

Student Success and Retention Statement

Student success and retention analyzes the student as a whole on their academic journey from pre-enrollment through post-graduation. Outcomes for student success and retention are driven by varying factors, such as students' academic preparedness, financial stance, familial circumstances, work experiences, and academic and professional goals before they begin their college journey. Students of color and students who come from low-income and first-generation backgrounds, or a mix of these backgrounds, in my time as a professional and for me personally, have struggled a great deal with being successful in a variety of aspects on campus. Students often time have not maintained academic success, struggled to balance work-life-school obligations, grappled with financial instability, and felt lost on what they should pursue and accomplish in life. This can be said for many students, but particularly students from underrepresented backgrounds or marginalized identities have encountered many instances of struggles that have impacted their success and retention. I aim to work with these students on their complete post-secondary education journey by developing the whole student in regards to their academic, professional, and personal goals.

It will be essential for myself, as well as the institution, to begin working toward each students' successes and retention strategies from the moment the student steps foot on campus, and if possible, before they do. Below are my guiding values that I will bring to my role when assisting with the success and retention of students.

Academic Achievement

To ensure that students' academic performances remain satisfactory throughout their entire enrollment with the institution. Students' academic progress will be monitored closely to ensure academic success, and to provide appropriate assistance and resources immediately when students' performance begins to display concerns.

Student Retention

To ensure that students remain enrolled with the institution, and complete their education requirements to graduate. Students who have taken time off will be guided through the re-enrollment process. All students will have an action plan that will be created as necessary to offer guiding factors that will contribute to their commitment to the completion of their education.

Holistic Growth and Development

To ensure that each student is viewed as a whole, and as an individual who has strengths and challenges, needs and desires that are true to them and only them. Each student will have opportunities to share their personal complexities and dimensions, such as their multiple identities, academic, professional, and personal aspirations, persistence, and development in multiple areas. Areas of holistic growth and development include:

Personal Validation

Students will always feel welcomed, feel that they are valued and cared for, and acknowledged as individuals. Validation of students' presence at the institution within the first few weeks of enrollment is crucial to the long-term success and retention of students, as they feel like they have a significant purpose on campus.

Authenticity and Self-awareness

Students will have opportunities to gain a sense of self-awareness and work to understand their authentic self. Understanding terms like intersectionality, and how their multiple identities factor in on who they are will allow students to fully embrace and present their authentic selves and use that as a basis to understand what their needs are. Different entities on campus can also work towards recognizing and acknowledging every aspect of students and provide appropriate support for each student as a whole.

Motivation and Self-Efficacy

Students will be given appropriate support, guidance, and advocacy to fuel their motivation through various aspects of their educational journey, but they will also be given space to allow themselves to become self-efficient. Students will have to have to learn how to take control of the performances and outcomes so that they realize that the energy and effort that they exert will make an incredible impact on their life and their accomplishments. Students will graduate with a strong sense of confidence, motivation, and independence.

Social Development

Students will develop their abilities to build and maintain interpersonal relationships, and effectively communicate with others with confidence and comfort. Students who learn how to communicate their concerns and needs to their support systems will gain the resources they need for their academic success and will increase their desire to stay on campus.

Promotion of Wellness

Students will learn about the importance of maintaining their health and well-being by engaging in effective wellness strategies. Students will be given opportunities to enhance their physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being so that they remain in good health that will contribute to their abilities to perform well academically and remain on campus.

Self-Reflection

Students will have many opportunities throughout their academic career to thoughtfully reflect upon their past, current, and future experiences. Students need to engage in reflection to analyze their academic learning, professional experiences and aspirations, and personal growth. Students will dissect where they were, where they have come, and where they would like to be, and use that to take appropriate action.

Plan of Action towards Promoting Student Success and Retention

Below is my plan of action that I will follow to ensure that I promote and achieve success for each of my students.

1. Establish a sound understanding of the institution, and its mission for student success. Work to understand each department that will encounter working with the students, become familiar with the staff, and stay current on any new information, services, or processes that could affect the students.
2. Establish a working relationship with the admissions department on student recruitment, to understand the pool of students that will be enrolling for the upcoming year. Work to understand who these students are to get ahead on pre-evaluation plans and determine any specific services or guidance a student could use from the very beginning.
3. Establish rapport with the student within the very first interaction. Allow students to have a great first impression so that they know they are in good hands. Provide a safe space for students to be themselves and remain open and honest with the advisor so that they are able to receive the most appropriate and accurate assistance.
4. Maintain constant communication with students so that their progress is continuously discussed. Constantly engaging with students will allow them to feel that they have a stable resource that they can turn to.
5. Create thorough, concise, and practical individualized plans that students will be able to use as a measurement of their progress as they reach multiple checkpoints throughout the years. Pair these plans with an effective process for tracking student successes, which will display the student's progress and growth. Providing evidence of their accomplishments will continue to motivate and uplift the students to continue to do more.
6. Prepare teaching opportunities that will provide additional information that is consistently updated and relevant to what students are experiencing, or information that will push students to the next tier of their progression.
7. Encourage student engagement and involvement by promoting social opportunities, such as student organizations, programming, events, and gatherings. Getting involved is a great way for students to break out of their shells, meet other people, work on their communication skills, and begin to establish a public presence.
8. Provide opportunities for academic and professional growth. Encourage students to attend events and seminars that could stimulate their growth and development.
9. As a professional, always stay current with information, policies, and procedures within the realm of advising and higher education. Attend professional seminars and development opportunities so that students have an advisor that is continuously developing to be one of the best resources for their continued successes.