Empowering Students for Academic Success

Rachel Cox
Leticia Villarreal

LEAD Cohort 2013

Purpose

• To achieve a decision on the best direction for improved success of first year students.

• To implement a program which will provide first year students the tools needed for academic success.

• To help students have a realistic understanding of what is required of them to succeed in college.
Problem Statement

First year students’ misconceptions of college academic demands contributes to high probation rates which eventually leads to low retention rates.

Recommendation

Implement the iSucceed Program (COA1)
Prior Coordination

- Definition of a successful first year student: “TAMUCC engages first year students with social and academic interventions that help them identify their educational objectives, including completion of 29 academic course units, and following a prescribed path leading to persistence, retention, and academic success.” Dr. Gerardo Moreno, Assistant VP for Student Achievement (CASA)

- “There is a disconnect between what they need to do in high school to succeed and what they need to do here at the university to succeed… the high school so much of it is geared to pass standardized test or end of course exams to move on and the skills to do so aren’t what we need them to do here.” Dr. J. Carlos Huerta, Director, Core Curriculum Programs & Professor

- “The university has a lot of things it is doing that are good initiatives. They miss the mark in giving the initiatives continuity. We have lots of data but somehow have the inability to use the data to come up with solutions that reflect the needs of our students.” Mr. Albert Royo, Senior Academic Advisor

Background

- 45% of the First Year Islanders (FYI) are fully accepted
- 53% are accepted under alternative or alternative committee
- 2% are “missing system”
- 27% of the FYI fall students were placed on probation after completing their first semester at TAMUCC
- Of the 27%, placed on probation 67 % were admitted under alternative or alternative committee.
- 32% of probation students were 1st generation.

Fall 2012 data obtained from Dr. Carlos Huerta, FYI Program.
Facts

- Students’ academic skills are not at the level needed for college success. Between 15-20% of students struggle academically their freshman year.*
- College requires greater demands than high school.
- Most students can benefit from academic assistance their first semester in college. Research finds that intrusive intervention such as assisting “students in identifying resolvable causes of poor academic performances” increases GPA.**

*http://umwbullet.com/2013/01/31/probation-rats-show-little-change/
** http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Resources/Clearinghouse/View-Articles/Probationreinstatement-research-literature.aspx

What does TAMUCC data tell us?

- Possible misalignment with high schools in some subjects.
- Students are lacking good learning strategies.
- Potential student motivation issues.
- Potential instruction issues.
- Failing or even a grade of a D or C in barrier courses are at least an early warning.

Retention Data Report by Colby Stoever as presented on 12-1-2012
Assumptions

• Students believe they are prepared because they passed their classes or had good grades in high school.
• Students believe high school academic demands are the same as college academic demands.
• Students believe they can get through college courses without asking for assistance or using the available resources.

Course of Action

• COA1: Islander Success Program (iSucceed); new year long program
• COA2: Study Skills Assessment; implement into seminar program.
• COA3: Maintain current processes
Screening Criteria

- Student impact
- Proven success
- Strong curriculum
- Identifying and building academic skills
- Well-rounded support; outreach
- Second chance option

Surviving COA’s

- COA1: iSucceed Program; new year long program
- COA2: Study Skills Assessment; implement into seminar program.
- COA3: Maintain current processes.
### Evaluation of COA1

**iSucceed Program: Implement year long program**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Disadvantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Extensive program addressing academic, social and emotional components for first year students.</td>
<td>• Cost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Year long program</td>
<td>• Personnel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Second chance option</td>
<td>• M&amp;O</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Campus-wide support</td>
<td>• Faculty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Specialized staffing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Campus buy-in</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Evaluation of COA2

**Mangrum-Strichart Study Skills Assessment:**

**Implement into seminar program.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Disadvantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Identify specific study skill strengths and weaknesses for each individual student.</td>
<td>• Implementation of program; training faculty and staff, testing time, IT coordination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Provides tools to develop areas of improvement for each individual student.</td>
<td>• Minimal Cost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Tailor curriculum to student need.</td>
<td>• Campus buy-in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Increasing student learning strategies.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Evaluation of COA3

Maintain current processes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Disadvantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Maintain status quo</td>
<td>• Maintain status quo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• No additional cost involved</td>
<td>• Risk of not increasing current retention rates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• No additional time &amp; effort</td>
<td>• No set curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Lack of success in persistence and graduation rates</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conclusion

COA1 is clearly the best approach for insuring first year student success. This course of action would be the most costly but would be the most complete by address the major areas of student needs; academic, social and emotional.
Recommendation

COA1: iSucceed Program; new year long program

Questions?