A New FYE Model: Advancing Student Success through Student Affairs/Academic Affairs Innovation and Collaboration

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First-Year Student Success Course

Academic Affairs

Transitions
discipline-specific
Student Success course

Student Affairs

Center for Academic Success (CAS)

National Data and Trends

• Approximately 50% of all students who enroll in higher education complete a Bachelor’s degree in 6 years – rate has remained unchanged for 50 years.

• U.S. Congress and many states have begun to focus on graduation rates as a “measure of institutional effectiveness.”
**National Data and Trends**

- Elite colleges become more selective to maintain their high retention and graduation rates.
- The People’s Universities are bound by our mission and demographics to educate a student population that has increased in diversity with respect to race/ethnicity, age, and social class.
- The Quest for Student Success – *Chronicle of Higher Education* – Sept. 15, 2014
  -- increased pressure on colleges for higher graduation rates, better retention and more engaged students.

**Murray State Data and Trends**

- FYEs and Transitions Courses for first-year students
- 1500 first year freshman enrolled
- 9200 undergraduate students
- MAP-Works early alert / retention system
  -- Academic self-efficacy
  -- Advanced academic behaviors
- Those who fail transitions have a 6-year graduation rate in the single digits

**Discussion**

- What does the FYE look like at your institution?
- Are Student Affairs professionals involved?
- Who coordinates the FYE?
“Fixing” Transitions:

Courses are discipline-specific, faculty-led;

Needs are student-success-specific, to be met by Student Affairs professionals

“Faculty ... report that their least favorite ... is teaching study skills, and that the area they feel least prepared for is ... helping students develop holistically.”

-- Porter and Swing

Pollyanna Peggy & Realistic Renae
**Spring 2014 Data**

Students were surveyed on February 12 and again on March 12. There were 46 students enrolled in the two sections and we had 38 respondents (83%) on February 12 and 29 respondents (63%) on March 12.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Survey Date</td>
<td>2/12</td>
<td>3/12</td>
<td>2/12</td>
<td>3/12</td>
<td>2/12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This course is helpful to me in developing new skills</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have become more competent in the student success skills we have discussed as a result of this course.</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**First-Year Student Success Course**

Peggy Whaley, Cindy Clemens, Barbara Cobb

Murray State University

Transitions discipline-specific Student Success course

- Academic Affairs
- Student Affairs
- Center for Academic Success (CAS)

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**The Embedded Model**

Discipline-Specific Transitions Class

- Professor in Discipline
- Student Affairs Specialist
- Teaches 8 Classes
- Program-specific content
- Connect w/
- Academic Program
- Student Success content
- Connect w/
- Direct Collaboration: Academic and Student Affairs

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The Lab Model

Discipline-Specific Transitions Class

“Traditional” Class  Additional “Lab”
Discipline-specific faculty  Student Affairs Specialist
Teaches 16 Classes  Teaches 8 Classes
Program-specific content  Student Success content
Connect w/  Connect w/
Academic program  Student Affairs

Academic Affairs/Student Affairs
Collaboration/Coordination

Spring 2014 Data

The aspect of this course that was the MOST HELPFUL for my learning is . . .

• Knowing I now have the ability to believe in myself
• Recognizing my strengths and learning styles
• Self-assessment helped me learn about myself
• Learning styles
• Managing time
• Note taking and Study Skills
• Self-motivation and self-analysis
“Faculty involvement in orientation programs had positive effects on students’ academic development. . . Participants in a freshman seminar reported significantly more informal contacts with faculty than nonparticipants.”

“Faculty involvement in the freshman seminar would seem to be an effective and efficient way to simultaneously implement the dual advantages of student-faculty contact and front-loading.”

-- Joe Cuseo, “The Case for Faculty Involvement with First-Year Programs”

Challenges

• No financial support
• Some resistance from faculty
• Student Affairs instructors and Canvas and grading and...
• Coordination of people and spaces
• Campus-wide duplication

Optimistic Future

“The average pencil is seven inches long, with just a half-inch eraser — in case you thought optimism was dead.” ~Robert Brault
Take-Backs, Sharing, Discussion

- How many of you are considering changes at your institution and why?
- What challenges exist with these efforts for change?
- Who are the key players to make change happen?
- What is one thing you can do to begin the process when you return to your institution?

References


