

Creating the 'ReFOCUS at Ferris' Program to Help Students on Academic Probation

Partner Profile | Ferris State University

Today's Presenters and Moderator



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EAB

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Ferris Equity Initiative

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CONNECTED24

Ferris Equity Initiative



Ferris State University

Background



Public university in Big Rapids, MI



10,316 students



77% retention rate and
53% six-year graduation rate

EAB Technologies

- ▶ Moon Shot for Equity and Navigate360 partner since July 2021
- ▶ Academic Performance Solutions (APS) partner since August 2019

A Focus on Equity Since the University's Founding

Long-Standing Commitment to Access, Opportunity, and Equity

1884

University's Founding

Ferris State University was founded by Woodbridge and Helen Ferris who were passionate about creating equal opportunities for all students.



Belford V. Lawson

First African American to argue and win a case before the Supreme Court, which became a starting point for the legal end to segregation



Amabel Anderson Arnold

Organizer of the Woman's State Bar Associate of Missouri, the first association for woman lawyers in the world



Percival L. Prattis

Editor of the Michigan State News, the first African American newspaper in Grand Rapids

2021

Moon Shot for Equity

A modern contemporary approach to achieve their vision

Communities of Practice Within Moon Shot for Equity

Building Capacity for Sustained, Equity-Minded Change



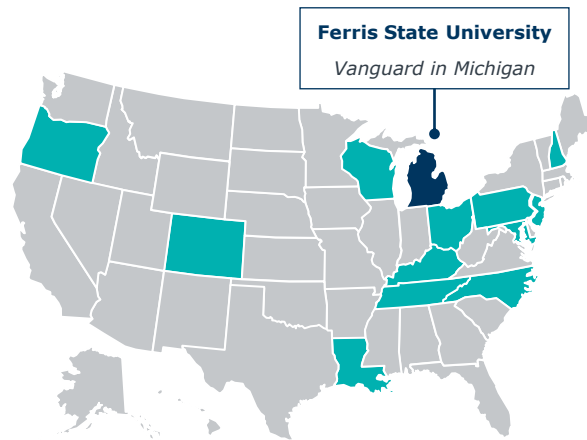
Moon Shot for Equity

A **transformational partnership** to improve student outcomes and eliminate equity gaps across race, gender, financial status, and other demographic categories.

National Community of Practice

Facilitating learning and building accountability with equity-minded peers

- ▶ **24** **Institutions** in the Moon Shot for Equity Partnership
- ▶ **4** **Regional Ecosystems** comprised of two- and four-year institutions
- ▶ **10** **Vanguard Institutions** taking bold action in their regions and recruiting ecosystem partners along the way



Moon Shot Best Practice Implementation Outcomes

Identifying and Carrying Out Improvements to Culture and Processes



15 Moon Shot for Equity Best Practices

- Academic Policy and Practice
- Access and Enrollment
- Student Support and Belongingness
- Leadership

As Best Practices Are Implemented, a Broader Transformation Ripples Out:

- ▶ Tangible changes to policies and procedures
- ▶ Opportunities to improve cultural barriers to change
- ▶ Application of equity-minded inquiry to data
- ▶ New norms and structures to work outside of traditional silos
- ▶ Fast-cycle learning through Moon Shot community of practice

"To build equity-minded practitioners, you need structured opportunities to remake practice." - Tia Brown-McNair

The Ferris Equity Initiative (FEI)

Driving Toward Continuous Improvement

Phases

1

Discovery

Assess current efforts and prioritize projects



2

Education and Engagement

Teach key collaborators best practices



3

Execution and Launch

Implement best practices with teams



Completed (September 2021 – February 2022)

In Progress (April 2022 and beyond)

Moon Shot for Equity Best Practices Provide Framework for FEI

Key Achievements

Applying an equity lens to process improvements

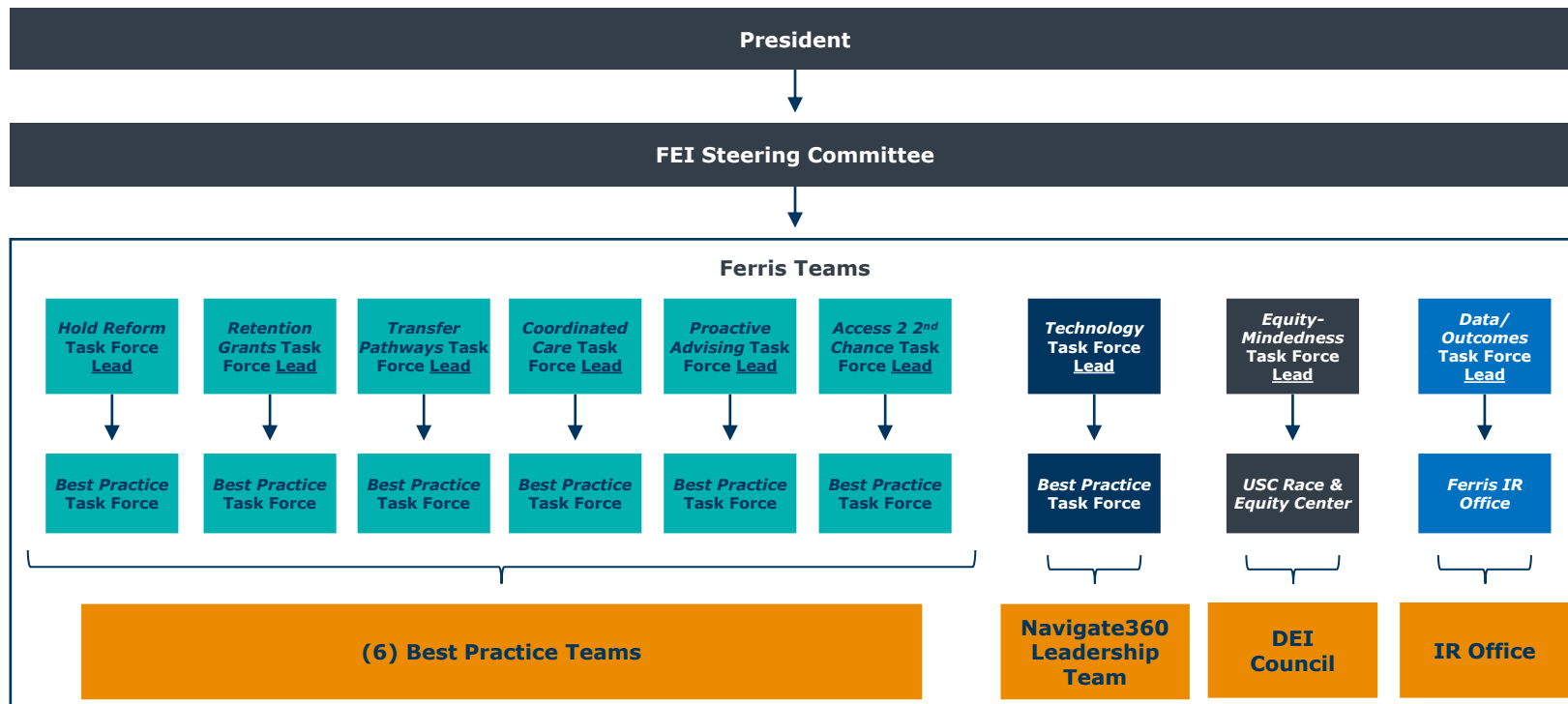
- Policy reform
- Hold reform
- Fundraising efforts

Embedding Navigate360 Use

- Coordinated care
- Case management
- Progress reports
- Interventions
- Campaigns to promote progress and engagement
- Analytic insights

Teams Activated for the Ferris Equity Initiative (FEI) in Year 1

Eight Teams Dedicated to Equity-Mindedness Work



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ReFOCUS at Ferris Program



Fall 2021 Enrollment Policy Change

Unforeseen Student Success Challenges Amid Policy Change

1

2021 Policy Change

Retention Task Force's Recommended Changes to Admissions Criteria

- Increased Base for Admissions: Students were admitted to the university, not into majors.
- General Studies Program: Students with lower academic readiness (determined by high school grades, standardized test scores, or placement scores) enrolled in the program managed by the University College, so that they could identify their interests before enrolling in a major.

2

2021-2022: Implementation Challenges

Enrollment Services Team's Policy Concerns

- Hesitation to Seek Help: Students didn't reach out to advising staff because they were not directly admitted into majors.
- Unprepared Advisors: When students were informed they *could* be advised in their major, advisors were not prepared for the students, especially higher-risk students.

Response to Challenges:



Outreach to high-risk students, encouraging use of tutoring and writing services



Creation of schedules to intentionally place students in courses with embedded structured learning assistance



Despite Advising Staff's best efforts to support these students, probation and dismissal rates continued to grow.

What is the likelihood of students on academic probation completing their program of study and graduating from your institution?

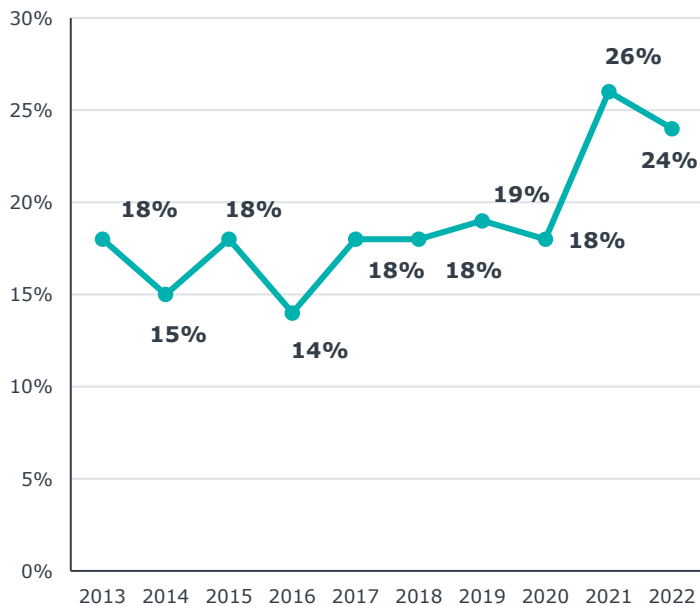
Nobody has responded yet.

Hang tight! Responses are coming in.

Low Recovery Rates for First-Semester Probationary Students

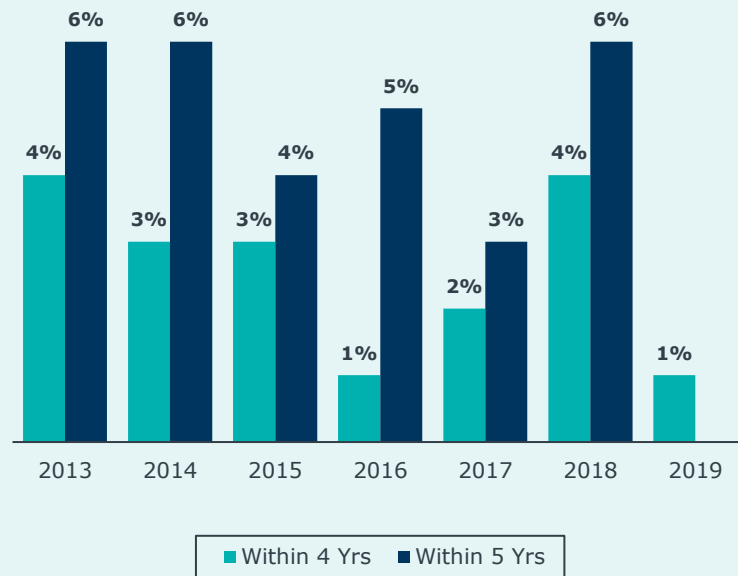
First-Semester Probation/Academic Dismissal Rates for Degree-Seeking FTIACs

Fall Semester, 2013-2022



First-Semester Probationary Students Completing a Degree

Fall Semester, 2013-2019



1) FTIAC = First Time in Any College

A Spark of Inspiration

- Ferris State Equity Initiative leaders learned about Middle Tennessee State University's success with a program for academic probation students at CONNECTED22.
- Inspired, the Ferris team used their remaining time at the conference to draft a similar program called ReFOCUS at Ferris.
- Upon returning to campus, leaders moved quickly, and within two months they had organized and staffed program supports to launch a spring 2023 pilot.



CONNECTED22

The image shows a large audience at a conference. In the background, a large banner displays the text 'CONNECTED22' in blue capital letters. Below the text is a graphic of rolling hills in shades of yellow and orange. In the foreground, the backs of many people's heads are visible as they face the stage. A man in a dark suit is seen from behind, addressing the audience. To the right, a Ferris State University logo is partially visible on the stage.

Does your institution have a dedicated program to support students on academic probation?

Yes

0%

Not yet; we're in the process of developing a program

0%

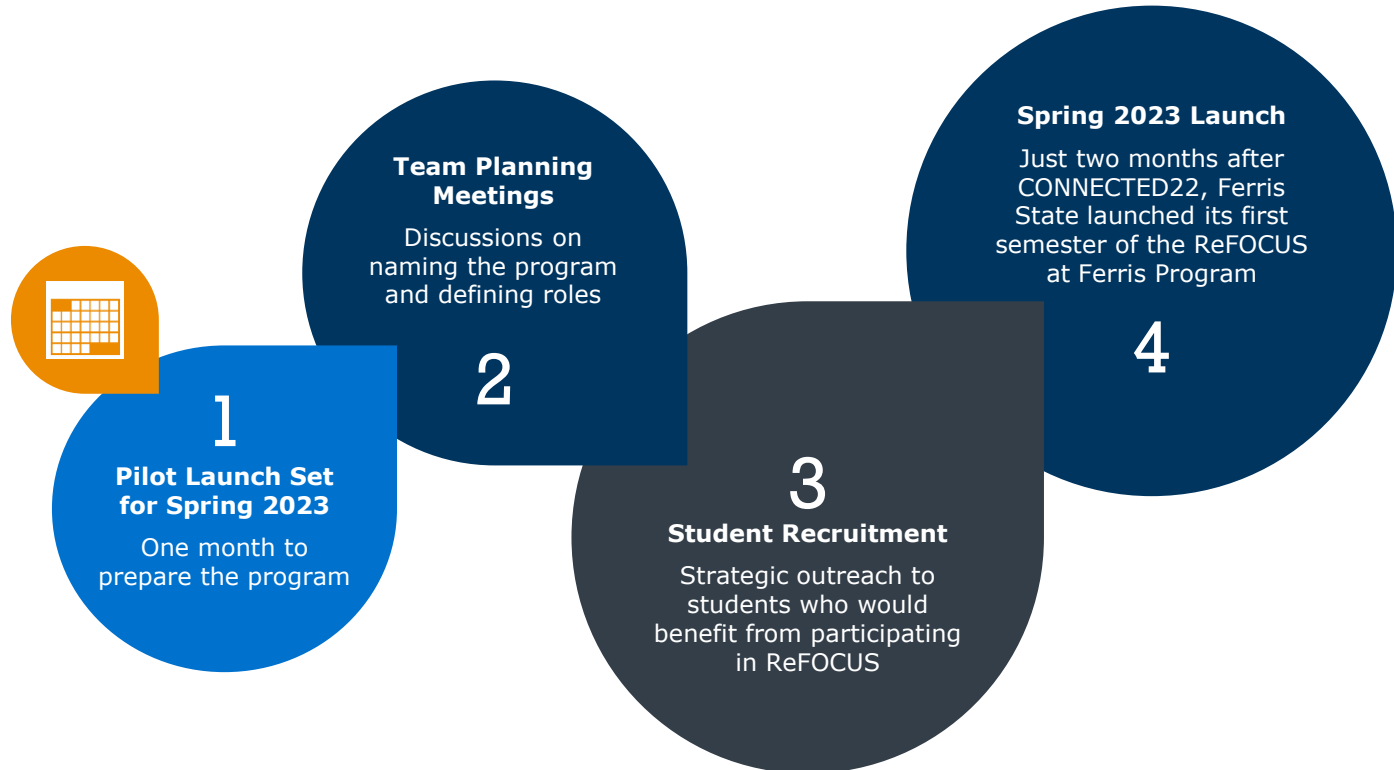
No

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Start the presentation to see live content. For screen share software, share the entire screen. Get help at pollev.com/app

Creating ReFOCUS at Ferris in Two Months

Hitting the Ground Running and Sustaining Momentum to Launch the Program



Recruiting Students to the ReFOCUS at Ferris Program

Spring 2023 Pilot Launch

Pilot Recruitment

Strategy

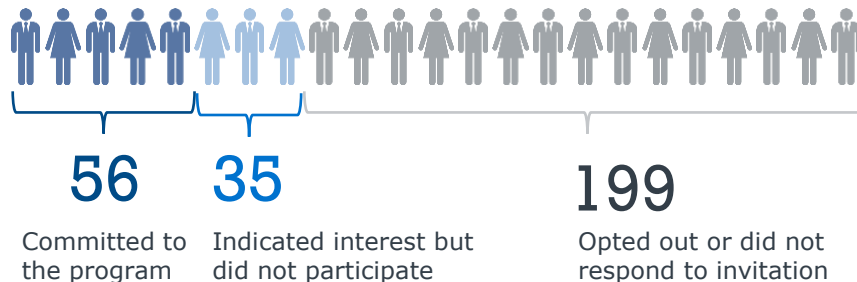
All students on academic probation (cumulative GPA <2.0) were eligible, with a focus on recruitment of underserved populations.

Administrators ran communication campaigns, relying on personal invitations to students from campus leaders, encouraging participation.

What's in It for Students?

- Free food and swag at workshops
- Drawings for book scholarships
- Resources for financial assistance
- A strong academic and social support system with administration, faculty, and ReFOCUS peers

290 Students on academic probation were invited to participate in ReFOCUS pilot



ReFOCUS Participant Commitments

- ✓ Attend five "This Semester Matters" Workshops
- ✓ Complete 15-minute weekly EduGuide modules
- ✓ Work with a professional student success coach
- ✓ Have instructors submit progress reports via Navigate360

ReFOCUS at Ferris Program Materials for Students

Defining Expectations and Setting Students Up for Success

ReFOCUS Information Sheet

Overview of the program and associated tools, benefits, and impact

Time and Grade Predictions Worksheet

Time management chart and a grade prediction/goal chart for students

Academic Recovery Plan and Acknowledgment of Responsibilities

Worksheet on barriers that may impede success along with an "acknowledgment of responsibilities" document to help students stay on track.

Canvas for Students

Academic recovery plan and workshop recordings for students and coaches to access on their own

How much time do I have (NEED?) each week?

# Hours per week working this semester:	
# Credit hours for courses this semester:	
Minimum Hours needed for study: (# cr hrs x 2)	
# Hours needed for sleep: (Daily average x 7)	
Total: (Add the first four lines)	
Subtract the total from 168 (# hrs in a week)	168 – total =
# hours left for other responsibilities	

In support of my academic success, I acknowledge that it is my responsibility to:

- contact my advisor if anything interferes with my academic progress;
- communicate with each of my instructors throughout the semester regarding my progress;
- be knowledgeable of drop/withdrawal dates and procedures for each semester:
 - Last date to **drop** without a grade: **Aug 31, 2023**
 - Last day to **withdraw** from a full semester course: **Nov 2, 2023**
- be knowledgeable of the FSU course repeat policy: The grade received when repeating a course will replace the prior grade in a student's GPA. (The most recent grade is calculated into the GPA.)
- use the following resources in the upcoming semester:
 - Tutoring Center, FLITE 120 Educational Counseling & Disabilities Services, ASC 1017
 - Writing Center, FLITE 120 Personal Counseling Center, 2nd Floor – Birkam Health Center
 - Also refer to the advising guide for other resources: www.ferris.edu/academics/advising/students/index.htm
- understand that, to be cleared to register, I must meet with my academic advisor prior to registration each semester.
- understand that I must achieve a GPA of 2.0 this semester to avoid potential dismissal from my program.

Barriers that may impede academic success (please place an X before all the apply)

ACADEMIC:	PERSONAL:	SOCIAL:
<input type="checkbox"/> Attendance	<input type="checkbox"/> Physical/Mental Health	<input type="checkbox"/> Extracurricular Activities
<input type="checkbox"/> Incomplete Assignments	<input type="checkbox"/> Financial	<input type="checkbox"/> Excessive Socializing
<input type="checkbox"/> Low Test Grades	<input type="checkbox"/> Sleep	<input type="checkbox"/> Too Much Gaming
<input type="checkbox"/> Organization	<input type="checkbox"/> Family	<input type="checkbox"/> Excessive Social Media
<input type="checkbox"/> Study Skills	<input type="checkbox"/> Identity	<input type="checkbox"/> Roommate Issues
<input type="checkbox"/> Reading/Writing Issues	<input type="checkbox"/> Work Related	<input type="checkbox"/> Substance use/abuse
<input type="checkbox"/> Undeclared Major	<input type="checkbox"/> Fear of Failing	<input type="checkbox"/> Excessive Partying
<input type="checkbox"/> Poor Time Management	<input type="checkbox"/> Pressure / Stress	<input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty Making Friends
<input type="checkbox"/> Not Enough Study Time	<input type="checkbox"/> Homeless	<input type="checkbox"/> Unsure I belong here
<input type="checkbox"/> Unsure of Plans	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	
<input type="checkbox"/> Cheating / Plagiarism		

OTHER: _____

SEMESTER GRADE PREDICTIONS – list your current courses and the grade that you want for each. You will revisit this again later to see if your midterm grades on are track as predicted.

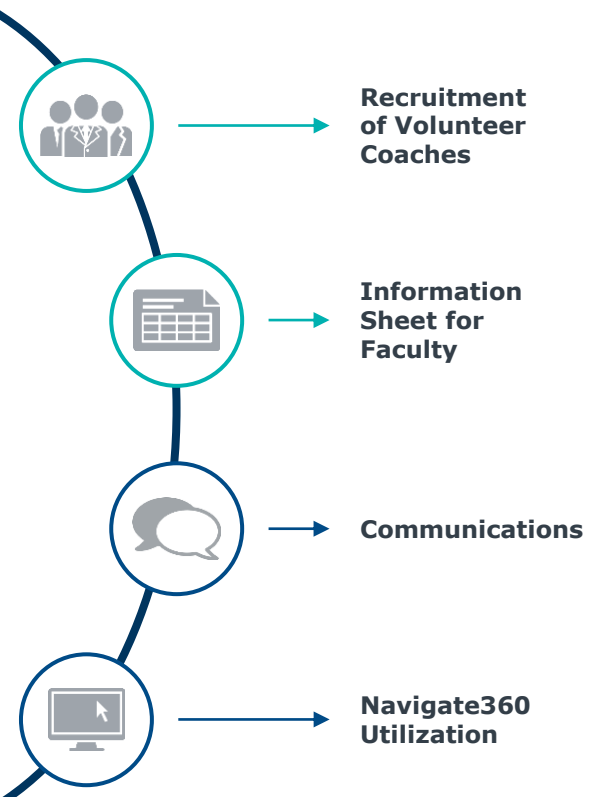
COURSE	EXPECTED FINAL GRADE	REPEAT? (Y/N)	Midterm grade

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Navigate360 Early Alerts and Progress Reports



Student Success Coaches and Navigate360 Utilization



Recruitment of Volunteer Coaches

- Professional staff, including the Provost, Faculty, and Advisors
- Enough coaches to meet participant demand

Information Sheet for Faculty

- Overview of ReFOCUS at Ferris Program
- Alert Reasons and intervention pathways

Communications

- Outreach to students, with emphasis on their belonging at the university

Navigate360 Utilization

- Early Alerts
- Progress Reports
- Appointment Summary Notes

ReFOCUS at FERRIS "This Semester Matters" Information Sheet

Student Progress Reports – "Alerts"

Alert Reasons	Reason Explained	Determined Intervention Pathways
Great Work!	Student is doing well in course.	Student will receive email with notification of the kudos. ReFOCUS Coach will contact students to also provide congratulations for a job well done.
Low In-Course Grade	Student missing assignments or quality of assignments needs improvement. Please place note in comments if tutoring is recommended.	Student will receive email to speak with instructor immediately related to the alert. Email also provides resources to tutoring , writing center , and other student success resources . ReFOCUS Coach will contact student to determine course of action and assist with scheduling tutoring as applicable.
At-Risk of Failing Course	Student is not meeting standards to	Student will receive email to speak

ReFOCUS at FERRIS "This Semester Matters" Information Sheet

PLEASE ENCOURAGE FRESHMEN AND SOPHOMORE STUDENTS WHO ARE ON ACADEMIC PROBATION TO PARTICIPATE

WHO CAN PARTICIPATE IN THE ReFOCUS @ Ferris PROGRAM?

- All students who are on academic probation (CUM GPA <2.0) may participate, but the program has a focus on underrepresented students.
- We highly encourage probationary students who fall into the following categories to participate:
 - First Generation
 - TIP Grant Recipients
 - Minority Students
 - Freshmen (0-25 hours earned)
 - Sophomore (26-55 hours earned)

WHAT IS THE ReFOCUS @ Ferris PROGRAM?

- The ReFOCUS program focuses on enhancing student engagement, retention, and academic success.
- Students are required to opt-in to the ReFOCUS program before the 3rd week of the semester.
- Throughout the semester, students will attend live "This Semester Matters" workshops.
- Student Progress Reports (SPRs) will be requested of instructors for students in the ReFOCUS program.
- Student Success Coaches will work with ReFOCUS participants throughout the semester.

Report Showing Progress Reports Received for ReFOCUS at Ferris Participants

Student	Student Id	Completed By	Completed By Id	Course	At-Risk?	Alert Reasons	Current...	Absen...	Comments
1				BIOL-108-223	No		A	0	off to a great start this semester!
2				BIOL-108-223	Yes	Great Work!	C	0	This is her lab score. In percentage 70%
3				MATH-110-006	Yes	Low In Course Grade	D+	1	
4				MUSI-232-002	No		A		Introductory discussions
5				ENGL-074-002	No		B+	1	Grade is 89.54%-above a 70% is passing.
6				MATH-110-002	Yes	Low In Course Grade	F	2	I suggest tutoring
7				ENGL-150-013	Yes	Low In Course Grade	D+	1	has missed a few assignments and generally doesn't seem present in the course. I ca.
8				BIOL-116-211 N...	Yes	Great Work!	B-		
9				PSYC-341-001	Yes	Great Work!	A-		
10				PHIL-216-001 L...	No		N/A	0	
11				ENGL-150-012	Yes	At Risk of Failing (Possible W)	D+	2	started well, but hasn't been showing up the last couple weeks and missed a lot of
12				MATH-117-VL1	Yes	Low In Course Grade	C+		Homework can be redone to improve the score (before the due date) low homework scores
13				ENGL-150-014	No				
14				EDCO-211-215	No	Great Work!	A	0	
15				COOP-101-VL3...	No		A		
16				COOP-102-VL2...	No		A	0	
17				HST-259-VL1	Yes	Great Work!	B	0	She needs to get going on her Activism Project, but her work on the whole, is solid. I don't
18				COOP-100-VL1...	No		A-		
19				CHEM-114-232	Yes	Great Work!	B	0	is doing well so far! Keep up the good work!

Appointment Summary Notes from Student Success Coach Appointments

Appointment Report For

Appointment Details

Care Unit: Academic Advising

Location: Main Campus - Big Rapids

Service: Select Service

Course: Start typing to search all courses

Meeting Type: Select Meeting Type

Date of visit: 11/03/2023

Meeting Start Time: 3:10pm to Meeting End Time

All times listed are in Eastern Time (US & Canada).

Attendees

Jason Bentley
231-691-3428
Administration, Adviser, Location
Administrative Student, Super User

Attachments

Attach File: No file selected.

Summary Details For

Topics Discussed: _____ Goals for Next Session: _____

Referrals: _____ Other Recommendations: _____

Student arrived on time. Yes No N/A

Student was prepared for our session. Yes No N/A

Student has clear next steps. Yes No N/A

Student submitted needed paperwork. Yes No N/A

Student feels engaged and connected to campus. Yes No N/A

Student is having academic difficulty. Yes No N/A

Appointment Summary

Meeting Type: B I [Rich Text Editor]

Attachments: An appointment will be created after you submit this report. If a Meeting End Time is not entered, this will default to the time you Save this Report.

Checkin: _____ to _____

Suggested Followup: This will be based on the report as a suggestion. No appointment will be created.

Date: _____ Time: _____

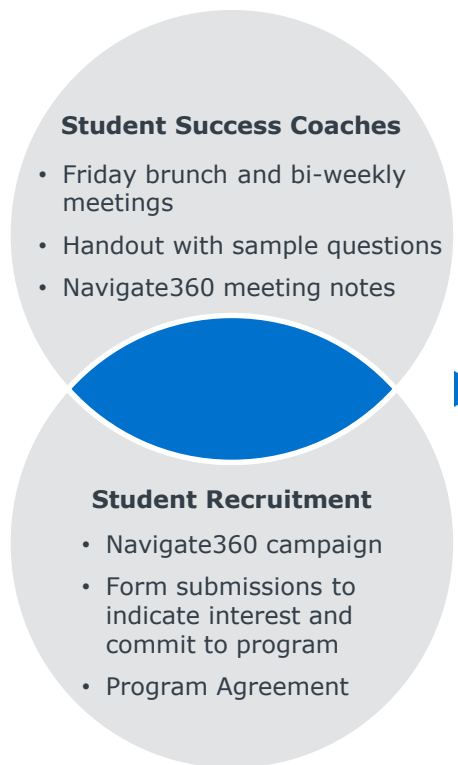
Cancel Save this Report

1) Screenshots have been blinded to protect student information.

Improvements Identified for Fall 2023 Cohort



Focus Placed on Providing Tools for Both Student Success Coaches and Students



Student Success Coaches

- Friday brunch and bi-weekly meetings
- Handout with sample questions
- Navigate360 meeting notes

Student Recruitment

- Navigate360 campaign
- Form submissions to indicate interest and commit to program
- Program Agreement

Meet-and-Greet to Connect with Each Other

- Interaction between students and Student Success Coaches
- Student panel of past program participants
- Free food as an incentive

Workshops Focusing on Student Success Topics

- Learning preferences
- Study strategies
- Mindset
- Time management
- Career focus

Session more spread out across the calendar and interactive with actionable takeaways for students

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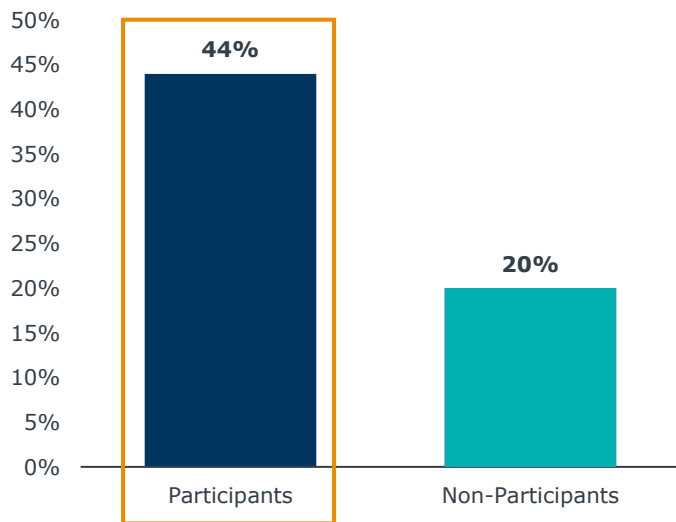
Program Outcomes



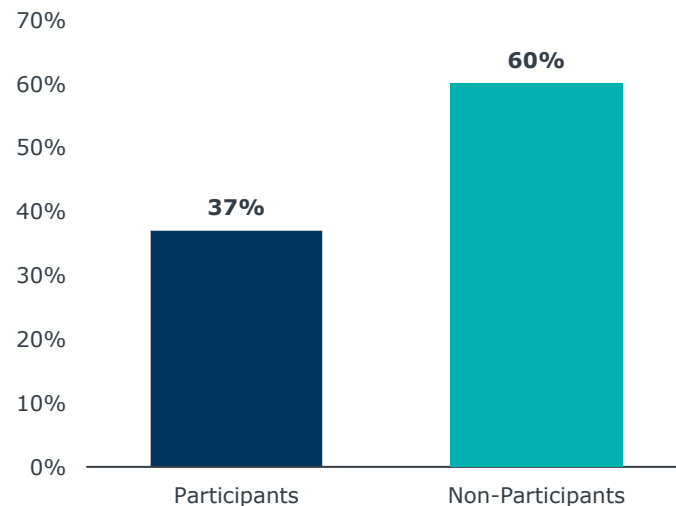
Fewer Midterm Warning Grades for Program Participants



No Mid-Term Grade Warnings



Two or More Mid-Term Grade Warnings

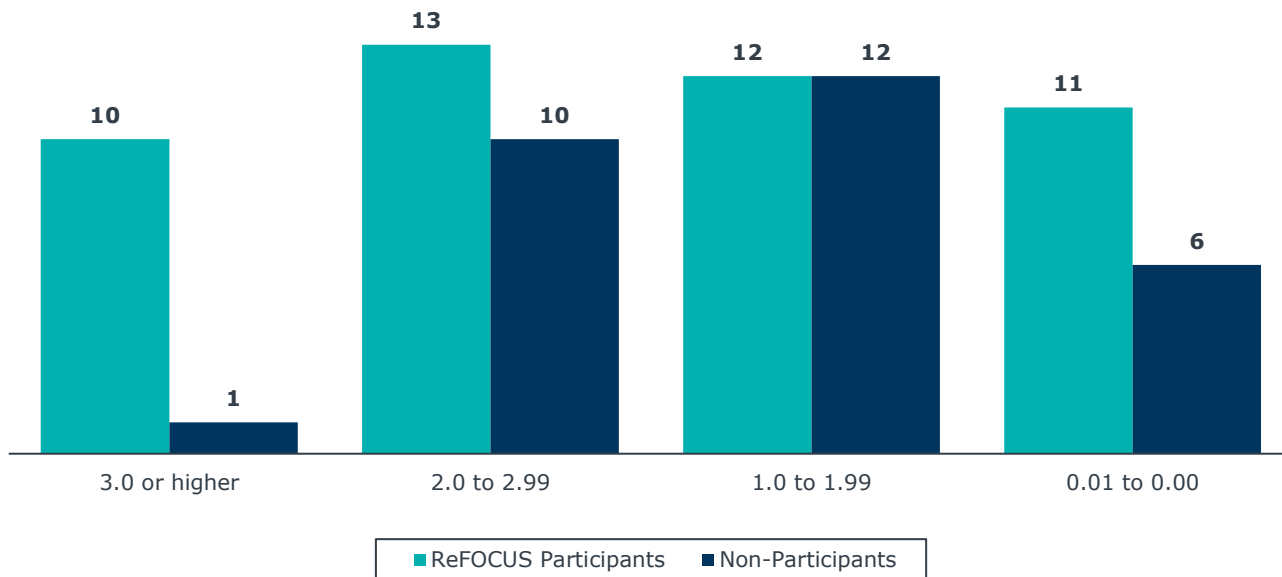


1) Midterm warning grade = C- or lower

Greater Improvement in Semester GPAs than Nonparticipants

Semester GPAs for Participants and Nonparticipants

n (ReFOCUS participants) = 56; n (nonparticipants) = 35



41%

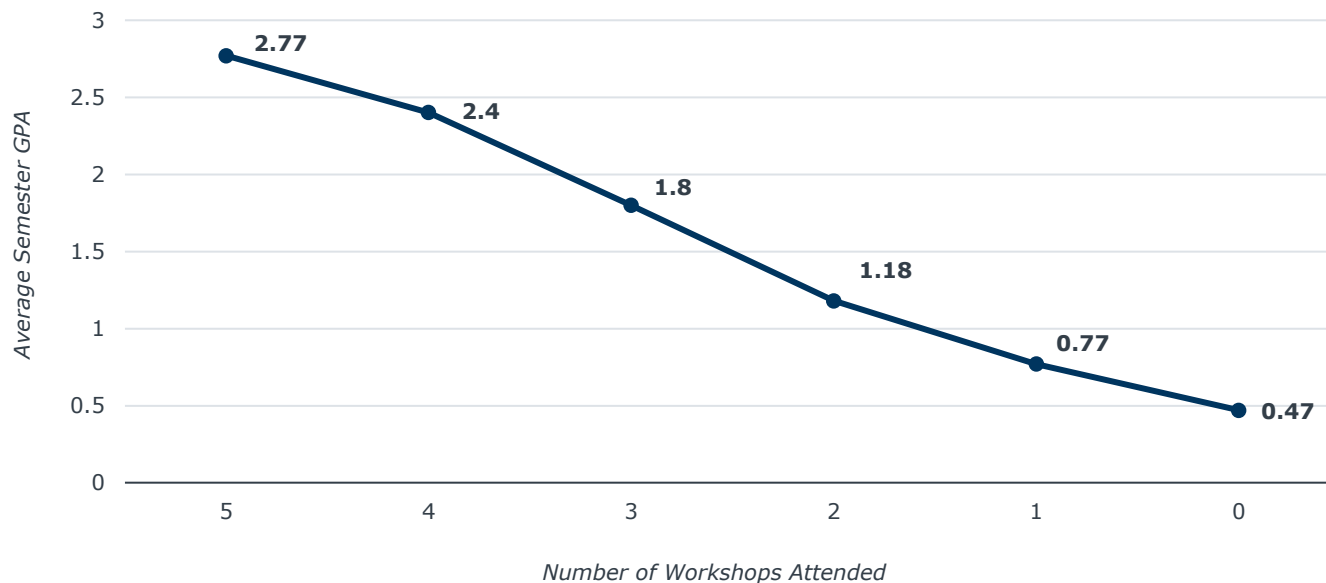
Of ReFOCUS participants had at least a 2.0 semester GPA, compared to 31% of nonparticipants

Correlation Between Workshop Attendance and Semester GPA



Participant Workshop Engagement

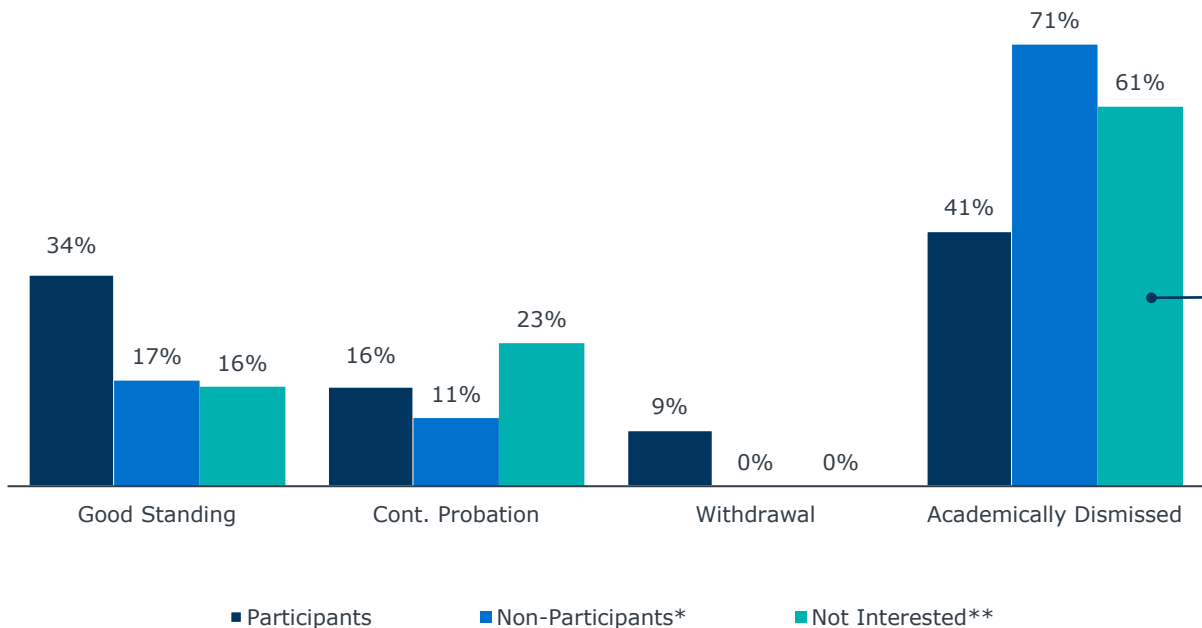
Average Semester GPA Outcomes



Reduction in Students Academically Dismissed



Academic Standing at End of Spring 2023 Pilot



Participants were academically dismissed at the end of the term at a rate **30 percentage** points lower than nonparticipants*

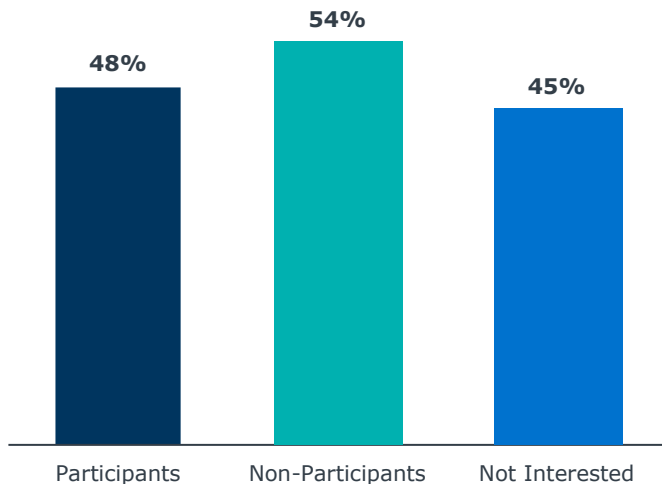
* Students who indicated an interest in the ReFOCUS program but did not participate.

** Students who opted out or did not respond to invitation to participate.

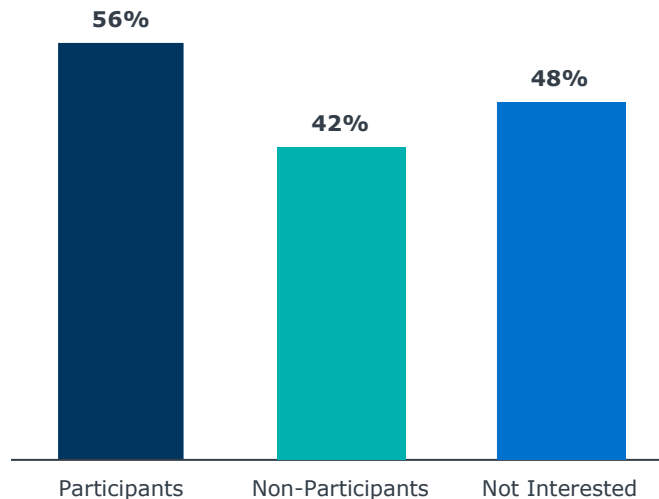
Fall 2023 Midterm Grades Indicate Need for Greater Support



Retention to Next Fall



Retained to Next Fall with Midterm Grade Warnings in the Fall



1) Nonparticipants: Students who indicated an interest in the ReFOCUS program but didn't participate.

2) Not Interested: Freshman students who opted out or didn't respond to invitations to participate.

“

Having a mentor to meet with each week was extremely helpful. My mentor helped me stay on top of my work and held me accountable for achieving the goals I established for myself and my future.

- *ReFOCUS at Ferris Participant*



Create Additional Resources for Students on Academic Probation

Review academic performance for consecutive semesters, leverage participation in EAB's Analytics in Action Cohort to further investigate and enhance ReFOCUS, and design and implement additional supports based on conversations with faculty, staff, and students.



Restructure Ferris Equity Initiative (FEI) Teams

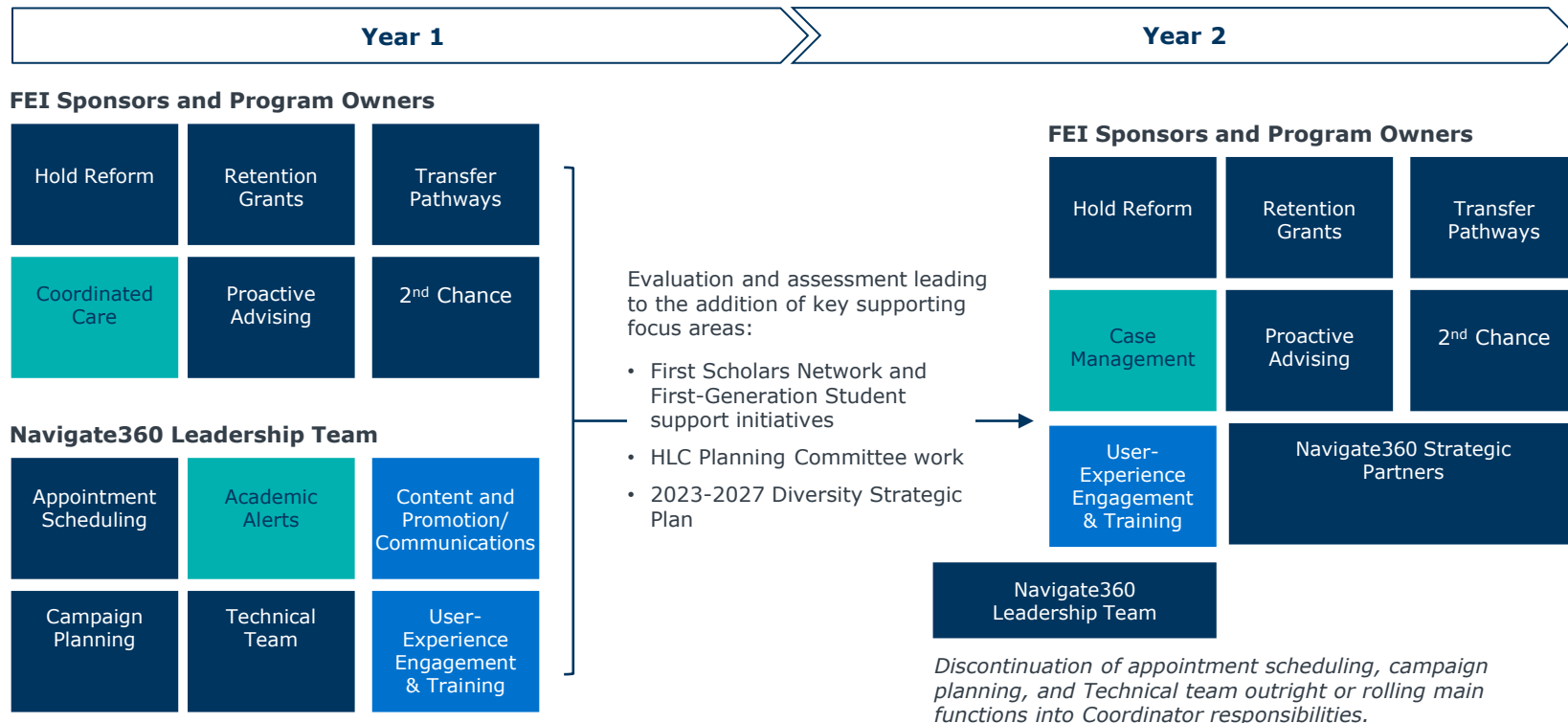
Collapse and integrate Navigate360 Team and FEI Teams for more coordinated and intentional work. Articulate alignments with new DEIB plan and NASPA FirstScholar.



Conduct Process-Mapping Exercises

Understand all aspects of the advising process and identify opportunities to further integrate Navigate360.

Evolving the FEI and Navigate360 Working Teams



New University DEIB Plan Developed

Emphasis on Belonging

At Ferris, **BELONGING** means feeling valued, respected, supported, and empowered in your professional, educational, and personal endeavors.

HELPING OTHERS RISE

A Diversity, Equity, Inclusion,
and Belonging Plan for Ferris
State University

2023-2027 DIVERSITY PLAN



FERRIS STATE UNIVERSITY

CONNECTED24

Q&A



Have a Question? Raise Your Hand!



Jason Bentley, EdD

Dean, University College

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Director of Student Academic Affairs

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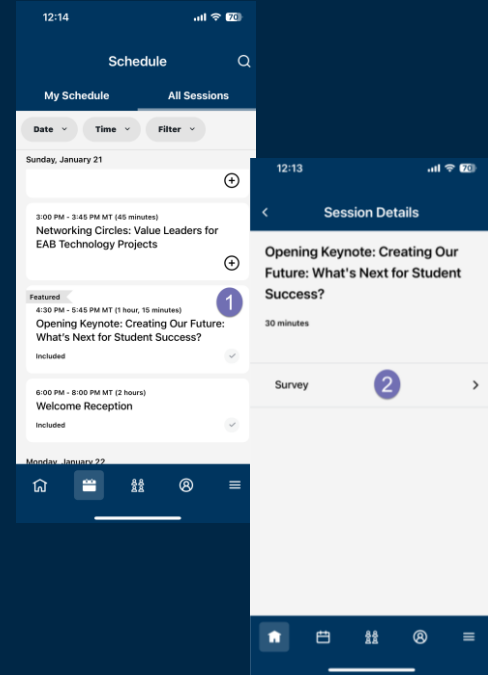
Complete Session Evaluations

Your feedback is important to us, please take a few moments to **tell us about your CONNECTED experience.**

Evaluations are available in the event app by clicking on a session and then clicking **Survey**.

Need help with the app?

Stop by the **information desk!**

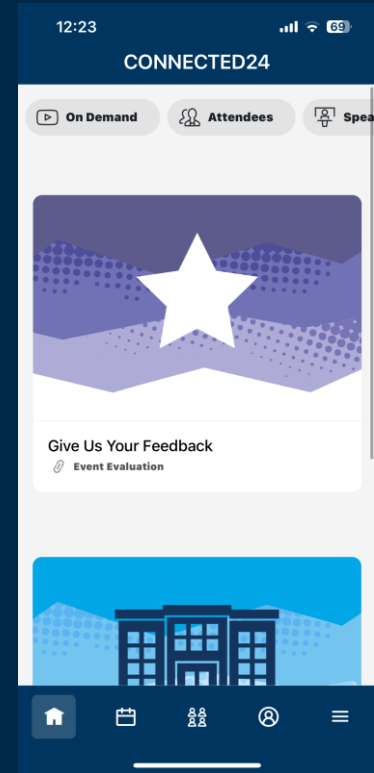


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From the front page of the app, click the Give Us Your Feedback box.

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