

# It Takes A Village: Using Early Alert Assessment for Proactive Advising

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presentation at:  
<http://bit.ly/1uzQjL8>

Tuesday February 10, 2015

National First Year Experience Conference



**It  
takes a  
whole village  
to raise a child**



- African proverb

A wide-angle photograph of a university campus. In the foreground, a flower bed with white and red flowers is visible. The middle ground features a large green lawn flanked by rows of mature trees. In the background, a white building with a portico and a flagpole is visible under a cloudy sky.

# DILLARD UNIVERSITY

# Academics aren't everything

“Students fail to do well in college for a variety of reasons, and only one of them is lack of academic preparedness. Factors such as personal autonomy, self-confidence, ability to deal with racism, study behaviors, or social competence have as much or more to do with grades, retention and graduation than how well a student writes or how competent a student is in mathematics.”

(Boylan, 2006)



# How can we help develop these skills?

Based upon the work of Tinto (2004), Boylan (2001), and McGillin (2003), those seeking to improve success rates for academically underprepared students should lobby for a developmental education program that encompasses a three pronged approach that:

- lays the groundwork for success with effective academic advising;
- provides content and structure e.g., pre-college basic skills course, tutoring, and topical workshops;
- develops resilient students who, despite sometimes improbable circumstances, can succeed.



~~Reactive~~

Proactive

**Proactive  
(Intrusive)  
Advising**



# Proactive (Intrusive) Advising Strategies

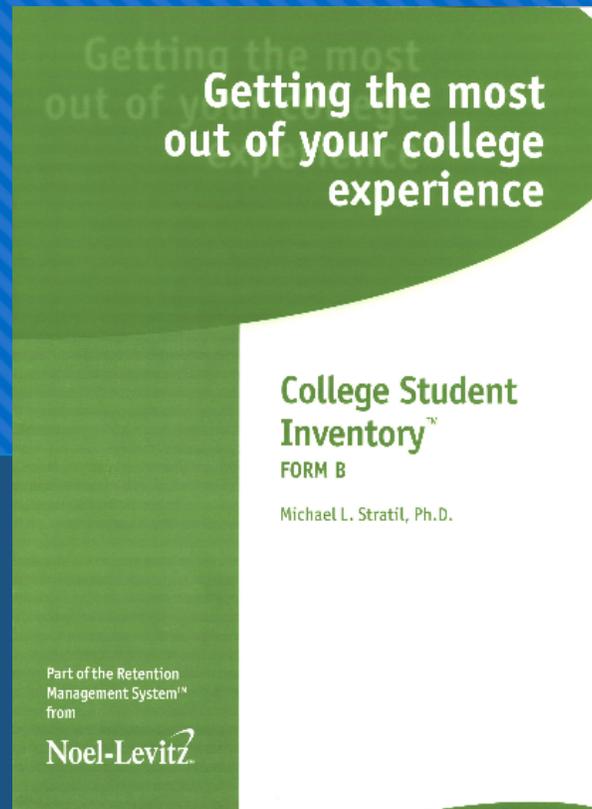
- Utilize appropriate assessment tools to determine student skills
- Employ open-ended questioning techniques
- Identify student strengths and skill deficits
- Be direct, empathetic and prescriptive when designing a plan to overcome skill deficits
- Recommend appropriate courses to students' current skill level
- Help students set short and long-term goals and develop action plans to achieve those goals.
- Introduce student programs, resources and groups (TRIO/SSS, career and writing centers, etc)
- Offer encouragement to boost students' self-concept in the academic environment



# Early Alert Assessment

- Early Alert programs help to facilitate dialogue among faculty, students and advisors
- Barriers to traditional Early Alert programs make it difficult to effectively implement them.
- Using an early alert assessment tool helps to eliminate some of those challenges and still have a mechanism to predict student difficulties and address need early on in the first-year.

# College Student Inventory



# The CSI...

- Used by 500 post-secondary institutions nationwide
- Designed specifically for incoming first-year students
- Provides 3 separate reports:
  - Summary & Planning Report
  - Advisor/Counselor Report
  - Student Report



# 3 Motivational Scales

- **Academic Motivation**
  - Study Habits, Intellectual Interests, Verbal Confidence, Math/ Science Confidence, Desire to Finish College, Attitude Toward Educators
- **General Coping Skills**
  - Sociability, Family Emotional Support, Opinion Tolerance, Career Closure, Sense of Financial Security
- **Receptivity to Support Services**
  - Academic Assistance, Personal Counseling, Social Enrichment, Career Counseling, Financial Guidance



# How do we use the CSI

- **Student Report**

- Students receive their reports in FYS
- First-Year Advisor meets individually with student to further discuss report

- **Advisor Report**

- Advisors review reports of all their students and identify students who are dropout prone

- **Summary Report**

- Summary report supports programming
- Outreach lists are provided to other departments



# CSI: A planning tool

- Pre-assessment of incoming class demographics/needs
  - Are there areas that need more attention?
  - Are there departments that need to be alerted?
- Diagnostic tool for individual students
- Partnership tool for building collaborative programs & services around identified student needs

# First-year Learning Communities & CSI

- Programming to meet identified student needs around CSI dimensions
  - Academic motivation
  - Family emotional support
  - Financial security, etc.
- Directed opportunities
  - School of Nursing
  - Developmental Learning Communities & Academic Skills Coordinator
- Foster opportunities for faculty-student interaction



# First-Year Seminar Redesign

- Textbook selections based on CSI data
  - Emotional Intelligence
  - Soft skills development
- Assignments
  - Autobiography
  - Mission Statement
  - Big Question
- FYS instructors



# CSI & Emotional Intelligence

## Emotional Intelligence Components

	SELF	OTHERS
Mindfulness	Self-Awareness ~ Filter ~ Identifying Emotions	Social Awareness ~ Understanding Others ~ Intent matching impact
Empowerment	Self-Management ~ Impulse Control	Relationship Management ~ Conflict Resolution ~ Collaboration and cooperation

INVENTORY ISSUES	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Students needing academic assistance	53%	52%	43%	33%	29%	32%	33%	37%	39%	38%	39%
Students who might benefit from personal counseling	44%	35%	59%	40%	29%	40%	44%	38%	40%	42%	39%

# Influences on Advising Model

- Baseline for advising conversation (understand students' specific life circumstances)
- Incorporation of life coaching in advising
- Incorporation of major and career exploration
- Centralization of ancillary resources that support advising (ALL forms come to us)



# Retention Results

- 1<sup>st</sup> year retention rate increased 16%
- Increase in students utilizing support services

	Fall 2014	Fall 2013	Fall 2012	Fall 2025 Goal
First-year enrollment	325	229	351	450
Overall student enrollment	1200	1187	1307	1800
First-year retention rate	74% (2013 cohort)	58% (2012 cohort)	67% (2011 cohort)	85% (standard)



# Creating Partnerships

- Division of Student Success

- Student Support Services
- Dean of Students
- Residential Life & Commuter Programs
- Chaplain's Office
- Counseling Center

- Academic Affairs

- FYS Instructors (student affairs professional staff)
- Institutional Research

- Division of Enrollment Services

- Admissions, Recruitment and Programming
- Financial Aid
- Business & Finance



# Student Integration Model for Success



# Stop ... Question time!

- What is your retention plan?
- Do you have a retention plan?
- Do you have a retention committee?
- Is your institution actively with other departments to improve retention?

# Academic Motivation

(Study Habits, Intellectual interest, Verbal confidence, math and science confidence, desire to finish college, attitude towards educators)

## Now

- Encourage students to attend existing workshops
- Talk about academic motivation during advising sessions
- Identification and connection to existing programs on campus (i.e. writing lab, math lab, and science lab)

## Future

- Collaborate with Student Support Services to strategically plan workshops to meet the needs of the incoming freshmen class
- Create an email group for students low on the motivation scale and send out weekly motivational statements.



# General Coping Skills

(Sociability, Family Emotional Support, Opinion Tolerance, Career Closure, & Sense of Financial Stability)

## Now

- Encourage students to attend existing counseling services and to participate social events on campus
- Integrated Emotional Intelligence and financial literacy lesson plans into the first-year seminar class

## Future

- Parent program- regular communication/updates with parents and conversations about expectations from student (Appropriate amount of independence)
- Include Financial Literacy class as an option for general education course
- Collaborate with Alumni services to create an alumni/student career day



# Receptivity to Support Services

(Academic Assistance, Personal counseling, social enhancement, career counseling and financial guidance)

## Now

- Capitalize on the rapport we built during the initial CSI meeting and are able to refer students to other services throughout the year
- Continuous exposure to support services and programming via advising sessions, first-year seminar class and convocation.
- Encourage students to attend career services events across campus.

## Future

- Students who have utilized these resources can discuss their experiences with support services in convocation
- Mentors can discuss in first year seminar class support services that they are involved with as well as services that they have used
- FERN (financial resource network) peer mentoring for financial literacy
- In general, increase peer mentor interactions

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