

# The Higher Learning Commission Action Project Directory

## Gogebic Community College

Project Details		
<b>Title</b>	Student Success Initiative	<b>Status</b> ACTIVE
<b>Category</b>	2 - Meeting Student and Other Key Stakeholder Needs	<b>Updated</b>
<b>Timeline</b>		<b>Reviewed</b>
	<b>Planned Project Kickoff</b> 06-06-2016	<b>Created</b> 05-18-2016
	<b>Target Completion</b> 05-01-2017	<b>Version</b> 1

### 1: PROJECT SUMMARY

**A:** This project will focus on incorporating three of the best practices of the TRiO-Student Support Services program into the general College population's retention practices. The TRiO-Student Support Services program consistently reports higher retention rates than the general population. For the 2016-2017 academic year, GCC will focus on more proactive academic advising, renewed emphasis on the Early Student Updates as an early warning system for potential student barriers/obstacles to success, and a more direct one-on-one approach for follow-up with student retention.

### 2: PROJECT RATIONALE

**A:** The rationale for this project is to help more students be successful and increase student retention at GCC. We hope to increase student retention rates by expanding the best practices of the TRIO -Student Support Services program. The TRIO Program at GCC has been incredibly successful.

### 3: PROJECT GOALS AND DELIVERABLES

**A:** The project goals are as follows:

1. Student Services advisors will begin engaging students from the time they are accepted to Gogebic Community College. The Admissions/Financial Aid Counselor will personally contact every incoming student to discuss their placement scores, financial aid information, and scholarship application. This early contact will provide students with a more streamlined and efficient way to connect with campus. Student Services advisors will contact advisees to discuss placement scores and set up assessments as needed as well as meet with each advisee one-on-one to advise and register them for classes. The anticipated outcome is that the more proactive one-on-one advising that happens shortly after they apply as well as continued contact throughout the summer will help students be more at ease, connect with a staff member as soon as possible, and engage with campus more quickly. This early advising with registration also helps the college to know which courses fill up quicker and will help us better meet the scheduling needs of students.
2. The Early Student Update (ESU) system will be modified and monitored during the fall and spring semesters. Faculty will be made aware of why the ESUs are so important to complete for each of their classes. Once faculty submit their ESUs to the ACES Center, the ESUs will be used to help identify at-risk students and will give advisors an opportunity to provide early intervention to help set up support services as needed. Examples of support services may be academic tutoring, counseling services, or other support or guidance to help improve the chances of student success.
3. Between semesters, Student Services advisors will follow-up directly with each unregistered student to either help them register for the following semester or to find out why they are not returning if they are not registering. This information could help the College create other interventions, or at least learn the reasons for not retaining students. The reasons may be things the College could control, i.e. classes don't meet at times that work for the student's schedule, or items the College cannot control, such as a student's health.

### 4: INSTITUTIONAL INVOLVEMENT

**A:** While every staff member on campus contributes to retention, specific staff members that will be crucial to this project's success are the Admissions/Financial Aid Counselor, Student Services Advisors, ACES Assistant, Dean of Students, faculty members for Early Student Updates, and the Director of Student Outreach & Engagement.

## 5: PROJECT CONTROL

- A:** 1. The proactive academic advising will be monitored by the number of students who have been accepted for enrollment for the upcoming term, and the Student Services advisors following up with each accepted student. The one-on-one advising appointments will be documented in Jenzabar. Progress and success will be determined by the number of accepted students being registered for classes.
2. The Early Student Updates will be monitored on a bi-weekly basis starting a week after the Early Student Update forms are sent out to faculty. An Excel file is created with all students receiving ESUs. Letters will be sent from the Dean of Students Office, and follow up with each student will take place by the Student Services advisors. Progress/success will be evaluated based on the number of students contacted, type of follow up necessary, and retention of the students to the following semester.
3. Directly following up with each unregistered student between semesters will be monitored by the number of unregistered students becoming registered students. A list will also be kept in terms of reasons if the student is not returning for the following semester. The list will then be reviewed to determine if any of the reasons should lead to changes within the College, or if the reasons are beyond the College's control.

## 6: ANTICIPATED CHALLENGES TO PROJECT SUCCESS

- A:** For the proactive academic advising to be successful, a large portion of the advisors' time will need to be dedicated to following up with advisees. Organization will also be imperative to document who advisors have been in contact with and who it might be time to reach out to.
- A large portion of staff time needs to be dedicated to following up on the Early Student Updates (ESUs). Timing is very important because early intervention can put a student back on the right path, for example setting a student up with a tutor with enough time to improve their skills before the next test, versus it being too late to make a difference.
- The follow-up between the fall and spring semester in particular is very tight with the College being closed for Holiday break, so having the time to get in touch with the students could be a challenge. An additional challenge could present itself if we do not have proper contact information for the students we are trying to reach out to, if students do not respond to our messages, or if students do not want to tell us why they are not enrolling for the following semester.

## 7: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- A:** NA