



The Gateway Student Success Center, located at the Northern Arizona University's campus in Flagstaff, is staffed by 19 full-time academic advisors, three advising coordinators, and one director.

Academic Advisors Embrace Technology to Help Students With Enrollment

"The advising shell was formatted to provide incoming students with information about the GSSC and to direct them to the content modules where advising tools are grouped into categories focused on orientation, enrollment, and support services."

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Located in Flagstaff, Northern Arizona University (NAU) is home to 31,073 students. Its Gateway Student Success Center (GSSC) is the hub for university advising and is staffed by 19 full-time academic advisors, three advising coordinators, and one director. The GSSC focuses primarily on first-year and exploratory students, and its mission is to help them transition to NAU and achieve the following learning outcomes:

- Identify a purpose at NAU with an academic plan, which includes a declared major that fits their skills and interests;
- Use a combination of tools to track students' academic progress, and select courses each term that are appropriate for university requirements, degree requirements, progression, and goals;

- Describe requirements, including courses or units for liberal studies distribution (a.k.a. general education) and foundation blocks;
- Show resiliency in navigating challenges; and
- Demonstrate an ability to build connections at NAU or in the larger Flagstaff community.

ADVISING STRUCTURE

Incoming students complete an enrollment profile each spring, which secures their placement in classes for their first term. Students then attend a mandatory orientation that includes a schedule review with an academic advisor.

One specific goal of the GSSC is to educate first-year students about future enrollment. Therefore, students complete advising sessions

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Figure 1 Advising contacts for incoming first-year students at Northern Arizona University

during the academic year to address enrollment, course selection, academic progression, and developmental questions (see Figure 1). As enrollment at NAU reached 6,614 first-year and exploratory students in Fall 2018, it became a challenge to meet with everyone who needed advisement. To help students persist into their sophomore year, GSSC staff sought innovative and creative new strategies to support student learning, development, and success. The search led to the creation of enrollment tutorial videos available in Blackboard Learn, NAU's learning management system.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE VIDEO TUTORIALS

GSSC staff created a course shell in Blackboard Learn to host video tutorials that coached incoming students on using NAU advising tools, which include (a) the academic catalog, (b) advisement reports, (c) Jacks Planner (a course selection tool), (d) degree progression plans, and (e) Jacks Scheduler (a course scheduling tool). All incoming students are enrolled in the course shell.

Creating the tutorials required evaluating each step needed, building the video scripts, working with NAU's Information Technology Services department to create the videos, reviewing the videos and giving feedback, and posting the tutorials to Blackboard Learn. The advising shell was formatted to provide incoming students with information about the GSSC and to direct them to the content modules where advising tools are grouped into categories focused on orientation, enrollment, and support services. Each tutorial averages less than two minutes, giving the student the option to watch them individually or in a sequence.

A social media marketing campaign was also developed to ensure incoming students were using the online modules to stay up to date on their enrollment responsibilities. Social media was chosen because previous engagement campaigns showed inconsistent student interaction with email, which led to them missing important information. As a result, student success had been affected when add, drop and withdrawal dates were not followed or when enrollment events were not attended.

GSSC staff created social media profiles on Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and Twitter to share important advising information as students scrolled through their newsfeeds. The goal of the social media campaigns was to bring advising awareness to first-year and exploratory students by (a) sharing NAU news, events, and important dates; (b) connecting them to campus resources; and (c) encouraging resiliency. A call to action was sent to students encouraging them to follow the GSSC on social media, and students began following within minutes.

The GSSC social media profiles initially were monitored by one academic advisor, but there is now a committee of seven. Staff use the Hootsuite social media marketing and management tool to schedule posts across all platforms to maintain message consistency and relevance, and to stay on students' newsfeeds. Each day is dedicated to information advisors found most important to students (e.g., #MotivationMonday, #TipTuesday, and #WednesdayWisdom). Thursdays featured departments across campus and advisor spotlights, and Fridays featured students with the hashtags #FreshmanFriday or #LumberjackTales. For example, #TipTuesday provided information such as navigating an advisement report, how to search for classes, or how to enroll in classes. In addition to text and pictures, videos of advisors were shared to make it more personable.

OUTCOMES

More than 6,096 students logged in to the GSSC advising module in May and Summer 2018, and 5,004 (82%) of them accessed the tutorial videos. Students spent a combined 5,860 hours in the online module, and more than 1,000 of the incoming students were able to enroll in their classes without visiting the GSSC. This significantly reduced the wait time at the GSSC and made in-person appointments available to students who preferred a face-to-face experience or who needed time to focus on more holistic and developmental components with advisors.

Staff tracked in-person visits and digital appointments during the enrollment period and noticed an increase in first-time visits by students who had partial (6 or more units) or full enrollment (12 or more units), compared to previous semesters when first-time visitors typically had no or low enrollment (3 units or less). Through follow-up discussions with students, advisors also indicated most (50%-75%) of their post-enrollment appointments had partially or completely used the tutorials, meaning the videos were being used at a time when the GSSC traditionally sees a lot of traffic. A survey was being compiled to identify students who used the online tutorial during the 2019 spring and summer terms, but those data are not yet available.

Social media data indicated GSSC's followers saw and engaged with the posts; the Facebook data also showed an increase of followers from about 300 to nearly 600 during the 2018-2019 academic year. GSSC staff used Facebook analytics to identify the best times to post (9 a.m. and



Incoming students attend orientation at Northern Arizona University's Gateway Student Success Center.

8:30 p.m.) and adjusted their content schedules accordingly. As of Spring 2020, the GSSC Instagram account had 988 followers. Using the polling element available through Instagram Story feature, staff learned that 85% of respondents found the posts useful. Enrollment reminders, campus events, motivational quotes, important deadlines, and advisor tips were the content students found most helpful.

DISCUSSION

Through video tutorials and social media engagement, GSSC staff leveraged technology to increase connections between advising and students. In the future, increased marketing should bring awareness to even more students, and the tutorials will be reviewed to make sure they are up to date. NAU college advising areas are also being encouraged to create their own mechanisms to use technology to further support students.

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Northern Arizona University academic advisors assist incoming students with tasks like registering for courses.



Screenshot from Northern Arizona University's Gateway Advising YouTube channel, where incoming students can learn more about advising tools.

First-Year College Transition Program Aims to Increase Sense of Belonging and Persistence Among Migrant Students

“... students who completed the Heartland CAMP first-year program said it provided them with opportunities and skills that helped them succeed academically.”

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Children of migrant, seasonal, and temporary farmworkers (MSFW) are an underserved student population in higher education in the United States (Zalaquett et al., 2007). MSFW students face a variety of barriers to college access including poverty, a lack of knowledge of the college-going process, and academic underpreparedness. The federally funded College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP) was created to support MSFW students in their transition to higher education.

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT: HEARTLAND COLLEGE ASSISTANCE MIGRANT PROGRAM (HEARTLAND CAMP)

The Heartland CAMP program is a grant-funded, college access and transition program for MSFW students that provides academic and financial supports to students from secondary school through their first year of college. Heartland CAMP serves four institutions in the Midwest: The University of Kansas in Lawrence, Kansas; Metropolitan Community College in Omaha, Nebraska; Western Iowa Tech Community College in Sioux City, Iowa; and Kansas City Kansas Community College in Kansas City, Kansas. Each of the Heartland CAMP institutions were strategically chosen based on the campus's proximity to large agricultural communities.

Using practices shown to be effective in helping first-generation, low-income (FGLI) students succeed in college, Heartland CAMP addresses low college enrollment, persistence, and graduation rates among MSFW students. The program achieves this through a two-pronged approach. First, it provides pre-college advising to MSFW high school students (i.e., campus visits, high school presentations, and college and FAFSA application assistance). Once eligible MSFW students are admitted to one of the four target institutions, Heartland CAMP provides academic, financial, and social supports throughout their first year. Supports include (a) living stipends; (b) student advising and guidance on the college systems (i.e., admissions, placement, and academic programs); (c) intensive academic advising, coaching, and tutoring; and (d) access to and connections with comprehensive institutional resources (i.e., computer/printing services, financial literacy supports), and assistance with financial aid applications and scholarship applications.

To understand students' interactions with the Heartland CAMP program, a mixed-methods evaluation study was conducted. In Spring 2019, evaluators partnered with Heartland CAMP staff to identify a purposive sample of highly engaged CAMP students



to participate in individual interviews. Participants were asked to share their perceptions and interactions with the Heartland CAMP staff to help staff better understand students' experiences with the program. Evaluators interviewed four participants using a semi-structured interview protocol. Each interview was audio recorded and transcribed for analysis. Results were analyzed using thematic analysis, a structured process for encoding data and identifying common themes. In addition to the qualitative interviews, evaluators also developed and distributed an online, anonymous survey using Qualtrics to current ($n = 19$) and former ($n = 9$) CAMP participants during Spring 2019. Using Likert scales, the survey asked CAMP students how frequently they engaged in meaningful campus activities (e.g., talk to a professor, receive tutoring), how often they encountered challenges (e.g., classes were too hard, felt lonely), and how satisfied they were with CAMP components (e.g., financial aid advising, sense of community with fellow students). The following section highlights the key findings extrapolated from the evaluation study.

INTENSIVE ADVISING HELPED STUDENTS DEVELOP SELF-SUFFICIENT HABITS

The majority of respondents were satisfied with the advising services they received from their Heartland CAMP advisor (see Table 1). Specifically, students felt the CAMP advisors helped them address financial and social obstacles they faced. While survey responses

were overwhelmingly positive, financial-aid advising was one area where current and former Heartland CAMP participants reported the least amount of satisfaction.

MSFW students who completed the Heartland CAMP first-year program said it provided them with opportunities and skills that helped them succeed academically. Former participants developed self-directed behaviors like setting goals, seeking help, and time management (see Table 2). According to one student, the

with student groups and make friends, thereby laying a foundation for feeling like they belonged on campus. Heartland CAMP held regular social events for its participants (e.g., potluck dinners, study parties). More than 75% of current and former participants were “satisfied” with the sense of community within Heartland CAMP. One interviewee paraphrased how the program improved their connections to campus and sense of belonging: “[Heartland CAMP] showed me I’m not the only one. It’s not bad to go look for help.”

Table 1
Satisfaction With Intensive Advising Components

Student status	Amount of time spent w/ Heartland CAMP advisors	Career path advising	Advising on available health/psychological services	Study skills advising	Financial aid advising	Sense of community among HCAMP students
Current (n = 19)	87.5%	93.3%	73.3%	80.0%	66.7%	86.7%
Former (n = 9)	66.7%	75.0%	88.9%	77.8%	77.8%	77.8%

Note. Responses on a 3-point Likert scale where 1 = Dissatisfied, 2 = Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, and 3 = Satisfied

Table 2
Perceived Benefits of Program Participation

Looking back on my freshman Heartland CAMP experience, the program helped me...	
Set goals for myself	88.9%
Communicate my needs to others	77.8%
Make friends	66.7%
Use good time management skills	66.7%
Get involved with non-HCAMP student groups and clubs	66.7%

Note. Responses on a 3-point Likert scale where 1 = Disagree, 2 = Neither agree nor disagree, and 3 = Agree

intensive advising component was an extremely beneficial part of the program: “They are great listeners. They have helped me open up and helped me with my stress.” The program’s advising model not only helped students navigate their academic courses but also provided an outlet for students to develop critical intrapersonal skills (e.g., stress management) needed to successfully navigate the transition into higher education.

INCREASED SOCIAL CONNECTIONS FOSTERED A SENSE OF BELONGING

Heartland CAMP students reported having family and work duties in addition to their academic workload and felt isolated or lonely at times on campus. Current Heartland CAMP participants had substantial time commitments, with the majority indicating they worked part-time, volunteered part-time, and stayed home to help with family responsibilities. More than half of current Heartland CAMP students said they worked to provide funds to family members, provided childcare to family members, helped to translate for family members, and helped with family finances or health-related documents on a weekly or daily basis.

In spite of their off-campus responsibilities, survey respondents reported they regularly (i.e., daily or weekly) communicated with their Heartland CAMP advisors and professors. Surveys also showed that Heartland CAMP helped participants get involved

Despite this high level of satisfaction, 22% of former participants “disagreed” that program participation helped them feel like they belonged on campus. This finding suggests that sense of belonging is a nuanced factor that may change as students move between and within social groups on campus.

IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTITIONERS

While MSFW students are a small segment of the college population, they face unique challenges to college access and success. Programs that target MSFW students and use interventions proven effective with FGLI students are a promising development. Practitioners should understand that these students face financial barriers before and during the college-going process. It is especially important that these students have access to FAFSA assistance, because if they are selected for FAFSA verification, research suggests they will be put at risk of not completing the college enrollment process (Warick, 2018). Intervention programs should include financial-aid advising and a stipend, whenever possible. MSFW students are often students of color (The National Center for Farmworker Health, 2012) who remain underrepresented in higher education (Delgado & Becker Herbst, 2018) and may feel unsupported and marginalized on campus (McDonough, 2005). These factors negatively affect their sense of belonging in college, a vital factor in college retention and graduation (Strayhorn, 2012).

While MSFW students often find it difficult to fit in on campus, more than 75% of current and former Heartland CAMP participants reported a key benefit to the program was the sense of community it fostered. Based on this finding, it is recommended that outreach programs designed specifically for MSFW students should include structured opportunities to connect participants with peers who share similar backgrounds and have overcome similar obstacles.

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Bridging the Gap: Equipping Marginalized Students for Success in Higher Education

"Participants leave the program feeling more connected to faculty, staff, and their peers and better prepared to engage in the academic and social transitions that accompany the college experience."

KYLE PHILLIPS, PROGRAM ASSOCIATE, OFFICE OF STUDENT SUCCESS AND TRANSITION, *BEREA COLLEGE*

It should come as no surprise to higher education practitioners that success rates remain low for first-generation, low-income (FGLI) undergraduates. Recent data from the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators (NASPA) indicates that 56% of first-generation students do not hold a higher education credential after six years (NASPA, 2019), and Johns Hopkins University's Institute for Educational Policy has found that low-income college students graduate at a rate of just 14% (Bjorklund-Young, 2016). Relatedly, FGLI students continue to report feelings associated with the imposter syndrome, defined by NASPA as "persistent self-doubt and fear of exposure as a fraud that causes many first-generation students to doubt their own abilities" (Dickson, n.d.).

Located in Madison County, Kentucky, Berea College is a small, four-year liberal arts institution. It is unique in that it solely admits low-income college students, the majority of whom come from first-generation households. Berea grants each admitted student a full-tuition scholarship in exchange for service in a campus labor position ranging from office assistants to groundskeepers.

Given the bleak outlook for students of similar backgrounds, Berea has established a deep commitment to providing services and resources to support an otherwise marginalized student population. As part of these efforts, the college's Office of First-Year Initiatives in 2014 piloted a summer bridge program, Berea Bridge, that sought to combat the dangers associated with imposter syndrome while also connecting its participants with academic and community support. At an institution that typically enrolls approximately 500 first-year students per year, Berea Bridge has served more than 300 incoming students over five years, with promising retention rates among its participants when compared to non-participants and among similar demographics nationwide.

STRATEGIES AND PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Information about Berea Bridge is sent in a welcome packet to each admitted student after they confirm their intention to attend Berea College. Newly admitted students who are interested in the program can submit their name to a lottery system that selects the participants. The lottery system typically gets about 150 entries from the incoming class; it was designed to prevent overwhelming the program's resources by limiting the number of participants while also ensuring an equal chance for students who are interested. The number of students in the Berea Bridge cohorts has fluctuated over the years, but the current model chooses 60 incoming students. The lottery selection is largely randomized, but efforts are taken by Berea Bridge staff to ensure the cohort is representative of the larger Berea College student population.

Always cognizant of the college's unique mission to admit only students of limited financial means, Berea Bridge was designed to be free for its participants. The program runs four weeks over the summer preceding students' official start at the college. Travel



Past participants in Berea College's summer bridge program have enjoyed kayaking and other activities to build positive relationships among one another and with college faculty and program staff.

reimbursements are given to allow each participant to travel to campus. Students are also provided campus housing, a meal plan, and a modest stipend for incidentals.

The Berea Bridge program is designed to reflect a typical Berea College experience: Students are assigned a work position for which they are paid, are enrolled in courses rooted in both humanities and quantitative sciences, and given opportunities to engage with the larger campus community.

Bridge students also embark on frequent outings as a cohort in order to foster positive relationships among one another and with college faculty and program staff. Past outings have included high-ropes challenge courses, kayaking, and volunteer work. The program was also designed to foster relationships and community through a living-learning community by housing all of the participants in the same residence hall and randomizing roommate assignments.

Berea Bridge students are held to high academic standards for the two courses they take during the bridge term. The courses are in a variety of disciplines and are specifically designed and reserved for participants. Each course uses a teaching assistant (TA), an upper-division student with proven success and an interest in assisting lower-division students. Bridge TAs also serve as peer mentors, meeting with students both individually and in small groups to discuss academic or personal concerns, and resident leaders in the program's living-learning community.

RESULTS

Promising results have emerged for retention and academic performance over the program's first five years, which are supported by encouraging testimonials from program participants. The average first-to-second year retention rate for Berea Bridge participants is 89.7%, compared to 83.4% for non-bridge

participants (Berea College, 2018). Another encouraging result is the first-to-second year retention rates of its male participants (84.5%) compared with a 75.3% rate for non-bridge male students (Berea College, 2018).

Program leaders also gather participant feedback at the conclusion of each summer. A survey collects responses on both the overall program and on its narrower aspects, and responses indicate all participants feel they were better prepared for the rigors of college than they were before the program:

- “Berea Bridge was my very first welcome to Kentucky, with all its glory and collegiate life. It was, in fact, a bridge that connected me with a world full of acceptance, opportunity, and reality. It was a challenging, yet rewarding experience that helped me see how much I could grow with the education I was about to receive once I began classes that fall” (2014 participant).
- “I was terrified to go to a new place where I didn’t know anyone. Bridge gave me the opportunity to make connections in a new place. I was lucky that I could lean on and count on [friends] after the Bridge program. The program pushed me to be more critical and analytical of my studies. I honestly think without the program and skills I learned that I wouldn’t have made it through Berea” (2015 participant).

These sentiments and retention rates underscore Berea Bridge’s success meeting its primary goal to build community, academic skills, and a sense of support for incoming students. Participants

leave the program feeling more connected to faculty, staff, and their peers and better prepared to engage in the academic and social transitions that accompany the college experience.

IMPLICATIONS AND PROGRAM REVISIONS

One of the challenges program staff have faced since Berea Bridge’s inception is finding the ideal cohort size. It began with 30 students, was expanded to 60, and was expanded again to 90 students in 2019. To maximize the number of students served while preserving the quality of the program as a whole, Berea Bridge will drop back to 60 students moving forward. This decision was made by program leaders after serving 90 students created difficulties in protecting the intentional design of the program to offer a close-knit, intimate learning community that promotes belongingness and responsive academic support.

Discussions are ongoing with Berea Bridge faculty to foster deeper relationships between the instructors and their TAs with the goal of creating an environment that allows for close collaboration to continue the learning process beyond the classroom. Faculty have also indicated a desire to personally select their TAs and for an additional opportunity to train and collaborate with TAs prior to the arrival of Bridge students.

Berea Bridge faculty have also underscored the importance of having sufficient class time to build academic and study skills with students, and how staff and TAs could be key resources in the development of those skills.

With these potential modifications in mind, Berea Bridge is poised to build on its success with matching incoming, at-risk students to the support, community, and expectations needed to successfully transition them to college.

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Berea Bridge seeks to connect participants with academic and community support and also build relationships through team exercises like this ropes course.

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Summer Transitions: Accelerating College Readiness for Rural Students

“This summer bridge program encouraged early and continued interactions with peer, staff, and faculty, which helped students prepare for the academic rigor of a full-time course load, and it also supported them in their transition to college.”

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Many rural students come from communities where a college education is neither necessary nor valued. The values associated with colleges and universities might even be perceived to be antithetical to those of rural areas. Rural students, then, are often faced with a choice to either leave much of their rural identities behind to succeed in higher education or maintain their rural identities and never fully integrate into college life. Educational programming and advising that acknowledges and builds upon students' lived experiences, while helping them align those experiences to post-college life, can lead to positive outcomes for students from rural backgrounds.

There has been increased interest in proactive career counseling for groups, such as first-generation students, to help with that alignment. Eismann (2016) suggested that first-generation students are far less likely to enroll in career-oriented majors and that they could benefit from targeted outreach and earlier career counseling. Maietta (2016) further suggested that first-generation students would benefit from a holistic admissions process that could walk students and their families through the available financial resources, academic support, and career services. Recruiting trips and summer bridge programs can provide these supports by assisting students with their transition from high school to higher education. Summer bridge programs are a useful support tool during an exciting and somewhat stressful time, especially for first-generation students from rural backgrounds.

BUILDING A SUMMER BRIDGE

A transitional bridge and scholarship pilot program called the Accelerate Student Achievement Program (ASAP) was created at the University of Arkansas in 2016. Its goal was to increase college completion and career readiness among underrepresented students from the Arkansas Delta region and other rural state communities that demonstrated low retention and completion rates and often faced high unemployment rates.

In 2015, the 26-county region had an 8.6% unemployment rate compared to a 5.6% state unemployment rate and 5.7% national unemployment rate (Arkansas Labor Market, 2015). In 2016, the first-year retention rate among incoming students from the 26 counties was 83%, with first-generation and low-income students from the region seeing a 75% retention rate. In 2016, the four-year graduation rate of incoming students from the ASAP region was

48.2%, and the six-year rate was 62.9%. For low-income and first-generation students, these rates were 34% and 50.4%, respectively.

The purpose of the ASAP program was to:

- extend early and personalized academic, financial, and career guidance;
- provide a seven credit-hour summer learning experience to introduce college-level work, help students prepare to navigate the academic rigor of a full-time course load, and encourage their early and strong connections with peers, staff, and faculty;
- support participants holistically in their transition to college with learning cohorts and course sequences, academic coaching and mentoring, living and learning communities, and social programming and campus connections;
- inspire students to strive for academic and career excellence;
- promote economic development in under-resourced Arkansas communities by preparing graduates for work in high-demand fields; and
- improve retention and graduation among a cohort of students whose predicted rates of persistence and completion are historically lower than the general student population.

ASAP recruitment efforts followed recommendations by Eismann (2016) and Maietta (2016) by conducting targeted outreach to underrepresented areas and by discussing college admissions processes with students and their families throughout the Arkansas Delta region. Outreach goals included increasing college access and helping students form realistic college expectations by providing insight on daily college life, academic workloads, and information on student support services. Schools within the 26-county region served by ASAP received tailored outreach based on their needs and interests in college admissions counseling and college readiness support. For example, because ASAP-eligible students represented first-generation and/or low-income students, they received assistance applying for financial aid and college planning. Students are randomly selected as ASAP Scholars from the total population of admissible students from the Arkansas Delta region, and 82 students were chosen in the program's first year. Students also received early advising assistance, which helped them select courses and complete initial academic planning. ASAP students

attended new student orientation as a cohort to help build personal relationships with other first-generation students.

PROGRAM SUCCESS

Two benchmark goals were set for the first cohort of ASAP Scholars: (a) 90% of the cohort completing seven credit hours during the summer bridge and (b) 60% of the cohort earning a 3.0 GPA.

Goal 1. All 82 ASAP Scholars were enrolled in seven summer credit hours, which 73 (89%) completed during the summer program. The nine students who did not complete seven hours had dropped one or more of the courses due to academic rigor/workload or concerns about grades. Each of the 82 students completed the summer program and continued to the fall semester.

Goal 2. The average summer GPA for this first ASAP cohort was 3.3, with 72% of ASAP Scholars (52 students) earning a 3.0 or higher.

A 2018 report on ASAP retention from the University of Arkansas Office of Retention and Graduation found:

- ASAP participants continued to their second year at higher rates than their eligible nonparticipant peers at every incoming GPA below 3.8.
- ASAP participants who were Pell-eligible continued to the second year at a rate 6.7 percentage points higher than that of Pell-eligible nonparticipants.
- ASAP participants who entered college without AP credit were retained to the second year at a rate 6.9 percentage points higher than did eligible nonparticipants without AP credit.
- Among ASAP and eligible non-ASAP students with college credit earned in high school and among those without, ASAP participants retained at higher rates than the nonparticipant group.

A survey was given after the program's first year, and 60% of the students participated. Responses indicated ASAP was very helpful to the participants' college transition, with results showing the highest scale score for "very helpful" was the most common response. ASAP Scholars were pleased most with staff mentoring and least with the requisite study hours (10 per week; Yingling, 2018).

Another aspect of the program's success was the importance of partnering with the university's Office of Admissions to support the ASAP Scholars' transition to college. An admissions counselor was assigned as the lead for program recruitment and the initial university point of contact for students. This counselor worked with students on their university admissions applications, summer program applications, and had a continual presence as students transitioned into and through their first semesters. Students reported this experience as a meaningful and helpful part of their transition from high school to the university.

ASAP also increased cross-campus collaboration. Departments that had limited communication in the past were communicating on a regular basis to ensure students received the best possible support: College-based academic advisors, the Office of Admissions, general-education faculty, the Multicultural Center, and the Office of Student Success collaborated on ASAP Scholars' summer and fall schedules, their summer programming experiences, and fall workshops. Creating this summer bridge program for first-generation college students also encouraged the University of Arkansas campus to heighten their focus and support of it. For example, faculty created customized courses in history, theatre, sociology, FYE, and wellness. Students were invited to networking

events with an opportunity to engage with campus leadership, faculty, and advisors.

FUTURE IMPLICATIONS

This program demonstrated how a dedicated effort to provide early and personalized academic, financial, and career guidance can produce tangible academic results for first-generation and/or low-income students. This summer bridge program encouraged early and continued interactions with peer, staff, and faculty, which helped students prepare for the academic rigor of a full-time course load, and it also supported them in their transition to college. Another of ASAP's accomplishments was the access it provided to academic coaching, mentoring, and campus connections, which may have helped increase participants' self-confidence and sense of academic ability. ASAP helped inspire participants to strive for academic excellence as they began their academic careers as first-generation students. This program successfully provided a learning opportunity for students whose predicted rates of persistence have been historically lower than the general student population.

Bridge programs like ASAP should focus summer programs on students who could potentially drop out from higher education and on equipping them with the resources they need to persist. A summer bridge program's goals should evolve to help students with the logistical details of college (e.g., filling out FAFSA forms, developing study skills) and with identifying how a college education fits into their future. Bridge programs should help underrepresented students by giving them opportunities to (a) acclimate to the collegiate environment, (b) increase their academic readiness, (c) access academic support programs and services, (d) promote self-efficacy and persistence, and (e) create opportunities for mentoring, inclusion, and social integration (Grace-Odeleye & Santiago, 2019). These programs are more critical for students from traditionally disadvantaged backgrounds (i.e., low socioeconomic strata, first-generation, and under-prepared; Castleman & Page, 2014; DeAngelo & Franke, 2016; Grace-Odeleye & Santiago, 2019; Murphy et al., 2010).

Overall, students from the 26 counties who participated in this program had increased retention rates even though their academic performance was lower than non-participants. They lived together on campus and took summer classes before their first year and received extra peer and faculty mentoring throughout the regular school year. This might suggest that social integration and perceived institutional commitment to student success are valuable to overall success, if not to success in any individual course.

The ASAP program has demonstrated that summer bridge programs can create meaningful opportunities for first-generation students who are preparing for the academic rigors of college. Moreover, ASAP's outcomes confirm that summer bridge programs can enrich the educational outcomes for first-generation students by providing them programs to assist their transition to college.

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E-Source for College Transitions (ISSN 1545-5742) is published three times a year by the National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition at the University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC 29208. The National Resource Center has as its mission to support and advance efforts to improve student learning and transitions into and through higher education.

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