

**African-American Male First-Time Freshmen
Focus Groups, COMBINED Summer and Fall, 2009**

Challenge to Fulfillment of 5 Criteria	Knowledge/Action Needed to Navigate	What Can RSU do?
Mission lacks national inclusion		Add language to indicate a national mission
Weak advisement for military student needs, especially credit transfer for prior learning	Military has associates degrees that are not recognized by HLC	Consider veteran students to advise other veteran students
Advising for developmental students unrealistic - over-scheduled, overwhelming	Developmental students get overwhelmed, drop out	Don't allow developmental students to take more than 13 hours Spread out heavy academic courses to balance workload
Certifying rosters too early	Doesn't give an accurate reflection of students' attendance Creates hassles for registrar and faculty	Allow more time for roster verification for night classes and seminars - allow at least two weeks for evening classes, give faculty another reporting option
Lack of RSU presence at local high school recruiting events - no financial aid assistance	Know that faculty and staff with high school students are reporting that their teenagers aren't seeing RSU recruiting at their events, but they do so NSU, TCC, and other competitors	Have college reps and financial aid information at high school parent-teacher nights at an RSU table
Lack of advertising (visibility)		Advertise! Billboards, radio-TV, social media Use search engine optimization - show RSU on side bar

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Excessive focus on athletics	Drains resources from academics Takes time away from academics Some athletes don't have realistic expectations about academic rigor For some, perception of athletics relates to the quality of the school	
Online courses not always available when needed - course rotation is out of alignment	Students perceive a difference in quality in online courses in math and business	Develop a two-year online course schedule and post it on the website
Insufficient mobile support - e.g. for phones, ipads, tablets		Enhance ACS and Help Desk
Students with single digit ACTs are being accepted and promised a degree	RSU is taking their money and setting them up for failure	Set an ACT floor
Too many students don't have books by the end of the first week of class, often because of financial aid late disbursement	Know that VA or Cherokee Promise is sometimes the reason for late aid availability	Find a way to cover book costs until financial aid arrives Engage community service (e.g. veterans' associations and others) to help support students
Students filing FAFSA late, financial aid not in place	Know that students may not be able to afford groceries or rent without financial aid	Consider a webpage dedicated to FAFSA issues and disaggregated by traditional V. non-traditional student needs.
Lack of financial aid advisement for first time and concurrent students	Talking with families is more important than daytime college reps	Holding financial aid workshop like TCC

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Adjunct faculty receive differential/disparate treatment: not invited to Convocation Can't participate in Faculty Senate Not invited to department meetings Not included in things that affect them on an everyday basis	Easy to forget adjuncts Adjuncts not treated like/valued as FT faculty are Inclusion is time/location specific Administration and faculty are both guilty of exclusion Title of adjunct teaching award seems segregationist	Send special invitations just for adjuncts Send invitations that specify "adjuncts encouraged to attend" Have conferences for adjuncts Send thank you notes to recognize years of service
Lack of support for conference attendance or research - barred from applying for Organized Research grants	OU gives adjuncts money for conferences	Open Organized Research internal grant funding to adjunct faculty.
Lack of support for higher ed in state	Know this is pervasive	Naviage carefully
Adjunct pay not competitive	Know that TCC pays \$758 per semester credit hour	Find a way to pay RSU adjuncts a competitive wage
Foundation lacks outreach to all faculty	No that some faculty are barely making it financially	Create and communicate a Foundation account to aid faculty in need

What Works?
Veterans
Early Alert system is well intentioned
RSU reps at high schools

What Works?
Athletics tutoring
Online courses
Availability of financial aid to finance education

What Works?
Dedicated adjuncts! Developmental studies workgroup Thank you notes recognizing years of service
Quality Matters program! High quality nursing program; RSU students recognized as well-prepared, get jobs easily; Communications broadcasting program; Graphic Arts program, BALA program, Counseling support for students