

Uncovering Promise: An Early College



Program for developing Skills, Engagement, and Confidence

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Presentation Overview



- Foundation – What does it mean to uncover promise?
- Programming – What does a program look like that aims to teach skills, boost confidence, and engage students?
- Tools – What tools exist to support this “guerilla-style” programming that is highly specialized, on the ground, in the moment work?

What is promise?



- To be “At Promise” versus “At Risk”
- Recognizing and discovering individual promise, starting with where they are at, where they want to go, what impediments are in their way, how they are going to get there.
- A “Constellation” approach

What Obscures Promise?



- Crabby bucket syndrome
- Wealth, Income, Race, Education, Relationships
- Avoiding the “everyone gets a trophy” technique synonymous with Deficit Thinking
- GPA/Standardized test scores are not the only measurement of success

How Do We “Grow” Promise



- Programs designed to target specific skill sets
- Short modules/multiple modalities
- Target engagement – The best predictor of college success is HOPE (Gallup – Branden Busteed)
- Avoid “one hit wonder” programming
- Do not underestimate the impact of peer modeling

The Promise Program at Providence College



- Budget - \$12,600
- Students served – All who apply, 13 total, from high schools in Providence.
- Description:
 - College Success Course – 1 1/2 credits
 - ✦ 2 times per week for 1 1/2 hours
 - College Writing Course – 1 1/2 credits
 - ✦ 2 times per week for 1 1/2 hours
 - Town Meeting
 - ✦ 1 time per week, 2 1/2 hours

College Success Course



- **INT 100: Foundations for College Success -**
This course helped students to develop skills and habits of mind that are essential for them to succeed in college. Major themes include:
 - Effective self-management
 - ✦ Mantra development
 - Critical reading/thinking
 - ✦ Asking “good” questions
 - Academic research
 - ✦ Library experimentation
 - Oral communication
 - ✦ Claiming their education

Town Meeting



- The “Hidden Curriculum” of Higher Education Success
- Once weekly meetings included:
 - Campus Acclimatization
 - College Admissions Panel
 - Financial Aid Panel
 - Student Success Panel
 - Professional Networking Event

Pre-College Writing



- Performance Assessments
- Academic Writing, Analysis and Argument tailored to students' personal needs.
 - Personalization is central to success
 - Understanding strengths and areas of improvement
- Personal Narrative
 - The Personal narrative is really an extension of the college essay, and it's where we create an opportunity for the students to develop as agents of their own education.

Overall Strengths



- Guerilla Nature
- Team Approach
- Multiple modalities for learning
- Small size allowed for targeted learning
- Small group “prevention” program during school year.

Areas of Improvement



- Schedule
- Size
- Scalability
- Sustainability
- Student Engagement

Beyond the Program: Key Considerations



- Determine what success looks like
- Stay agile so that your programming can evolve with the needs of your students?
- Be prepared for the unexpected
- Find ways to keep your finger on the pulse

Understanding Success



- What is success?
- Have you had an impact?
 - What your program has done for your students (i.e., you've achieved your mission or parts of it)
 - Students feel better prepared as a result of your program
 - Unintended benefits, successes (e.g., improved relationships within the community)
 - How will you measure impact?
- You will be judged not just on what happens with your students today



**“In God we trust.
All others must bring data.”**

– W. Edwards Deming

Staying Agile



- **Can you shift when the landscape does?**
 - You're not seeing the results you were seeking
 - Changes in funding
 - Personnel changes (i.e., you've lost your evangelist)

- **Are you aware of the trends?**
 - Student needs
 - College & career readiness dialogue
 - Data

- **Can you measure your program's impact frequently?**

Being Prepared



- Create user stories to help you anticipate scenarios: "As a ___ I want to ___ *so that* ___ because ___"
- As a **student** I want to **be a critical thinker** so that **I can be a better writer** because **colleges will expect me to be.**
- As a **student** I want to **fit in** so that **I feel like I'm part of the community** because **that will help me graduate.**
- As a **program manager** I want to **develop confidence in my students** so that **they believe in themselves** because **believing is a strong predictor of success.**
- Your students will need you on an ongoing basis

Keeping Your Finger on the Pulse



- How are your students doing? What do they need?
- What is working well?
- What are your pain points? What needs improvement?
- How can we be helpful right now?

Leveraging Mobile to Gather Key Data



- Do you feel that you have the family support that you need to be successful in college?
- Are you the type of student who tends to cram for a test the night before?
- Do you want a part-time job when you are in college?
- Have you find your 5 key contacts on campus?

Emerging Trends



- **Grit and tenacity matter**
 - Assessing preparedness, examining how students are negotiating challenges
- **Relationships matter**
 - Familial support, support from the program, having friends who are traveling the same path
- **Belonging matters**
 - Homesickness, getting involved on campus

Contact Information



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