

STAY@FAU

OFFICE FOR STUDENT RETENTION NEWSLETTER • UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES

STUDENT SUCCESS CONFERENCES PLANNED FOR FIRST-YEAR AND TRANSFER STUDENTS

As faculty across the country maintain that student performance and behavior in the classroom is on the decline, FAU faculty and staff will be proactive this year as we create “conferences” for new first-year and transfer students to address these concerns. Separate programs are being planned for each population (and on each campus for the transfer students) and may be offered several times prior to and right after the start of the fall semester. Interested students will be required to register in advance for the conferences that will cover some of the topics shown below:

FIRST-YEAR STUDENT SUCCESS CONFERENCE

- Preparing for the first two weeks of classes
- Transition from high school to college and academic life at FAU
- Appropriate classroom behavior and attitudes
- Getting connected (with faculty and the school)
- Campus resources
- The basics (attendance, accountability the syllabus)
- Technology (MyFAU and Blackboard)
- Basic skills (note taking, studying, reading college texts)
- Learning styles and teaching styles

TRANSFER STUDENT SUCCESS CONFERENCE

- Understanding the University structure and functions
- Transition to FAU (new academic demands)
- Getting connected (with faculty, the school and student life)
- Campus resources
- Finding a balance and time management
- Technology (MyFAU and Blackboard)
- Curriculum assessment
- Career development

For more information about these conferences or to participate, please contact Jeanne Takeda (transfer student conference) at jtakeda@fau.edu or Dr. Jennifer Bebergal (first-year student conference) at bebergal@fau.edu.

LIVING LEARNING COMMUNITIES EXPAND FOR 2006-07

We are excited to announce the creation of three new living-learning communities (LLCs) for next academic year. In addition to expanding the “Explore” LLC for first-year students who are undeclared or still deciding majors, we will add an Engineering LLC, Intercultural LLC and Women in Leadership LLC.

Students in each community will participate in classes and programs to enhance their connections to other students and to their majors/interests while additional support and study groups will ensure their satisfaction and success with their collegiate experience. Thank you to the numerous people involved in submitting and reviewing LLC proposals and implementing the programs as we grow from 18 participants in 2005-06 to 128 anticipated for next fall.

HERITAGE PARK SUPPORT CENTER (HPSC) GROWING FOR 2006-07!

Last fall, the HPSC opened its doors, bringing the services from Freshman Academic Advising, the Career Development Center and the University Center for Excellence in Writing to where many of the students are—in the residence halls. Housing and Residential Life dedicated an office on the first floor of Heritage Park Towers as a support center. With the creation of new Living-Learning Communities in 2006-07, plans include the addition of engineering student services, tutoring for engineering majors and instructor office hours right in the HPSC.

If your department is interested in providing satellite services to students in the HPSC or for more information about the HPSC, please contact Dr. Jennifer Bebergal at ext. 7-2432 or bebergal@fau.edu.

CTESS AND THE TITLE III-A GRANT PROPOSAL

FAU is proposing the creation of an organizational and physical entity where all activities related to teaching excellence and student success take place. The Center for Teaching Excellence and Student Success (CTESS) would incorporate faculty development and learning enhancement initiatives with the ultimate goal to substantially increase student retention and graduation rates at FAU.

The purpose of CTESS will be to coordinate and deliver all the academic support and faculty instructional development services needed to ensure achievement of student learning outcome goals and the successful completion of baccalaureate studies in a timely manner.

As we prepare to submit a \$2 million Title III-A Development Grant application to the U.S.

Department of Education in 2006, members of the Title III-A steering committee have decided that using the grant monies (if awarded) to help start-up this proposed center would be the best way to impact student success at FAU. Initial plans to focus the grant on providing a better support structure to promote student success in math will be a large component of the start-up efforts.

We encourage feedback on the Title III-A grant proposal as it is formed. Please look for campus announcements with links to review the proposal prior to submission this spring term. If you are interested in more information about the Title III-A grant, contact Dr. Jennifer Bebergal at bebergal@fau.edu or Dr. Tom Pusateri at pusateri@fau.edu.

HOW FACULTY CAN ENCOURAGE STUDENT RETENTION



The ability to make connections with other students, faculty and administrators during the first year of college is an important predictor of student persistence. To enhance the first year experience, faculty and administrators must work together to create engaging educational settings.

The following ideas are a product of a faculty seminar at Jefferson Community College, Kentucky (as posted by Honolulu Community College) Sixty-three ideas are presented for faculty use in dealing

with retention/attrition. Below are excerpts. To view the entire list (and other faculty development information) visit <http://honolulu.hawaii.edu/intranet/committees/FacDevCom/index.htm>.



Faculty/Student Interaction

1. Learn the name of each student as quickly as possible and use the student's name in class.
2. At the end of each class period, ask one student to stay for a minute to chat (compliment on something, tell student you missed him/her if absent, etc.).
3. Instead of returning tests or quizzes in class, ask students to stop by your office to pick them up. This presents an opportunity to talk informally with students.
4. Call or e-mail students if they are absent. Make an appointment with them to discuss attendance, make-up work, etc.
5. Provide positive reinforcement whenever possible; give students a respectful answer to any question they might ask.
6. Have the students establish a "buddy" system for absences, work missed, assignments, tutoring, etc. Exchange telephone numbers; pair them by majors or geographical proximity.

General Classroom Management

1. Circulate around the class as you talk or ask questions.
2. Give each student a mid-term grade and indicate what each student must do to improve.
3. Tell the students (orally and in writing) what your attendance policy is. Make them aware of your deep concern for attendance and remind them periodically of the policy and the concern.
4. Conduct a full instructional period on the first day of classes. This activity sets a positive tone for the learning environment you want to set.
5. List and discuss your course objectives on the first day. Let students know how your course can fit in with their personal/career goals.
6. Return tests, quizzes and papers as soon as possible. Write comments (positive and negative) when appropriate.
7. Vary your instructional techniques (lecture, discussion, debate, small groups, films, etc.).
8. Use familiar examples in presenting materials.
9. Clarify and have students understand what is acceptable and unacceptable behavior in a

classroom. Be consistent in enforcing your rules.

10. Throughout the course, but particularly during the crucial first class sessions, stress a positive "you can handle it" attitude and emphasize your willingness to give individual help.

Student-Initiated Activities

1. Have students read each others' papers before they turn them in. This activity could help them locate errors before being graded.
2. Ask students to submit sample test questions (objective or subjective) prior to a test. The class itself can compose a test or quiz based on your objectives.
3. Have students set specific goals for themselves throughout the semester in terms of their learning and what responsibilities they will undertake.

Faculty-Initiated Activities

1. Utilize small group discussions in class whenever feasible.

2. Take the initiative to contact and meet with students who are doing poor work. Be especially cognizant of the "passive" student, one who comes to class, sits quietly, does not participate and does poorly on tests, quizzes, etc.
3. Use your background, experience and knowledge to relate your subject matter with other academic disciplines.
4. Work with the Office for Student Retention to discuss procedures to follow-up absentees, failing students, etc.
5. Set up special tutoring sessions and extra classes. Encourage students who are doing poorly to attend.
6. Team teach a class with a colleague or switch classes for a period or two. Invite a guest lecturer to class.
7. Engage in periodic (weekly) self-evaluation of each class. What was accomplished this past week? How did students react?

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the University's Retention newsletter, is published bi-annually. Please watch for future issues that will provide in-depth coverage of some of the key services that enhance student persistence and how you can help increase the retention rates of FAU students.