

The Role of Technology in Compassionate Leadership and Belongingness

Strategy Conversation

Our Presenters



Dr. Wes Lewis

Missouri University of
Science and Technology



Marina Zarate, MPA

California State
University, Fullerton



Dr. Jessica King

Strategic Consultant,
Partner Experience | EAB

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Discussion and Takeaways

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Belonging and Compassionate Leadership in Student Success

1



What is belonging?

“

Students' perceived social support on campus, a feeling or sensation of connectedness, the experience of mattering or feeling cared about, accepted, respected, valued by, and important to the group (e.g., campus community) or others on campus (e.g., faculty, peers).

”

Key Considerations About Belongingness

Belonging Is Both Personal and Measurable



Belonging is an essential human need centered on desire to form and maintain interpersonal connections.

People have varying requirements for fulfillment of their individual needs for acceptance and social connection.

Unmet need for belonging – or fewer social connections than desired – reduces an individual’s social well-being.

Relative to other generational groups, Gen Z has reported lower overall instances of social connection.

Due to the subjective experience of belonging, the best way to measure belongingness is to directly ask.

Belongingness Drives Student Success

Multiple Studies Show Impact of Belonging on Persistence Indicators

Students who feel a sense of belonging:

+

Are more likely to **use campus resources** such as advising and financial aid

+

Are more likely to feel they have made meaningful **learning gains** in class

+

Are more likely to **understand the relevance** of their coursework

+

Feel like they can **overcome setbacks** and have a sense of self-efficacy

+

Have lower stress and better **mental health**

+

Are more likely to **remain in college and graduate**

What is compassionate leadership?

“

The practice of using your head and heart to inspire and influence people so they can, in turn, inspire and influence others. Compassionate Leaders use their influence to positively impact themselves, others, and the planet.

”

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A RESET Moment for Belongingness

Marina Zarate, MPA | California State University, Fullerton



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California State University, Fullerton

Background



CSUF is a large, public university within the CSU system

- Only CSU
- in Orange County, serving the greater Southern California area
- Offering bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees



Over 40,000 students

- Hispanic-serving
- First-generation
- Pell-eligible
- Commuter campus

Initiating Change

CSUF

University Goals



- Increase four-year and six-year graduation rates
- Increase interventions to support retention efforts, including focus on equity and opportunity gaps

Sense of Belonging



Directly tied to long-term student retention

- Increased advising touchpoints
- Language used to communicate with students
- Number of holds issued

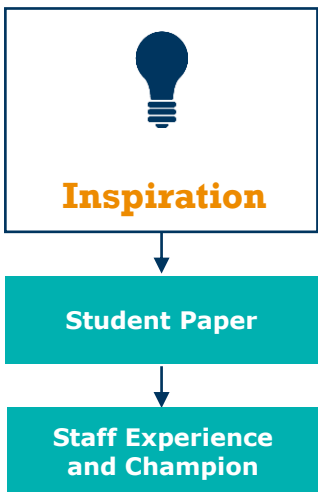
Power of Language



- **Academic probation** was historically used to classify students with a GPA below a 2.0; explored a change
- Initiated cross-collaboration between supportive faculty, student engagement, directors, an advising advocate, and Advising Leadership

Reimagining Educational Success for Every Titan (RESET)

'Academic Notice' Language Launched in Spring 2022



New Language, New Program

- Destigmatize the experience of students navigating academic hardship
- Increase collaborative relationship with the advising community



"I appreciated how comforting and reassuring the overall course made me feel. It felt as if the school did not look at me as a failure but instead gave me hope and a spark of initiative to do better."

Academic Notice Student, Spring 2022

RESET Components

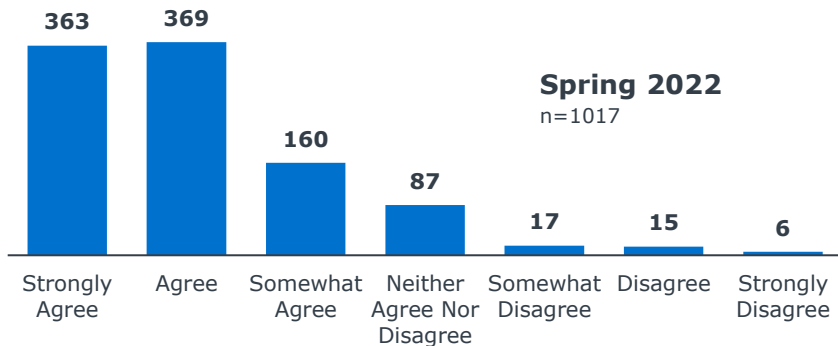
- 90-minute nongraded, guided experience
- Accessible throughout the semester; self-paced
- Announcements, reminders, and updates
- Registration prep, checking in with advisors
- Seeking tutoring, mental health checks, goal setting
- Weekly recommended due dates in first six weeks



Data and Insights

The RESET course acknowledges me as a whole person.
I feel supported with both my personal and academic needs.

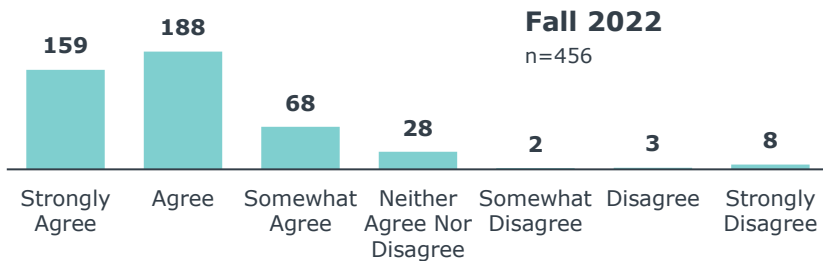
92%
of students agree



85%

of students placed on academic notice successfully completed RESET (Spring 2022 to Spring 2023)

91%
of students agree





Next Steps from Here



1

Intrusive Advising

Sixty-one percent of students have expressed interest in more direct, guided interactions with advisors

2

Technology

Further leveraging technology tools to free up advising time

3

Compassion

Improving our advising practices in compassion, use the EAB tool to help us be strategic in our communication methods

4

Format

Continue to revise the format on RESET to match the needs of students

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Belonging as a Cornerstone of Student Success

Dr. Wes Lewis | Missouri University of Science and Technology

3



Missouri University of Science and Technology

Background



4-Year Research Intensive
R2 in a rural setting



6,303 undergraduate
students



academically intensive
programs, especially for
math, physics, and chemistry
foundational courses

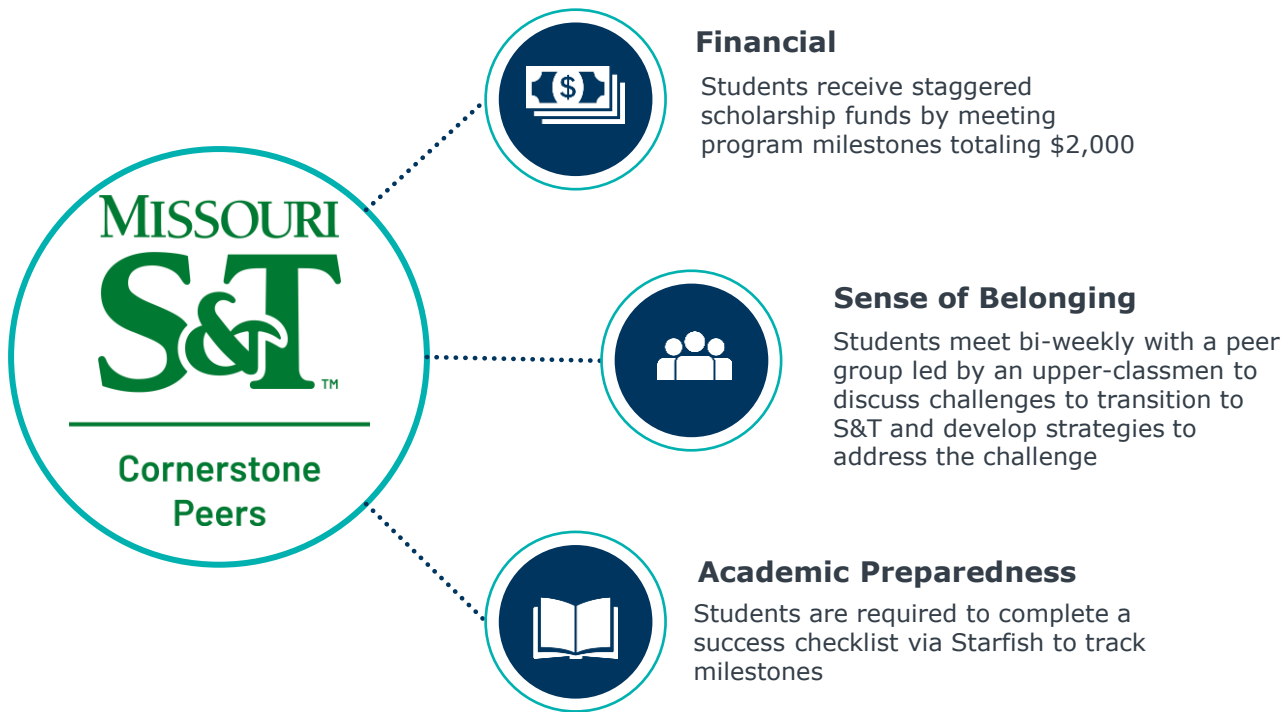
Challenge

Strategic Priority is increasing first-
year retention rate above 90%;
current rate is 86%



Addressing First-Year Retention

Identified Barriers to Student Success





Data and Insights

Fall 2023 Cohort: 113 Students

Cohort Demographic Data

▶ **88.7%**

Male

▶ **68.7%**

Underrepresented Minority

▶ **59.1%**

Pell Recipient

▶ **23.5%**

First-Generation

Key Performance Indicators



Cohort Retention Rate from Fall/Spring Term and to Second Year



Students' participation in events



Completion of checklist milestones

Fall 2023 Data



92.2%

Cohort Retention Rate to Spring



85.3%

Cohort Milestone Completion Rate



3.02 GPA

Mid-Term GPA

Summary and Looking Forward

Fall 2023 Lessons

- Ensure peer mentors are outgoing and engaging (not passive).
- Hold more than one required 1-1 meeting between peer mentor and student.
- Anticipating problems, such as student health hold for spring registration
- Need for group bonding experience



Fall 2024 Additions

- Expand to 200 participants including conditionally admitted students.
- Add pre-orientation programming focused on sense of belonging and academic preparedness.
- Getting a dedicated space for students to meet with peer-mentors




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Discussing Strategy

4



Panelist Reflections

1. How did each of you **operationalize student belonging**? How did you specifically identify lack of belonging as a barrier in this work?
 2. In what ways did you run into or **overcome barriers** in mobilizing your plans or building strategy, particularly with compassionate leadership in mind?
 3. Which challenging components of student success efforts might be better supported by integrating belonging and compassionate leadership in your work?
- 

Small Group Discussion Starters

- How do you think student belonging impacts student success at your institution?
- Do you have specific measures in place to track students' sense of belonging at your institution?
 - If so, what dimensions are considered? How are they utilized?
- What are ways you can integrate tech into your work related to students' sense of belonging?
- Which challenging components of student success efforts might be better supported by integrating belonging and compassionate leadership in your work?

Takeaways and Final Insights



- 1** Identifying and systematically limiting **known barriers** to student success may require **structural changes**, including the launch or reimagining of initiatives
- 2** Belongingness is cultivated and compassionate leadership is demonstrated through campus-wide, collaborative, and **coordinated care efforts**; everyone can play a role
- 3** Infusing positive, **growth mindset messaging and touchpoints** can help deepen – or at least not compromise – feelings of belongingness

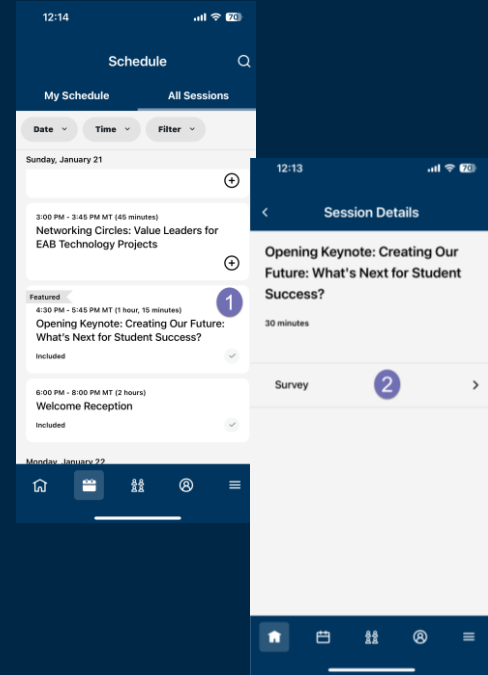
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Evaluations are available in the event app by clicking on a session and then clicking **Survey**.

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Join us tonight for a
CONNECTED Celebration!



Join us at **5:00 p.m. in the Aurora Ballroom B-D** to celebrate with your colleagues and peers.

Bites, drinks, and fun provided



Next Up: Choose Your Own Adventure Time

Followed by our CONNECTED24

Celebration in the Aurora Ballroom B-D at 5:00 p.m.

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Appendix





Embed screencast here?

<https://www.screencast.com/t/M8vecTUZoe>



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