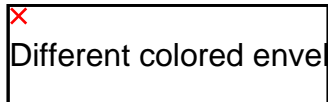




Using Technology to Keep Students on Track

Posted on 03/04/2019



For many students who enter post-secondary institutions, time and money are two huge factors that spell success or failure. To address these issues, some schools are starting to leverage technology to help keep students on track and minimize the negative effects of students spending too much time and money while they are enrolled.

Temple University in Philadelphia has begun a program called Fly in 4. The overall goal is to graduate as many undergraduates in four years as possible. (Nationwide, just over 40% of college students are able to graduate in four years.) By getting students to complete their studies in four years or less, this saves students from taking on additional student debt and gets them into the workforce in a shorter amount of time. If a student signs a Fly in 4 agreement, holds up their end of the bargain, and is not able to complete their program in four years, Temple agrees to waive tuition and associated fees until the student completes their program.

The technology that supports Fly in 4 is a component of the school's Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) software program. Academic advisors utilize the ERP program to schedule and manage each student's yearly Fly in 4 checkpoints, and students are regularly notified of requirements, meetings, and deadlines and can stay in touch with advisors via the ERP program.

There are other ways to keep students focused by using technology. In addition to a school's ERP program or Student Information System (SIS) software program, advisors, teachers, and staff can contact students via email, a learning management system (LMS) such as Moodle, Canvas, Blackboard, or Schoology, or text and phone messages. In all cases, the language in the messaging should be carefully worded and the timing should be well thought out. It is based on the idea of "nudging" students to keep appointments, meet deadlines, check in with advisors, and answer questions that might prompt follow-up by school staff (for example, contacting a student if they are absent for a number of days). Nudging is an idea that has taken hold in higher ed based on the book *Nudge* by the social scientists Thaler and Sunstein published in 2008, which posits that well-crafted nudges provide incentives for people to make decisions in their best interest.

In the discussion about the proper and improper uses of student data, schools are providing a powerful example of how data can be leveraged to help guide students through the post-secondary world and keep them on track for success.

Source: [Using technology to fast-track student success at Temple University](#) 

Source: [Giving a nudge: How digital alerts can keep students on track](#) 

Website: [Persistence Plus](#) 