Institutional Promising Practices in Completion: WVU’s University College and Mountaineer Success Academy

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Recognizing the Need for Change

- Understand expectations
- Accept what the data say
- Acknowledge anecdotal accounts of the present and the past
- Listen to all voices
The Culture

• Hear the perspectives of others
  o Real or perceived
  o Thoughts
  o Experiences
  o Expectations

• Assess the message and the messenger

“In a climate of change many come forward….
Stand up to be counted.”
Cultural Readiness

• Environmental scan
  o Local – university level
  o State
  o National

• Receptivity of stakeholders
  o Are we a re-invention of the past?
Organizing for Change

• Key Leaders
  o Who are they?
  o What is their role?
  o Analyze their potential impact and level of contribution

• Evidence
  o Accept what the data say
  o Acknowledge anecdotal accounts of the present and the past
  o Listen with your heart
  o Find and know your passion

West Virginia University
Academic Affairs
Garnering Support to Change

• Recognize and understand governance structures
  o Board of Governors
  o Administrators (Academic Affairs & Student Affairs)
    • Deans
    • Associate and Assistant Deans and Directors

• Key Stakeholders
The West Virginia University University College

Goal 1
• Instill high expectations for personal academic achievement in our students along with the skills, experience, and confidence to succeed.

Goal 2
• Empower students to develop personal and academic goals.

Goal 3
• Promote undergraduate student access, learning, persistence, and success.
The West Virginia University University College

Goal 4
- Establish partnerships within the university community that promote a supportive academic learning environment for all students.

Goal 5
- Develop strong partnerships with degree-granting programs and departments to facilitate the transition from the University College to majors.

Goal 6
- Assist students in identifying complementary majors and career goals.
A Culture of Care

• Effective academic integration

• Effective and responsible social engagement

• Seamless transitions
  o High school to University College
  o University College to academic major
  o Academic major to UC – readjustment period
Mountaineer Success Academy

• First-time freshmen
  o Undecided/exploratory
  o Not directly admitted to first-choice major
  o Lower high school GPAs and SAT/ACT scores

• Programming
  o Summer bridge and first-year experience
  o New Student Orientation experience
  o Week One – instructors who collaborate with program staff
  o Enhanced first-year seminar (FYS)
  o Success coaches who collaborate with FYS instructors
  o Assigned advisors who collaborate with program staff
  o Major and career exploration opportunities
Mountaineer Success Academy Metrics

- Week One participation
- Credit hours completed/attempted
- First semester GPA
- First semester probation rate
- Fall-to-spring retention
- Fall-to-fall retention
- Others – e.g., transition to majors
Questions? Suggestions?

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