

PROBATION WEEKLY MESSAGING PROJECT

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Learning Together

- What does academic probation support and notice look like in your area and for your students?
- Are there separate grade standards or thresholds for “probation” and how do you navigate those differences?
- How do you engage with students on academic probation?
- How do you work with students to re-engage in activities when they return to good standing?

Aims

- Why weekly, informal, and personal messaging?
 - Used successfully in Honors on topics related to wellbeing
 - Ensure students on probation maintain positive campus connection
 - Supportive with no expectations
- Message content and tone
 - Informal, personal, approachable, and encouraging
 - Minimize sense of failure—humanize the experience
 - Timely and appropriate awareness of campus resources
 - Balance of academic and wellbeing topics
 - Scaffolding a growth mindset



Evidence-Based

- Reviewed Themes from Probation survey
(sent each semester by Advisors & Registrar)
- New Post-Probation Survey in Fall 2020
 - Students ($n = 109$) who had been on probation—returned to good standing
 - Contributions to probation status
 - Contributions to returning to good standing
 - Encouraging/motivating quotes to other students on probation
- Option to indicate faculty and staff who made a difference
 - Each faculty and staff member indicated received (and has continued to receive) an acknowledgement from Teaching & Learning.

Fall 2021 Schedule

Week	Date	Group 1	Group 2
1			
2	8/30	Intro/Welcome (Mindset)	Intro/Welcome (Mindset) *
3	9/6 (Labor Day)	Resources for strong semester*	Resources for strong semester*
4	9/13		
5	9/20	Seeking help is not a burden (modified)	Seeking help is not a burden (modify)
6	9/27	Sleep	Sleep (Modified)
7	10/4	Where and when you study	Preparing for Fall break
8	10/11 (Oct. Brk)	Failure and Growth	Imposter Syndrome
9	10/18	Study effectively	Assessing your learning
10	10/25	Fear of Missing Out	Fear of Missing Out
11	11/1	Studying and Stress	Studying and Stress
12	11/8	Mental Pollution	Mental Pollution
13	11/15		
14	11/22 (Thnksgvg)	Gratitude	Gratitude
15	11/29	Preparing for holistic finals week	Preparing for holistic finals week
16	12/6		
Finals	12/13	Encouragement for finals	Encouragement for finals

Steps to Leaps Pillars

Weekly messages specifically directed students to Steps to Leaps resources (e.g., wellbeing tips, website resources)

- Well-Being
- Networking
- Impact
- Leadership
- Grit/Persistence



Spring 2021 Implementation Assessment

- Surveyed students in May 2021 who received messages that spring
- IDA+A assisted with integrating demographics and academic data for the students who responded.
 - N = 193 out of 2,665, response rate, 7.2%
 - Women 86, Men = 107
 - URM = 23, Non-URM = 170
 - International = 33, Domestic Non-Resident = 50, Resident = 110



Spring 2021 Implementation Assessment

- Survey completers > Spring 2021 GPAs and credits than non-completers
- GPA and credits did not differ for the Fall 2020 semester.
- No groups differences by demographics on any of the study variables—
but some variation in associations among variables.
- Read messages ↔ followed links in messages
- Followed links ↔ engagement with the Academic Success Center
- Stronger for men than women, for URM than non-URM, and international
than for domestic students



Spring 2021 Implementation Assessment

- Followed links \longleftrightarrow engagement with a range of campus resources (e.g., academic advisors, TAs, faculty)
 - Stronger for URM than non-URM, and for international than domestic students
- Engagement with campus resources \longleftrightarrow credits earned
 - Stronger for URM than non-URM students
- Sense of belonging (general—not campus) \longleftrightarrow credits earned and GPA
 - Stronger for URM than non-URM students

Fall 2021 Implementation Assessment

- N = 116, Similar response rate and break down of demographics
- Survey completers > GPAs and credits earned in Fall 2021 than non-responders, but not in Spring 2021
- No demographic differences on variables; Except First Gen students (n = 22) < GPA and credits earned in Spring 2021 than Non-First Gen (n = 79)



Fall 2021 Implementation Assessment

- Read messages ↔ followed links in messages, belonging (campus), and Fall 2021 credits earned
 - Read messages NOT related to Spring 2021 credits earned
- Followed links ↔ engagement with the Academic Success Center and with campus resources
- Belonging (campus) → Fall 2021 GPAs and credits earned
 - Belonging NOT related to Spring 2021 GPAs for credits earned
- The smaller sample did not allow for subgroup examination



Implications of Project Process and Findings

When engaged with students on probation:

- Keep in mind the high level of shame and need to "prove" themselves
 - Don't need reminders of seriousness
 - Do need messages that humanize and encourage--"students at promise"
- Facilitate belonging as variable most associated with GPA and credits earned
- Emphasize the benefit of reading weekly messages and following links
- Focus in an intentional way on your personal verbal and written communication
 - EX: Academic Dismissal rather than "Dropped" or "Kicked Out"
 - Temporary setback that doesn't define the student
 - No doubt they belong here, students at-promise

Implications of Project Process and Findings

When engaged with students on probation:

- Compassion isn't handholding
- Consider sharing one of your own failure stories through a video submission
- Refer to Financial Aid (DFA) for changes in financial matters
- Cultivate your own sense of growth mindset—for yourself—so that you can directly and indirectly communicate that mindset to students
- **The vast majority of students on probation have faced broad and significant life events and challenges--it is not solely or even primarily about their academic potential.**

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION

Thank you!

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