

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
 - Real or perceived
 - Thoughts
 - Experiences
 - Expectations
- Assess the message and the messenger

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



Cultural Readiness

- Environmental scan
 - Local – university level
 - State
 - National
- Receptivity of stakeholders
 - Are we a re-invention of the past?



Organizing for Change

- Key Leaders
 - Who are they?
 - What is their role?
 - Analyze their potential impact and level of contribution
- Evidence
 - Accept what the data say
 - Acknowledge anecdotal accounts of the present and the past
 - Listen with your heart
 - Find and know your passion



Garnering Support to Change

- Recognize and understand governance structures
 - Board of Governors
 - 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
 - High school to University College
 - University College to academic major
 - Academic major to UC – readjustment period



Mountaineer Success Academy

- First-time freshmen
 - Undecided/exploratory
 - Not directly admitted to first-choice major
 - Lower high school GPAs and SAT/ACT scores
- Programming
 - Summer bridge and first-year experience
 - New Student Orientation experience
 - Week One – instructors who collaborate with program staff
 - Enhanced first-year seminar (FYS)
 - Success coaches who collaborate with FYS instructors
 - Assigned advisors who collaborate with program staff
 - 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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