Co-Curricular Student Success Programs

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GVSU Overview

▸ Total Students: ~25,000

▸ Undergraduate: ~21,500

▸ Graduate: ~3,500

▸ Faculty (Regular): ~850

▸ Support Staff: ~1,600

▸ Master's – Large Comprehensive

Graduate Program Overview…

▸ Undergraduate institution serving west Michigan

▸ ~25% of degrees awarded annually are graduate degrees

▸ 36 graduate degree programs
  ◦ Clinical doctorates
    · DPT - Physical Therapy
    · DNP - Nursing
  ◦ EdS in Educational Leadership
  ◦ >80 degree options

How does a comprehensive institution better ensure successful graduate student outcomes?

PACES

Professionalism **A**dvancement **C**ommunication **E**ngagement **S**uccess

How did we start?

- Provost's Advisory Board Meeting
  - Fall 2009
  - Advisory board members
    - West Michigan employers, professionals, and university partners
  - Told us what is needed from graduates in today's workplace
  - Very clear need for non-technical skills
    - communication, commitment to excellence, and decision making
    - emotional intelligence, social skills, and professionalism
    - stress management, time management, and motivation

- Do graduate curricula prepare students to acquire these kinds of skills?

PACES program origin

▸ Inception of the idea

  ▸ Participation in MSU's PREP program

  ▸ Could a master's comprehensive university do this?

  ▸ "Adopt, adapt, and improve the idea…" (Karen Klomparens, MSU)

▸ Idea challenges

  ▸ Would such a program work at our institution?

  ▸ Aren't there offices on campus that already provide programming for graduate students?

  ▸ Will graduate students attend extra-curricular events not directly tied to their degree programs?

Advisory Board

▸ Identify offices, staff, and faculty who might assist in program development

  ▸ Experienced with programming for undergraduates

  ▸ Interested in expanding to include graduate students

  ▸ Sounding board for programming ideas and new directions

▸ Initial members

  ▸ Student Affairs

  ▸ Counseling & Career Development Center

  ▸ Health and Wellness

  ▸ Career Services

  ▸ Select graduate program directors

Advisory Board challenge

▸ Advising and providing programming ideas for a constituent group that has not been served before…

   ▸ Is there a qualitative difference between UG and GR students?

   ▸ What do GR students need that UG student don't?

   ▸ How will we commit to servicing this group with a culture defined by, and devoted to, UG students?

   ▸ What resources are available to meet these needs?

First steps…

▸ Challenge: need an identity, a recognizable 'brand'
- ▸ Solution: Find a creative 'champion' (one of our staff)
  - ▸ Create a meaningful acronym, a program 'brand'
  - ▸ Design an attractive logo
  - ▸ Marketing identity

Office of Graduate Studies
PACES
Professionalism. Advancement.
Communication. Engagement. Success.

www.gvsu.edu/gs

What types of programs will be offered?

- <u>What</u>?
  - Programming that complements professional development, personal growth, and enables academic and career success
- <u>Where</u>?
  - Downtown campus locations where graduate programs reside
    - Main campus in Allendale = undergraduate students (~90%)
    - Downtown campus = graduate and graduate professional students
- <u>When</u>?
  - A time when most graduate students are available (4-5:30 pm)
- <u>Who</u>?
  - Individuals who are familiar with graduate student issues
- <u>How</u>?
  - Active and passive delivery

Passive delivery via our web page…

www.gvsu.edu/paces

Active programming (1ˢᵗ & 2ⁿᵈ year)

- ▸ 1-hr sessions on topics of interest
  - ▸ How to get the most out of a professional meeting
  - ▸ How to give a platform or poster presentation
  - ▸ How to manage debt
  - ▸ Library skills workshop (RefWorks)
  - ▸ Finding a research mentor and choosing a research topic
  - ▸ Fellowships: Increasing your chances for success
  - ▸ Responsible conduct of research ("RCR 101")
  - ▸ Thesis workshop: Writing strategies for success
  - ▸ Constructing a successful meeting
  - ▸ Pursuing a PhD
  - ▸ Getting the most from your internship/clinical experience
  - ▸ Resumes, cover letters, and letters of recommendation

Programming challenges we've faced…

- Speakers/presenters who know and work with graduate students…
  - Avoid 'canned messages' and standard delivery from a service office
  - Use faculty over staff whenever possible
- Program message and examples need to fit the graduate population
- Build a pool of good providers
- Use student feedback to refine, revise, and re-shape
- Adopting social media strategies (Facebook, Twitter)

Transitions for programming – 2nd year

- Why not try a weekend format?
    - Attendance was low for some weekday sessions
    - More relaxed atmosphere, more available time for attendees
    - Able to merge several small workshops into a 1-day offering

- "Art of Interviewing" workshop

- "Leading High Performance Teams"

How did we do?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	N/A
Valuable towards prof. dev.	38%	62%				
Content was appropriate	75%	25%				
Topic presented in a useful manner	62%	38%				
Keynote Speaker (Thomas Brown) was useful and appropriate	88%	12%				
Social Media session was useful and informative	63%	21%	6%			
Session on Interviewing: Interviewee perspectives was useful and informative	19%	56%	25%			
Session on Interviewing: Employer perspectives was useful and informative	81%	13%	6%			
Session with Dr. Arnold was useful and informative	69%	31%				
Post Mortem of an Interview was useful and informative	33%	40%	13%	7%		7%
Live Interview was useful and informative	19%	50%	13%			18%
Presentation methods were high quality	50%	50%				
Sufficient material presented	44%	50%	6%			
Topic materials were high quality	69%	31%				
Registration process was clear	25%	56%	6%	13%		
Website information was helpful	25%	31%	19%			25%
Overall I was satisfied	50%	50%				

Would you recommend program?
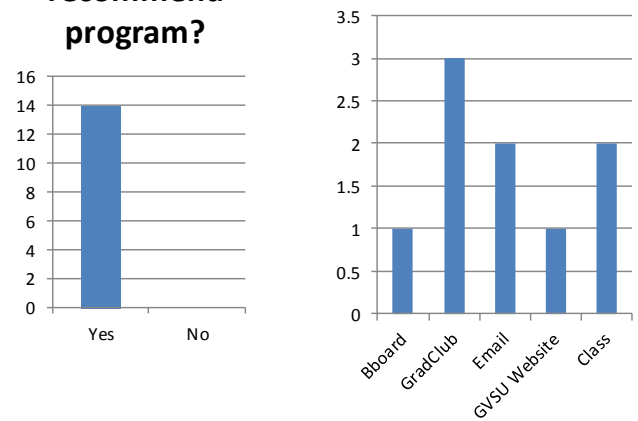
When you would you prefer to attend PACES events?
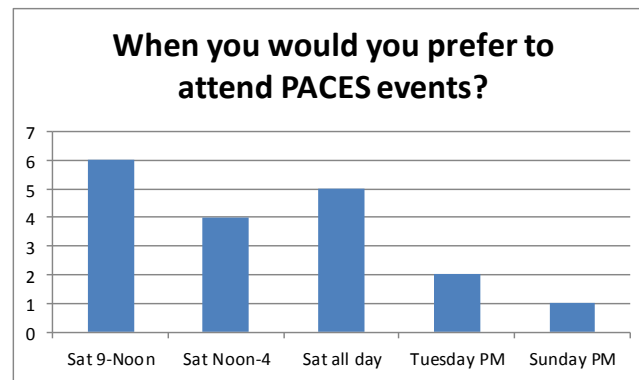
Where are we headed now?

- ▸ Plan and schedule more weekend workshops
  - ▸ Half days (9am to noon)
  - ▸ All day workshops (9 am- noon; 1-4 pm)
- ▸ Layer related topics
  - ▸ Example: Job Search Workshop
    - ▸ letters of application, resume/cv writing, search strategies, dress, communication and interview skills
- ▸ Bring in outside speakers
  - ▸ Build a budget and share costs with GSA
- ▸ Create a better advisory board with GSA participation
  - ▸ Social media connections with GSA

Added benefits for our efforts…

- Building an active, growing graduate student community
  - Given GSA a reason to grow and become a voice for graduate student concerns
  - Helped integrate the 'silos' of student cultures by discipline…
    - Business students now interact with health professions and engineering students
    - International students integrate more with domestic peers
- Gives The Graduate School a supportive role in education
  - Role for Associate Dean in graduate student affairs
  - Our GAs help build and sustain programming and operations

Program assessment outcomes…

▸ Improving quality of the graduate student experience

▸ Complementing and supplementing curricula and degree programs

▸ Providing transferable skills

▸ Meeting employer needs

▸ Improving placement outcomes

▸ Building a sense of institutional loyalty

▸ Becoming engaged alumni who give back

▸ Others?

Questions or Comments?