**Sample Letter to President for End of**

**First Year of Coaching**

*Source: Adapted with permission from Achieving the Dream*

Purpose: This tool provides an example of a letter that a coach would write to the college president at the end of the coach’s first year at the college. Depending on the college, the president/leadership will expect a different type and frequency of communication, so be sure to establish at the onset how often the coach will report to the president/leadership. Also be clear with the stakeholder group you are working with on what information will and will not be shared (and in what detail) with the college president/leadership.

Dear [President],

We are pleased to report that we had a highly productive visit last week. We are grateful for the gracious hospitality we received, especially the delicious homemade meals. The agenda was carefully crafted to make the best use of our time, and [Student Success Team lead] used their strong leadership skills, once again, to keep us on task.

Commendations

*Use this section to list a few examples of what the college did well over the past year—progress, willingness to engage, results (if any).*

We are witnessing an energetic Student Success Core Team that is committed to problem solving as it moves forward with the immediate task of completing its Student Success Action Plan. The team is beginning to demonstrate agility in connecting data with strategic interventions. For example, qualitative data collected from students in fall 2018 about the entry process has been analyzed, and areas for improvement are being targeted for specific intervention. Many of these will provide “early wins” that will build trust and additional momentum, in addition to improving student outcomes.

Also, despite initial concerns that the college’s student success work would be undone or redone during [external issue], the team has gotten more comfortable that they can develop additional foundational capacities, processes, and practices that both begin to improve the student experience and better prepare the college to equitably and successfully implement [external] priorities. For example, the college’s data highlights that students who complete college-level math and English in the first year are retained at higher rates than those who do not. The data also shows that gateway math and English completion rates are low for all students, especially African American and part-time students. The action plan reflects the team’s focus on developing new advising protocols that encourage students to enroll in math and English in the first semester and sequentially until completion of requirements, and additional academic support processes for students who enroll in these courses. The team is also recommending professional development to address deficiencies in onboarding new faculty and staff that were identified through the discovery process this year. This is capacity building that will benefit students regardless of which courses are selected for inclusion in the pathways.

Recommendations

*Use this section to list your recommendations for the college to continue building off the work you’ve done together over the past year.*

We recommend that the existing Core Team become the steering committee for action plan implementation, and that each member provide a leadership role on a subcommittee tasked with one or two of the action steps. We recommend that these subcommittees be formed, charged, and convened as soon as possible (before faculty members have completely left campus), so that meetings in the fall can be scheduled and planning for implementation can be initiated.

We also recommend that the college use Professional Development Day at the start of the fall semester to summarize and celebrate the work that has been done this past year and roll out the action plan. A potential structure for this could include a brief presentation that highlights a few key data points and the priorities in the Student Success Action Plan, with breakout sessions that go more deeply into each area and encourage additional participation among faculty and staff.

Finally, the college will need a communication strategy to keep everyone informed and engaged in the work. This is often provided through a SharePoint site or regular newsletters.

It has been a pleasure to work with the college this past year. Your support has been pivotal in helping faculty and staff manage their anxiety about [external situation] and focus on making the institution a premiere academic experience for students. We are excited to be part of your journey moving forward.

Sincerely,

[Coach Name]