

Governors State University

Student Affairs and Enrollment Management: Reaching Vision 2020

Focus Area: First and Second Year Programs

Leader(s): Roshaunda Ross

Implementation Year: 2016-2017

Goal #1: Develop an exemplary first-year experience program designed to both support student success and attain first year to second year retention rates that surpass the national average for peer institutions.

Objective 1:	Activate the Student Success Teams (SST) in order to implement institutional processes and policies to support FY student achievement and retention
Action Items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Host an event to introduce students to the SST members This was completed in August, 2016 during Smart Start. Lunches were held for each cohort theme and SST members were introduced after an explanation about the teams' purpose. 85 students total attended the lunches. ➤ Convene the core SST on a regular basis There were several meetings held in FA16. ➤ Conduct research to identify strategies to improve the achievement/retention rates of FY students in Smart Start The team researched retention strategies from other campuses and concluded that GSU is using best practices. A focus group of cohort students was held in October, 2016. An emphasis was placed on Fall, 2015 admits, although Fall, 2016 cohort students were also invited. Input from the students was mixed. ➤ Implement new incentives and penalties to encourage FY student success It was concluded that implementing many incentives and penalties would require action on behalf of the UCC and/or Board of Trustees. However, recognition such as a 'Spring Stars' bulletin board in the NSP lounge and various GSU Star messages were implemented to encourage students.
Indicators and Data Needed (Measures that will appraise progress towards the strategic objective)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ GPAs of FY students ➤ Persistence and retention rates of FY students ➤ Focus group results, feedback
Responsible Person and/or Unit (Data collection, analysis reporting)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Roshaunda Ross, New Student Programs ➤ Amy Comparon, Academic Resource Center ➤ SST Core Members
Milestones (Identify Timelines)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Midterm grades ➤ Final grades ➤ Census date in SP17
Desired Outcomes and Achievements (Identify results expected)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Cumulative GPA of FY students who participated in both Smart Start raised to at least 2.0 The cumulative GPA of Smart Start both students averaged just above 2.0 for both fall and spring semesters. ➤ Retention of FY students raised above previous years The fall to spring persistence of first-year students rose 6% from the 2015-2016 academic year.

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Objective 2:	Engage families to enhance support network of FY student success
Action Items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Host program during GSU Family & Friends Weekend for parents This was completed October, 2016. The program, ‘A Parent’s Guide to Freshman Year: Roundtable Discussion’ received high ratings on evaluations. This will be repeated and grown next year by using earlier and expanded marketing strategies. ➤ Create a social media networking system for families of FY students This is still in progress. Family information, including email addresses, is being collected during ROAR orientations. Once more information has been gathered, a family Facebook page will probably be created to engage families. In lieu of the social media campaign, postal mail letters were sent to every admitted freshmen family regarding ROAR and its special family programming. ➤ Keep families informed of milestones and important information/programs This is still in progress. Once more family contact information has been collected, an email distribution listserv and a social media page will inform families of milestones. ➤ Enhance family programming during ROAR This began during the January, 2017 ROAR and has been expanded for the summer ROARs. More informative, engaging, ad targeted sessions for families were added including a faculty/student panel, a mock class, and a game show. Private meetings with financial aid were added as well as special, individualized workshops for families.
Indicators and Data Needed (Measures that will appraise progress towards the strategic objective)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Number of students’ families contact information collected ➤ Number of students’ families represented in social media networking ➤ Evaluation results from family portion of ROAR and other programming
Responsible Person and/or Unit (Data collection, analysis reporting)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ NSP staff
Milestones (Identify Timelines)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ GSU Family and Friends Weekend ➤ Social media created/contact info collected by end of FA16 ➤ Formal outreach campaign begins in SP17 ➤ New family programming at ROAR implemented by June, 2017
Desired Outcomes and Achievements (Identify results expected)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Families are more informed and engaged in their student’s development This will be measured during the next academic year after initiatives have been executed. ➤ Evaluations show that families feel more aware and able to be supportive of their students Evaluations from the Family & Friends Weekend event showed that families are more aware of their students’ experiences and they are comfortable with their students being at GSU.

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Objective 3:	Improve student outreach and find more effective ways to contact students/disseminate information
Action Items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Assist campaign to implement utilization of Starfish system by students/advisors This effort is ongoing. According to FY Intake Form that was given in October/November, 2016, 63% had used Starfish. Staff uses for concerns, kudos, etc. Appointments with Cohort Advisors only accepted through Starfish. Incorporated reminders about Starfish in group advising sessions. Participated in early alert survey through Mastering College course. ➤ Update and regularly post on NSP social media This is ongoing with the use of Instagram. Raised followers from 51 to 133. Still need to utilize Twitter and Facebook better. ➤ Utilize Peer Mentors to share information, make announcements in class This was an ongoing effort in both semesters. In FA16, Peer Mentors were utilized in all but one FYS course and all but one Mastering College course. In SP17, a Peer mentor was assigned to Mastering College and another was assigned to Emerging Leaders Program. ➤ Identify method to utilize text message reminders This was researched and paused. Permission must be granted to use Rave system. GSU is working through licensing and processes. ➤ Partner with Housing staff to contact students This was an ongoing effort. Cohort Advisors attended Residential Academic Leadership meetings to discuss progress of and outreach to lower division students in PP. ➤ Add questions to evaluations to ask how students found out about programs/initiatives This is still in progress. A more consistent evaluation system is being developed.
Indicators and Data Needed (Measures that will appraise progress towards the strategic objective)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Number of lower division students using Starfish to set appointments, correspond with faculty /advisors ➤ Like, views on NSP social media ➤ Responses on FY Advising Intake Form
Responsible Person and/or Unit (Data collection, analysis reporting)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ NSP Staff ➤ Housing Staff ➤ Starfish Implementation Team
Milestones (Identify Timelines)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Starfish campaign during beginning of FA16 ➤ FY Advising Forms summarized in FA16 ➤ Focus group feedback at end of FA16 ➤ Use of text reminders by SP17
Desired Outcomes and Achievements (Identify results expected)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 100% utilization of Starfish by lower division students All lower division students have used GSU Star since they must use it to schedules appointments with the Cohort Advisors. ➤ Higher attendance at programs/events Attendance at programs varied. However, there was higher attendance when Instagram was fully utilized. ➤ Higher response to calls of action (i.e. scheduling mandatory meetings) This has been a challenge. Outreach methods have been varied and frequent, but students still do not respond as expected or desired.