

DANVILLE AREA COMMUNITY COLLEGE
UNDERREPRESENTED GROUPS REPORT 2017

Institutional Practice/Topic #1: Mandatory Advisement Project

Purpose, Goal, or Objective

In 2014 DACC elected to develop and implement a Mandatory Advisement Process as our required HLC Quality Project. Once the project proposal was approved by the Higher Learning Commission, the College embarked on a journey to change the culture of advisement on our campus. First and foremost, the goal was to develop and implement Advisement & Counseling services that meet the needs of today's community college student with respect to the student learning process including individualized education/career plans, retention, timely completions, fiscal management, and student satisfaction. To develop our capacity to change the College's culture, intensive advisement training was required for our current advisors/counselors, as well as, training for all faculty and staff. The culture shift was needed to provide academic advisement and counseling services to all certificate and degree seeking students, reduce the barriers to timely completions, and increase the overall success and satisfaction of our students. It was/is a project that has the potential to move the needle in the right direction.

Date of Implementation

Elements of the Mandatory Advisement Project were initiated in Fall 2014 and continued through FY2014-15 and FY2015-16. The project's strategies will evolve through FY 2016-17 and FY2017-18 as well.

Description of Program Elements or Strategies that Make the Program Successful

The project incorporates philosophies that work toward systemic change, especially with respect to the following:

- Integrated systems to eliminate silos between departments, student services and classrooms;
- A culture of shared advisement that is embraced by the entire campus;
- Case-management techniques that incorporate value added check-in points; and
- Student-centered research to introduce strategies that increase equitable outcomes by reducing the performance gaps between two main groups: 1) part-time vs. full-time students and 2) Pell-Eligible vs Not Pell-Eligible students. All underrepresented groups are served under the two categories.

Specifically, the purpose of the Mandatory Advising process was designed to assist students, campus-wide, in actively engaging in their advisement experience through appreciative and intrusive advising, and by helping our students develop, define, evaluate, and achieve their academic and career goals. This process is a shared process where students, advisors and faculty work together in meeting the student's educational goals. It was also designed to help students develop the ability to make informed, responsible decisions towards successful goal attainment, while utilizing free and available resources, and, preserving financial resources. To transform our processes and students, we chose to focus on first-time, full-time and part-time students, who are seeking a degree or certificate.

Evidence of Success

Policy & System Changes Made Since the Start of the Project in Fall 2014:

- All certificate and degree seeking students are now required to go through Advisement & Counseling. In the past, only full-time students were required. With a large discrepancy between the retention of full-time vs. part-time students, the policy was changed to require part-time students to do the same as full-time.
- Additional Academic Advisor hired to focus on bridging campus/community resources for students.
- In the past, Advisors only met with students one time per semester during the registration period. Now, timely, structured contacts initiated by the Advisors are made with students throughout the semester.
- To help staff/faculty better understand our students' perspectives and barriers, various trainings have been completed by staff and faculty:
 - Advisors & Counselors are training through the nationally recognized NACADA group.
 - Bridges Out of Poverty training for staff/faculty
 - Investigations into Economic Class training for students and staff.
- Implemented Embedded Advisement in developmental math sections with two advisors visiting the classroom regularly.
- Introduced and implemented an electronic early alert/retention system to implement more timely services. To date, faculty and staff have embraced the new system based on the number of reports received and services provided.

Institutional Practice/Topic #2: Providing the Getting Ahead Curriculum through our INST 101 Success in College course onsite at the Danville Housing Authority

Purpose, Goal, or Objective

To help students who have grown up in generational poverty be successful in the classroom and attain their desired college credential, DACC pledged to help participants turn what was once a core barrier into understanding and coping skills for the future. The Getting Ahead curriculum, part of Ruby Payne's aha! Process, guides students through an investigation of the impact of economic class on their lives. It helps them build resources to successfully navigate the complex worlds of college and the workplace, plan for a brighter future for themselves and their families, and contribute to a sustainable community. Individuals who grow up in generational poverty learn to understand and adopt successful life strategies and function effectively in the middle class environment of education and employment. Students work to understand the mental models of generational poverty, along with the mental models of the middle and the upper classes, and learn to apply these concepts to their own environment.

The Getting Ahead curriculum:

- Involves rigorous work completed in a safe learning environment with the support of an experienced facilitator.
- Enables participants to examine their own experience of poverty as well as explore issues in the community that impact poverty – banking, housing, jobs, transportation. These insights provide critical information the community can use to take action to end poverty.
- Guides students/investigators through an assessment of their own resources and how to build those resources as part of their move to self-sufficiency.
- Puts the concepts, tools, and relationships in their hands to make a difference in their own lives and in the life of their community.
- Addresses the community as a whole by encouraging social service agencies which provide support to the same populations to use a common methodology; teaching employers to better respond to employees to reduce turnover; and helping schools to find strategies to help more students graduate.

Date of Implementation Fall 2015, Spring 2016, and thereafter

Description of Program Elements or Strategies that Make the Program Successful

While the initial course offerings were provided on the DACC campus, the College decided to partner with the Danville Housing Authority (DHA) and provide the course onsite at one of our federal housing project locations, Fair Oaks in Danville. Taking the course/curriculum/services to the environment that students are comfortable in has proved to be very successful to date based on student success, demand for additional sections/services, and feedback from the DHA. The outcomes witnessed include individuals from generational poverty learning how to function effectively in the middle class education/employment settings and the employment/educational support provided by the community. The curriculum works to influence the mindsets and actions of everyone involved - the students in poverty, social service agencies, the college, community leaders, and businesses and employers. The College and DHA utilize the Getting Ahead learning environment as a systemic approach to address the devastating effects of generational poverty on families and individuals in our community; to define strategies for change that are based on research; and to outline specific community roles and responsibilities for creating a sustainable community.

Evidence of Success

- Course completion and success increased when offered onsite at the housing complex: 100% course success onsite vs. 64% course success on campus
- 58% of the participants continued to meet with DACC instructor for an additional 5 weeks to follow-up with the life plans created during the program; both resumes and continuing education plans were developed.
- Community Leader support was developed through interactions with the class/students leading to mentoring and internship opportunities for completers. Two students were hired by local organizations.
- Danville Housing Authority contributed \$5000 to the course for instructional materials and supplies.
- Additional Getting Ahead INST 101 course sections have been offered, completed and planned.
- Qualitative data was extracted from the participants to scale-up the program in FY 2017. Transportation, computer literacy, employment preparation, and equipment needs were identified and supplied. Vermilion County Works (Danville's Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act/WIOA entity), GED classes, computer literacy through Community Education, and Small Business Development Center services are all active partners/services onsite now.