

2020-2021
Unit Annual Report
Division of Academic Affairs
Unit: Student Success

There are amended instructions throughout this document to reflect the special circumstances of this academic year (AY20-21). You will find these in red. As an institution and as departments we have learned that we can use our creativity to deliver services and learning even in the most difficult of circumstances. This year's annual report should also serve as a memorialization of the lessons learned.

I Mission and Goal/Outcomes Statement:

Provide overall Mission/Goal Statement for your unit.

The student success unit and its associated academic support center, Academic Coaching and Tutoring, seek to assist and support all current students, to improve their learning, hone their critical thinking and executive function skills, and prepare them to be lifelong learners. Supporting this work is the foundational goal to improve overall retention, persistence, progression, and graduation rates, particularly of our undergraduate Day students. A key part of our mission is the regular reexamination of existing University policies and the creation of new policies to improve institutional effectiveness.

II Personnel:

List all staff and note all personnel changes that occurred during 20-21.

Academic Coaching & Tutoring Center:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>
Jen Abbott	Assistant Director (promoted from Staff Assistant)
Lisa Bauer	Staff Assistant (Part-time)
Tracy Foster-Howdle	Staff Assistant (Part-time Placement Coordinator)
Morgan Hakala	Staff Assistant (Academic Coach)
Ellen Hughes	Administrative Assistant
Andy Linscott	Staff Assistant (Academic Coach)
Kat McLellan	Director

Student Success:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>
Nancy Robillard	Administrative Assistant
Jason Smith	Assistant Dean

III Facilities/Equipment:

List any new facilities/equipment/software etc. acquired during 20-21.

The assistant dean acquired an ipad and data plan for increased portability and consistent access to telecommunications. There were no additional equipment or software acquisitions.

No new facilities were acquired in 2020-21. Our overall utilization of space shifted to accommodate social distancing requirements from the pandemic. ACT Academic Coaches moved from Hammond 332 & 322A to share Hammond 308A (alternating days). The assistant dean and administrative assistant were moved to 322B and 322A, respectively. Additionally, two of the advisors from Career Services and Advising were temporarily relocated to 306E, one of ACT's group tutoring rooms which the ACT Center ordinarily shares with the library.

In AY21/22, it will be essential that academic coaches return to office spaces that allow for them to facilitate coaching sessions with students. These spaces need to be conducive to the need for coaches to have candid, often sensitive, conversations with their students. Without the appropriate spaces available to the coaches, comprehensive and effective support to students will be compromised. This will be particularly true as we continue to see the expansion of the scope of the coaches' work with students to include targeted and proactive outreach to students on warning and probation. These students will need to be provided confidential spaces to have candid discussions with their coaches.

IV Budget Expenditure Analysis:

Was the budget expended as planned? Were additions/changes made, and if so, explain.

Please note any changes that resulted from the pandemic.

The expenditure of the Student Success budget was significantly impacted by the pandemic. This was the first fiscal year that the Student Success department was allocated an operational budget. As such, it would have been critical to evaluate the department's budgetary needs in terms of its operations when setting up the budget, while leveraging funds to support some of the activities the department collaborates with campus partners to realize its objectives.

The funds expended this year were for office supplies and promotional materials [E00, **\$540.87** (9% of budget)] and service for the assistant dean's ipad [U00, **\$815.87** (13% of budget)]. A total of **\$1,356.74** (22%) of the budget was expended. The minimal expenditure was the result of (1) conservative spending as the department assessed the unit's needs under its new structure, and (2) the pandemic. The latter had implications on some of the campus initiatives the department planned to facilitate, but were postponed. For example, the Student Success Task Force planned to hire student facilitators to train and lead focus groups as a part of its Defining Student Success

project. After reading literature which made a case against virtual focus groups, the committee decided to postpone this component of the project until the fall when students could participate in in-person focus groups. \$1,500 was allocated for this initiative that was not expended.

It will be critical that the Student Success department retain this operational funding moving forward into the next fiscal year, despite minimal spending in this current year. The department will have ongoing operational costs to ensure the administrative functionality of the office. Additionally, the department has, and plans to, engage in several institutional initiatives that will require monetary resource contributions, particularly in the vein of compensating students for participation to ensure equitable access to activities for all.

V Programs/Activities:

List major campus activities, events etc. that the office participated in/supported; committees served; community outreach; etc. List events provided to current and prospective students. Also, provide professional development of all staff. Please note which, if any, of these activities occurred specifically as a result of, or in response to, the pandemic

1. Began working with our EAB rep and AVP of Institutional Research to understand current SSC utilization.
2. Contributes to student success generally, the unit, and the mission of the university.
3. Collaborated with the director of Academic Coaching and Tutoring to establish modalities by which services would be delivered to students, particularly for peer-to-peer supports during the pandemic.
4. Worked with department chairs and General Education Program Area coordinator to modify AIM scripts based on departmental curricular changes.
5. Collaborated with Admissions and Financial Aid departments to establish partnership with OneGoal.
6. Collaborated with Office of Student Development to develop the Academic Life and Expectations portions of the online orientation modules.
7. Collaborated with faculty and staff to develop and facilitate the Academic Success orientation session for Falcon Experience, facilitated virtually, and focused on effective online learning, metacognition, and navigating Blackboard.
8. Continued to facilitate the Safe Zone program.
9. Developed and facilitated a session for the Department Chairs Workshop day, "Student Success as a Process" focusing on a holistic approach to student success.
10. Facilitated Falcon Talks with first-year students and families/supporters.
11. Collaborated with the Registrar and IT to develop the dynamic form for the new Incomplete policy.
12. Coordinated the planning, administration, and reporting of the Falcons Supporting Falcons initiative.
13. Absorbed and began planning the Summer Bridge program.

14. Increased peer mentor support for all first-year students given the challenges faced by the pandemic.
15. Coordinated messaging and timeline for non-registered student timeline.
16. Served as PI for HEIF grant, *Heritage Language Project*, and developed the framework for the Multilingual Scholars Program
17. Coordinated new protocol for premajor advising with CSA advisors
18. Coordinated the development of a coach/advisor taught FYE section to focus on career exploration
19. Co-lead for Advising pillar of CTL
20. Coordinated campus partner participation in CONNECTED conference and led post-conference discussion
21. Campus coordinator for SOVA Student Success study
22. Created SSC alert flowchart
23. Co-developed *Advising the Whole Student* CTL Summer Institute Day and co-facilitated *Advising Approaches* session
24. Collaborated with Bio/Chem department to develop Inclusive Excellence student success evaluation project
25. Co-presented at the NEFDC conference focusing on personal wellness
26. Service to Committees and Working Groups:
 - a. Leading for Change Core Group and Teaching & Learning subgroup
- i. Developed initial draft of the Land & Labor Acknowledgement Statement
 - b. NECHE Standard 6 committee
 - c. LA&S considerations for Transfer students working group
 - d. LA&S operations working group
 - e. BIRT Team
 - f. AUC Student Affairs
 - g. CARE Team
 - h. Chair of Student Success Task Force
- i. Defining Student Success project
- ii. Timeline for academic policies review
- iii. CSI data utilization
 - i. Open Educational Resources committee
 - j. Co-chair of First Year Experience Committee
- i. Chair FYE Experiential Working Group
 - k. Transfer Student Task Force
 - l. First Generation Student committee
 - m. Rethinking Student Engagement working group
 - n. Code of Student Conduct review working group
 - o. Wellness Days: Personal Wellness Campaign working group
 - p. Grant Center Assistant Director Search Committee
 - q. English language supports working group
27. Professional Development

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|----|--|---------------------|
| a. | Attended SSC Web Conference | July 2020 |
| b. | <i>So You Want to Talk About Race</i> book talk | July thru fall 2020 |
| c. | Participated in FYE faculty development program | Summer 2020 |
| d. | <i>Student Ready College</i> discussion with Student Affairs | September 2020 |
| e. | CONNECTED conference by EAB | December 2020 |
| f. | Open Educational Resources workshop, SPARC | January 2021 |
| g. | DHE Policy Review workshop/presentation | January 2021 |
| h. | <i>Student Ready College</i> book talk, Student Success | February/March 2021 |

VI Action Plan for 2020-21:

(Insert Action Plan for 20-21)

1. Strengthen case management model through SSC protocols and coordinated care
2. Develop standards of advising practice
3. Develop the experiential component of the First Year Experience
4. Develop an institutional definition of Student Success

VII Assessment Report for 2020-21

Were the Action Plan objectives met? Provide in list or table format that parallels item VI above.

Please note any changes to the plan that occurred as a result of the pandemic.

Case Management and Coordinated Care

This work is ongoing. In Fall 2020, the ACT director began tracking the multiple alerts that students would receive as a result of the SSC campaigns that were requested of faculty to complete. This included attendance, mid-semester deficiencies, academic coaching/tutoring referrals, and students on probation and warning. This work was formally absorbed by the ACT department once a commensurate line item was added to the director's job description. This included communicating with the Case Manager in Student Affairs to compare these academic alerts with the CARE reports. Through this communication, we were able to elicit a holistic picture of the needs of students with multiple alerts and deploy services based on a hierarchy of needs (i.e., a student may not benefit first from academic coach outreach if they are housing insecure). The thought here is that outreach is critical to the student, but we want to prevent the student from feeling overwhelmed by frequent outreach from various campus partners. This process has allowed us to better serve students while seeking to eliminate duplication of efforts.

- Developed an SSC alert flowchart to distribute to faculty and staff
- Communicate campaign plans at the start of the semester
- Share historical campaign success data with faculty to encourage participation

Advising

The assistant dean began collaborating as a co-lead of the advising pillar of the newly structured Center for Teaching and Learning for which the following vision statement was drafted: All faculty have the tools and skills to provide effective, equitable, proactive advising. We will embrace a campus culture where academic advising is an essential component to student success and retention, and the advisor role extends beyond the 3-week advising period. Faculty will have the tools and support to balance their advising responsibilities. AY20/21 deliverables include:

- Departmental listening tour to understand advising needs
- Advising Page on the CTL website
- Email to Faculty Prior to the Advising Period, which included a sample google document to use with advisees, an infographic of how to elicit deeper conversations with advisees, and resources for advising various student populations
- 6-hour CTL Summer Institute scheduled on May 17, 2021 titled, Advising the Whole Student

Future initiatives include:

- Professional development workshops
- Advising training guide
- Advising calendar
- Advising tool repository

FYE Experiential Program

This is ongoing work being coordinated by the Experiential working group, a subcommittee of the FYE committee and chaired by the assistant dean. Though the components are at various stages of completion, there is substantial work being done to develop the framework for what the first-year experience looks like outside of the classroom. To achieve this vision, the subgroup has been working on the following initiatives:

- Family/Supporter webpage with information and resources
- FAQ-based institutional directory for students
- A student resource-focused podcast
- Leveraging FalConnect with the support of peer mentors to encourage students to satisfy the co-curricular engagement requirement of the course

Additionally, the co-chairs of the FYE committee will be developing the Transfer Student Experience, an online module-based program that will take students about two weeks to complete. The content will be modified materials that will address the learning outcomes of the FYE course, as well as supplemental information that will be presented at their orientation program.

Student Success Definition

The Student Success Task Force developed and initiated an inclusive process by which we will develop an institutional definition of student success. This process includes the following components:

1. Priority mapping of new Gen Ed curriculum and Institutional Learning Priorities
2. Student success literature review
3. Inventory of other institutional definitions of student success
4. Student survey (qualitative)
 - a. Administered Spring 2021 with 106 responses
5. Faculty/Staff survey (qualitative)
 - a. Administered Spring 2021 with 36 responses
6. Focus groups for students, faculty, and staff

VIII Other Accomplishments:

List accomplishments not already captured above.

Please note which, if any, of these accomplishments are related specifically to your department's response to the pandemic.

IX Action Plan 2021-2022:

Planned Initiatives for 2021-22 <small>Add more rows as needed</small>	Associated Strategic Plan Goal & Strategy <small>Goal # followed by Strategy # ex: 3.2</small>	Indicate if a DEI initiative
Summer Bridge implementation with hybrid modalities	2.1	
Multilingual Scholars Program and collaboration with MWCC	2.1 3.3	x
First Year Experience implementation	1.1 2.1	
Bio/Chem Inclusive Excellence study	2.3	x
Heritage Language Project	2.1	x
Strengthen quality and equity of Advising	2.1	

Defining Student Success	2.1	
Academic Policy Review	2.2	x

Updates to the Action Plan may be submitted via a revised Annual Report.

X Reflection:

Take this section to reflect on--

1) *Initiatives that you may be considering for 22-23 academic year that you did not already capture above.*

N/A

2) *Reflect on how the department adapted to the pandemic. Reflect on actions that surprised you and on lessons learned that will help in the future.*

The Student Success unit absorbed the Falcons Supporting Falcons initiative, an intervention that was first launched in Spring 2020 by the Student Affairs and the Dean of Students in response to the challenges students faced by quickly pivoting to online learning due to the pandemic. We continued these efforts in Fall 2020, though modified to exclusively reaching out to first-year students given the need to prioritize outreach. Volunteers found this exercise to be meaningful to support the students and found satisfaction in their participation as a member of the community. Many students received referrals for support based on these conversations, which made this a retention initiative as well. Due to the success of this intervention, and the relatively low-commitment on the part of volunteers, Student Success proposes to continue facilitating this intervention each fall for UG Day first-year students.

Student engagement suffered as a result of the pandemic. Students are successful and have higher persistence rates when they are able to participate in co-curricular experiences and have a sense of belonging to the institution. Student Success collaborated with campus partners to re-imagine what engagement could look like over the pandemic. Strategies included varying frequency and modality of outreach, online engagement opportunities, more informal online gatherings, etc. While we experienced minimal success implementing these strategies now (during a pandemic, when students have additional stressors) we have certainly learned more about the need and opportunity for variation in the modality of supports and engagement opportunities. Translating these efforts into our work in the future will only strengthen our ability to be a student-ready university in the future.