

Pilot Program Academic Transition for Students on Academic Probation by Carmen Serrano

An overview of the project proposal - The goal of the project was to increase the retention of students at the College by working collaboratively with the academic departments and their students who have been placed on academic probation. The second part of the project was to ensure that academic policies are fair and apply to all students equally.

Steps taken - Letters were sent out to students under signature of the curriculum coordinator giving the name of the counselor that they were assigned, asking them to contact the counselor and make an appointment to explore ways for improving their academic situation.

Students also were sent a list of steps to take during their probationary semester.

Two weeks later, follow-up phone calls were made. Fifty percent of the listed phone numbers were disconnected or incorrect.

During the 5th week of the semester, an early warning form was sent to all the instructors of the students participating in the pilot program, asking feedback on students' academic performance. Fifty instructors returned the completed early warning form.

At the 7th week of the semester, students were sent another letter with an academic inventory "How engaged are you in your learning?" asking students to complete and return the inventory to the counselor in a postage-paid envelope. (Only four questionnaires were returned out of 62.)

In the letter, students were reminded that they must register for the next semester courses with the counselor.

Some Data of Students in the Pilot Program

Students in Pilot Group	Students Contacting Counselor
9 Office Technology	6
16 Medical Assistant Office Management	4
19 Electronics	6
18 Paralegal	5
62 students TOTAL	21 TOTAL

1 student letter was returned by post office.

19 students were currently enrolled in CAP courses.

Several students were registered for courses at various sites and they were not willing to come to the main campus to see a counselor.

One-third of the students had been dropped from the College previously.

21 students made appointments with counselors.

24 students out of 62 had enrolled for over 48 credits (2 years or 4 semesters as full-time) and did not have a 2.00 grade point average and they were still receiving financial aid - which is contrary to the academic policy.

3 students previously PVP were registered for more than 7 credits.

3 dropped students did not sit out for at least one semester.

Next Steps with the Program

1. To do a complete and thorough analysis of data, including grade point average.
2. To compare the academic performance of students that had contact with counselors and the ones that did not respond to any of the communications.
3. To make recommendations based on the data collected.
4. To repeat the same process for the next 3 semesters, Fall and Spring only.
5. To possibly expand the program to the Education and Business curricula.
6. To review academic policies with the Counseling Department and with Academic Advising.

What I Have Learned from Doing This Program

1. Students that have been on Academic Probation several times or have been dropped from the College more than once are very difficult to work with. They manipulate the system and become uncooperative.
2. It was impossible to be able to obtain a list of first time students on academic probation. Unfortunately, we were told "to wait for OASIS; one year, 2 years or even 4 years." In the meantime, no one is doing anything to improve the current situation.
3. The College doesn't consistently enforce many of the academic regulations.
4. Faculty are very cooperative and willing to go the extra mile for the student's success.
5. Very difficult to clarify some Financial Aid policies.
6. Although we do have academic appeal process at the College, it is not as it was intended.
7. Students on probation and DPS receive letters from Financial Aid, letting them know that they have money to be used during the summer. Students insist on registering for summer courses even after counselors point out to them that it is inappropriate for them to take summer courses.
8. After students are dropped from the College for the second time, they are being admitted for the summer. The academic policy clearly indicates that "reinstatements are not granted for summer sessions."
9. Admissions invites students that have been DPS to come and register for courses.

Assessment will be done after the grade point average calculation is done.