Trends Identified in the Fall 2008 Academic and Student Services Program Reviews

1. Underprepared and underrepresented student populations continue to be less successful academically.
This year as last year the strongest factor identified as affecting student enrollment, retention, and success was the availability and student awareness of support services and academic interventions.¹

2. Students continue to have difficulty efficiently progressing towards their academic goals.
The second most frequent factor listed as affecting student access and retention was the need to better schedule classes to meet students’ needs, including evenings, weekends, distance education, block schedules, condensed courses and sequential classes.²

3. Enrollments in many programs declined or failed to grow. Retention in some areas is significantly low.
The third strongest need was for an increased institutional focus on outreach, recruitment, and marketing for attracting and maintaining students. Basic skills and other student services programs also noted that effective retention strategies such as mandatory orientation, early alert for at-risk students and financial aid would positively affect enrollments.³

4. Decline in the number of full-time faculty has led to inconsistency in course offerings, program operation and curriculum development.
The fourth strongest need was for full time faculty because of the negative effect on retention, success and enrollment when faculty are not available on campus. The availability and experience of faculty was cited as the second highest factor affecting student success.⁴

¹ Trend 1 was mentioned in 26 out of 34 programs. 14 programs stated a need for more tutoring; 12 programs listed a need for additional counseling; 8 programs described the positive results from learning communities, mentors and noncredit review courses.

² Trend 2 was mentioned in 22 out of 34 programs. In addition 8 programs noted a decline in enrollment because foundation or degree courses had not been offered.

³ Trend 3 was identified by 19 out of 34 programs. This was the fourth highest factor listed in last years trends.

⁴ Trend 4 was emphasized by 18 out of 34 programs. Last year 9 programs mentioned this trend.