

# Support Through Club Involvement

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# Personal Story

- A feeling of directionlessness is common among disadvantaged students
- Participation in clubs can help students build support structures
- Disadvantaged students often face barriers to clubs due to under-representation or lack of knowledge



# Problem

- A lot of students shy away from the College of Engineering because of the difficulty and lack of support structures
- As a result, they either leave the College of Engineering to pursue different majors or drop out



# Some Statistics

- In 2009, about 28 percent of bachelor's degree candidates had declared a STEM major. Of those who had entered a STEM program, 48 percent of bachelor's degree candidates had left the STEM field by spring 2009.
- "Peer mentoring [has] been shown to positively impact traditional indicators of college student success such as average GPA, credits earned, and retention. In addition, researchers have established that both approaches facilitate new students' adjustment to campus and increase students' satisfaction with their universities."

# Solution

- With the new Direct to College system, we are proposing a one-week orientation for incoming freshmen in the College of Engineering to learn about engineering at UW, but also hear from clubs
- During that one week, there will be two panels of representatives from clubs focused on STEM to talk about their experience in hopes of enticing students to join the club and which will help them throughout their time at UW

# Schools reported multiple efforts to improve retention.

Best practices identified in the literature were used to code those mentioned in each school's submission. The practices cited by schools spanned the full range of retention strategies found in the literature. Most schools took a "holistic" approach to improving retention; rather than focusing on one approach, they pursued multiple strategies. Academic support and enrichment were the most common, followed by research and work opportunities. Frequently mentioned types of support included:

- tutoring;
- mentoring;
- learning centers;
- programs specifically developed for at-risk students;
- programs specifically for first-year students;
- academic advising; and
- career awareness.

Mentioned least often were practices focusing on faculty training and student preparation for graduate school. Almost all schools reported that their specific practices furthered the intangible but important goal of developing a "community" among EETC students and faculty, which contributed to student retention and graduation.

We regrouped best practices and created crosswalk tables showing which schools applied which practices. These tables reveal the breadth of practices reported by schools. The groupings of best practices should not be viewed as exhaustive. Submissions had to adhere to word limits, so schools may not have reported all their efforts to support student retention. Some submissions are included in this report, chosen on the basis of their clarity and supporting data.

# Details

- Orientation could be Late August or Early September
- Panel will consist of 6-8 students from different clubs
  - One towards the beginning of the week and one towards the end
  - 3 minute presentation for each panelist
- Extremely important that the panelists have stories that inspire students to come check out the club





# Expected Results

- Hopefully, the panel will draw enough interest so at least 30% of the entering freshman class go to the events after to learn more about the clubs
- The students who are inspired by the clubs and eventually join gain a lot from the experience
- Moving forward, this helps the College of Engineering in the long run

Questions?

# Sources

- <https://www.asee.org/retention-project>
- <https://journals.iupui.edu/index.php/muj/article/download/21539/20817/>
- <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2013/11/27/study-tracks-attrition-rates-stem-majors>
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