2015 – 2020 ACTION PLAN
STUDENT ACADEMIC SUPPORT SERVICES
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Student Academic Support Services

MISSION
At Nevada State College, excellence fosters opportunity. Student Academic Support Services, in turn, fosters opportunity—the ability to positively impact student lives through academic advising, tutoring, disability services, orientation, and peer to peer mentorship.

ANNUAL GOALS
1. Integrate evidence-based, developmental coaching approach in all academic support services
2. Implement self-service degree pathway software
3. Implement Milestones in Advising
4. Improve and expand programs that maximize the power of peer support
5. Implement a system of assessment and evidence-based improvement for all academic support areas
6. Expand & improve student orientation
7. Implement intentional block scheduling
8. Assess and address college readiness of incoming students
9. Develop a strategic initiative plan to increase utilization of NSC/CSN Transfer Office
10. Cultivate, implement and publicize advising mission, vision and key outcomes
11. Expand and improve supplemental instruction and structured learning assistance
12. Incorporate technology to increase quality and accessibility of academic support

ACTION PLAN ITEMS AND ALIGNMENT

OPPORTUNITY

○ Implement self-service degree pathway software
  In conjunction with Information & Technology Services, implement “Guided Pathways to Success (GPS)” degree planning software that empowers students to make informed course selections while accounting for a year-round degree plan, semester course availability, completed coursework, and student availability.
  • Eliminate institutional barriers and facilitate students' progress towards degree completion (e.g. develop two year schedules of courses, expand year round and accelerated course offerings) (1.6)
  • Integrate tools that provide real-time success-oriented feedback to faculty and students (e.g., predictive analytics) (1.8)
    ○ Data from software can help faculty members provide optimal class schedules based on student availability/preference trends and degree requirement needs.
  • Direct students along ideal degree-completion pathways with prescribed curricular sequences and automated scheduling guidance (1.10).

○ Implement Milestones in Advising
Collaborate with faculty and academic support staff to identify and guide students to the achievement of milestones that reflect timely and meaningful steps towards degree completion. Utilize Hobson’s and PeopleSoft to launch communication and automated “nudging” campaigns facilitate students’ degree progress and generates lists for academic advisors to proactively outreach to students who are not on track towards milestones.

- Eliminate institutional barriers and facilitate students’ progress towards degree completion (e.g. develop two year schedules of courses, expand year round and accelerated course offerings (1.6)
- Integrate tools that provide real-time success-oriented feedback to faculty and students (e.g., predictive analytics) (1.8)
  - Missed milestone trends that emerge from the data can inform curricular redesign and/or emphasis in lower level courses with the aim to increase student’s confidence and willingness to take necessary milestone courses.
- Implement block scheduling for 1st and 2nd year students (1.9)
- Direct students along ideal degree-completion pathways with prescribed curricular sequences and automated scheduling guidance (1.10).
- Implement proactive outreach advising (1.20).
  - Advisors can outreach to students flagged for being “off track” and help strategize with tutors, course assistants, peer mentors and other personnel to help students get back “on track.”
- Develop mechanisms that allow advisors to provide feedback collected from students to department chairs, deans, admissions and records, and other important stakeholders (1.27).
  - General themes that emerge from advising sessions with students who are missing milestones can provide information that faculty can use to improve student preparedness for future milestones.

1. Improve and expand programs that maximize the power of peer support

Continue to expand the scope of academic assistance that is actively integrated into the student experience, particularly in the form of the course assistant program and expand the peer mentorship program, particularly for first-year and at-risk students.

- Implement proactive outreach advising (1.20).
- Improve collaborative efforts involving learning support services and teaching faculty (1.22).
- Expand the use of supplemental instruction and structured learning assistance (1.23).
- Capitalize on the value of peer support (peer mentorship program; in-class course assistants) (1.25).
- Bolster interactions between incoming students and successful, experienced students and alumni (2.11).

2. Implement a system of assessment and evidence-based improvement for all academic support areas

Develop and implement a system of assessment that incorporates: 1) on-the-spot student feedback (e.g., point of service evaluations); 2) comprehensive student feedback (i.e., annual services of student satisfaction); and 3) direct measures of student success (e.g., retention and credit accumulation). Use results to guide improvement to academic support services.

- Establish on-the-spot assessment of student satisfaction of experiences with academic assistance personnel (1.26).
• Develop mechanisms that allow advisors to provide feedback collected from students to department chairs, deans, admissions & records, and other important stakeholders (1.27).

  ○ **Expand & improve student orientation**
    In collaboration with academic and student affairs professionals, identify essential practices and knowledge that must be imparted to students, both through an initial orientation session and ongoing efforts to prepare students for success (e.g., preparation for transition to the major). Develop orientation presentations for specific populations (e.g., pre-nursing students) that allow faculty and staff to cover topics that instill desired perspectives (e.g., the importance of critical thinking) and direct students towards important milestones.
    • Direct students along ideal degree-completion pathways with prescribed curricular sequences and automated scheduling guidance (1.10).
    • Expand virtual and on-demand academic assistance opportunities (1.11).
    • Implement proactive outreach advising (1.20).
    • Develop mechanisms that allow advisors to provide feedback collected from students to department chairs, deans, admissions and records, and other important stakeholders (1.27).
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  ○ **Implement intentional block scheduling**
    Collaborate with deans/chairs and academic faculty to create 12 to 15 credit blocks of courses for students in their 1st and 2nd years at NSC. Where possible, align blocks with student goals (e.g., particular elements of a degree plan) and scheduling availability (e.g., separate blocks for different days of the week and morning vs. afternoon schedules).
    • Implement block scheduling for 1st and 2nd year students (1.9).
    • Direct students along ideal degree-completion pathways with prescribed curricular sequences and automated scheduling guidance (1.10).

  ○ **Assess and address college readiness of incoming students**
    Administer a robust, well-validated assessment tool (e.g., the Noel Levitz College Readiness Survey) to identify the academic and non-cognitive risk factors faced by incoming NSC students and use the results to guide the development of support services and proactive outreach.
    • Redesign placement procedures—including preparedness for online instruction and technology utilization—through enhanced predictive models and the examination of alternative methods (1.17).
    • Implement proactive outreach advising (1.20).

  ○ **Develop a strategic initiative plan to increase utilization of NSC/CSN Transfer Office**
    Develop and implement a strategic plan to increase the utilization of the NSC/CSN Transfer Offices, increase our transfer pipeline, and help mitigate the challenges that transfer students face when they come to NSC.
    • Forge stronger partnerships with transfer stakeholders and decision-makers at the community colleges (1.12).
    • Expand use of dual and concurrent enrollment with the community colleges (1.13).
    • Expand advising outreach to community college students wishing to transfer (1.15).

  ○ **Cultivate, implement and publicize advising missions, vision and key outcomes**
In collaboration with college stakeholders, refine and develop a mission, vision and key outcomes for the Academic Advising Center. Separate outcomes will be developed both for what advisors should achieve and for what NSC students should gain from advising support. Communicate to the College that the Center’s fundamental goal is to promote student success in a constellation of ways that would be impossible – or less likely – without the use of our services.

- Improve collaborative efforts involving learning support services and teaching faculty (1.22).

**Expand and improve supplemental instruction and structured learning assistance**
Encourage the development of course schedules that permit time and space for supplemental instruction/structured learning assistance and implement the support in high-need areas.

- Establish campus policies and procedures that will maximize the likelihood of student success (1.7).
- Expand the use of supplemental instruction and structured learning assistance (1.23).
- Capitalize on the value of peer support (1.25).

**Incorporate technology to increase quality and accessibility of academic support**
Strategically incorporate technology to improve the quality and utilization of academic support services. The latter will be made possible in large part by the implementation of virtual tutoring and advising services using enriched media (e.g., Skype, SmarThinking), as well as the automated outreach made possible by “nudging” technology.

- Eliminate institutional barriers and facilitate students' progress towards degree completion (e.g. develop two year schedules of courses, expand year round and accelerated course offerings) (1.6)
- Expand virtual and on-demand academic assistance opportunities (1.11).

**ENRICHMENT**

- **Integrate evidence-based, developmental coaching approach in all academic support services**
  Academic coaching is a comprehensive approach to student support that assists students with a range of academic and life challenges while accounting for a host of non-cognitive factors related to student success (e.g., feelings of belonging, academic mindset, and academic self-confidence). Our approach is rooted in positive psychology and will be adopted to varying degrees by academic support staff, including advisors, tutors, and peer mentors, as we strive to foster a welcoming environment that inspires maximum effort, high expectations, and self-confidence in students.

  - Impart adaptive knowledge, values, and skills that facilitate the ability to engage in critical inquiry, solve challenging problems, communicate persuasively, and contribute to the community in a meaningful way (2.1)

- **Improve and expand programs that maximize the power of peer support**
  Continue to expand the scope of academic assistance that is actively integrated into the student experience, particularly in the form of the course assistant program and expand the peer mentorship program, particularly for first-year and at-risk students.

  - Implement proactive outreach advising (1.20).
  - Improve collaborative efforts involving learning support services and teaching faculty (1.22).
  - Expand the use of supplemental instruction and structured learning assistance (1.23).
  - Capitalize on the value of peer support (peer mentorship program; in-class course assistants) (1.25).
Bolster interactions between incoming students and successful, experienced students and alumni (2.11).