Creating Ownership: Increasing Communication with Faculty, Students, and Peer Mentors through Multi-Media

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- Two campuses
  - Traditional residential campus
  - Approximately 10,000 students (1,600 freshmen)
  - Student-to-Faculty ratio = 17:1
- Metropolitan commuter campus (no freshmen)

Residence Halls

- FYE Nights
- MAP Surveys

Common Reading

- FYE Courses
  - 35 departments; small class size (15-20 students); 80 faculty; 100 peer mentors
  - Freshmen are required to complete two FYE classes

Communication in FYE Residence Halls

- Previous - fliers & word-of-mouth
- Now - Facebook invites
  - UHDS twitter
  - Parent chats

- Increased Ownership
  - Facebook group

Communication with FYE Peer Mentors

- Previous - Seminar Format
  - E-mail
- Now - Powerpoint
  - E-mail
  - Facebook group

- Increased Ownership
  - Peer Mentor Coordinator Manual
  - Peer Mentor advertising

Communication with FYE Faculty Members

- Previous - Bi-annual training sessions
  - Weekly e-mail updates
  - FYE website on common reading
- Now - Bi-annual training sessions
  - WebCT section for Faculty
  - Monthly Newsletters
Twitter and Facebook Information

Twitter

Twitter describes itself as, “a service for friends, family, and co–workers to communicate and stay connected through the exchange of quick, frequent answers to one simple question: What are you doing?”

As you post a message of 140 characters or less it is posted directly to the wall of those people who have requested to follow your posts.

Ways to use Twitter

Cost reduction: Students connect to twitter. Connecting and advertising via Twitter often takes less time and a lot less money than a dedicated call center. With Twitter, it’s necessary to be short and to the point, which reduces the time needed to solve each problem.

Meet students where they are: Twitter is a lightning-fast platform that can help sift through and solve problems quickly. If it’s a small issue, a single tweet may be enough. For a more complex problem, the student can initiate a deeper conversation with the customer.

Positive image: Great connections and easy information access gets talked about, and this can lead to more attention being paid to your programming. Twitter is one of the most viral (quick and intentional spreading of information) platforms around.

Staff involvement: If the team does not buy into the notion of helping the student, they are going to provide sub-par assistance. Twitter is not only a more interesting platform than phone or email, but gives staff a better picture of their impact on others.

Facebook…So many options

Facebook is a social networking site that has the largest number of the America population connected. This can be used by professors to contact students. Also, this can be used by departments and organization to connect with students in a new way.

Facebook Profile

Profiles are the basic premise of Facebook. The profile is each individual's homepage. But you can include as much or as little as you want on this page. This can be a space to network including presenting your professional self. Also, this is a great way to keep in touch with many students.

Facebook Page

Pages can be used to keep your department or program in the front of people’s minds. Pages have the ability to have friends, they can add pictures, and they have walls (space for people to post topics) that fans can post on. Pages communicate by “updates” which show on the update tab or a person’s wall.
Facebook Group
Groups are great for organizing on a personal level and for smaller scale interaction around a cause. A group is set up and then you are able to invite all people to connect them together. You are also able to send messages out to the whole group.

The most important thing to remember with Facebook and Twitter is you should continue to update. Departments and organizations should have a person designated to communication with anyone who reaches out to you in this way.