During the 2012-2013 academic year, the administration of the University of South Carolina stressed the importance for all academic units to improve efforts to increase undergraduate student persistence and graduation rates. Shortly afterwards, the College of Hospitality, Retail and Sport Management (HRSM) began by asking an advisor in the HRSM Office of Student Services to lead efforts in academic planning and student retention for the College.

After researching the issue to learn how other comparable higher education institutions in the United States have been successful, the Academic Planning Director met with the HRSM Assistant Dean of Student Services to discuss ideas which may be feasible for the College to implement. This discussion resulted in the following academic planning and student retention goals for the College of HRSM.

1. Survey HRSM undergraduate students to determine perceived needs of these students which may impact their desire and/or ability to persist in the College of HRSM through graduation.
2. Based on results of this survey, make efforts to implement programs that address the perceived desires and/or needs of HRSM students.
3. Encourage HRSM students, parents, staff and faculty to participate in student retention efforts.
4. Increase the 6-year persistence and graduation rate for HRSM students per the University administration’s preference.
5. Increase the 4-year persistence and graduation rate for HRSM students per the HRSM Assistant Dean of Student Services’ preference.

Efforts to achieve these goals began during Spring 2013 and continue while also increasing. Although it is still too early to determine how successful HRSM efforts have been, the efforts made thus far are being well-received and continue to look promising.

Best practices:
1. Increased emphasis on appreciative advising
2. Increased emphasis on customer service
3. Points to ponder
4. Pertinent information posted to Blackboard
5. Academically borderline students encouraged to meet with advisors
6. Academically borderline students referred to Academic Counseling and Encouragement (ACE) and the Student Success Center
7. HRSM Peer Mentoring Network
8. HRSM Faculty Mentor Pool: Tina Weaver, David Cardenas, Robin DiPietro, Annette Hoover, Sallie Bogg, Simon Hudson, Richard Sourhoul, Mark Harris, Andy Gillentine
9. HRSM Parents Newsletter (monthly)
10. New, informative HRSM Office of Student Services (OSS) website (currently under construction)

Services provided to HRSM students:
- Academic Advising
- Academic Planning and Student Retention Initiatives
- Career Counseling
- Faculty Mentoring
- Orientation Sessions
- Peer Mentoring
- Referrals

"Being an HRSM Peer Mentor... is important to me because it’s a commitment that I made to help someone else. Many people need someone that they can confide in, and just knowing that I can do that for my buddies makes a difference."
Dana Johnson, Retailing / Fashion Merchandising

College of HRSM Student Survey Results

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Above results reflect an increased focus on Appreciative Advising and Customer Service in the College of HRSM OSS.
November 2013

Welcome parents!

Points to Ponder ...

Are you a new student at USC? Do you have questions about how to navigate around campus or which professors are great for which classes or almost anything else? Or do you want a study buddy or a new friend? Sounds like you could benefit from having a peer mentor. The peer mentors in the HRSM Peer Mentoring Connection are ready and willing to be your new best friend. Check with the HRSM Office of Student Services to sign up for a peer mentor today.

Do you consider yourself a leader? Are you looking for a great service opportunity? Do you want a study buddy or a new friend? Consider becoming a peer mentor for the College of Hospitality, Retail and Sport Management’s Peer Mentoring Connection.

Regardless of your major, this would be a wonderful chance for you to make a difference in the life of another HRSM student. You must be a sophomore, junior or senior in good academic standing and with at least one full academic year left at USC to volunteer as a peer mentor. You must also be able to participate in the training session. Visit the HRSM Office of Student Services, and sign up to be a peer mentor today.

Are you wondering what grades you need to make to earn a certain GPA? To find out, use a GPA calculator. The USC Office of the Registrar’s GPA calculator is online at registrar.sc.edu/html/gpa_calc/gpa.htm.

Office of the Registrar’s GPA calculator is a helpful tool. It will help you determine your current GPA and how to earn a certain GPA make to earn a certain GPA.

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Helping Students Make the Most of Their Education

USC Connect is a comprehensive learning initiative to support all students at Columbia, Lancaster, Salkehatchie, Sumter and Union by connecting academics and beyond the classroom experiences.

Students may earn Graduation with Leadership Distinction on their transcript for extensive work in Community Service, Global Learning, Professional and Civic Engagement, or Research.

For All Students

Core Experiences: Engage in first-hand experiences in community service, internships, peer leadership, global learning, and/or research. Search the USC Connect Database for opportunities and see on-line Recommendations by Major.

Enhancement Activities: Enhance understanding of a pathway through events (e.g., lectures, workshops, conferences, performances) or experiences (e.g., living-learning community, Conversation Partners).

Course Work: Complete pathway-related courses that provide a framework or explore related issues.

Presentation: Integrate examples and learning from beyond the classroom experiences into course assignments, papers, projects, and oral presentations.

Analysis: Explain preparation for the future as a result of experiences within and beyond the classroom. Highlight significant experiences in resume, applications, and interviews.

When possible, complete a culminating assignment or seminar (available in many programs or UNIV 401) describing key learning and experiences.

To Graduate with Leadership Distinction

Core Experiences: Any one category (Assoc/Bac):
-125/300 hours of Community Service;
-150/300 hours of peer leadership & internships for Professional & Civic Engagement;
-6 wks/1 semester study abroad for Global Learning
-1/2 semesters extensive research for Research

Enhancement Activities: Two (Assoc) or three (Bac) activities related to the area of distinction.

Course Work: Three (Assoc) or Six (Bac) credit hours from chosen pathway course list.

Presentation: Public presentation at a conference (e.g., Discovery Day) or approved college event OR journal publication (e.g. USC’s Caravel).

Analysis: e-Portfolio including sections on learning, analysis, application to the future, and leadership that articulates information important to graduate school applications, fellowship/scholarship opportunities, and potential employers.

www.sc.edu/usccconnect
USCConnect
Graduation with Leadership Distinction
Information for Advisors

USCConnect (integrative learning within and beyond the classroom) is for all students! Students engaging at high levels can earn Graduation with Leadership Distinction (GLD).

Basic Information on GLD
Students can Graduate with Leadership Distinction in 4 pathways
- Community Service
- Global Learning
- Professional and Civic Engagement
- Research

First graduates with GLD: May 2014
Distinction appears on transcript
USC Connect receives student applications for GLD, verifies completion of all requirements, and notifies registration of eligible students

Role of the Advisor:
Academic advisors support and encouragement of students’ engagement can have a significant impact in helping students take advantage of opportunities to make the most of their education. We ask advisors to:
- Know basic information (above)
- Post information on GLD
- When possible:
  - Encourage students to consider what beyond the classroom experiences will enrich their academic experience and check out on-line resources
  - Recommend students pursuing GLD take UNIV 401 (IF it fits in their schedule)
- Contact USC Connect at any time for information or support 777-3272; uconnect@mailbox.sc.edu

Plans for the future:
- Orientation and e-portfolio training will be available online
- GLD to appear in Degree Works to increase awareness (projected Fall 2014)
- An on-line tracking system of beyond the classroom opportunities will facilitate monitoring of student engagement in USC Connect and completion of GLD requirements (projected Fall 2015)

Resources available:
- Searchable Database of Opportunities: tinyurl.com/USCConnectDatabase
- Recommendations by Major: tinyurl.com/ProgramRecommendations
- Graduation with Leadership Distinction: sc.edu/USCConnect/Leadership
- E-Portfolios: tinyurl.com/USCConnectPortfolio

USCConnect Faculty Conference
May 12, 2014 8:30-3:30; Hollings Library

www.sc.edu/usccconnect

The University of South Carolina is an equal opportunity institution.
The mission of the Carolina Leadership Initiative (CLI) is to actively and enthusiastically promote, encourage, and facilitate leadership at the University of South Carolina and the greater community. To accomplish this mission, the CLI provides several programs and also partners with numerous other groups to develop and present leadership information, training, and outreach.

**Minor in Leadership Studies**
- Interdisciplinary minor available to all individuals
- Prepares students for lifelong process of leadership development and engagement
- Minimum 18 credit hours
  - Introduction to Leadership Studies
  - Second course in public speaking / management / organizational dynamics
  - Experiential course
  - Three additional courses (ethics, communication, diversity, and advanced leadership)

**Leadership Scholars**
- Group of talented and dynamic undergraduates
- Year-long program of in-depth leadership training and education
- Participate in mentoring activities with former USC Student Body Presidents
- Work on a group project related to leadership
- Receive stipend each semester

**President’s Dialogue**
- Features a prominent leadership speaker
- Multiple opportunities to interact with students across campus throughout the visit
- Formal presentation followed by an active and dynamic dialogue with President Pastides

**Initiative**
- Annual leadership magazine
- Showcases leadership events and programs across campus
- Features faculty, staff, and students engaged in leadership activities
- Offers an essay to encourage individuals to think about a leadership topic or question

**Carolina Leadership Initiative**
Dr. Kirk A. Randazzo, Director
Phone: 803-777-6795
Email: randazzo@mailbox.sc.edu
Web: Leadership.sc.edu