



**LEGAL CAVEAT**

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# 1) Executive Overview

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**Institutions establish centralized student success centers to address college transition and preparedness challenges and increase student retention.** Underclass students especially struggle to manage their free time efficiently and may not be prepared for rigorous college curricula. Centers offer individual and group tutoring, supplemental instruction for

## 2) Overview of Student Success Services

### Services and Programming

#### *Offer Services That Address Course Content Needs and Promote Study Skills Development*

Administrators consider programming at peer institutions and services provided by other offices on campus to determine the types of services to offer. For example, **University A** does not offer writing services through the centralized student success center on the \_\_\_\_\_ because another campus office provides writing instruction. **University E** features a number of services outside the student success center, including a writing center within the English department and a math lab in the Math \_\_\_\_\_ plans to incorporate these services because students perceive there is a negative stigma associated with seeking out departmental centers. Students may be concerned that tutors or staff in departmental centers will alert faculty members that they have pursued help.

#### Services That Address Course Content Needs

Student success center staff at **University C** identify courses with at least a 20 percent failure rate annually to determine courses for which to offer supplemental instruction.

##### Tutoring

Most institutions feature individual or group tutoring in core courses. The top five tutored subjects at **University D** include math, English, chemistry, biology, and Spanish. Sessions typically last 30 minutes to an hour.

##### Supplemental Instruction

Free supplemental instruction (SI) sessions allow students to review material and prepare for tests in courses with high withdrawal or failure rates such as math, business, chemistry, and engineering. Contacts advise offering supplemental instruction for courses with a large number of sections especially because students often do not receive adequate one-on-one attention by faculty members in these courses. Undergraduate students who lead SI sections complete readings, attend class meetings, and take notes to prepare to teach SI sessions. Supplemental instruction groups at **University D** meet three times per week for one-hour sessions.

#### Services That Promote Study Skills Development

##### Academic Counseling

Institutions offer peer and professional academic counseling and coaching. Academic coaches at **University C** meet one-on-one with students to review course loads and discuss learning strategies.

##### Academic Success Workshops

The student success center at **University D** offers voluntary, one-hour workshops one to two times per semester. The most in- \_\_\_\_\_ and test-taking skills workshops. Students on probation at **University C** attend a 60-minute workshop to review their academic record and develop plans for academic success.

##### Presentations On-Demand

The new student success center at **University E** will offer presentations on study skills upon request in locations such as residence halls and for groups such as sports teams.



## Early Registration Advising Sessions at *University E*

### ***Centers Adapt Services to Phone or Online Formats Based on Student Demand***

Student success centers

*f* **Video podcasts:** Center staff at **University B**

person workshop series into 15- to 20-minute video podcasts to respond to declining attendance rates for in-person workshops. Sample podcasts include test taking and time-management. Contacts describe podcasts as a more student-friendly delivery system because students may listen to podcasts at any time and access lessons multiple times.

*f* **Online PowerPoints:** **University D** features presentations from workshops on the student

## 2) Operation of Student Success Centers

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### ***Hire a Director, Coordinators, and an Administrative Assistant to Serve in the Student Success Center Full-time***

Professional staff select services and programming, provide professional advising and counseling services, and train student tutors and instructors. Directors and assistant directors coordinate all student success center programming, whereas coordinators typically develop and train staff for individual services such as tutoring or individual courses.

#### **Common Professional Staff Positions**

	<b>Role</b>	<b>Typical Qualifications</b>
<b>Director</b>	<i>f</i> Selects and develops student success center programming <i>f</i> Hires and supervises student success center staff	<i>f</i> PhD or a related field <i>f</i> Previous experience directing student success programming or managing student success centers
<b>Assistant Director</b>	Supports director in organization of student success center programming	<i>f</i>



## ***Hire High-performing Students to Serve as Tutors, Supplemental Instruction Leaders, and Peer Academic Coaches***

Institutions hire 10 to 40 peer tutors based on student demand for services. The ratio of tutors to undergraduate students ranges from one tutor for approximately 100 to 1,000 undergraduate students. Most institutions restrict eligibility to undergraduate students who have earned a B or higher in a particular course for tutor positions.

Prospective tutors at **University E** submit essays, a resume, and faculty recommendations and complete interviews with the student success center director, a faculty member, and a student. Tutors complete 10 to 20 hours of training over the course of one year that includes case studies, scenario simulation, tutoring technique modules, and academic policy compliance lessons to receive certification.

Students who receive an A- or higher



## ***Common Space Features Include a Large Classroom, Meeting Rooms or Cubicles for One-on-One Sessions, and a Computer Lab***

The new student success center at **University B** features one classroom, a conference room for staff meetings, private offices for each professional staff member, a large entry area with furniture and a workstation for administrative assistants, a large room with eight semi-private cubicles, restrooms, and a kitchenette. The center also includes several key-operated gymnasium lockers for secure storage and eight computers for use by student staff. The new center at **University C** occupies approximately 10,000 square feet and features approximately 40 rooms, including a small computer lab, a large active learning space, several study rooms, and meetings for academic coaches.

### **University A**

features a small computer lab that offers the cheapest

health sciences campus. Although printing series do not directly relate to the

services encourage student visits to the center.

## ***Offer Tutoring or Courses in Other Campus Locations and Purchase Flexible Furnishings to Maximize Space***

Student success centers often provide tutoring services or host courses in other campus locations due to limited space. For example, the student success center at **University C**

Administrators at **University E** purchased flexible furnishing for their new student success center to enable staff and students to adapt spaces quickly for different programs. Staff can  
-visual classroom for lectures or seminars.

The center also features rolling white boards that students can move for group study sessions.

## **Hours**

### ***Offer Reduced Weekend Hours Due to Low Student Demand***

Center offices maintain normal weekday hours (i.e., 8:00 AM through 5:00 to 8:00 PM). Later evening hours accommodate students who complete late afternoon courses or student athletes who must attend late afternoon practice sessions. Centers often establish reduced hours (i.e., 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM) on Fridays because most students do not seek services on Friday evenings. Centers typically close on Saturdays and Sundays due to conflicts with  
kend plans and athletics.

Centers feature extended tutoring hours six or seven days per week. For example, **University A** offers tutoring from 7:00 AM to 11:00 PM seven days per week based on tutor availability.

### ***Internal Funding Supports Student Success Center Operations***

Total student success center budgets reflect personnel and operating costs. Personnel costs represent between 80 and 94 percent of total budgets. Contacts recommend that centers hire graduate students with work-study awards to fulfill coordinator or administrative assistant roles to reduce costs.

### **Budgets for Student Success Centers**

## **2) Assessment of Student Success Center Programming**

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### ***Track Student Usage and Programming Impact Through Learning Management Systems and Student Surveys***

#### **University A**

and academic counseling through Hyperion. Tutor scheduling platforms like TutorTrac and GradesFirst also enk

### ***Students Who Complete Academic Strategies Courses are Less Likely to Receive Academic Probation***

Staff at **University A** compared students who completed the \_\_\_\_\_-credit academic strategies course to students from prior years who would have had to take the course had it been offered. Approximately 15 percent of students who did not have the opportunity to take the course received academic probation. In contrast, no students on the verge of probation who completed the course received academic probation. The course also contributed to approximately half a grade point average improvement for students.

### ***Students Who Visit Student Success Centers Experience Higher Retention Rates***

Students who visited the student success center at **University D** from fall 2007 to fall 2008 were more likely to persist than students who did not visit the center even if they only visited the center one time.

### ***Student Retention Rates by Visits to the Student Success Center at University D (Fall 2007 to Fall 2008)<sup>1</sup>***

## 3) Research Methodology

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Leadership at a member institution approached the Forum with the following questions:

- f* What services and programs do student success centers offer? What informs the inclusion or exclusion of different student services?
- f* What are the physical space requirements for centers?
- f* What staff members support student success programming?
- f* What is the process to assess student success center programming? What outcomes have administrators observed as a result of centralized student success centers?

The Forum consulted the following sources for this report:

- f* Institutional websites
- f* National Center <http://nces.ed.gov>.

The Forum interviewed directors of recognized student success centers.

### **A Guide to Institutions Profiled in this Brief**

#### **Institution**