New Student Activities

How do we connect admissions, enrollment, and orientation to Guided Pathways?

1. How have you connected new student activities (admissions, enrollment, orientation) to Guided Pathways so far?

- Virtual Accepted Students Day –students introduced to the college by School; receive parallel sessions.
- We have connected through new student orientation and open houses for career communities.
- Undecided students must choose a career community on application to the college.
- Accepted Student Day Series was announced with our pioneer events set for the fall '21 class. 5 total events scheduled, four in-person and one virtual.
- Virtual open houses with breakout rooms for families, Financial Aid, special services, and programs. Zoom New Student Advising rooms.
- Develop a role of Enrollment services. This office has navigators and they direct students throughout the process. This office oversees accepted students' day, etc.
- Provide a seat at the table for representatives from all Enrollment Management and Student Affairs and Academic offices to engage in planning and implementation of onboarding events and processes.
- School-specific first-year experience type course embedded in each of our 5 Schools to help students adjust to the transition to college.
- Students encouraged to take Focus 2 Career Inventory to help them choose the correct pathway to completion, as a part of onboarding process. For students who do not complete prior to registering for classes, they engage with the tool in their first-year experience course.
- Students informed of their Student Success Team upon being accepted to the College; emphasizes one point of contact for students; eliminates floundering students.

2. What challenges of practice have you encountered?

- We have struggled with overlapping services with academic advisors with admissions counselors
- Communication between departments can be challenging.
- Not as much guidance for student affairs to meet GP practices
- How do we replicate what we did virtually when we are back on-ground? Could be a logistical nightmare.
- Ability to set events that accounts for the very dynamic and different schedules of all of our student populations.
- Students with technology needs, such as no Wi-Fi, or home computers
- Communication breakdowns
- Differences in vision from key stakeholders on campus.
- We struggle with helping students identify and confirm their major prior to application and advisement.
- Burn out and people say they are over GP

- So many at my institution are unfamiliar with GP and as a result, see it as the “flavor of the day” initiative...if you ignore it long enough it will go away.
- Students not responding to proactive outreach; waiting until last minute to be advised/register for classes

3. For [] challenge, what might the root causes be?

- Everyone does not know who does what and what the handoff point are.
- The events have never been executed which leads to concerns about direction and failure.
- Defining to the community how this event is not competing with New Student Orientation but will serve as a community building event that engages students in a less pressurized format.
- It is much easier to divide students by Schools when we are in Zoom rooms; may not have appropriate facilities for a comparable on-campus experience for our new students.
- When information is missing in the application process, advising does not have the information but they are the ones contacted. The student is confused.
- Intake survey created by admissions with referrals to other offices without consulting with those offices
- Role responsibilities are unclear, with blocks put up by unions
- Some roles are unionized and others are not who work directly with students
- Community college culture; you can wait until the last minute or after and still get the schedule that works for you.
- Health and human services basic needs take priority over registering for classes.
- Students are already focusing on coursework, the need for planning for next semester seems so far away.

4. What strategies might you use to refine or refocus your work?

- Maybe consider keeping VASD?
- Sharing best practices from other colleges with our team can help to “show the way” and the reason/value behind this work.
- Different offices, or the same unit, need to speak with each other so that the processes are clear to them so that it is clear to the students
- Commitment Day-students get VIP access to services and processes if they commit to attending
- Students who commit early get different “perks” - timely access to advisors, walk you through the process, special FA assistance and early packaging, timely access to scheduling orientation, party
- Assign specific staff to bridge a gap between departments to check in and be a point person to ask questions for each unit
- Reassign some funds to streamline processes, automate when possible, to free up people to work with each other
- Collaborating with Student Engagement/Involvement to incentivize early registration.

Working Across Silos

What strategies can we use to work across silos?

1. What strategies for working across silos have you undertaken so far?

    - Communication and transparency
    - Willing to find processes that may be a log jam for student flow
    - Communication
    - Reconfiguring GP leadership to have three leaders from the three functional areas of the college
    - Keep moving forward. If there is a jam, move to another topic.
    - Collaboration
    - Cross-divisional student success committees with cross-divisional co-leaders

2. What challenges of practice have you encountered?

    - Dealing with the natural human tendency to assign responsibility to others
        - The tendency to look to others and say, "Oh, that's so and so's job."
    - People are not necessarily listening to each other.
    - Twelve-month employees are not listened to much by the faculty, although the year-round employees have a perspective that faculty may not have.
    - Front-line staff are doing things the way they have always done them
        - People are not necessarily following the processes we have put into place associated with this new model.
    - Many offices are resistant to change
    - Communication
    - Reactive but not proactive
    - Student Affairs and Enrollment feeling they need to follow Academic affairs lead
    - Turf Wars
    - Institutional barriers – the way the college is structured and funded.
    - Different focus of other offices when working across
    - Administrative alignment, commitment, and dedication to work that needs to be done.

3. For [] challenge, what might the root causes be?

    - How do we work to overcome this lack of trust? We need to find ways that do not assign blame and ways that we can establish trust.
    - Past failures have conditioned others to establish territories/boundaries as people come into this initiative
    - Fear- loss of power or influence
    - Worry that change may devalue past work
    - Will change harm students?
    - Fearfulness
    - Fear of change. Comfort in doing things "the way we have always done them"

- Territorial --ditto
- Indecisiveness from upper administration
- Hierarchical thinking
- The county requires a LOT of paperwork to hire new people, to increase salaries, to change titles...

4. What strategies might you use to refine or refocus your work?

- Develop the ability to conduct a post-mortem in a safe way. No need to assign blame or fault, but to be able to learn
- Stick with it. Give room for mistakes to be made.
- This is the most transformational change I have seen in my career. We need the constant support and help to make the transformational change take root.
- Establish safe mechanisms for accountability
- Meeting of academic and student affairs weekly meetings
- Transparency
- Grassroot efforts, bottom to top work for change
- Pick workable topics towards increments of change
- Willingness to make mistakes

Shifting Roles/Responsibilities

How do we navigate changing roles and responsibilities as part of our Guided Pathways work?

1. How have you navigated the changing roles and responsibilities part of Guided Pathways work?

    - Incorporation of intake survey – Success Coaches were created to manage this
    - Change in structure of separate offices into one larger comprehensive office.
    - Separation of new vs continuing student advisement across divisions
    - Reimaging the role and responsibilities of advising including a large responsibility on the part of faculty.

2. What challenges of practice have you encountered?

    - We have experienced challenges to the conversation about shifting roles and responsibilities from our union based on the feedback from teaching faculty and counselors
    - The roles and responsibilities differ across our campuses so often one campus is willing to try a novel approach, but it is difficult to have all three campuses agree to the same change.
    - In our onboarding process, we recognized a need to create a role the "lives" between admissions and advisement. This was a challenge with collective bargaining units (this role needed to support advisement but not DO advisement, as we have a faculty model). We negotiated for a long time, with student needs in mind and eventually got there with the Success Navigator role. This role is incorporated into our Counseling & Career Center where our counselors are faculty and advisors.
    - Difficulty keeping up with numbers of students coming into the intake with limited staffing
    - Faculty commit a limited number of hours per week for advising and are not available in between semesters or summer.
    - Tension between wanting to write everything down for clarity but new positions or responsibilities that have not been actualized fully

3. For [] challenge, what might the root causes be?

    - Root cause of union issues relates (in my opinion) to job/role insecurity – "if someone else fills my role, I will be phased out."
    - Coordinating resources to eliminate duplication
    - Trust
    - Confusion of roles, who is responsible for what and how do students know this?

4. What strategies might you use to refine or refocus your work?

    - Ideas to encourage/increase trust cross divisionally
    - Structure to update consistent data regularly
    - Professional learning
    - Open communication and performing a communication audit

Professional Learning

What professional learning and training is required for our staff and faculty, and how do we provide it effectively?

1. What professional learning activities for faculty and staff have you undertaken so far?

    - PD Development Day for Faculty
    - Ongoing PD sessions on pedagogy/andragogy, best teaching practices, advising, technology
    - State of the Schools
    - Advisement
    - Adjunct Supper for Success – Guided Pathways Overview and Adjunct Role
    - Professional Development Day: Guest speakers about guided pathways
    - Professional Development Days have had multiple Guided Pathways sessions.
    - We have been focused a lot on Assessment lately, and we have done a lot of training that would fall under Pillar 4. This has been an on-going theme as we have been revising PLOs to be more discipline specific and to map up to ILOs.
    - We asked our BOT to read Redesigning America's Community Colleges and have been providing presentations to them. I think these counts as professional learning for them (and has helped frame our work in their eyes)
    - PD days for staff and faculty - intentional and marketed
    - Title 5 grant – hired Melinda Karp – 4-part series
    - Inclusivity and equity training and discussions
    - Weekly professional development e-newsletters highlighting upcoming internal/external PD opportunities for faculty and staff
    - PD opportunities for ESL instructors

2. What challenges of practice have you encountered?

    - Trying to make sure all have information they need when they need it
    - Faculty not seeing connection to guided pathways
    - Faculty/staff thinking the work belongs to one office, division, department
    - Getting faculty involved and the desire to participate
    - Working in silos
    - Scheduling
    - Faculty are tired of hearing about Guided Pathways or say they have not heard enough
    - Getting a more personalized approach
        - Getting faculty/staff to see their role
    - Implementation is hard without PD
    - Back-to-back meetings
    - I will get to it later.
    - Zoom burnout now that everything is remote.

- COVID has caused an internal PR problem, I think. We are still doing the work, but it is harder to advertise Guided Pathways work and celebrate our successes. So, it feels like we have lost momentum at times. That has been hard to combat.

3. For [] challenge, what might the root causes be?

    - Disconnection
    - Faculty teach classes and it is difficult to find a date that would work for everyone.
    - When everything is Guided Pathways, it is easy to think that nothing is Guided Pathways. So, it is easy to lose sight of something as simple as a Master Course Syllabus Revision that knocks out ridiculous pre-reqs as Guided Pathways work, but it is.
    - Also, we have spent the last year reacting to COVID and we have not had as much bandwidth to look forward and focus on some systemic problems.

4. What strategies might you use to refine or refocus your work?

    - Writing PD into the contract
    - Common hours with brown bag luncheons
    - Every college needs guided pathways refresher
    - PD works best when it is ground-up rather than top-down
    - Central repository for professional learning and someone to manage it
    - Look forward to face to face and how that focuses your time

Intake surveys

What would it look like to use an intake survey to support student onboarding and engagement?

1. What intake survey activities have you undertaken so far?

    - We have a Pre-Advising Questionnaire in place for all incoming students that we have used for about 5 years now. We review educational history, schedule preferences, future goals, course mode preferences, and more in our survey. Advisors use this to guide the discussion in the entering student advising appointment. We have yet to implement our Starfish Intake survey but are trying to see if we transition to that or create something different.
    - CSI (College Student Inventory), this is an exhaustive survey that covered nonacademic barriers, self-assessment, etc. It takes about 25-30 minutes to complete. This is introduced and administered during the orientation session, followed up on in 1st advising session.
    - We are currently utilizing a pre-advisement questionnaire to assist with guiding the advising sessions based on program and a checklist of required items.

2. What challenges of practice have you encountered?

    - Information informs first advising session, but a lack of long-term impact of the tool. The tool is housed in COGNOS, and there is no transparency of data unless reported out.
    - We do not want it to be a barrier, so we try to get all responses before an advising appointment is scheduled, but if we do not it does not prevent the student from scheduling. However, then the advising appointment is starting from square one and is less personalized. Do we combine directed self-placement questions? Is that a separate process? Who gets to see the responses? We also have a confidential disability identification survey, which must remain separate.
    - A consistent approach to administration and level of detail captured based on the advisor.

3. For [] challenge, what might the root causes be?

    - Need for additional training and accountability
    - Decentralized systems, siloed processes, not automated

4. What strategies might you use to refine or refocus your work?

    - We might be able to do a standardized format that will allow a smooth transition to the handling of our data with Starfish.
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5. Questions?

    - Is there any data to show what retention/graduation has been like based on intake surveys (for the schools that have done it)? Seconded that question!
    - Transitioning a pre-existing survey to Starfish? Pros/Cons
    - Check with Starfish CoP to discuss intake surveys/early alerts

Guided Pathways 101: Q & A

1. What questions do you have about guided pathways?
    - Beyond the four pillars, what is one important takeaway/factor to know or focus on for guided pathways implementation?
        - Student-centered, always
        - Intentionality in how we design structures and how we work differently
        - Changing the student experience means changing behaviors, not just changing structures
        - Explicit communication to and with students
    - What to require? Thinking specifically to placing holds on student accounts until orientation or FYE course or activity completed—How do we do this without massive impacts to enrollment?