

Educational Opportunity Program at a Higher Education Institution

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ABSTRACT

This poster demonstrates the experience of a candidate for MEd in Student Affairs and College Counseling at her field experience. The student was placed in the Education Opportunity Fund program at a public institution in New Jersey as an intern. The poster includes information regarding the graduate student's experience through the field placement as well as the impact EOF program has on undergraduate students' experiences at a four-year, public higher education institution.

LITERATURE REVIEW

First-generation students and students from low-SES backgrounds face many challenges at institutions of higher learning. Research regarding educational opportunity programs in the United States has demonstrated greater access and graduation rates for first-generation students and those from low SES backgrounds (Pitre & Pitre, 2009). Specifically, EOF programs play a significant role in student retention and success (Watson & Chen, 2019).

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The EOF program provides students with Academic Advising, social and emotional support, and some financial assistance. First-year students, who are admitted through the admissions department for the Fall semester, attend Summer Academy. The five-week bridge program "introduces students to the academic and social demands of college life and prepares them for transition into the fall semester" (*Summer Academy*, n.d.). Transfer students are admitted to the program in both Fall and Spring semesters. All EOF students receive support with Academic Advising, social and emotional development needs, as well as financial assistance. The EOF students must complete certain requirements in order to maintain their EOF status.

SUPPORTING TRANSFER STUDENTS

The intern has been meeting with newly accepted transfer students during the 2022-2023 academic year. She has met with around 20 students, at least twice each semester, providing them with information about their EOF requirements as well as resources available such as EOF events and the student lounge in the office.. She had assisted the students with academic advising, the financial aid process, housing issues and food insecurity as well as leadership opportunities on campus. Through utilizing a holistic approach and person-centered theory, the intern has gotten to know the students well and provided them with the support they need to succeed.

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CONCLUSION

Through this internship experience, the candidate was able to utilize her counseling skills and put various counseling and student development theories into practice. In addition, the intern was able to gain insight into the EOF program at a public institution. As a result of this experience, she was able to gain an understanding of how EOF supports students of historically marginalized populations.

References

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