



**UNCSA Student Success:
Opportunities for Intentional Partnership
Between Academic & Student Affairs**

**2018 SACSCOC National Conference
New Orleans**

Presenters

- Dr. Karen Beres, Vice Provost and Dean of Academic Affairs; Professor, School of Music
- Dr. David English, Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost

Presentation Overview

- Overview of UNCSA
- Academic Early Warning Report through *Maxient*
- Student Advantage Week
- Graduate Student Coaches
- Discussion and Questions

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About UNC School of the Arts

- Public Institution opened in 1965
- Member of the UNC System since 1972
- Conservatory environment:
 - 1,300 students (250 HS, 900 UG, 150 GR)
 - 150 Full-time faculty
 - Dance, Drama, Design & Production, Filmmaking, Music
 - High School Diploma, BFA, BM, MFA, MM, Professional Certificate

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About UNC School of the Arts

- Undergraduate students are admitted directly into their major, and begin taking major coursework immediately
- General Education program is run entirely by the Division of Liberal Arts, with students completing 30 semester credit hours across their four-years of enrollment

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Setting the Stage

- Continued focus on improving student success metrics
- New UNC System Strategic Plan *Higher Expectations* identified specific and measurable goals for Access, Affordability and Efficiency, and Student Success

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Institutional Capacity

- Like many other small institutions, UNCSA had some data on student success, but not robust information
- Began a process of examining which factors were associated with student success at UNCSA
- Looked at traditional metrics and campus-specific factors

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Retention and Graduation Data Regression Analysis

First-semester Liberal Arts (Gen Ed) GPA had the strongest correlation with 1st-year retention

Students who earn above a 2.0 GPA in these courses demonstrate a 1st-year retention rate that is 22% higher than their peers who fail to do so

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Retention and Graduation Data Regression Analysis

- High School GPA (3.0 or better) makes a significant difference in the 4-year graduation rate:
 - HS GPA greater than 3.0 have a graduation rate of 66%
 - **HS GPA less than 3.0 have a graduation rate of 51%**

- Just like with 1-year retention, First-semester Liberal Arts GPA greater than or equal to 2.0 was highly correlated with 4-year graduation
 - Liberal Arts GPA above 2.0 have a graduation rate of 70%
 - **Liberal Arts GPA less than 2.0 have a graduation rate of 38%**

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Sense of Belonging

- Hausmann and colleagues (2007) investigated African American and White first-year students' intention to persist
 - Sense of belonging declined slightly over the course of the academic year
 - A student's initial sense of belong at the beginning of the academic year was a predictor of their future interactions with peers and faculty
 - Safeguards should be made early to address declining sense of belonging

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During their exit interview, almost 50% of students who withdrew from UNCOSA during the 2017-18 academic year cited feeling unwelcome on campus or noted a sense of feeling that they did not fit in.

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So What Do We Do Now?

- Have data demonstrating the importance of HS GPA and first-year liberal arts performance
- Have information showing that belonging and connections are tied to success
- Have external pressure to improve student success metrics
- Have highly constrained budgets and limited staff
- Developed a set of initiatives that focus on leveraging expertise in academic affairs and student affairs, and providing students with meaningful connections

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Academic Early Warning Report

Academic Early Warning Reports

- Built upon the *Maxient* platform that had previously been used by student affairs for non-academic issues
- Managed jointly by academic affairs and student affairs
- Academic early warnings are electronically routed to Vice Provost, Case Manager, Director of Learning Resources, and the academic contact in the student's art school
- Based on content of report, appropriate person meets with each identified student individually, to discuss challenges and chart a path forward

Academic Early Warning Reports

- Culture shift from midterm grade reports to early warning, allowing for more effective intervention at all undergraduate levels
- Special alert for first-year students missing two class meetings in a row
- Used for absences, tardiness, low engagement, poor grades

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Student Advantage Week

Student Advantage Week

- Build a supportive peer network of colleagues from across the UNCSA campus, and engage in a social/cultural orientation
- Become familiar with campus resources supporting student success
- Better understand academic expectations and college culture, and the intersection of arts work and liberal arts
- Learn or improve important transferrable skills, including journaling, mindfulness, resiliency, and time management
- Initiate work with a Graduate Student Coach

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Student Advantage Week

- In its first year, Student Advantage Week 2017 included 11 incoming first-year students.
- Of the 11 that attended, 10 returned for their second year; the one who left will be returning in spring semester 2019
- UNCSA's analysis found that a student's High School GPA makes a big difference in 1-year retention, with those earning a GPA below 3.0 being retained at 79%, with those earning a 3.0 or higher being retained at a rate of 86%.

Our 11-member SAW group achieved a first-year retention rate of 90.9%

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Student Advantage Week

- Of the 10 returning students:
 - All are making strong progress toward their degree, with an average GPA of 3.46
 - Only three Academic Early Warning alert in their first year
 - Many are maintaining strong ties with each other
 - Two students worked with orientation on the 2018 Welcome Squad
 - One student has been hired as a Resident Assistant

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Student Advantage Week

Our SAW program grew from a group of 11 in the program's first year, to a cohort of 20 in August 2018

2018 SAW Participants included incoming students from three categories:

1. lower HS GPAs (below 3.0)
2. In-state residency from Tier I/Tier II NC counties
3. recommended by their Art School, for various reason

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Student Advantage Week

In 2018, greater emphasis on:

- Resiliency
- Self-care
- Introduction to the skills and mindset necessary to creatively engage as a member of an artistic community

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Student Advantage Week

- Resiliency
 - Vision Boarding
 - Kintsukuroi
- Self-care
 - Making Stress Your Friend
 - Mindfulness
- Introduction to the skills and mindset necessary to creatively engage as a member of an artistic community
 - Artistic Journaling

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Kintsukuroi - “repair with gold”

“When a ceramic pot or bowl would break, the artisan would put the pieces together again using gold or silver lacquer to create something stronger, more beautiful, then it was before. The breaking is not something to hide. It does not mean that the work of art is ruined or without value because it is different than what was planned. Kintsukuroi is a way of living that embraces every flaw and imperfection. Every crack is part of the history of the object and it becomes more beautiful, precisely because it had been broken.

People are the same way.”

John Sean Doyle, From *Psychology Today*, October 3, 2015

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Artistic Journaling

- *Where I'm From*, George Ella Lyon
Prewriting exercise, culminating in student-generated poems prompted by their recollections
- *The Steal Like an Artist Journal*, Austin Kleon
“This journal is designed to get you looking at your world like an artist, always ‘casing the joint,’ always collecting ideas, always looking for the next bit of inspiration to lift– to turn you into a creative kleptomaniac.”

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Group Activity –

What does “sense of belonging” look like
on your campus?

What are ways to help foster belonging in
your own campus culture?

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Graduate Student Coaches

Graduate Student Coaches

- **University Liaison:** Graduate student coaches help their assigned undergraduate students make connections with key administrative and student affairs staff across campus. Coaches make connections between students and offices on campus to ensure that each one receives the support and encouragement they need.
- **Academic Liaison:** Graduate student coaches help to identify the services needed to support students in their academic success. Coaches make connections between students and services including Learning Resources, the Writing Center, the Library, Faculty, Staff, and Deans.

Graduate Student Coaches

- Second-year graduate students went through a written screening and personal interview prior to hire
- Attributes of a great coach candidate:
 - Personal connection/likeability
 - Historical evidence of academic and/or personal resiliency
 - High level of empathy
 - High level of responsiveness
 - Dependability

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Graduate Student Coaches

- Present for full Student Advantage Week program
- Initial 4-hour training session with certified Motivational Interviewing Trainer; additional 4-hour MI training sessions in October, January
- Monthly Grad Coach meeting with Vice Provost, Case Manager
- Continued work with up to 8 undergraduate students each over the course of the year
- Weekly touchpoints, including in-person session at least every 2 weeks

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Questions and Discussion