



Overview/Learning Outcomes

- Learning Outcomes
 - Compare orientation, transition, and retention by definition and practice
 - Identify and articulate individual roles in OTR on campus
 - Understand how you “fit” and how you would like to “fit” in OTR
 - Identify at least 1 campus collaborative partner to better serve students
- Key Terminology/Considerations
- Guided Reflection and Survey Responses
- Strategies & Collaboration
- Collective Brainstorming
- Moving Forward

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Considerations

- How do you define Orientation, Transition and Retention?
- What is your campus climate for OTR?

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Defining OTR (grab your phones and take a picture!)

- **Orientation:** deliberate programmatic & service efforts designed to facilitate the transition of new students to the institution; prepare students for the institution's educational opportunities & student responsibilities; initiate the integration of new students into the intellectual, cultural & social climate of the institution; & support the parents, partners, guardians, & children of the new student.
- **Transition:** the process students go through (typically lasting up to 1 year) when entering a particular institution of higher education and/or entering the same institution for a new purpose. This may include, but is not limited to, entering a college as a first-year student, transferring to a college from a different institution, and/or entering a college or university for a subsequent degree. Successful transition results in student integration into the institution & ultimately retention and/or achievement of personal educational objectives.
- **Retention:** student progression through higher education, focusing primarily on student persistence (i.e. term to term) through the beginning of the 2nd year at the same institution, with the goal being graduation from that institution and/or achievement of personal educational objectives. Retention is 1 outcome/measure/byproduct of successful student transition, which can be facilitated by effective orientation programs & other academic & social integration processes.

Source: HODA Task Force to Explore the Definition of Orientation, Transition & Retention (2012)
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Guided Reflection

- What is your contribution to OTR on your campus
- What role do you play?
- Who are the major players?
- How do you connect?
- Does campus see your connection to OTR as you do?

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Survey Responses

- 50 Respondents
- Varying in positions and years experience
- Varying roles in OTR conversations
 - Leading all efforts
 - Collaborative partnerships
 - Not involved
- Consider:
 - Are the roles you listed earlier real or perceived?
 - How do you change perception and engage?

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Survey Results

- **Orientation**
 - Lead discussion and serve as experts
 - Coordinate and host campus partnerships and collaborative meetings
 - Recognized as preliminary step in retention efforts
 - Drive campus wide changes
- **Transition**
 - Primary planners/implementers – oversee and collaborations with campus partners
 - Drive the conversation
 - Integral member of committees and task forces
 - Do this piece secondly and market “their” events. Limited role in a neglected area of programming
 - “Transition” lives in the Academic Advising offices

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Survey Results (cont)

- **Retention**
 - Primary office to handle retention initiatives, understanding issues, data and how we as an institution can improve (FYE/Student Success offices)
 - Participate in committees
 - Part of the conversation
 - Collaborate with housing, advising, career services
 - Part of an early alert team
 - We SHOULD have more of a fit in this campus conversations, but we are not the leaders on campus
 - Limited role in a neglected area – rarely included in these conversations. Supplementary or not at all
 - Not highly involved

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Strategies & Collaboration

Consider your areas of influence and strategies...

1. Who does my office currently collaborate with across campus?
2. Of those collaborative partners, how effective are they? Which one(s) could be improved?
3. Who am I not currently collaborating with that I should or could be? (consider the goals you would like to improve upon or achieve that you can't do currently)

Collective Brainstorming

- Who leads the conversations on your campus about transition and retention?
- What do you need to know/show in order to get a seat at the table? (who does the inviting?)
- How can you insert yourself and impact the conversation through your role? (see NODA portal for resources/documentation)

Advice from the Field

- Build relationships and be intentional.
- Ask "How can we better influence our students' experiences and retention through our programs?" An open and non-threatening question often creates the space for better quality and more frequent collaboration.
- Start the conversation - reach out. Make the case for areas not being addressed to be a part of your responsibilities -but do so with a collective (i.e. campus wide group).
- Use assessment to facilitate dialogue! This will open doors to conversations, help you to challenge the status quo, and allow you to showcase what you are doing well. Don't be afraid of assessment! You will be remembered at the discussion table.
- Network with colleagues across the campus, volunteer to serve on committees related to these areas, become familiar with the literature on orientation, transition, and retention, present at conferences and write for journals.

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Advice from the Field (cont)

- Get to know everyone and never turn down an opportunity to serve on a committee related to student success. Take people to lunch or coffee. Get to know them and what is important to them and offer to help brainstorm ideas for integrated programming.
- Key collaborations for me have been bridges across student affairs, academic affairs and enrollment management. When you can follow a student from prospect to applicant to admit to enrolled to yield to retained and all the way through to graduation... that's gold.
- Get to know your institutional research people and be a data geek. The data is what you need to connect with others and understand what works and what doesn't.
- Start first to understand, then be understood. Know what drives the work of your colleagues (show respect and care).
- Work on your salesperson skills. Need to show the connection between what's more in your control and what's not.

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Moving Forward

You must find ways to build/grow relationships

- What is your area of influence?
- How would you like to see it increase?
- What are you doing to impact student persistence that you can show through research, data, and results?

Take Aways

- Orientation, Transition, and Retention are NOT stand alone areas
- YOU can and should play an integral role by making connections and driving conversations
- Prove what you do connects and impacts student success from orientation through retention... and beyond

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