The Ties that Bind: A Case Study of the Dynamic Role of Advising for Pre-health Students in the Acceleration Program

Presentation Overview

- VCU Acceleration: Program overview
- Departmental collaboration
- Expanded role of advisor in co-curricular programming
- Program assessment and results
Virginia Commonwealth University

- Urban research university
- Over 31,000 total students
  - 3,500 incoming freshmen
  - 1/3 pre-health interested
- Comprehensive health system
- 5 health professional schools: allied health, dentistry, medicine, nursing, and pharmacy
Program Overview

Focus on freshman year

- Summer pre-matriculation program
- Academic year living-learning community

Pre-health student concentrations

- Bachelor degree programs: nursing, clinical laboratory, radiation sciences, dental hygiene
- Professional degree programs: medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, physical therapy, occupational therapy
Student Participant Selection

Students *must* attend VCU to participate in all aspects of the program

- Minimum GPA – 2.5
- SAT scores considered
- 2 letters of recommendation
- Personal statement
- Volunteer and extracurricular activity
- Student demographic characteristics
Departmental Collaboration

Health Sciences Diversity (VCU Pipeline)
- Marketing and recruitment
- Plan and implement summer program
- Academic year workshops

Strategic Enrollment Management
- Pre-health advisor
- Pre-registration for first semester
- Teach UNIV 101 and UNIV 102 courses
Advisor Role Structure

- Participant selection
- Non-cognitive interviews

Pre-program

Summer Program
- Pre-registration
- Orientation
- Program presence

- Course instructor
- Academic advising

Academic Year
Expanded Role of Academic Advisor

• Participate in student selection process
• Conduct student orientation
• Coordinates fall and spring learning community courses
• Required advising appointments
• Teach UNIV 101 (Intro to the University) and UNIV 102 (Mindsets for Success)
Advisor: Pre-program Components

Participant selection
• Applicant review sessions

Placement testing

Academic background form
• Placement for summer courses
• Initial placement into learning community courses
Pre-matriculation Session

- Exposure to on-campus housing
- University New Student Orientation
- Introduction to college level math and science courses
- Service project
- Health professions exploration
## Pre-matriculation Session

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:00 - 10:30 am</td>
<td>Biology Prep Course</td>
<td>Biology Prep Course</td>
<td>Biology Prep Course</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:30 – 11:00 am</td>
<td>Break</td>
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<td>1:00 – 2:30 pm</td>
<td>Service Project Group Work</td>
<td>Career Exploration Forum Room</td>
<td>Academic Coaching Forum Room</td>
<td>Success Strategies 101 Forum Room</td>
<td>Service Project Status Update</td>
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<td>2:30 – 3:00 pm</td>
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<td>5:00 – 5:30 pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>5:30 – 7 pm</td>
<td>Health Professional</td>
<td>Group Meeting with Advisor</td>
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Advisor: Pre-matriculation Session

- University-wide New Student Orientation
- Group advising sessions as part of programming
- Individual sessions by student request
- By end of summer: final learning community placement
Learning Community Placement

- Prior Academic Performance
- Non-cognitive Factors
- Summer Academic Performance
- Learning Community Placement
Academic Year: Learning Communities

**ANCHOR:**
UNIV 101

**Acceleration 1**
- BIOL 151
- MATH 151/200

**Acceleration 2**
- Options: CHEM 101, PSYC/SOCY 101
- BIOL 101, PSYC 101
Advisor: Academic Year

- Instructor for UNIV 101/102
- Course advising
- Pre-health advising
- Maintains pre-health advising relationship throughout undergraduate careers
UNIV 101 Requirements

• 1 credit class
• Required meetings with advisor
• Required attendance at selected campus events: focused on pre-health students’ needs
• Group presentations on health professions
Program Evaluation

Multi-tiered evaluation process
  • Student surveys, academic progression

Academic success measures
  • Retention, academic performance, graduation

Matriculation to health professions training programs
Retention Rates
Academic Performance

GPA at graduation vs. FYGPA

VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY
Graduation Rates
## Enrollment in Health Professions Programs

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<th>Program</th>
<th>VCU</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nursing - BSN or MSN</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>16</td>
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<tr>
<td>Medicine - MD or DO</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dentistry – DDS</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pharmacy – PharmD</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clinical Lab, Radiation Science, Dental Hygiene – BS</td>
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<tr>
<td>Occupational Therapy, Rehabilitation Counseling, Pharmaceutical Sciences (MS), MPH, MHA</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
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<td>PhD - Biomedical Sciences</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other - Post- baccalaureate</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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<td><strong>20</strong></td>
<td><strong>71</strong></td>
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Questions?

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