The Higher Learning Commission Action Project Directory

University of St. Francis

**Project Details**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Freshmen In Transition program (FIT)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>3-Understanding Students' and Other Stakeholders' Needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Timeline</td>
<td>Planned Project Kickoff 08-01-2012</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Target Completion 05-15-2015</td>
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**Status** | ACTIVE

**Updated**

**Created** 05-23-2012

**Version** 1

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1: **Project Goal**

A: Currently, USF does not have a comprehensive method of identifying students who have met admissions criteria but are considered at-risk and therefore less likely to complete a bachelor's degree. Predictors such as ACT and GPA have been used but have been documented to be weak predictors at best. Overall, the retention rate from freshman to sophomore rate is approximately 80% at USF. Graduation rate is approximately 65%.

In addition to needing a tool to identify at-risk students, we need a formal process for mentoring/coaching these students.

This Action Project proposes to implement the Noel-Levitz College Student Inventory (CSI) survey to identify incoming freshmen who are most likely to not be retained. The students who receive a score that indicates they at-risk will become part of a newly developed Freshmen IN Transition (FIT) program. FIT “Trainers” will be trained to use CSI scores to identify potential factors that put the student at risk and work with the student to minimize their impact.

This Action Project was developed as a result of our deliberations at the 2012 Strategy Forum.

2: **Reasons For Project**

A: This project is the outcome of a year-long review of examining retention statistics and recognizing that there were specific populations that were being underserved. African-American males were among these students. In a subsequent exploration of how to address this problem and how to prepare for the anticipated increased number of students from diverse backgrounds we recognized that we needed a comprehensive solution that will evaluate all incoming freshmen.

3: **Organizational Areas Affected**

A: Student Services, Academic Resources Center (ARC), and Admissions

4: **Key Organizational Process(es)**

A:  
- Process to identify students most likely to leave the institution before completing a four-year degree
- Process to identify specific factors that put students at risk of not completing a four-year degree
- Process to mentor/coach at-risk students

5: **Project Time Frame Rationale**

A: The first year (2012-13) will be the first year for administration of the survey to freshmen, FIT trainers receiving training on how to use the CSI tool, and at-risk freshmen being mentored by FIT trainers. Since we will not know the outcome until Fall 2013, it will take at least one more year (2013-14) to make adjustments to program and again measure outcome in Fall 2014.

6: **Project Success Monitoring**
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<tr>
<td><strong>A:</strong></td>
<td>Measure retention (and graduation rate over time) of students who participate in FIT program.</td>
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<td><strong>7:</strong></td>
<td>Project Outcome Measures</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>A:</strong></td>
<td>Increase in overall retention rate (freshmen to sophomore) and graduation rate, especially with students from diverse backgrounds including Latino and International students. Increase in students who have a sense of belonging and engagement as measured by NSSE and Noel-Levitz Student Satisfaction Survey.</td>
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