

Notes on Student Success (Eric Loomis and Kevin White):

Student Success: What Departments Can Do

I. Use Student Data to Find and Reach At-Risk Students in the Department

- Identify students at risk in the department. Examples:
 - Students showing early signs of distress in classes (use Jag Alerts)
 - Students who miss success markers in core courses in the major (use Student Success Collaborative list filters)
 - Look for specific sub-groups of majors in department showing signs of academic difficulty. For instance:
 - Students with high predicted risk in major, despite mid-range GPAs (Student Success Collaborative list filter)
 - Scholarship recipients who are underperforming (Jag Alerts, Student Success Collaborative list filter)
 - Conditional Freshmen or other at-risk incoming populations (Student Success Collaborative list filter)
 - Athletes, USA Band members, or other groups prone to absence from class (Student Success Collaborative list filter)
 - Students with down-trending GPAs (Student Success Collaborative list filter)
 - Students with poor credit accumulation (Student Success Collaborative list filter)

- Possible Responses:
 - Send notification to at-risk students indicating your concern, and requesting a follow-up meeting with the student's advisor to discuss problem.
 - Insure that students are aware of academic support available for problem courses.
 - Insure that students are taking courses in the correct sequence, and are aware of required courses.
 - Encourage collaborative career planning between the student and their advisor using available tools:
 - USA Office of Career Services
 - FOCUS 2
 - Student Success Collaborative Major Explorer
 - Provide advisor training/mentoring
 - Consider using pro-active alerts to notify students of gateway courses in the major that they have not taken at the proper time in their academic career, or of difficult upcoming courses. Use Student Success Collaborative filters to find these students.
 - Encourage/mandate early academic career "library training"

II. Reach Out to Students Not Academically At-Risk Who Might Nonetheless Not Graduate at USA.

- Identify students who might be at risk of leaving your major or USA, despite acceptable academic performance. Use Student Success Collaborative filters to identify these students. Examples:
 - Majors in the program with a 2.0 or greater GPA and more than 89 earned credit hours who are not enrolled for the next term.
 - Response: Ask to meet with student to see how department can help them finish degree. Consider arranging meeting with Financial Aid Office if necessary.
 - High achieving majors in the department who may be at risk of migrating to another institution.
 - Response: Ask to meet with student to make sure they are academically challenged, and are aware of opportunities at USA such as UCUR, Honors Program, Study Abroad, Departmental Honors, Departmental Clubs.
 - Get to Know ALL Majors in the Program and Encourage Student Integration with Faculty
 - Encourage Student Research Collaboration with Faculty
 - Create Departmental Social Events for Students

III. Seek Improvements to the Major Curriculum to Enhance Retention and Graduation.

- Examples:
 - Build a Curriculum Map for the major to provide clear course sequencing and timing. Keep Map updated with each change to the major program.
 - Identify foundational courses that are “bottlenecked” with insufficient class space, or with students taking the courses too late in their academic career. Use the Student Success Collaborative Predictive Workbooks to help identify these courses.
 - Look for required courses that may be clustered together in a way that imposes a significant academic burden (E.g., difficult math, chemistry, and physics frequently taken in the same semester). Seek to better distribute these courses over students’ academic progression through major.
 - Identify areas where course scheduling could delay graduation (e.g. multiple required sophomore courses always taught at same time of week).

IV. Provide a Clear Incentive Structure for Departmental Faculty Advising, Faculty Extracurricular Support, and Faculty Training.

- Use annual reviews to recognize, evaluate, and encourage
 - faculty engagement with student success initiatives
 - good faculty advising
 - Look for signs of faculty commitment such as:
 - Large number of advisees relative to peers
 - Use of advising resources (via. SSC usage reports, e.g.)
 - Faculty activity as student club sponsor, honors thesis director, student research involvement, etc.
- Encourage faculty development (for improved teaching and advising)
 - To improve engagement
 - To improve student motivation and learning, especially in early classes
 - Use and encourage faculty use of the ILC to improve teaching, especially first year instructors

V. Investigate Redesigning Courses with High D/F/WD Rates.

- Consider using alternative delivery methods (Online, Blended) where appropriate to improve progression through major.
- Look for Courses where curricular innovation might offer benefits (Team-Based Learning, Required Study Labs, etc.)

Pro-active alerts

- Example:
 - SI, Tutoring
 - Career Planning
 - Library “training”
 - “News” about your Major (for engagement, career direction, and relevancy of courses)