



SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY

SDSU's Advising Crisis: The Case for Transition Advising



SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY

Paul Justice, Ian Ruston, Justine Poulin

Division of Academic Engagement & Student Achievement, San Diego State University

The Facts

SDSU admits as many as 4000 newly FTF who are likely to need transition advising each year, yet there's no dedicated transition advising structure in place to serve them

- ❖ This total includes the following: 658 undeclared (Fall 2018), ca. 3300 declared (only 35% of the Fall 2012 cohort completed their initial declared major in 6 years) [Tableau]

Students discover new interests (65%), students realize that a major isn't what they expected (42%), students can't meet impaction criteria (10%) [2019 survey]

Exploring and changing majors can be part of an important development process, but the process require specially trained advisers [Bullock-Yowell et al. 2014, Cueso 2005]

Existing advising services are inadequate to meet the advising demand – 60% of 2018-2019 graduating seniors reported access issues with the current structures [2019 survey]

Conclusion: SDSU needs a dedicated transition advising center to serve this population

The Model

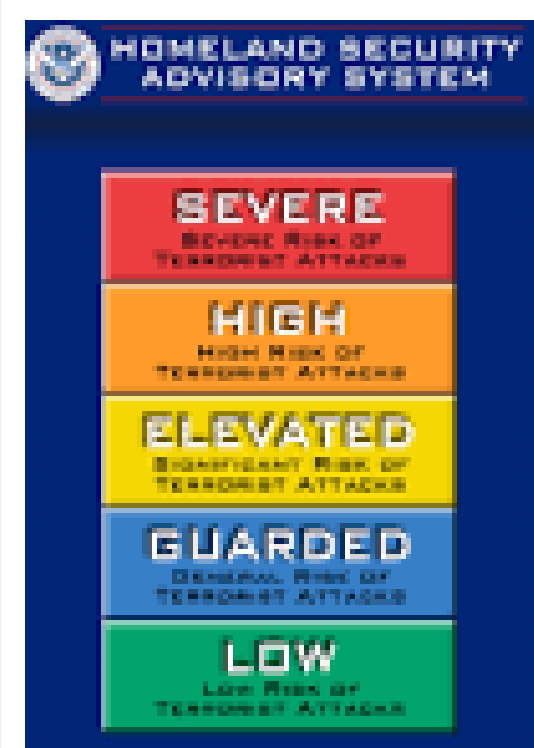
Ohio State's University Exploration Program (EXP): designed to assist students as they explore major options to find their "best fit" program

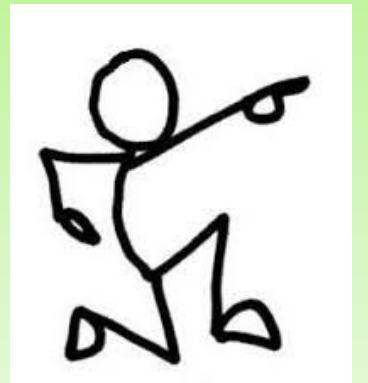

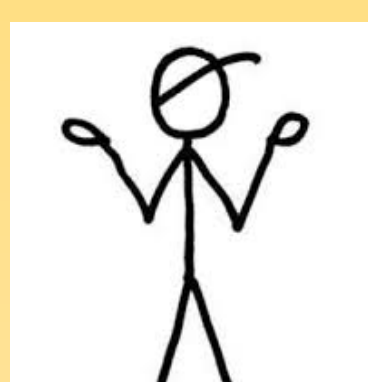



13 program staff work with ca. 20% of the student body (ca. 1600 students in each first-year cohort)

Demonstrated effectiveness: sophomores and juniors who participate in the program were more likely to graduate than those who didn't [Steele & Gordon, 1993]

Ohio State's 2014 cohort 4-year graduation rate: 64.6%

SDSU's 2014 cohort 4-year graduation rate: 47.6%



Student Types [adapted from Gordon & Steele, 2015]	Required Advising Services	SDSU Source of Advising Support (both existing and proposed)
 <p>The Persistent Enters with a declared pre-major that matches abilities Graduates in that same major with little or no trouble</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Help with GE requirements ✓ Help with major-specific requirement 	<p>Main GE Advising Office (currently exists) 59% of major changers reported accessibility issues [survey 2019]</p> <p>Major Advisers (currently exists) Narrow focus is on completing a specific major</p>
 <p>The Undeclared Enters without a declared pre-major and Open to exploring a variety of majors Must declare some major by 70 units earned</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Help with exploring interests, abilities and majors ✓ Help with developing sense of confidence <p>[Firmin & MacKillop, 2008; Bullock-Yowell et al., 2014]</p>	<p>DAESA Advising (currently exists) Responsible for 680+ IS3D majors and 1000+ undeclared students Two part-time advisers with combined effort of 0.9-1.4 (varies by term) Long wait times [up to 3 hours during Spring 2019 adjustment period]</p>
 <p>The Drifter Enters with a declared pre-major Recognizes poor fit early, but doesn't seek support Takes classes that don't fulfill graduation requirements Unable or unwilling to engage in major exploration</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> X Help accessing information about potential majors X Help with organizing the major search <p>[Gordon & Steele, 2015]</p>	<p>SDSU Transition Advising Center (STAC) - proposed</p> <p>Dedicated space open 30 hours per week</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ No more accessibility issues <p>Specially trained faculty/staff advisers (3) Specially trained peer advisers (4) Specially trained graduate interns (2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Appropriate/sufficient staffing to meet specialized needs <p>Individual advising (walk-in and appointment) Group advising for at-risk pre-majors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Different approaches for different student types <p>Collaborations with academic colleges Collaborations with Career Services Collaborations with first-year experience program Collaborations with Bounce Back program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Connecting students with valuable campus resources <p>Active monitoring of at-risk student populations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ No more drifting or reluctance!!! <p>NOTE: current DAESA advising would become part of STAC</p>
 <p>The Closet Changer Enters with a declared pre-major Changes majors in their head, but not officially Enrolls in "new major" classes but without guidance Might have external pressure not to change major Is at-risk of attrition [Cueso, 2005]</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> X Help with evaluating tenability of new major choice X Nudge to seek major advising and officially declare <p>[Gordon & Steele, 2015]</p>	
 <p>The External Enters with a declared pre-major, but changes often Seeks informal advice from friends and family Worries about missing out on potential majors Takes an unorganized approach to major exploration</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> X Encouragement to commit to a major X Encouragement to accept responsibility for commitment <p>[Gordon & Steele, 2015]</p>	
 <p>The Reluctant Enters with a declared pre-major but can't meet impaction Abilities may not match their stated interests Resists considering changing majors Finds the prospect of changing majors depressing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> X Encouraging, non-judgmental support X Help with accepting the need to change X Help with self-reflection regarding current situation X Help with avoiding repeat of past experiences <p>[Gordon & Steele, 2015]</p>	