Undergraduate Retention Initiatives

College of Media & Communication

Office of the Provost
Texas Tech University
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Introduction
Successful retention programs encompass virtually everything an institution does to improve the quality of student life and learning. Quality can be defined as that set of attributes of an educational program or service that consistently exceeds student expectations within specifically defined institutional-determined standards and/or criteria of performance. Practically speaking, the evidence of effective programs is clear, namely that the route to successful retention lies in those programs that ensure from the very onset of student contact with the institution; that entering students are integrated with teaching/learning processes of the college; and that students acquire the skills and knowledge needed to become successful learners in that community.

To better understand each college’s approaches to supporting student success, the Provost issued a request for the inventory of college-based retention and success initiatives. In conjunction with the larger institution-wide report, this extract reports only the information submitted provided by the College of Media & Communication.

Current Structure/Approach
− The college provides a retention framework in the form of an Info Graphic.
− The document contained a number of current and future initiatives related to retention, that include the following:
  o hiring advisors for probationary students
  o students that have between a 2.0 – 2.5 GPA will be required to enroll in a studies skills course
  o students facing adversity, will now be required to attend a face-to-face meeting with their advisors
  o the web presence of additional retention services are being improved
  o the college has developed a new freshman seminar course that is specific to its discipline
  o the college has developed a new learning community in the residence halls
  o the college is requiring that students complete the StrengthsQuest instrument

Initiatives
− Focus on “inside retention,” which has resulted in a first year freshman retention increase of 62% to 72%.
− The college will also implement its own “student ambassadors” program
− Other retention initiatives include:
  o augmenting the branding and publicity for the major and career options for those who are retained
  o create career counseling a portfolio development course
  o create more portfolio based outcome courses
  o expand undergraduate
  o research and mentoring opportunities
  o offer additional loyalty building events and programs
  o bridge courses between intro to the college and senior courses that builds college loyalty among students
Support Needed

- Hiring of an additional academic advisor for fall 2014 and one additional recruiter
- Helping to expand undergraduate research and mentoring opportunities, including internships and service learning
- Re-examine existing policies that appear a preventative to retention, i.e. hosting college events given current food and entertainment policies