PLACEMENT AND ACCELERATION: START SMART AND PLAN FOR SUCCESS

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November 18, 2016
AMATYC Denver
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 (Legislative Incentive for Future Excellence)
  • SC Uniform Grading Scale GPA ≥ 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 ≥ $5340)
  • Self-pay for transitional/developmental courses
  • Second year of eligibility if GPA ≥ 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?