Advising First Year Students

4/26/2017

Presented by:

Maria Barichello – Student Success Office
Paige Doherty – St. Jerome’s University
Growing Success Documents

Provincial:

Growing Success – Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting in Ontario Schools

Board Specific (WRDSB):

Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting Handbook (AER)
STUDENT WORK AND MARKING
Policy impacts in high school

- The following are not factored into student grades:
  - Homework completion
  - Late/overdue/missing assignments
  - Attendance
  - Participation

- As a result:
  - Student work is marked without penalty, even if it is submitted late (e.g. last day of the semester)

What this means for you:

- You may see students who:
  - Procrastinate on assignments
  - Feel overwhelmed and stressed by due dates
  - Ineffectively manage their time
  - Have violated or are close to violating academic integrity policies
  - Are attempting to submit work late or are asking for extra credit work
Policy impacts in high school

- Students are assessed multiple times for each learning objective
- A single unsuccessful assessment may not make a significant impact on the student’s final grade

What this means for you:

- You may see students who are:
  - Confused as to why they didn’t do well on an assignment or test
  - Frustrated and/or worried because the study strategies they used in high school worked
  - Experiencing their first low mark or failing grade
STUDENT FEEDBACK
Policy impacts in high school

- Feedback is:
  - Frequent
  - Descriptive

What this means for you:

- You may see students who:
  - Have a false sense of confidence and ability in their courses when, in fact, they may be failing
  - Do not know how to leverage available supports in a university setting:
    - Prof/TA office hours
    - Syllabus
    - Course notes, etc.
PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT
Policy impacts in high school

- Expectation is for teachers to communicate frequently with parents about:
  - Deadlines
  - Expectations
  - Grades
  - Classroom behavior
- Extensive parent and teacher involvement in students’:
  - Time management
  - Content/organization of notes

What this means for you:

- You may see students who have not had many chances to practice and gain skills in:
  - Note-taking
  - Organization
WHAT CAN ADVISORS DO?
Brainstorming Activity

In your groups think about the following:

- What needs to be communicated to students/parents (how?)
- What resources are available to you/them?
- What do we need to be mindful of when we notice these behaviours?
Solution-based Approach to Student Work and Marking

- Reinforce the differences between high school and university, specifically around the inflexibility of a university deadline:
  - 11:59 submission means 11:59; anything submitted later will not be considered

- Clarify available resources to address time-management challenges, such as:
  - Student Success Office – e.g. ‘Get this term started’ and ‘Organizing your time’
  - Student Success Office time management resources – e.g. ‘backwards planning’
  - Peer success coach appointments
Solution-based Approach to Student Learning

- Remind students that the study strategies and approaches they used in high school may not be appropriate in post-secondary because the emphasis is now on analysis and critical thinking rather than knowledge and factual recall.

- Clarify available resources that can help students build a sense of control over their academics. Students can learn new study strategies through:
  - Student Success Office workshops
  - Peer Success Coaching appointments
Solution-based Approach to Student Learning

- Normalize failure as a part of the learning process. Resiliency is a skill that can be rebuilt or strengthened by:
  - Identifying areas of strength and growth
  - Reflecting on goals to build motivation
  - Gaining deeper insights into the motivation to be successful, and reflecting on how the experience of failure can improve their future performance
Solution-based Approach to Providing Student Feedback

- For students who do not know how to leverage supports it would be useful to explain the value and importance of course tools that may be available to them.
- Explain what office hours are and how students can access and use them to support their learning.
- Be mindful of the fact that many students are intimidated by the thought of revealing academic challenges to their instructor or TA.
- You may be the first point of contact for these students, as many of them may have not identified their struggles to anyone prior to meeting with you.
Solution-based Approach to Parent Involvement

- Emphasize the difference between high school and university, particularly in:
  - Self regulation
  - Independent learning
  - Responsibility

- Emphasize the importance of:
  - Regular review
  - “Chunking” bigger tasks such as assignments and studying for exams
  - Learning/improving basic time management skills
Solution-based Approach to Parent Involvement

- Be mindful and patient with parents who reach out for information or who try to advocate; it has been their experience for many years that they can approach teachers/administrators for information without worrying about confidentiality issues
QUESTIONS?