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IN THE  
FAMILY TREE  
TO RECEIVE A  
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DEGREE

DZ

**GRADUATION INITIATIVE  
SYMPOSIUM  
ENGAGEMENT GUIDE**

20  
25

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# WELCOME TO THE CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY GRADUATION INITIATIVE 2025 SYMPOSIUM LIVESTREAM EXPERIENCE!

## **We invite you to use the guide to**

- preview the topics to be discussed in the sessions
- promote discussion during your viewing party
- facilitate personal reflection and to capture your thoughts about the presentations
- brainstorm and outline your team's plans to improve student success
- expand your knowledge on student success topics using the additional resources in this guide
- encourage thinking about small changes you personally can make to work toward increasing college completion and eliminating equity gaps within the larger context of your campus and the system

To view the agenda, visit the Graduation Initiative 2025 Symposium at [calstate.edu/GraduationInitiative](https://calstate.edu/GraduationInitiative)

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## **SEE YOU ONLINE!**

Join the conversation from anywhere using **#GradInitiative2025**

### **Tweet, post, caption or go live to share**

- best practices that support academic success
- your thoughts on Graduation Initiative 2025
- how you influence student success everyday
- with higher ed professionals and thought leaders from across the nation

# WHY LEADING MEANINGFUL CHANGE REQUIRES EXTRAORDINARY COURAGE

**Michael Sorrell** | President, Paul Quinn College

1. What characteristics of a strong leader are most likely to drive campuswide change?
  2. Describe some of the common barriers that hinder campuswide transformation and how they can be addressed.
  3. What new ideas might modernize the services and opportunities your institution provides to students?
  4. In what ways can leaders at every level of the institution make important changes?
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## Looking for more?

Implementing institutional change requires campuswide collaboration. Exemplary leadership cultivates a genuine effort from faculty and staff to propel the campus toward excellence. Servant leadership, entrepreneurship and academic rigor are foundational principles that drive campus innovation to improve student success.

[“Teaching the Ivory Tower New Tricks,”](#) by Eric Cortellessa

[“Effective Leadership at Minority-Serving Institutions: Exploring Opportunities and Challenges for Leadership,”](#) by Robert T. Palmer, Dina C. Maramba, Andrew T. Arroyo, Taryn Ozuna Allen, Tiffany Fountaine Boykin and John Michael Lee Jr.

[“Phoenix Rising: HBCU Leadership During a Period of Change,”](#) by Larry J. Walker

# GRAD TALKS

**Alexandra Bernadotte** | Founder and CEO, Beyond 12

**Doug Lederman** | Co-Founder and Editor, Inside Higher Ed

**Michelle R. Weise** | Senior Vice President, Workforce Strategies and Chief Innovation Officer, Strada Education Network

**Moderator: Gayle Hutchinson** | President, California State University, Chico

1. How is the CSU educating students for the future economy that includes robotics, artificial intelligence and automated processes across multiple fields such as medicine, commerce, transportation and sales?
2. What is the missing link to closing the equity gap for earning a bachelor's degree?
3. As students enroll across higher education sectors, institutions and in more online coursework, how are universities being entrepreneurial to fit the evolving student experience?
4. In what ways has your campus transitioned from faculty-centered to student-centered as it receives a new generation of students?
5. How has your institution moved from ensuring students are "college-ready" to ensuring your campus is student-ready?
6. What kinds of campus-community partnerships can address the "leaky education pipeline" as students transition into a career informed by their program of study?

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## Looking for more?

Campuses can meet their Graduation Initiative 2025 goals by thinking innovatively, adapting to change and preparing students for a different tomorrow. Check out the Grad Talks speakers' websites and media coverage to learn more about their projects and programs as they relate to student success.

["Challenges for Regional Publics: A Survey of Business Officers,"](#) by Doug Lederman

["From College to Life: Relevance and the Value of Higher Education,"](#) by Strada Education Network and Gallup Inc.

["Alex Bernadotte Guides College Freshmen Through Overwhelming Challenges,"](#) by Jill Tucker

# “ALEXA. HOW WILL ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE TRANSFORM HIGHER EDUCATION EDUCATION?”

**Yakut Gazi** | Associate Dean, Learning Systems, Georgia Institute of Technology

1. How can artificial intelligence assist areas of your work that could benefit from innovation? In what ways will the benefits outweigh the risks?
  2. If artificial intelligence can provide a personalized student experience, will student engagement and retention increase? Why or why not?
  3. How will students' on-campus experiences change as higher education uses more advanced technology to serve them?
  4. How can universities accelerate incorporating technology in daily practices?
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## Looking for more?

Artificial intelligence can dramatically change the way institutions serve students. As campuses work to achieve their Graduation Initiative 2025 goals, technology may be able to streamline tasks to allow for more meaningful interactions with students. There is a need to understand the research behind best practices as artificial intelligence becomes more integrated in higher education.

[“Artificial Intelligence and Higher Education,”](#) by Marguerite J. Dennis

[“Hey, Alexa, Should We Bring Virtual Assistants to Campus? These Colleges Gave Them a Shot,”](#) by Lindsay Ellis

[“Under the Hood: Learning Design Behind Georgia Tech’s Degrees at Scale,”](#) by Shabana Figueroa and Yakut Gazi

[“Affordable and At-Scale,”](#) by Ray Schroeder

# USING PROCESS MAPPING TO UNDERSTAND THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Alex Aljets | University Innovation Alliance Fellow, Oregon State University

1. How would you use the results of your process mapping to positively influence decisions affecting the student experience?
  2. If your team were to engage in process mapping, what one aspect of your work would likely be discontinued?
  3. How can you apply process mapping to your everyday work to increase your personal effectiveness?
  4. To what extent could a process map and the steps outlined below improve interdepartmental workflow and collaboration with cross-functional teams?
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## Looking for more?

Alex Aljets suggest that you begin process mapping by organizing your efforts into six simple steps:

1. Work with relevant stakeholders and identify a specific, concrete process.
2. Choose and populate the graphic you are using as your map.
3. Assess current processes.
4. Identify any issues, including steps in the process that can be removed.
5. Redesign the process with an eye toward improvement, not perfection.
6. Repeat steps 3-5 until the process best serves your student populations.

Use the resources below to learn how to use different process maps to understand and improve the student experience at your institution.

[“Three Insider Tips for Effective Process Mapping in Higher Ed,”](#) by Alex Aljets

[“Using Process Mapping to Redesign the Student Experience,”](#) by Bridget Burns & Alex Aljets

# STUDENT SUCCESS. IN THEIR OWN WORDS.

**Areline Naranjo** | California State University, Stanislaus

**Coral L. Olynyk** | California State University, Chico

**Danny Gancayco** | California State University, East Bay

**Kimberly Silverio-Bautista** | California State University, Northridge

**Zachary Smith** | California State University, San Bernardino

**Facilitator: Brandon Tsubaki** | Assistant Director of Student Engagement, Cal State Student Association

1. To what extent does your campus incorporate the student voice as it advances new initiatives?
  2. How does increasing the participation of students in leadership positions address policies that may differentially affect students from diverse backgrounds?
  3. In what ways can administrators deepen relationships with students to create practices that improve student success?
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## Looking for more?

As the CSU continues to improve the student experience in and out of the classroom to reach Graduation Initiative 2025 goals, campus and system leaders may benefit from considering the student perspective. Lindsey Templeton, Andy MacCracken and Amy Smith created a rubric with four core metrics of the student voice in higher education.

- To what extent do students have **access** to meetings with the governing board and institutional leaders?
- What is the **role** of a designated student leader in decision-making settings?
- How do student leaders experience **empowerment** and the institution's investment in student leaders' abilities?
- What is the **influence** students believe they have in campus decision-making?

["A Study of Student Voice in Higher Education,"](#) by Lindsey Templeton, Andy MacCracken and Amy Smith

The National Student Leadership Council has created the [Student Voice Index](#), designed to capture the current landscape of how student voices are used and to support student input within the context of shared governance in higher education.

# USING THE BCSSE SURVEY TO GENERATE TARGETED SUPPORT AND INTERVENTIONS FOR FIRST-YEAR STUDENTS

**Tom Miller** | Executive Advisor and Associate Professor of Education,  
University of South Florida

**Michelle Bombaugh** | First-Year Retention, Office of Academic Advising Initiatives,  
University of South Florida

1. Which first-year or transfer programs should your campus enhance or remove based on BCSSE data?
2. If BCSSE data reveal inequitable programming, what steps would you take to address the deficiencies?
3. How do you envision BCSSE data complementing other student data your campus collects?
4. What types of interdepartmental collaboration are needed for your campus to use BCSSE data to transform the student onboarding process?

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## Looking for more?

The Beginning College Survey of Student Engagement (BCSSE) and a complementary survey, the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), have been used to understand students' transition to college. To further the use of data in making decisions, particularly about first-time students, the Office of the Chancellor supported 16 CSU campuses as they administered the BCSSE in summer 2019. The BCSSE has been used to understand student behaviors in high school and college settings, how students arrive at college ready to engage and their expectations. Additionally, several studies have validated the use of the BCSSE in higher education research.

["Confirmatory Factor Analysis of the BCSSE Scales,"](#) by James Cole and Yiran Dong

["Accuracy of Self-Reported SAT and ACT Test Scores: Implications for Research,"](#) by James S. Cole and Robert M. Gonyea

["Community Service During the First Year of College: What Is the Role of Past Behavior?"](#)  
by Ty M. Cruce and John V. Moore III

["Behavior-Based Student Typology: A View From Student Transition From High School to College,"](#) by Lanlan Mu and James Cole



# IT TAKES A VILLAGE: ASSESSING CAMPUSWIDE ADVISING

**Sherri Watson** | Student Engagement & Enrollment Services, Old Dominion University  
**Ann Werbach** | InsideTrack

1. When you think about how advising on your campus could be improved, do the biggest changes need to occur with people, structures or the existing culture?
  2. How might an assessment inform the way campus leadership engages with academic advisors as collaborative decision-makers?
  3. How would a campuswide assessment increase collaboration and communication between professional and faculty advisors?
  4. How do you envision an advising assessment leading to a culture shift across your institution?
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## Looking for more?

The Office of the Chancellor has prioritized academic advising as key to achieving Graduation Initiative 2025 goals. Intentional student-advisor interactions, strategic advising structures and clear pathways to graduation will improve student outcomes. As with other programs and practices, advising should be assessed periodically to identify emerging best practices and address persistent challenges.

[“Appreciative Assessment in Academic Advising,”](#) by Ye He and Bryant Hutson

[“Assessing the Impact of Academic Advising: Current Issues and Future Trends,”](#) by Kathy Megyesi Zarges, Tomarra A. Adams, Elizabeth M. Higgins and Ned Muhovich

[“Steps in Developing an Assessment Plan for Academic Advising,”](#) by Charlie Nutt, Rich Robbins, Sharon Aiken-Wisniewski and Karen Boston

[“Academic Advising Assessment Practices: Results of a National Study,”](#) by Keith L. Powers, Aaron H. Carlstrom and Kenneth F. Hughey





