Facebook Me: Using Social Media to Promote College Retention

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Today’s Conversation

- About Us
- Strategies
- Content
- Examples
- Metrics
- Questions
Expected Outcomes

- Develop and implement strategies to use social media
- Measure and assess the effectiveness
- Learn strategies for using e-mentoring techniques
Illinois College Advising Corps (ICAC)

- **Mission**: to increase college attendance and completion rates among low-income, underserved, first-generation-college students

- **In Partnership** with the National College Advising Corps and the Illinois College Advising Corps
The Model

ADVISER
STUDENT A
STUDENT C
STUDENT B

STUDENT A
STUDENT B
STUDENT C

COACH
STUDENT B
STUDENT C
STUDENT A
The Near Peer Solution

- Recent college graduates
- Two year commitment
- Shared similar challenges that their students are experiencing
- Focused on fostering a college-going culture (Adviser)
- Focused on nourishing year one college success (Coach)
- The near peer model has been remarkably successful because high school students are more likely to engage with young adults who look, think, and act as they do (Institute for Higher Education Policy, 2010)
Getting Started

- What is your program mission?
- What are your program goals?
- Who is your audience?
- What do you hope to accomplish utilizing social media?
- What is the best way to reach those goals with your audience(s)?
Social Media Strategies

- Developing Content
- Addressing service needs from students
- Effectively Utilizing Specific Social Media Tools
Using FB effectively

**Pointer:** Use a mixed-methods approach

- “Like” pages that relate to your goals and audience
- Post at appropriate times for your audiences’ schedules
- Tag other pages to target & increase post impact
- Promote your Facebook through off-line avenues
- Use different types of posts to keep page dynamic
- Connect Facebook to other venues, (e.g., Twitter)
- Be creative
“Like” Us Campaign

Description: Incoming freshman enrolled at a community college or public university were encouraged to “Like” us on Facebook and repost our page on their Facebook wall for the opportunity to win a $100 book store voucher.

Goals:
- Recruit student participants
- Increase traffic to the Facebook page

Promotion: July 16 to August 21, 2012

Results: 96 new “likes”—Totaling 124 lifetime likes

Greetings ICAC Class of 2012!
Want the chance to win a book voucher?
**Blogs**

**Purpose:** To provide tips that will make students successful in college (e.g. seeking on-campus support, finding employment, renewing the FAFSA)

**Goals:**
- Educate and encourage students to be their own advocate
- Provide consistent online advising
- Generate traffic to the Facebook Page

**Time:** Weekly (every Monday)

**Results:**
- Topic popularity informs advising
- Library of content is saved on Page for students to browse at anytime.

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**Five Tips for Cheaper Textbooks**

1. **Shop early** - The closer you are to the beginning of the semester, the more you’re likely to pay full price for a brand new textbook. Email your professors or visit your college’s online bookstore to get your book list.
2. **Buy online** - Our favorite means of finding the cheapest textbooks is online. Try Amazon, eBay, half.com, and Chegg.com
3. **Shop for the best price** - Some colleges have nearby bookstores offering discounts.

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**Transferring from a Community College to a 4-year University**

It’s not too early to start planning for your transfer now! Here are some tips to help you get started...

**APPLICATION PROCESS:** Transferring from a community college to a 4-year university is very similar to when you applied to those same schools as a senior in high school.

**What’s the difference?**

Well, you’re a college student now. Therefore, you will have accumulated 2 years of college credit. You will no longer...
#freshmansolutions

**Purpose:** To frame information positively through solutions, not problems

**Goals:**
- Capture student attention
- Encourage informed decision making

**Time:** Weekly (every Wednesday or Thursday)

**Results:**
- In average, 53 users organically view the posts, while 2X+ as many users virtually view the posts.

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<iC^2 = Meet with your academic advisor once a semester to stay on the right track towards your academic and career goals!</iC^2 = iCompleteCollege
**Purpose:** To communicate in real time with students

**Goals:**
- Chat with at least 1 student during each session
- Develop the near-peer relationship
- Answer questions

**Time:** Weekly (1 night by each Coach)

**Results:**
- Because all chats occur during evening hours, Coaches often chat with multiple students.
- Students who have had a face-to-face interaction with Coaches are more likely to utilize the Chat.
Useful Tools for Social Media
- Facebook Analytics
- Google & YouTube Analytics
- Aggregators: HootSuite, TweetDeck

What to keep track of
- Fans/Followers
- Behavioral Impact (Shares, Likes, Interactions)

How to improve
- Learn from mistakes
- Keep up-to-date on changes in your tools’ policies
Challenges

• Student Responsiveness
• Institutional Buy-In
• Campus Event Planning
• Family Advocate Network
Finish what you started.

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