



Southwest Minnesota State University

**Luoma Academy
Action Learning Project Report**

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Southwest Minnesota State University

University Mission

Southwest Minnesota State University prepares students to meet the complex challenges of this century as engaged citizens in their local and global communities. Our comprehensive degree programs, taught in the liberal arts tradition, are dedicated to connecting students' academic and practical professional development experiences in southwester Minnesota to the wider world.

Strategic Priority

Evaluate and improve upon the transfer process between MnSCU systems as well as into SMSU from other MnSCU schools.

Project Charter Goals

For SMSU to provide its prospective transfer students and applicants a more inclusive and personalized "entering student pathway" experience that would support individuals in moving from prospect to applicant, and from applicant to admitted/ready to register.

Executive Summary | Context and Current Situation

In the summer of 2015, the newly-formed MnSCU/SMSU Transfer Experience: Luoma Action Learning Project Working Group meet with SMSU leadership to discuss past strategic planning and reporting activities targeting prospective transfer students. Reoccurring meetings with the Action Project Working Group were also held to review the planning and development of new strategic recommendations to increase enrollment of prospective transfer students to SMSU.

Meetings with multiple SMSU departments were held to set operational priorities for the group. Continuous assessment of progress was discussed throughout this process. The Action Learning Project Working Group developed recommendation for enrollment and marketing plan for the SMSU. Using the research data from recent enrollment trends, MnSCU surveys, as well as input from internal stakeholders, a report was drafted in the spring of 2016. These findings will be shared with SMSU administration and will be used in completing the annual assessment of the University enrollment strategic plan.

The report will be further revised and subsequently approved by the SMSU Leadership team, and the Working Group. In order to advance the transfer enrollment goals of the SMSU, the Luoma Action Learning Project Working Group developed new recruitment initiatives, provided recommendations for enhanced service through technology and collaboration, and enhanced overall website experience for transfer students. The recommendations will be redefined and reorganized to reach assist SMSU's institutional enrollment goals and budget restrictions.

Within this Report we will establish a student- centered and culturally competent approach in the academic context of the University that will make enrollment management the responsibility of everyone. Viewed as an institution- wide responsibility and part of the academic context and culture of the institution, this Report will become one of the focuses of institutional planning. This focus also means structure supports the processes and procedures as opposed to processes and procedures being driven by a static Strategic Plan structure.

Southwest Minnesota State University has undergone a decline in transfer student enrollment since 2005, with a net headcount of 2047 transfers students

from 2005 – 2014. Over this time, the university’s recruitment focus shifted from traditional students, to transfer students and partnership programs. These shifts happened as the University’s administration continued to change.

Over the next fiscal year, SMSU would like to see enrollment growth from the following areas:

1. Growing new enrollments by increasing presence on the MnSCU Community college campuses, and providing communication and advising tools to transfer prospective students
2. Building educational partnerships and transfer pathways with MnSCU Community colleges as well as community partnerships.

Enrollment growth for Southwest Minnesota State University emerges from the Academic and Strategic plans at the institution. These goals are listed as the following:

1. Academic Strategic Direction
2. Enrollment Management Strategic Direction
3. Facilities and Equipment
4. Community Partnerships Strategic Direction
5. Diversity Strategic Direction

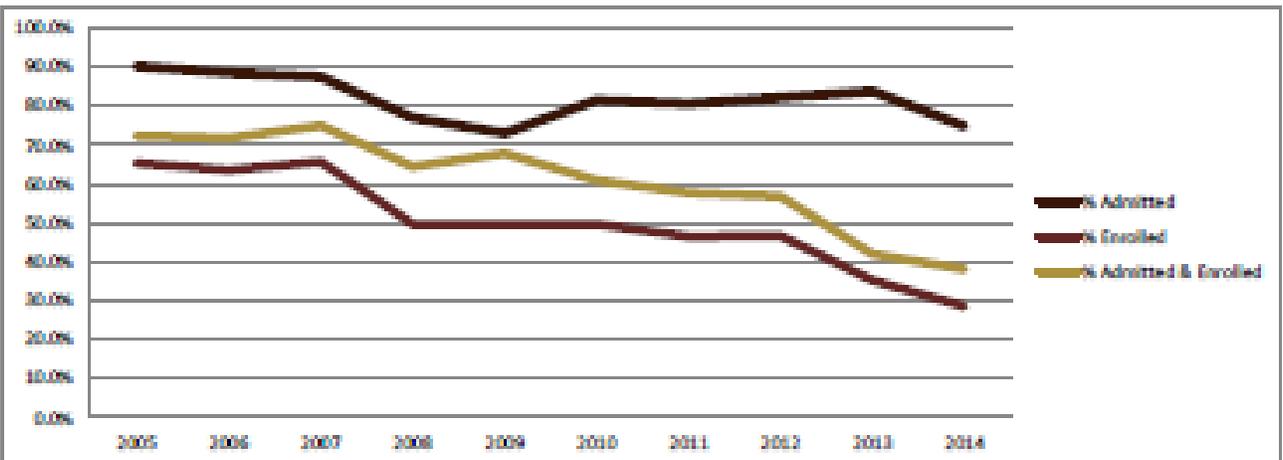
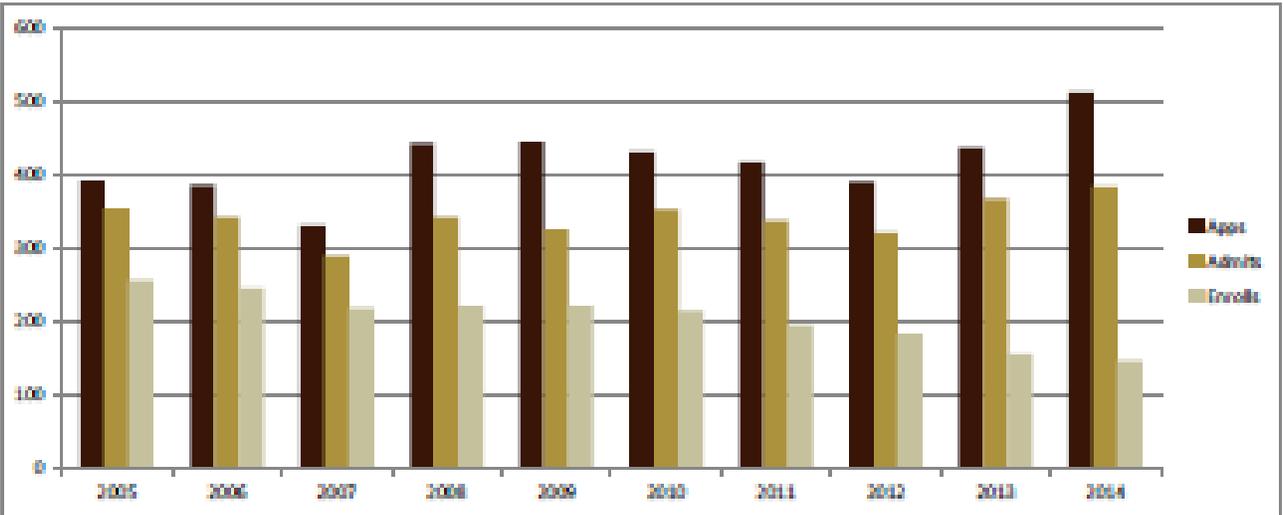
Recruitment Historical Analysis

Figure 1. Historical Enrollment Data 2005 – 2014

**SMSU Applications, Admits, and Enrolled
Transfer Students
Fall Semester 2005 to 2014**



Term	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Apps	390	385	330	442	443	430	410	380	435	510
Admits	352	341	289	341	324	351	330	320	360	383
Enrolls	255	245	217	220	220	214	194	182	154	146
% Admitted	90.3%	88.6%	87.0%	77.1%	73.1%	81.0%	80.0%	82.3%	83.0%	74.9%
% Enrolled	65.4%	63.0%	65.0%	49.8%	49.7%	49.8%	46.0%	46.0%	35.3%	28.6%
% Admitted & Enrolled	72.4%	71.0%	75.1%	64.5%	67.9%	61.0%	57.7%	56.0%	42.1%	38.2%



Note: E:\Matzneral Documents\Admissions\Greenbook Data ISRS.mdb
Contains comparison of Connect load and old BI-Weekly D9 query logic

Recruitment Strategies

Southwest Minnesota State University has undergone changes in leadership since 2009, and since that time, the university has said that it would like to see an increase in transfer student enrollment. In order to achieve this growth, the university will require new and aggressive recruitment and retention strategies. The following plan is a comprehensive review and recommendations from the Luoma Action Learning Project Working Group.

These recruitment strategies will be based on SMSU strengths and opportunities.

Strengths/Opportunities

- Unique mission in the state
- Dependable and dedicated student affairs personnel open to change and new initiatives
- Small faculty-to-student ratio and intimate scholarly community
- Multiple academic service support that extends throughout the University
- University faculty is well-respected by students and academic community at large.
- Strong endorsements from alumni and current students.
- Unique educational opportunity for students wanting to focus on experiential learning and life experiences
- A long established philosophy and commitment to underserved students within southwest Minnesota.

Challenges/Threats

- State budget challenges and current contractual constraints have dramatic effects on University.
- Electronic/Web-based outreach is deficient.
- Lack of student tracking system.
- No clear institutional philosophy, mandate, resources, staffing or support for developing and instituting a viable and dynamic University.
- Current location within the state.
- Continual, ongoing discussions about the positioning of University within the System cause uncertainty and confusion.

The primary recommendation is to utilize a “multi-touchpoint” campaign focusing on four distinct areas: **Prospect, Applicants, New Admitted Students, and Yield Rates**. The Office of Undergraduate Admissions will communicate with transfer prospective students, applicants, and MnSCU Community/Technical Colleges in a highly personalized fashion with minimal staff support. Each communication piece is customized and generated campaigns, developed by Marketing and Enrollment Management Leadership. The recommendation is to involve the entire campus including the president, deans, department chairs, student clubs, and alumni association in the following efforts:

Strategy I: To build a prospect pool with quality prospects to achieve stated enrollment goals and decrease the number of phantom applications. Increase number of prospects from five main categories:

- Integrated marketing
- Community College Visitation
- Student Initiated
- Partnership Programs
- Prospects (names purchased/requested)

Strategy II: Develop print and online transfer pathway documents showing transfer students the path to completion in 120 credits.

Strategy III: Enhance and rebuild two-year college relationships through:

- On Site Transfer Admit Days
- Transfer Recruitment Programing/Events

Strategy IV: Develop and implement targeted communication campaigns to move students from the prospect phase to enrollment.

Strategy V: Implement continuous staff development and training opportunities.

Recruitment Action Plans

Strategy I:

To build a pool with quality prospects to achieve stated enrollment goals and decrease the number of phantom applications. Increase the number of prospects from five main categories:

- Integrated marketing
- Community College Visitation
- Student Initiated
- Programs
- Prospects (names purchased/requested)

Action Plan 1: *Determine the communication flow marketing collateral necessary to from pre-funnel to admit.*

IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE/TIMELINE	
TASK	COMPLETION DATE
Distribute new branded and co-branded marketing pieces, to Community/Technical Colleges and community partners	TBD
Create program postcards/One-pagers	TBD
Translated recruitment key marketing materials into 4 identified languages	TBD
Review and implement Transfer Communication Plan	TBD
RESPONSIBILITY:	
TBD	
BUDGET:	
\$TBD	
EVALUATION/CONTROLS:	
TBD	

Action Plan 2: *Establish and promote a consistent community college calendar with office hours listed at each location.*

IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE/TIMELINE	
TASK	COMPLETION DATE
Print visit poster	TBD

Identify key outreach and recruitment opportunities. Cultural Events, Transfer Fairs, and additional outreach events at Community/Technical colleges	TBD
Contact community colleges to determine annual standard visit days/dates and times	TBD
Complete visits as scheduled	TBD
RESPONSIBILITY:	
TBD	
BUDGET:	
Salaries and travel as planned in fiscal budget	
EVALUATION/CONTROLS:	
TBD	

Action Plan 3: *Create an online prospect form to collect and track student initiated request for communication.*

IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE/TIMELINE	
TASK	COMPLETION DATE
Improve prospect communication campaign combining printed and web-based communication	TBD
Purchase annual prospect mailing list and create a targeted communication campaign for students on list	TBD
Leverage marketing and outreach to grow prospect pool	TBD
RESPONSIBILITY:	
TBD	
BUDGET: \$ TBD	
EVALUATION/CONTROLS:	
TBD	

Action Plan 4: *Develop and Implement Transfer Recruitment Events.*

IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE/TIMELINE	
TASK	COMPLETION DATE
Choose dates for transfer recruitment event	TBD
Create marketing pieces for event	TBD
Promote through distribution of marketing materials, posters at two year colleges, mailed postcards, and emails to all prospects	TBD
Schedule and host Fall On-Site Transfer Day Event	TBD

Promote through distribution of marketing materials, posters at two year colleges, mailed postcards, and emails to all prospects	TBD
Collect feedback survey results for continuous improvement	TBD
Schedule and host Spring On-Site Transfer Day Event	TBD
Promote through distribution of marketing materials, posters at two year colleges, mailed postcards, and emails to all prospects	TBD
Create marketing pieces for event	TBD
Collect feedback survey results for continuous improvement	TBD
RESPONSIBILITY:	
Director of Admissions	
BUDGET: \$ TBD	
EVALUATION/CONTROLS: TBD	

Action Plan 5: Increase On-Site/Partnership Academic Programs with Community/Technical College (i.e. Exercise Science.)

IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE/TIMELINE	
TASK	COMPLETION DATE
Identify specific On-Site/Partnership Academic Programs opportunities	TBD
Develop processing manual that includes program and marketing plan development/implementation	TBD
Identify staff and faculty to implement programs and processes.	TBD
Host events	TBD
RESPONSIBILITY:	
TBD	
BUDGET:	
\$ TBD	
EVALUATION/CONTROLS:	
TBD	

Action Plan 6: Leverage Community/Technical College Transfer prospect student list to increase enrollment.

IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE/TIMELINE	
TASK	COMPLETION DATE
Request prospect names from Community College Partners (i.e. all students 45 credits or above)	TBD
Maintain and update shared data list	TBD
Receive data files to begin communication flow	TBD
RESPONSIBILITY:	

TBD

BUDGET:

\$ TBD

EVALUATION/CONTROLS:

TBD

Strategy II

Maintain and update transfer pathway documents showing students the path to completion in 120 credits.

Action Plan 1: *Create transfer pathway completion guides from Associate of Arts-Pathway (AA-P), Associate of Science Pathway (AS-P) and Associate of Fine Arts Pathway (AFAP) degrees to Bachelor's degrees at Southwest Minnesota University and update existing transfer pathway guides*

IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE/TIMELINE

TASK	COMPLETION DATE
Deans/Department Chairs meetings and discussions	TBD
Deans meeting discussions	TBD
Create transfer pathway drafts for identified programs and Community/Technical colleges	TBD
Email two year colleges for their input	TBD
Deliver transfer pathway documents to each Community/Technical College partners	TBD
Finalize new transfer pathway guides and update existing transfer pathway guides (Put in template, incorporate two year college feedback, etc.)	TBD

RESPONSIBILITY:

TBD

BUDGET: **\$ TBD**

EVALUATION/CONTROLS:

TBD

Strategy III

Enhance and rebuild two-year college relationships through:

- On Site Transfer Admit Days
- Transfer Recruitment Events

Action Plan 1: *Plan and host on site transfer and off site Transfer Recruitment events with community colleges.*

IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE/TIMELINE

TASK	COMPLETION DATE
Choose dates and locations for programs	TBD
Admissions staff meets to determine logistics	TBD
Admissions meets with marketing to determine creative marketing	TBD
Admissions meets with processing to determine system process	TBD
Sent out marketing posters to publicize event	TBD
Host Events	TBD
RESPONSIBILITY: TBD	
BUDGET: \$ TBD	
EVALUATION/CONTROLS: TBD	

Strategy IV

Develop and implement targeted communication campaigns to move students from the prospect phase to enrollment.

Action Plan 1: *To develop and cultivate prospect pools.*

IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE/TIMELINE

TASK	COMPLETION DATE
Utilize CRM, to create communication campaigns	TBD
Assess and determine effectiveness of student recruitment initiatives; including proactive strategies, identify recruitment points, and set metrics for effective outcomes.	TBD
Create a variety of uniquely designed and branded collateral materials to be distributed internally as well as externally through various	

appropriate channels (during orientations, special insertions into college publications, etc.) that are targeted to specific demographics.	TBD
Integrated marketing messages will be conveyed through cross media outreach, tailored for specific audiences and demographics.	TBD
“Tell Story Campaign” Postcard development.	TBD
Leverage relationships and networks through the University staff and faculty to create awareness and partnerships.	TBD
Document current communications flow in a timeline based on days after inquiry, days before the semester begins, and date-based messages sent to prospects/applicants throughout the year. This can be shared with SMSU student affairs to highlight recruitment of transfer students and engage other offices on ways to assist these students.	TBD
RESPONSIBILITY:	
TBD	
BUDGET: \$ TBD	
EVALUATION/CONTROLS:	
TBD	

Action Plan 2: *To increase overall yield rates, of transfer student population.*

IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE/TIMELINE	
TASK	COMPLETION DATE
Utilize Luoma Survey results to identify effective yield rate and communication campaigns.	TBD
Communicate admission’s updates, goals and processes to external and internal audience/stakeholders.	TBD
RESPONSIBILITY:	
TBD	
BUDGET: \$ TBD	
EVALUATION/CONTROLS:	
TBD	

Action Plan 3: *Entice newly admitted students to enroll.*

IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE/TIMELINE	
TASK	COMPLETION DATE
Produce annual calendars outlining each semester in detail as well as guidelines for registering, financial aid, career services, tutoring, etc	TBD
Utilize Robocalling system for reminders of deadlines, events, and incomplete records.	TBD

Support the written and electronic communication plan with a tele-counseling effort.

TBD

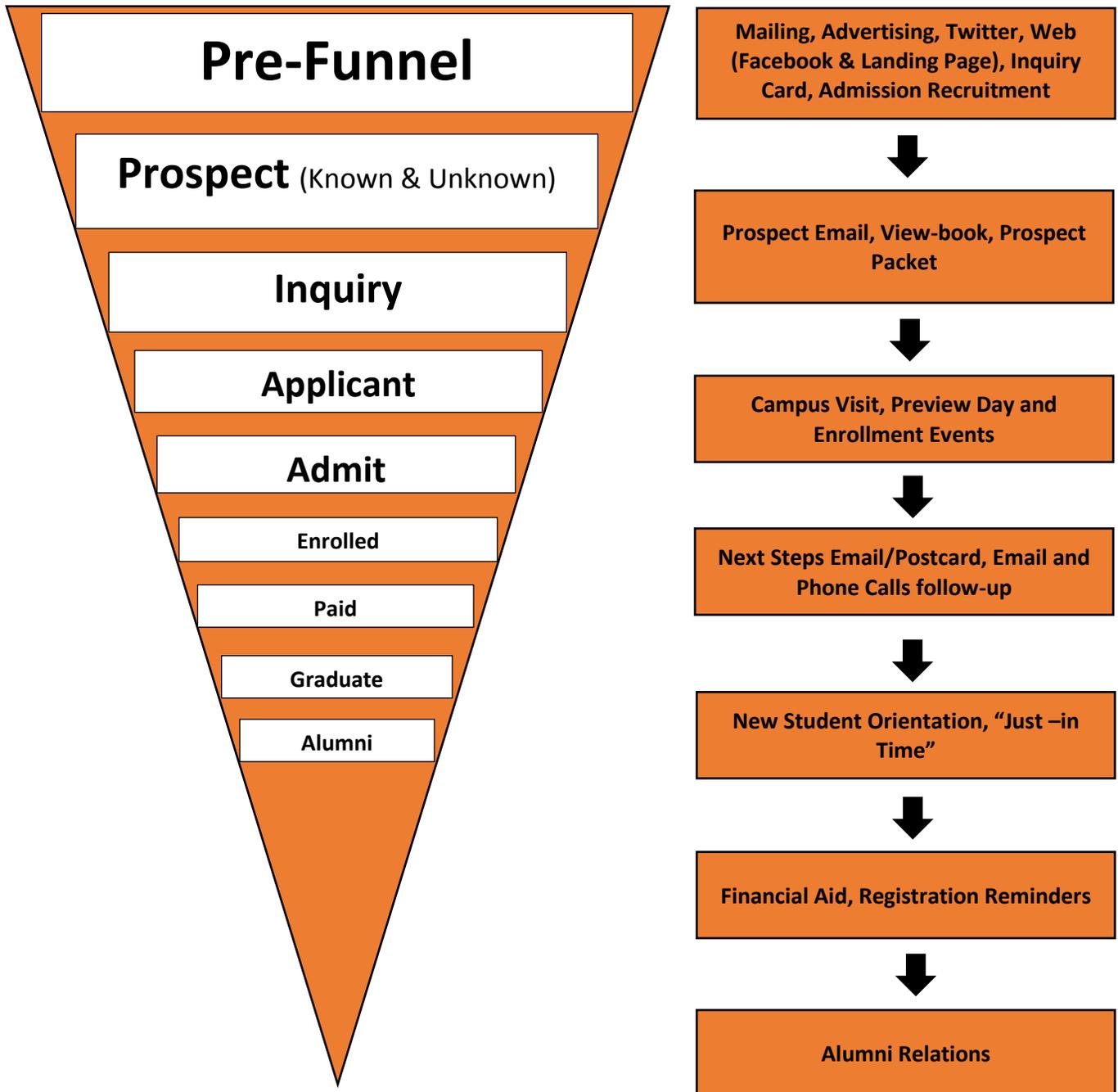
RESPONSIBILITY: **TBD**

BUDGET: \$ **TBD**

EVALUATION/CONTROLS: **TBD**

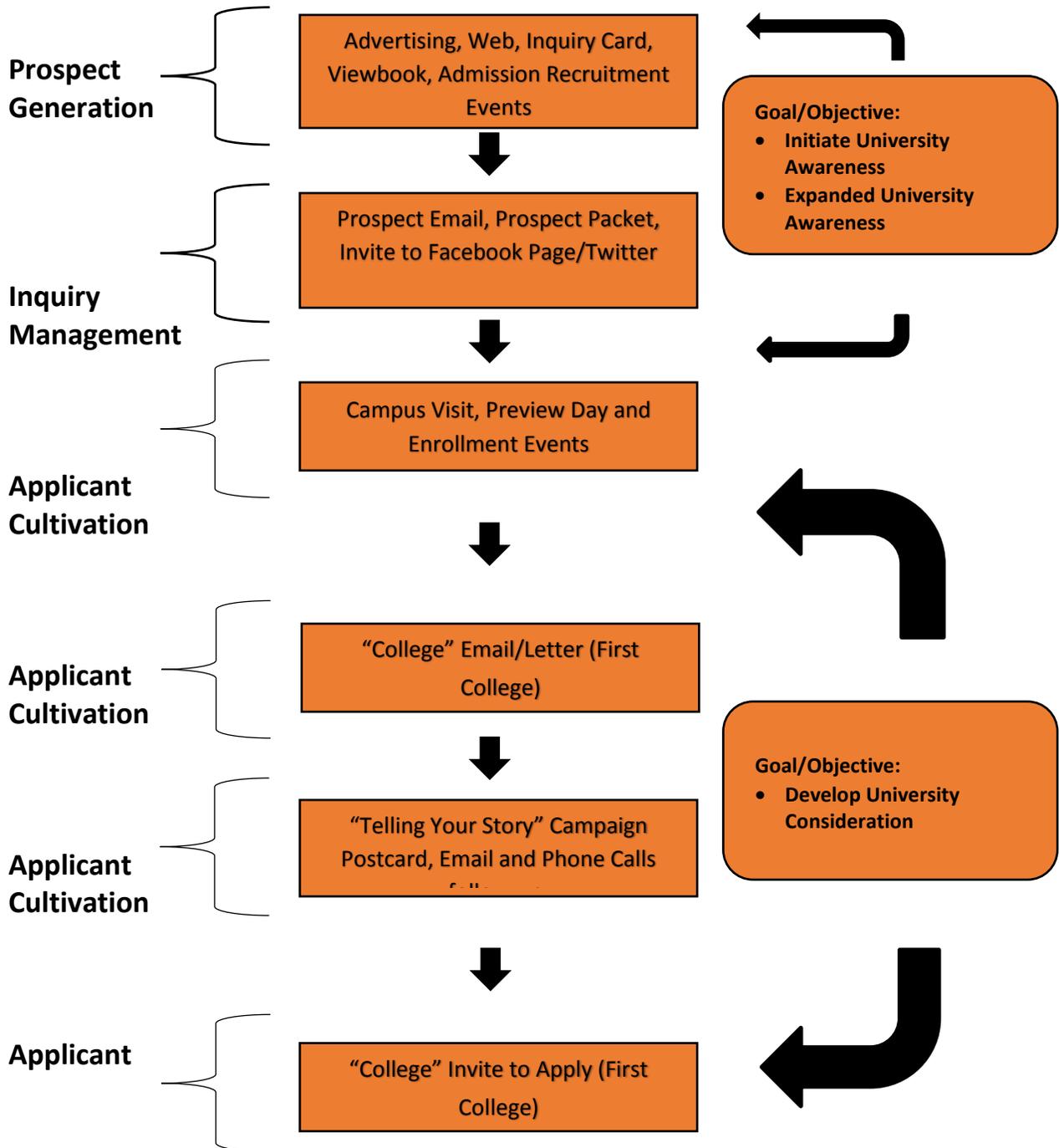
General Communication Flow

The following communication flow are recommended changes to utilize a “multi-touchpoint” campaign focusing on four distinct areas: Prospect, Applicants, New Admitted Students, and Yield Rates. The goal is to enhance the overall enrollment experience for new entering transfer students. In Appendix A, are additional edits/recommendation for email communication flow for transfer students.



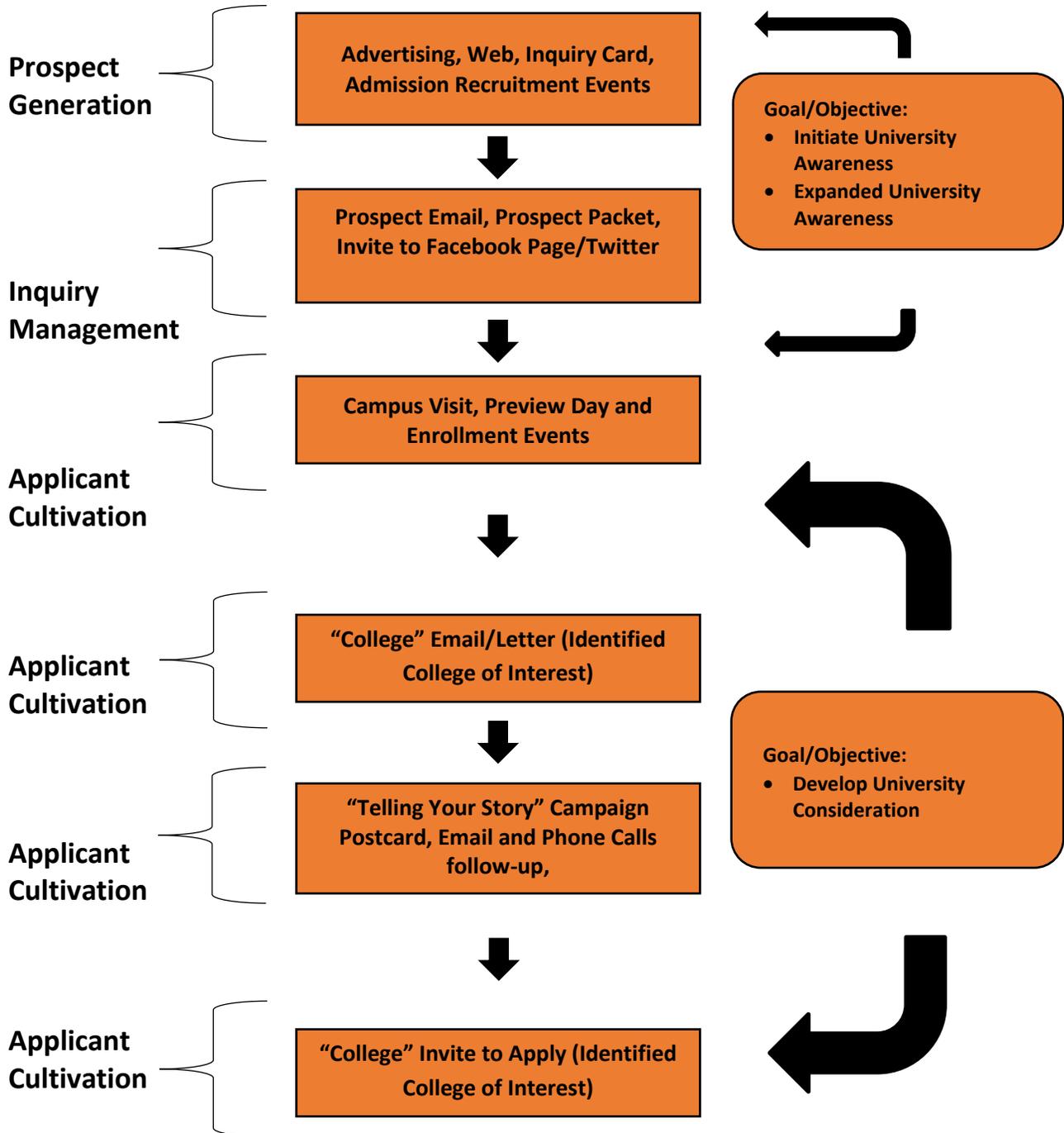
General (Undecided) Prospect Communication Flow

(Campaign 1)



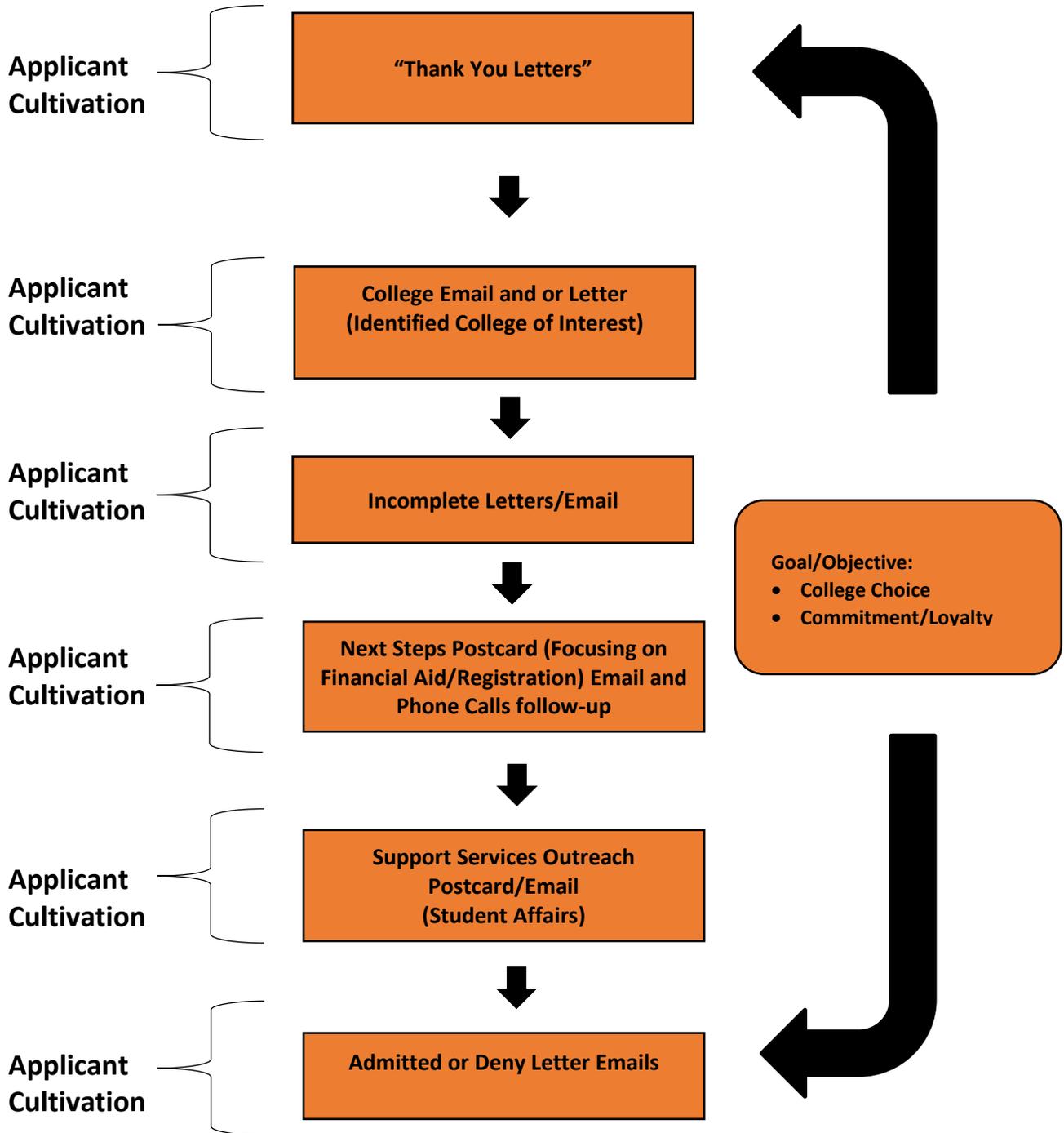
General (Decided) Prospect Communication Flow

(Campaign 2)



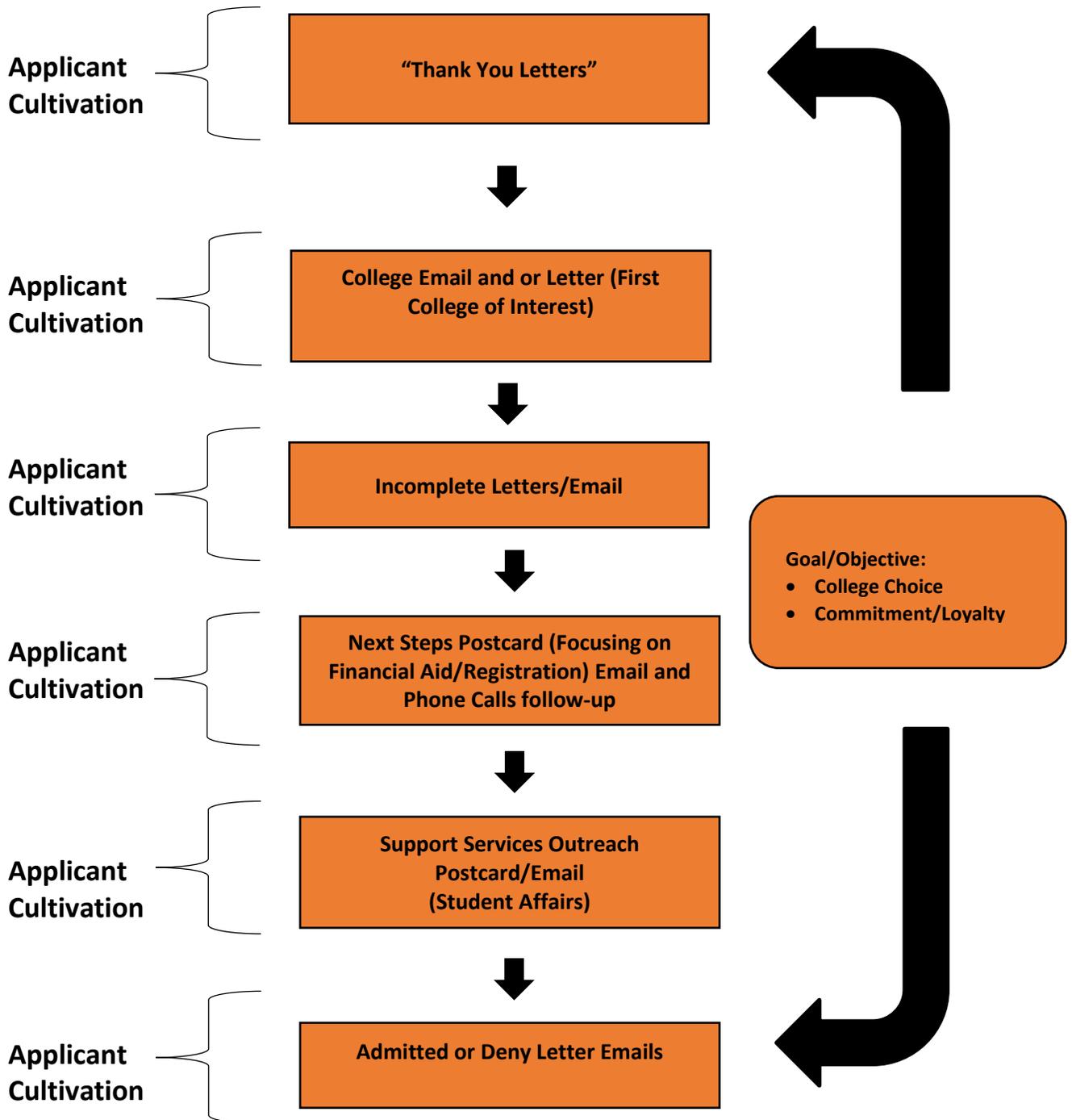
General (Decided) Applicant Communication Flow

(Campaign 3)



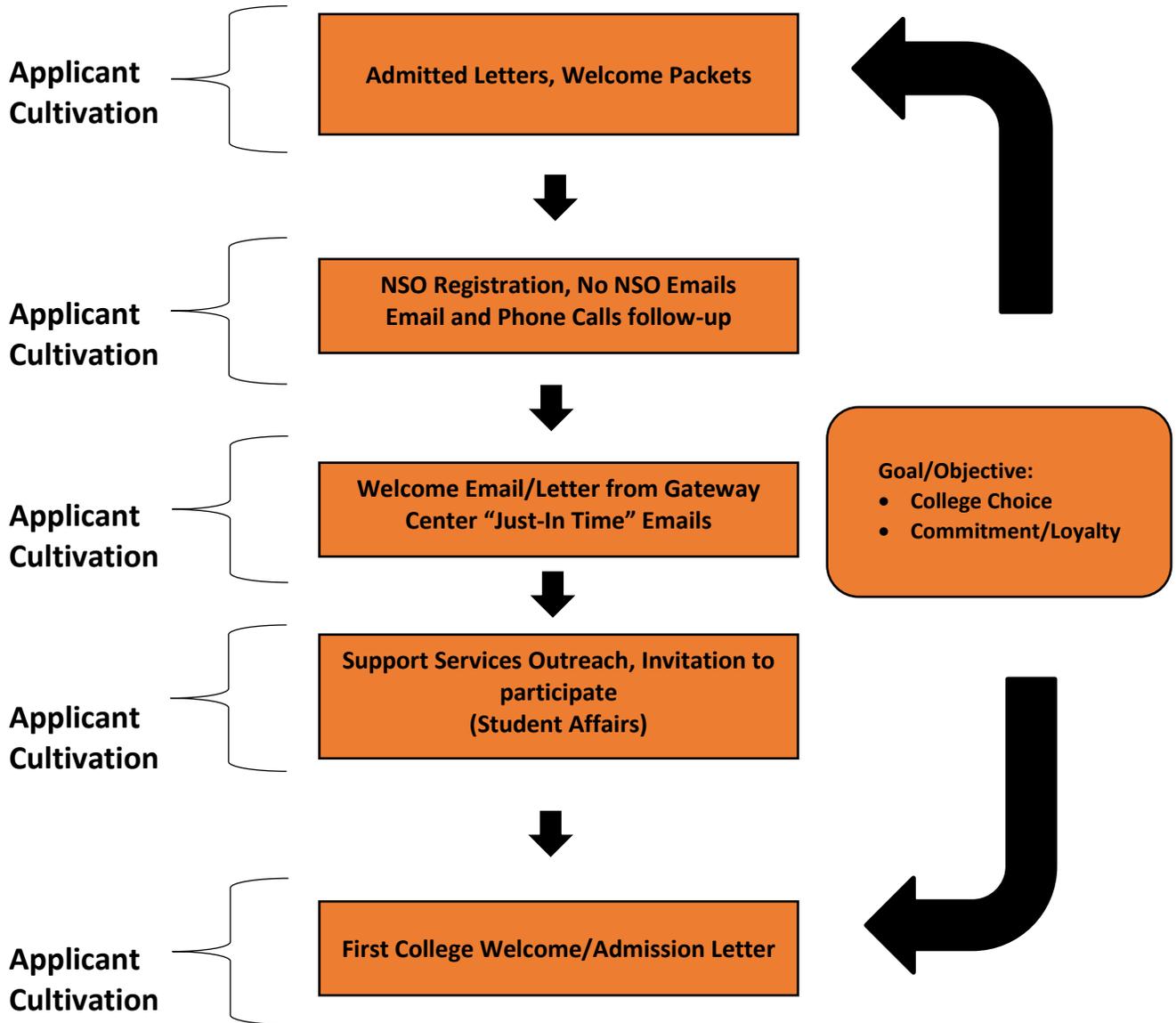
General (Undecided) Applicant Communication Flow

(Campaign 4)



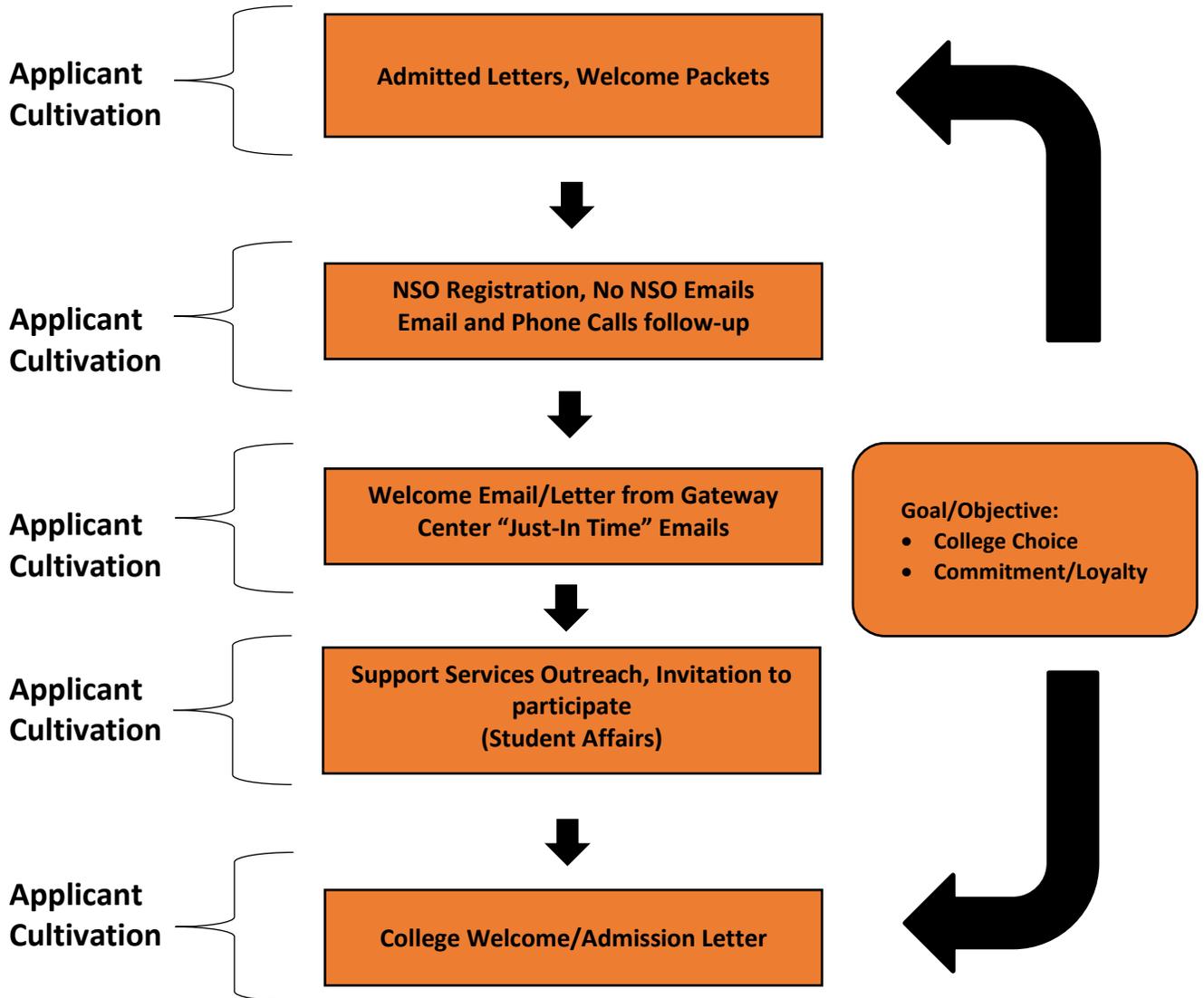
General (Undecided) Admitted Communication Flow

(Campaign 5)



General (Decided) Admitted Communication Flow

(Campaign 6)



SMSU Web Evaluation & Recommendations

While Southwest Minnesota State University's website is pleasing to the eye, it has a few hurdles when it comes to flow and navigation. We evaluated the pages with the help of several web and user experience (UX) experts and geared our results strictly to the pages pertaining or attached to transfer information. We broke it down page and page with recommendations for each.

Overall

- The site has some untraditional methods of navigation which can be confusing to users.
- From an overall user experience perspective, the switching between the different styles of website is not ideal. The design of the admissions section sports a pleasing layout and it is recommended to continue that feel throughout.
- Within the older portion of the site, content should be updated and formatted better.
- The site lacks diversity. This could make potential students not feel welcome when thinking of coming to the University.
- Link colors are hard to distinguish on many pages.
- There are several places “admissions” goes to throughout the site, pick one location and update all links to “admissions”:
 - <http://www.smsu.edu/degreePath/>
 - <http://www.smsu.edu/admission/>
 - <http://www.smsu.edu/admission/?id=10048>
- Try to make all your page’s flow through the information like it is on a "path". If I am a transfer student/new student/international student what am I going to need 1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc? What resources do I need to take advantage of? What things do I need to see and in what order? Overall it doesn't feel like there is a solid process/path the prospective student would take.

Homepage

www.smsu.edu

Slideshow/Navigation:

- Slideshow is a confusing piece of navigation. Not traditional, hard to follow.
- "Where you belong!" is very hard to read, poor font choice.

- It is very hard to realize that the slideshow stopped and links are now available to the left. People view websites in a sort of "F" pattern first a horizontal left to right than vertical down. It is not natural for your eyes to want to travel left when clicking and viewing something on the right. This does not follow general UX (user experience) patterns.

Transfer Landing Page

<http://www.smsu.edu/admission/index.cfm/?id=394&transfer>

Page Items:

- Why should I transfer to SMSU? Add some sales/marketing text.
- The image should move down the page, inline, or be removed. On your average screen resolution size all the viewer is going to see is the image, it can confuse the viewer into thinking there is nothing else on the page.
- 3 easy steps. The steps should be expanded a bit, there really is more involved and it should be outlined.
- Rewording opening paragraph: "The transfer process is very straightforward, but if you have questions, you can always call us...". This could be worded better, the process isn't always straightforward... this statement could make the user feel like, "If you can't figure out our easy process I suppose you can contact us" The page should give the user the tools to do this all themselves, but still make the user feel like SMSU would love to be contacted.
- Step 3: Give options to pay the application fee. There is an address, but what if I don't have a check book? Can I pay online? Can I get my fee waived if I visit the campus? Could step 3 actually be part of step one?
- Look at adding more steps or expanding the information on the page. Maybe add a section about what comes next... "Transferology", "Transfer Orientation and Options", "Meet with Advisor", "Financial aid", "What happens after acceptance", "Assessment/Placement Tests".
- Including a transfer contact person would be very beneficial instead of just listing the admissions general number. Preferably identify additional Transfer Specialists, currently you only have one listed on the website.
- Add important dates/deadlines to page, like when registration is due, etc. This information was not very easy to find.
- Some examples of more detailed transfer pages that have a good flow:
 - <http://www.metrostate.edu/admissions/undergraduate/transfer-students>

- <https://www.century.edu/admissions/transfer-student>
- <http://www.bemidjistate.edu/admissions/transfer/>

Left Navigation

- Check link order, doesn't seem to have a clear purpose. Try to group them or list them in an order that makes better sense. At least order by "importance."
- Admission Homepage Link: Oddly, goes to a blank page. Should probably go here <http://www.smsu.edu/admission/index.cfm>
- Add a link to financial aid and/or cost of attendance
- Add a link to the Transfer Credit Information page
<http://www.smsu.edu/campuslife/registrationrecords/?Id=2205>

Transfer Credit Information

<http://www.smsu.edu/campuslife/registrationrecords/?Id=2205>

Page/Section:

- The page is not really clear on what the student NEEDS to do. We see lots of options, nothing stands out. Make the steps CLEAR actions right at the top, if other information needs to be presented, put that in a section below the steps.
- Remove the header "Welcome to Southwest Minnesota State University!", it is not a needed statement and it takes up a lot of space.
- Remove exclamation points from the header on the page, "Transferring to SMSU!"
- Clean up page and language, check that link descriptions are on proper points for accessibility purposes. For example: instead of "policies and procedures" that leads to a big list of policies. Say "transfer policy" and link directly to that individual policy.
- Condense some of the content to make for easier reading, try to find a balance of information: not too much, not too lean.

Left Navigation

- Transfer Specialist page, remove link and remove page all together. This information should be included on the pages within the transfer section.
- 4 of the left nav items have an icon next to them which normally means you are leaving the site and going to an external site, but that is not what they are doing. We would recommend removing them if they don't serve an actual purpose.

- The link on the left to MnTC just leads to your program page, you should remove this link as you are already talking about MnTC in the body of the page. Or link to something talking more about the MnTC whether it be a page dedicated to that information or the mntransfer.org site.

Transfer Specialist Page

<http://www.smsu.edu/campuslife/registrationrecords/?id=2654>

Page Items:

- An extra page that probably doesn't need to exist.
- Remove the page and include the transfer specialist information on the other relevant transfer pages so the student has access many times to this information.
- Identify additional Transfer Specialists if possible.

Degree Path

<http://www.smsu.edu/degreePath/>

Page Items:

This page could potentially have a box for Transfer Students as well.

Priority Registration

<http://www.smsu.edu/admission/?id=9953>

Page Items:

- We thought this would just cover how to register, not provide info on what seems to be an orientation. Is the 'Spring Registration' the name of their event? We were confused about what exactly the event was at first and if it was mandatory for me to go to register.
- The left navigation changes on this page and doesn't show us other pathways for where we wanted to click next. Recommending best practice of consistent left navigation on subpages of a primary/top-level page.

Left Navigation:

- Add a link to Transferology

Recommended Links

<https://www.smsu.edu/campuslife/registrationrecords/?id=9320>

Page Items:

- Both the links to "Transfer Specialist" and "Petition Process" are dead links, they give web errors.

Transfer Policies

<http://www.smsu.edu/campuslife/registrationrecords/?id=9322>

Page Items:

- Using the “click here” to name links is not accessible and should be avoided if possible. Try working the links into the body of the sentence.
- What about linking directly to the transfer policy instead of the whole policy page?

DARS

<http://www.smsu.edu/campuslife/registrationrecords/?id=2970>

Page Items:

- The link “Minnesota State College or University” is a broken link

Transferology – How will my credits transfer?

<http://www.smsu.edu/campuslife/registrationrecords/?id=8845>

Page Items:

- Link at bottom to import courses feature PDF is a broken link.

Credit for Prior Learning-CLEP/AP/IB/DSST

<http://www.smsu.edu/campuslife/registrationrecords/?id=3763>

Page Items:

- Remove CLEP/AP/IB/DSST from navigation link. Body text is fine, but is muddling in the nav.
- Link to DAN TES is a broken link.

Transfer Credit Appeals Petition Form

<http://www.smsu.edu/campuslife/registrationrecords/?id=2655>

Page Items:

- Change title to “Transfer Appeals Form” as it is now system procedure to call these “Transfer Appeals.”
- Link at bottom to “System Level Appeal Form” does not lead to the right location.

Consortium Program

<http://www.smsu.edu/campuslife/registrationrecords/?id=2521>

Page Items:

- Both links to “Consortium Agreement” are broken links.
- Both links to “Petition” are broken links.
- Change “Petition” link names to “Transfer Appeal”

Summary of Recommendations

In the summer of 2016, the Director of Admissions should start discussions with the Leadership Team to review past strategic planning and reporting activities for transfer students. Meetings with the staff, faculty and leadership should be held to review strategic planning for the Office of Admissions. Using “[The Transfer Playbook](#)” from The Aspen Institute as resource would be helpful, as it addresses different strategies to make transfer success a priority.

Meetings with key department stakeholders should be held to set operational priorities for FY2016 – 2017. Annual meetings would then be held with the leadership team to conduct a mid-year assessment of progress. These findings would be shared among the staff/faculty and will be used in completing the annual assessment of the department strategic plan.

The Enrollment Management Division, IT Division, and Communications/Marketing Division needs to develop an integrated enrollment and marketing plan for the university. Using the research data from recent enrollment trends, parent/family surveys, faculty/staff-led positioning committee, as well as input from external stakeholders, a plan would then be drafted in the Fall of 2016. The plan should be further revised and subsequently approved by the Leadership team. The Enrollment Division should be given funds and begin implementation of the plan in the Fall of 2016.

In order to advance the enrollment and marketing goals of the SMSU, the Enrollment Management division should develop and implement new recruitment initiatives, provide enhanced service through technology and collaboration, and enhance their ability to lead effective university-wide enrollment efforts, such as:

- Having four-year admissions/recruiters set up advising meetings on specific days/times at the two-year feeder colleges throughout the semester. Use

Transferology to import courses and gauge where the student is and whether or not they're on track during these sessions.

- Allowing transfer students to apply earlier to the university. If students are denied admissions, offer them advising to identify what they could do to improve their admissions chances thus giving them another opportunity to apply for the same start date at the university.
- Offering transfer students perks such as use of the University library, attendance at sporting or other events, etc. so transfer students begin to identify with being a student at that university and to ease into the transition process.
- Updating SMSU website with the recommendations listed on pages 21-26.
- Providing priority registration for transfer students.

The marketing function would be redefined and reorganized to maximize SMSU's ability to reach the institutional enrollment goals within their budget restrictions.

Within this Strategic Plan SMSU should establish a student centered and culturally competent approach in the academic context of the university that will make enrollment management of transfer students the responsibility of everyone. Viewed as an institution-wide responsibility and part of the academic context and culture of the institution, this strategic plan should become one of the focuses of institutional planning. This focus also means structure supports the processes and procedures as opposed to processes and procedures being driven by a static strategic plan structure. It is all about how SMSU organizes the institution to achieve their Strategic Enrollment Management (SEM) vision, goals and objectives (Henderson, 2005).

Appendix A

This section includes recommendations for changes to SMSU's email communication to transfer students through Hobsons connect. It is important to try and minimize content and utilize white space when sending through email. Less text and better spacing is easier to read and becomes a more effective tool for sending information.

Email Communication: Your Success Story Begins at SMSU

Original:

{#First Name#}!

Thanks for checking out Southwest Minnesota State University! I wanted to take a minute to introduce myself as your SMSU Admission Counselor!

I am so excited to share all of the good things (and there are A LOT) happening at SMSU with you. I'll be communicating with you via email and phone, but I **really hope** we get the chance to meet in person at a transfer fair, or even better, on campus during a visit! I encourage you to check out our transfer page, which has a lot of the information you seek!

[Transferring to SMSU](#)

Please see my contact information below. You can email, call or text me whenever you need to. I would also encourage you connect with us on social media! You can find links to our Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram accounts below.

There are many reasons students choose to transfer. To get our conversation started, I'd like to know **what made you look at transferring to SMSU?**

I look forward to hearing from you {#First Name#}!

Matt Suby

Assistant Director of Admission

Southwest Minnesota State University

P - (507)-537-6286

C - (507)-828-7219 (Call or Text)

Recommended Edits:

{#First Name#}!

Thanks for choosing Southwest Minnesota State University!

I would like to introduce myself as your SMSU Admission Counselor. As your counselor, I am here to ensure you have a successful learning experience at SMSU.

So let's get connected. I'll be reaching out to you via email and a phone call. Also, feel free to email, call or text me—however you prefer to reach me. You can also find us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram!

In the meantime, check out our transfer page to learn more about SMSU.

[Transferring to SMSU](#)

I look forward to visiting with you and welcoming you to SMSU!

Matt Suby
Assistant Director of Admission
Southwest Minnesota State University
P - (507) 537-6286
C - (507) 828-7219 (Call or Text)

Email Communication: We Got Your Application!

Note to SMSU: Make sure you are linking to Transferology, not Transferology Lab.

Original:

{#First Name#}!

I just wanted to let you know that we received your Application for Admission and you are one step closer to becoming a Mustang at Southwest Minnesota State University!

You are busy....I get it. So to make life easy, here are your next steps:

1. Send all Official Transcripts from your previous institution(s)

If you are transferring from a college/university within the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU) system, we can pull your transcript(s) electronically. If you are transferring from outside of MnSCU, you'll need to request your transcripts to be sent to us.

An official evaluation of your credits will be done once you are admitted. So the sooner you can get us the transcript(s), the sooner we'll know how your credits transferred.

If you'd like to take an unofficial look at how your credits will transfer, check out the [Transferology Lab](#).

As always, if you have any questions {#First Name#}, let me know!

EVERY day is a GREAT day to be a MUSTANG!

Matt Suby
Assistant Director of Admission
Southwest Minnesota State University
P - (507)-537-6286
C - (507)-828-7219 (Call or Text)

Recommended Edits:

{#First Name#}!

We received your application and you are now one step closer to becoming a Mustang at Southwest Minnesota State University.

If you haven't done so, please provide us with your official transcripts. However, if you are transferring from within the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system, just let us know and we will retrieve them.

We will make a determination about the number of transferable credits and communicate the information with you as well as post it online at the [Transferology](#).

In the meantime, if you have questions, let me know.

Matt Suby
Assistant Director of Admission
Southwest Minnesota State University
P - (507) 537-6286
C - (507) 828-7219 (Call or Text)

Email Communication: We got your SMSU Scholarship App!

Notes to SMSU: Please verify and confirm the dates. Should January 1 be October 1? Also, is there a reason why other info such as scholarship criteria is listed after they submitted the application? Shouldn't the information be shared before they apply? Also, is the statement about the admission date just a reminder?

Original:

{#First Name#},

Thank you for submitting your Scholarship Application to SMSU! I just wanted to let you know that we received it and that you are now applied for all new student scholarships offered through the Office of Admission!

*We will be sending out scholarship offers the **1st week of March and the 1st week of June**. In order to be included in these rounds you must:*

1. **Be admitted to SMSU by February 29 or May 31**
2. **Qualify based on scholarship criteria (GPA and Transfer Credits/Degree)**

For more information about the scholarship criteria, visit our [Transfer Scholarship page](#). We understand that cost of attendance is an important part of your decision. We strive to make attending SMSU affordable for all students through various types of financial aid. Be sure you submit your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) as soon as you can after January 1st and send us your results by adding the code below.

SMSU FAFSA Code: 002375

If you have any questions, *or would like an early scholarship estimate*, please don't hesitate to contact me at Matthew.Suby@smsu.edu.

Matt Suby
Assistant Director of Admission
Southwest Minnesota State University
P - (507)-537-6286
C- (507)-828-7219 (Call or Text)

Recommended Edits:

We received your scholarship application.

We will be notifying all scholarship recipients during the first week of March and June. You must be admitted to Southwest Minnesota State University (SMSU) by Feb. 29 or May 31 to qualify.

In addition to applying for a scholarship, be sure you also complete your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) after January 1 and include the **SMSU FAFSA code 002375** in your application.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me at Matthew.Suby@smsu.edu.

Matt Suby
Assistant Director of Admission
Southwest Minnesota State University
P - (507) 537-6286
C- (507) 828-7219 (Call or Text)

Email Communication: Admitted Student Days at SMSU - Save The Date!

Original:

{#First Name#}!

Congratulations again on your acceptance to Southwest Minnesota State University! I wanted to get a couple of dates on your radar that you'll for sure want to mark down. We will be hosting **Admitted Student Days** in February and I hope you can join us!

**Admitted Student Days
February 12, 2016 or February 19, 2016**

Admitted Student Days are not just another campus visit {#First Name#}. Rather, it's an in depth look at our academic programs and what separates an SMSU education from everywhere else! You'll get to meet with your academic department, learn more about the Liberal Education Program, hear testimonials from current SMSU students and meet other future Mustangs!

Invitations will be sent out in early January, but I wanted to get these dates to you now so you can add them to your calendar. Let me know if you'd like more information now and I can follow up {#First Name#}!

Have a great day and GO MUSTANGS!

{#Counselor Name#}
{#Counselor Title#}
{#Counselor Cell#}(Call or Text)
{#Counselor E-mail#}

Recommended Edits:

{#First Name#}!

Congratulations and welcome to Southwest Minnesota State University!

Join us at our **Admitted Student Days** in February to learn more about our courses, degrees, and to visit with the faculty, staff, and students. Meet many SMSU students and future Mustangs.

**Admitted Student Days
February 12, 2016 or February 19, 2016**

Be sure to save the date. We look forward to meeting you and providing you with the learning experience that will open doors to your successful future.

{#Counselor Name#}
{#Counselor Title#}

{#Counselor Cell#}(Call or Text)
{#Counselor E-mail#}

Email Communication: Save the Date for SMSU Priority Registration

Original:

{#First Name#},

Congratulations again on your acceptance to Southwest Minnesota State University! I'm excited for you to continue your education with us as you continue to pursue your dreams!

As a transfer student, I understand that an important part of your decision to enroll involves how your credits transfer and the availability of the classes you need to complete your degree. That's why I wanted to get an important date on your calendar now.

We begin registering students for fall semester in April during our ***Priority Registration*** program. This is a chance for you to come to campus early and get signed up for fall classes with the help of our faculty advisors. So mark your calendar for:

Transfer Priority Registration Friday, April 1, 2016

We will also have registration programs in June, July and August, but the earlier you can attend a registration program, the more options you'll have constructing your schedule.

I hope to see you in April, {#First Name#}! GO MUSTANGS!

Matt Suby
Assistant Director of Admission
Southwest Minnesota State University
O - (507)-537-6286
C - (507)-828-7219

Recommended Edits:

{#First Name#},

Congratulations on being admitted to Southwest Minnesota State University!

To help you transition with ease into SMSU, we are hosting a Transfer Priority Registration event where we will answer questions about transfer credits, course options, and help you develop a degree completion plan.

We can also register you early for fall semester at the transfer priority registration day. So save the transfer priority registration date!

Transfer Priority Registration
Friday, April 1, 2016
(ADD TIME)

Registration programs are also offered in June, July and August. Classes fill up quickly so plan early to secure your classes.

Matt Suby
Assistant Director of Admission
Southwest Minnesota State University
O - (507) 537-6286
C - (507) 828-7219

Email Communication: Save the Date for SMSU Priority Registration

Original:

{#First Name#}!

Thanks for stopping by my table at the transfer fair recently! I hope that after gathering information and learning about Southwest Minnesota State University that the day turned into more than you expected!

I genuinely enjoyed visiting you close to your hometown, now it's your turn to visit us in ours! Take the next step and come find out what else SMSU has to offer you! Even if you've been here before, you're likely to learn or see something new!

To schedule a visit, go to our [Online Visit Scheduler](#) or reach out to me directly. I would be happy to help you set something up!

I look forward to hearing from you!

Matt Suby
Assistant Director of Admission
Southwest Minnesota State University
P - (507)-537-6286
C - (507)-828-7219 (Call or Text)

Recommended Edits:

{#First Name#}!

Thanks for stopping at our table recently at the transfer fair. I hope I was able to answer all your questions and share with you with the many reasons to attend Southwest Minnesota State University.

We would also like to invite you to visit our beautiful campus. You can schedule your visit at [Online Visit Scheduler](#) or simply contact me.

I look forward to learning about your interests and sharing the many ways SMSU is here to provide you with the learning experience that will help you fulfill your ambitions and dreams.

Matt Suby
Assistant Director of Admission
Southwest Minnesota State University
P - (507) 537-6286
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Appendix B

Included are the results from a survey we sent to approximately 700 SMSU transfer students in January of 2016, we had around 111 responses.

1. Which type of school did you most recently attend and transfer credits from into SMSU?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	State Community College	23	21%
2	State Community & Technical College	43	39%
3	State University	21	19%
4	Private College	14	13%
5	University of Minnesota	3	3%
6	State Technical College	7	6%
7	Private Career College	0	0%
8	Private Online College	0	0%
	Total	111	100%

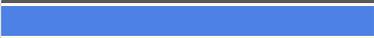
Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	6
Mean	2.57
Variance	1.85
Standard Deviation	1.36
Total Responses	111

2. Did you complete the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum prior to transferring to SMSU?

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Completed prior to transfer		32	29%
2	Completed some courses/goals		40	36%
3	Did not complete		16	15%
4	Do not know if it was completed		22	20%
Total			110	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	4
Mean	2.25
Variance	1.18
Standard Deviation	1.09
Total Responses	110

3. How much time elapsed between your attendance at your last college or university and enrollment at SMSU?

#	Answer		Response	%
1	1 year or less		86	79%
2	Within 5 years		16	15%
3	More than 10 years		7	6%
Total			109	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	3
Mean	1.28
Variance	0.33
Standard Deviation	0.58
Total Responses	109

4. How did your general education/Minnesota Transfer Curriculum (MnTC) credits transfer, compared to your expectations?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Above Expectations	13	12%
2	Met Expectations	79	72%
3	Below Expectations	17	16%
	Total	109	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	3
Mean	2.04
Variance	0.28
Standard Deviation	0.53
Total Responses	109

5. Please Explain:

Text Response	
Thought more of my accounting classes would have taken place with some of the university credits and some were considered not a "high enough level" course.	
Since I transferred from a State institution to another State institution, I assumed the state had a seamless education plan that would encourage students to build upon degrees earned at other institutions this was far from the case. A completed associate's degree earned at a state institution should count for two years towards a bachelor's in the same subject at another state institution, as was my case, but I have found myself attending almost another 4 years worth of courses in addition to my bachelors -- it's a waste of time and money, and a bizarrely inefficient way for the state to offer education. Since state institutions are supposed to be affordable, it's bizarre that this wasteful education plan exists as it causes students to spend more money and time than they would otherwise need to.	
I had to go in manually to transfer some of my credits. And others came up along the way that I needed to petition for, in order for them to take place of courses that SMSU wanted me to take.	
Was hoping specific classes for my degree would transfer. I had to retake 2 courses.	
Coming in to SMSU, I thought I would only need to complete credits in my major. However multiple credits I thought would transfer in did not and credits I was told to take for my said major did not transfer in to SMSU. These credits did transfer to other university.	
I don't remember specifics, but I seem to remember not many credits transferring, or only counting for partial credit, so the classes had to be retaken.	
I had to put in for 2 patitions for classes that are offered here, so that the credits transfered.	
I thought more credits would transfer over. I think I only got 40 credits to transfer out of about 80.	
Some basic level classes were not honored and had to retake them. I did not understand why not, no one told me why other than "because"	
Many classes didn't count for credits here.	
I had to fight for every credit transferred. No one wanted to transfer any credit towards my BA from my Associates.	
Certain history classes did not transfer into my history major because they had different names than the classes here. Also, my anatomy class did not qualify as a science requirement here.	
Being that I attended a Technical College I did have any credits that transferred which met the MNTC.	
Took classes at a bible college and none of those credits transferred	
Some credits weren't transferable even though the classes matched	

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	15

6. How did your credits, other than general education/Minnesota Transfer Curriculum courses, transfer compared to your expectations?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Above Expectations	9	8%
2	Met Expectations	76	70%
3	Below Expectations	23	21%
	Total	108	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	3
Mean	2.13
Variance	0.28
Standard Deviation	0.53
Total Responses	108

7. Please Explain:

Text Response	
Same as previous question.	
classes that i could have used for prerequisites did not transfer	
Please see my explanation to the previous question. My required "core" courses at the community college level would not transfer to another state institution because they were not at the same level. I recognize that community college's may have different educational demands than a state university, but there has to be a way to structure the educational plan to better integrate with other state institutions. I wasted at least a semester or two of courses due to small differences between otherwise identical courses than rendered them incompatible.	
I had to retake 2 courses that I had already completed and passed.	
I received an associates degree and had to retake some of those courses at the university. Many of the same concepts were covered. For instance I took Principals of Marketing at a community college and needed to retake it at SMSU. It was not difficult, just added to the work load.	
Credits I thought would transfer did not. The process was very challenging	
I had to take another first year seminar although I had already taken one at my previous college.	
Same as before	
North Dakota to Minnesota was sorta different	
I was hoping more of my core class credits would have transferred into my Computer Science course as I was coming from a 2yr Computer Science course.	
Again, I had to fight for every credit transferred. No one wanted to transfer any credit towards my BA from my Associates.	
Many many credits were left as "Courses with grades which do not transfer". I understand they are "old" credits, but it appears no effort was made to link those classes with present-day classes.	
Courses from out of state were hard to transfer without me having to make multiple phone calls to my prior college to obtain syllabus upon syllabus, etc. to see if they met MN requirements.	
Credits for special ed minor took quite a long time to go through. It was frustrating and I had to contact many people many times.	
I didn't receive full credit for a course and the level of classes were different between schools	
Cabinetmaking doesn't transfer easily into Justice Administration	
Was denied a credit transfer because of the school I attended	
I did a semester of Nursing through my last college and they transferred as electives. Therefore, I only have 2 more courses to take as electives. I was disappointed because I'd like to take more writing and communication classes, but unless I define one of them as a minor, I can only take two.	

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	18

8. Did you seek advice regarding the transfer of your credits?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Sought Advice	71	66%
2	Did not seek advice	36	34%
	Total	107	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	2
Mean	1.34
Variance	0.23
Standard Deviation	0.47
Total Responses	107

9. Who did you go to for advice regarding your credit transfer into SMSU? (Choose as many as needed)

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Counselor/Advisor	50	70%
2	Transfer Admissions Counselor	24	34%
3	Registrar	11	15%
4	Faculty Advisor	21	30%
5	Friends/Family/Fellow Students	10	14%
6	Current College/University	14	20%
7	Another Faculty Member	6	8%
8	Other (Please comment)	3	4%

Other (Please comment)

State WorkForce Center

The professor of my major was the only person who helped me with any questions i had

i sent alot of emails. my main contact was Gus, if he suggested that i email prof. XY and Z i did, if those profs could help and suggested i talk to prof L and M i did that too.

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	8
Total Responses	71

10. What is your opinion regarding the advice you received? Please share feedback about the quality, accuracy, or consistency of advice provided to you and if it was helpful.

Text Response
Lori Wynia is great. Michelle Beach is great too. They are very good at making sure all classes are taken care of and that I am in the correct direction I need to be in
it was helpful. They worked with me to petition for some equivalent credit as well, which was approved.
I was able to quick and easily get the help I needed to address my transfer concerns. It was quite helpful in completing my transfer.
Very well on feedback but just some credits were not accepted when I arrived.
I felt the advisers I consulted did not have the time to truly examine my particular case. In retrospect, I feel I was given general advise but given no practical, specific guidance to achieve my goals, and no serious energy was put into considering the details of situation. Therefore I missed critical details that would have helped my transfers and course selection.
The advice I received was very helpful and allowed me to complete the courses that I needed and not take courses that I had completed at RCTC.
the Registration Office staff was extremely helpful in helping me find the information I needed, then explaining what happened. They were great.
my professor went out of his way to help me get set up for the classes that I needed. Which was nice considering I was never given an advisor or anyone else to even help me start at a new college.
Good feedback. Quick replies. Friendly staff.
I was basically told the credits I received would transfer over except for the "lower level" courses which I would just have to repeat.
The advice was accurate but I was allowed to substitute some courses for my bachelors degree that I do not believe should be substituted. It actually put me behind in my major.
It was very informative they led me the correct path towards my degree plan when coming to Smsu. They walked me though the process and explained everything along the way regarding courses, tutors, and professors
All of the advice was accurate and true.
Communication between university and colleges are lacking. According to my transfer school I should have been ready to go but coming in I am behind by more then a semester and took over 24 credits that did not have and meaning at SMSU. The advice is what detoured me, MATH was a huge mess up and I have now wasted 4 semesters of math to achieve one pre-re.
I am disappointed. I was told that I was going to be able to graduate in two years. There is no way I can finish in two years. It will be two and half years because I couldn't apply into the Ed program until I complete Ed 101. I won't be able to get into the program till next fall then I still have a semester of student teaching. I will not be able to graduate till fall 2017. I am disappointed that I won't graduate till the fall of 2017 after I was told that I would graduate by spring of 2017.
Was absolutely no help at all, hard to contact, and very rude in the conversations I had with her.
It was very helpful and accurate. I received the advice from my professor not my advisor.
If a class is relatively similar try to petition it because there is a chance that it may work. It helps to have the syllabus for the classes as well.
Good

Lori Wynia has been wonderful. She responds to emails very promptly and answers all questions thoroughly.

They were able to check if all completed courses would transfer over to SMSU.

it was very stressful, mainly do to people being gone for the summer and classes filling. but it all worked out.Gus was very good to work with, i was able to communicate via email and text. this shorted the wait time.

I thought the advise was helpful, it worked, and my credits transferred and stayed on schedule.

I was talked through the cost of tuition, and the admission process. I was also talked through how to receive financial assistance.

Transferology.com is a helpful tool for transfer students.

The advice I received was very accurate when it said all credits transfer between MN state colleges and universities, and that if you complete your liberal arts degree at a junior college, you don't have to take liberal arts classes at the next MN college. I wasn't aware that there might be some issues regarding 200 level classes needing to be at a 300 or 400 level at a 4-year school. Also, for going to grad school, my advisor told me my 200 level A & P class might not be good enough. It might have to be at an upper level. So I retook that class at the 300 level and found out later I didn't need to. It would be nice to be more aware and informed on this.

What I was told the classes would be is not what the university offers

The advice I got was very accurate and helpful. It saved me lots of time.

OK

My advisor gave me good advice. I emailed the registrar about things and never really got an answer from them. I still have a class that didn't transfer right.

Some advice I received was helpful, but sometimes the advisor didn't know what she was talking about it seemed or didn't know how to fix the problem and told me to just ignore it.

Good advice

It was good and made sense.

I was told not to worry too much about it as the courses i had were 3 credits and @ SMSU they are 4 credits and there were things covered here than at previous college.

The advice I received was incredibly helpful. The advisers were able to point me in the direction I needed to go.

It was ok, I really realized that my whole degree transferred after i came to SMSU. It was more a surprise than anything

Little help at all. Same B.S. answer "File a petition." I think I can write petitions in my sleep now.

I though that it was great advice and if the transfer admission couldn't answer, they directed me to the person that could.

I spent a lot of time being transferred between departments on the phone. It got somewhat frustrating.

Great help! Extremely friendly and quick to respond.

Overall I was satisfied, although I was not happy to find out the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum at the University was different than the college I was attending. I had taken a class that was accepted at my community college as transfer curriculum at SouthWest due to instructor preference and later found out it is not considered a transfer class at SouthWest. Resulting in having to take an extra class at my community college. The MNTC could be the same throughout all schools with the option of taking a class at another to fill the MNTC requirements.

It helped me transfer without too much difficulty

The BSN program is relatively new, but Laurie Johansen has been very helpful. I have BA from UMM so I have to figure out which gen eds I need for my BSN.

credit transferred easily into SMSU. More than expected actually. Advisor set me up with the proper classes to start fulfilling my bachelors degree.

My advisors at both places were wonderful. They were helpful with the questions I asked and if they were unsure of something they were timely in getting back to me with the information that was needed.

My advisor was very knowledgeable in the transfer curriculum. She noted classes that had not transferred and had me submit an appeal which was granted.

GREAT

I thought it was very helpful. It is good quality.

Admissions was very helpful in getting me the information needed and helping me understand the process

Very helpful. Reassuring.

It was not the greatest. I have been doing all my own dars work regarding transfer credits and registering for classes

I was very pleased

Good

Had to visit transfer service multiple times in regards to issues with institution not receiving transcripts & AA after submitting it various times.

It was really good and got to know what I should have done and the classes I needed to take.

MNSCU system helps making transferring credits very easy.

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	56

11. Did you use online resources (websites) to assist you during the transfer process?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Yes	59	55%
2	No	49	45%
	Total	108	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	2
Mean	1.45
Variance	0.25
Standard Deviation	0.50
Total Responses	108

12. Which online resources did you use to assist you during the transfer process?
Choose one or more.

#	Answer	Response	%
1	SMSU Website	49	83%
2	Prior College/University Website	20	34%
3	MnSCU Website	9	15%
4	Transferology® /u.Select®	13	22%
5	Other: (please list)	4	7%

Other: (please list)
friends helped me out a lot
Calling SMSU
Played here in a football game of the 2014-15 season and it seemed like a nice place to be.
Both colleges are MnScu, I didn't have to do anything except register and let them know where I was coming from/going to

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	5
Total Responses	59

13. What is your opinion regarding the online resources you utilized? Please share feedback about the quality, accuracy, or consistency of information found online and if it was helpful.

Text Response
helpful once I found the information I was looking for.
Transferology was effective and efficient.
Useful
I thought the process went well without any issues, problems, or concerns.
There are too many resources that are too separate. Transferring between state institutions shouldn't require a full weekend of comparing multiple websites and taking copious notes. There should be one tool, run by the state, which analyzes your past courses, looks at your future goals, and provides guidance. Basic, accurate transfer advice would be far more efficient, detailed, and helpful if it was automated. This isn't rocket science, but it does require careful considering of details which many advisers simply don't have time for -- which should be acknowledged, and then worked around by the use of a carefully made online tool.
The transfer process for my classes was a breeze! Upon applying Lori emailed me and helped me through the process step by step. I was overwhelmed at the simplicity of the website. It is easy to navigate through.
not as helpful as I would have liked.
The SMSU website is very user friendly and easy to navigate. I was able to quickly complete the enrollment process, as well as request transcripts from my previous schools. The phone numbers and contact emails listed on the website are accurate and the staff I spoke with were both helpful and friendly.
Their website is useful all around.
They were all helpful. At times hard to locate the information. However, everything with some research was able to be found.
the level a difficulty between using each site was considerable and they were a challenge to get to work well with each other.
Transferology was not helpful. Some of my classes would not show up.
The resources and information about what to do when transferring were very helpful! The information was what I needed.
It was helpful but hard to follow. I feel like it was more for appeal than accuracy.
The were fast and easy.
Just helpful.
It was accurate.
its ok. but the currant trasferology site is confusing and messy. the old way where you could compare two schools side by side with the course in question in the middle was alot easier to understand.
The website, Transferology shows which courses transfer, courses that match, and even other school options that are also transferable.
SMSU needs more online opportunities for things such as text books, mustang card, or dining services. My previous university allowed me to submit paperwork for things like these online, and if SMSU did something like this, the transfer process would have been much less stressful
the information from the online sources is not accurate.
OK

The online resources worked well for me.
Easy to get around. Very operator friendly
I thought they were quite helpful and made the transfer fairly easy and informative.
It helped, sometimes hard to understand. Talking to people directly was much more help.
It was ok. Not the easiest to find information.
They were all fine. The info was pretty accurate and easy to find
Works great
The information was great.
I applied online and then was able to find which classes I needed to register for and registered for them.
used SMSU website to access the proper paperwork I needed to be able to enroll into SMSU as a 2+2 student (attending 2 colleges at once) and also the proper forms to fill out my application for SMSU. The SMSU website is understandable
GREAT
Good resources
It's was good.
Great!
Helpful enough to allow user to complete process.
As an Exercise Science major, I explored the Exercise Science Department web page and was very impressed with amount of information that was available online. Without being able to visit the campus, I was only able to experience what it would be like through the videos on the home page. I felt excited listening to professors talk about the curriculum and watching students interact with one another in multiple settings discussing the theory and application of exercise prescriptions. I believe you can gain a lot by reading between the lines and I was convinced not by what they said but by how they all carried themselves. I believed it was place that students could be themselves and have a passion for learning that would be recognized and nurtured by the faculty and staff at SMSU.
Very good
easy to navigate

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	40

14. Did you attend a Transfer Orientation Session provided by SMSU?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	a. Yes	47	44%
2	b. No	61	56%
	Total	108	100%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	2
Mean	1.56
Variance	0.25
Standard Deviation	0.50
Total Responses	108

15. Do you have any comments regarding orientation at SMSU?

Text Response
it was helpful, this is where I was able to get help to petition for equivalent credit, and to review my DARS
None
There should be lunch included for the transfer student orientation.
very helpful
I had no idea this service was offered.
I don't believe I attended a transfer orientation?
Did not attend. I am an older non-trad plus I work here, so I did not feel it was necessary.
no tour was even given and I was never given an advisor so at the end of orientation we were told to register for our classes and I had no idea what I was supposed to do or classes I needed to choose.
No - I'm an online student so there wasn't any.
SMSU has an excellent orientation process.
Did not attend
More Advisers during session and give opportunities for transfer students to talk one on one with advisers .
None
Very helpful!
It was nice having cookies and water. I liked getting to meet a faculty member from my major at the end who helped me with registration.
I already knew most of what they said, but it was nice to get my feet wet.
No
It made the transitioning smooth.

Orientation was a HUGE HUGE disappointment both me and another transfer student felt VERY unwelcome. It was like the school said "now that we have you and your money here we are going to ignore you, because you aren't a traditional on-campus living student". We attended 2 meetings the one with disability services and the one for students living off-campus. Both were a disasters. the disability services meeting Pam was 20-35 minutes late, making Dawna (who has no training in this area) to start the meeting and then continued to address us as if all in the room were freshmen even after being informed that we weren't (I thought this was a one off, but this was the thread that ran through everything we saw and heard. and it did spot that wk. it was a problem all last semester. every speaker that came to the intro classes to speak addressed us as if this is our first rodeo when there was a few jrs in the room), and the web site said the time that the meeting started was wrong, making some that wanted to be there come in as we were leaving. As for the meeting for student that live off-campus, this was the last thing we both attended mainly on how we were treated. We were about 5 minutes late (do to not know the town yet) when we arrived we were not addressed with a greeting or caught up on what was going on. but the two girls that were speaking thought that it was very important to tell us how much they loved this school and that they accomplished this, that or the other, this made them come across as smart as a Beverly Hills surfer girl "Like really". None of us cared about half of what came out of their collective mouths. Then we were asked who were freshman and the passports were handed out to only these select few. by this point my friend and i were getting rather mad, then we asked if everyone got one if this is their first year at smsu, and we were told "no only those that are freshman and its their first year" then we explained that we are new to the school, this is our first year but we were transferring in as juniors. we got a " well I guess that you could have one if you want" this was done in a high school popular kid talking to a not popular kid way, (rather condescending and making it sound less exciting and important then before because we were going to be allowed to have one too). Afterwards we went and talk to them because now we were so mad that our faces have turned pink. so instead of taking the time to get to know the school and students we stayed home and organized our apts and settled out dependents and wondered if all the stress and headache to get into this school, to get the classes that were needed and to move so far away from friends and family that were our much needed support system was worth it. I for one have done a wait and see option, i was accepted to several schools. This school defiantly has some major issues: 1) The handicapped accessible door between BA and CH is often locked or the button isn't working, I have literally had to slam my hand into it to make it work. 2) The bathrooms for the handclapped in BA have shower curtains instead of walls and some of the rings are missing so there are gaps, and the ones in FA have no buttons for access and to make things even easier they have 2 doors opening in opposite directions. I think that the head people of this school should have a week where they have to use a wheel chair for everything, even if they go off campus. They also must follow the guidelines that a wheelchair bound person must follow. Such as having security walk them outside to and from things like the dorms. 3) One of the BIG ones is the school's student senate is close door. They have no power. This is not ok. The meetings should be held during the day so more students can come to the meetings. The meetings should be open door with the policy of "if you want to know what your fees are being used for or have a say on what they are used for you need to come to the meeting and learn" this is how my other school did it and we all loved it. The clubs were required to send one representative to the meeting and they could announce fundraisers or events that they were hosting; this brings more people to the event. I would like to think that this is helping this small tech schools retention rate, which I have found out after making the move is a rather big problem here at SMSU). We also strictly followed robs rules, none of this not caring "ya, whatever" crap, my last school also did not pay any of their senators or board members, they did however pay for them (or a portion of them) to go to the senate conferences. I was very very active in the senate to the point were not only did my club receive club of the year two years running, but also I was voted by me peers as senator of the year two years running. I hope this helps. and that changes are made.

I wish they would give a tour of the school at the orientation. I went to a summer orientation before fall semester, and I did not receive a tour. When I got to campus, I was lost and frustrated that I didnt know where anything was. I have been here now for a year and a half, and I just found out the student center is not just for students living on campus. I'm glad I found out now, but wished I would have known before now.

It was long. But there were plenty of people there to answer questions.

I didn't know Transfer Orientation existed.

I was not notified about one.

It was a bummer I couldn't get into some classes as a junior that were full at the time of registration, but everything still worked out for me to graduate on time.

no

no

Nope, never attended one.	
No comments regarding orientation.	
Nope	
I thought it was a nice brief tour with other information to help us prepare for the upcoming education at SMSU to include early acquirement of SMSU ID's	
It was very helpful.	
Nope, don't remember much of it	
Useless.	
No	
My orientation Adviser came to me to a local college that was great.	
I think it is great that the BSN classes require some days on campus. Laurie gave us a tour, and we were able to get our Mustang ID cards, so it was really great.	
No.	
NA	
no	
None.	
Short and sweet	
None	
None.	
Exercise Science Advisors were very helpful and fun to work with. They took the stress out of registering for the right classes and demonstrated great patience working with so many new students like myself.	
It was helpful and eased me into a larger school.	
No.	
staff did a good job	
Statistic	Value
Total Responses	48

16. Please list any additional comments you have about your transfer experience or transfer process into SMSU:

Text Response
If you are told one thing about the program when applying then it should be upheld by the department. Honestly I am very unimpressed by the program.
Nothing further to add.
The transfer process went smoothly and efficiently.
It went better than expected. It was easy and no issues happened. I was pointed to the right people for any questions or concerns I had.
All in all I have been happy with SMSU as a school. I simply feel the transfer experience was too convoluted to be helpful, and I have wasted a lot of time and energy due to lack of good information. It doesn't matter if good information is available if you don't know how to get it. MN state needs to think about how accessible and easy to process their information is -- because in my personal experience the information is very good but very hard to find (which, in essence, makes it bad information).
I feel that there has been a lot of disorganization dealing with my schedule even after I had transferred all of my credits.
it was difficult and very frustrating.
It went well!
I have enjoyed SMSU. I am so happy I picked this school.
WELCOME your transfer students more during welcome week in Aug/Sep. I went to the first session and was told I could not participate in the games/drawings because I was not a freshmen. I ended up getting none of my questions answered and felt very unwelcome by the school.
I had a hard time seeking advice and i had to do the transfer completely on my own.
It went smoothly once I knew what to do.
It was fairly stress free and I really appreciate that. Gus the guy who helped me in the beginning was really helpful. He registered me right away and I was accepted that day. He even helped me set up a day to go to orientation.
The transfer experience went well compared to other state universities. This institution makes sure the student is prepared and equipped with the correct information.
I am considered a transfer student but also a non traditional student. There should be special orientations for non trads. Not only do we have new material to learn but we have to learn how to be students all over again using technology that some of us have not been exposed to. I felt lost my first few weeks because I did not know how to utilize D2L Brightspace. Training simulations would be helpful in this. Orientation in a group of other non trads would be helpful.
Make sure you look at the courses of the school you are transferring to prior to registering for courses at first school .
Transfer was stressfull. Little communication from the school on what i needed to do. Upon arrival, my dorm room was very dirty, food isn't good. i love the school
The transfer scholarship that includes \$200 towards on-campus living needs to specify that this does not apply to the FRA apartments. I sort of chose to live there thinking I'd get the \$200 each semester, but found out later than they aren't classified as "on-campus". I also wish bigger scholarships were available for academics like there are for freshman. Overall, I think SMSU does a nice job with transfer students.
no
Not counting one of my gen eds transferring, the processes was not too bad. It sucked that I had to fill out a petition for a course and another separate one for the lab for so many of my science classes but o well, it's over now.

My advisor helped some, but what she instructed me to do one semester then changed the next semester when I asked about it and said not to do it. When I noticed a discrepancy on my degree audit report and questioned my advisor on it, she told me I hadn't filled out the paperwork she told me to not fill out. Luckily I had done it anyways going with what she had told me my first semester, and it ended up being an error between the financial aid office and the registrars office. She also didn't advise me that I needed to take 2 accounting classes within the same semester to make sure I have my pre-requisites done for a class I can't take until my last semester. Now I have to petition the teacher for that class in the fall because I wasn't advised this by my advisor.

I thought over all it was easy with little travel. Would like to know better what some of my credits transferred in as instead of a general transfer in without a course/class transfer like on my DARS report.

It was an easy transfer process, that exceeded my expectations. I thought i would lose a lot of credits, but since my whole degree transferred, it saved me a year of school

SMSU was the worst choice for me. Your faculty treats its students like idiots. The administration in the city of Marshall thinks SMSU is a joke. Your faculty is biased when it comes to its education. I could go on and on. Basically, I have wasted my time, and should have stayed at my community college.

I have been to several high level educational institutions. SMSU, like all I've attended before, have barriers which exist and are maintained. I sometimes think they are put up as a way of proving which students are most interested in school. It's like enemy flack in an air raid. If you want to reach the target you'll have to prove it by pushing through the ack-ack. I will push to the end.

It would be nice to have more meetings with other transfer students in order to foster relationships

The online application was not geared for a transfer student, which made it a bit confusing, but still manageable.

I will need more assistance in the future to see which requirements have been fulfilled from my previous degree.

Good transfer. I wish there was a schedule for me to have for my next 3 years of school so I am sure I will be done when I am supposed to be. They do not offer anything as such.

The process was simple. My advisors at both campuses were helpful. Financial Aid is smooth with the consortium agreement process. I have no complaints.

I do not feel transfer students are welcomed as much as the incoming class. We are kind of forgotten about. It sucks that we have to take the LEP 100 courses, just because we didn't have that at our school and I'm a junior taking that course with freshman. I have completed most of the material they teach the student in this class. It is for starting college students, transfer students are not starting college students

I recommend the center outlines which classes are an individual would not need to take in their academic plan, was not told & enrolled in a class for a month before i realized it & wasted a 3 unit class when i could have been taking another one.

As a non traditional student transferring, I feel like I didn't get the explanations I needed because I didn't know there was any orientation to attend. I do, however, like SMSU better than my last school.

I've been to two different high schools, attended junior college, and attempted going to a large university all from the other side of the country before I ended up at SMSU. I have never had a better experience transitioning to a new school and community than when I arrived here at SMSU. This experience has shaped me to become a great person and has provided me with tools that will allow me to achieve the goals and aspirations that I have for the future. I can't begin to express how proud I am to be a part of the mustang tradition here at SMSU and I will always cherish the time I spent here. I owe this school and all its faculty a great deal of thanks for their patience, guidance, and dedication to teaching.

It went smoothly

please make scholarships available to 1st year transfers and not just to students who went to community college for 2 years then transfer

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	40