

Veteran Student Organization Coaching Program

Four-Stage Model for College Success

The Four-Stage Model for College Success was developed and utilized specifically to guide the coaching program for veteran students transitioning to college life.

The four stages of the program included:

- 1) Introduction
- 2) Development of Life Management Plan
- 3) Implementation and Support
- 4) Maintenance and Evaluation.

Introduction Stage:

The first stage begins with a two-week orientation in which students meet in a large group. They start to build trust with each other and share their experiences. They become acclimated to the campus; learn about resources available to them on and off campus, learn study skills, time management, and organization skills. Students learn the value of knowing their own learning style and relating this information to their past experiences, professors teaching styles, team involvement and peer and family interactions. Using data from the Learning Combination Inventory (LCI), coaches assist the student in this understanding. Knowledge of these learning styles is also intended to empower the students and increase their confidence level; thus, reducing anxiety. Each student in this program is assigned a coach by the second week. The coach will assist them with accessing resources, organizing assignments, adjusting to living environments, and assist with social and interpersonal issues when needed. The student and the coach will collaboratively begin to discuss requirements for success. Students are encouraged to attend all campus programs in an attempt to assist them making contacts and feeling connected to the university. A proactive stance is taken by the coach in order to predict possible issues that may arise which will result in a reduction in stress and anxiety for the student.

Development of Life Management Plan Stage:

The second stage begins with the third week with emphasis on completing a Life Management Plan (LMP) to assist in the transition and future success. A LMP is developed collaboratively between the coach and student and consists of the following domains: understanding of possible challenges, support services, organizational plan, time management, study skills, learning style, anxiety reduction, problem-solving, social/communication issues and health maintenance. In the College Management Plan, three goals are agreed upon to assist in achieving success.

Implementation and Support Stage:

In the third stage, coaches meet with their assigned veteran students at least once a week depending on the individual needs. Vets are encouraged to attend individual meetings, a weekly support group, and monthly workshops. Vets are also encouraged to drop-in at anytime as issues arise. The LMP is reviewed weekly and coaches monitor workload and academic progress. Referrals are made as needed for subject tutoring, personal and career counseling, and academic planning. Challenges are discussed and students are empowered and assisted in resolving issues.

Maintenance and Evaluation Stage:

The fourth stage is the maintenance phase, which occurs after the first semester for most students. For other Veterans with greater challenges, the support continues as needed. With the on-going evaluation of progress, the level of support needed to assist the students in being successful is discovered. The goal in this stage is to empower the student to become independent and benefit from an improved style of life and academic success. At this point, they may become a coach to other veteran students.

