

Wayne State University
Proceedings of the Student Affairs Committee

March 24, 2021

Present: Pynthia Caffee, Meghan Courtney, Jane Fitzgibbon, Siobhan Gregory, Michael Horn, Barbara Jones, Afifi Kadadu, Thomas Karr, Christine Knapp, Rachel Pawlowski, Shauna Reeves, Michele Ronnick, Brad Roth, Krysta Ryzewski, Naida Simon, Neelima Thati, Jennifer Wareham, mark wenzel

Absent with Notice: Paul Johnson, David Merolla, David Strauss

Absent: Amanda Levitt, Sean Peters

Guests: Kenya Swanson, Mark Jackson and Henry Robinson

The meeting was called to order at 1:32 pm via Zoom.

A motion to approve the agenda was adopted. A motion to approve the minutes as written was adopted.

The topics for today: A look at Warrior VIP, APEX Scholars and Federal TRIO Programs

Our first guest today was Kenya Swanson, Coordinator for the Warrior Vision and Impact (VIP) Program. Warrior VIP is a voluntary, comprehensive student support program and learning community geared to first generation, Pell eligible and students of color and other underrepresented minorities. Students in Warrior VIP are students who are regularly admitted to WSU and not conditional admitted students. It is not associated with a course but with a focus on belonging and creating community, particularly with incoming students to help them find their space on campus. VIP focuses on peer mentors so that they can effectively support incoming freshmen. It partners with departments and other learning communities across the university. Warrior VIP ensures students' successful transition into college, fosters their positive engagement in the university setting and prepares students to challenge themselves as leaders beyond graduation.

The Warrior VIP Coalition is comprised of student services representatives and program coordinators who meet regularly to make efficient use of university capacities, share resources and best practices plus address student concerns. Their results show that students who participate in learning communities affiliated with the VIP Coalition benefit from the shared resources and the improved communications which have resulted from the coordinated support of learning community partners. An incoming freshman is paired with a second- or third-year WSU student peer mentor who helps the freshman discover resources that the freshman might struggle to find. Warrior VIP begins while the student is still in high school. There are pre-college workshops, mentoring relationships and carefully planned academic experiences. They have a program called Momentum where prior to the start of the fall semester Warrior VIP students have a college experience. Classes are run by university faculty for one week to give students a taste of what being in college entails. During Spring Break in 2019 Warrior VIP students went to Toronto Canada for one week as an example of a study abroad experience. Warrior VIP additional partners includes the Office of (Undergraduate) Admissions, the Office of Student Financial Aid, the Office of Multicultural Student Engagement, Counseling and Psychological Services and First Year Seminar (FYS) course where there are sections specific to Warrior VIP students. These FYS sections include peer mentors and

participating in classes with the same students with whom you will socialize so that you can form connections. FYS meets the general education Wayne Experience (WE) requirement.

Results show that Warrior VIP students are retained at a higher rate (90%) than a similar cohort of non-Warrior VIP students (80%). This year it was difficult to gain the sense of community in the virtual world. The program began with 24 students the first semester and there are now more than 600 Warrior VIP students at WSU. To date all Warrior VIP students have been FTIACs. But it is recognized that there is a need for a similar program for transfer students.

Warrior VIP is housed in the Academic Success Center in the David Adamany Undergraduate Library. Also housed in that suite is University Advising Center and Student Disability Services.

Contact Information: Kenya Swanson, email: ae4082@wayne.edu, phone: 313-577-3224.

Our next speaker was Dr. Mark Jackson, Director of the APEX Scholars Program. APEX is the acronym for A Pathway to Academic Excellence. APEX Scholars is a bridge program or alternative admission program that provided an academic bridge designed to help incoming first-year students' transition and progress successfully through their first three full semesters at Wayne State University. Through consistent participation in academic support and career development activities, APEX seeks to produce self-directed, independent learners prepared for successful continuation toward their educational goals.

The APEX Scholars program expects students to attend frequent scheduled meeting with their APEX advisor, be active participants with specialized academic support personnel, active participation with personalized career exploration and development activities and to take ownership of their education and career development. The program has four benefits: An early start through a summer bridge program, APEX Scholarship opportunities, personalized academic support through advising and tutoring and eligible for priority registration for the following semester.

The Summer Bridge program is a free eight-week residential program (but for 2020 was virtual and will be virtual for 2021) where three required synchronous courses were offered (ENG 1010, APX 0510 and one additional course (COM 1010, Bio Prep, Business). There are study sessions with study group leaders and tutors, biweekly individual and group advising sessions, weekly workshops in career exploration and with departmental advisors, a passing grade requirement of at least a "C" in the three above courses to be fully admitted to APEX Scholars in the fall semester. Usually there are 130 students in summer bridge but last summer there were 175 as it was virtual rather than residential.

In the first full fall semester APEX Scholars take a blocked course schedule with 12 – 15 credits. There continues to be group study sessions with study group leaders and tutors, bi-weekly individual and group advising sessions, an eight-hour per week on-campus study requirement, meetings with departmental major advisors and career exploration. Students are required to earn at least a "C" in all courses. There is assistance with course registration and assistance with financial aid and scholarship applications.

Mark shared some comparison data with us comparing APEX students with a comparison group with similar characteristics. For winter 2020 credit completion APEX students completed 85% of their credits compared to 76% for the comparison group. The fall 2020 GPA comparison was 2.67 for APEX students and 2.1 for the comparison group. Fall to winter retention was APEX 85% versus 83% for the comparison group.

Contact Information: Mark Jackson, email: Mark.jackson4@wayne.edu or apexscholars@wayne.edu phone: 313-577-4695.

Our third speaker was Dr. Henry Robinson, Director of Federal TRIO Programs Uniting for College Access and Success. The main impetus for the creation was the 1954 Supreme Court decision of *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka Kansas*. There was bipartisan support for the 1964 Economic Opportunity Act which created the Upward Bound Program and the 1965 Higher Education Act which created Talent Search to find “exceptionally talented, exceptionally needy students”. This was followed by the 1968 Reauthorization of the Higher Education Act. This moved Upward Bound from the Office of Economic Opportunity, established a new program for undergraduate students originally called Special Services for Disadvantaged Students and now called Student Support Services. These three programs were group together in a separate chapter of Title IV of the Higher Education Act entitled Special Programs for Students from Disadvantaged Backgrounds. They were renamed TRIO as there were three programs.

More programs were added to the TRIO umbrella: creation of Educational Opportunity Centers and Veterans Upward Bound. All Federal TRIO programs now have a uniformity in eligibility criteria: 150% of poverty level and/or first-generation to college. In 1986 the McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement Program was created under the TRIO umbrella. In 1992 a third Upward Bound program was created Upward Bound Math-Science Program.

Talent Search (TS) focuses on low-cost, early intervention for students in grades 6 – 12. Students receive academic, career and financial counseling, participate in college visits and receive assistance with college entrance exams, admission applications and help with completing financial aid forms. According to the U.S. Department of Education between 2011–12 and 2013–14, about 80 % of college ready TS seniors enrolled in institutions of higher learning.

Upward Bound (UB) also provides students with academic support in several subjects during the school year and during a six-week campus-based residential component in the summer. Upward Bound also provides mentoring and support as students tackle entrance exams, admission and financial aid applications, scholarship forms, etc. Using this same model, Upward Bound Math-Science provides specific instruction in and encourages students to pursue postsecondary degrees and careers in disciplines like science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

There is also Pre-College Adult Program found in Educational Opportunity Centers (EOCs). EOCs target adult learners and prepares them to go back into the workforce by arming them with the educational supports necessary to succeed. EOCs along with Veteran Upward Bound is one of the few national initiatives that assist adults in identifying, enrolling in and paying for college. There are two groups: the Dream Team ages 22 – 40 and the Winners Club ages 41 plus.

Veterans Upward Bound (VUB) provides intensive basic skills development and short-term remedial courses for military veterans to help them successfully transition to postsecondary education. Veterans learn how to secure support from available resources such as the Veterans Administration, veteran associations and various state and local agencies that serve veterans. VUB students outperform similar low-income/first generation veterans. Data supplied showed that 27% of VUB students earned a bachelor’s degree within 6 years versus 19% of low income/first generation veteran students.

Student Support Services (SSS) is the largest and most expansive program promoting college persistence for low-income students, as it provides academic tutoring, personal counseling and other supports necessary for such students to persist and ultimately graduate from college. It includes specialized programs to support students with disabilities, veterans, students for whom English is not the primary language and students pursuing teacher preparation and STEM degrees.

In 2019 the Department of Education released a study comparing students who first joined SSS as college freshmen in 2003 – 04 with a sample of matched non-participants with similar demographics and high school achievement levels. The study showed that the supported students achieved at degree completion at a higher rate. In two-year institutions non-participants achieved at 31.4% and participants at a 45.6% rate. At four-year institutions non-participants achieved at a 43.4% rate whereas participants at a 51% rate.

McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement Program not only helps low-income, first-generation and minority students graduate from college, but also enables them to successfully pursue postgraduate study and career in academia. It is named after Dr. Ronald E. McNair, an astronaut that died in the Challenger Space Shuttle disaster. Data shared showed that 72% of McNair Scholars who obtained bachelor's degrees in 2010–11 enrolled in postgraduate education within three years. In 2013–14 McNair reported a graduate persistence rate of 84.3% among those who enrolled in 2012–13. Thirty percent of WSU McNair Scholars have earned a Ph.D.

Contact Information: Henry Robinson email: hrobinson@wayne.edu Phone: 313-577-5050 and 313-993-7510.

Next Meeting: April 14, 2021. Our speakers will be Dawn Medley and Ericka Matthews-Jackson (Admission without Standardized Tests) and Monica Brockmeyer (Student Success Efforts)