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Building a Retention Program for Students of Color From the Ground Up

Abstract

A Student of Color Retention Program should follow an academic retention model that assists first-year students of color navigate their first year. Through the use of Noel- Levitz principles institutions can identify and utilize existing programs at their institutions for student success. Various offices will be able to work collaboratively on a SOCR Program and highlight the various services that their respective university can provide.

Robert N. Page, Jr.

Director, Office of Multicultural Affairs, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS

For year's parents, faculty, and staff have preached the importance of the first year. Some research has shown that students will decide to stay in college the first six weeks of their college tenure. But, critical as this period is, many students view their first year as a time to experience everything that they can get involved in while at college. Unfortunately, some of these experiences are not as productive and can lead to a difficult first year in which issues surface those students must deal with during the rest of their college days.

An SOCR program will help students navigate through existing campus programs by assisting in the collaboration of services to provide direct intervention. An SOCR format will help students operate from an inclusive model that will prepare students for success well beyond their college days. By linking students with various departmental programs and services, an SOCR program approach is designed to bring focus to the first year.

Direct intervention beginning with assessment to mentoring programs from both faculty and students, culminating in graduation, the SOCR approach is designed to help students with both academic and personal success.

Presenter

Robert N. Page, Jr. is currently the Director of the Office of Multicultural Affairs at the University of Kansas. He has worked in postsecondary education for over 14 years and specializes in retention and recruitment programs for students of color, diversity training and awareness, conference coordination, and budgeting and strategic planning and the motivation of all students to achieve at their highest potential.

In his current position at the University of Kansas, Mr. Page oversees and supervises an office that assists with academic progress and leadership development. He develops the budget for the Office of Multicultural Affairs and plans all programs related to the office. He has overall responsibility of all programs in the Office of Multicultural Affairs including; the stEp Program, a mentor program that focuses on tutoring and mentoring, the Multicultural Resource Center and the HAWK Link retention program for students of color.

Robert has conducted countless workshops, seminars and keynotes on many issues with a focus on multiculturalism. Certified and trained through the National Multicultural Institute and the Institute on Racial Justice, his areas of expertise include; multiracial identity; dominant culture privilege; training and curriculum design, equitable policies and practices, multicultural education, multilingual issues, inclusive decision-making processes, multicultural curriculum training, cultural communication and a specific focus on "Cycle of Socialization Theory".

The founder of such programs as the Black Greek Leadership Conference, Minority & Friends Network at the Oshkosh Placement Exchange, African American Male Summit, the Tunnel of Oppression Diversity Activity, his successes are attributed to people that he has worked with.

Robert holds a Master of Science in Counseling from Central Missouri State University. He is a member of the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators and the Association of College Personnel Administrators, Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc and the proud father of two daughters Morgan and Madison Page.