



**The Bridge Project**

SAMPLE

## COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENT FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

*Facilitator:* I am here to learn more about your views about transitioning between high school and college. Everything that you have to say here is confidential. I am audiotaping this discussion so that I don't have to take notes now and can give you my full attention. The tape will be destroyed after it is transcribed. No one besides the transcriber and I will have access to the tape.

It is very important that everyone feel comfortable to state their views, without being afraid that they will be judged. Let's please respect everyone's comments. At the end of this discussion, there will be a few minutes to answer questions; I will not provide answers for the questions that I ask you until then, because I don't want to influence your answers. Also, many of the questions that I am asking you have no right answers – I want to learn from you. This is your time to help researchers and educators understand how you felt about transitioning from high school to college. Finally, you do not need to respond to any of the questions if you do not want to, but I am very interested in what everyone has to say. Does anyone have any questions about the study or the surveys that you filled out?

Did everyone here go to high school in [your state]? Is anyone from out-of-state?

How was your transition from high school to college, academically?

- Did you feel prepared?
- Were there any surprises? [Probe: were you aware before you went to college that you would have to take placement exams? Did you feel prepared for the placement exams? Is there anything you would have done to prepare for the exams in high school if you had known about them then?]

Were there any other surprises about college – things you weren't prepared for (scheduling, advising, bureaucratic requirements, etc.)?

Do you think that you were prepared well, academically, for college?

- If not, what would you have done differently in high school?
- Is there information that you wish you had received in high school?
  - Prior to high school?

How did you learn about this college?

What are some of the reasons why you decided to attend this college?

Did any of you take any classes at this community college while you were in high school?

Did any of you complete high school at this community college?

At what point in high school (e.g., which grade -- 8, 9, 10, 11, 12?) did your counselors or teachers begin meeting with students to talk about college?

- Can you tell me about them? [Probe: What happens in these meetings? Did they start early enough gradewise? Is there information that you wish these meetings had provided you, but didn't?]

When do you think is a good time (grade level) to start preparing for college academically?

Who do you think decides where high school students end up go to college? [prompt: Students? Parent(s)? Counselor? Teacher? Someone else?]