First-Year Student Success

Key Findings

Academic Affairs Faculty Forum
May 15, 2019
First-Year Student Success

What is it?
• Achieving learning outcomes
• Prepared to progress
• Social / emotional / personal adjustment and maturation
• Satisfaction

Retention is a proxy
• First Year Retention = Student returns to UMaine for second year
First-Year Success at UMaine

- First-Year Retention Rate: 76% (UMaine)
- Compared to peers: 81% (Hanover Selected Peers)
- Compared to competitors: 88% (Other New England Land Grant Universities)
First-Year Retention – what do we know

Retention by Background

- **Non-First Generation**: 78%
  - **First Generation**: 67%
- **Non-Pell Eligible**: 77%
  - **Pell Eligible**: 72%
- **Not Under-represented Students**: 76%
  - **Under-represented Students**: 68%
- **Female**: 77%
  - **Male**: 74%
Working Groups

- Academic Support Services
- Faculty Support/Development
- Financial
- First Year Student Success Courses
- Living Learning Communities
- New Student Orientation
- Placement, Preparation, and Progress
- Student Success Hub
- Summer Preparation
- Navigate
Steering Committee

Jeffrey Hecker, Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs & Provost

Robert Dana, Vice President for Student Life and Dean of Students

Debra Allen, Assistant Provost for Institutional Research and Assessment

Caroline Dababneh, Graduate Assistant

Robin Delcourt, Special Assistant to the Provost

Brett Ellis, Assistant Professor of Electrical Engineering Technology

Monique LaRocque, Associate Provost for Division of Lifelong Learning

John Lawler, Director of Residence Life

Sara Lello, Lecturer and Student Success Advisor

Mary Mahoney-O’Neil, Associate Dean for Academic Services

Kenda Scheele, Assistant Vice President for Student Life and Senior Associate Dean of Students, Interim Chief of Staff

Lindsay Seward, Instructor in Wildlife Ecology

Kim Stewart, Graduate Assistant

Jeffrey St. John, Senior Associate Provost
Timeline

2018

September
27 Academic Affairs Faculty Forum

October
30 Working Groups Formed
31 Steering Committee Initial Meeting

2019

February
15 First Convening of Working Groups

April
19 Second Convening of Working Groups

May
3 Working Group Penultimate Reports submitted
15 Academic Affairs Faculty Forum
31 Working Group Final Reports due
Plan for Today

• Presentations from each working group

• Key Findings

• Key Recommendations
Academic Support Services

Crisanne Blackie, Director of the Career Center
Eric Chapman, Director of College Success Programs
Amy Coleman, Graduate Student in Higher Education
Paula Drewniany, Lecturer in Mathematics
Susan Gardner, Director of the Rising Tide Center, Director of Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies
Michelle Gayne, Assistant Director, CLAS Advising and Academic Services Center
Sarah Joughin, Senior Associate Director of International Programs
Ann Maxim, Director of Academic Support Services for Student Athletes
Paige Mitchell, Lecturer in Composition
Brittney Smith, Coordinator of Tutoring Services
Academic Support Services

Key Findings:

• Academic support services are underutilized by first year students, limited by lack of resources and collaborate infrequently. High levels of collaboration between support services result in increased retention and graduation rates.

• UMaine needs a webpage with comprehensive information about academic support services.

• Many students struggle with mental health issues that impact their academic success.

• Test proctoring is a service that could be used by many UMaine students and departments.
Key Recommendations:

- Academic Success Center (ASC) that integrates existing academic support services located in a large central space on campus. The ASC could integrate most of the recommendations made by this working group.
- Address the student mental health crisis.
- Expand existing academic support services including the Tutor Program, MLAs, and Writing Center.
- Creation of a University wide testing center.
- Creation of a comprehensive website with information about academic support services at UMaine.
Faculty Support/Development

Peter Schilling (Chair), Executive Director of Innovation in Teaching and Learning
Mitchell Bruce, Professor of Chemistry
Phil Dunn, Professor of Construction Engineering
Sarah Dyer, Academic Advisor and Success Instructor
Kathleen Gillon, Assistant Professor of Higher Education

Christina LeBlanc, Graduate Student in Higher Education
Karen Pelletreau, Manager for Workshops, Programs, & Training
Natasha Speer, Associate Professor of Mathematics Education
Erin Vinson, STEM Professional Development Coordinator
Key Findings

1. Need to gather data on pedagogical practices and then continuously use the data to inform institutional, college, departmental, and individual decisions relating to teaching and learning.

2. Need sustained resources, practices, and protocols that encourage, support, and value all instructors’ efforts to improve teaching.

3. Need to accommodate the specific challenges of 1st year service courses and the diverse academic needs of their students.
Key Recommendations

1. Targeted support for instructors
   a. Pre-Instruction
   b. During Instruction

2. Sustained, structural support for efforts to improve teaching in large-enrollment, first year service courses

3. Increase TAs and MLAs for large enrollment classes and work with faculty to help make best use of them

4. Gather and use data on pedagogical practices and conditions that support student learning
Financial

Connie Smith (Chair), Director of Financial Aid
Tiffany Butler, Associate Director of Financial Aid
Jessie Daniels, Director of Operations, DLL
William DeSisto, Professor of Chemical Engineering
William Elsemore, Bursar/Senior Finance Officer

Sara Flanagan, Assistant Professor of Special Education
Samuel Hanes, Assistant Professor of Anthropology
Jessica Hickernell, Associate Director of Student Financial Aid
William Osmer, Academic Advisor & Success Instructor
Key Findings

• Financial barriers intersect with many other identified areas – collaboration and research is essential

• Most at risk students of not persisting as a result of financial barriers: Low income, Federal Pell Grant Eligible Students
Key Recommendations

- Persistence Incentive Scholarship
- Expanding the INSPIRE Maine Scholarship Program
- Use technology as a tool to more effectively communicate across generational gaps/proactive Billing Communications
- Training/Communication collaboration with academic advisors and faculty
- Expand Maine high school outreach
- Implement an Institutional Work Initiative program
First Year Success Courses

Emily Haddad (Chair), Dean of the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences
Lynn Atkins, Instructor in Biological Sciences
Kate Axelsen-Foster, Assistant Director – Employer Relations
Orlina Boteva, Director of International Programs
Andra Bowen, Associate Director of Residence Life
Alice Bruce, Professor of Chemistry
Sandra De Urioste-Stone, Assistant Professor of Nature Based Tourism

Michelle Gayne, Assistant Director, Advising and Academic Services Center
M Plymale Larlee, Lecturer in Academic Writing
Natalie Machamer, Lecturer in Chemistry
Daniel Puhlman, Assistant Professor of Family Studies
Olivier Putzeys, Lecturer in Mechanical Engineering
Kate Ruskin, Lecturer in Ecology and Environmental Sciences
Joshua Stanhope, Assistant Director of Fraternity, Sorority Affairs and Leadership Development
Claire Sullivan, Coordinator of Community Engagement
First-Year Success Course (FYSC)

Key Findings

• 94% of students currently take a course labeled an FYSC. Students who participated in an FYSC were retained at a higher rate than those who did not, especially among first-generation students and students with mid/low C-Index scores. First-generation students in an FYSC were less likely to withdraw from the University.

• UMaine offers both (a) field-specific FYSCs and (b) general FYSCs that focus on skills and strategies for success in college. The field-specific FYSCs and those with >25 students were less likely to address “success in college” topics.”

• Instructors surveyed (70% response rate) reported that individual contact or connection was the most effective way to help students.

• There is no consensus among UMaine’s peer institutions on how an FYSC program should be implemented. However, Univ. of Wyoming and Univ. of Rhode Island offer useful examples.
Key Recommendations

• First-year success course (FYSC) enrollment should be required of all first-year students, with particular emphasis on delivering the course to first-generation students and students with a C-index score below 85.

• The University should develop content standards a course must meet in order to be classified as a FYSC.

• FYSCs should prioritize and maximize individual contact between the students and the course instructor.

• The University should offer and incentivize first-year-specific professional development opportunities for FYSC instructors.

• FYSCs should offer an extended experience for students through either a summer session before classes begin in the Fall and/or a Spring follow-up to their initial FYSC enrollment.
Living Learning Communities

John Lawler (Chair), Director of Residence Life
Shane Smith (co-Chair), Area Coordinator, Residence Life
Kyle Arthenayake, Assistant Community Coordinator, Residence Life
Tobby Bragdon, Academic Advisor & Success Instructor
Lisa Carter, Assistant Director for Maine Bound
Sally Clark, Administrative Support Supervisor, Housing Services
TJ England, Student Life Educator
Faith Erhardt, Coordinator of Academic Advising & Support Services
Sarah Joughin, Senior Associate Director of International Programs
Jessica Miller, Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs & Interdisciplinary Programs CLAS
Jennifer A. Perry, Housing and Communications Director
Richard Powell, Professor of Political Science and Director of Cohen Institute for Leadership & Public Service
Susan Tardiff, Lecturer in Nursing
Living-Learning Communities

Key Findings

• Utilized strategically, LLCs have potential to impact success of students the university struggles to retain.

• Our current LLC models do not reflect best practices nationally.

• Best practices will not necessarily require significant new investment.

• Several policies, practices, and protocols that govern housing and residence hall operations create barriers to LLC success.
Living-Learning Communities

Key Recommendations

• Adopt a new living-learning community model, prioritizing programs with intentional academic components.

• Establish standing committee to oversee all elements of learning community development, assessment, and support.
  - Review policies and protocols to ensure they do not hinder successful LLC implementation.
  - Coordinate with institutional research, enrollment management, academic advising units, and academic programs to develop LLCs that will support appropriate populations.
Navigate

Mary Mahoney-O’Neil (Chair), Associate Dean for Academic Services

Deb Allen, Assistant Director of Institutional Research

Kathleen Gillon, Assistant Professor of Higher Education

Molly MacLean, Instructor of Biology and First Year Advisor

John Mascetta, Director of the Advising & Academic Services Center and the Explorations Program, CLAS

Linda Reid, Associate Registrar

Penny Rheingans, Director – School of Computing and Information Science

Chris Richards, Director of Recruitment

Jeff St. John, Senior Associate Provost for Academic Affairs

Kim Stewart, Graduate Student in Higher Education

Lynne Woods, Operations Support Specialist, Student Records
Key Findings

1. The Navigate Student Mobile App could be a phased roll out starting in June 2019.

2. The Navigate implementation requires long term, dedicated ongoing support and is a significant lift.

3. FYSSI groups identified deep areas of interest for incorporating Navigate into the plans of their groups.

4. Feedback from Faculty Senate, Student Government, Deans and Associate Deans and Directors has been positive.

5. Growing student interest in participation on several aspects of the Navigate initiative.
Key Recommendations for FY 2020

1. Dedicated personnel (2 FTE)
   • Implement full roll-out: Plan and oversee all training for faculty and staff, promotion to the UMaine community, management of the technical side of Navigate.

2. Transition the Navigate Leadership Team from a steering committee to an advisory board.

3. Ongoing conversations with other FYSSI working groups to establish and facilitate collaborations to gain the greatest benefit from Navigate (breadth and depth).

4. Develop formal evaluation plan to measure impact and establish best practice.
New Student Orientation

Lizzie Wahab (Chair), Vice President for Enrollment Management
Jamie Ballinger (co-Chair), Assistant Director of Graduate Enrollment Services
Silverio “Ace” Barrera, Associate Director of Recruitment
Michael Cooley, Director of Enrollment Information Systems
Jenny Desmond, Assistant Director of Admissions and Student Ambassador Programs

Thane Fremouw, Associate Professor and Chair of Psychology
Torsten Hahmann, Assistant Professor of Computing and Information Science
Jeff Hunt, Director of Campus Recreation
Nory Jones, Professor of Management Information Systems
Lauri Sidelko, Director of Student Wellness Resource Center
Joshua Stanhope, Assistant Director of Fraternity, Sorority Affairs and Leadership Development
Key Findings

- Orientation begins prior to admission and continues through the first days of class
- Orientation has three overarching goals: **Campus Skills**, **Personal & Social Growth**, and **Support for Families**
- UM’s current Orientation is robust, but does not perfectly fulfill all goals
New Student Orientation

Key Recommendations

- Develop **Personalized Orientation Pathways** for diverse learner groups
- Invest in **Training and Resources** for academic departments & divisions
- Adapt **Navigate Platform** for use at orientation activities
- Adapt **Orientation Communications and Events** to reinforce key goals
Placement, Preparation, and Progress

Jeff St. John (Chair), Senior Associate Provost for Academic Affairs

Eisso Atzema, Lecturer in Mathematics

Mandy Barrington, Assessment Coordinator

Eric Chapman, Director of College Success Program

Farahad Dastoor, Director of School of Biology and Ecology

Ann Dieffenbacher-Krall, Assistant Director of School of Biology and Ecology

Doug Johnson, Director of the Counseling Center and Touchstone Resources

Jon Kreps, Lecturer in Chemistry

Sarah Lindahl, Lecturer in Chemistry

Penny Rheingans, Director of School of Computing and Information Science
Key Findings

- The university needs a math placement software solution capable of supporting a) math placement for Calculus; b) potential placement/diagnostic instruments for other STEM disciplines; and c) online proctoring.

- The university should consider developing a set of STEM prep courses for incoming students who may benefit from additional preparation prior to enrolling in our STEM gateway courses.
Key Recommendations

• By mid-May, we anticipate recommending a contract for math placement and online proctoring services with ALEKS, a leading vendor for math placement software solutions, in preparation for a Summer 2020 launch.

• We recommend creating a suite of one-credit, pass/fail STEM prep courses—targeting skills and concepts for success in chemistry, physics, biology, and related fields—for first-year students who require additional preparation prior to entry into our gateway courses.
Student Success Hub

John Mascetta (Chair), Director of Advising and Academic Services Center and Explorations Program

Jason Bolton, Associate Extension Professor

Orlina Boteva, Director of International Programs

Cindy D’Angelo, Assistant to the Associate Dean, Undergraduate School of Business

William Ellis, Associate Director of the School of Marine Sciences

Faith Erhardt, Coordinator of Academic Advising and Support Services

Andrea Gifford, Assistant Dean for Student Life

William Livingston, Associate Professor of Forest Resources

Gina Marquis, Coordinator of Course Scheduling and Data Support, DLL

BJ Roach, Career Counselor

Katie Taylor, Assistant Director of Residence Life

Dominick Varney, Student Support Specialist

Mary Beth Willett, Associate Director of College Success Programs
Key Findings

• Decentralized advising models may lead to confusion for students

• Concerns for students “running around in circles” to find answers

• Many models at other institutions rely on a referral approach

• Some models provide multiple resources (i.e. Advising, Bursar, Financial Aid)

• However, most models provided a centralized space for students to find answers to common questions

• Require larger amount of staffing
Key Recommendations

1. Centralized and visible location in the Memorial Union; expand First Year and Transfer Student Center

2. Advisory Board comprised of student, appointed faculty and staff from each academic college, and various student and academic service departments.

3. Support from CITL and/or IT to create centralized websites and online videos.

4. No more than two stops for students to find answers
   • Parallel recommendation:
     ➢ Advising incentivise for faculty
Summer Preparation

Monique LaRocque (Chair), Associate Provost for Division of Lifelong Learning

Chris Bartram, Coordinator for Maine Bound

Timothy Boester, Assistant Professor of Mathematics Education

Jessica Browne, Assistant Training Director, Counseling Center

Ashley Buttice, Graduate Student in Higher Education

Jessica Chubbuck, Area Coordinator, Residence Life

George Criner, Associate Dean, College of Natural Sciences, Forestry & Agriculture

Dylan Dryer, Associate Professor of English

Matthew LeClair, Social Media Manager, Enrollment Management

Todd Zoroya, Lecturer of Mathematics
Summer Preparation

Key Findings

• Many public and private institutions across the country offer summer kick start programs

• Well-designed summer programs are an important strategy for supporting student retention

• In addition to course work, summer programming needs to support students’ social and emotional well-being

• Students’ sense of belonging to the university community is critical. The earlier they feel connected, the more likely they are to persist.

• The university community must work together to ensure we have meaningful and viable programs in the summer. This will entail collaboration between academic affairs, student affairs, auxiliary services, financial aid, among others.
Key Recommendations

- Pilot a summer coaching program focused on math preparedness (Summer, 2019)
- Create a Task Force focused on strategies to address issues of social/emotional health (AY19-20)
- Develop 2-3 pre-college, “kick-start” programs for selected academic departments (Summer 2020)
- Expand UM’s OPTIONS program to FGLI students
- Develop fundraising strategy for scholarship support for FGLI student participation in summer courses/activities