

RESUME OF KEVIN P. THOMAS

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Career Track

Director of Retention and Student Success

07/2012 – Present

Office of Retention and Student Success

Southern Illinois University Edwardsville (SIUE)

- Responsible for budgeting, planning, implementing, and evaluating coordinated retention efforts for SIUE
- Maintain use and manage transactions of a combined budget of \$1.9 million for the division of the Office of Retention and Student Success
- Coordinate and collaborate on all University related retention and student success initiatives for undergraduate, graduate, international, and distance learning students
- Supervise and coordinate the division of the Office of Retention and Student Success. This division contains the Office of Academic Advising, Learning Support Services (LSS), and Testing Services. These units include four assistant directors, 14 professional staff advisors, 34 developmental course work faculty, three support staff, three graduate students, and 60 student staff
- Within the Office of Academic Advising, over 80 percent of all incoming SIUE students begin as undeclared, and are advised until they are able to declare a departmental advising unit. This is roughly 2,700 – 3,100 students – depending on time of the semester
- LSS includes both college credit and non-college credit bearing course work. This office also houses the Tutoring Resource Center, the Writing Center, the Speech Center, and Supplemental Instruction. These services will have over 40,000 usages in an academic year. These services are SIUE's university support systems for students who are in need of success interventions
- Testing Services is responsible for all placement testing, ACT and SAT testing, departmental exams and will have over 8,000 usages within an academic year.
- Foster a university-wide environment that supports student persistence and completion at SIUE
 - Since implementation of student success initiatives, retention rate of first-to-second year students has increased from 69.3 percent to 74.4 percent
 - First-to-second-year retention rate of African-American students has increased by 10.3 percent since implementation efforts
 - Retention rates of sophomores and juniors has increased and led to record enrollment for SIUE (fall 2016 and spring 2017)
- Through the Retention and Student Success Committee, work with academic and student affairs professionals to improve SIUE policies, procedures, and academic support for all students, specifically first-generation, low-income, and diverse student populations.
- Monitor student enrollment, persistence, and graduation rates, and report key demographic indicators to SIUE administration
- Create, implement, and evaluate the 5th Week Freshmen Assessment. This early alert assessment allows faculty to provide information on student attendance and grades early in the fall and spring semesters. Various offices on campus utilize the captured information to follow-up with at-risk students.
- Creation and implementation of the Academic Probation Informational Meetings for students who are placed on academic probation. These meetings occur during the fall and spring semesters, and provide students with necessary information regarding pathways off probation.
- Creation of the Student Academic Success Sessions (SASS) for students who are at-risk, and all first year students. These programs are presented by a variety of campus experts and now count toward experience credit for SIUE general education.
- Involved nationally, regionally, and statewide in promoting advising and retention efforts through the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA), Commission Chair for the Advising Administration commission within NACADA (2014 – 2016) as well as Chair of the 2017 Annual Conference in St. Louis, MO.

Director, Academic Advising and Retention Center

09/2010 – 06/2012

Academic Advising and Retention Center (AARC)

Western Kentucky University (WKU)

- Responsible for all budgeting, planning, program implementation, and evaluation for the AARC
- Maintain use, and manage all transactions of a \$900,000 budget for AARC
- Supervise and coordinate advising, retention, and supplemental education services university-wide with 12 full-time professional staff, 70 undergraduate student employees, and five graduate assistants
- Foster a creative team environment that supports the AARC mission and vision
- Oversee all advising activities (including New Student Orientation) with faculty and professional advisors within five college and three regional campuses
- Assist in the design, implementation, and evaluation of ongoing training programs and print materials for advisors
- Provide data on program effectiveness for all services provided by AARC (use of the WKU Student Engagement Survey, National Student Survey on Engagement, retention rates, and six-year graduation rates as baseline data)
- Use technology to enhance advising, retention, and supplemental education (Website, TutorTrac, AdvisorTrac, Change of Major online form, and other online advising and retention services)
- Conduct Academic Status Review each semester for all WKU students
- Supervise and oversee retention program (Best Expectation Programs) targeting several student groups (new, first-year students that require developmental coursework, students on academic probation, students back on appeal, and African-American students)

RESUME OF KEVIN P. THOMAS

Career Track Continued

Assistant Director of Undergraduate Advising Practices
Academic Advising and Retention Center

06/2007 – 09/2010
Western Kentucky University

- Supervise and direct operations, in support and consultation with the Associate Dean, Student Services and Enrollment
- Coordination and implementation of the Academic Advising Week. A series of programs centered-around academic advising during one week in the fall and spring semesters.
- Responsible for the organization and marketing of the Campus Advising Network. In the first year of coordination, attendance grew by 20 percent, compared to previous year attendance. In the second year, attendance grew 15 percent over the previous year. The program saw 12 percent growth over year two in the third year.
- Created and implemented the faculty-only Master Advisor Certificate (MAC) program. Over four years 68 faculty members graduated from the program. The MAC program provides faculty with intensive training in advising at WKU.
- Implemented the Advisors of Excellence program, designed for professional staff advisors to learn more about advising in a similar educational program to MAC
- Directly supervise the Retention Coordinator, and oversee all WKU retention programs. In the spring of 2008, under a new leadership team, there was significant growth in participation of retention programs.
- Coordinate all student pre-registration for Academic Transition Programs (ATP) on WKU's campus, across more than 25 departments
- Coordinate and implement the fall 2007 – 2010 Majors and Minors Fair, which garnered participation from more than 60 majors at WKU. In 2010, more than 1,100 students attended the Majors and Minors Fair.
- Coordinated the Summer Mini-Series on Advising, to provide continuing education for advisors throughout campus. This program provided in-depth presentations and discussions on advising.
- Maintain use of the AdvisorTrac system, an online advising system used by more than 125 advisors
- Created the Academic Advising Handbook, which was released to all academic advisors in the fall of 2008. The Handbook has been updated electronically each year since.
- Responsible for the indirect supervision of the Peer Advisors in AARC. These student staffers are responsible for meeting with students in WKU retention programs, as well as advising exploratory/undeclared students.
- Coordinated and implemented the Fall and Spring Prep Tour, held in eight residence halls at WKU to help prepare students for the upcoming semester
- Designed marketing plans for the Master Advisor Certificate, Campus Advising Network, AdvisorTrac Training, Majors and Minors Fair, Academic Advising Week, Fall and Spring Prep Tour, and the Summer Mini-Series on Advising
- Responsible for coordinating the 5th Week Assessment with Housing and Residence Life
- Responsible for creation and updating of AARC website (wku.edu/advising)

Housing and Residence Life Experience

Coordinator of Housing and Residence Life
McCormack Hall

02/2006 – 06/2007
Western Kentucky University

- Supervise and direct operations for one, co-ed freshmen residence hall containing 375 beds
- Directly select, train, supervise, and evaluate 20 undergraduate student staff consisting of resident assistants, desk clerks, night clerks, and a desk manager
- Facilitate multiple educational seminars for M.A.S.T.E.R. (Making Academic and Social Transitions Educationally Rewarding) Plan.
 - A program focused on freshman transition to college and early retention efforts for the residence halls and the University
- Maintain discipline system and serve as judicial hearing officer; adjudicate student conduct cases and provide creative and educational sanctions
- Advise academic support programs (Gateway and ACES); two learning communities housed in McCormack Hall
 - Implemented the *USA Today* sponsored "Make a Difference Day" into the learning communities
- Participate in on-duty rotation for emergencies including weeknights and weekends

Residence Hall Director
Brayton/Clevenger Halls

06/2004 – 02/2006
Ball State University

- Supervise and direct operations for a 438 bed residence hall
- Advise students with mid-term deficiencies on academic options
- Advise hall council and Communications Activities Board (CAB)
 - Worked with students on initiatives to bring more faculty and staff into the residence halls

RESUME OF KEVIN P. THOMAS

Career Track Continued

Hall Director

Robert H. White College

05/2002 – 06/2004

Murray State University

- Supervise and direct operations for a 400 bed Residential College
 - Co-advise Residential College Council
 - Awarded Council of the Year two consecutive years
 - Oversee programming within Robert H. White College
 - Implemented International Focus programming model for RA and Hall Council use
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Education

Doctorate of Education in Educational Leadership

Educational Leadership, Postsecondary Strand

Dissertation: *A University-Wide Student Support Program: Comparative View on Student Success*

May, 2012

Western Kentucky University

Master of Science in Human Services

Human Development and Leadership, College Student Personnel

May, 2004

Murray State University

Bachelor of Science

Organizational Communication and Public Relations

May, 2002

Murray State University

Committee Involvement

Southern Illinois University Edwardsville

Office of Retention and Student Success

- Retention and Timely Graduation Committee (Summer 2012 – Present)
 - Chair of committee designed to implement recommendations for improvement of persistence and completion rates at SIUE
 - Committee works on issues related to overall academic success within the university
- Enrollment Management Committee (Summer 2013 – Present)
 - Member of university-wide committee on enrollment management plan at SIUE
 - Specific involvement focuses on how enrollment management plan and retention efforts work together
- University Quality Council (Summer 2013 – Present)
 - Member of university-wide efforts on quality of SIUE
 - Appointed to committee by Provost
- General Education Assessment Committee (Spring 2013 – Present)
 - Member of faculty and staff committee working to effectively assess general education at SIUE
 - Specific involvement on retention efforts within assessment techniques
- SIUE Experience Committee (Spring 2013 – Present)
 - Member of committee representing academic affairs
 - Specific involvement on retention efforts within the first year program for students
- Conditional Admit/Summer Bridge Committee (Spring 2013 – Present)
 - Provost appointed chair of committee that is determining need for a conditional admit policy and program
 - Membership includes faculty and staff throughout campus
- Summer Session Enrollment Task Force (Fall 2013 – Present)
 - Chancellor appointed member of committee that is determining ways to increase enrollment for summer term at SIUE
 - Sub-committee chair of a group of faculty and staff working to find ways for new students to enroll during summer
- Financial Considerations Task-Force (Fall 2012 – Spring 2013)
 - Member of task-force that was established to determine effectiveness of drop for non-payment policy
 - Contribution focused on potential retention complications
- Member of Search Committees that led successful searches for the following positions:
 - Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs (Chair)
 - Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs (member)
 - Associate Director of Online Program Development and Summer Sessions

RESUME OF KEVIN P. THOMAS

Committee Involvement Continued

Western Kentucky University

Academic Advising and Retention Center

- University Disciplinary Committee (Fall 2011 – Summer 2012)
 - Member of committee designed to adjudicate severe disciplinary cases on behalf of the university
 - Responsible review and decision of cases on Presidential appointed committee
- Western Kentucky University Senate Academic Quality Committee (Fall 2010 – Summer 2012)
 - Advisory member of faculty committee
 - Committee works on issues related to overall academic quality of the university
- Committee for Credits and Graduation (Fall 2010 – Spring 2012)
 - Advisory member of committee which hears student appeals for waiver of certain degree requirements
 - Serve as the primary information provider in regards to advising best practices
- Campus Partners (Fall 2007 – Spring 2012)
 - Contributing member to committee designed to identify and work with potentially harmful students at WKU
 - Responsible for follow-up on cases regarding academic situations
- Member of Search Committees that led successful searches for the following positions:
 - Assistant Director of Supplemental Education (Chair)
 - Academic Advisor (Chair)
 - Retention Coordinator (Chair)
 - Residence Hall Director

Western Kentucky University

Housing and Residence Life

- Professional Staff Committee (Summer 2006-Spring 2007)
 - Implementation of reading groups for professional staff members through the book, “Blink” during the fall semester.
 - Organized interviewing set-up for Oshkosh Placement Exchange to be held in March of 2007

Ball State University

Housing and Residence Life

- Multicultural Committee (Fall 2005-Spring 06)
 - Chair of Housing and Residence Life Multicultural Committee
- Ed High 200 (Spring 2005 and 2006)
 - Taught leadership class that is required of all Resident Advisors to take for credit prior to being hired as an RA
- GLACUHO Host Committee-Great Lakes Association of College and University Housing Officers (2004-2005)
 - Served as web and registration coordinator for the GLACUHO 2005 Conference held in Indianapolis, Indiana
- Oshkosh Placement Exchange (OPE) Interviewing Team (Spring 2005)
 - Attended OPE and interviewed potential hall and assistant hall director candidates for positions at BSU
 - Hosted candidates for positions when invited for on-campus interviews

Presentation Experience

National Presentations

- *Academic Advising Administration Commission Session* – Session held at the 2015 and 2016 NACADA Annual Conference
- *The Beginning of a Retention Program* – Presented at the 9th Annual National Symposium on Student Retention (2013)
- *The Growth of a Retention Program: Beginning Steps to Established Program* – Presented at the 2013 NACADA Annual Conference
- *Retention Strategies: First Year Strategies Toward Academic Success* - Presented at the NACADA Annual Conference (2008)

Regional Presentations

- *No Lion, Retention Can Be Tamed: A Proactive Look at Working with At-Risk Students* – Presented at NACADA Region 5 Conference (2013)
- *A University-Wide Student Support Program* – Presented at NACADA Region 3 Conference (2012)
- *Hall Directors as Academic Advisors: How Housing and Residence Life Collaborates with Academic Advising at WKU (2012)*
 - Selected as BEST of KAHO at the Kentucky Association of Housing Officers Conference and then presented at SEAHO conference
- *Who are Today's College Students? Tips to Help You Advise* (2009)
 - Selected as Best of KACADA at annual conference and then presented at NACADA Region 3 Conference
- *Retention's Wild Ride* - Presented during the NACADA Region 3 Conference (2009)
- *How the Implementation of the Master Advisor Certificate has Educated More Faculty at WKU* - Presented during the NACADA Region 3 Conference (2009)
- *The Implementation of the Campus Advising Network* - Presented at the NACADA Region 3 Conference (2008)

RESUME OF KEVIN P. THOMAS

Presentation Experience Continued

Institution Presentations

- *Retention and Faculty at SIUE* – Presented at New Faculty Orientation (2013 – 2016)
- *How Students Help Retain and Graduate their Fellow Students* – Presented at Annual RA and Orientation at SIUE (2013 – 2016)
- *SIUE and High Impact Educational, Retention, and Student Success Practices* – Presented at the Student Affairs Retreat, SIUE (2013)
- *Excellence in Advising = Retention Excellence* – Presented to the Professional Development Committee, SIUE (2012)
- *Retention and Student Success Campus Forum* – Presented to SIUE campus on retention information, SIUE (2012)
- *Technology and Your Advising Style* - Co-Presented to the Campus Advising Network, WKU (2010)
- *Using Academic Services at WKU Inside the Residence Halls* - Housing and Residence Life Professional Staff Training (2010)
- *Advising for Orientation: Everything an Advisor Needs to Know* – Presented to the Campus Advising Network, WKU (2009)
- *Academic Expectations* - Presented at Focus on Western Weekend, M.A.S.T.E.R. Plan, and ATP Parent Orientation (2007 – 2012)
- *Use of AdvisorTrac-Pros and Cons* - Presented to faculty and staff during Engaging the Spirit at WKU (2007)
- *AdvisorTrac Training* - Presented to faculty and staff advisors during six sessions at both WKU Main and South Campuses (2007)
- *Money Management* - Presented during M.A.S.T.E.R. Plan at WKU (2007 – 2008)
- *The Office-Utilizing the TV Show to Identify Our Office Culture* - HRL Professional Staff Training, WKU (2006)
- *Community Service and Engaging Your Students* - HRL Professional Staff Training, WKU (2006)
- *Working with Groups and Communication Patterns of Our Students* - HRL Professional Staff Training, WKU (2006)
- *Reflective Questioning* - Cardinal Training, Ball State (2005)
- *Transitions-Balancing Professionalism and Personal Time within Changes* - Cardinal Training, Ball State (2005)
- *Supervising, Advising, and Counseling Students of Color* - Cardinal Training, Ball State (2005)
- *Building a Future in Student Affairs* - RA Training, Murray State (2003)

Professional Development

TRIO Reader Information

- TRIO – Upward Bound and Upward Bound Math and Science
 - Grant Reader for TRIO Upward Bound grant submissions during 2016 – 2017 year

National Conferences

- ACT Enrollment Planners Conference (2015 and 2016)
 - Attendance conference for professional development
 - Attended sessions on the need for collaboration between admissions and retention practices
- Complete College America (2016) – 15 to Finish Summit
 - Attended institute as a representative of NACADA regarding CCA agenda and working within academic advising
 - Institute brought together key legislators, higher education upper-administration, and critical stakeholders
- National Symposium on Student Retention
 - Attended conference for professional development
 - Presented at conference on beginning student success and persistence efforts at SIUE
- The Higher Learning Commission (2013)
 - Making a Difference in Student Learning: Assessment as a Core Strategy Conference
 - Attended early workshop on current expectations for assessment of student learning, general education, and student success
- National Conference on Student Recruitment, Marketing, and Retention (2013 and 2016)
 - Attended conference for professional development
 - Attended session on building faculty into the current university retention efforts
- MAP-Works Summer Conference (2013)
 - Attended conference for professional development
 - Attended sessions on building connections with non-residential students using the MAP-Works assessment tool
- Conference on Excellence in Gateway Course Completion (2013)
 - Attended conference for professional development
 - With support from academic and student affairs brought three faculty to hear about implementation of best practices
- National Academic Advising Association-NACADA (2007 – 2015)
 - Attended conference for professional development
 - Served on Annual Conference Committee, 2012
 - Served as Kentucky Liaison for NACADA from 2008 – 2010

Regional Conferences

- National Academic Advising Association – NACADA Region 5 (2013)
 - Attended conference for professional development
 - Presented at conference on working with at-risk students
- National Academic Advising Association – NACADA Region 3 (2007 – 2012)

RESUME OF KEVIN P. THOMAS

Professional Development Continued

- Attended conference for professional development
- Served as co-chair of conference (2010)
- Presented at conference in 2008, 2009, and 2012
- Appointed Kentucky Representative to NACADA Region 3, and Facilitated Kentucky state meeting (2008 – 2010)
- SEAHO 2004, 2007, and 2012
 - Attended conference for professional development
 - Served as moderator and conference volunteer
 - Presented in 2012, *Hall Directors as Academic Advisors: How Housing and Residence Life Collaborates with Academic Advising at WKU*
- GLACUHO 2004 and 2005
 - Served as member of conference planning committee (2005)
 - Attended conference (2004) to participate in sessions as well as evaluate for planning the GLACUHO 2005 conference

Statewide or Institution Conferences

- Kentucky Association of Housing Officers (2011)
 - Attended and presented session on advising/housing collaboration at WKU
- Kentucky Academic Advising Association-KACADA (2009)
 - Attended and presented one session at the conference
 - Served as officer on executive board at conference
 - Presentation on today's college students was selected as "Best of KACADA"
- Kentucky Higher Education Compliance Assistance Symposium (2008)
 - Attended sessions during conference at WKU to learn more about higher education compliance issues and updates
- Teacher Quality Summit (2008)
 - Attended sessions regarding the transitions of students from high school to the university
 - Also able to become more knowledgeable on new testing services through ACT, Inc. for current high school students

Trainings Attended

- Developing a Comprehensive Retention Plan
 - Attended Academic Impressions conference in St. Louis, MO in October of 2013
 - Meeting aided in creation of SIUE retention plan within Enrollment Management plan
- Connections NOW Customer Service Training
 - Attended Connections NOW Customer Service Training in October of 2012
 - Program is designed to aid in beneficial interactions with faculty, staff, students, alumni, and other university constituents
- QPR Training
 - Attended QPR Training by Dr. Karl Laves, Assistant Director of Counseling Services
 - This program is designed as a suicide reduction program and certifies attendees of the session
- PRIME FOR LIFE Course Training Conference (Alcohol Educational System)
 - Attended training seminar in Lexington, Kentucky that certifies teaching of 21 hour alcohol education course