



The Pathway To Success



We're For Strategic Planning

Goal One:

Increase Enrollment and Student Success

Initiative: 8 **Initiative Name:** Develop a Comprehensive Retention Program for the African American Cultural Center

Introduction

The purpose of Goal 1: Initiative 11 is to develop a comprehensive retention program within the African American Cultural Center (AACC) to assist both students and parents. The ISUccceed Program was developed to accomplish this goal by retaining, developing and graduating African American students. The purpose of the ISUccceed Program is to support the retention initiative of Indiana State University and to develop a program within the cultural center geared toward African American students with a focus toward helping to increase African American student's rate of retention, sense of academic capability and persistence toward graduation. ISUccceed has six (6) components: Summer Orientation Sessions for Parents and Students; ISUccceed Prep Fall Orientation; ISUccceed Scholars Program (academic year program); ISUccceed UNIV 101 course; ISUccceed Summer Research Internship and Academic Probation component.

Purpose

Increase the retention and graduation rates of African American students

- Involve and assist the parents and/or guardians in the process of preparing their student for college
- Help students transition from high school to college and adjust to the academic and social rigors of college life.
- Guide and support students as they learn to navigate the university and develop positive academic strategies.
- Help students build leadership and professional skills.
- Assist students who are facing academic difficulties (academic probation).

Methods

The ISUccceed Program has six components: 1) The ISUccceed Summer Orientation Session discusses the ISUccceed program with students/parents. 2) ISUccceed Prep-Fall Orientation is a one and a half day orientation, held prior to classes. Helps new students to transition to ISU. 3) The ISUccceed Scholars Program provides on-going social and academic support to students through bi-weekly meetings with graduate and undergraduate mentors, academic seminars, leadership development and social activities. 4) UNIV 101 - course geared to help students transition to and become acclimated to ISU. 5) The Summer Research Internship is a collaborative effort with SURE to provide opportunities to learn about scientific research and prepare for graduate school. 6) Refocus - the Academic Probation component helps students who are placed on academic probation get back on track through intrusive counseling and academic seminars. Our goal is to develop an academic culture of success. Activities take place within AACC.

Discussion

We are beginning the fourth full year of the program. All six of the components were implemented this past year. The program has been well received by parents and students.

For AY 2015, the ISUccceed program served 109 students who attended meetings with their graduate and undergraduate mentors. Over the year, the average number of mentoring meetings was 6.1 per student.

This year we implemented the ISUccceed UNIV 101 course. The course is co-taught Valerie Craig and Dr. Stephanie Jefferson. We had 104 students in the class and used the book "College Rules!: How to Study, Survive, and Succeed in College. We had 93 students complete the course. The course was taught in a large lecture structure, once per week for the Fall semester. The course was successful and will be taught for Fall 2015, however with changes. Over 90% of the students passed the class with a C or better. Our results show that students who participated in the program and attended 2 or more meetings with mentors, obtained an average gpa of at least 2.4.

For the second year, we sponsored the ISUccceed Summer Research Internship program that was held for 10 weeks, from May through July. This was a collaboration with SURE. Six students were chosen and were assigned to work with Dr. Rusty Gonser, Genomic Advocacy and Dr. Jim Speer, Center for Sustainability. In addition to the research, students visited the laboratory of Dr. Daniel Llano in the Beckman Center on the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign campus and met and talked with Dean Jesse Thompson, College of Agriculture and Daniel Wong, Graduate College.

Summary

The ISUccceed program strengths are: our focus on early contact with students (we make contact before classes begin); introducing and reminding them of resources; getting students engaged and involved with activities; and creating a place where students know help is available.

ISUccceed program challenges are: 1) the voluntary nature of the program is a challenge to encouraging students to commit to bi-weekly meetings; 2) marketing the ISUccceed program to prospective students, high schools and community centers. This upcoming year we will focus on increasing the number of students in the program, including more social activities, creating study tables, developing a closer working relationship with the colleges and revising our data collecting methods to show our effectiveness.

Initiative Chair(s) and Contact Information

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