N = 1: Defying Retention Convention
(Session 76-CI)

Kurt Stimeling, Dean of Students
Cathy Clark, Associate Vice President – Student Success Center
Introductions

Cathy Clark –
Associate VP for Student Success
Accommodative Services, Student Support Services, Tutoring, Study Skills, Time Management, First Year Seminar

Kurt Stimeling –
Dean of Students
Residence Life, Student Activities & Organizations, Student Center, Student Life and Engagement, Wellness and Campus Safety
Where is Clarkson?
Our Campus...
...during many months!
N=1

- Private
- 2600 undergraduates
- 400 graduate students
- 50% engineering
- 25% Business
- 21% Arts & Sciences
- Rural
- Research-driven
- Division 1 and 3 athletics
N=1
Defy Convention
Our Retention “Problem”

First Year to Sophomore Retention = 88%

Goal of 92% by 2014
So what’s the problem?
Defy Retention Convention

We had to rethink who impacts retention and how they can do it.
5 Target Populations

1. Overall population of freshmen
2. Separated and readmitted students
3. Incoming “at risk” based on numerous pre-matriculation data
4. Summer Pre-Calculus test scores
5. Late admitted students (last to come first to leave)
3 Overarching Strategies

1. Develop Advising models
2. Reform First-Year curricula
3. Intervention strategies for at-risk students
Advising Models

• School of Business offers a centralized professional advising

• Engineering school advising evolving
FY Curriculum

The BIG 3...the Trifecta:

Calculus, Chemistry, Physics
Intervention Strategies

- Academic Standing & Messages
- Fully integrate CSI and RT data across the university to identify all “at-risk” students to make connections to resources
- Intervention and recovery plan for students in academic jeopardy.
Intervention strategies: CU connect Mentoring program
College student inventory (csi)
Calling all Knights
Why mentor all First-Year students?
Offices represented

- Marketing
- Philanthropy Clarkson Fund
- VP Student Affairs
- Career Services
- CSTEP McNair Scholars
- Office of Technology
- Institutional Diversity
- Dean of Students Registrar
- Division of Research
- Financial Aid Alumni Relations
- Student Affairs
- Administrative Services
- Student Life
- Residence Life
- Athletics
- Higher Education Opportunity Program
Steps and timing...

1. Meet → first week of classes
2. Connect → within first month of classes
3. Support → mid-semester
4. Closure → end of semester
Step 1... Meet your students

- FYS class section
- FYS Interview Sheet
- Mentor contact information to students
- Tracking Mentees through Peoplesoft
College Student Inventory

CSI: 3 main categories:
1. Academic Motivation
2. General Coping Skills
3. Receptivity to Support Services

Additional background characteristics:
• high school GPA
• hours the student plans to work
• family educational background
Step 2...Connect

- Individual meetings to review CSI
- Integration and Action Plan
Step 3...support

Mid semester check-in individually or in a group.

Funds to support activities
Calling All Knights

- Contacted all first-year student families at the sixth week of the semester.

- Callers were student peer mentors, peer educators, RA’s and Knightline callers.
### Results...

#### Fall 2009

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<th>Conversations</th>
<th>Left messages/Responded</th>
<th>Follow up</th>
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#### Fall 2010

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<th>Left messages/Responded</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>236</td>
<td>302/5</td>
<td>15</td>
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Step 4... closure

- Wrap up communication via email
- Evaluation to student and mentor
- President’s Recognition
Do you feel you and your mentor made a connection?
268 = YES, 69 = NO, 22 = “OTHER”

• “Yes, I do feel that I made a connection with my staff mentor. She is a great woman and actually helped me get an on-campus job and was easy to talk to. It was great.”
• “Yeah, we tight”
• “So far, I have not contacted my mentor, but the idea of having one is good because there is someone to go to if I need to.”
• “I feel like we made a connection because I emailed her a lot, and every time she would email me back. When I see her around campus she always smiles and asks how I’m doing.”
Please don’t forget to complete your program evaluations.

Session 76-CI
Kurt Stimeling
Cathy Clark
“Project Success”

Targeting true “at risk” students in academic jeopardy.

Engineering specific changes: experiential course (pilot 11-12)