Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

Between Office of Academic Affairs
And
School of Business Administration

Reference: Last Five Miles: Coaching Students to Degree Completion

I. Purpose

This MOU outlines partnership roles and responsibilities for implementation of the Provost Challenge project: Last Five Miles: Coaching Students to Degree Completion

II. Project Description and Key Project Outcomes

Overview:
Our goal is to reach out to students who were close to graduation but never applied for graduation (thus were not included in the last mile data). Utilizing Cognos, we will gather a comprehensive list of students who were admitted to the program (identified by a 06 college code) and were close to graduation (identified by completion of certain 400 level business classes). We will go back as far as 1995 for this first run. This will require temporary staffing to manage the project of reaching out to past students and working with them on a plan to finish their degree. Going forward, we will create systems in order to prevent the “stop out” before it happens by reaching out to students who are admitted and have taken 400 level classes but have taken two or more terms off.

Key project outcomes (as agreed by Project Lead and Vice Provost):
1. Use web analytics to measure hits on the site
2. Track the number of students who re-enroll in courses Winter & Spring Terms as a result of this project
3. Track the number of students who graduate by Fall term 2014 as a result of this project

III. Funding
The project team will be funded up to $6,864 to achieve the outcomes established for this project. Vice Provost for Academic Innovation in consultation with Provost and the appropriate dean may increase, reduce or terminate funding for this project.

IV. Funding Agreement Terms
The funding agreements in this document are contingent upon completion of the proposed project as describe above. Changes to the agreements, timetables or funding will be based on written agreement between the College/Department and Office of Academic Affairs designees. OAA will provide an index code that will be used for funding of this project. There will be no transfer of funds.

V. Resolution of Disagreements
In the event of a disagreement that cannot be resolved by the parties, resolution will be through agreement of Vice Provost for Academic Innovation and the Dean of the Department's College or Director of the Unit.
WITNESS WHEREOF, the representatives have signed this Memorandum of Understanding on the 20th day of August, 2013.

Becky Sanchez, Project Lead, Academic Advisor, SBA

Scott Marshall, Associate Dean of Graduate Programs, SBA

Sukhwant Jhaj
Vice Provost for Academic Innovation and Student Success

Scott Dawson, Dean, SBA

Enclosures:
• Copy of reThink PSU: Provost Challenge project proposal
#73 Last Five Miles: Coaching Students to Degree Completion

Last modified: February 20, 2013 – 10:52am

Project Lead
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Academic Advisor
Business Administration, School of

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Challenge
Inspiration Challenge

Abstract/Summary
Our goal is to reach out to students who were close to graduation but never applied for graduation (thus were not included in the last mile data). Utilizing Cognos, we will gather a comprehensive list of students who were admitted to the program (identified by a 06 college code) and were close to graduation (identified by completion of certain 400 level business classes). We will go back as far as 1995 for this first run. This will require temporary staffing to manage the project of reaching out to past students and working with them on a plan to finish their degree. Going forward, we will create systems in order to prevent the “stop out” before it happens by reaching out to students who are admitted and have taken 400 level classes but have taken two or more terms off.

Introduction
Currently, if a student stops attending courses and has not applied for graduation, there is no outreach done. The group of students we intend to reach with this project would be very close to graduation and may need some added encouragement and resources to persevere on to degree completion. By reaching out to these populations of past students, we rekindle the relationship with them and will have the opportunity to learn valuable information on their reasons for stopping school. We can then put the knowledge we gain into practice by changing how we reach out to students who “stop out” going forward. We may have different resources we offer them, reach them in different ways, or work more closely doing case management with them.

Impact/Significance
The School of Business currently has 320 students who have been admitted to the SBA, taken 400 level classes (i.e. were within a year of graduating), completed at least 165 credits and then stopped taking classes since 1995. Seeking out and working with these students to help them complete their degree will increase our graduating class and enable us to gain valuable relationships and data going forward.

Approach and Strategy
Phase one: Use award money to fund a part time advisor on wage agreement (15 hours per week for two terms) to reach out to these students. Reaching out will consist of multiple tools including social and professional networking (LinkedIn and Facebook) as well as traditional methods (email, phone, mail). Assist these students by waiving courses, supporting petitions and mapping out degree plans for remaining requirements.

Phase two: Create a recurring report from Cognos that lists students who are admitted, have taken 400 level classes, completed 165 or more credits and
have taken two terms off. Full time professional advisors will reach out to students on this list every term.

Milestones
1. We will hire a part time temporary advisor to start in Fall Term 2013, this advisor will be trained on business and university degree requirements as well as university petition processes and procedures in the first four weeks.
2. The part time temporary advisor will create social media pages, draft letters and emails to students and immediately begin reaching out to these students (320 business students identified thus far) to see if we can get any of them graduated by Winter Term.
3. The advisor will meet with students and assist them in navigating university procedures over the course of Fall & Winter Terms and get students reengaged with the university.
4. First batch of students graduate in Winter Term 2014
5. The temporary advisor position ends, project is then taken over by full time professional advisors, systems put in place to reach out to students on a regular basis.
6. Second batch of students graduate Spring Term 2014
7. Third batch of students graduate August 2014

Benefits
The short term benefits are that we will increase our graduation and success rate. The students who still need and plan to take a few courses will bring added revenue to PSU. Long term benefits are that these students move to an alumni role rather than past student. As alumni, we can track them better and engage with them more effectively. There are 320 potential students who we will reach out to initially. I am hoping that we can get at least 30-40 of these students reenrolled or graduated by August 2014. Reaching out to students on an ongoing basis will have the same short and long term benefits.

Consequences
Consequences of not implementing this proposal would be that students who need the added assistance and motivation to return and finish their degree will not be contacted. These students will continue to be lost to us as potential degree recipients.

Needs Assessment
Download (http://www.rethink.pdx.edu/sites/default/files/needs%20assessment%20last%20five%20miles.pdf)

Inspiration Challenge Only
1. Supporting early identification of students at risk - If this proposal is funded we will be reaching out to a different type of "at risk" student than is defined in the initiative. These students are at risk of dropping out entirely and (if not communicated to) may end the pursuit of their degree or may transfer elsewhere.
2. Intentional advising and charting a pathway to degree completion - The last mile committee is mentioned in this initiative, this proposal takes the last mile concept to the next stage, reaching students who have not yet applied for graduation, working with them and coaching them to the finish line. Reaching out to students who are close to the end but "stop out" can be done across campus and any other department with the bandwidth could join us in this mission. This initiative also mentions improving graduation rates which would be the result of a successful undertaking in this project.

Media
The last five miles (http://www.slideshare.net/Becky_Sanchez/the-last-five-miles-16047620) from Becky_Sanchez
(http://www.slideshare.net/Becky_Sanchez)

Tags
21st Century Student, College Access, Degree Completion, Policy Change, Process Change, Reduce Credit to Degree, Student Success, Undergraduate,

Comments

Robert Mercer — January 3, 2013 - 1:18pm

we could all learn from this SBA proposal. It’s exciting to think about the number of students it could impact across the University

Kerry Wu — January 24, 2013 - 3:25pm

This proposal, if funded, will benefit not just SBA, but the entire campus. There are many factors (personal, financial, change of mind/career path, etc.) for people not completing school, esp. for the many nontraditional PSU students that juggle multiple responsibilities. Results from the outreach to this underserved population will be enormously useful to the rest of PSU.

Lindsey Wise — February 14, 2013 - 2:49pm

I agree this will be useful to the entire university, as well as helping students gain their degrees. Identifying common reasons for leaving the university before graduation will help us address those issues for future students before they get to the point of leaving the university.

Jeanne Enders — February 15, 2013 - 5:19pm

Becky and team, you make a very clear argument for this. The Last Miler work the university (and you) have done so far has really paid off. Great thinking to extrapolate something that was very successful into a new proposal to do more of it! It seems like the fact that cognos can activate these reports automatically makes this all more do-able - part of our everyday work. So great. Nice work.
Portland State University
professor invents zero-gravity
coffee cup »

The Oregonian: Merkley
proposes federal money to boost
Oregon's 'pay it forward' plan
for student loans »

Sustainable Business Oregon:
New 'vomimo charger' hits
Oregon, foreshadows EV power
showdown »

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tuesday, Aug 13
Annual SEMpdx Rooftop
Networking Party »

Wednesday, Aug 14
Free MATLAB & Simulink
Seminar »

Wednesday, Aug 14
Sounds of Summer Concert
Series in StMo »
go to events

Nicholas Robbins »
Pre-Med Biology - ESAMP
Student Action Team

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