

Student Success at UT

New Faculty Orientation



THE UNIVERSITY OF
TENNESSEE
KNOXVILLE





86%

of our students return
after year one

70%

of our first-year
students graduate

Why?



Common Reasons

Realistic expectations of college

Financial security

Academic integration

Sense of belongingness

Connection between college, the real world, and a world they want to experience now



We need a Cultural Strategy – Gen Z

- Gen Z is not waiting for their turn to lead
 - There are more demonstrations, social movements, and protests today than at any given time in history.
- Gen Z is the most inclusive generation ever
 - By 2025, Gen Z will make up 29% of the population, making it the largest generation ever.
- Gen Z is seriously questioning higher education
 - 75% of GZ say there are other ways of getting a good education than going to college.

Source: Archrival.com/insights

A disciplined, focused
strategy is required

Historically...

We ask student scholars to conform to our norms.
Assimilate.

We ignore the individual perspectives each student scholar brings to the table.

Student scholars are punished for their academic preparedness before college.



Shift from the Deficit Mindset

A deficit mindset impedes our student scholars' success by limiting their potential. To enhance their success, we encourage the shift from a deficit to a strengths-based mindset.

**Deficit
Mindset**



Strengths Mindset





In a rigid, uncertain world,
we are a university built
on **empowering** each
student by developing
their **potential**.



UT's Definition of Strengths/Wellbeing

CONFIDENCE

We believe that our student scholars can learn at high levels. We share this message often and consistently.

HIGH EXPECTATIONS

We challenge every student scholar intellectually. We believe expectations are attainable.

EVERY STORY MATTERS

We will provide the structures necessary for every student scholar to reach their potential.

PERMA by Seligman

- Positive Emotions
- Engagement
- Relationships
- Meaning
- Accomplishments



PERMA Examples

	Classroom	Social	Local Community	Faculty/ Administration	Residential
Positive emotions	Curriculum development using PP constructs (e.g. gratitude)	Strengths-focused social events	Movie screenings with positive psychology content	Integrate PP principles into team development activities	Implement “strengths spotting” among residents
Engagement	Teach students about flow and what promotes it	Mindfulness reflection groups	Free seminars and talks on the importance of flow and absorption	Recognize workplace initiatives designed to enhance flow	Residential events for increasing flow (e.g. African drumming)
Relationships	Design strengths-based group assignments	Implement programs that encourage random acts of kindness	Offer parenting workshops on active constructive responding	Recognize and reward work output at the team level	Celebrate national holidays to promote cross-cultural learning
Meaning	Get students to contribute ideas to curriculum	Assess levels of social capital	Promote the university as a virtuous organization	Encourage job crafting to help staff develop congruent career paths	Enable residents to tangibly express the values of the residence
Accomplishment	Implement assessments for learning, as well as of learning	Acknowledge individuals who positively contribute to campus life	Give awards for outstanding contributions to campus life	Infuse performance appraisal systems with PP approaches	Offer evidence-based coaching to enhance academic performance

Source: Oades, Robinson, Green, & Spence. (2011). Towards a positive university. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 6(6), 432-439.

Strengths/Wellbeing Framing Examples

Term

Students



Strengths-Based

Student Scholars

Improve, Support



Enhance, Enrich

Tutors



Learning Consultants

Increase



Sharpen, Hone, Perfect

Help



Facilitate, Benefit

First-Year Volunteers' Strengths

78% of first-year students enrolled in the Vol First-Year Experience took the CliftonStrengths

All - First-Year Students Top Five

Restorative

Achiever

Empathy

Adaptability

Positivity

Students of Color - First-Year Students Top Five

Restorative

Achiever

Adaptability

Futuristic

Competition

First-Generation - First-Year Students Top Five

Restorative

Achiever

Adaptability

Futuristic

Competition

Undergraduate Student Success Goals

Retention Goals

- Increase first-to-second-year retention rate by supporting all students
- Paying particular attention to the achievement gaps for first-generation and underrepresented minority students



Undergraduate Student Success Goals

Engagement Goals – Student scholars will:

- Meet with a member of their Vol Success team each semester
- Participate in at least one high-impact practice their first year
- Engage in the Vol Study Center, Math Place, or Judith Anderson Herbert Writing Center



Undergraduate Student Success Goals

Academic Belongingness Goals

Student scholars will respond with positively agree or strongly agree to the following:

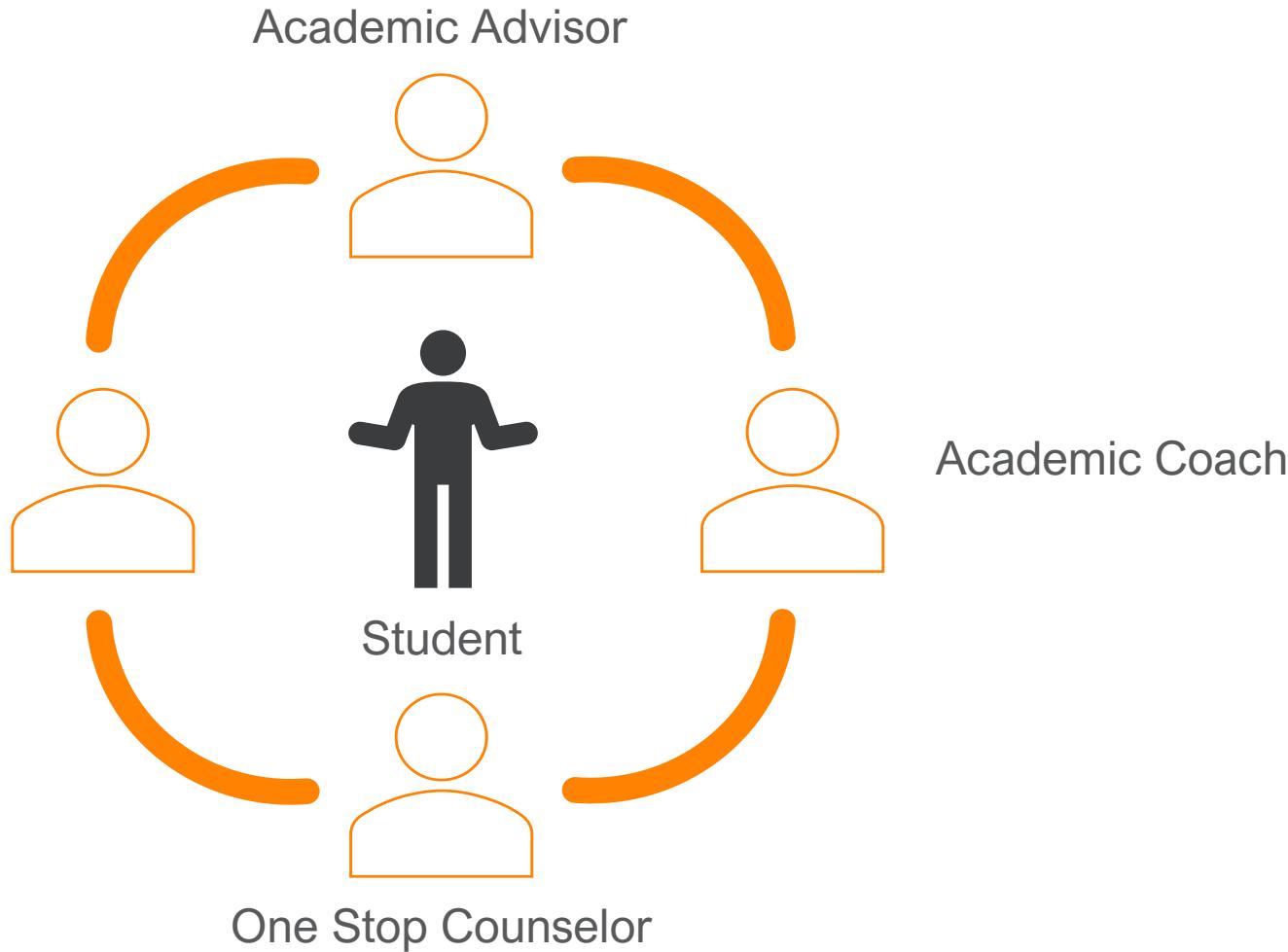
- I feel a part of the UT community.
- I believe that I will excel academically at UT.
- I would rate my current overall stress level since enrolling at UT this fall.



Student Success Signature Programs

Vol Success Teams

Peer
Mentor
Starting
Fall 2021





Vol Success Teams

- Over 90% of first-year student scholars are in good academic standing
 - Fewer students academically dismissed
 - Fewer than 10% are on academic probation
 - Fall-to-spring retention to remain flat or slightly higher than last year
 - Feedback indicates those who engaged with their VST reported:
 - Lower stress
 - Increased sense of belongingness
 - Increased perception academic success
- 

Vols Start Back

Vols Start Back (VSB) helps each UT student reorient to an in-person experience by providing opportunities to engage faculty, staff, and peers.

Program Requirements

- Participation in zero-credit-hour Canvas course
- Student scholars will participate in-person activities that will be organized into five categories based on Gallup's essential elements of wellness with the addition of academic engagement:
 - Academic and Career
 - Social
 - Financial
 - Mental
 - Community

Program Benefits

- Up to \$250 stipend for participation (\$50 for sign-up, \$200 for completion).
- Support each student scholar in building meaningful relationships with faculty, staff, and peers.
- Aid student scholars' transition to in-person student life by connecting them with resources designed to support their success.

Sign-Up: August 2-27

Vol Study Center: Services

- Supplemental Instruction (large group study sessions for designated courses)
 - In-person, streamed, and recorded
- Study Sessions (1:1, group, & exam prep)
- Study Space in Greve Hall
- Free printing & Refreshments
- Computer Use

Appointments and drop-in services available



Vol Study Center: Locations

- Greve Hall 3rd Floor (302, 304, 311)
 - All services
- Hodges Library 220K
- Pendergrass Library
- Frieson Black Cultural Center
- Geier Hall
- Online

By request

- Pride Center & Veterans Success Center



Academic Success Center

- Academic coaching
- Vol Study Center
 - learning consultation
 - study sessions,
 - Supplemental Instruction
- Customized academic support for your course, such as presenting programs focusing on student success issues
- Presentations to your class on UT's academic success resources
- Academic alerts and ad hoc alerts for students in crisis and need outreach from their academic coach and the center

Division of Student Success

Academic Inclusive Initiatives
Academic Success Center
Campus-Wide Advising Initiatives
Center for Career Development & Academic Exploration
First-Year Programs
Honors & Scholars Programs
New Student Orientation
Undergraduate Research & Fellowships
UT Success Academy
Veterans Resource Center



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