

## COMPASS Frequently Asked Questions for Faculty & Staff

### **What is COMPASS?**

COMPASS stands for Coaching, Mentoring, Persistence, and Student Success, and is DSC's proposed Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), designed to complement the amazing services already provided to our students. COMPASS is a proactive and personalized program that offers academic coaching and mentoring specifically designed for first-time in college students pursuing an A.A. degree. Its primary objective is to guarantee academic success by providing tailored support and guidance during a student's first year of college.

### **What does an academic coach do?**

An academic coach works with first-time in college (FTIC), A.A. degree-seeking students to identify their goals, potential challenges they may encounter, and connect them to campus resources – we want to make sure they know that we have what they need to be successful in college. They can help students navigate the process of advising, applying for financial aid, approaching difficult assignments or classes, accessing academic support, and addressing issues outside of college that may impact their success. Students can ask them anything. They are the compass dedicated to helping our students be successful here at Daytona State and on their personal journey.

### **Why would a student need an academic coach?**

Students can often feel overwhelmed with the process during their first experience of college, and we know they don't always know what questions to ask. We want to ensure that they know they are not alone and that we're here to help! Academic coaches work with students to navigate the college process and any challenges they may encounter; help them stay motivated and provide ongoing support and accountability throughout their first year.

### **How do students connect with an academic coach?**

Academic Coaches will contact first-year, A.A. degree-seeking students via phone or email after they have submitted their admissions application.

### **Can a student sign up for academic coaching?**

There is no sign-up or referral process for eligible students. The students who are first-time in college and seeking an A.A. degree will be contacted by phone or email soon after they apply to Daytona State.

### **Why did we choose FTIC, A.A. degree seeking students for this initiative?**

We know that first-time college students can often feel overwhelmed with the application and enrollment process and need extra support. A.A. degree seeking students are our largest population of students, and since they are all focusing on different transfer pathways, they take a variety of courses with various faculty. Having a point person for support, guidance, and assistance can lead to greater success.

### **How do I respond to a student who is not FTIC, A.A.-degree seeking but asks for an academic coach?**

While this initiative focuses on a specific population of students, support is available to them in many other facets – academic advising, career services, their instructors, and in the future, mentors. Share all of the wonderful resources that the student can access.

### **Where do eligible students meet with an academic coach?**

Academic coaches are available to meet in-person, via Teams, or by phone – whatever is most convenient for the student’s schedule!

**How much does an academic coach cost?**

Our service is completely FREE! Our coaches are here to support first-time, A.A. degree seeking students to be successful and get the most out of their college experience.

**How is an academic coach different from an academic advisor?**

Academic advisors assist all students and focus on the educational elements of the student’s college journey, such as major selection, course or requirement questions, and enrollment assistance. Advisors will also help guide students to campus resources, but there are often time constraints, and students are not assigned to a single advisor.

An academic coach helps a specific population of students – those who are first-time in college and pursuing an A.A. degree - after they apply, proactively reaching out and taking a broader, more holistic approach to identify academic and non-academic needs before they enroll. *For example, if a student shares that they plan to take online courses, the coach will ask if they have a reliable computer and internet – if the student says no, it is an early opportunity to let them know that we have laptops available that they can borrow, computers for use in the Academic Support Centers, and free wi-fi on all campuses so they can make these arrangements before they begin classes.* The support they get will be personalized based on their unique needs with the goal of empowering them to access the resources that will guide them on the path to graduation.

While advisors will also help connect students to these resources, it is typically later in their enrollment process or semester, while a coach can make the connection earlier. The value and goal of adding the proactive support of an academic coach for this population is to identify student needs and connect them to resources *before* they experience challenges that can impact their success.

**How is an academic coach different from a mentor?**

An academic coach will begin working with the selected students as soon as they apply to attend Daytona State and provides support and motivation throughout their first year. Depending on their specific goals, a coach may introduce students to a mentor, who will work with students to help foster their personal and professional growth by sharing wisdom and personal insight through a relationship that may last through graduation.

**What happens to a student after their first year?**

Once a student completes their first year, they will be equipped with the knowledge and confidence to continue on their path without an academic coach. They may be paired with a mentor but will also still have access to all other campus resources, including academic advising to help connect them to resources as they need them.

**What is a mentor?**

A mentor is an individual who provides guidance based on their experiences, knowledge, and expertise. The mentor provides support and feedback to mentees to help them achieve their goals.

**How are students connected to mentors?**

During the Fall 2023 semester, we are piloting mentoring with students in select sections of Managing Your Success (SLS1122). Using feedback from the pilot, we will develop a Faculty Mentoring Toolkit and

expand mentoring activities for future semesters. More information about how students can connect to mentorship will be shared as these opportunities become available – look for a session during Spring planning!

### **How can I become a mentor?**

If you are interested in becoming a mentor, please email [COMPASS@daytonastate.edu](mailto:COMPASS@daytonastate.edu) to be added to our mentor database for future semesters.

### **How will we assess the success of the program?**

We will be assessing five key measures:

- Yield rates (the number of students who apply then follow through with enrolling).
- Major selection by 24 credits – ensuring students identify a major and transfer plan by time they earn 24 credits).
- Student’s sense of mattering.
- Reduction in withdraw rates during the first year of college
- Retention rates (Fall-to-Fall)

### **What are our target outcomes and rationale for selecting the measures?**

#### **Yield Rates**

- **Target Outcome** – 3% increase in number of applicants who enrolled after application.
- **Rationale** – Students are often overwhelmed by the enrollment process and hesitate to complete the steps once they apply. The proactive support of an academic coach can ease such feelings and increase the likelihood of enrolling.

#### **Major Selection by 24 credits**

- **Target Outcome** - A 2% comparative population reduction of the number of identified students without a declared major by 24 credit hours.
- **Rationale** – Students who identify their intended major early can focus on courses that are necessary pre-requisites to transfer to their intended degree and develop an academic plan, thus reducing their time to degree.

#### **Mattering**

- **Target Outcome** - Participating students will assess their connection to mattering as it relates to their participation in academic coaching and mentoring.
- **Rationale** – Student perceptions of mattering and belonging impact their ability to connect with campus, persist, and completion their degree.

#### **Reduction in W rates during the first year**

- **Target Outcome** - 3% reduced withdrawal rate among students during the 1<sup>st</sup> year.
- **Rationale** – Students who withdraw during their first year are often unaware of the resources and support available to them, which can compromise their progress and financial aid eligibility, resulting in a higher risk for not returning or completing their degree.

#### **Retention**

- **Target Outcome** - Increased retention of FTIC AA-degree seeking students.

- **Rationale** – Students who are supported and are retained from year-to-year, specifically Fall-to-Fall, are more likely to complete their degree.

**Comparison of Advising, Coaching, and Mentoring**

	<b>Advising</b>	<b>Coaching</b>	<b>Mentoring</b>
<b>Focus</b>	Academic planning – selecting a major and schedule, creates the blueprint for academic success.	Navigating the college process - A holistic approach to explore student's needs, goals and skills to support academic and non-academic needs.	Personal and professional development/growth - Sharing experience, knowledge, expertise, and support.
<b>Timeframe</b>	Available throughout student's entire time in college.	First year of college.	First-year, potentially through graduation.
<b>Strategy</b>	Transactional in nature. Gives advice or recommendations based on academics and college policies.	Helps students identify strategies and resources for success through proactive outreach and asking guiding questions.	Personal and professional development based on the mentor's experience and expertise.
<b>Training</b>	Advising training required	Academic coaching training required	Mentoring training and tool kit required