

New College

THE HONORS COLLEGE of Florida

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NEW COLLEGE OF FLORIDA has been laser-focused on improvement in two areas this year: Connecting Undergraduate Arts and Sciences to the World of Work and Student Success: Persistence to Second-Year and Graduation. Though primary responsibility for executing the 2014-15 Performance Improvement Plan has rested with four key administrators, under the supervision of the Provost, the entire campus has been involved in carrying out the plan. We are pleased to report our progress as of December 18, noting that we have met or exceeded our stipulated interim goals.

I. Connecting Undergraduate Arts and Sciences to the World of Work

Addresses the following metrics:

Metric 1: Percent of bachelor's graduates employed in Florida and/or continuing their education further 1 year after graduation

Metric 2: Median average full-time wages of undergraduates employed in Florida 1 year after graduation

Metric 4: Six-year graduation rate full-time and part-time FTIC

ACTION 1:

Transform Career Preparation Campus-Wide

By December 2014, hire a new Career Services Director, assess current operations and prepare written recommendations for deployment of specific immediate and longer-term initiatives.

Measurable Outcomes Achieved:

- >> Following a national search, Kim Franklin was hired as Director of Career Services, and began work in July (see CV, Appendix A).
- >> The New College Center for Engagement and Opportunity (CEO), combining Career Services, Internships, and National Fellowships, was created in July 2014.
- >> Using national standards from the Council for Advancement of Standards in Higher Education, the CEO conducted initial evaluations of both the career services and internships programs, and began addressing deficiencies immediately to prepare for the new academic cycle.
- >> Written Assessments and Recommendations for Career Services have been prepared (see Appendix B, D).

Supporting Results:

- >> By October, the CEO had more than 800 interactions with students in programs, presentations, and individual appointments. Additionally, the CEO built more than 70 new or expanded partnerships to support student engagement, cooperating with a diverse cross-section of industries (among them media and communications, legal, finance, government, health and STEM). See Appendix C for a complete list of partners.



CEO Team



CEO, Norm Worthington
Star2Star Communications and alumna
Speaking to classes in Fall 2014



Pending:

- >> By May 2015 launch remaining initiatives, monitor student satisfaction and use of the CEO with a student survey, and compare results with that of previous years.

I. Connecting Undergraduate Arts and Sciences to the World of Work (continued)

Addresses the following metrics:

Metric 1: Percent of bachelor's graduates employed in Florida and/or continuing their education further 1 year after graduation

Metric 2: Median average full-time wages of undergraduates employed in Florida 1 year after graduation

Metric 4: Six-year graduation rate full-time and part-time FTIC

ACTION 2:

Formalize and Strengthen Internships

By December 2014, hire an Internship Coordinator, assess current operations, and prepare written recommendations for deployment of specific immediate and longer-term initiatives.

Measurable Outcomes Achieved:

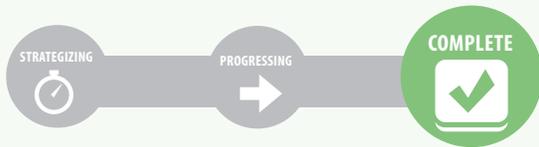
- >> Following a national search, Andrea Knies was hired as Internship Coordinator, and began work in June (see CV, Appendix E).
- >> Written recommendations have been developed for short-term and long-term initiatives (see Appendix F).
- >> Developed institutional standards and regulations, adding structure to the current program. These include learning objectives for internships, contracts for providers, rights and responsibilities for both students and providers, and evaluation instruments (see samples of documents, Appendix G).
- >> Amended the New College Faculty Handbook to provide the students with a process for more direct access to faculty internship sponsors.
- >> Tracked internship data, such as the internship provider information and learning objectives.
- >> Initiated/coordinated evaluations by internship providers to students.
- >> Created marketing materials to distribute to the community (see samples, Appendix H).
- >> Spoke widely on campus and in the community about internships. Presented at Student Orientation, Parent Orientation, Faculty Retreat, Family Weekend, Alumni Board Retreat, Board of Trustees Meeting, and Internship Workshops.

Supporting Results:

- >> Students participating in internships increased by 28% during fall semester.
- >> Extensive community outreach efforts resulted in a 94% increase in posted internship opportunities.

Pending:

- >> By May 2015, launch remaining initiatives, and implement a system for tracking and assessment of internships, with attention to student, provider and faculty satisfaction.



Recent Alumna, Carmella French
Speaking at the CEO on Workforce Readiness
Fall 2014



II. Student Success: Persistence to Second Year and Graduation

Addresses the following metrics:

Metric 4: Six-year graduation rate full-time and part-time FTIC

Metric 5: Academic progress rate 2nd year retention with GPA above 2.0

ACTION 1:

Strengthen Academic Advising

By December 2014, launch Navigating New College, a program to improve faculty and staff communication with students across the campus about essential academic planning and evaluation practices and deadlines.

Measurable Outcomes Achieved:

- >> Navigating New College was launched in August 2014. Throughout the Fall 2014 semester, Navigating New College evolved into a robust program that provides crucial academic guidance and information to students, with special emphasis on first-year students. Navigating New College includes an aggressive communications and intervention effort on the part of the Dean of Studies. Working in close collaboration with the Office of the Registrar, the Office of Communications and Marketing, and other campus offices, the Dean has fostered an environment in which students and faculty understand that meeting key deadlines is essential to student success:
- >> 99% of students submitted fall semester contracts by the September 3 deadline, the highest rate in College history.
- >> More than 200 students attended the Independent Study Project (ISP) Planning Workshop in October, nearly double the attendance in 2013.
- >> 86% of students submitted ISP Description Forms by the December 5 deadline, compared to 38% by the deadline last year.
- >> 84% of students used the Course Request System by the December 5 deadline, compared to 80% by the deadline last year.

Supporting Results:

- >> The Dean of Studies worked directly with more than 50 students regarding their academic progress during the fall semester.
- >> The Dean initiated and coordinated a range of outreach and follow-up efforts: mid-term progress reports for first-year students, regular office hours in a central common space, individual follow-up with students who are struggling at the college, and ongoing direct communication with both students and faculty regarding important benchmarks in the academic year. The measurable accomplishments of strengthened academic advising include the following:

Distributed advising checklists to faculty (see Appendix I).

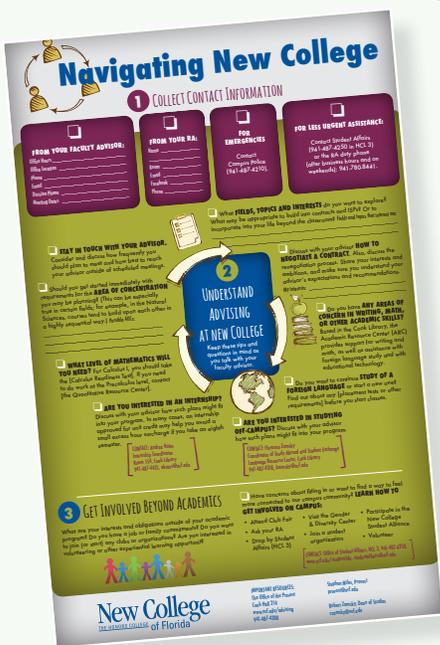
Held college-wide discussion on best practices in advising.

Participated in Orientation Week activities.

- >> Created Orientation Guide to New College, distributed to all incoming students (see Appendix J)

Pending:

By May 2015, conduct a workshop to introduce possible areas of study to first-year students. The effectiveness of the workshop and Navigating New College will be assessed by the percentage of faculty and students meeting deadlines for the completion of required academic planning and evaluation documents.



II. Student Success: Persistence to Second Year and Graduation (continued)

Addresses the following metrics:

Metric 4: Six-year graduation rate full-time and part-time FTIC

Metric 5: Academic progress rate 2nd year retention with GPA above 2.0

ACTION 2:

Enhance New College's Writing Program

By December 2014, hire a Writing Director, implement first-year writing courses, and expand faculty involvement with Writing Enhanced Courses.

Measurable outcomes achieved:

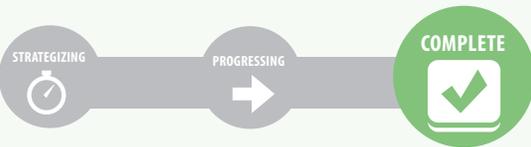
- >> Following a national search, Dr. Jennifer Wells was hired as Director of Writing, and began work in August 2014 (see CV, Appendix K).
- >> The Writing Resource Center (WRC) offered three sections of a new course for first-year students (see syllabus, Appendix L). The course was designed to help students: a) reflect on the knowledge of writing that they bring from high school, b) apply, adapt, or re-purpose that knowledge for New College courses, and c) connect with college writing resources.
- >> The WRC piloted a new, half-semester length course for third-year students (see syllabus, Appendix M). The purpose of the course was to provide students with the tools to build stronger foundations for their theses. In addition to learning the conventions of writing in their field of study, each student drafted a 10-page prospectus, including a rationale, review of literature, and research questions.
- >> The WRC partnered with ten faculty members to develop Writing Enhanced Courses.

Supporting Results:

- >> Student work in the first-year course amply demonstrated that the course objectives were met in the short term. Crucial longitudinal data analysis must wait until successive semesters. Students from these courses will be present their research at a January symposium hosted by New College.
- >> Assessment of the third-year course will be conducted next academic year, while students are working on theses.
- >> Faculty participation in the Writing Enhanced Courses has been robust, with nine disciplines and all three academic divisions (Humanities, Natural Sciences, and Social Sciences) represented. The effectiveness of the courses will be assessed during the spring semester and any necessary adjustments or improvements will be implemented in subsequent semesters.

Pending:

By May 2015, assess the effectiveness of the first-year, first-semester writing courses, offer Writing Enhanced Courses in at least five disciplines, and implement a required training course for students who wish to serve as peer writing tutors in subsequent semesters.





CONCLUSION: New College of Florida's Performance Improvement Plan aims to strengthen graduate outcomes in the areas of employment and median earnings, and to lift 6-year graduation rates and academic progress rates. As the Board of Governors has pointed out repeatedly, it takes years of effort to move the needle in these areas. We are heartened by the progress so far, and are pleased that the implementation of the Performance Improvement Plan is months ahead of schedule. As the interim data show, the steps taken so far are moving the College closer to its goals in the targeted areas for improvement. New College is undergoing a transformation, and is better prepared to serve our students and the State of Florida. We look forward to presenting our final report in May.