High Impact Practices and Student Success & Retention

University Honors Program, McNair Scholars Program, and Undergraduate Research Program
University of Wisconsin – Whitewater

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Introduction
The University Honors Program, McNair Scholars Program and Undergraduate Research Program all contribute to students’ success by promoting LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes in their programs. The three programs have been informally working together to promote our services, support systems and activities to the students in the University of Wisconsin - Whitewater. However, the three programs now plan to intentionally develop a pipeline for students to be engaged in these programs from freshman year to graduation. As stated by George D. Kuh (2008), being engaged in multiple high impact practices improves students’ graduation rate and this is a long-term outcome the programs would like to achieve for our student participants.

University Honors Program
Eligibility:
• By invitation based on student high school class rank, gpa and ACT score.
• Student can also be accepted into the program once their gpa is at least 3.4 cumulative gpa per director approval.
• Number of students in 2012-13 is 616.

McNair Scholars Program
Eligibility:
• Low income, first generation and/or groups underrepresented in graduate education. The following ethnic and racial groups are considered underrepresented in graduate education: Black (non-Hispanic), Hispanic, American Indian, Alaskan Native, Native Hawaiians, and Native American Pacific Islanders.
• 2.75 cumulative gpa.
• 60 units completed by end of term accepted into the program
• Must be U.S. citizens or permanent residents.
• Number of students in 2012-13 is 30.

Undergraduate Research Program
Eligibility:
• Students write approved research project proposals for entry into the program.
• Minimum gpa requirement (2.75 cumulative or 3.0 in major and minor depending on the grant program; exemptions granted on a case-by-case basis)
• At least of sophomore standing. OR
• Students work as paid research assistants whose projects are supervised by approved faculty/staff mentors.
• Number of students in 2012-13 is 168.

LEAP High Impact Practices
Students in our programs engage in many of the LEAP High Impact Practices but the three that are most prominent are:
• Learning Community
• Undergraduate Research
• Service Learning

LEAP Essential Learning Outcomes
Students in our programs experience the most gain on:
• Intellectual and practical skills, including inquiry and analysis
• Critical and creative thinking
• Written and oral communication
• Quantitative and informational literacy
• Teamwork
• Problem solving

LEAP Principles of Excellence
Our programs contribute towards the following:
• Give Students a Compass
• Aim High – and Make Excellence Inclusive
• Assess Students’ Ability to Apply Learning to Complex Problems

High Impact Practice Pipeline
The above pipeline can be achieved by learning and promoting each other’s programs with referrals. Our goal is to increase the number of students participating in multiple programs.

Fall 2013 Results: N=2058
Q: Are you aware of the following programs?
• McNair Scholars Program (4.3%)
• Undergraduate Research Program (24.0%)
• University Honors Program (22.8%)
• All of the above (12.7%)
• None of the above (36.2%)

Spring 2014 Results: TBD (by March 2014)
Q1: Are you aware of the following programs?
Q2: Are you involved with any of the following programs?

Action Plan and Progress to Date
1. Promote Program Awareness
Develop venues and “messengers”
a) Begin initial contact of key personnel of various offices and develop messengers:
• Campus Assistant Training (Summer 2013)
• Peer Mentor Training (Summer 2013)
• RA Training (Summer 2013)
• Academic Advising & Exploration Center Campus (Summer 2013-Academic Year)
• Campus Assistant Training (Summer 2013)
• Advising Council Meeting (Academic Year 2013-2014)
• Plan-It-Purple Orbit Sessions (Freshmen Orientation/Transfers; Summer 2013-Academic Year)
• Premiere Days (Academic Year 2013-2014)
• New Student Seminar Class (Fall 2013)
b) Create program fact sheet: Handout

2. Enhance Inclusive Excellence
Evaluate potential barriers against entry into programs
• Waive the gpa requirement for McNair Scholars
  → Improved Inclusive Excellence

Gather existing data on current participants
• Survey on programs awareness on MapWorks (through Residence Life)

3. Maintain/Increase Retention & Graduation Rate
Track the retention and graduation rates of participants
• Working with the Office of Institutional Research

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