"She doesn't even go here…or does she?":

How a peer mentor program benefits transfer students



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Presentation Overview

- Introduction: What is it like to be a transfer student?
- General Profile of Transfer Students
- Getting to Know How Your School Handles Transfer Students
- Outlining Existing Programs
- Why mentoring?
- How to Start A Transfer Student Mentoring Program
- Outcomes of Mentoring
- Question and Answer Session

What is it like to be a transfer student?

“No matter where students attended previously, the new institution will most likely have different policies, academic standards, faculty expectations, advising systems, peer groups, and even vocabulary, leaving the transfer students uninformed, uninvolved, and adrift if they are not addressed.”

(Grites and Farina, 2012, p. 1)

General Profile of Transfer Students

National Statistics

- Transfer students are a large percentage of the higher education population (CAS, p. 1).
- “The numbers of college students in the United States on a transfer track at a community college or as transfer students at a 4-year campus account for one-third of entering students” (NACAC, 2010).
- “Nearly 60 percent of college graduates in the U.S. have attended more than one college or university” (Adelman, 2009 as cited in CAS, p. 1).

These numbers emphasize the relevance of transfer student programs and the importance of facilitating transfer student success.

General Profile of Transfer Students (cont'd)

Who do we typically think of as Transfer students?

- often older
- more likely to work full time
- from lower socioeconomic backgrounds
- have significant family responsibilities or work responsibilities compared to native students

(Lester, Brown , & Mathias, 2013)

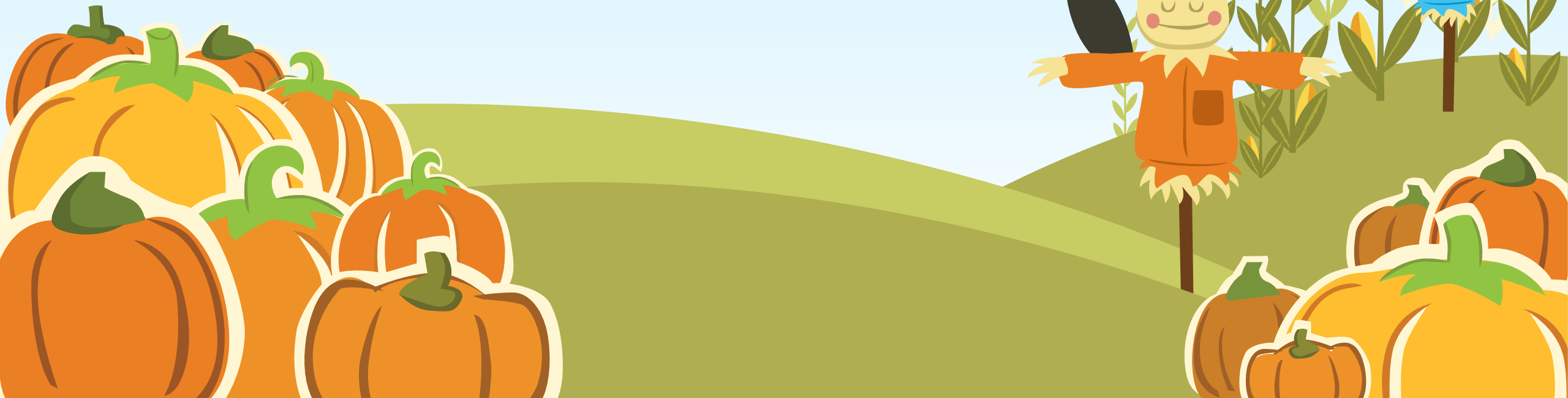
General Profile of Transfer Students (cont'd)

- The term "transfer" refers to various pathways
  1) Lateral---same type of institution (4 year to 4 year)
  2) Vertical-- 2 year to 4 year to complete Bachelor's degree
  3) Reverse--4 year to 2 year
- "Swirl"--students go between institutions and take courses from more than one school simultaneously or consecutively
- Among vertical transfer students, 44% attended two or more institutions (Lester, Brown , & Mathias, 2013)

Services should address all types of transfer students regardless of institutions of origin, credits, or educational goals

(CAS p. 1, 2)

Reflective Activity



Existing Programs

- NYU
- UVA
- SUNY--Oswego

Theoretical Foundation

- Schlossberg's Transition Theory
- Sanford's Theory of Challenge and Support
- 5 Senses Model by Lizzio
- Council of the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education—Transfer Student Programs and Services

Why Mentoring?

- Connects students to their campus
- Provides support through information, socialization, encouragement, and guidance
- Creates opportunities for collaborative learning and reflection

Several studies support the idea that the more students are involved academically and socially, the more successful they are in their transition and the better their student experience.

Objectives of a Mentor Program

- Help students feel connected to the campus community
- Inform students about campus resources and activities
- Provide social, career, and emotional support
- Encourage self-exploration and self-awareness
- Motivate students to achieve goals
- Build community

Overview: How to Start A Transfer Student Mentoring Program

- Structure of the program
- How to select mentors
- How to match mentors
- Outline mentor duties
- Learning Outcomes

Structure of the Program

- Ratio of students to mentors
- Duration (1 semester, 1 year, etc.)
- Marketing and Promotion
- Recruiting and Training (paid or volunteer, etc.)
- Tool and Resources (StrengthsQuest, Career Planning, etc.)
- Monthly Meetings with Program Coordinator
- Evaluation and Assessment

How to Select Mentors

- GPA Criteria
- Good academic and disciplinary standing
- Current transfer student and/or student leader
- Application with essay questions
- Available for all events and trainings

How to Match Mentors

A program can match mentors and mentees based on some of the following criteria:

- Transferred from same institution
- Are from the same state or region
- Have the same major
- Both live on campus
- Same professional goals

Outline Mentor Duties

- Reach out to mentees before classes start
- Hold one social event during each semester
- Hold an academic or career-focused event during each semester-professional development, final study session, career workshop, etc.

Outcomes of Mentoring

Mentor Learning Outcomes:

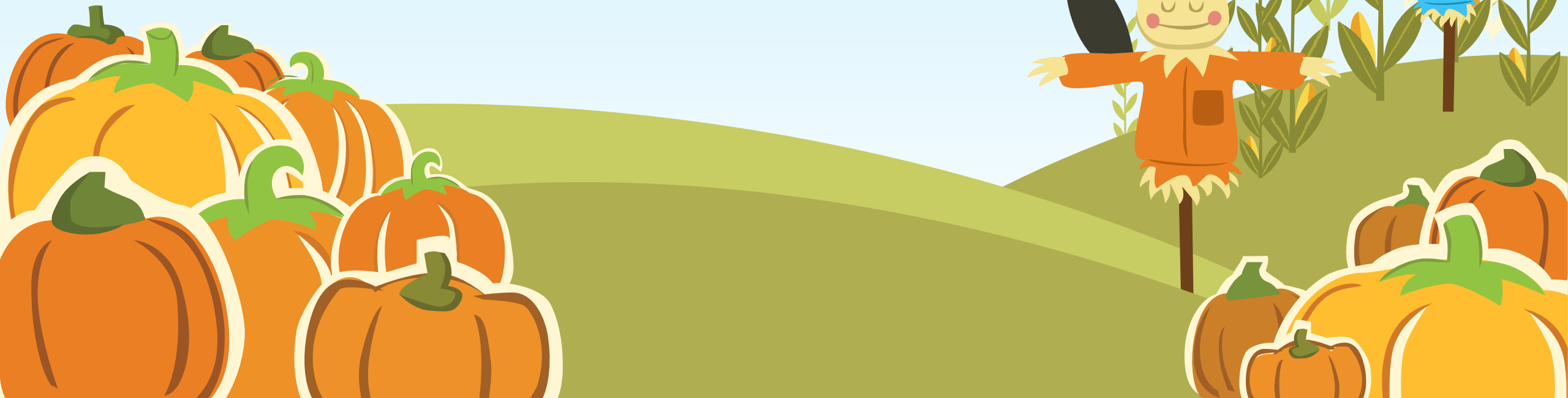
- Mentors can summarize the challenges that new students encounter at their institutions
- Mentors can identify the campus resources and tools that can help address those challenges
- Mentors can prioritize the campus information and activities related to their program goals
- Mentors can create a schedule for programs, activities, and meetings that address program goals

Outcomes of Mentoring

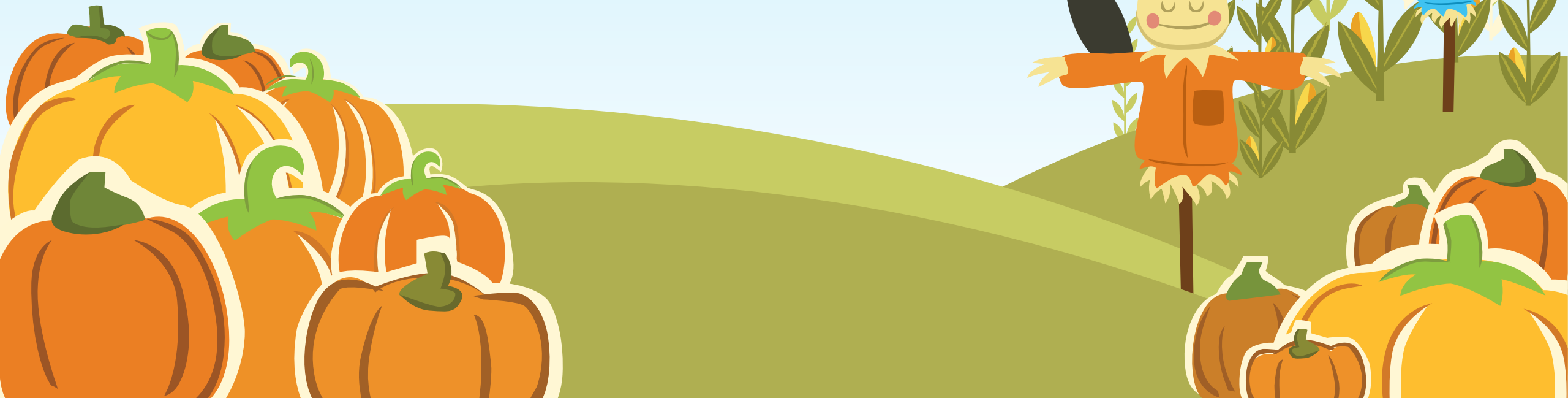
Mentees Learning Outcomes:

- Mentees can describe their educational goals and develop an action plan for achieving those goals
- Mentees can propose solutions for the challenges they expect to encounter in working towards goals
- Mentees can list ways they would like participate in the institutional community (for example, join student organization, part-time job, academic department activities, honor societies, undergraduate research, community service, etc)

Questions?



Thank you for coming!



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