Student Success in 2020: Engage and Retain Students in a Virtual Environment

Danial Jameel
President, Founder
Ready Education
Housekeeping

☐ Check audio and video
☐ All participants audio turned off by default
☐ Type any questions that come up
☐ Two audience polls
☐ We will follow-up with a recording of today’s session
Speakers

Dr. Eddie Howard
Vice President Student Affairs
Youngstown State University

Julia Arreguy
Software Integration Manager,
Office of Student Equity and Achievement
Sierra College

Dr. Christine Deacons
Director, Academic Support Programs, Holman Success
Eastern Michigan University
Audience Poll

Do you believe virtual engagement is an important factor in driving student success in 2020?
Virtual engagement - Why it matters

- Most colleges are opening this fall with a hybrid approach.
- At risk students require more support than ever before.
- Real time data is essential for improving planned strategies.
- Building a virtual community is key to driving student success in this new normal.
Student Success Framework

- **Intervention**
  - Intervene with non-engaged students

- **Engagement**
  - Increase community engagement

- **Integration**
  - Integrate with key campus resources

- **Assessment**
  - Measure attendance and student feedback

- **Community**
  - Build community

- **Centralization**
  - Unify campus resources

**Student Success**
Retention Report

Enrollment
2000 Students

Data sources
Retention, Demographic, App data

Timeline
2016-2019 (4 years)
The probability of continued enrollment is 42% for students who did not use the app before the start of the semester, and 86% for students who used the app before the semester.

App Use Before Term Start

- The probability of continued enrollment is 16% for students who never used the app, and 84% for students who used the app at least once.
The probability of continued enrollment is 81% for students who attended no campus events (n = 752), 83% for students who attended between 1 and 5 events (n = 913), and 95% for students who attended more than 5 events (n = 277).

The probability of continued enrollment is 78% for students who received none or few messages, and 98% for students who received a lot of messages.
Urban, research Institution
Youngstown, OH
Founded in 1908 by the YMCA

“Not too big, not too small”
12,756 students
145 Acre Campus
Challenge

Defragmenting the Student Experience
Hybrid Model: In Person & Virtual Engagement
COVID-19 (Student Affairs)

- Support resources on Covid-19
- SA Division was already virtual
- The YSU app was the most engaging platform during peak covid period.
- Result: 12,000 app opens every day during peak Covid period.
Virtual Events

- Facilitate Virtual Town halls
- Virtual Greek sing
- Virtual Graduation
Virtual Services:

Academic Coaches & Supplemental Instruction:

- No touch attendance tracking for services
- No touch Real-time feedback
- 54,000 Academic visits with 80% feedback
Virtual Services: Academic Coaching

“Tara is a big help! She encouraged me not to let one very, bad test score keep me down and depressed. She informed me to “let it go” and let’s move on, because she knows I will be down on myself forever over it.”

“It was a beautiful meeting, Honestly she was a huge help!”
Results

**EMAIL**

- **20%**
  - Engaged students

**YSU App**

- **80%**
  - Engaged students

**Orientation Onboarding**

Past 5 years, Over 2700 freshman each year used the app to engage with resources & peers

**Yearly Engagement**

- **1M yearly APP SESSIONS**
- Average Student Opens the YSU App 821 times/ a year
- **3M** times out of classroom resources were accessed

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ August 24, 2016

I love being able to stay in touch with all of my peers 😊😊😊
Lessons learned

A big shift for staff and leadership team.

How volatile higher education is, but also how agile higher education can be.

It takes the right strategy, team mindset, and technology tools to succeed.

Be open to collaborative partnership. Show leadership in crisis.
Member of the California Community College System

Rocklin, California

18,000 students

Julia Arreguy
Software Integration Manager, Office of Student Equity and Achievement
Challenges: Communication

- Students not reading email.
- Providing the right information to the right student at the right time.
- A guided experience for students.
- Getting students through completion is the ultimate goal.
- Covid-19 has compounded existing communication challenges.
Why a specific mobile strategy?

• Deliver critical time-sensitive information
• Achieve high “stickiness”
  • Engage students
  • Build a sense of community
• Achieve high app adoption among students
• Integrate systems (Banner and Canvas)
• Centralize key resources
• Reaching students where they are already at (spending time on)
COVID 19 (IT)

- Academic & Remote support
- COVID support
- Community support
Summer semester is my first semester at Sierra, being online, where do I find a syllabus or textbook requirements for the online classes? Any tips on how the online classes even work?? TIA

Good Question. I think they use something called "Canvas" for online classes. For syllabus and textbook I am not so sure!!

log in to mySierra and then click on Canvas to see your classes. That's where you'll find the syllabus for all of them. However, summer semester doesn't start until June 8, so your classes may or may not show up until that date, depending on when the professor makes them live.

Does anyone know how can I contact and schedule a meeting with my college counselor? (Online)

call the records and admission department and they can direct you. It depends on your field of study

(916) 660-7400 Call the counseling office not admissions and records. Or you can try to do it through starfish in mysierra but it hasn't been working right lately.

https://esars.sierracollege.edu/eSARSRedirect/eSARSRedirect.aspx
Community Building

• Build Sense of Community

• Campus Pulse

• Get peer answers less 10 mins

• Immediate Feedback
Impact of Virtual Community on retention

The probability of continued enrollment is 78% for students who received none or few messages, and 98% for students who received a lot of messages. - Ready Education + Columbia University data science team’s study.
Results

1M Yearly App Session
224,744 Total Conversations
10k Friendships Formed
413 Hours Hours Admin Time Saved By Crowdsourcing Student’ Questions
Lessons learned

Due to the current crisis, suddenly the virtual environment is the only tool students have.

Campus services may have paused but students still need support.

Getting students through completion is the ultimate goal.

The Ready app enabled staff to stay connected with the pulse of the community.
“When we launched the upgrade for our Mobile App, we were caught completely off guard by the magnetic impact of “The Wall.”

Within just a couple of days, thousands of students had flocked to the medium, thrilled with the opportunity to easily connect and engage with others in their college community.

With appropriate protocols in place, it has required minimal supervision as students self-monitor for inappropriate content.

Further, students help each other by answering the many questions that are posted – in nearly every instance, accurately!”

Mandy Davies, Vice President of Student Services
Public, 4-year university in Ypsilanti, MI

- Enrollment: 21,105 Students
- Representing 40 countries and 46 states
- 66% full time students; 92% In state
- 21% live on campus; 68% receive need-based Financial Aid

Dr. Christine Deacons
Director, Academic Support Programs
Holman Success Center
Support Services

- Supplemental instruction
- Tutoring
- Success coaching
- Peer academic coaching
- Eagle study tables
- Eagle Rewards program
- Book loan program
- Academic skills workshops
- EMU Edge Program
EMU Edge Program

- Grant funded
- 200+ new participants each fall
- Academically and/or economically “at-risk”
- 58% first-generation
Challenge: Supporting At Risk Students

Theoretical Framework

Individualist Culture & Collectivist Culture
Building a Campus Community

Making Friends

Freshman Asking Help

Interests
Assessment: Structured Support

Measured Attendance
- Success Coaches
- Study Tables
- Supplemental instructions
- Drop-in tutoring
- Peer Academic coaches

Assessment & Real time feedback allowed us to make adjustments faster:
- Study tables were reorganized based on student feedback.
- The book loan program, more computers into the space
- Changed our time of opening

Results: 161,000 Visits, 90% real-time feedback
Assessment: Support Services

I was very satisfied with the service I received today. I feel like I learned a lot and, he was very nice and helpful.

"He was very helpful and did not mind going over whatever I needed help with!"
Interventions

Right Information at the right time

*Mapping Intervention across the student lifecycle*

**Intervention Category**
- Academic
- Financial
- Engagement
- Mental Health

**Examples**
- FAFSA Application
- Bills due, registrations
- Deadlines, last day to drop/withdraw
- Covid-19 information
- Scholarship
Student Success Results

EMU App is Top 4 predictors among 54 predictive variables of First Year student Success

1. High School GPA
2. Participation in Study Tables (access to resources)
3. ACT / SAT Test Score
4. EMU App Registered User
What students say about the app?

• 88% of students feel like they belong to the university community while using the app.

• 90% of students say the app helped them get off to a good start.
App Engagement Results

- 775K yearly app session
- On Average students open the app/year: 943
- Total Conversations: 165,000
- 8K Friendships formed
- 344 Hours admin time saved by crowdsourcing student questions
Lessons Learned + Covid

- Centralization of campus resources into one platform
- Build Community
- Move from mass messaging to intentional messaging.
- Use student feedback to increase iteration cycles for service improvement (from once semester/weekly)
Audience Poll

Are you interested in learning more about Ready Education and engaging your students in a virtual environment this fall?
Email
research@readyeducation.com
(webinar slides, retention study)