

Dear Fellow Faculty Member,

The Student Success Team (SST)\*, with support of the Provost, recommends the implementation of undergraduate academic maps at CCSU. It takes about 30-60 minutes to complete and submit an academic map, with the end result being an invaluable tool for faculty to use during advising, for CCSU students to use in academic planning, and for non-CCSU students to use prior to transferring into a program here at CCSU.

Several universities have increased both graduation and retention rates by instituting academic maps across campus. These simple sheets provide students with a map for completing a specific degree program in four years. Academic maps provide a useful starting point for advising students and help students make better decisions about course selection, course loads, etc. We are beginning this initiative by focusing on baccalaureate programs and presenting a realistic approach to completion within four years. The use of four-year academic maps has notably increased four-year and overall graduation and retention rates at a number of institutions. (If you would like to see one university's academic map program, go to <http://www.academic-guide.fsu.edu/> and click on the Map links.)

The six-year graduation rate for CCSU students will break the 50% mark for the first time this year. While this is a cause for celebration, there is still much work to be done. Nationally, 50% of all students at public master's institution require over five years to complete their degree. CCSU's four-year graduation rate is currently 21%, or about one student out of every five. There are numerous reasons for this low rate, and many are outside our control. However, there are some factors that can delay graduation we might be able to address. For example, some students do not complete their baccalaureate within four years because they failed to register for a necessary course that has an irregular cycle or because they did not seek out their advisor to make a feasible academic plan. No matter what the reason, the end result is the same, namely a delay in graduation.

We hope that your department will have the undergraduate academic maps available for use during pre-registration for spring 2013. Our goal is for departments to upload the information by October 19 and sign-off on final revisions by November 21. The academic maps will be made publicly available by the beginning of spring 2013.

We thank you for your support in this endeavor as we strive to improve the success of our students and to help undergraduate students in your program(s) see the possibility of earning a degree in four years.

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Sincerely,

Yvonne Kirby, Student Success Team  
Jim Mulrooney, Faculty Senate President  
Eric Bergenn, Student Government Association President  
Carl Lovitt, Provost

\* The SST (Student Success Team) is comprised of faculty, staff and students from across campus, charged with increasing retention and graduation rates