College of Health and Human Services Retention/First Year Programs

This information is provided by Cecil Walters, CHHS Coordinator of Recruitment and Retention and Rebecca Zuspan, Coordinator of Student Services. For more information on the Peer Mentor Program and MAP program, contact Cecil at waltersc@ohio.edu. For more information on orientation and welcome programs, contact Becky at zuspan@ohio.edu.

CHHS Peer Mentor Program

Transitioning from high school or community college to a large institution can be an intimidating and confusing experience for students. New students to Ohio University not only face the challenge of excelling in rich academic environment, but must also become familiar with faculty, staff and a wide array of campus activities, and student groups.

Peer influences certainly weigh heavily on how well students adapt to college. With this in mind, the College of Health and Human Services’ Peer Mentor Program (PMP) matches some of our best juniors and seniors with incoming freshman and transfer students. Our overall aim is to create a culture of student achievement through peer-to-peer engagement. PMP began Fall 2008.

Mentors and Mentee activities are guided by three goals:

1) Orientation - Introduction to CHHS/campus personnel and services
2) Community - Intentional inclusion and self-development within CHHS and other campus communities
3) College Success - Encourage academic excellence through peer modeling and meaningful student tasks

Mentors and Mentees develop Weekly Action Plans designed to accomplish each goal throughout the academic year. Mentees learn to take responsibility for their own success by meeting Action Plan Goals. Their Mentors model successful academic and social behaviors. Mentors must have a minimum 3.0 GPA (current average: 3.5). Mentees gain an immediate social network with CHHS juniors & seniors; are introduced to student organizations and social activities; and become familiar with campus-wide services, faculty and staff.

Peer Mentor Program Activities

- Academic Workshops
- Campus Arts and Theater
- Study Sessions
- Critical Evaluation of Action Plan Tasks
- Faculty Introductions
- Student Group Meetings
- Fitness Activities
- Attend Departmental Meetings
- Attend Discipline Specific Conferences
- Library Research Skills
- Lunch and Dinner Meetings
- Movie Nights
Peer Mentor Program Outcomes: Fall 2008

- 34 Mentees
  - Over 200 Activities Completed
  - Mentees are pre-majors and majors in all CHHS Schools offering UNG degrees
  - 89% (30) First Year Students; 11% (4) Transfer Students

- Peer Group Analysis:
  - Control Groups: Random sample sets (34) from all Fall 2008 incoming First Year and Transfer Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Avg. GPA/(#)/%</th>
<th>2.0 &gt; GPA/(#)/%</th>
<th>3.0 &gt; GPA/(#)/%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PMP Mentees</td>
<td>2.97/(34)/100%</td>
<td>3.22/(30)/88%</td>
<td>3.59/(18)/52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control Group #1</td>
<td>2.75/(34)/100%</td>
<td>2.99/(30)/88%</td>
<td>3.43/(16)/47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control Group #1</td>
<td>2.68/(34)/100%</td>
<td>2.89/(29)/85%</td>
<td>3.36/(15)/44%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PMP Outcome Summary:
Mentors and Mentees were engaged in rich interactions over the Fall quarter. As a retention intervention, PMP participants demonstrated meaningful GPA outcomes over their sampled peers.

My Achievement Program (MAP)

The “My Achievement Program” (MAP) is a coordinated agenda focused on academic and personal improvement. Its primary purpose is to provide guidance and support to students whose enrollment at the university is in jeopardy (academic probation). The first group of students entered the program Spring 2008 followed by a second group Fall 2008. The third group of MAP students will commence Winter 2009.

Prospective MAP students are identified based upon probationary or suspension status. They are not required to join but are strongly encouraged to do so. Participants undergo a comprehensive assessment of academic, study, and goal planning needs. Each student must commit to a scheduled program of activities and behavioral modifications that encourage academic success within a quarter.

- My Achievement Program Objectives:
  - Increase Current Term GPA (MAP Term) Above Previous Term’s GPA (Non-MAP)
  - Achieve Academic and Personal Goals Through a Series of Diagnostic and Student Engagement Activities (Advising Sessions, Academic Workshops, Progress Meetings and Student Created Performance Standards)
  - Student Retention Through Academic Achievement
  - Promote Overall Student Success
My Achievement Program Activities
• Academic, Social and Personal Assessments of Prior & Current College Performance
• Weekly Progress Meetings (Goal Establishment, Evaluation & Update Meetings)
• One-on-One Advising (Major Selection and Planning, Study Schedules)
• Small Group and Large Group Workshops (Study Skills, Evaluation of Successful Student Behaviors, Faculty Rapport)
• Learning Contract Meeting
• Student Generated “Academic Update” Emails to Retention Staff

My Achievement Program Outcomes: Spring & Fall 2008
• Spring Quarter 2008: 20 Students Enrolled
  o 70% (14) Retained
  o 55% (11) Earned Above a C Avg. for the Quarter
    ▪ [These students had failing grades the previous quarter]
  o 20% (4) No Longer on Academic Probation

• Spring 2008 Peer Group Analysis:
  o MAP
    ▪ Term GPA AVG.: 2.046
    ▪ Prev. Term GPA AVG.: 1.077
  o Control Group (Random Sample)
    ▪ Term GPA AVG.: 1.77
    ▪ Prev. Term GPA AVG.: 1.37

• Fall Quarter 2008: 10 Students Enrolled
  o 100% (10) Retained
  o 60% (6) Earned Above a C Avg. for the Quarter
  o 50% (5) No Longer on Academic Probation

• Fall 2008 Peer Group Analysis:
  o MAP
    ▪ Term GPA AVG.: 2.3
    ▪ Prev. Term GPA AVG.: 1.39
  o Control Group (Random Sample)
    ▪ Term GPA AVG.: 1.64
    ▪ Prev. Term GPA AVG.: .867

MAP Outcome Summary:
MAP Students performed significantly better than their peers over the last two terms. Most participants were retained and earned higher average term GPA’s than their counterparts. This positive outcome not only reflects a continuation of tuition revenue (cash flow) but also a demonstrable example of MAP’s effectiveness as an academic intervention for CHHS students.
Precollege, Student Orientation, and Welcome Week Activities

Over 400 new CHHS first-year and transfer students were welcomed and advised through the efforts of faculty representatives of the four schools offering freshman entry programs and dean's office staff during the precollege orientation programs held in the past year. Importance of active student involvement in academics and campus life programs, regular contact with faculty advisors, continuous access and review of OAK e-mail account and information gathering from College website were all emphasized to the students in each session.

CHHS regularly conducts a New student orientation during Welcome Week just prior to the beginning of fall quarter. Activities include small group (approximately 20 students) sessions with faculty to familiarize students with our College, academic expectations in college, how to effectively communicate with faculty, and life on the OU campus. Large group sessions include QA session, welcome from the Dean's office, and a technology briefing. Students pick up technology packets, and faculty are available for chat afterward. This year, approximate attendance was about 300 students.