

Project: ISUccceed Program – Year 2

Start Date: August 15, 2012

Client: Indiana State University

Program Director: Stephanie R. Jefferson, PhD

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 four (4) components: Summer Orientation Sessions for Parents and Students; ISUccceed Prep Fall Orientation; ISUccceed Scholars Program; and Academic Probation component.

Purpose

To build a culture of academic achievement through:

- Involving and assisting the parents and/or guardians in the process of preparing their student for college.
- Helping students transition from high school to college and adjust to the academic and social rigors of college life.
- Guiding and supporting students as they learn to navigate the university and develop positive academic strategies.
- Helping students build leadership and professional skills.
- Assisting students who are facing academic difficulties (academic probation)

Proposal

Retaining students is very important to the university's strategic mission. The ISUccceed program was developed to assist in the retention of African American students. Three important factors that aid in retention are: helping students learn to navigate the university, developing positive academic strategies and, helping students build leadership and professional skills. This proposal will outline the leadership and professional development aspect of the ISUccceed Scholars Program.

Work Plan

In order to maintain what was learned during the fall orientation, new freshmen and transfer students need ongoing support to learn and develop effective and successful academic strategies that will help them during the first year and throughout their college career. Additionally, these students also need support to successfully engage with the University. According to research, African American low-income, first generation students are less likely to be engaged in the academic and social experiences that foster success in college (Engle and Tinto, 2008). ISUccceed Undergraduate Academic Mentors (UAM) will fill this need. These undergraduate academic mentors will work with the graduate retention counselors to provide support in helping the new students navigate the university and learn successful

study strategies. The overall goal is to create a group of scholar role models of the student's peers who will then show the new students successful academic and social strategies.

We will recruit a group of successful undergraduate students to be mentors to freshmen and new transfer students. The students chosen for this position will have a cumulative grade point average of at least a 3.0 and be involved in campus activities and student organizations. The duties of the undergraduate mentors will be to assist new students in the learning of academic and social strategies. Methods for doing this could include group meetings, study sessions, group social activities or one on one meetings. These activities would occur twice per month in the cultural center or in various campus locations. Evaluations will be given to students to assess the quality and effectiveness of each activity. These evaluations will be used for on-going training of UAMs.

The undergraduate mentors will undergo training to help them facilitate individual and group meetings. They will also receive support in helping to plan social activities. The benefits of such a program will not just go to the new student. Undergraduate mentors will also benefit. Students who are chosen to be undergraduate mentors will learn how to plan and implement an activity, facilitate group meetings, learn about university resources and develop skills that will help them in their professional careers. Initially, some of the undergraduate mentors will be chosen from the Mentoring Assistance for Prospective Scholars (MAPS) program. However, we will also post a job notice on the ISU Human Resource website.

This program will be provided in addition to the other components of the ISUceed program, the ISUceed Prep Fall Orientation and the ISUceed Scholars Program (academic year component). The attached budget includes funding requests for the fall orientation and the academic year program.

ISUceed Prep-Fall Orientation Program

ISUceed Prep-Fall Orientation is a voluntary opportunity for African American new freshmen, transfer students and other students who have signed up for the program during summer orientation. Students will meet with AACC-ISUceed staff, Graduate Retention Counselors and Undergraduate Academic Mentors and discuss how to be successful at Indiana State University. This orientation program will include sessions that cover: transitioning from high school to college: Financial Aid basics and money management; handling your Sodexo account; ISU resources; successful academic strategies; the benefits of ISUceed and the role of the Graduate Retention Counselor; engaging with the University and preparing for college graduation. This day and a half orientation, which will be held prior to the start of classes on Friday, August 17th from 5:00pm until 9:00pm and Saturday, August 18th from 10:00am until 3:00pm.

In June, we will update job descriptions for the Graduate Retention Counselor positions and post them on the ISU Human Resources website. All positions will be hourly.

ISUceed Scholars Program

The ISUceed Scholars Program is divided into three parts a) academic mentoring and support; b) student leadership and professional development and; c) academic probation program. This program will begin the first day of classes for the Fall semester.

Brotherhood of Successful Scholars (BOSS)

The ISUcced Program is also incorporating the Brotherhood of Successful Scholars (BOSS) program. This organization, formerly Student African American Brotherhood (SAAB) has been on the Indiana State University campus since 2007. The name was changed to reflect the organization's emphasis on academics. BOSS is a retention program and support group for young men. The organization provides social, emotional and academic support to its members. In the past few years, the organization has brought speakers to campus and has coordinated several student events that allowed students to reflect and discuss various campus and community issues. Additionally, BOSS members are very active in campus activities such as helping with move-in; Special Olympics; SGA and community service projects.

Here at ISU, as across the nation, institutions have struggled with helping minority men enter, achieve and graduate from college, BOSS was created to assist with this effort. The retention and graduation rate for African American males is lower than for all other groups. The four year graduation rate for African American male students has been less than 10% since 2003 (OSPIRE, 2011).

This past year, two ISUcced graduate retention counselors worked with the organization and provided much need guidance and support. In fact, many of the freshmen members of BOSS are also in the ISUcced program.

We are requesting funds to support a graduate assistant who will work directly with the BOSS program. The graduate assistant will attend weekly meetings with the young men, guide them as they coordinate activities, accompany them to national conferences and monitor their academic progress. Funds are also being requested to support the various activities of the organization.

Reporting and Deliverable Schedule

Timeline

June	Post position notice for Graduate Retention Counselor
July	Post position notice for Undergraduate Academic Mentors
July	Interview and hire GCs and UAMs
August 15 th -17 th	ISUcced Graduate Retention Counselor (GC) and Undergraduate Academic Mentor (UAM) training.
August 17-18	ISUcced Prep Fall Orientation
August 18	New freshmen and transfer students assigned GRC. Students on academic probation also assigned GRC
August 21	ISUcced Scholars Program begins on first day of classes. Start of bi-weekly meetings
August 27-31	First activity for UAMs
September 3	Academic study skill workshops begin
September 10 th -14 th	3 rd week academic assessment meetings
October 1 st -5 th	6 th week academic assessment meetings
October 29 th -Nov. 2 nd	9 th week academic assessment meetings

Budget

\$133,359 is requested for the implementation of the ISUcced and BOSS program for FY2013. This amount will include graduate and undergraduate hourly positions, tutoring, food for training and orientation, activities, supplies and mailings.

*The ISUceed program had funds left over from FY2012. The actual amount left over from FY 2012 was \$10,000. We requested an additional \$3,100 for the ISUceed Summer Orientation Program. The left over money was used to fund the Summer Orientation activities. The ISUceed program had a Parent Session and a Student Session during New Student Orientation. Money was budgeted for staff (5 Undergraduate Academic Mentors); housing for three (3) of the UAMs; one (1) Graduate Counselor; food for the parent sessions; shirts for the staff and mailings, brochures and postage.

Stakeholders and Management Plan

The African American Cultural Center (AACC) is responsible for the management of the ISUceed Prep-Fall Orientation program and the ISUceed Scholars Program. AACC will work with Residential Life on the housing of the participants and with various departments for the orientation workshops. ISUceed program will also work closely with the colleges to ensure that students are following their program to completion. Students will meet with their college academic advisors to select their classes as well as to add or drop classes.

Outcome Assessment

Students who attend the ISUceed Prep-Fall Orientation will be surveyed prior to the start of the program to ascertain their understanding of the program. They will also be surveyed after the program to see if the orientation met their expectations and needs. Students will also be surveyed on their preparation for college. Attendance will be kept for bi-weekly meetings as well as contact sheets which record the essence of each meeting. Students will be expected to obtain grade reports each month and assessed periodically (3rd, 6th, and 9th week) throughout the semester to ascertain their academic progress. Students will also be surveyed to ascertain if the ISUceed Prep Fall Orientation workshops aided them throughout the semester and what other information they would have liked to have had. Finally, students will be surveyed at the end of the semester to find out about their knowledge and use of successful academic strategies as well as their thoughts on the program and whether it met their expectations.

The cultural center will also compare the 2012, 2011 and 2010 freshmen cohorts to identify any differences in terms of retention and gpa attainment.