Empowering Student Success: Leveraging Effective Communication Strategies and Technology Solutions

Dr. Elizabeth Coghill, Executive Director, Student Academic Success Services
Dylan Moore, Administrator, Student Success Communications
Session Goals

Introduce the comprehensive **student success framework** underpinning communication strategies.

Deepen understanding of **nudging theory and optimal communication practices** for student resource engagement.

Explore how campus learning centers can enhance student success through **personalized communication strategies**.

Gain insight into **utilizing technology strategically** to replicate communication strategies across various campuses.
SASS programs utilize *Connect, Support, Serve, Succeed* as framework for student programs, services and campus communications.
Elements of Effective Communication

✓ Cultivates student well-being, a sense of belonging, and academic achievement.
✓ Optimizes campus resource utilization.
✓ Leverages student data, experiences, empathetic messaging, multi-channel communications.
✓ Increases student engagement with resources.
✓ Enhances student success metrics.
Communication Building Blocks

- Student Journey Mapping
- Nudge Theory
- Student Data
Student Journey Mapping

1. Prioritizes the student experience.
2. Fosters the inclusion of student experience-based research within decision making processes.
4. Uncovers student experiences impacting persistence in tandem with quantitative data points.
5. Targets small, essential process changes and their impact on students.

Burns & Aljets (2018); Rains, (2019)
## Student Journey Mapping Exercise

**How do new Freshmen learn about and use center services in their first Fall semester on campus?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase 1</th>
<th>Phase 2</th>
<th>Phase 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Start of Classes to 1st month of semester</strong></td>
<td><strong>Mid-semester</strong></td>
<td><strong>End of Semester</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What do you wish students accomplish? What are the desired action step(s)?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the student doing?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What are students thinking or feeling?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do you communicate these action steps?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Multichannel Communication Strategy/Process

What is your message or action you want taken?

What Outreach or Communication methods will you use?

Who are the campus stakeholders is the message intended for?

When does the message need to be sent (timing).

Are there campus success partners that need to respond?
Student Journey Mapping at ECU
Common Ineffective Communication Practices

1. Relying on a One-Size-Fits-All Communications
2. Unwelcoming Messaging Filled with Higher Education Jargon
3. One-Way Messaging
4. Lack of a Coordinated Communication Plan
5. Ignoring the student experience
# Communication Building Blocks

## Student Journey Mapping
- Identification of university milestones.
- Expectations vs. Barriers.
- Gap interventions.
- What are students thinking, feeling, and experiencing?
- Frequency of messaging.

## Nudge Theory
- Behavioral nudges can be designed to keep students on track to succeed.
- Nudges focus on the student journey along with known campus “problem points” (withdrawal dates, advising timing etc.).
- Predict moments to communicate meaningful information with students.

## Student Data
- Student Real Time Data
- Progress Gaps
- Specialized Reports
Communication Process

1. Identify goals
2. Select focus population
3. Determine what support is needed
4. Consider effort vs. impact
5. Create a calendar of messaging and tools
6. Evaluate
### ECU’s Multichannel Approach towards Communication

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What Outreach is Being Utilized</th>
<th>Who are your Campus Partners</th>
<th>Who is the Success Team</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Flyers</td>
<td>DSS</td>
<td>Faculty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LCD Monitors</td>
<td>Financial Aid</td>
<td>Advisors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programming</td>
<td>Dean of Students</td>
<td>Peers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coherent Branding</td>
<td>Cashiers Office</td>
<td>Campus Learning Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texting</td>
<td>Registrars Office</td>
<td>Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Alerts</td>
<td>Career Center</td>
<td>Parents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Call Center</td>
<td>Campus Living</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provost Newsletter</td>
<td>Advising</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing Items</td>
<td>Admissions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trainings and Presentations</td>
<td>Strategic Enrollment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stickers and Popcicles</td>
<td>Management Council</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Connect for Success

ECU CONNECT
ECU’s Early Success System

PIRATE™ CONNECT
Pirates™ Supporting First-Year Pirates

PeeDee CONNECT
PeeDee Serving His Crew

CONNECT. SUPPORT. SERVE. SUCCEED.

Learn more at academic-success.ecu.edu
Connect for Success

PIRATE CONNECT

Pirates Supporting First Year Pirates

Peer Enrollment Coaches
Peer Retention Coaches
Success Navigators

PIRATE CONNECT

- Provide timely nudges to impact student behavior
- Encourage engagement with campus resources
- Foster student belonging and connection on campus
- Support the academic transition of first-time students
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Peer Enrollment Coaches</th>
<th>Peer Retention Coaches</th>
<th>Success Navigators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Incoming Students</td>
<td>Data Identified</td>
<td>First Year Call Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Establishing <strong>Sense of Belonging</strong> at ECU.</td>
<td>• Peer to Peer coaching.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Current Pirates <strong>connecting</strong> with admitted Pirates.</td>
<td>• Calling &amp; Meeting with students that are being identified through <strong>ECU CONNECT</strong>.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| • Continuous **feedback loop**, **students** call their coach for any problems that arise. | • Help with academic challenges experienced at ECU:  
  • Academic Coaching  
  • Connecting students to resources provided by the Pirate Academic Success Center.  
  • **Personalized** support. |
| • Helping new Pirates **navigate institutional barriers**. | • Helping students **navigate academic hurdles**, with a data driven approach. |
| • Establishing a **warm connection to student success resources** through personalized and timely outreach | | • Peer to Peer Interactions through Call Center. |
|                         |                         | • Timely communication based around institutional milestones |
|                         |                         | • Calling same students building rapport and increasing sense of belonging. |
|                         |                         | • Following up with Referrals in **ECU CONNECT** on Students made by faculty |
|                         |                         | • Sophomore students that have a passion for helping student avoid the pitfalls they had. |
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What we know about early alerts...

- Are an important component of a successful retention strategy.
- Most effective when targeting specific student populations, such as undergraduates, athletes or at-risk students.
- **Can increase number of students using success resources.**
- Classroom absences or no online activity are one of the most important indicators for early alert systems to track.
- Must include an effective **Tiered Intervention** strategy to achieve results.
- Timing matters.

Research Guide
Early Alert Warning Systems - Early Alert Warning Systems - Research Guides at East Carolina University Libraries (ecu.edu)
ECU CONNECT: Themed Surveys & Semester Touch Points

- **Connect:** Course Enrollment Verification and Canvas usage
- **Connect:** Campus Resources
- **Support:** Mid-Semester check in
- **Serve & Succeed:** Success Recognition
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Survey Theme</th>
<th>Outcome Goals</th>
<th>Flag Options</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st Month of Semester</td>
<td>Connect:</td>
<td>Roster verification and never participated alert.</td>
<td>Never Attended / Never Participated No Online Platform Activity PASC Referral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Course Enrollment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd Month of Semester</td>
<td>Connect:</td>
<td>Connecting students to resources and grade performance feedback.</td>
<td>Off to a Good Start Course Grade Below C Critical Attendance Concerned PASC Referral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Campus Resources</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd Month of Semester</td>
<td>Support:</td>
<td>Grade performance feedback prior to course withdrawal date and resource referrals.</td>
<td>Keep Up the Good Work Course grade below C Course Grade below D Concerned Stopped Attending PASC Referral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mid-Semester check in</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th Month of Semester</td>
<td>Serve &amp; Success:</td>
<td>Recognizing outstanding performance, student improvement, and referral for peer roles on campus.</td>
<td>Outstanding Course Work Recommendation for campus employment Thank you for being in my class Recommendation for graduate studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Success Recognition</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ECU CONNECT Process

Instructor (Raiser)

Success Team

Student (Receiver)
# Building a Campus Wide Knowledge Campaign for ECU CONNECT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Desired action step or message outcome</th>
<th>Outreach &amp; communication methods</th>
<th>Message Target (Campus stakeholders)</th>
<th>Communication Timeline</th>
<th>Campus Stakeholder Involvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • Faculty identifying students in academic crisis. | • Call Center  
• Common Branding  
• Early Alert Data  
• Flyers  
• LCD Monitors  
• Marketing items  
• Programming  
• Provost Newsletter & Communications  
• Student Outreach & Popsicles  
• Texting Campaigns  
• Training & Presentations | • Admissions  
• Advising  
• Campus Living  
• Career Center  
• Cashiers Office  
• Dean of Students  
• DSS  
• Financial Aid  
• Registrars Office  
• Strategic Enrollment Management Council  
• Students | • Build campaign strategy  
• Plan dates & times for each method used  
• Assign responsible partner | • Academic Advisors  
• Academic Affairs Leadership  
• Campus Learning Center  
• Faculty  
• Parents  
• Peers  
• Staff  
• Student Affairs partners |

- Student awareness and use of resources.
- Resolved academic issue.
## Usage Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Metrics</th>
<th>Fall 2022*</th>
<th>Spring 2023*</th>
<th>Fall 2023</th>
<th>Spring 2024</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Tracked Items</td>
<td>52,354</td>
<td>43,464</td>
<td>53,590</td>
<td>45,728</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Raisers</td>
<td>690</td>
<td>578</td>
<td>654</td>
<td>692</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flags</td>
<td>18,441</td>
<td>14,445</td>
<td>16,360</td>
<td>12,097</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kudos</td>
<td>33,900</td>
<td>27,553</td>
<td>36,528</td>
<td>32,559</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referrals</td>
<td><strong>13</strong></td>
<td><strong>300</strong></td>
<td><strong>704</strong></td>
<td><strong>1,072</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Indicates Undergraduate & Graduate Numbers Combined
Refer students to services using a digital referral.
Connect for Success

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ECU’s Early Success System

PIRATE® CONNECT
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PeeDee Serving His Crew

CONNECT. SUPPORT. SERVE. SUCCEED.

Learn more at academic-success.ecu.edu
Ahoy! I'm PeeDee the Pirate, and I'm here to help you navigate any questions you have about East Carolina University. Whether you need assistance with campus life, academics, or anything else, I've got you covered. Let's set sail on this adventure together! I am happy to have you on my crew! GO PIRATES!! 🌴 🐵 ❤️
PeeDee Connect

Connect.
Feedback Loop and questions.

Support.
Nudges and semester wellness checks.

Succeed.
Data-Driven Campaigns.
PeeDee Connect & the Campus Learning Center

- Academic Coaching Services
- Events
- Tutoring Services
- Special Populations Support
- DFW rate support
Communication Process

- Identify goals
- Select focus population
- Determine what support is needed
- Consider effort vs. impact
- Create a calendar of messaging and tools
- Evaluate Impact
Connect for Success Working Example: Unregistered for Spring 2024

As of 12/13/2023

238 FR Students

133 FR W/ Holds Students

105 FR Students

Cashier Holds & Immunization Holds

All FR Not Registered

FTFT Not Registered with Holds

X
Communications Tools:
How did we reach those students who were not registered?

ECU Connect
(flag, text, email)

PeeDee Connect
(Mainstay texting)

Pirate Connect
(Call Center, Coaching)
# Building a Communication Campaign

**Not Registered students**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Desired action step or message outcome</th>
<th>Outreach &amp; communication methods</th>
<th>Message Target (Campus stakeholders)</th>
<th>Communication Timeline</th>
<th>Campus Stakeholder Involvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • Students registered for Spring 2024 classes | • Call Center  
• Texting Campaigns  
• Advising Email  
• Feedback loop | • Students  
• Academic Advisors | • Build campaign strategy  
• Plan dates & times for each method used  
• Assign responsible partners | • Academic Advisors  
• Academic Affairs Leadership  
• Parents  
• Peers  
• Staff |
## Data Impact

### 12/4/23

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cohort</th>
<th>First Spring</th>
<th>Cohort (n)</th>
<th>Early Reg (n)</th>
<th>% Retention</th>
<th>% From Previous</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FTFT202180</td>
<td>Spring 2022</td>
<td>4,017</td>
<td>3,521</td>
<td>87.65%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FTFT202280</td>
<td>Spring 2023</td>
<td>3,725</td>
<td>3,240</td>
<td>86.98%</td>
<td>-0.67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FTFT202380</td>
<td>Spring 2024</td>
<td>3,894</td>
<td>3,510</td>
<td>90.14%</td>
<td>3.16%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 1/8/24

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cohort</th>
<th>First Spring</th>
<th>Cohort (n)</th>
<th>Early Reg (n)</th>
<th>% Retention</th>
<th>% From Previous</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FTFT202180</td>
<td>Spring 2022</td>
<td>4,017</td>
<td>3,636</td>
<td>90.52%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FTFT202280</td>
<td>Spring 2023</td>
<td>3,725</td>
<td>3,420</td>
<td>91.81%</td>
<td>1.30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FTFT202380</td>
<td>Spring 2024</td>
<td>3,894</td>
<td>3,592</td>
<td>92.24%</td>
<td>0.43%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Future Focused: 6 Take Aways

How to stay focused & goal oriented in a moment in higher education when the goals change constantly, and focus is a luxury.

• Staying within our Framework.
• Delegation of appropriate tasks.
• Impact vs. Effort Matrix.
• Utilizing & Relying on your Team.
• Data Driven decisions
• Feedback loop- student experience
Effort vs. Impact Matrix

- High Effort - High Impact
- High Effort - Medium Impact
- High Effort - Low Impact
- Medium Effort - High Impact
- Medium Effort - Medium Impact
- Medium Effort - Low Impact
- Low Effort - High Impact
- Low Effort - Medium Impact
- Low Effort - Low Impact
## Effort vs. Impact Matrix: Connect For Success

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>HIGH IMPACT</th>
<th>MEDIUM IMPACT</th>
<th>LOW IMPACT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increased Sense of Belonging through Merchandise</td>
<td>Marketing to Stakeholders to emphasize the importance of Grade Feedback, and use of Systems. Marketing to Students and showing them the resources, that ECU offers. Hiring appropriate student staff</td>
<td>Individual Email without any context or follow-up. (an email with a list of steps) PeeDee Nudge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PeeDee CONNECT Interactive Messages PIRATE CONNECT Phone Calls ECU CONNECT Follow-up Group Registration Assistance Student Journey Mapping Processes Maintain knowledge base</td>
<td>Centralized Data Collection Process Training of Professional &amp; Student Staff on Systems. Website maintenance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mass Email System Wide Announcement Automated Phone Call Directed to Website</td>
<td>STOP</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Thank you!

Copies of this presentation will be on the Student Academic Success Services website:

https://academic-success.ecu.edu/success-research/

For more information about:

Early Alert Systems  https://libguides.ecu.edu/EarlyAlertWarningSystems

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Thank you for attending!
Please remember to complete your session evaluation!

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