011 Taskforce’s Three Main Recommendations

Academic Advising is largely decentralized at our University. Creating a central advising position (housed in the Advising Gateway but reporting to the Registrar’s Office) would go a long way to better disseminate information on academic program and policy changes among advisors on campus and create a nexus between the SRC’s, advising faculty, FYEX, student support services, the Registrar, Diversity, and Academic and Student Affairs administration. This central advisor would also supervise the creation and maintenance of an “intelligent” advising website with a self-improving algorithm based on user feedback.

### B50 (Big Ideas; Becky Copper-Glenz et al.): Bachelor Completion Advisor

While the student population at 7700 France is growing, no advising services have been established for them. This bachelor completion advisor would address an especially urgent need and serve this specialized population for which there are no existing resources available on campus.

### F15 (Facilities; Karen Bunde et al.): Renovate CSU 117 Hub/MavCard/CSU Info Desk

This redesign serves two purposes: to reduce long lines by creating more service stations, and to reorganize the counter space set-up so that students and staff can look at each other while sharing the same screen view.

### F28 (Facilities; Joan Roca et al): Library Connection to the Centennial Student Union

If the Advising Gateway in Margaret Preska Hall was connected to the Library and the Library to the CSU, all students would have unprecedented, safe, and ADA-compliant access to residential housing, communal work and recreation spaces, advising, counseling, and library services all around campus.