Designing a “Toolbox” For Developmental Advising Leveraging Technology
Research Partners
Montgomery County Community College

- Main campus located 20 miles NE of Philadelphia in suburban Blue Bell, PA
  - Virtual Campus, West Campus, Other Locations
- Offer more than 100 2-year degree and certificate programs
- ~16,000 students
- ~70% part-time
- ~50% transfer rate (six-year rate)
- ATD Leader College & Leah Meyer Austin Award
Research Context

• 26 institutions funded in 2015 by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to implement advising technologies
  – Degree planning modules
  – Coaching; case management tools
  – Early alert systems
  – Predictive analytics

• CCRC and MDRC are conducting a randomized controlled trial study to assess impact of mandatory holistic, integrated and sustained student support strategies that leverage advising technologies on student outcomes

• Part of study is developing and disseminating intervention tools in collaboration with college partners
Session Objectives

• Introduce an advising “toolbox” to facilitate learning-centered interactions

• Share one college’s experience designing and applying an advising “toolbox” to support learning-centered advising sessions

• Consider “toolbox” application to other institutions via discussion and questions
Agenda

• Motivation and Background
• Elements of an Advising “Toolbox”
• Overview of MontCo’s “Toolbox” Design
• Creating a “Toolbox”: Interactive Session
• Implementation Successes and Challenges at MontCo
• Q&A
Background
Technology-Mediated Advising

Degree Planning + Coaching & Advising + Early Alerts & Risk Targeting

- Course
- Degree
- Education
- Career
- Finance
- Financial Aid Issue
- Submit Schedule
- Attend Office Hours
- Multiple Absences
- Visit Tutor
Holistic student support is structured and delivered according to a SSIPP model

**Sustained**
Support is ongoing, rather than using an “inoculation” approach.

**Strategic**
Services are differentiated to maximize capacity.

**Integrated**
Services are not viewed as stand-alone interventions.

**Proactive**
Services are an integral part of all students’ experiences.

**Personalized**
Students receive the support they need when they need it, from an individual who knows them well.
Technology can enable holistic student support
Key Elements of an Advising “Toolbox”
Advising as Teaching
Egan’s Skilled Helper Model

Helps the student address 3 main questions:

**Stage 1**
What is going on?

**Stage 2**
What do I want instead?

**Stage 3**
How will I get there?
Egan’s Skilled Helper Model

Helps the student address 3 main questions:

**Stage 1**
What is going on?

**Stage 2**
What do I want instead?

**Stage 3**
How will I get there?
Egan’s Skilled Helper Model

Helps the student address 3 main questions:

**Stage 1**
What is going on?

**Stage 2**
What do I want instead?

**Stage 3**
How will I get there?
Components of an Advising “Toolbox”

- Learning Outcomes
- Suggested Topics
- Guiding Questions
- To-Do Items
“Toolbox” Application at MontCo
MontCo’s “Toolbox”

**STAGE 2: Plans and Goals (What do I hope to achieve?)**

*Objective:*

- **Cognitive Development:** The student will reflect on any discrepancies between his/her current academic status and where he/she ideally would like to be in order to achieve his/her future academic and career goals.

*Discuss Strategies to Meet Academic and Career Goals*

- Help the student explore possible solutions to the current situation (i.e., low GPA) to achieve his/her academic and career goals.
- Direct the student toward activities and habits that will nurture and support his/her academic and career goals.
  - For high achieving students, consider emphasizing activities such as internships, research opportunities, study abroad, student government.
  - For students who did well in the spring, but still have a GPA below 3.0, discuss strategies for continuing to improve overall GPA.

*Helpful Questions*

- “You mentioned you wanted to accomplish ____ this semester. How will you do this? What are your options (e.g., use time wisely, incorporate studying in schedule, visit tutoring more frequently, etc.)?”
- “Last time we met you talked about hoping to use your degree to pursue a career in ____. How will doing ____ help you achieve your career goals?”

---

1. **Career indecision**
2. **College readiness**
3. **A lack of understanding or appreciation of educational value**
4. **Health** issues
5. **Interference** with non-academic issues
6. **Mismatch** between skills, interests, and abilities
7. **Low self-efficacy**
8. **Lack of a sense of belonging**
9. **Trouble with transition management**
My Career Plan at MontCo

Assessments

Summary

Assessment Interests
Your primary interests are Social and Conventional.

Assessment Values
Your primary Values are Achievement and Relationships.

Assessment Personality
Your Personality traits are listed below.

Assessment Workplace Preferences
Your primary Workplace Preferences are Performance and Recognition.
MontCo’s “Toolbox” - Learning Outcomes

• Stage 1 (What is going on?):
  – Cognitive Development: The student will identify and acknowledge his/her views, experiences, and feelings.
  – Cognitive Development: The student will learn to think critically about his/her current experiences and the implications for his/her academic progress.

• Stage 2 (What do I want instead?):
  – Cognitive Development: The student will reflect on any discrepancies between his/her current academic status and where he/she ideally would like to be in order to achieve his/her future academic and career goals.

• Stage 3 (How will I get there?):
  – Cognitive Development: The student will learn how to translate long-term academic, career, and life goals into concrete action steps they can work on now.
Interactive Session
Group Activity - Learning Outcomes

• **Think (10 minutes):**
  – Work in small groups to draft one learning outcome that may be included in your institution’s toolbox.
    • Think about what technologies (current or future) at your institutions can support advisors in achieving these learning outcomes.

• **Share (5 minutes):**
  – Allow each group to choose who will present their thoughts, ideas, and questions they had to the rest of the audience.
MontCo’s Implementation Successes and Challenges
Implementation Successes

- Establishing standardized advising processes
- Providing trainings to advisors to implement holistic advising practices
Implementation Challenges

- Managing the culture shift
- Lack of continuous monitoring of “toolbox” use
Questions?
For more information

Please visit CCRC on the web at
http://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu
where you can download presentations, reports, and briefs, and sign-up for news announcements. We’re also on Facebook and Twitter.

Community College Research Center
Teachers College, Columbia University
525 West 120th Street, Box 174, New York, NY 10027
E-mail: ccrc@columbia.edu Telephone: 212.678.3091

Please visit MDRC on the web at
www.mdrc.org
where you can download presentations, reports, and briefs, and sign-up for news announcements. We’re also on Facebook and Twitter.

New York Office:
16 East 34 Street New York, NY 10016 Phone: (212) 532-3200

Oakland Office:
475 14th Street Suite 750 Oakland, CA 94612 Phone: (510) 663-MDRC