The mission of retention is to provide a comprehensive, collaborative delivery model where each student is valued and respected, encouraged to learn and grow through a student/advisor partnership ensuring that the students receive the resources and support needed to maximize individual success.

I. Introduction
Successful retention of students is essential for the survival of our college and the intellectual and economic growth of our community. Miami-Dade Community College is the largest community college in the United States, but an important focus of our retention plan is becoming smaller in the way we serve students. The model is underpinned by a philosophy that stresses individualized communication that keeps each student’s goals at the forefront of each interaction. Our model is not a quick fix, but a paradigm shift requiring the input, participation and support of each member of our campus. Our model lays out the steps of registration and long-term advisement encompassing educational planning, career and transfer options. It is the intent of this model to customize the advising process for each student.

II. Student Target Groups
The targeted student groups identified in this retention plan are: first-time-in-college students, students with undecided majors, students who have earned 45 credits or more and students with disabilities.
A. Rationale:

**First-time-in-college student**
A first-time-in-college student is defined as a student who is newly enrolled and did not transfer college credits. In 2001-1, this group numbered 2,400, 15% of the North Campus enrollment.

In a ten-year longitudinal study, 85% of degree-seeking students in this group required one or more college prep class. Of this group, 55% were first generation in college students. The fall-to-fall retention rate for these students in 2001-1 was 61%. Because many of these students come to us with academic deficiencies, lack of familial support, unclear goals along with family and work responsibilities, we are compelled to assist the students in developing ties to the institution and to other students by integrating the academic and social environment necessary for them to be successful.

B. Goal:
To increase the fall-to-fall retention rate of first-time in college students from 61% to 63% in 2003 and to 65% in 2004.

C. Activities:
- Develop a 12 credits cohort for students deficient in two or more areas of college prep that provides an integrated approach to helping the students meet the challenges of their course work. Cohort will include those students testing into MAT 0020, REA 0002 and required to take SLS 1535. Participants will be identified during new student orientation/ advisement sessions. The first 30 students who meet criteria will be registered in the cohort. In fall 2002-1, 30 students will participate in the cohort. In spring 2002-2, three cohorts will be offered for 90 students. A total of 120 basic skills deficient students will participate.
- Each student will be assigned a mentor who will become a part of the cohort team.
- Implement success workshops that will provide a smooth transition into the first year college experience. During the workshops students will explore effective learning methods coupled with a realistic approach to managing their college experience. The workshops will include opportunity for students to determine their progress using grades and other information provided by their instructors. Students will examine goals and re-define those goals as needed. These activities complement and build upon the new student orientation and SLS curriculum.
- In the selected SLS class, a special unit provided by the instructor will teach students how to study mathematics. Issues to be covered will include critical thinking skills and problem solving. In addition, students will be given practical instruction regarding math anxiety, studying math textbooks, note-taking skills, when to take a math course, how to choose an instructor and when to ask for help.
- Implement “Student Life Expo,” a day set aside within the first week of classes that include social and academic integration where student life is showcased, i.e.:
lectures, entertainment, hands on demonstrations, clubs and organizations are showcased to recruit student participation.

- Conduct a marketing survey and focus groups using a cross section of the campus population to identify the best methods of involving students in campus programs and activities.
- Develop and implement a peer assistance initiative that would include forming student study groups, tutoring and student to student sharing.
- In conjunction with the academic departments, provide credit incentives incorporated into course work for participation in student life activities.
- Implement a student life and service learning partnership where students can engage in community service activities individually and campus organizations/clubs can serve the community as a group.
- Expand student life activities that relate to human issues that affect our students, i.e. drugs and alcohol, domestic violence, tobacco, child rearing, finance, emotional and physical health.

D. Population:
All in first-time-in-college student enrolled fall semester 2002-1.

E. Sample:
The sample will include 120 students enrolled in the college prep cohort during the 2002 academic year. Thirty students will participate in 2002-1 and 90 students will participate in 2002-2.

F. Indicate the extent to which your strategies have college wide application.
All activities can be implemented college-wide.

G. Involvement and/or role of faculty, staff and others.
All activities will be coordinated by the director of retention and transition and the director of academic advisement and will include; academic department chairs, faculty and staff, student services division department heads and staff.

H. Evaluation:
Review Institutional Research data and compare fall-to-fall retention rates for students from 2001 to 2002 and 2002 to 2003. Survey mentors and students to determine the effectiveness of the mentor relationship. Create a report that will show a correlation between the students participating in the mentor program and their persistence.

I. Resources:
Funds to support mentor activities to include training, travel and refreshments, commitment from community based organizations to donate cultural and social admission. Hospitality funds for the workshops.
A. Rationale:

**Undecided students**
An undecided student is a student who indicates on the admission application “Pre Bachelor of Arts” program choice. Undecided students who are filing for financial aid and required to declare a major may sometimes use this designation. In 2001-1, this group numbered 927, 6% of total number of students enrolled at the North Campus. Research shows that students with undeclared majors are least likely to persist.

B. Goal:
To reduce the percentage of students with undecided majors from 6% to 5%, representing a decrease of at least 155 students.

C. Activities:
- The transfer coordinator will make initial contact, at which time all students will complete a questionnaire and an appropriate module of CHOICES to determine the stage of the student’s career exploration and to identify possible barriers to decision making.
- The student and transfer coordinator will develop an Individualized Career Plan (ICP). The ICP will consist of objectives, goals, special needs, resources available, and action to be taken by the student and transfer coordinator, deadline, and date the goal is met. Once a student declares a major, categories will be added to include, number of prerequisites needed for declared major and percentage of needed prerequisites taken. All students will be required to take two workshops, one on the financial aid advantages on choosing a major and the other to explore the range of career resources available.
- At the end of the first semester those students who have not declared a major will continue to explore career options with the transfer coordinator utilizing other resources such as O*NET, workshops, field experiences and sessions with departmental faculty in an effort to further clarify their career goals.
- All students will meet with the Transfer Coordinator (individually or in groups) the third week of each semester starting in 2002-2 to review, and possibly revise, the ICP from the previous semester.

D. Population:
The population is all students who identify “Pre-Bachelor of Art” as a program of choice Fall 2002-1.

E. Sample:
A randomly selected sample of 200 students will be taken from the undecided student population after the 100% refund deadline.

F. Indicate the extent to which your strategies have college wide application.
The activities can be implemented college wide.
G. Involvement and/or role of faculty, staff and others.
The director of career center and the coordinator of transfer programs will coordinate all
efforts related to the goal. Department chairs and faculty are needed to provide
information and guidance to students who need clarification and knowledge regarding
their careers. Outside professionals are needed to serve as resources, coordinate and
evaluate work experience programs.

H. Evaluation:
Students who are part of the undecided sample will be compared to 200 students chosen
randomly among other undecided students. A comparison will be made using G.P.A.,
classes dropped, SOAP status and when major was chosen. Data on number of students
selecting a major and maintaining it for two semesters will be collected and reported.
Data on the students’ progression in their career exploration will also be collected and
reported at the end of 2002-4.

I. Resources:
Support from department chairs, faculty and outside professionals is needed to provide
information and guidance to students who need clarification and knowledge regarding
their careers. Funds are needed for career exploration and assessment materials.

A. Rationale:

**Students who have earned 45 credits or more**
This target group encompasses students who have earned 45 credits or more, excluding
College Prep and EAP courses, with a 2.0 or better G.P.A. In 2001-1 this group
numbered 1,277, of these 3% graduated.

Currently, this is the target group we know least about. Collecting data for this group
will provide an opportunity to affect student success.

B. Goal:
To increase the percentage of students with 45 credits or more who graduate within three
major semesters from 3% to 5%.

C. Activities:
- Obtain data from Institutional Research regarding 1) the proportion students that
  pass/fail last math taken, 2) the number of students who have been exempted from
  the CLAST, and 3) the number of students who were enrolled before 1998.
- Using transcripts, degree audits, surveys and Institutional Research data develop a
  simple matrix or checklist to show what the student needs to graduate. The
document will also provide suggestions to overcome identified barriers (outcome
  focused). Using the matrix, develop an Individualized Education Plan. Make
  initial contact with students to review the plan and assist the student in selecting
courses. The students’ progress will be monitored by the benchmarks identified on the degree audit.

- Advisor and student will meet to review the students’ progress to ensure that the student remains focused at least three times a semester.
- Provide a linkage with the career center for transfer and employment exploration.

D. Population:
All students who have earned 45 credits or more as of 2002-1.

E. Sample:
A randomly selected sample of 200 students from the students enrolled with 45 credits in the fall semester 2002-1.

F. Indicate the extent to which your strategies have college wide application.
The activities can be implemented college wide.

G. Involvement and/or role of faculty, staff and others.
The director of academic advisement, an academic advisor and an intervention specialist will coordinate the activity. For career and employment resources, coordination is required between academic advisement and the career center. Personnel in financial aid, Institutional Research and the academic departments will also be involved.

H. Evaluation:
Compare baseline data of the 200 students in the sample group to the number of students who graduate at the end of 2003-1. Document, evaluate and report activities and interventions that occurred. Track the remaining students within the sample that have not graduated and continue to provide the necessary support.

I. Resources:
A commitment of staff time (advisors and intervention specialists) and assistance from Institutional Research is needed.
A. Rationale:

Students with Disabilities
A student with disabilities is a student that has identified himself/herself as disabled as defined by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. In 2001-1, this group numbered 463, 3% of the enrolled students at the North Campus. Of this number, over 50% are identified as having specific learning disabilities.

This group is targeted because current data shows that the North Campus disabled student population is below the 9% average suggested by national statistics. We believe that a large percentage of students in this category are not being identified, therefore we will improve the self-identification of disabled students. Addressing this area will enhance Miami-Dade’s commitment to diversity and will have funding implication if these students are retain to completion.

B. Goal:
To establish a clearly defined approach to identifying students with disabilities and to provide an appropriate referral system.

C. Activities:
- Create a task force from college prep faculty and ACCESS services staff to develop a set of indicators for early identification and referral of students with disabilities.
- Provide comprehensive training for faculty and staff in the identification of students with disabilities.
- Provide comprehensive training for advisors to properly guide students regarding learning disabilities resources.
- Coordinate with the basic communications and testing departments to refer students for comprehensive advising when they score below 35 on the reading subtest by the end of September. Based on 2000 data, 50-60 students will be in this category.
- Identify students that are not successful in their first semester of college prep and offer appropriate interventions.
- Incorporate a section on ACCESS services into the SLS courses.
- Encourage all students who fail MAT 0002 to be further assessed.
- Create a climate of openness by including Access Services information at the orientation programs and design posters and fliers that will inform students about available services.
- Identify institutional transitional funds (need and middle income) that will provide financial assistance to college prep students who are successful, but exceed the 30 credits of developmental coursework covered by financial aid. Without funding these students may not be able to continue their education.

D. Population:
All North Campus students who score below 35 on the reading subtest of the CPT.
E. Sample:
All North Campus students who score below 35 on the reading subtest of the CPT.

F. Indicate the extent to which your strategies have college wide application.
The activities can be implemented college wide.

G. Involvement and/or role of faculty, staff and other.
Coordination between academic advisement staff, college prep chairs and faculty, and
ACCESS services staff that will be proactive in providing early intervention for students
with possible learning disabilities.

H. Evaluation:
Using 2001-1 as a baseline, analyze the data to determine the percentage of students who
self-identify during each major semester. Conduct a focus group from the sample of the
self-identified disabled students to assess their impression of the campus’ awareness
efforts that include orientation and promotional materials.

I. Resources:
A commitment from advisement, college prep and ACCESS services faculty and staff
to provide the interventions necessary. A learning disabilities professional that will
provide appropriate assessment once students are identified as being at risk. Effective
testing instruments are also needed.
II. PROMOTING LONG TERM ADVISEMENT AND ACADEMIC PLANNING FOR STUDENTS

A. Goal:
To ensure that 33% of first-time-in-college students have an Individualized Education Plan by the end of their first semester.

B. Activities:
- Develop a web-based, database driven academic advisement support system. The system will have the capacity to provide an individual education plan that will interface with Odyssey and the Internet. The system will also provide a history of academic activities and interventions as well as monitor advisor appointments (see attachment 1).
- Academic advisors will be assigned a student caseload of 100 students randomly selected from all first-time-in-college students 2002-1.
- The academic advisor and the student will develop an individualized education plan.
- The advisor will be responsible for conducting orientation advisement meetings (individual or groups of students) and establishing contact with the student at least four times a semester.
- The advisor maintains a file that includes demographics, contact log, the individualized education plan and referral and/or intervention information.
- The advisor is responsible for the student until that student has successfully completed all college prep courses and declared a major.
- Advisors will introduce students to the services of the Career and Transfer Center so that the students will engage in pre-graduation and pre-employment planning including identifying financial aid and scholarship options, receive transfer information and strategies on how to effectively make the best of the visitations from employers and universities.

C. Population:
All first-time-in-college North Campus students.

D. Sample:
Eight hundred students randomly selected from all first-time-in-college students, 2002-1.

E. Involvement and/or role of faculty, staff and others.
Faculty and professional advisement staff will have shared responsibilities of academic advisement. All first-time in college students will be initially advised in the Department of Academic advisement. In subsequent terms college prep faculty will advise students who are not successful in passing college prep on the first attempt. Students who have declared a major will be advised by faculty in the major department.
F. Evaluation:
Generate a monthly report on the total number of education plans completed by each advisor and conduct a staff meeting to discuss different strategies utilized to get the students to respond by coming in and completing the educational plan. Develop a list of the most effective strategies for all advisors to apply.

G. Resources & Support Needed:
Time commitment from academic advisement staff and Institutional Research is needed. Support from the Director of Learning Resources and Media Services staff to develop and maintain web-based advisement system.

IV. A CONSISTENT COMMUNICATION PLAN FOR STUDENTS

A. Goal:
To determine the most effective way to communicate with students.

B. Activities:
- Conduct surveys and focus groups during the fall term to solicit input from students on the most effective approaches, format and content of communication.
- Design a pilot study to test the different methods of communication based on the results of the surveys and focus groups.
- Create samples of communications in different formats and ask the students to respond as to which they found to be more effective.

C. Population:
All North Campus students.

D. Involvement of faculty, staff and others:
A coordination is needed among targeted faculty and staff from academic, student services and media services department to develop and produce text for all material.

E. Evaluation:
Surveys and focus groups data will be collected to determine the most effective approaches, formats and content for communicating with students.

F. Resources and Support:
Time commitment from student services and media services staff. Funds are needed for printing, duplicating and displaying of materials.
V. Actively Promoting Early Registration

A. Goal:
To increase the number of continuing students who register four weeks before the term begins by 20%.

B. Activities:
- Provide training for students to utilize Web portal services and encourage their use.
- Communicate registration dates and encourage students to register early.
- Require SLS and College Prep faculty to advise and register their students two weeks before final examinations.
- Incorporate student web portal instruction into the SLS curriculum.
- Assist students to complete financial aid applications.
- Communicate with student once Student Aid Report is returned to correct errors or address missing information.
- Provide refresh advisement workshops for faculty and staff to enhance their skills.
- Implement system that alerts each eligible financial aid recipient to re-apply in accordance with deadlines.

C. Population:
All continuing North Campus students.

D. Involvement and/or role of faculty, staff and others.
Time commitment from faculty and staff.

E. Evaluation:
Analyze data to determine if there is a significant increase in the number of students who register four weeks before the beginning of each term. Survey students to determine the reasons for not registering early.

F. Resources and support:
Time commitment from faculty and staff, funds for production of materials.

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