

# PLACEMENT AND ACCELERATION: START SMART AND PLAN FOR SUCCESS

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# Goals of the session

- Provide information on a process that uses developmental faculty to advise new students
- Showcase workshops that can be utilized to prepare students for placement testing
- Offer strategies for placement based on student characteristics
- Offer guidance on the use of multiple measures for placement into curriculum (non-developmental) courses
- Present the orientation model being used to advise new students, providing the guidance and support that is typically needed to begin their college experience
- Present acceleration options to decrease time to credit-bearing courses.

# Warning...

Your faculty may not like you; their involvement in the new student intake process can greatly increase.

# About Greenville Tech

- Public, open-door two year technical/community college
- Upstate SC, nearby access to several 4-year options (Clemson, Furman, Lander, USC Upstate, Anderson, University Center Greenville, ...)
- Economically thriving area, strong technical programs to meet area demand
- Enrollment around 11,926 for Fall 2016

# Some background

- New Student Orientation
  - Centralized advising; students no longer just showed up for first semester advising; NSO required
- Advising reorganization
  - Orientation Center
  - Early Advising
  - Three Divisional Advising Centers
- Multiple measures placement
  - Small-scale efforts; required student to be proactive

# Orientation – the initial system

- New Student Orientation with lengthy intro session before separating out to divisions
- Prepared packets with placement decisions and recommended courses for first semester
- Staff advisors spent more time with papers than people
- 25 students, about 5 faculty in each group; multiple sessions required to meet need
- Inadequate personalization, especially for AA/AS students
- Advisor assignment occurring 3-6 weeks into the semester

# Orientation – revised model

- Online orientation, eliminating need for lengthy intro session
- Completion leads to calendar of division/program-specific PASS sessions (Planning and Advising for Student Success)
- More personalized packet preparations – we know more about who is coming; more people involved in packet preps
- Smaller groups at each session; more sessions which require more participation by faculty
- Divisional-variations; lock-step programs can more easily run larger sessions, “easier” preps for some areas

# Role of the faculty

- Early Advising Center
  - Adjacent to Placement Testing office
  - One staff advisor; Transitional Studies faculty
  - No assigned advisees for these faculty
  - Placement test score interpretation and consequences
  - Valuable preregistration conversations
  - Students informed of options – retest, workshop, Accelerate Math, course offering formats (full term, fast track, emporium)
  - Notes in electronic system; accessible at PASS session



# Pre- and Post-testing assistance

- Test for Success - EXPRESS!
  - Open lab at Testing Center to help students prepare for testing
- Test for Success Workshop
  - Three-hour review courses in basic math, reading and writing; \$15

# PASS sessions

- Sessions for Fall term began Spring 2016, continued throughout the summer
- Packets prepared prior to each session
- Transfer destination requirements included
- Eligibility for multiple-measures placement

- Advisor assignment
- Staff advisors and faculty prepared packets
- FEAT (Faculty Expert Advising Team) formed; release time for leader
- One-on-one true advising conversations between student and faculty
- Registration immediately afterwards using nearby lab, staffed by faculty; later added staff to assist as available between terms

# Multiple Measures – the initial efforts

- Restricted to students eligible for the South Carolina LIFE scholarship (**L**egislative **I**ncentive for **F**uture **E**xcellence)
  - SC Uniform Grading Scale GPA  $\geq 3.0$  – only requirement for technical college students
  - Must be full time (12 credits minimum)
  - Must complete 30 curriculum credits in one year
  - Tuition paid for Fall and Spring terms only (max of \$5000 for the 2 terms, including \$300 book allowance; 30 credits  $\geq$  \$5340)
  - Self-pay for transitional/developmental courses
  - Second year of eligibility if GPA  $\geq 3.0$  and 30 curriculum credits

- Small flyer placed in packets prepared for use at NSO
- Mentioned at divisional session to encourage action by student
- Student initiative required to discuss waiver
- Small group of approvers
- Access to high school transcripts
- Approximately 100 students each Fall
- Success data indicated appropriate to scale-up

# Scaling up college-wide

- No placement test required for LIFE-eligible students
- Additional approvers needed – all staff advisors, satellite campus staff who wear many hats, College Skills faculty, divisional leadership
- Training, communication and buy-in
- LIFE-eligible students identified at packet-preparation time
- Critical advising conversations for LIFE-eligible students to discuss placement and options
- Override of prerequisites needed at registration time
- Required college skills course
- 790 LIFE students Fall 2016 (All did not require placement waiver)

# “Near” LIFE students

- SCUGP GPA 2.60-2.99
- Placement test required
- Use of high school transcript
- Initial advising conversation at Early Advising Center
- Less “skin in the game”; less generous with bump up from placement test results
- Required College Skills course

# GED students

- More challenging test beginning January 2015
- 3 levels of scores
- Equated to LIFE and “Near” LIFE
- No placement test required if at top GED score level



# Challenges with our current orientation model and multiple measures placement

- Heavy reliance on faculty; summer availability issues
- Campus-wide communication
- Time-intensive process
- Final transcript not always in system when student attends PASS
- Access to transcript and interpretation
- Which entry-level course? Is the student prepared?
- Tracking and data collection
- Shift in enrollments due to waivers; fewer developmental sections, more curriculum sections. Know your numbers!
- Allow repeat if not successful first time?

Questions?

Comments?

Your experiences?