**Dorothy and Bill Cohen Honors College**

**Student Success & Persistence Plan**

**based on NISS Recommendations – DRAFT**

**2022-23**

**Submitted to COD Teams 3.31.23 KE**

**PURPOSE & OVERVIEW**:

The purpose of this document is to serve as an initial draft where the Cohen Honors College and units can address how they support university recommendations connected with student retention.

Honors College curricula and academic advising are designed to complement any major or course of study. We are intentionally positioned as a student-centered, multi-disciplinary environment and aim to support intentional pathways, academic choices, and transitions between academic majors.

Honors will use academic data and student information to understand how students receive support and how to work collaboratively across campus and within our college to improve consistency and effectiveness. Among other initiatives, we will integrate student services and scholarships with a new leadership staff position that will coordinate proactive outreach. We have included relevant strategies from the college playbook and from the diversity, equity and inclusion plan in this student success and persistence plan.

To find Honors in the spirit of the recommendations below, we have elevated key phrases that apply particularly to the Honors student experience.

**SUMMARY: GOALS & STRATEGIES**

Systematize the ***use of academic data*** to identify courses with​ high non-pass rates and improve outcomes in these courses​

* Establish dashboard to monitor data, including persistence information and high-impact, high touch point academic programs:
  + First-Year Research (e.g. Summer Research, First-Year Research Experience)
  + Lead for Tomorrow
  + First-Year Seminars
  + Student Organizations (e.g. Honors Ambassadors, Honors Student Council)
* Monitor first to second year honors student persistence
  + Establish engagement measures for high-impact practices such as first-year ePortfolio pilot
  + Create a 0 Credit Honors Colloquium (HNRS102 and HNRS103). Launch in Fall 2023.

Standardize academic advising to ensure students receive ***consistent support*** across all majors​

* Create Director, Scholarships and Student Services
  + Advising Process/ Curricular Pathways
* Create Honors First-Year 0 Credit programming (HNRS 102 and Honors 103- Colloquium)
* Determine and implement best use of Degree Map/plan for Honors Baccalaureate.
* Collaborate with College Advising Offices to ensure relevant departmental honors courses are included in Degree Map/Plans.
* Standardize the use of Navigate "early alerts" to allow advisors to identify and address problems students are facing before the students drop out, and standardize the practice of keeping advising notes in Navigate.
* Recognize student success through proactive outreach using tools such as Navigate campaigns.

Develop intentional pathways to help students learn about, select, and ***transition*** between academic majors​

* Create Director, Scholarships and Student Services
  + Advising Process/ Curricular Pathways
* Creation of Honors First-Year 0 Credit programming (HNRS 102 and Honors 103- Colloquium).
* Require all first-year honors students to submit an ePortfolio with documentation and reflection on learner outcomes.
* Intentionally creating first to second year transitions and second year signature experiences through scheduling fall presession or summer honors courses with focus on diversity content and community connections.
* Identify intentional pathway supports for student academic choices such as graduate school, fellowships, research and connection to programs such as McNair Scholars.
* Equip advisors with basic financial information about the students who are changing majors—including their remaining eligibility for college scholarships—to ensure that students make informed decisions.

Strengthen financial aid through collaboration with other units and coordinated, ***proactive outreach*** to students ​

* Honors awards over $650,000 annually including $90,000 to 100,000 to support applied such as study abroad and research and $60,000 awarded to students with high financial need with preference given to first-generation and underrepresented minority students.
  + Create Director, Scholarships and Student Services - Integrating oversight for advising process and scholarships
* Improve efficiency and effectiveness of scholarship processes and increase communication of available benefits to students.
* Ensure collaboration among areas of responsibility in the college particularly Director of Scholarships and Students Services; Director of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion; and Assistant Dean for Student Success
* Leverage university messaging systems—including texts—to send students nudges indicating specific aspects of the financial aid and scholarship application processes that they need to complete with links to assistance.

**COHEN HONORS STUDENT SUCCESS & PERSISTENCE PLAN**

The following pages will identify how Cohen Honors intends to engage with institutional goals and each NISS recommendation.

**UNIVERSITY-LEVEL GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

* + 1. Persistence of Full-Time Undergraduate Degree Seeking Freshmen: 75% by 2025, 80% by 2030
    2. Close equity gaps: 1st year retention and 6-year graduation rate

a. 6-year graduation equity gap reduced by 50% (3.8% to 1.9%) by 2026 spring

**RECOMMENDATION #1: Systematize the use of academic data to identify courses with​ high non-pass rates and improve outcomes in these courses.**

University-Wide Action Steps

1. Systematically track DFW rates for all courses and proactively share these data each semester
2. Use data such as time to degree and course availability data to inform course and program redesign
3. Target academic supports such as tutoring in high enrollment, first-year courses with significant DFW rates, and use data to assess the effectiveness of the supports

*Cohen Honors overview:*

* Establish dashboard to monitor data, including persistence information and high-impact, high touch point academic programs:
  + First-Year Research (e.g. Summer Research, First-Year Research Experience)
  + Lead for Tomorrow
  + First-Year Seminars
  + Student Organizations (e.g. Honors Ambassadors, Honors Student Council)
* Monitor first to second year honors student persistence
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Cohen Honors program coordinators prepare annual, year-end reports summarizing key activities and initiatives. Year-end reports include, among other things, a report focused on recruitment and retention activities. Retention reporting has included qualitative and quantitative data with some program coordinators using national survey measures.

Honors does not have any “D, F, or W” courses. However, we do monitor availability of courses required for graduation with an honors distinction. We have started planning a year-long course schedule with the intent to share with other colleges and advising offices to support student planning. As part of the schedule building process each year, we review course enrollments and consider course offerings in relation to enrollment numbers.

We use a variety of institutionally provided data sources to build course schedules, track student progress, and support student retention efforts. Please see table 1 for a summary of these data sources.

Table 1. Cohen Honors College and retention-related information: Data sources and usage patterns by report.

| **Report** | **Report/data usage** | **When utilized?** | **Persons responsible?** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Honors Student profile | Track enrollment history and trends; can track changes by semester and/or year. | Dean requests after 20th day; annual reporting and program review. | Dean, Asst Dean, program coordinators |
| OPA # 82: Schedule of courses | Used for identifying course rotations or offerings by semester and/or year. | Semesterly during schedule building times. | Dean, Asst Dean, program coordinators |
| OPA #23: Near capacity CRN. | Used to identify demand/need for new sections and how to manage class quotas moving forward. | Semesterly for schedule building and monitoring class quotas. | Department leaders, other academic college department chairs, Dean |
| OPA: Closed course report | Provided to schedule builders prior to schedule building efforts; used to identify demand/need for new sections and how to manage class quotas moving forward. | Semesterly during schedule building. | Dean, Asst Dean, program coordinators |
| National Survey of Student Engagement | Request honors data to monitor student engagement in high-impact practices | Every other year | Dean, Asst Dean, program coordinators |
| OPA: Degrees conferred factbook | Summary data at the university, college division and student level for degrees conferred by academic year | Annually to see data trends; used in connection with annual reporting, academic year planning and program review. | Dean, Asst Dean, program coordinators |
| OPA: Enrollment: (Spring, Summer, and Fall terms- headcounts, enrolled hours, majors by college) | Summary data at the university, college division and student level for enrollment on Fall Census (20th day) | Annually to see data trends; used in connection with annual reporting and academic year planning. | Dean, Asst Dean, program coordinators |
| College: Graduating senior survey results | Student exit survey reporting | Annually to see qualitative data trends | Dean, Asst, Dean, Department leaders, program advisors, faculty, and academic advisors |

*Academic Advising and College Communication*

Over the past few years, the Cohen Honors academic advisor has been utilizing SSC/Navigate to reach out to students through the use of campaigns, emails, and texts. The college created a communication calendar including advisor communication and social media campaigns led by student assistants to promote engagement and focus retention efforts on specific groups throughout the semester.

Program coordinators send out time-sensitive information during the semester regarding enrollment, deadlines for applications and scholarships, and other enrichment opportunities.

*Requests/Recommendations*

1. Increase access to Honors information through – for example: annual scheduled delivery or dashboard access to key reports such as the Honors Student profile.
2. Create curriculum-level (e.g. honors track) retention/graduation rate reports: We recognize that low *n* may make these reports difficult to interpret, but would like to have the data available, nonetheless. These will be necessary to track outcomes to see if recommended courses of action are effective.

**RECOMMENDATION #2: Standardize academic advising to ensure students receive consistent support across all majors**.

University-Wide Action Steps

1. Standardize degree maps, training for professional and faculty advisors, and the systems used for academic advising.
2. Ensure all WSU students receive a standard of care that includes timely and proactive outreach relative to academic map progression and early alerts.
3. Develop common training for advisors and common systems for advisors to use

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* Recognize student success through proactive outreach using tools such as Navigate campaigns.

*Cohen Honors Requests/Recommendations*

1. College Advising Offices included relevant departmental honors courses in Degree Maps/ Plans.
2. Identify/ hire an Honors Student Success Coach.

**RECOMMENDATION #3: Develop intentional pathways to help students learn about, select, and transition between academic majors.**

University-Wide Action Steps

1. Enroll students who are most at risk in a for-credit summer program before first-year fall, building academic skills and introducing them to academic fields.
2. Develop intentional pathways such as meta majors to help all students decide upon and, when necessary, transition between degree programs and majors.
3. Appoint a small group of “transition advisors” trained in the special skills and data critical to helping students moving between majors.

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* Identify intentional pathway supports for student academic choices such as graduate school, fellowships, research and connection to programs such as McNair Scholars.
* Equip advisors with basic financial information about students who are changing majors—including their remaining eligibility for college scholarships—to ensure that students make informed decisions.

*Cohen Honors College Requests/Recommendations*

1. Elevate Honors summer signature experiences and connected courses in university level marketing.
2. Support electronic portfolios and other digital tools through ongoing training and financial resources to promote integrated learning across the degree/degrees and transition to professional/post-graduate experiences.

**RECOMMENDATION #4: Strengthen financial aid through collaboration with other units and coordinated, proactive outreach to students.**

University-Wide Action Steps

1. Ensure students receive all aid for which they are eligible through focusing on timely completions of the FAFSA and other financial aid documents
2. Use data systems to determine processing priorities and to implement proactive outreach targeting students needing help
3. Use financial aid analytics across student-support offices to track early signs of students at-risk and to deliver wellness supports

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*Cohen Honors College Requests/Recommendations*

1. Create tools such as templates for college social media and a communication calendar to coordinate effective communication about financial aid & scholarships across areas
2. Assist in creation of college scholarship manual with standard language for Scholarship Universe processes and tools such as a shared calendar for major scholarship competition coordinators on the current scholarship Teams site