CASA and SST Interdepartmental Collaboration to Supplement IDIS 11000 – Fall 2017[1]

Summary

The goal of this project is to create a structured, collaborative effort between Student Success and Transitions (SST) and the Centers for Academic Success and Achievement (CASA) to enhance the learning environment for conditionally admitted students who are in the Student Success Program (SSP), thereby increasing the success rates of these students in their college careers. This project is under the direction of Kim Myers, representing SST, and Jack Schroeder, representing CASA. Programming and structure for the project are being developed by peer tutors in CASA and overseen by Jack, with input from SSP advisors/instructors. The project will include two mandatory phases: 1) during the first two weeks, six workshops will be conducted through face-to-face and online student/tutor group meetings. Students will be required to attend a total of two workshops during the first two weeks of class; 2) during weeks three through eight, students will be required to attend one hour per week of tutoring or writing assistance in subjects of their choosing. Students may attend a second hour of tutoring each week for extra credit. Attendance at workshops and participation in tutoring will comprise 10% of students' course grade.

1. Workshop topics will include the following six areas of concern for conditionally admitted students:
    a) The differences between high school and college
    b) How to study effectively
    c) How to study for memorization
    d) How to study for calculation
    e) How to read college texts and take notes
    f) Test-taking skills and test anxiety
2. Tutoring topics, during weeks three through eight, will vary according to the students' needs as the term progresses. A variety of topics will be offered each week. Tutoring sessions will primarily be carried out as group participation meetings.

Programmatic Goals

With the foreknowledge that conditionally admitted students are at-risk for failing to complete their college objectives, this program will focus on creating a productive atmosphere that will foster a sense of belonging in a university setting while establishing good study habits by embracing the academic ethic of hard work that is required to achieve their goals. Students need to develop themselves and adapt to their new lifestyles.

1. Strengthen collaborative efforts between SST and CASA to better serve first-year students who are at risk academically
2. Aid conditionally admitted students in the transition from high school to college

[1] This summary report was prepared by Kim Myers (myersk@ipfw.edu), Assistant Director of Student Success Curriculum and Assessment, and Jack Schroeder (jack.schroeder@ipfw.edu), Coordinator of Math and Science Tutoring and Embedded Tutoring for Math and the Sciences, Center for Academic Success and Achievement.

3. Increase utilization of CASA support services by the conditionally admitted student population, beginning with Fall 2017 conditionally admitted enrollees

4. Decrease DFW rates among conditionally admitted students in the courses for which CASA services are primarily utilized

5. Improve average GPAs and reduce probation and dismissal rates of conditionally admitted students, beginning with Fall 2017 admits

Programmatic Objectives

To make this program more effective, IDIS 11000 students will be required to participate in this collaborative effort:

1. Students will be required attend a minimum of two peer-facilitated workshops during the first two weeks of the Fall 2017 term, one each week

2. Students will be required to attend a minimum of one hour per week of peer tutoring or writing support in CASA during weeks three through eight

Workshop Objectives

Three to five measurable outcomes have been established for the six workshops that will be offered during weeks one and two of the Fall 2017 semester (as referenced on page one of this document). Students who successfully complete the workshops will be able to:

1. Recognize and appreciate the differences in expectations for student effort between high school and college courses
    a) Be prepared to be proactive in class by participating in classroom activities as opposed to being passive
    b) Know that being prepared for class and examinations will facilitate clearer understanding and better assessment scores
    c) Understand that wise time management, prioritization of workloads and self-discipline are paramount to success
    d) Understand that the class syllabus is a roadmap to successfully navigate through the course
        i. Know the key points contained in the syllabus, such as assignments, project due dates, and examination dates
        ii. Know that the syllabus also contains support services needed by many college students
    e) Learn the definitions of and penalties for plagiarism and academic dishonesty
        i. Understand that plagiarism is *theft* of intellectual property
        ii. Be able to understand what plagiarism is and learn how to recognize it
        iii. Know how to incorporate sources properly by using direct quotes, paraphrasing and summary techniques with the appropriate attribution to the author of the work
    f) Be able to write professional emails using correct format and etiquette

2. Know how to study effectively
    a) Explain the meaning and significance of SMART acronym in relation to effective study habits
    b) Know that different courses require different study habits in the four general categories of classes: reading, calculation, memorization and writing based classes
    c) Understand that *smart* study breaks are required and yield more productive study time

3. How to study for memorization based courses
    a) Understand what is meant by a *visual learner* and why visual aids are used to enhance material retention
    b) Know that if the student is not a visual learner, adjustments to study habits must be made
    c) Know that the technique of read, write and repeat produces a 90% comprehension of the material
    d) Identify the significance of *hindsight bias*
    e) Be able to identify and use resources for learning, repeating and maintaining information: Kahn Academy, Quizlet and Crash Course
4. How to study for calculation based courses
    a) Understand and practice George Poly's four step method of problem solving applies to mathematical and science problems as well as understand writing assignments
        i. Understand the problem, i.e., critically the problem
        ii. Devise a plan to solve the problem
        iii. Carry out the plan to solve the problem
        iv. Look back to see if the solution is reasonable
    b) Understand that breaking the problem into its simplest components helps to gain understanding
    c) Understand that mastering a concept in a calculation course requires repetition of problem solving
    d) Understanding the theory behind the problem is more important than just memorizing the algorithm used to solve the problem
5. How to read college texts and take notes
    a) Know how to skim to find important content
    b) Be able to extract information through deep reading
    c) Design a personalized note taking style from a list of options
    d) Be able to organize and take legible notes
    e) Summarize portions of the text in writing
6. Test-taking skills and test anxiety
    a) Understand how to manage test anxiety by recognizing the symptoms that manifest themselves before, during and after the exam

b) List tips to improve their test taking skills for various test types: word problems, multiple choice problems, short answer questions, essay questions, and true and false questions

7. Know the names of your group members and your peer tutors

Assessments

Because this program focuses on the development of a sense of belonging in students—which should enhance student participation and success in their courses—reflective parameters will be investigated to evaluate the success of this program.

For comparison, the following benchmark data will be gathered:

1. CASA utilization for Fall 2015 among Fall 2015 conditionally admitted students CADM) by week

2. CASA utilization for Fall 2016 among Fall 2016 conditionally admitted students (CO) by week

3. Courses with high DFW rates for Fall 2015, including comparative data of CADM

4. Courses with high DFW rates for Fall 2016, including comparative data of CO

Assessing programmatic goals:

1. Compare utilization of CASA support services among conditionally admitted students by week for Fall 2015, 2016 and 2017

2. Compare DFW rates among conditionally admitted students for Fall 2015, 2016 and 2017 in the courses for which CASA services are primarily utilized

3. Compare average GPAs, probation and dismissal rates of conditionally admitted students for Fall 2015, 2016 and 2017

Assessing programmatic objectives:

1. Weekly quantitative reports of workshop attendance and utilization of CASA support services

Assessing workshop objectives:

1. Qualitative post-workshop opinion surveys via Qualtrics with respect to the students' perceived value of the workshops, to include informational insights gained through participation, as well as how the students feels about participating

2. Blackboard quizzes to assess students' knowledge and understanding of workshop information