Retention Success

Growing 8% in 5 years!
Setting the Stage

• Who we are
• Who are you?
• What do you hope to learn today?
Otterbein University

• Small, private university
  – 2900 - Total enrollment
  – 2400 - Undergraduates
  – 600-650 – Typical Size of the First Year Class

• Profile
  – Average ACT – 24
  – 30% Pell Eligible
  – “A+ school for B students” Ranking from US News and World Report

• Westerville, Ohio (Suburb of Columbus, Ohio)
Starting to sense a Problem
The Start of a Problem

- University had grown complex.
- Everyone was responsible, which meant no one was responsible.
- By being “nice” we were causing more problems then helping.
Building Campus Support

- Retention Committee (up until 2009)
- Retention Task Force (2009-2010)
- Retention Council (2011-2015)
  – Establishment of the Center for Student Success
- New Vice President for Enrollment Management in 2012
Guiding Questions

• Where are the “low hanging fruit”/easy wins?
• Where are we getting in the way of student success?
• How do we engage others in the conversation?
Key Strategies

• Prior to enrolling at Otterbein:
  – Financial Aid Model
  – Admissions based interventions

• Infrastructure on Campus:
  - Creation of Center for Student Success
  - Launch of comprehensive FYE program
Key Strategies, cont.

- Interventions once they are enrolled:
  - Cardinal Concerns
  - Faculty Feedback
  - AMP Mentoring
  - Living Learning Programs
  - Cohort support
Prior to enrollment

• Financial Aid Model
  – Getting aid into the hands of the students who need it and cannot afford to be here
  – Focused recruitment as a mission-based initiative

• Shaping Admissions Process
  – Understanding admissions based interventions and using them appropriately
Infrastructure

• Establishment of the Center for Student Success
  – 2010
  – Initial charge was semester conversion advising
  – Long-Term goal for advising support and retention
  – Central coordination of Retention Efforts on campus
# Student Use Drove Growth

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Appointments</th>
<th>% that were unique</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13-14</td>
<td>821</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14-15</td>
<td>1187</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-16</td>
<td>1542</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-17</td>
<td>837 to date (1/30/17)</td>
<td>59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1730 Projected</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Timeline of Changes/Innovations

- July 2010 – Center founded
- July 2011 – Re-organization on campus brought ¾ time advisor to our office
- August 2011 – Temporary, part-time administrative assistant converted to full-time position
- August 2013 – Part-time Living Learning Coordinator hired
- April 2014 – ¾ time advisor converted to full-time
- August 2014 – Additional full-time advisor hired
- January 2015 – re-organization in Academic Affairs division brought one full-time administrative position to our office; part-time LLC position combined with another staff position (Went from 2.5 to 2.0 positions)
- July 2015 – re-organization brought Study Abroad Coordinator (1/2 time) to our office
- January 2017 – Job Share for Directors begins
First Year Experience

• Identified in 2008 strategic plan
• Coordinated launch with Semester conversion
• Two major components:
  – FYS
  – Co-Curricular Support
Cardinal Concerns

- Online form (early alert) that any member of the community can use to signal support for a student.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Year</th>
<th>Number of Concerns Submitted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012-2013</td>
<td>253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-2014</td>
<td>227</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-2015</td>
<td>274</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015-2016</td>
<td>426</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Faculty Feedback

• Formal process to solicit feedback from faculty each term about their students’ progress.
• Process timed to allow outreach prior to the final date to receive a W in their course(s).
• Collaboration between Registrar, Academic Support Center and the Center for Student Success.
## Sample Faculty Feedback

### Spring 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Total # of feedback</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total # of feedback</td>
<td>2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unique Students</td>
<td>1241</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Concerns</td>
<td>918</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Required Outreach</td>
<td>323</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Fall 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Total # of feedback</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total # of feedback</td>
<td>2131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unique Students</td>
<td>1349</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Concerns</td>
<td>997</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Required Outreach</td>
<td>352</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
AMP Mentoring

- Faculty/Staff Mentoring program for at-risk students
- Students are identified based on known risk indicators as they enter Otterbein
- Students and a faculty/staff member are matched
- Encouraged to meet throughout the year
AMP Mentoring
Living Learning Communities

• National trend to create dynamic, linked experiences for students.
• Combine their residential community with their FYS class.
• Themes: Leadership, Health and Wellness, Sports and Society, Radical Creativity
• Positive outcomes: students having positive experiences!
Living Learning Communities
Cohort Approach

• Looked at specific cohorts of students who are retaining less than the overall student population – designed interventions
  – Undeclared Students
  – Urban Districts
  – Students on Academic Probation
## Retention Success on Campus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Incoming Cohort</th>
<th>First to Second Year Retention Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010, n=653</td>
<td>75.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011, n=633</td>
<td>76.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012, n=559</td>
<td>76.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013, n=568</td>
<td>77.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014, n=560</td>
<td>81.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015, n=559</td>
<td>83.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lessons Learned

• Campus Culture shifts
  – BUT - Not everything impacts retention!
• Student Ready Campus vs. Students ready for college
• You don’t need (necessarily) fancy data analytics – the information is on your campus!
• Pilot programs are your friend!
• There is NOT a simple solution
How to Replicate?

• Who are your champions?
• What are the things you know cause problems and how can you address those?
• What opportunities exist to build campus support?
• Where are connections made (Between the real student experience and institutional policy/expectation)?
Questions?

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