In this session, we will review how a large, four-year, public research university successfully created a Transfer Student Advocate training program for staff and faculty in order to promote awareness and support of transfer students. We will discuss how the program was created and implemented and review the program structure and materials. Attendees will have the opportunity to discuss how they might develop a similar training for their campus.

Sarah Ihrig, Assistant Director of the Transfer Student Experience
University of Minnesota, Twin Cities
Creating a Transfer Student Advocate Training for Staff & Faculty

Sarah Ihrig, MA
Assistant Director of the Transfer Student Experience, University of Minnesota
AGENDA

1. U of M at a glance
2. Overview of the U of M advocate training
3. Developing your own advocate training
4. Evaluation & Next Steps
Out of the 30,754 U of M undergrad students...

6,883 new freshman
Admitted in Fall 2021

1,718 new transfers
Admitted in Fall 2021

467 additional transfers
Admitted in Spring 2022
25% of U of M undergraduate students are transfer students.
Compared to their freshmen counterparts, U of M transfer students are more likely to...

- Be Students of Color
- Be First-Gen
- Be Pell-eligible (and working more outside of school)
- Be commuters
- Have a lower first-year retention rate
- Report feeling less welcome on our campus
THE U OF M TRANSFER STUDENT ADVOCATE TRAINING
Training Overview

▪ Began in 2018 as part of efforts to improve campus climate for transfer students.

▪ Formed with the help of the U of M Transfer Student Advisory Committee & Office for Equity & Diversity.

▪ Offered every semester.

▪ Over 300 staff & faculty have attended the training (mostly staff).
Training Overview Cont.

- Two hour training when in person (½ hours when virtual)
- Training Agenda:
  - Why transfer students matter
  - Who are U of M transfer students & what challenges do they face
  - How we are currently supporting transfer students
  - Student panel
  - Attendees create their own transfer advocate plan
After the training participants:

- Receive an “I am a Transfer Advocate” sticker for their office to create a visible marker of support.
- Complete a post-training evaluation
- Are added to a Google Drive where training materials and transfer data are available
Advocate Training Outcomes:

Although it is difficult to correlate transfer success to these trainings, after these trainings...

- Inquiries for more data and consultation on transfer initiatives has increased.

- Specific transfer improvements have been made as a result!
What's Your Campus Transfer Student Story?
DEVELOP

Your Transfer Advocate Training

DATA

OBJECTIVES

PARTNERS
DATA

What do you know?

How do you know?

Who can help you get this data?

QUALITATIVE

▪ What are students telling you about their experience?

▪ What are staff & faculty telling you about the transfer students they work with?

QUANTITATIVE

▪ Admissions Data

▪ Demographic Data

▪ Retention & Graduation Data

▪ Academic Performance Data (D/F/W rates)

▪ Participation in High Impact Practices

▪ Survey Data
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OBJECTIVES</th>
<th>STUDENTS</th>
<th>STAFF &amp; FACULTY</th>
<th>YOUR CAMPUS</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What do you want your training to accomplish for...</td>
<td>How will your training benefit students?</td>
<td>What will staff &amp; faculty gain from this training?</td>
<td>How does this training align with your institutional goals?</td>
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U of M Transfer Advocate Training Objectives

1. To **increase** knowledge and awareness of the U of M transfer student population among U of M staff and faculty.

2. To **promote** transfer student access to, and participation in, University activities and resources.

3. **Identify** specific next steps participants can take to be a transfer student advocate within their current role and unit at the U of M by encouraging transfer student participation and/or removing access barriers.
PARTNERS

Who are your transfer cheerleaders?
CREATING ADVOCATES
In-Depth:

U of M Advocate Training Agenda

National & institutional Data

Current campus initiatives & support

How can I support transfer students?

What is the Issue?  
Why does it matter?  
What are we doing about it?  
How can I help?
Adapted from the Aspen Institute Transfer Playbook Tool for Assessing Progress Toward Adoption of Essential Transfer Practices for Four-Year Institutions.

- Self-assessment checklist.
- Prompts information gathering & goal setting.
Advocates added to Drive after training:

- Repository of training materials and data
- Easy to update information
- Efficient way to contact advocates with articles & opportunities
EVALUATION & NEXT STEPS
Post-training Evaluation

Take-Aways:

- The data is useful and interesting, but *the student panel was the most impactful part of the training.*

- The swag and food are very much appreciated

- Participants want opportunities for further engagement.
Next Steps & Future Directions

➔ Specific trainings for campus departments

➔ Creation of a faculty toolkit for those who do not attend the training.

➔ Re-engaging past participants with an advanced training and/or more opportunities for discussion.
Thank you for listening!

If you have any questions about this presentation please don’t hesitate to contact me at:

- transfer.umn.edu
- sihrig@umn.edu