Improving Retention and On-Time Graduation: Using Proactive Advising and Tracking Tools to Redirect Exploratory Students

Janie Valdés, Charlie Andrews, Vanessa Mériné
Florida International University
NACADA 2013 • Salt Lake City, UT
About Us

PUBLIC • URBAN • RESEARCH • LOCALLY & GLOBALLY ENGAGED

- 50K students: 77% UGRD; 69% from Miami-Dade County
- 61% Hispanic + 13% African American
- 63% new students are transfers; #4 transfer enrollment
- 53% first-generation; many Hispanic + African American
- 89% freshmen receive financial aid
Graduation Success Initiative

Improve Academic Success of UGRDs • Retention + On-Time Graduation

- FTIC 6-year GRAD rate:
  - 2010 = 42.5% • 2011 = 41.0%
  - 2012 = 47.3% • 2013 = 50.0%

- FTIC 1st Year Retention Rate = 80%

- Admitted to Majors/Declared = 78%

- 2009: Dropped Out
  - 75% never formally intended a major
  - 5900 students w/over 60 credits
  - Transfer 4-YR GRAD rate: approx. 60%

Improve Advisor: Student Ratio

Develop 24/7 Advising Tools

Leverage Data + Intrusive Advising

2 + 2
Fragmented Experience

4-year
Integrated Experience
In a Perfect World…

Appropriate Major

Unsure/Unrealistic
Undecided Students

- **In Fall 2010**, 1318 FIU students coded as “undecided” majors
  - 5% active undergraduates
  - 12% active undergraduates not yet admitted to a major

- **Advisors** tasked with contacting these students
  - Summer 2011: phone calls, emails, and registration holds
  - Students asked to select a major
  - Unsure/ineligible students converted to Exploratory by Summer 2012

- “Undecided” removed from admissions application
  - Students can now select one of the six Exploratory majors
  - Admits can now complete MyMajorMatch assessment
## Exploratory Tracks / Majors

### Physical Sciences and Engineering
- Chemistry, Info. Tech
- Math, Physics
- Statistics

### Biological and Environmental Sciences
- Biology/Pre-Med
- Geosciences
- Marine Biology

### Nursing and Health Sciences
- Dietetics & Nutrition
- Nursing
- Pre-Physical Therapy

### Global and Social Sciences
- Criminal Justice
- EDU, INR, Journalism
- Psychology

### Humanities and Arts
- Architecture, Art
- English, Music
- Philosophy, Theater

### Administration and Management
- Accounting, Economics
- Public Administration
- Rec and Sports Mgmt.
Exploratory Students: Who and Why?

**Freshmen**
- Choose EXP *(must choose track)*
- Nursing/CARTA *(special criteria)*
- Must choose major by 45 credits

**Transfers**
- Choose EXP *(must choose track)*
- Not eligible for major of choice *(Limited Access)*
- Must choose new major in 1 term

**Redirected**
- Little progress in major
- Can be moved to EXP
- Must choose new major in 1 term
Exploratory Students

Today: **1696** FIU students coded as Exploratory majors

- 549 (32%) = EXP-Nursing & Health Sciences
- 522 (31%) = EXP-Administration & Management
- 283 (17%) = EXP-Global & Social Sciences
- 198 (12%) = EXP-Humanities & Arts
- 75 (4%) = EXP-Physical Sciences & Engineering
- 69 (4%) = EXP-Biological & Environmental Sciences

930 (55%) Exploratory students admitted as Freshmen—45% readmits/transfers

- 58% current EXP students were admitted Summer/Fall 2013 or later
- 8% current EXP students were admitted Spring 2013
- 24% current EXP students were admitted Summer/Fall 2012
- 10% were admitted prior to Summer 2012

Goal: Limit the amount of time students spend in Exploratory majors

Orientation: We see movement from EXP to Major and vice versa
Discover Your Major—SLS 1402

- 1-credit course to help students explore ‘Major’ options
- Exploratory students are required to take the course
- Curriculum utilizes the concept of the 16 Career Clusters
- Students complete interests and skills assessments
- Students research careers, participate in job shadowing, and conduct informational interviews
- 63% of students select a major by the end of the course
- 79% of students were commitment to their major by the end of the course
## Tri-Part Model of (Re)Direction

**MyMajorMatch** 
(Kuder)  
- Career interest inventory available at admission  
- Career Clusters linked to FIU majors—link to MyMajor  
- Advisor can use in individual sessions + SLS courses  
- Lifetime student access—including inventories

**MyMajor**  
- Interactive website of FIU majors  
- Admission requirements, prerequisites, career outlook, median FL salaries, O*NET  
- Major Maps—term-by-term course plan

**My_eAdvisor**  
- My_eAdvisor: Dynamic tracking tool  
- Critical indicators (grades, credits enrolled)  
- Not all require intervention by advisor  
- Universal advising notes
MyMajorMatch: Results

As Of Date Wed 10-Oct-2012 03:17:00PM

Student ID: 
Name: 
Admit Term: Spring Term 2013 
Admit Type: Transfer: Florida Comm. College 
Academic Plan: Biomedical Engineering - BS

Assessment Results by Rank

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Percentile</th>
<th>Cluster</th>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Track / Concentration</th>
<th>Visit Our Information Page</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>SCIENCE AND MATH</td>
<td>Biological Sciences - BS</td>
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</table>
MyMajor provides in-depth information on all FIU Undergraduate majors, their admissions criteria, career opportunities, and their departments' contact information. Use this tool to help find where you fit at FIU.

- **All areas of interest**
- **on All campuses**
- **Browse**

OR by college/school: Architecture and the Arts

OR browse all.

Search using career/major name

MyMajor is part of the Graduation Success Initiative (GSI)—an extensive, university-wide set of innovations dedicated to helping students to succeed academically. If you would like to learn more about GSI, please visit [http://gsi.fiu.edu](http://gsi.fiu.edu).
### My_eAdvisor: MyMajor

**Assigned Advisor:** Michael Christie

**MyMajor**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement Year</th>
<th>Catalog Year</th>
<th>College/School</th>
<th>Major</th>
<th>Track/Concentration</th>
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<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>Biomedical Engineering - BS</td>
<td>Two Year Transfer</td>
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</table>

**Fall Term 2012**

2 Year Plan: assumes student has satisfied UCC 1000-2000 level requirements (i.e. via AA), all Math & Science (MAC2311, MAC2313, PHY2048, PHY2049, PHY2049L, CHM1045, CHM1045L, Lower Division Programming, CAD

#### Critical Indicators
- **Cumulative GPA:** 2.000
- **Cumulative Hours:**
- **Term GPA:**
- **Term Hours:** 16

#### Official Assessment
- **Cumulative GPA:** 3.130
- **Cumulative Hours:** 5
- **Term GPA:** 3.130
- **Term Hours:** 5

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<th>Requirement Description</th>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Catalog Nbr</th>
<th>Course Description</th>
<th>Credits Taken</th>
<th>Course Notes</th>
<th>Critical Indicator</th>
<th>Add to Cart</th>
<th>Official Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>Major Required Lower Level</td>
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<td>2.00</td>
<td>B+</td>
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<tr>
<td>Engineering Math</td>
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<td>3.00</td>
<td>B-</td>
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<tr>
<td>1000-2000 Level Electives</td>
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<td>1008</td>
<td>Intro to Biomed Eng</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>B</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### My_eAdvisor: Alerts

**Assigned Advisor:** Michael Christie

**Filter**
- **Severity:**
- **Term:**
- **Pending**
- **Action Taken**
- **Override**
- **Resolved**

**Legend**
- **Pending:** You have a new Alert, Message, or make an Appointment with your advisor to discuss the alert(s).
- **Action Taken:** Your Assigned Advisor has reached out to you via Message or Advising Note. Follow-up with your Advisor.
- **Override and Resolved:** The alert(s) has been resolved.

**Alerts**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Severity</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Fall Term 2012</td>
<td>Not enrolled in a required cou</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Action</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Fall Term 2012</td>
<td>Not enrolled in a required cou</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Action</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Spring Term 2013</td>
<td>Earned an F grade</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Action</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 Spring Term 2013</td>
<td>Less than a 2.0 GPA</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Action</td>
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<tr>
<td>5 Spring Term 2013</td>
<td>Did not meet full-time status</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Action</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6 Spring Term 2013</td>
<td>Did not meet Critical Indicato</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Action</td>
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### Common Redirected Majors

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<tr>
<th>Management</th>
<th>International Business</th>
<th>Journalism</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>- Communication Arts</td>
<td>- Asian Studies + minor</td>
<td>- Communication Arts</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Hospitality Mgmt.</td>
<td>- Economics</td>
<td>- English</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Public Administration</td>
<td>- Int’l Relations</td>
<td>- Political Science + minor</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Rec and Sports Mgmt.</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nursing</th>
<th>Social Work</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Health Services Admin.</td>
<td>- Health Services Admin.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Pre-Physical Therapy</td>
<td>- Liberal Studies: Health</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Other RN or BSN</td>
<td>- Psychology</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
## EXP Transfers: Initial Challenges

### 2012
- Communication *Breakdown*
  - Admissions Letter
  - Transfer Orientation: 1st *contact*
- No assigned advisor
- TTS outreach
  - *Calls, handouts, Advising*
  - *Restricted to Orientation*

### 2013
- Revised Admissions communication process
  - 2 Steps: Acceptance vs. Exploratory
- Academic advising home
  - *My_eAdvisor*
- Advisor Outreach
  - *Student Dashboard messages, Calls*
EXP Transfers: Qualitative Data

Exploratory Label: Unclear, Unwanted, Discouraging

Su/Fall 2013 TR Orientation

EXPLORATORY TRANSFERS = 187 or 7%

Orientation attendees were much more likely to rate their advising experience as a positive one!

- Lack of exposure to and/or knowledge of program requirements
- Conflicting messages – realistic vs. recruiting advising approach
- Major vs. Career confusion
- Need for early contact/intervention
- Need for follow-up and tracking
**EXP Transfers: Supplemental Tools**

### SLS 3407
**Major & Career Exploration**
- Transfer or min. Sophomore Status
- **51** enrolled for Fall 2013
  - 7 Exploratory; **23** Transfer students

**On Why they enrolled:**
- Required by Major (Biomedical Eng)
- Exploring career options
- Need reassurance
- Truly Exploratory

**Goal:** Career Action Plan

### MDC Transfer Guides
- Launched in Fall 2012
  - *Dual Admission Program*
- Collaboration and Support from Academic Units

**Highlight:**
- Prerequisites and ‘Special Notes’ from Departments

**Goal:** Transfer Readiness
Lessons Learned & What’s Next

- **OVER Communicate!**
  - Lack of Follow-Up w/ Transfers
    - Logistics—change of major
    - Missed opportunity for high touch
  - Impact of SLS Courses
    - Unaware of dept. requirement
    - Surprised by “type” of student
    - Did not jump out the data gate!

- **Ongoing Training/Communication**
- **Transfer Outreach / Tracking**
- **My_eAdvisor Alerts**
  - Current vs. hard holds
  - Advisor use
- **More Qualitative Research**
  - MyMajorMatch
  - Partner with Career Services
  - Student feedback—alerts, other
Thank you!

Janie.Valdes@fiu.edu
Charles.Andrews@fiu.edu
Vanessa.Merine@fiu.edu