Promoting Faculty Involvement in Student Retention & Student Success Initiatives

Wichita State University
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Academic Deans & Department Chairs
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I. Why is Faculty Buy-In & Involvement a Perennial Concern?

1. Lack of Preparation in Graduate School
2. Lack of Orientation upon Entering the Professoriate
3. Lack of Professional Development
4. Lack of Professional Recognition & Reward

II. What forms of faculty involvement have the greatest impact on student success?

1. Interaction Inside the Classroom:
   
a) Instructor-Student Rapport

   b) Engaging Pedagogy

   c) Effective Student Feedback: Proactive & Prescriptive

   d) Effective Student Referrals (see Appendix, p. 4)

   e) Course-Integrated Academic Support

2. Interaction Outside the Classroom

   a) Developmental/Appreciative Academic Advising (vs. perfunctory course scheduling)

   b) Faculty Involvement in Discipline/Department-Based Student Clubs & Organizations

   c) Faculty-Student Research & Teaching Partnerships

   d) Faculty Involvement in the Co-Curriculum (Student Life Experiences)
III. How can faculty be educated and motivated to become engaged?

1. Top-Down (“Trickle-Down”) Strategies: Soliciting Support from High-Level Administrators
   a) Public Comments & Communiqués
   b) Presence at Meetings & Events
   c) Providing Faculty Incentives & Recognition

2. Organizational Development Strategies: Seeking Systemic Policy Changes with respect to Faculty Expectations, Roles, & Rewards
   a) Faculty Evaluation, Promotion, & Tenure
   b) Faculty Development
   c) New-Faculty Orientation
   d) New-Faculty Recruitment & Selection

3. Faculty Persuasion Strategies
   a) The Rational Approach: Appealing to Reason (It’s logically consistent with the campus mission and institutional goals.)
   b) The Empirical Approach: Appealing to Evidence (It’s what the research shows to have high impact on student learning and development.)
   c) The Moral Approach: Appealing to Altruism (It’s the right thing to do, i.e., it’s in the best interest of our students.)
   d) The Egocentric Approach: Appealing to Self-Interest (It’s in our own best interests, i.e., it will make our job easier by increasing student motivation, retention, and institutional stability/resources.)
   e) The Egotistical Approach: Appealing to Self-Pride (It will enhance our quality and reputation.)
Appendix

The Art & Science of Making Student Referrals: Suggested Strategies

1. *Describe* the goals and services of the referred service. (Don’t assume that the student already knows its purpose or benefits.)

2. *Personalize* the referral: Refer the student to a *person* (a name)—rather than an office.

3. Reassure the student of the qualifications, capability, and approachability of the person to whom s/he is being referred.

4. Help the student identify what *questions* to ask and *how to approach* the resource person.

5. Make sure that the student knows *where* to go and *how* to get there. Or, if possible, and better yet: (✓)

6. Offer to *phone* for an appointment while the student is *in your presence*. Or, if possible, better yet: (✓)

7. Offer to *walk* with the student to the referred person’s *office*.

8. If the student is not willing to act on your referral at the moment, offer to *check back* with the student at a later point to time.

9. *Follow-up* the initial referral by asking the student *if* the contact occurred and *how* it went—in general (rather than probing for specific or personal details).

10. *Acknowledge* the student’s willingness to seek support, for taking personal initiative to resolve the issue, and for capitalizing on supportive resources (i.e., for being resourceful person).
GO SHOCKERS!