Pre-Enrollment and Momentum Strategies for Advising – Purposeful Choice from the Start

2021 NACADA NATIONAL CONFERENCE

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As a comprehensive university, VSU is charged with meeting the general and professional needs of its South Georgia service area, which stretches from the Atlantic Coast to Alabama, encompassing forty-one counties and 31 percent of the land area of the state.
In Fall 2020, VSU served 12,304 students (headcount) with FTE of 10,632

- 77.8% were undergraduate, 22.2% are graduate
- 68.1% were female
- 66.2% enrolled full-time
- 26.6% of undergraduates live on campus
- 47.3% white, 38.1% black, 1.6% Asian
Hello, My Name is...

RETENTION
STRATEGY BUILDING
SETTING THE FOUNDATION FOR CHANGE

2016
NACADA CONSULTANTS VISIT & REPORT

2017
VSU 70/80 TASKFORCE REPORT

2018
VSU STRATEGIC PLAN

2019
PRE-ENROLLMENT SURVEY FOR 1ST YEAR STUDENTS
GOAL #1: Valdosta State University will increase retention, progression, and graduation rates through creating a campus culture focused on individual student success.

Outcome 1.1: ...VSU will implement a University-wide advising model with professional advisors working in conjunction with faculty mentors within all academic colleges.

Outcome 1.2: By spring 2019, VSU will develop evidence-based responses to identify and address barriers to successful retention, progression, and graduation of students at the University.

Outcome 1.3 | Outcome 1.4 | Outcome 1.9
Academic Advising Centers
Appreciative Advising is the intentional collaborative practice of asking generative, open-ended questions that help students optimize their educational experiences and achieve their dreams, goals, and potentials.
Student Success Framework
JOIN THE MOVEMENT

CCA’s Alliance includes more than 47 states, higher education systems, and consortia working together to transform policy, practice, and perspective. Our diverse Alliance members are committed to building higher education systems that increase economic opportunity, social mobility, and racial justice.

www.completecollege.org/our-work
# Purpose

Aligning the college experience to each student’s goals for the future.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First-Year Experience</th>
<th>Career Exploration</th>
<th>Academic &amp; Career Alignment</th>
<th>Adult Learner Engagement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop structures to connect students with resources that foster their academic and career goals.</td>
<td>Make information on careers readily available to all students, empowering them to make informed decisions about programs of study that meets their skills, aptitudes, and aspirations.</td>
<td>Create a clear connection between learning taking place in the classroom and the competencies associated with careers.</td>
<td>Proactively communicate the value of a higher education degree to address the unique needs and goals of adults.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

https://completecollege.org/strategies/
MOMENTUM

Designing multiple avenues for students to get started, earn credits faster, and stay on track to graduate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CREDIT FOR COMPETENCY</th>
<th>MULTIPLE MEASURES</th>
<th>COREQUISITE SUPPORT</th>
<th>DUAL ENROLLMENT</th>
<th>15 TO FINISH/STAY ON TRACK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recognize the prior learning, skills, and knowledge that students possess and establish mechanisms to award appropriate credits.</td>
<td>Consider a variety of placement options that include high school grade point average to provide more ways for students to take a college-level class in their first semester.</td>
<td>Design structures and pedagogical approaches for students needing or requesting additional support to succeed in college-level foundational math and English courses that allow students to complete requirements in a single academic term.</td>
<td>Provide high school students opportunities to take college classes while they are still in high school so they can get an early start on college.</td>
<td>Invest in coordinated communications efforts and structural solutions to match student credit loads with the credits needed for on-time graduation for both part-time and full-time students.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

https://completecollege.org/strategies/
**STRUCTURE**

Building course road maps that make the path to a degree or valued workplace credential clear.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MATH PATHWAYS</th>
<th>META MAJORS</th>
<th>ACADEMIC MAPS &amp; MILESTONES</th>
<th>SMART SCHEDULES</th>
<th>STACKABLE CERTIFICATES &amp; CREDENTIALS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identify the appropriate gateway math course that is aligned with the skills students need for their chosen program of study.</td>
<td>Provide students with opportunities to explore related programs of study that allow them to make more informed and deliberate decisions about their majors, while making progress towards their degrees.</td>
<td>Delineate the path to graduation and highlight significant milestones that contribute to student success in a clear and comprehensive format.</td>
<td>Design schedules that contribute to degree progression and meet the needs of all students.</td>
<td>Create competency-driven structures that encourage lifelong learning and attainment of degrees of value.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[https://completecollege.org/strategies/](https://completecollege.org/strategies/)
SUPPORT

Addressing student needs and removing barriers to academic success.

ACTIVE ACADEMIC SUPPORT
Provide students with programs and services to help them develop the academic skills needed to be successful.

PROACTIVE ADVISING
Require advisors to take a preemptive approach that anticipates and helps eliminate concerns, roadblocks, and barriers affecting student success. Through strategic and consistent outreach, ensure advisors are a resource for students, working with them to create a holistic plan for a timely graduation.

360° COACHING
Provide students with a designated coach to contact whenever issues arise in and outside of the classroom. Train coaches to work with students to find answers, identify appropriate resources, and advocate or intervene on their behalf.

STUDENT BASIC NEEDS SUPPORT
Ensure that students have access to food, housing, childcare, physical and mental health services, financial assistance, and transportation.

https://completecollege.org/strategies/
Implementation & Student Flow
**ORIENTATION REGISTRATION**

Registration opens late December to early January

**MYMAJORS ASSESSMENT**

Recommendation of best fit majors specific to the VSU campus

**PRE-ENROLLMENT SURVEY**

Information gathered flows to academic advisors on campus

**SCHEDULE CREATION**

@ VSU we utilize Visual Schedule Builder to create 1st year schedules

**ORIENTATION ATTENDANCE**

Advisors meet with students and guests to review, and adjust, schedules*

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*During orientation sessions, academic advisors review the MyMajors Assessment and Pre-Enrollment information, along with the developed schedule. This meeting occurs in-person and includes the student and the guests of the student. Moving major conversations to this point, has allowed for the Purposeful Choice conversation to occur students ever step on campus.
Pursuitful Choice from the Start

Initial Request to Complete sent with orientation confirmation. Follow up requests sent via email/text/phone calls.

Best-fit majors report based on student responses to their interests, aspirations, and aptitude in academic coursework completed to date with each student receiving an individualized report with their Top 10 VSU majors.

Insight into student motivation and completion concerns also captured. (we will come back to this piece later).
Key Valdosta.MyMajors.com Stats: May 15, 2020 – August 24, 2020

Total Assessment Registrations: 3,125
Completed Full Assessment: 3,046
Assessment Completion %: 97%

Total Pre-Enrollment Registrations: 3,040
Completed Pre-Enrollment Survey: 3,020
Pre-Enrollment Completion %: 99%

97% of students who started the MyMajors assessment ended up completing the pre-enrollment survey.
Pre-Enrollment Survey

Examples of Data Collected in this Survey

- Student Demographic Information
- Intended major/minors
- Participation in varsity athletics, club teams, etc
- Previous coursework in AP/IB/AICE and/or DE
- Comfort with online courses
- Rank order of courses in the core/general education
- Times/days when student is not available for courses
- Are any access accommodations going to be needed while at VSU?
- First-Year Learning Community interest
VSU Advisors received a custom report per student based on their Advising Center Report was utilized to personalize student conversations, address concerns, and register students online.

### Summary Report

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scholar</th>
<th>Nursing, Bachelor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Valdosta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email</td>
<td>[email protected]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intended Major</td>
<td>Nursing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preferred email address:</td>
<td>[email protected]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preferred phone number:</td>
<td>475</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is your current status at Valdosta State University?</td>
<td>Incoming Freshman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How confident are you about your choice of major?</td>
<td>Confident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What would your ideal dream job?</td>
<td>Registered Nurse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is your ultimate career goal after receiving your degree?</td>
<td>Currently an RN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tell us more about your goals and background:</td>
<td>I am a first-gen to attend college</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My current employment status:</td>
<td>Employed part-time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you have any concerns that may hinder your ability to complete your degree? (check all that apply, if any)</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is your top motivation for attending college? (you may select up to 3)</td>
<td>Get a good job, Make more money</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What do you plan to do after graduating from Valdosta State University?</td>
<td>Getting a good job, Making more money</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Pre-Enrollment Responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>My intended major is: I will declare my major for VSU</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do you plan to participate in Concert Choir?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you plan to participate in Cheerleading?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you plan to participate in Red Hot Dance Team?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you plan to participate in ROTC?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you plan to participate in Marching Band?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you a member of one of VSU's intercollegiate NCAA-sanctioned athletics teams?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you planning to participate in the VSU Honors College?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you an International Student utilizing a student visa?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you need any accessible accommodations (e.g., EP-94A, mobility, sight, etc.) while at VSU?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you a First-Generation College Student?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you interested in participating in a First-Year Learning Community, a set of specific courses that you take with the same group of students?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you already, or do you plan to, complete any Dual Enrollment (High School When Ready) credit prior to enrolling at VSU Fall 2023?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you already, or do you plan to, take any Advanced Placement (AP) exams prior to enrolling at VSU in Fall 2023?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you already, or do you plan to, take any The Cambridge Advanced International Certificate of Education (CAIE) exams prior to enrolling at VSU in Fall 2023?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you already, or do you plan to, take any International Baccalaureate (IB) exams prior to enrolling at VSU in Fall 2023?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did you earn Education Pathway credit?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will you have completed an Associate's Degree prior to enrolling at VSU 2023?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are you planning to take classes all online?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Recommended Majors

1. Nursing
2. Healthcare Administration
3. History
4. Political Science
5. Health Sciences
6. Communication
7. Communication: Public Relations
8. Office Administration & Technology
9. Economics
Course Scheduling in Visual Schedule Builder
Next Steps with the Data Collected
Do you have any concerns that may hinder your ability to complete your degree?

- 1381: Paying for my education
- 758: Lack of transportation
- 678: Poor study habits
- 168: Health issues
- 89: Access to food
- 117: Returning to school after a long break
- 162: Disability or learning difference
- 12: Lack of motivation and goal setting
- 120: Lack of support from family or friends
- 451: Prefer not to answer
- 897: None
- 43: Other
Building Additional Supports

Mymajors Data to Action Steps

- Concerns on how to pay for college.
  - Know More. Borrow Less. (Financial Aid Campaign)
  - Career Opportunities presentation at orientation.
- Lack of Motivation | Goal Setting | Study Habits
  - Developed academic coaching sessions to address these topics. Partnership with Tutoring Center.
- Food insecurity issues.
  - Connection to VSU Food Pantry
  - Student employment with Campus Dining
Cautiously Optimistic

Three Year Trend Data
AY 17/18 - 19/20

- First-Year Retention
  - Black Males: Up 14.1%
  - Black Females: Up 3.4%
  - First-Generation: Up 10.2%
  - Male underrepresented minority (URM - American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Hispanic, Multiracial, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander): Up 11.2%
  - Female URM: Up 4.3%
Cautiously Optimistic

Three Year Trend Data Continued

AY 17/18 - 19/20

- 4-Year Graduation
  - Male URM : Up 1.5%
  - Female URM: Up 4.8%
  - First-Generation URM: Up 3.1%

- 6-Year Graduation
  - Male URM : Up 6.1%
  - Female URM: Flat
  - First-Generation URM: Up 4.0%
Future Steps and Initial Takeaways

CIVITAS INTEGRATION
Include Summary Reports inside system and track Event participation tied to MyMajors Data (Ex. Academic Coaching)

ASSESSMENT & EVALUATION
Partner with VSU Office of Institutional Research to determine impact of work on the number of major changes on the way to degree completion.

PROGRAM MAP ENHANCEMENTS
Include major milestones and clear off-ramps to majors with close alignments.

STAY PATIENT
Keep moving forward and adapting.
IF WE HAD TO DO IT ALL OVER AGAIN...

We would and the focus would be on the following areas

**PURPOSEFUL CHOICE**
Deepens meaningful conversations from the beginning

**PRE-ENROLLMENT**
Provides accurate information to the advising team to build course schedules before orientation

**UNIFIED ADVISING PHILOSOPHY**
Creates a common language for centers to work and learn together

**CONNECTION TO ORIENTATION**
Maximizes the experience for all involved
Before we leave, what questions and/or comments do you have?

If you are interested in chatting, call or text me at 616-581-7082

Or send an email to: rcfreidhoff@valdosta.edu