<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Subculture</th>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Advising Strategies/Techniques</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Freshmen/First Year Students | • Stages of assimilation important  
• Must meet new expectations of peers and faculty  
• Academic integration influences development of academic skills  
• Social distractions influence academic success  
• May have negative reactions (irrelevancy, not prepared, uncertainty about majors, careers, incompatibility) | • Consider students as individuals adjusting to a new environment  
• Be familiar with the stages of assimilation (See Chickering’s Developmental Vectors)  
• Establish a supportive relationship early  
• Be attentive to fit between student and college  
• Emphasize strategies for academic success  
• Schedule regular contact first, then increase student’s responsibility for self |
| Undecided/Undeclared        | • Heterogeneous population (like other subcultures)  
• Many lack sense of identity  
• More common among incoming first years  
• Students can still be “undecided” even if they have already declared a major  
• Anxious about being undecided  
• Some need information only to decide on a major  
• Some need help with making decisions | • Encourage doing self-assessment and discovery activities related to interests, values and goals (Career Development Centers)  
• Reinforce that being undecided is acceptable  
• Maintain a positive attitude concerning change  
• Identify decision making strategies and techniques  
• Encourage responsibility to/for decisions |
| Transfer Students           | • Some transition processes unlike that for freshmen  
• Some feel as if they already know what they are doing because they’ve already been to college  
• Rely heavily on advisors help with credit transfers  
• Many have specific academic and career goals  
• Some have lower levels of attainment  
• Some miss the personal attention of community colleges  
• Need to understand practical aspects of college | • View advising relationships as key to success  
• Display concern and interest not just availability  
• Orient students to college as well as advise them  
• Collaborate with sending or receiving institution  
• Analyze transfer credentials promptly  
• Help students find resources they need to achieve academic success |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adult Learners</th>
<th>Ethnic Minorities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • Most have been away from formal education  
  • Most work full or part time  
  • Many take night classes  
  • Education is usually not a primary concern  
  • Less involved with college life than traditional students  
  • Most manage multiple life roles  
  • Bring life experience to the classroom  
  • Want to expedite the academic process  
  • Lack of time | • View as developing individuals  
  • Understand adult stages of transition  
  • Understand students’ reasons for enrolling  
  • Assist in forming campus connections  
  • Encourage academic planning  
  • Act as an advocate to provide equity |
| • Declining percentage of African Americans and Hispanics enrolling  
  • Usually going to school for a better life  
  • Tend to stick together because they need the space and opportunity to be themselves  
  • Often have low self-concept, few positive expectations  
  • Performance related to satisfaction  
  • Achievement is most related to preparation and support not race  
  • Lack of role models on campus  
  • Common myths: they are all underprepared, EOP students, and first generation (very situational) | • Extra effort to enhance college and student fit  
  • Encourage involvement in college life  
  • Assist in utilizing campus resources  
  • Encourage positive self-concept  
  • Avoid stereotypical attitudes and expectations  
  • Suggest academic experiences leading to early success  
  • Acknowledge the importance of role models  
  • Self reflect on your own biases to remain open minded  
  • Remember social justice; Make sure programs do not just focus on specific races or ethnicities; include them all!  
  • Utilize multicultural center if you have one!  
  • Need cross collaboration so programs are not always geared towards minority students but welcome everyone  
  **Diversity is a number; Multiculturalism is getting to know each other and other cultures; Social justice is seeing who is missing and inviting them to join** |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Academically Under-prepared | • Increasing participation in college  
• Often dependent learners with low self concept  
• Many deficiencies in basic skills  
• Need to experience academic success  
• Hesitant to seek needed support services |
|                        | • Establish a trusting advising relationship  
• Begin with intrusive (assertive) advising techniques  
• Examine the purpose of college early in the relationship  
• Emphasize the importance of resources on campus that can assist them in their academics  
• Encourage development of basic skills first and the related use of academic support services  
• Reinforce need to utilize intervention programs |
| Students with Disabilities | • Increasing participation in college  
• One or more major life activities limited  
• May need accommodations or other support services  
• Prefer to see themselves as able rather than disabled  
• Expressed need for removal of barriers to full participation  
• Need support from peers and others |
|                        | • Understand students’ abilities and barriers they face  
• Advisors need to be aware of the students they serve  
• Advisors need to see people, not just the disability  
• Display positive attitudes about the integration of students into the college community  
• An advisor should be aware of adaptive technology on a campus  
• Encourage full participation in college  
• Encourage organizations and others to be open to student participation  
• Be an advocate in connecting with support services |
| Student Athletes        | • Some unprepared academically  
• Many have unrealistic career goals  
• Need to participate in academic support programs  
• Importance of academics often depends on Division type of athletics |
|                        | • Begin support services early  
• Be aware of the constraints of participation in athletes  
• Academic schedules need to be worked around practice and game schedules |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>International Students</th>
<th>Native American Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • Increasing numbers of traditional age  
  • Most from Third World Countries  
  • Academic and career concerns  
  • Need practical experience in career areas  
  • Concerned with language difficulties, financial problems and selecting relevant programs  
  • Non Western students see professors as revered authorities | • Many student entering college are leaving their tribal community for the first time  
  • Many students are not familiar with large cities  
  • Need sense of belonging  
  • Treat each student as a unique situation and do not over-generalize; different tribes have different customs  
  • Three factors that will hinder success for Native American students:  
    o Sociocultural-lack of identity, lack of accommodation to Native culture  
    o Academic-lack of preparation, lack or negative interaction with faculty and staff  
    o Personal-financial support, family situations, lack of confidence |
| • Establish academic support and intervention systems  
  • Teach problem solving and decision making skills  
  • Encourage academic commitment equal to athletic commitment | • Work with Native American student prior to their arrival on campus- sending information or instructions in advance, and inviting them into the office as soon as possible  
  • Role of faculty and staff in the Native American campus community has a positive outcome for Native American student retention  
  • Create sense of belonging by providing resources and comfortable locations on campus  
  • Help students with application process and financial aid process |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Generation Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • Parents and/or immediate family never attended college | • Encourage them to utilize support services and academic resources on campus  
| • Do not have knowledge of college experience like other students entering college | • Guide them to meet with financial aid counselors and academic advisors  
| • Parents and family cannot help student as much as students whose parents and family went to college | • Primary predictors of academic achievement and aspirations include parental involvement and the perceptions of the importance of good grades  
| • More likely to be ethnic minorities than non-first generation students | • Encourage institution to provide a summer bridge program for these students  
| • More likely to come from lower-income homes | • Assist them in finding a connection to the campus and find a social network that will provide support and acceptance  
| • Most have lower high school GPAs and lower standardized test scores |  
| • Twice as likely to leave a four year institution before the second year |  
| • More attend two year institutions than four year |  
|  
| Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning Students (LGBTQ) |  
| • Often self conscious of being “out” on campus (Depending on campus climate on the subculture) and will often conceal their sexual identities | • Encourage them to be involved with LGBT groups on campus or in the community  
| • Fear of what people are going to think of them | • Encourage them to seek support or services from Multicultural Center on campus  
| • Be aware of Stages and Models of Sexual Orientation Identity Development | • Create programs on campus to education faculty, students and staff on coming out process and issues facing LGBTQ students (Safe Zone)  
| • Depending on their stage of the coming out process, it can be very hard for them socially and personally on campus | • Understand and education yourself on the LGBTQ language and culture  
| • Students are often harassed in some form (physical attacks, written harassment and verbal harassment) |  

| Commuter Students | • Commute from a distance; Don’t live on campus  
• Work more than residential students  
• Many have more family obligations than residential students  
• Most have established their own social networks in their community instead of at the college/university  
• Many have lack of connectivity to the campus (however, more involvement leads to more connectivity)  
• Many will not return to campus for events or programs  
• Must find places to go during breaks in classes (most frequently the library or classroom)  
• Common myth: They do not want to get involved | • Provide programming and opportunities for involvement when they are there so they do not have to return  
• Have bridge programming (programs between when they would leave and come back; so they do not have to leave)  
• Do not treat them as you would a resident  
• Use technology to keep them in the loop (multiple types of technology so they receive the message more than once)  
• Create opportunities for them to ask questions through technology  
• Meet them where they are; (i.e. the library)  
• Tell them about services and resources (many believe they are just for resident students) |
| Veteran Students | • Use G.I. Bill and need assistance filing for financial aid  
• Need assistance filling out paperwork  
• Need support services to ease back into education  
• Some encounter post traumatic stress syndrome and other mental illnesses  
• Need counseling and health resources and services (mental health and physical health needs-common issue with veterans)  
• Sometime deployment can lead to interruption in education if education has already been started | • Encourage them to utilize support services and academic resources on campus  
• Encourage them to utilize counseling and health services on campus  
• Encourage them to seek out advising from the Financial Aid office to make sure their paperwork is in place before classes start  
• Encourage campus administrators to create support networks (Veteran Affairs or Veteran Administration offices) as well as support services specifically geared towards easing the transition from military to the classroom |
| Parent Students | • Students who have dependents they are responsible for  
• Situational; Have children, are guardians of family members, care for siblings, etc.  
• Resident parents (if family housing is available): Participate and get involved, have day classes and utilize daycare  
• Commuter parents: Usually take evening classes, less involved on campus  
• Can deal with custody issues or family court (Custody and family court issues can cause absences from class)  
• A child drives a parent student and motivates them to go to school and succeed (they do it for their children, not themselves)  
• Many work during the day and go to school at night  
• Age varies from traditional students to nontraditional students  
• May be single parents or have spouse to assist with care of the family | • Try to provide family friendly programming for parent students  
• Important for institutions to support this subculture by having family college residence programs  
• Professors need to be flexible and understanding (i.e. when a child is sick, the parent needs to care for the child)  
• Custody and family court issues can cause absences from class  
• Be flexible and create convenience |

Jamie Jueckstock, graduate student and  
Dr. Tim Gallineau, faculty, Independent Study Project (2009)  
Buffalo State College  
Student Personnel Administration Graduate Program