Capacity Café Breakout room discussions guide for Facilitators and Notetakers

(If hosting the event face-to-face, adjust the sections accordingly)

Directions for the Notetakers

* The notetakers should write down all the main points (rather than verbatim) and relevant comments made by the participants.
* Note which comments had strong agreement and/or were repeated with number of times among the participants.
* No names should be associated with the comments.
* At the conclusion of the café, send your notes either in electronic form or written form to [name of the designated individual at the university]. Be sure to note the number of the discussion round at the top of the page.
* All the comments from the notetakers will be summarised into one document for the university, with copies provided to all the participants in the Capacity Café and to the student success teams.

Directions for the Facilitators

* Begin by introducing yourself as the facilitator and then recognise the Notetaker—emphasising that the Notetaker will document the comments without names associated them.
* Make sure that everyone in the breakout room/table knows each other and each person’s respective role at the university (give special attention to any recent additions to the university and to those in different roles).
* Indicate that the goal is for a balanced discussion—everyone’s voice is valued, and everyone should have a chance to make comments. Basic rules apply:
  + Listen to each other, respect differing points of view, stay on topic, and be mindful of the time.
  + Remind participants that the discussion is not being recorded.
  + Encourage participants to engage in the group discussion verbally rather than using the chat box if hosted online. (Encourage use of sticky notes and other form of engagement tools)
* Restate the purpose of Capacity Café:
  + To reflect on where we are as a university, acknowledge strengths in supporting students
  + Be courageous in pointing out opportunities for the university to do a better job—especially with students are under-represented in the success stories.
  + Finally, with a clearer understanding of our strengths and opportunities to be better—what areas should the university focus on in the future, what should have priority, and what actions should the university take in the short term and in the long term?
* To kick off the discussion, start with discussion guide question #1.
* Use the discussion questions to initiate conversation. Focus on areas that are most helpful for your university.
* 2 minutes prior to the end of each breakout session, stop the discussion and allow the Notetaker to read back the main points in order to identify a single, relevant point to share with the entire group once you return to the main room.
* Once all groups have returned to the main room, be prepared to share each of the main points from your three discussions. This role may be assigned to the Notetaker or the Facilitator.