



Partner Profile: New York University (NYU)

Addressing Completion Rates Through a Data-Informed
and Starfish-Enhanced Summer Experience at NYU

CONNECTED21



New York University



A four-year private university with campuses in New York City, Shanghai, and Abu Dhabi



26,981 undergraduate students in Fall 2019



Admitted Class of 2024

- Highly selective with a **15%** acceptance rate
- Richly diverse with **27%** of class who identify as minoritized students
- **18%** of students who are eligible for Pell Grants
- **15%** of class are first-generation college students



Dr. John M. Burdick

Associate Director,
Student Success



Holly Halmo

Director, Student
Success Initiatives

Our Mission: Improving connections to drive outcomes



94%
Retention
in 2018



96%
Retention
Goal

88%
Six-Year
Grad Rate
in 2018



90%
Six-Year
Grad Rate
Goal



NYU Office of Student Success: What We Do



In 2018, NYU established the Office of Student Success

Broad Charge

- Improve the student experience, inside and outside of the classroom
- Increase retention and graduation rates

Team Focus

- Target interventions and outreach through technology and case management
- Guide broad, systemic change through data-driven strategic consulting

How We Work

- Start-up mentality
- Pilot initiatives based in action research
- Work is data driven, intentional and student-centered
- Focus on student outcomes – mindfully putting students at the center of all thinking and decisions

What We Do

- Individualized case management
- Academic coaching
- Support navigating resources
- Focused programming
- Promote policy and practice that place students at the center
- Serve as strategic consultants for campus partners



Starfish (NYU Connect)

**Make this big place small – with technology
Collaboration, communication, and data.**

- Quickly rolled out (4 months!):
 - Early Alert
 - Case Management
 - Targeted Support
- Pitch to users: Remove administration burdens and inefficiencies
 - Many custom attributes/system flags to drive notifications to administrators and communications to students – get the students to the people who can help them as fast as possible with minimal administrative lift
- Found ways to say YES (a lot)!
- Engaged in hyper-specific details and use cases; ~100 roles in system and +75,000 logins per term
- Expanded to Graduate Schools

Summer Success Program

**Research, Pilot, Assess, Scale
Always keeping students at the center**

- Quickly rolled out (1 month)
- Intentional in linking national research to our local understanding
- Deep dive into the NYU data and patterns in retention and graduation
- NYU data showed clear patterns of which students were behind in credit attainment and retention/graduation
- Support credit accumulation to keep students on track for a timely graduation
- Using CARES Act funding to directly support students
- Wrap around support
- Utilize technology to streamline processes wherever possible



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SUMMER SUCCESS PROGRAM

Foundational research questions driving the pilot program



What is the relationship between standard academic progress factors in the first semester and four-year graduation?



Students who earned **16 or more credits** in their first semester are about **2.7 times more likely to graduate** than students that earned **11 or fewer**.

Students who earned **16 or more credits** in their first semester have a graduation rate of **nearly 30% points higher** than students that earned **12-15 credits** in their first semester.

However, the group that was credit deficient after the first semester was relatively small and only made up **less than 15% of the cohort**.

The conclusion



There is a **significant relationship between first Fall credit accumulation and graduation rates**.

We need to intervene early.

These are comparatively small populations of students, so we could potentially make a significant impact.

Developing the Pilot Program: Asking the right questions



Can we find a target population based on research and evidence?

- Students with < 16 units earned after first term
- Students with less than 100% credit completion



What would happen if we intervene as early as possible?

- Design an intervention based on academic performance in the first semester
- Support students before academic performance issues compound
- Support credit accumulation over the summer to help students get back on track



And wrap services and academic support around students for summer and beyond?

- How can we collaborate with campus partners to offer additional support, making it a more holistic summer experience.
- Can we **document our work** with these students during the 'Summer Program', ensuring others who support the student are in the loop?



Would we see statistical improvements in outcomes?

- Can we impact retention, persistence, decreased time to graduation, and/or graduation rate by improving credit attainment for students between their first and second year?
- Can we justify such a program early in their academic career?





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PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Improving Success and Closing Gaps for Good



Program Objectives

- To **support credit accumulation and rate of progress** toward timely graduation amongst NYU first-year students early in their academic careers through a pilot six-week summer initiative
- To **holistically support students** who have demonstrated early signs of academic difficulty by providing wraparound coaching and programming
- **To intervene as early as possible** by designing an intervention based on academic performance in the first semester that would support students before academic performance issues compound
- **Collect as much data as possible to determine if such a program is viable**, scalable, and effective. Starfish was essential to data collection and programmatic assessment

Recruitment

- Collaborate and get buy in from various university stake holders first (decentralized culture)
- Identified ~300 students eligible based on demonstrated early academic progress warning signs in a combination of academic risk factors:
 - Low cumulative credits
 - Low completion ratio
 - Low cumulative GPA
- Determined messaging for students so they didn't feel like it was punitive—but a selective grant to provide additional support; had to be careful with language
- Allowed schools and advising teams to review and approve students selected



Launching the Summer Success Program



6 weeks

+4 units

87 students

3 sessions

Program Overview

- **87 rising second-year students** enrolled during the first six week summer session (May 24—July 5)
- **Grants to fully cover the cost for up to four units plus room and board** for six weeks
- **Academic support and community engagement programming**
 - Mandatory program orientation and three mandatory meetings with a Student Success Specialist
 - A mid-semester workshop focused on growth mindset facilitated by NYU Neural Science and Psychology Professor Dr. Wendy Suzuki
 - Various virtual and in-person community/social engagement events
 - Ice cream social, scavenger hunt, virtual game nights, career coaching with our Center for Career Development & end-of program lunch
- **Success Plan** in Starfish to announce, track, and get students excited about what is to come

Coaching Sessions: 3-Tiered Approach



NYU Connect (Starfish) = Success



New **Role** for Student Specialist (Case Manager) included in the **Student's Network**



Automated appointment type to easily track and reach out to students who did/not attend coaching sessions

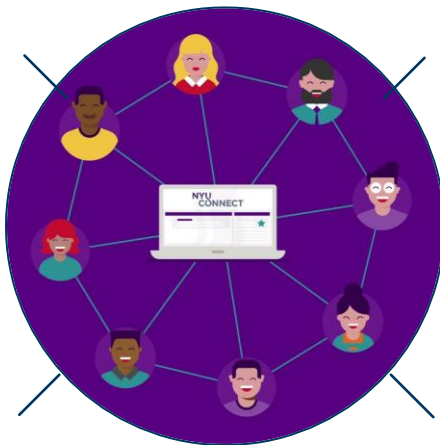


Notes to document interactions with students

System flags to remind students to book Coaching sessions if they did not have one scheduled in the next 14 days



Bulk Note upload to let those who work with the student know what the program is and what it entails



Progress Survey to check in on students' performance in their course; used for all data collection, participation tracking, and programmatic assessment



Success Plans **Macros** for leadership to quickly see progress of each student and overall engagement

A+

Kudos for finishing program



Custom **appointment message templates** to remind students of program requirements



Success Plans listed each event and meeting and functioned as a live/interactive to-do list for program students



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PROGRAM ASSESSMENT

Research Questions for Assessment



Question 1

Did this program **address credit accumulation issues** for participating students? Are they back on track?

Question 2

Did students demonstrate **improvement in their academic skills**?

Did this **correlate with academic performance** in their summer courses?

Question 3

Based on both demographic and enrollment data, **how did student groups perform**?

- **More successful** in their summer course?
- **More likely to demonstrate improvement** in academic skills?

Question 4

What happened to **students who did not complete** the program?



What Students Are Saying

It is okay to ask for help and I have a strong support network.

“As a student I am not just going to fall through the cracks, and I have a support network at NYU that cares about my academic success.”

New Skills

90%

Strongly or somewhat agree that they learned new skills to be successful at NYU

92%

Strongly or somewhat agree they can adjust their strategies if they experience a setback

56% baseline

Academic Resilience

Connectedness

92%

Feel more connected with NYU resources and feel comfortable accessing future support

90%

Feel comfortable asking for help when facing academic challenges

42% baseline

100%

Black and Hispanic students felt more supported by NYU

Supported

Course Success

82%

Earned *C or better*
in at least one
course

98%

Passed a course with
a *D or higher*

93%

Students who
attended all coaching
sessions passed with
a *C- or higher*
(versus 31%)

86%

Students living on
campus passed at
least one course

“

I was thankful for the opportunity to have the one-on-one meetings as they gave me a chance to talk through my concerns, help me find strategies and methods for studying, as well as academic advice.

Improving Student Success

It is okay to ask for help and I have a strong support network.

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New Skills

90%

Strongly or somewhat agree that they learned new skills to be successful at NYU

92%

Strongly or somewhat agree they can adjust their strategies if they experience a setback (56% baseline)

Academic Resilience

Connectedness

92%

Feel more connected with NYU resources and feel comfortable accessing future support

90%

Feel comfortable asking for help when facing academic challenges (42% baseline)

98%

Felt more supported by NYU after completing this program

Supported

Achieving Impact and Improving Student Success

Fall 2020 leading indicators

96%

Registered for
the next fall

97.5%

Registered for 12 or
more credits

Back on Track for Four-Year Graduation!

13%

On track after Fall
2020; earned 16+
credits

17%

On track after
Spring 2021;
earned +32
credits

69%

On track after
Summer 2021;
earned +32
credits

An increase of 56%!



“My Student Summer Specialist helped me set the path going forward not only in my Summer Classes but also in future classes as well. By...[providing] advice as well and helping me to create a method that works for me. I feel more confident in my academic capabilities.”

“I often looked forward to my meetings with Mary Virginia. She was so supportive and helpful throughout the entirety of the summer semester. She provided a lot of useful information and [made] me feel heard. Mary Virginia was great so I’m hoping to stay in contact with her in the future.”





Program Design



Spent a lot of time “selling” and getting buy-in

- University leaders, college leaders, students, etc.
- A history of collaboration and relationships provided a helpful foundation

Messaging to students is key!

- Chosen for a new program based on your first term; believe you could benefit from a free course; we see potential in you!

Adjustments to the program recruitment and enrollment process

- Process was more rapid and more challenging than expected.

Early interventions matter!

- Students found it helpful for someone to proactively reach out and give them a space to be heard early in their academic career
- We have the foundation of strong relationships with these students, which will continue over the next 3+ years.
 - **This is the start of a support relationship, not a finite program!**

Programming Reflections: To-Do's for Next Time

- Would like to create more ownership by students
- Make intake more robust, including having Student Support Specialists interview and evaluate students before selection
- Include more large mandatory events, as they were well received by all!
- Hold program as an in-residence summer program ideally (But COVID restraints)



Student Success Technology



Did a lot in Starfish on the fly—good to be flexible

Be ready and able to assess and iterate along the way!

Don't be afraid to "pilot something in a pilot"—you can pilot more than one thing at a time

- Students liked the Success Plan!

Automate as much as possible

- Coaching session reminder system flags/notifications took the administrative burden off the Specialists, so they could spend more time with students one on one.

Service Profile

Summer Success Program

Contact
Send an email
Call (212) 998-4272

Team Members

 Faith Allen Student Success Specialist	...	 John Burdick Associate Director, Student Success	...
 Mary Ireland Student Success & Financial Education Specialist	...	 Habibat Shittu Student Success & Financial Education Specialist	...

Overview
The NYU Summer Success Program provides selected rising sophomores with financial and academic support to help them make the most of the summer and start the fall 2021 semester on the right page. Students who participate in this program will receive a 6-week, 1 summer scholarship to cover up to 4 units of coursework, a housing and dining stipend, and individual coaching to continue to build their academic skills. Students will also have the opportunity to engage with virtual workshops and community-building events.

New Success Plan: Summer Success Program

nyuconnect@nyu.edu
to v1225, me

Tue, Mar 16, 5:38 PM

Dear Violet Liberal,

The following plan has been created for you by Holly Halmö.

Plan: Summer Success Program

Overview: This success plan is your to-do list for the NYU Summer Success Program. On here, you will find exactly what you need to complete as part of this program. Remember, you must have at least three coaching sessions with your Student Success Specialist during the duration of the program.

- Summer Success Program Orientation
 - In this mandatory, 1 hour, virtual orientation we will provide an overview of the program, including the requirements and expectations for the program, and give you a chance to meet with your Student Success Specialist.
- Summer Success Program: Complete Pre-Program Questionnaire
 - The goal of this quick pre-assessment is to help your Student Success Specialist understand how they can best support you over the course of the summer and help you achieve your academic goals.
- Summer Success Program: Coaching Session 1 Due by: 6/2/2021
 - In these coaching sessions, you will work one-on-one with your Specialist to discuss your academic progress and address any challenges you may be facing, in or outside of the classroom. In this first session, we will review your pre-program questionnaire and set some goals for the Summer. You are required to meet with your Specialist 3 times over the course of the program.
- Summer Success Program: Workshop with Dr. Wendy Suzuki Due by: 6/7/2021
 - Dr. Wendy A. Suzuki, Professor of Neural Science and Psychology in the Center for Neural Science at New York University, leads an interactive workshop where she discusses her innovative research on the performance of the brain and how it relates to your academic success.
- Summer Success Program: Coaching Session 2 Due by: 6/16/2021
 - In these coaching sessions, you will work one-on-one with your Specialist to discuss your academic progress and address any challenges you may be facing, in or outside of the classroom. In this second session, we will review your progress and create an action plan going forward. You are required to meet with your specialist 3 times over the course of the program.
- Summer Success Program: Coaching Session 3 Due by: 6/30/2021
 - In these coaching sessions, you will work one-on-one with your Specialist to discuss your academic progress and address any challenges you may be facing, in or outside of the classroom. In this third session, we will review your progress and look ahead to the Fall and Spring. You are required to meet with your specialist 3 times over the course of the program.

Tips for Making It Work on Your Campus



Tenant Admins

- Don't wait for others to come to you—offer the system to support.
- Innovate with the system, but you may need to be the one to offer the innovation
- When asked for a new appointment type...ask them why! What else can Starfish do to support that use case/program?



Starfish End-Users/Program Leads

- **Having a data-driven understanding of factors impacting your retention and graduation rates is key.**
 - How can you find and target the right students for a program like this?
- Begin planning as soon as possible, but **do not be afraid to pivot and iterate along the way.**
- **Find collaborative champions** who will help develop and scale such an initiative.
- **Could do this for “free”**
 - If tuition is waived for summer coursework, you could scale up the support for such a program.



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NYU Student Success

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