

FHSU welcomes transfer students into success

This year, as in the recent past, we will serve over 930 new college freshmen, and we will also welcome more than 5,300 transfer students – 2,900 from Kansas and other states and another 2,400 from our international partners. Over the past 10 years, our top transfer community colleges, in order, are Barton, Hutchinson, Garden City, Butler, Colby, and Dodge City. Our transfer students are a very diverse group, representing both traditionally-aged, adult, international and military students. The military students include active duty service members, veterans, spouses and dependents.

The working adult is becoming more of the norm in higher education. In fact, almost one-third of our students are over the age of 25. This is why we were thrilled to be recognized for the last two consecutive years as a top-10 national ranking (No. 4 this year) by Washington Monthly in the category of the “Best Four-Year Colleges for Adult Learners.” This change in the profile of the typical college student presents new opportunities and challenges for Fort Hays State as we look to shape how we serve these students.

There are so many cutting edge and meaningful ways we can evolve our offerings to better serve military students. Perhaps you read about our new Associate of Applied Science degree in technology and leadership, which transfers up to 36 credits for military training and experience. We also provide unofficial transcript evaluations for prospective military transfer students. The university also hosts the Student Veterans Association support group that recently established a new scholarship for military and veteran students. We are proud of the progress we’ve made in this area, and we are committed to continuing to explore new program and credit options for prior learning for service members and veterans.

Fort Hays State has also partnered with Barton Community College to launch a pilot for the new Transfer Connect program, which focuses on creating a seamless student transitions from the community college to FHSU. Transfer Connect aims to increase student success by offering specialized services through a partnership between the community college academic advisor and a dedicated FHSU Transfer Success Coach. The intent is to increase students’ satisfaction, retention, and completion while at Barton and then at FHSU once they transfer. We are looking at ways to expand this program to other partners.

On campus, we offer a unique opportunity for transfer students to live together in Tiger Village along with the Greek social fraternities Delta Zeta, Sigma Sigma Sigma, and Sigma Phi Epsilon. Students who choose the Transfer Network learning community will have a unique opportunity to live together and build a network with new Tigers who have already experienced college life at another institution.

This is just a small sampling of the transfer student success initiatives we have in place or in the works. We maintain a relentless focus on student success so that students like Cassandra Anderson feel good about their decision to continue their education at FHSU.

Cassandra, who transferred from North Central Kansas Technical College, Beloit, describes her transfer experience: “Transferring from a vo-tech to a university has been super easy and smooth because I was not the only person who was transferring. Fort Hays made the experience very worthwhile and helped me not worry about my classes being transferred. I love how close-knit FHSU is. They understand my worries and seem to almost make them their own. It just feels like home and like I belong.”

The typical life experiences and the needs and expectations of the contemporary college student will continue to evolve. At Fort Hays State, we are already thinking ahead and putting programs in place that

will allow us to remain a national leader in creating innovative access and success programs for adult learners.