

NISTS 2023

BE A CONNECTOR FOR TRANSFER STUDENT SUCCESS

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The following presentation was given at the 21st Annual Conference for the National Institute for the Study of Transfer Students. Please cite responsibly and direct questions to the original presenter(s).

Educational Session

2818 - Bridging The Gap: Supporting Transfer Students from Admitted to Orientation

Transition Programs and Supports, Matriculation Trends and Issues

The transition for transfer students from admitted to enrolled is overwhelming. Transfer orientation programs are one-day experiences allowing for limited time between students and staff. Institutions focus on articulation, prerequisites, and engagement, but support is needed for the admitted to orientation phase. Initiatives focusing on early outreach are beneficial and allow students to work one-on-one with coaches on transition related tasks. It also encourages conversations regarding readiness, enrollment behavior and expectations of the one-day orientation.

Angelia Smith, *Director, UCF Connect*

Bernard Huggins, *Associate Director, Student Coaching*
University of Central Florida



Bridging the Gap: **Supporting Transfer Students** **from Admitted to Orientation**

Angelia Smith | Bernard Huggins

The National Institute for the Study of Transfer Students

2023 Conference | Portland, Oregon



Angie Smith

Director, UCF Connect
Transfer Center



Bernard Huggins

Associate Director,
Transfer Center



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UCF Transfer Facts

UCF is one of the largest transfer institutions in the country. Transfer Connect provides comprehensive support with success coaching, engagement, and resources for prospective and enrolled transfer students, both in-person and virtually.

Fall 2021 Demographics

TOTAL UNDERGRAD ENROLLED **60,062**

TRANSFERS ENROLLED **30,210**



50.3%

OF UNDERGRADUATES ENROLLED ARE TRANSFERS

Undergraduate First Generation Enrolled

TOTAL FIRST GEN ENROLLED **12,641**

60.1% OF ALL UNDERGRAD FIRST GEN ENROLLED ARE TRANSFERS

Low-Income (Pell Eligible) Enrolled

TOTAL PELL ELIGIBLE ENROLLED **21,815**

61.1% OF ALL UNDERGRAD PELL ELIGIBLE ENROLLED ARE TRANSFERS

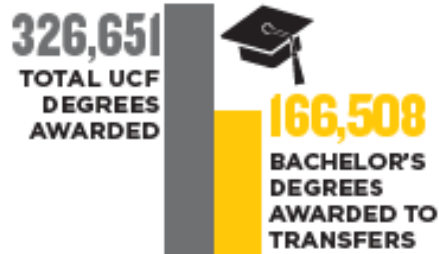
Underrepresented Populations Enrolled

TOTAL UNDERREP. POP. ENROLLED **30,561**

51.6% OF ALL UNDERREP. POP. ENROLLED ARE TRANSFERS

UCF Transfer Facts

Degrees Conferred



Social Mobility



How transfer students impact social mobility:

- **Affordability** and savings by finishing AA at a state college prior to entering
- **Financial stability** for themselves and their communities
- **Less debt and more earnings** with bachelor's and over lifetime

Paying for College

Had over 51% covered by student loans	No expenses covered by scholarships/grants	No expenses covered by parents/family	Relied on "self" to pay expenses
FTIC STUDENTS 13%	FTIC STUDENTS 17%	FTIC STUDENTS 30%	FTIC STUDENTS 3%
FCS TRANSFERS WITH AA 51%	FCS TRANSFERS WITH AA 32%	FCS TRANSFERS WITH AA 56%	FCS TRANSFERS WITH AA 14%

UCF Transfer Facts

Working Transfer Students



58%

of Florida College System (FCS) transfers with AA degrees reported they work more than 20 hours a week.



27%

of first time in college (FTIC) students reported they work more than 20 hours a week.

Spring 2018 Voices of Knights Survey Results from over 11,000 respondents.

Coaching Through the Transfer Process

UCF Connect

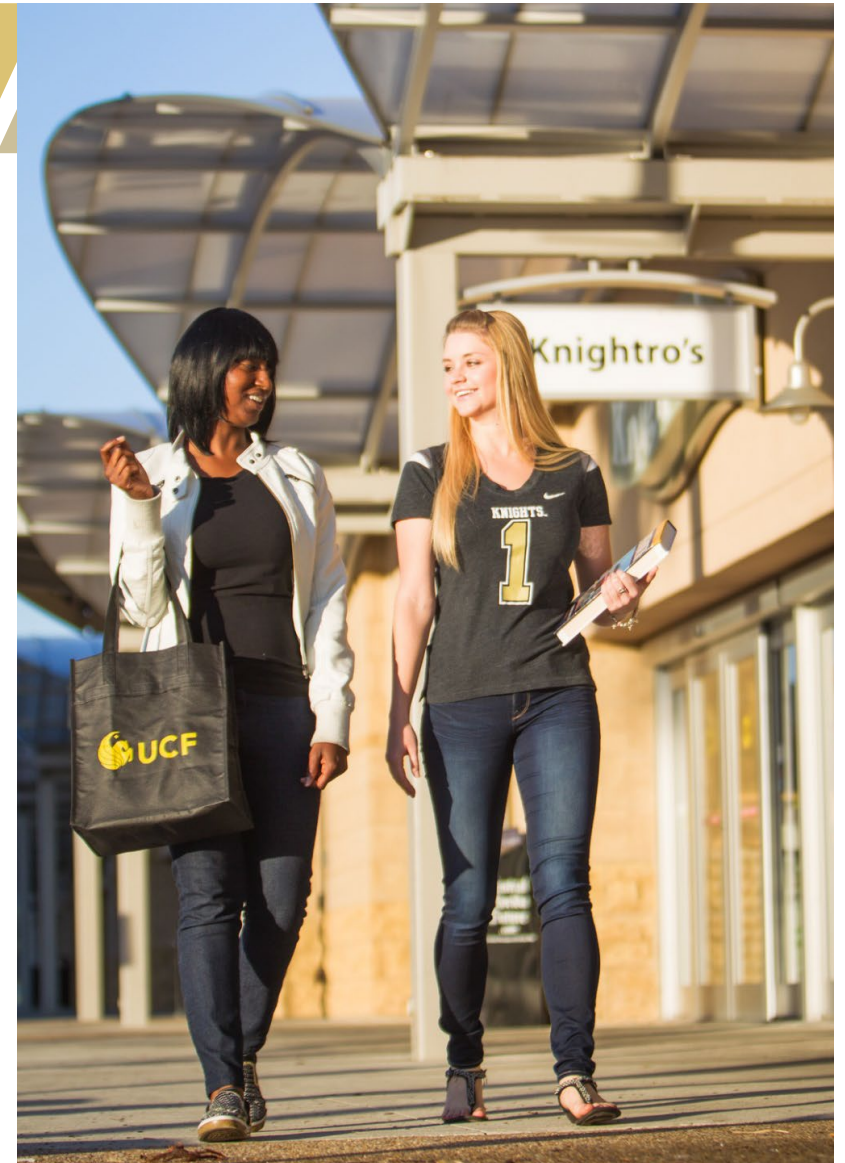
Transfer Connect

The Transfer Center & UCF Connect Centers

- Supports all other transfer students
- Online and campus-based programs
- Success Coaching
- Liaising for student success
- Data sharing

DirectConnect to UCF®

- Supports DirectConnect® transfers
- Online and campus-based programs
- Embedded Coaches at state college
- Steering Committee
- Joint programming
- Data sharing
- Shared philanthropy
- Academic program coordination



Success Coaching Fundamentals

Success Coaches will

Focus on helping students discover their individual definition of success, then to develop the skills and resources needed to reach their academic, educational, and or professional goals.

Relationship-Build

Coaches get to know their students, what motivates them, what barriers students perceive, things they do well and what they struggle with.

Personal Connection

Coaches facilitate meaningful connection to university services and resources relevant to student goals.

Transition Support

Coaches work with transfer bound students using the Success Pathways tool

Coaches provide an extra layer of support from inquiry to graduation.



The Call-to-Action

A need emerged to be a bit more intrusive and implement a new strategy to proactively engage our incoming cohort. This need was driven in part by:

- A shorter transition time between orientation for summer admits and start of summer term.
- A need to ensure students understand how to access their new network of support (advisor, success coach, and peer coach).
- The implementation of a new Florida Board of Governors performance-based funding metric
 - 2-year Florida College System (FCS) AA-degree transfers (from a state/community college)

Components of the Pre-Orientation Coaching Initiative

- Coach outreach to each new FCS AA student with an orientation reservation.
- Deployment of a communication strategy for students, coaches, and broader university community.
- Started with summer admits. Continued through entire season to include fall and spring admits.



Pre-Orientation Coaching Goals

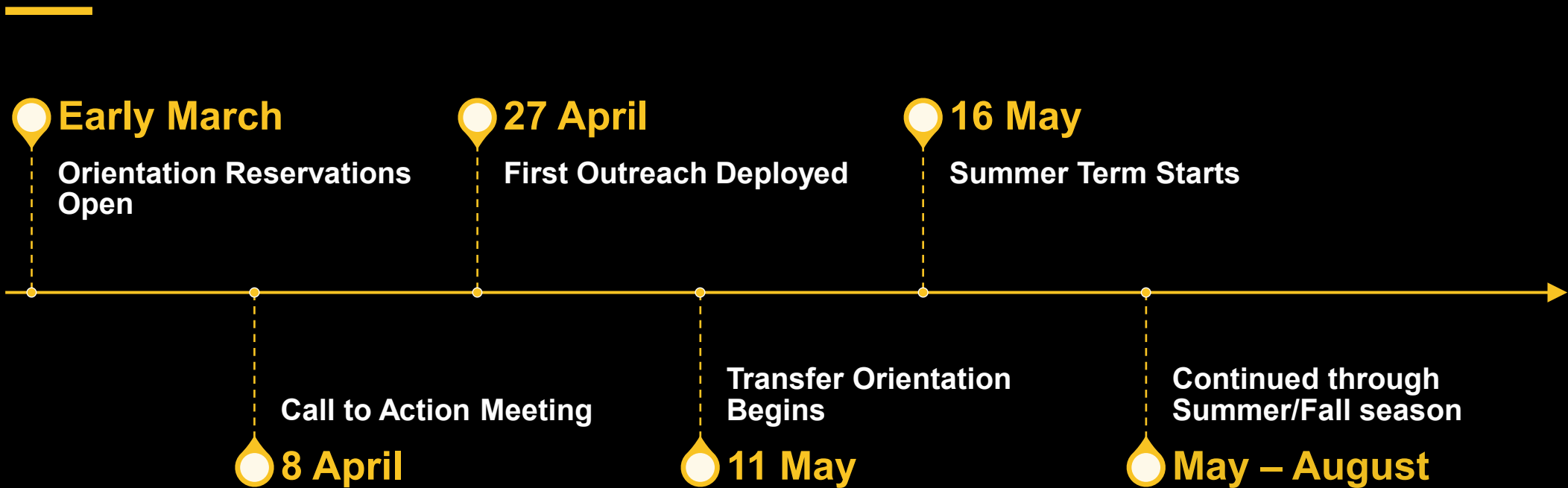
- Encourage **healthy course registration habits** for students that have historically been part-time enrolled at prior institution and are considering a full-time class schedule.
- **Demystify the orientation and onboarding process** for new transfer students by providing a brief overview of **what to expect** and **how to prepare** for a smooth orientation experience.
- Ensure students are “**orientation ready**” by the time they arrive to campus on their orientation day. This will allow for a more seamless course registration experience.
- Provide coaching to students around their **academic and personal goals**. Sharing tips for a strong and successful start at UCF.
- Emphasize the **network of support** available to transfer students new to UCF. Including access to a Success Coach and PeerKnight throughout their time as a Knight.

Essential Partners and Stakeholders

- First-year experience (orientation)
- UCF's Advising Leadership Council
- UCF Connect (from leadership to connect specialists)
- Additional partners: Registrar's office, Undergraduate Admissions, Student Health Services, Financial Aid



Pre-Orientation Coaching Initiative 2022 Timeline



Preparing for Launch: Building Buy-in

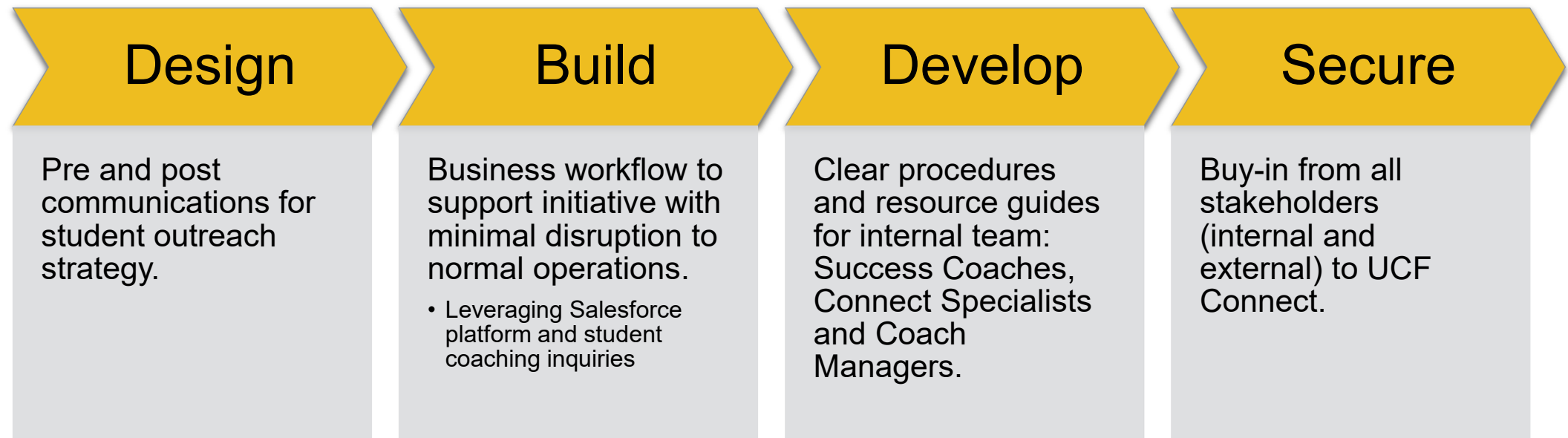
Establish and share clear goals and purpose for initiative.

Work closely with university partners to clarify roles and agree on messaging to students.

Take time with internal UCF
Connect team to create clear guidelines, instructions, and resources for implementation.

All hands-on deck!
Managers helped carry the load.

Preparing for Launch: Checklist





Launching Initiative

- **412** students contacted in first outreach. Over the course of 3-months **1,247** students were contacted and **1,070** interactions recorded.
- Students assigned across 15 Coaches and 5 Coach managers (managers assigned for initial batch only).
- All students received a formal email to expect a call from their coach.

Launching Initiative: Emerging Trends



Personal connection goes a long way

Eased anxiety about the day

Grateful for communication

Full-circle connections on orientation day



Uncovered snags and pain points in onboarding processes for transfer students

Sending final transcripts

Understanding financial aid/scholarships

Navigating next steps



Opportunity to talk through enrollment behaviors

Will you be part-time or full-time your first term?

Do you work full-time or part-time?



Most common referrals

Admissions

Registrar

Student Health Services

Neighborhood Relations (off-campus housing)



Impacts of Central Florida housing crisis

After Launch: Lessons Learned



100% of contacted students enrolled in the fall term.



89% returned for the Spring 2023 semester.



22% experienced major transfer shock (over .5% GPA dip); Compared to 25% of those not contacted.

After Launch: Lessons Learned & Future Considerations

- Implemented a “Knights Prep” webinar available to all other transfer students that were not our target for this outreach.
- Created an annual schedule for this outreach. Allows coaches and other staff to plan and block calendars accordingly.
- Considerations for the future include exploring what a follow-up plan could look like that’s inclusive of outreach to previously contacted students that either stopped out or experienced major transfer shock.

Special Acknowledgments

Additional members of the implementation team for this initiative:

- Deborah Bradford, Director – Academic Support Services
- Lisa Cruz, Associate Director – Student Coaching
- Georgia Kent, Student Coach Manager
- Christy Pasnisin, Student Coach Manager
- Kaushal Patel, Application Systems Analyst

Questions and Discussion

What are some of the best practices at your institution for supporting students between being admitted and attending orientation?

How do you envision implementing a high touch intervention such as this for your transfer students? What are some of the barriers or roadblocks you anticipate?

What are a few key tips that you communicate out to your transfer students ahead of their first term?

A few of ours included the promotion of healthy enrollment behaviors and a balanced first semester course load, utilizing your support network, and completing your admissions file, etc.

RESOURCES AND CONTACT INFO

Angelia Smith

Director, Transfer Center

angelia@ucf.edu

Bernard Huggins

Associate Director, Transfer Center

bernard@ucf.edu

The UCF Transfer Center

<https://connect.ucf.edu/transfer-center/>

  @TransferConnectToUCF

We are happy to share materials. Contact us!

