ReDesigning Academic Advising
+ Presented by 

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Purpose of today's workshop

- Share College’s challenges with Academic Advising
- Impart the outcomes of the college’s assessment
- Introduce a new Advising system
- Discuss challenges and opportunities which emerged from implementing a new advising system
Challenges Faced by the College

• Low Retention Rates
• Low Graduation Rates
• Advising Services Fragmented
• No Singular Source for Academic Information
• No Uniform Mechanisms for Communication
• No Specific Individual Responsible for Advising
Three years of college-wide inquiry

- 2009-11: Achieving the Dream
- 2011-12: Destination Graduation
- 2011-12: Academic Affairs-Student Affairs Alignment
- Fall 2012: Advising Design Team and Faculty Review Group
Achieving the Dream

A National Project to Increase Student Success at Over 130 Community Colleges

How would student success be increased?

• Use Data to Inform Actions
• Engage the Whole College
• Implement Strategies and Evaluate Success
• Establish a Culture of Continuous Improvement
LaGuardia’s Student Success Goals

By 2017-18, LaGuardia Will Increase the Graduation Rate by 80% (from 26% to 47%)

80% of LaGuardia Students Pass Basic Skills Test (ranges from 49% in writing to 68% in math)

80% of LaGuardia’s GED Graduates Are "College Ready"
% of Active Students Dropped Out
(Fall 2004 New Student Cohort, N= 3,491)
Students Who Earned More than 45 Credits, 1,341 of the Fall 2004 Cohort of 3,491

- Graduated, 907
- Still enrolled, 79
- Dropped, GPA>2.0, exit dev, 124
- Dropped, GPA>2.0, never exit dev, 59
- Dropped, GPA<2.0, 39
- Xfrd, GPA>2.0, exit dev, 87
- Xfrd, GPA>2.0, never exit dev, 39
- Xfrd, GPA<2.0, 7
The Milestones: A Tool for Organizing the College’s Thinking

- My First Semester
- After the First Semester: Completing Basic Skills/Starting My Major
- Any intervening semester
- I Have 30-44 Credits
- I Have 45 Credits and Heading Towards Graduation
Common Questions for Each Milestone

- What are the critical junctures for students at this milestone?
- What do students need or want at this milestone?
- What should students do at this milestone to stay on track towards graduation?
- What are the internal/campus barriers at this milestone?
- What kinds of data do we need at this milestone?
- Who should be part of the conversation about this milestone?
- What questions do you have about this milestone?
Destination Graduation

- A two-year campus-based project which emerged after our work with Achieving the Dream.
- Pilot study which focused on ensuring students with 45+ credits graduated within one term.
- Students were given customized advising by faculty advisors.
- The College’s findings through Destination Graduation lead to the conclusion that advising activities must take place throughout the student experience.
What We Learned

• Students, Faculty and Staff Experience College as Fragmented
• Some Students Don’t Have the Skills or Knowledge to Know Where to Go to Get Help
• Students Drop Out at a 15% Rate Per Semester Throughout Their College Career
What We Learned

• Fragmentation of advisement led to students “falling through the cracks.”
• More effective communication is needed.
• Faculty play a powerful role in advising students in their majors
• Flexibility in approach, based on size and needs of each major
What Students Were Saying About Advising

• Noel-Levitz Survey

- “Avoid advisement like the plague. The advice received will delay my graduation and I will graduate with way more than 60 credits.” - LaGuardia Student

- I DO NOT GET ADVISED because half of the advisors seem to in la-la land when they hand out advice. I vowed to never get advised again and just figure things out myself. - LaGuardia Student
Realigning Academic Affairs and Student Affairs

The goal of the Alignment Initiative is to develop findings and recommendations for strengthening alignment of student affairs and academic affairs in order to help more students graduate.

Alignment Recommendation #1: Redesign Advising

“The College must establish an integrated and comprehensive advising system, including academic, career, and transfer advisement, to help students identify and achieve milestones toward graduation. “Transfer” encompasses both into and out
Alignment Recommendation #1: Redesign Advising

Create an Office of Advisement, Records & Registration in Student Affairs
Reporting directly to the Assistant Dean will be:
• Senior Director for Academic Advisement
• Senior Director of Career Services (Judith Gazzola).
• Academic Counseling
• Educational Planners
• College Discovery
• Disability Services
• Transfer Services
• COPE
• ASAP

An Advisory Council will be established to support the Assistant Dean of Advisement, Records & Registration with on-going coordination and alignment of advising. The Advisory Council will include faculty (with a particular emphasis on how to support advising in the departments), and staff (with an emphasis on incorporating co-curricular activities).
Advising Redesign Team

A student’s essential needs throughout the academic advising continuum are identified as: academic advisement, career and transfer literacy, health and wellness information, and student support services (e.g. financial aid, tutoring, mentoring, or job placement).

To meet these needs, the College must establish a team-based and major focused advising system that includes faculty, staff and peers whose diverse knowledge, ability and skills support the essential needs of all students throughout the four critical junctures of enrollment.
Advising Redesign Team Recommendations

- Offer students support and interventions at each critical juncture along the advising continuum.
- Create one portal where students, advisors and faculty may access all electronic advising tools.
- Collaborate with the Admissions, Transfer Services, Career Services, Financial Aid and Student Life departments to develop advising strategies that keep students engaged on campus and in their major.
- Implement a standard student check-in system in all advising areas (advising, career, transfer, generalist, financial aid, etc.).
The Solution: A Team-Based Advising System
To address these findings, a new advising system was proposed

The new advising system must:

• Be knowable and student-centered, charting the journey to graduation from the students’ point of view.

• Create an advising system that incorporates the college community establishing clarity about roles & responsibilities.

• Make the best use of technology.

• Create a singular, central source of information.
The Message to Students is:

Select your Major
- Biology
- Philosophy
- Travel & Tourism

Welcome to LaGuardia

Meet your Advising Team!!
Challenges we Faced?

- Defining Advising
- Combined Three Advising Departments
- Identifying Advisors for the Advising Teams
- Full-Time Faculty Assuming Advising Roles
- Defining Roles and Responsibilities
Challenges we Faced?

- Varying Levels of Advising Expertise
- Delivering Accurate Information to Students
- How the System Works in Winter and Summer
How We Made it Work: Collaboration

- Relationships, Relationships, Relationships
- Student Affairs Staff at Academic Departmental Meetings
- Direct Lines of Communication
- Information Sharing
How We Made it Work: Professional Development & Training

- The Art of Advising
- FERPA
- Educational Planning
- Course Selection & Course Pairing
- Understanding the Degree Audit
How We Made it Work: Staffing

• Hired new full-time faculty and staff members who provide advisement
• Hired peer mentors – Funding by CUE
• Will hire additional full-time staff this year
How We Made it Work: Technology

- Electronic Academic Advising Forms
- Hobson’s Retain for Electronic Communication
- SharePoint – Created a home-grown student engagement tool
- eAdvising – Full Service advising via e-mail
- Online Help Requests
- MyLaGuardia as a Hub for Advising Tools
“I was Chair of the Humanities Department for 18 years and, never before experienced such tremendous collaboration.”

- Professor Sandra Dickinson
What the Students are Saying

“If no one ever takes the time out to say it, thank you! Multiply it 10 fold for all the times people don't say it. You have no idea how much your kindness has helped to take a load off of my shoulders. It’s impossible sometimes for me to campus before all the offices close. Your assistance was excellent!”
Next Steps

- Painting a Moving Train
- Addressing Departmental Differences: One Size Does not Fit all (the same)
- Scaling up utilization of Technology (SEMS, Text, Kiosks, and Chat)
- Firming Up Relationships Between Faculty and Staff
- Tackling Administrative Duties (Advising Stops, Advising Forms)
- Advising for Course selection Two-years at a Time
- Staying the Course with Current Initiatives
- Assessment: How will we know it’s working?
Questions & Answers
Thanks for Coming!!!