



INSTITUTE for EVIDENCE-BASED CHANGE
Informing Decisions · Improving Practice · Increasing Student Success

Caring Campus *Frequently Asked Questions*

What is the purpose of IEBC's *Caring Campus* initiative?

Caring Campus's purpose is to create a college environment that increases students' sense of connectedness and belonging and, in turn, completion of each student's education goals. This sense of connectedness is especially important for underrepresented student populations who complete at lower rates than majority students. Research indicates that student support staff and other employees can contribute considerably to enhancing student connectedness, thereby increasing the likelihood students will attain their educational goals.

Which staff are involved?

Representatives from every department are invited to participate. Departments vary by college but have included admissions and records, financial aid, veteran's services, disabled student support services, counseling, buildings and grounds, bookstore, security, and more.

What types of staff behaviors are addressed?

Specific behavioral commitments are identified by staff. Typically, they include behaviors such as ensuring all voicemail messages are addressed daily; when making a referral to another department ensuring students know where they are going and with whom they are meeting; following up on referrals, greeting students with a smile and learning their names when they walk into the office; and approaching students who seem lost on campus.

Our staff already engage in these behaviors, why should my college participate?

We find that although many staff may engage in these behaviors, there is value in making them intentional and college-wide. This ensures that a consistent message of caring about each student's success is a part of the college community and culture.

What is the time commitment?

Caring Campus is designed to be completed in one semester, beginning with an initial kickoff event for campus and department leadership to familiarize them with the effort. This is followed by three half-day coaching sessions for participating staff in which they identify behaviors and develop implementation, communication, and monitoring plans. Between sessions (which occur about every three weeks), participating staff obtain feedback from their colleagues. There also is a concluding webinar to discuss institutionalization and celebrate success.

Our staff have been through professional development, how is *Caring Campus* different?

IEBC uses a facilitated coaching model. This is not traditional professional development or customer service training. According to the dictionary, a coach instructs in the fundamentals and directs strategy. That is what IEBC's *Caring Campus* coaches engage in with staff. We instruct staff about the fundamentals of what can be done to increase student connectedness to the college. We also help departments and divisions to develop a strategy, grounded in commitments, that they can easily implement campus-wide. *Caring Campus* coaches are available between coaching sessions to answer questions and to provide assistance and support.

What resources are my college expected to provide?

IEBC's *Caring Campus* initiative is funded by Ascendium Education Philanthropies. Participating colleges are expected to provide space for the kickoff and coaching sessions, including any refreshments. Additionally, colleges are expected to commit to providing materials needed to fulfill behavioral commitments, which are designed to be no- to low-cost.

Who do I contact with other questions?

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