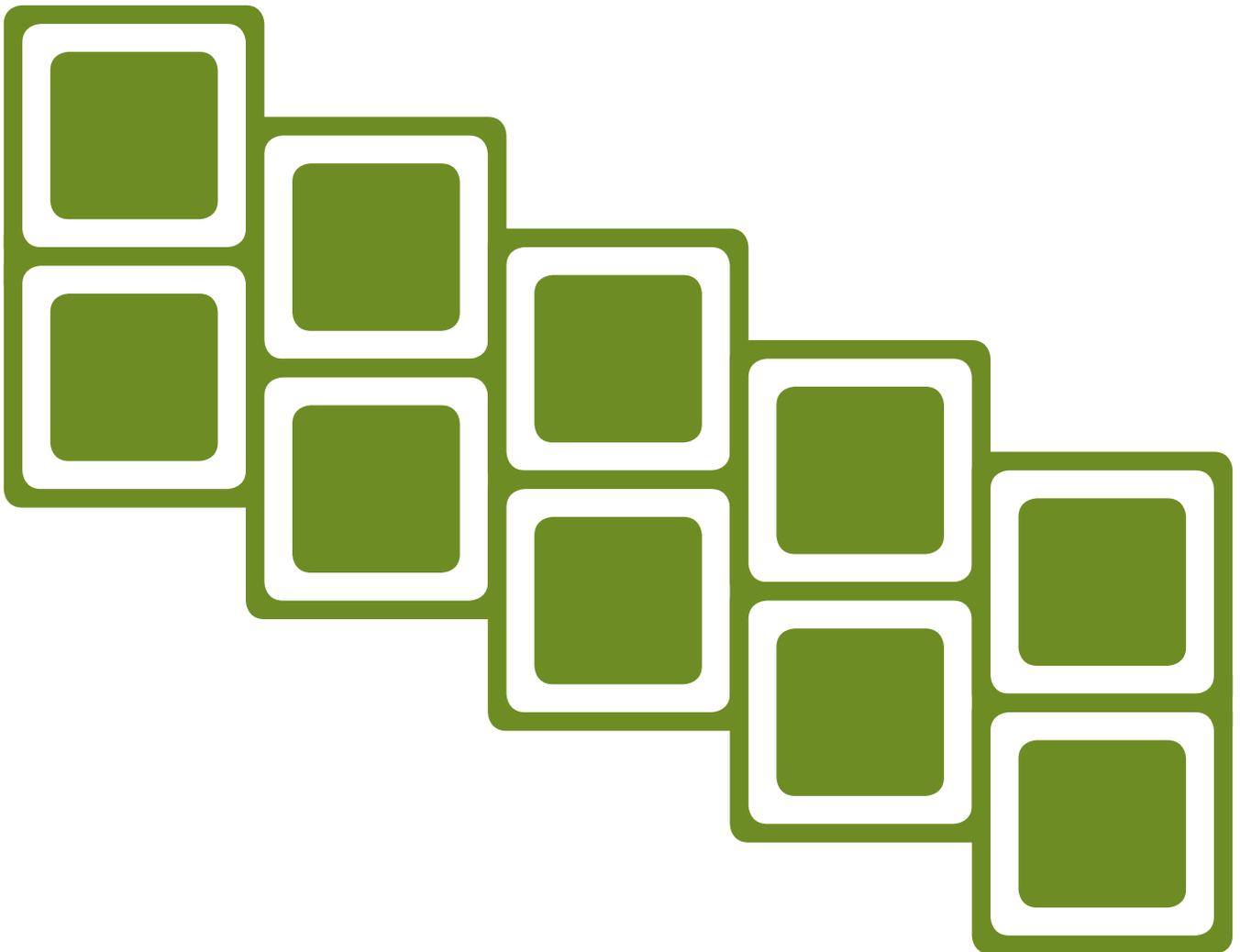


Summer Academe  
Conference Papers

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# *Lead the “Think and Do” Movement: How North Carolina State Increased Summer Campus Resource Programming by 400%*

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## **Abstract**

Summer administrators are feverishly tasked with developing new and innovative strategies to increase student enrollment. Competing priorities have influenced the increase in online course offerings and, in turn, the need for greater campus utilization. With numerous constraints around college campuses during the summer, there is a need to further stimulate buy-in to create change. This article examines a case study of an initiative spearheaded by the Summer START program at North Carolina State University that achieved this through increased student engagement. The creation of the certificate took the collaboration of numerous offices, and it increased student support programming by 400% during the summer of 2014.

“If you build it, they will come.” This novel concept was made popular in the late 1980s classic film “Field of Dreams,” and summer administrators know it is no easy undertaking. These administrators are feverishly tasked with developing new and innovative strategies to increase student enrollments. With greater access and portability of online courses, as well as cheaper options closer to home, successfully utilizing campus space over the summer is a major concern. As constant budget constraints are becoming the norm, universities are also seeing an increase in the presence and influence of conference services or other auxiliary departments during summer months. This paradigm shift has, in many cases, led to higher prices for room, board, and other services during summer sessions than in the Fall and Spring semesters, deterring students from summer enrollment. A case study of a new initiative at North Carolina State University (NC State), a large public research institution, explores opportunities to combat these challenges through student engagement.

The real question now seems to be, what exactly are we trying to build? With the current emphasis on career readiness and student experience outside the classroom, students must quantify and package their experiences and accomplishments. The need to help develop a student’s skills and awareness is a high priority for the career sector, advanced degree attainment, and the individual student. NC State sought to explore this growing trend and student need, prompting it to explore the relevance of student engagement during summer sessions.

Packaging a summer session experience that would be meaningful for both the student and the university proved challenging. Perceiving limited resources and lack of student interest, student affairs offices and departments were not inclined to collaborate. This paper discusses the efforts of NC State to pilot the Certificate of Achievement in Leadership and Wellness during the Summer II five-week session, by breaking down the “Talk and Don’t” culture. With limited resources and staffing during the summer months, the initiative was achieved through building collaboration across units—often a challenging task. Packaging each office’s programs together created what appeared to students as a purposeful robust summer session with diverse opportunities to engage and explore.

## **Certificate of Achievement in Leadership and Wellness**

In an effort to provide students with engaging co-curricular opportunities both in and outside the classroom, a certificate of achievement was developed for summer 2015. The certificate of achievement was piloted with a group of 265 new incoming students participating in a summer transition program entitled Summer START. The pilot group consisted of students from all academic colleges and a large variety of majors, forming a sample that served as a microcosm of the university population in terms of ability, diversity, and academic level.

The Certificate of Achievement in Leadership and Wellness, a non-credit, co-curricular opportunity, was designed to educate students on making informed and healthy decisions for more balanced lives as individuals and students. The certificate consisted of 25+ programs, representing varied facets of leadership and wellness as they relate to the campus community. To obtain the Certificate of Achievement in Leadership and Wellness, students were required to attend a four-

dational workshop, *Defining Wellness*, and seven topic-specific workshops, speaking to each of the seven dimensions of wellness (see Appendix A). In addition, students had to provide meaningful reflections for each workshop and a final student success plan.

Through the certificate, students were introduced to personal and academic strategies for success through a deeper understanding of leadership and wellness. The seven dimensions of wellness outlined by Health Services at NC State were used as the foundation: social, spiritual, occupational, physical, environmental, intellectual, and emotional (see Appendix B).

With the aim of addressing these dimensions, Summer START worked closely with campus partners to develop intentional and meaningful programs for students. Through 25+ programs, several speaking to multiple dimensions, students were able to choose what interested them most within that aspect of leadership and wellness. Physical wellness was explored through collaboration with University Recreation, University Dining, and Health Services. Environmental wellness was explored through outdoor and service-related opportunities. Occupational wellness was explored through collaboration with the Career Development Center. Emotional and spiritual wellness were explored through collaboration with the Counseling Center. Intellectual wellness was explored through collaboration with Multicultural Student Affairs, Undergraduate Research, and Leadership Development. Social wellness was explored through a variety of formal and informal programs developed by professional staff, resident advisors, and mentors.

The final element of the certificate was the development of a student success plan (see Appendix C). This was designed, under the direction of NC State’s strategic plan, to ensure students would make timely progress toward graduation and be offered educational opportunities that inspired them to lead, serve, challenge, take responsibility, and build problem-solving skills for engaging with complex issues. The student success plan asked students to reflect on their interests, experiences, and future aspirations, and to develop a detailed outline to address these aspects as well as their short- and long-term goals. Required components included a personal mission statement, several SMART goals (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and timely), and a proposed evaluation plan. This plan was designed to be a living document that students could continue to update and modify, using it to track their progress at NC State and beyond. By being asked to think critically about their personal and academic goals as incoming freshmen, students could begin to develop the skills needed to identify interests, set goals, and create opportunities for a successful student experience.

## Challenges

“Think and Do” has been NC State’s marketing campaign for the past two years. However, with what is known about the challenges of summer sessions, change is hard to come by. One of the main constraints for summer co-curricular programming is new student orientation. Orientation is responsible for reserving most of the large meeting rooms throughout the summer and requires many student affairs offices to participate in facilitating programming. Due to this engagement, many offices will respond that they do not have the time or capacity to facilitate programming during the summer. Another hindrance is the lack of graduate assistants (GA) during the summer,

as many appointments run from fall to spring. With student affairs offices experiencing shortages in time and space due to orientation, and staff reductions due to the lack of GA contracts, there can be a lack of motivation to offer programming.

Funding and creating buy-in are equally as taxing. An important reminder for campus partners that operate in part by student fees is that these fees are also charged to summer-enrolled students. As summer professionals, it is our ethical responsibility to highlight the amount of fees generated over the summer months and to push for student services and opportunities equivalent to those offered in the traditional academic year.

Once you get past the initial challenges of diminishing resources and creating initial buy-in and are able to sit down and meet, it is common for meetings to be inactive and noncommittal, an obstacle not easily overcome. The “Talk and Don’t” culture is meeting for the sake of meeting, a concept too often experienced by higher education professionals. With our time taxed by additional responsibilities due to limited staffing, a meeting that fails to accomplish its objective(s) is a waste of both time and money. To combat unproductive meetings, efforts should be made to ensure meetings are purposeful, focused, and enjoyable. Meetings should also involve key decision makers and have achievable action items. It is often beneficial to begin with an end goal in mind, but with any proposal that requires collaboration, a vision must be set forth to create buy-in from the constituency. Without buy-in, meetings become stagnant, with no clear outcome or means of accomplishing the goals set forth in the vision.

## Opportunities for Collaboration

Aside from gaining credibility, trust, and an administrative mandate, there are many different ways to create buy-in for new initiatives through meaningful collaboration across units. The following subsections offer some approaches for creating buy-in.

### Tie to Strategic Plan or Mission Statements

First and foremost, any new initiative should be founded in strengthening the university as a whole through ties to the overall strategic plan. When working across offices or departments, it is often difficult to get everyone on the same page. With differing personality types, theoretical leans, and motivations, finding common ground is at times the only way to move forward. In working to define the needs and vision of the initiative, it is important to align outcomes with the mission of the office or department that is being asked to partner, in conjunction with the overall strategic plan for the university. Showing potential partners they are important to the success of the initiative, and allowing them to claim that success as part of their contributions to the university, positions the initiative as a win-win.

## Experts Sharing Their Expertise

Pride. How pride is focused can be a strength or a weakness. Showing others how they can be acknowledged as leading contributors to the success of a new initiative can be an alluring factor. This is where the vision comes in. With an initiative that has a specific need in which a specific office is seen as the campus expert, the desire is for them to facilitate. If you are having issues convincing offices to participate, acknowledging and praising their expertise in relation to a given initiative can contribute significantly to their contribution. There is a dark side to this as well: other offices may be discussing the topic at hand, making for a competitive environment of expertise. Such pressure at times frustrates the targeted office and can push them to participate, as they regard themselves as the "experts." Either way, it is a win-win for both parties.

## Strength in Numbers

Strength in numbers is twofold: qualitative data and asking for involvement within group meetings in which the majority of the group is already on board. Data provide the best weapon in the academic environment. Collecting data regarding the need for which the initiative is being developed can lead the charge. Aligning strategic plans and relevant data to the new initiative has greater probability of garnering university-wide support.

## Back-Scratching

The old adage, "I'll scratch your back if you scratch mine" is relevant here. To bring up the budget issue again, offices are always looking for the cheapest help possible. A favor for a favor is a tactic that can benefit both sides. Back-scratching, in this case, can be considered in a separate light as well. If you know that meeting the request will entail increased work for the other office, there may be an opportunity to offer assistance with the workload. Also, or alternatively, can the process be set for a specific time when the office is typically slow, or can employees be cross-trained to help create or update each other's processes? Being able to show the partnering offices that there is an understanding of increased workload, but there is also the intention to limit it as much as possible through shared knowledge and responsibility, gives the office asking an air of understanding and credibility.

Overall, there are many different approaches to creating buy-in, and how these look differs within the scope and feasibility of each university. In whatever ways these strategies are modified to fit the institution, this is a critical step that takes both time and energy. To create a meaningful experience for the students and the university as a whole, especially during the summer session, this step must be a priority.

## Implications for Practitioners

As mentioned previously, collaboration is the key to any new initiative, especially during the summer sessions, when resources are limited. Building strong relationships across campus is critical to any type of cross-departmental program initiative. The following are several key tips for administrators to build such relationships.

## The Four Ps of Partnership

For the purposes of increasing student enrollment and engagement during summer sessions, collaboration is a critical element to achieving success in any program development initiative. Once buy-in is created through the previously listed methods and opportunities, it is important to foster the relationships created through collaboration, creating expanded opportunities in the future. Partnerships and solid working relationships are more easily fostered when you show Purpose, Provide, give a Personal touch, and Praise.

### *Purpose*

Before reaching out to create a partnership, you must establish a clear purpose and reason for contact. As previously mentioned, aligning your need for partnership to the strategic plan or the office's expertise (or both) shows strong purpose for coming together and a compelling need for the office to participate.

### *Provide*

One cannot promise a cake and expect others to be satisfied with receiving a crumb. Through the process of creating buy-in, promises will be made and action items given. If promises are made and then not fulfilled, the result is a work environment without trust, leading to the collapse of the working relationship. Taking the extra step to ensure that trust and respect are sustained is imperative to a strong partnership.

### *Personal Touch*

Bulk emails and long checklists are an easy way to disengage collaborators. Working together to accomplish a goal, in which everyone should benefit, requires the understanding that personal check-ins are important to track progress but also to maintain morale. Each individual in the collaboration should understand they are an important part of the success and that their opinion is highly valued.

### *Praise*

One person cannot take the credit for a collaboration. When publicly discussing anything that deals with the initiative, it is important to stress that it was a team effort. If you are in a leadership role, praise individuals to their direct supervisor. This speaks to the personal touch by going the extra mile. Additionally, humility and praising others further help garner respect and trust.

## Conclusion

Creating buy-in and gaining campus support for summer initiatives is often not easy. With the challenges unique to summer-session models, different strategies for creating meaningful collaboration must be explored. While these tips and strategies proved beneficial at NC State, every institution holds unique opportunities for developing strong and supported initiatives.

Creating enriching summer experiences offers the potential for summer sessions to serve multiple purposes outside the classroom and, in turn, increase the appeal to students. It is our hope that these concepts will assist in other attempts to increase student engagement and enrollment through meaningful collaborations.

## **Biographies**

Owen Hooper is currently the assistant director of innovative education at the University of South Florida; previously, he was the coordinator of Summer START at North Carolina State University. Owen's responsibility is focused on the successful operation of Summer and Winter sessions. He also directs the Summer Academic and Cultural Engagement Program. He received his BS in Sports Management and MEd in counselor education from North Carolina State University.

Ginny Shepherd is currently the coordinator of Summer START at North Carolina State University. In her role, she directs a holistic summer academic program to help new students make a successful personal and academic transition to university. She obtained a BS in Business Administration from the University of North Carolina Wilmington and an MEd in counselor education from North Carolina State University.

## Appendix A

# Certificate of Achievement

in  
**Leadership and Wellness**

Summer START 2014

*Broaden your knowledge of personal wellness  
as a college student at NCSU!*

This certificate of achievement is designed to foster student understanding of the dimensions of wellness while introducing personal and academic strategies for success. Working closely with many campus resources, a well-rounded and informative program has been created to assist students with the transition to leading a healthy college lifestyle. Over 25 programs have been developed to speak to each of the seven dimensions of wellness according to the Wellness Wheel.



### Requirements

<b>Attend Programs</b>	Attend a total of 8 programs focused on each dimension of the Wellness Wheel
<b>Reflection</b>	Write a 1-2 page reflection on each program attended
<b>Personal Success Plan</b>	Develop a detailed 4-year success plan on further developing all areas of wellness

**\*Please see back for list of offered programs.**



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## List of Programs

Program	Dimension of Wellness	Date	Attending?
<b>Defining Wellness</b>	*Required introductory workshop	7/1/14	
<b>Avoiding the Freshman 15</b>	Intellectual, Emotional	6/26/14	
<b>LDS 116</b>	Intellectual, Occupational	6/30/14	
<b>Wellness Wednesday – Procrastination</b>	Emotional, Intellectual	7/2/14	
<b>Healthy C-Store Tour</b>	Physical, Intellectual	7/3/14	
<b>Carolina Tiger Rescue</b>	Environmental	7/5/14	
<b>Crafts Center</b>	Intellectual, Social	7/7/14	
<b>Fishbowl Night</b>	Social, Emotional	7/8/14	
<b>Wellness Wednesday – Healthy Cramming</b>	Intellectual, Emotional	7/9/14	
<b>Fitness 101</b>	Intellectual, Physical	7/10/14	
<b>Paddle and Yoga</b>	Physical, Spiritual, Environmental	7/12/14	
<b>Civil Rights Museum Trip</b>	Emotional, Social, Intellectual	7/12/14	
<b>Financial Management</b>	Intellectual, Occupational	7/14/14	
<b>Networking 101</b>	Occupational, Social	7/15/14	
<b>Wellness Wednesday – Anxiety</b>	Spiritual, Emotional	7/16/14	
<b>Healthy Dorm Cooking</b>	Intellectual, Physical	7/17/14	
<b>Dive-In Movie</b>	Social	7/18/14	
<b>Inter-Faith Food Garden</b>	Environmental, Social	7/19/14	
<b>Time Management</b>	Emotional, Spiritual	7/21/14	
<b>Sleep Education</b>	Intellectual, Physical	7/22/14	
<b>Wellness Wednesday – Relationships</b>	Emotional, Social	7/23/14	
<b>Resume 101</b>	Occupational, Intellectual	7/24/14	
<b>Habitat for Humanity</b>	Emotional, Environmental	7/26/14	
<b>Pool Battleship</b>	Social, Physical	7/26/14	
<b>QPR Training</b>	Emotional, Intellectual	7/28/14	
<b>MSA Symposium</b>	Spiritual, Social	6/28/14	
<b>Intramural Sport</b>	Physical, Social	TBD	



## Appendix B

# WELLNESS WISDOM

A HEALTHY PACK IS A STRONG PACK



## WHAT IS WELLNESS?

We hear the word "wellness" a lot. Many health-related products and services say that they improve wellness. But what does that word really mean?

Wellness encompasses seven dimensions. Each of these dimensions directly affects and is related to one another. When one dimension suffers or improves, another follows.

Read the descriptions of the seven dimensions below. Where in YOUR life could you increase your wellness?

Physical	Emotional	Intellectual
<p>Involves recognizing that our behaviors impact our body and that by adopting healthy habits, we can have optimal health.</p> <p>Tips to improve physical wellness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exercise daily and eat a variety of healthy foods;</li> <li>• Use seat belts, helmets, and other protective equipment;</li> <li>• Learn to recognize signs of illness;</li> <li>• Practice safer sex;</li> <li>• Stop smoking and use alcohol in moderation.</li> </ul> <p>Resources:  <a href="#">Student Health Services</a> 919-515-2563  <a href="http://healthcenter.ncsu.edu">healthcenter.ncsu.edu</a>  <a href="#">myfitnesspal</a> (free app)  <a href="http://www.myfitnesspal.com">www.myfitnesspal.com</a>                      Couch-to-5K Running Program (app)  <a href="http://www.coolrunning.com/engine/2/2_3/181.shtml">www.coolrunning.com/engine/2/2_3/181.shtml</a>  <a href="#">ACE Fitness</a> (exercise library, tips, articles)</p>	<p>Involves understanding how we feel, accepting our feelings, and expressing them in healthy ways.</p> <p>Tips to improve emotional wellness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tune in to your thoughts and feelings;</li> <li>• Cultivate an optimistic attitude;</li> <li>• Seek and provide support;</li> <li>• Learn time-management skills;</li> <li>• Practice stress-management techniques.</li> </ul> <p>Resources:  <a href="#">Counseling Center</a> 919-515-2423  <a href="http://healthcenter.ncsu.edu/counseling-center">healthcenter.ncsu.edu/counseling-center</a></p>	<p>Refers to ability to make sound decisions, think critically, and remain open to new ideas</p> <p>Tips to improve intellectual wellness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take a course or workshop;</li> <li>• Learn a foreign language;</li> <li>• Seek out people who challenge you intellectually;</li> <li>• Read;</li> <li>• Keep up-to-date on current events.</li> </ul> <p>Resources:  <a href="#">The Crafts Center</a>  <a href="http://www.ncsu.edu/crafts/for_students.html">www.ncsu.edu/crafts/for_students.html</a>  <a href="#">TED</a>  <a href="http://www.ted.com">www.ted.com</a></p>

Source: [NutriMirror.com](http://NutriMirror.com)

# WELLNESS WISDOM

## STUDENT HEALTH CENTER

### What is Wellness? *continued*

#### Social

Refers to ability to interact successfully in our communities and to live up to the demands of our personal roles.

Tips to improve social wellness:

- Cultivate healthy relationships;
- Contribute to your community;
- Share your talents and skills;
- Engage in activities that keep you connected to others.

Resources:

[Student Organization Resource Center](http://ncsu.orgsync.com)  
ncsu.orgsync.com

[NCSU Club Sports](http://recreation.ncsu.edu/club)  
recreation.ncsu.edu/club

#### Environmental

Involves maintaining a way of life that minimizes harm to the environment. Also involves being aware of the unstable state of the earth and the effects of our daily habits on the physical environment.

Tips to improve environmental wellness:

- Conserve water and other resources;
- Reduce, reuse, recycle;
- Minimize chemical use.

Resources:

[Sustainability at NC State](http://sustainability.ncsu.edu)  
sustainability.ncsu.edu

[Wake County Environmental Services](http://www.wakegov.com/environment/Pages/default.aspx)  
www.wakegov.com/environment/Pages/default.aspx

#### Occupational

Includes the actual work that you do, the roles that you play, and the responsibilities you have at your jobs. Also refers to contributing your unique skills and talents to work that is meaningful and rewarding.

Tips to improve occupational wellness:

- Explore a variety of career options;
- Create a vision for your future;
- Learn new skills.

Resources:

[Career Development Center](http://careers.ncsu.edu) 919-515-2396  
careers.ncsu.edu

[Campus Jobs](http://www.ncsu.edu/career/students/jobinternships/campusjobs.php)  
www.ncsu.edu/career/students/jobinternships/  
campusjobs.php

#### Spiritual

Involves forming values and beliefs that make up your spiritual "center," giving direction to your life and giving you something to turn to during hard times. Includes seeking meaning and purpose in human existence.

To improve spiritual wellness, try these tips:

- Spend time alone and/or meditate regularly;
- Allow yourself and those around you the freedom to be who you/they are;
- Be fully present in everything you do.

Resources:

[Kadampa Center](http://www.kadampa-center.org) 919-859-3433 (Meditation Center)  
www.kadampa-center.org

[Chaplains' Cooperative Ministry](http://chaplains.wordpress.ncsu.edu) 919-515-2414  
chaplains.wordpress.ncsu.edu

Source: Lansing Community College

## Appendix C

### USC 100 Final: Student Success Plan

**Due:** 7/31/14 at 12PM via Moodle

**Purpose:** NC State’s goal is to ensure that our students make timely progress toward an NC State degree and, along the way, must provide educational opportunities that inspire them to lead, to serve, to challenge, to take responsibility, and to build problem-solving skills for engaging in complex problems. Student success looks different for each student but is a holistic concept that ranges from academics to social to their professional life that is in constant development.

Much like a strategic plan for a business to set a path and grow, students can create a student success plan to define and set goals for what they want to accomplish and set a path. By reflecting on what is important to the student and future ambitions, students can work to create an outline for their experience semester by semester to reach their short- and long-term goals.

#### Outline:

##### 1. Create a Personal Mission Statement:

- a. A personal mission statement is the beginning of your path to success. Think about where you want to be in 4 years and write down those things that are important to that vision. While it will be vague, craft a paragraph that sums it up that empowers that vision.
- b. **Example:** The purpose of my mission here at NC State University is to develop: (a) lasting and influential relationships, (b) a healthy lifestyle, and (c) strategies that support my learning to earn a degree and career.

##### 2. Set SMART Goals:

- a. Now that you have your mission statement, create SMART goals for the fall that will lead to your success. When thinking about goals, remember they can be offensive goals or defensive goals.
  - i. Offensive: Setting up practices you know will lead to success—setting study times, setting a certain amount of programs around a certain topic to attend, making faculty connections, etc.
  - ii. Defensive: Looking at yourself and your time on campus, you understand that there may be some weaknesses; set goals to enrich areas in which you want to grow—eliminate wasted time from schedule, balance social life, don’t overcommit, etc.
- b. You should set goals that are aimed toward academics, student involvement, your social life, and overall wellness.
- c. **Example:** The five key elements to meet my specific mission include meeting with my advisor on a biweekly basis to discuss academic strategies (e.g., test-taking skills, managing my time, and front loading my Spring and Summer plans). I will be able to measure this goal by having all my assignments located on Google calendar, meeting with a specific academic tutor, and reviewing the registration and records portal. This is an attainable goal for the first eight weeks of each semester. I will be able to notice a difference in my wellness because I am present in the classroom and with my peers, and my grades will range from 88–98%.

**3. Evaluate Your Progress:**

- a. Now that you've set your goals, how do you know if you are on the right track? Evaluation is key to making sure you are on the path to reaching your goals. You will need to have a reality check at times to first of all reflect and see if your goals have changed, but also reissue your personal challenge to push yourself to where you want to be.
- b. Create an evaluation plan that includes when you will look back in on your progress (once a week/month, etc.) and who is involved in the process (individual, mentor, friend, etc.). Be specific.

In addition to writing your student success plan, you need to complete a 2–3 page, double-spaced reflection on your time during Summer START. This reflection should include:

- What were your perceptions when you arrived on campus and what have you learned over the summer session that has helped develop your student success plan?
- What role does your personal identity and the diversity of campus play in your student success?
- What are your specific strengths and weakness and how do you plan to further develop areas you define as weaknesses?