ACADEMIC ADVISING PERCEPTIONS OF STUDENTS ENROLLED IN A FIRST YEAR SEMINAR COURSE WHERE THEIR ADVISOR SERVES AS THE SEMINAR INSTRUCTOR

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Where's Mayville?
133 - average Freshman class size over the past ten years
90 Freshman incoming 2008
147 Freshman incoming 2009
57.7% Freshmen retention average over past ten years
60% of Freshmen came back for fall 2008
61% of Freshman came back for fall 2009 (highest since 1993 – first fall term after new FYE course implementation)
In the beginning...

- Work group formed including:
  - VP for student affairs
  - A coach (from our largest recruiting sport)
  - Faculty from several academic divisions
  - Housing staff
- Discussed needs and concept for FYE course
- Concepts run by student tutors. Feedback was great.
SOS was birthed

- Freshman Seminar changed to Seminar on Success
- One full semester course
- Letter graded, one credit course, versus previous S/U grading
- Met for two hours, once per week Fall 2008, tried pairing with another GE
- Met for 1 ¼ hours per week, Fall 2009, no GE pairing
- Over 90% of Freshmen enrolled in 2008 and 2009 compared to 7% to 39% from 1996 to 2007 (average of 22%)
Data collected

- Retention
- NSSE – Spring 2007 compared with Spring 2009
- SOS Survey
- Focus Group
- Fall 2009 Advising Perceptions Study
Participated in a community based project (e.g. service learning) as part of a regular course

Overall, how would you evaluate the quality of academic advising you have received at your institution?

How would you evaluate your entire educational experience at this institution?

Understanding yourself

To what extent does your institution emphasize helping you cope with your non-academic responsibilities (work, family, etc.)
SOS Survey

Fall 2008  Fall 2009
Survey participation of enrolled students 77% 69%

Think the class should be required of all 68% (yes) 61% (yes) all incoming freshmen

Course impacted decision to remain at 33% (yes) 20% (yes) Mayville State

Top Topics
* Educational Planning and Decision Making 1 1
* Finding a Path to Your Future 1 3
* The Value of a Liberal Arts Education 2
* Life Management Skills (time and money) 2 5
* Improving memory and Test Performance 3 4
Feedback reflected much of what the Fall 2008 course survey revealed

Students thought a required text gave the course added merit but frustration was expressed if the text was utilized poorly

Morning class is not appealing – especially if prior to 10 AM

Activities made the class better – in and out of class
Fall 2009 Advising Perceptions Survey

- 137 Freshmen enrolled at time of study
- 113 completed survey (82% response rate)
- 104 enrolled in SOS (+1 no response indicated)
- 8 not enrolled
- After factor analysis, three constructs were identified including advisor concern, advisor contact, and advising relationship quality
- Between group comparisons did not yield significant results (although mean agreement was higher for those enrolled in SOS on the constructs of advisor concern and advising relationship quality)
What’s next

- Peer Leaders
- Review student feedback
- Bimonthly instructor meetings throughout spring
- Freshmen/SOS activities
- Advisor changeover event
- Spring student focus group
- Course content and text decisions
- Advisor/Instructor base solidified
Questions?

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