



SUNY Brockport: Tips and Tricks to Successfully Integrate Starfish Solutions Into Campus Culture



The College at
BROCKPORT
STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

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- Thomas Chew, Director of Academic Success Center

The College of Brockport, State University of New York, Monroe County, New York

The College at Brockport, State University of New York (SUNY Brockport) is a nationally recognized four-year comprehensive public college focused on student success, academic quality, and exceptional value. With more than 8,000 students, Brockport describes itself as one of the most engaged campuses in the country, due in large part to their focus on student success.

Creating a Common Language

Brockport set out to use Starfish solutions in 2017 with the goal of establishing a culture in which students instinctively reach out for assistance and get it quickly and easily in order to achieve the university's student success goals. "Implementing Starfish was the beginning of our journey to institutional culture change," said Thomas Chew, Director of Academic Success Center at SUNY Brockport.

Characteristics of a campus focused on student success:

- **Asking for help:** Chew believes that a new, common language has been built to redefine student success and build a culture of asking for help. "At the collegiate level, the best students ask for help. The same is true in the workplace, so we need to engrain that concept in all of our students."
- **Reaching out beyond the campus:** Through the SUNY Starfish Community of Practice initiative - allowing SUNY faculty to share best practices on using Starfish - and the Hobson Summer Institute, Brockport has gained insights on expectations from their local and state-wide counterparts, increasing their own understanding of

Over **9%** increase in Faculty Engagement in just one year

83.8% survey response rate in just the first semester of use

Nearly **4:1** ratio of kudos to flags

Nearly **6,000** flags in the first semester of use

Over **19,000** kudos raised in that same first semester



what Starfish can do and how they can optimize the user experience.

- **Valuing patience:** The SUNY Access Mission and Completion Plan asked Brockport to increase enrollment to 8,600 by 2020. They also set a goal to raise the first-to-second-year retention rate by 8% by 2020. While one year of utilizing Starfish has impacted these goals, established Starfish institutions like Monroe Community College have shared that these initiatives take at least two or three years to become a fully integrated part of the campus culture. Meanwhile, Brockport has already had great success with their Progress Survey completion rate. "Our first survey gave us the highest completion rate in all of SUNY and was 40 percentage points over the Starfish average," said Chew.
- **Asking for feedback:** Qualitative feedback is an essential aspect of gaining campus buy-in, as well as maintaining energy and enthusiasm for the system. The campus functional leads and implementation team utilize the system differently than the daily user. "Hearing how faculty, staff and students need it to function is more important than how we think they should want it to work," explained Chew. "There is no better advertisement for the effectiveness of the Starfish system than a user who can say with confidence that raising or receiving a flag directly led to a student getting the support they needed."

Following through with Enhanced Integration

Brockport is moving beyond the initial roll-out to expand their use of the full suite of Starfish software. In that effort, Chew believes being part of the SUNY Starfish Community of Practice has been invaluable. Based on experiences relayed by colleagues there, the Academic Success Center (ASC) is establishing a faculty advisory board. The board will provide feedback on how to better train and connect faculty with the Starfish system.

Elsewhere on campus, Starfish is in demand. After a very successful Roster Verification Survey in Fall 2017, ASC and the Graduate Studies division are currently working to expand Starfish usage to the entire institution.

In the coming years, ASC plans to use Starfish to track the use of tutoring services and to enhance partnerships between the Student Learning Center, Living Learning Communities, academic departments, and faculty advisors. Student leaders, campus groups, and academic departments will receive training to better utilize features like Raise Your Hand and advisement scheduling.