



# A Guide for Concierges



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## Section 1: Welcome to the Open SUNY Community!

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### Video link

[This video describes the aspirations of the Open SUNY initiatives.](#) The video is approximately 2.5 minutes in length.

The [Open SUNY website](#) and the [Open SUNY Navigator](#) describe the many programs associated with Open SUNY initiatives. Please take some time to navigate through these sites. They will help to orient you not only to your own campus participation in Open SUNY but also the rest of the system initiatives.

### What is a Concierge?

The concierge model was developed as a “baseline” model for providing student support. Simply stated, the concierge is a “single point of contact” – the person or people to whom students can turn for information, support, and guidance.

Many campuses have implemented even more robust models that are effectively working on their campuses. Depending on your campus culture, you may be an “advisor,” or a “mentor” or an “academic advisor.” As your campus grows into this model, you may consider taking the concierge role to the next level. The “next level” can take many forms, but it often means the concierge plays a full academic advisor and/or mentor role to students.

### Why a Concierge?

Research on online education has yielded some disheartening results. Chief among them is a consistently lower completion rate for online students—between 20% and 50% lower than that of their conventional on-campus peers.<sup>i</sup>

Fortunately, these trends are not immutable. Research also shows that online students are more likely to succeed when they have access to personalized, one-on-one attention<sup>ii</sup>

For example, numerous community colleges have begun to implement single-point-of-contact concierge models and early alert systems, with encouraging results.<sup>iii</sup> In fact, the National Academic Advising Association now recommends that institutions offering distance learning provide a single point of contact for all student support services.<sup>iv</sup>

The role of the concierge at SUNY was developed to help online students navigate their degrees and find a place within the broader University community. SUNY is not alone in this effort – indeed, institutions in various states have begun to identify the concierge model as a potential solution to the many barriers facing students who do not exactly fit into a “traditional” profile. The Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, for example, has emphasized the concierge model as a primary tactic to stimulate re-enrollment and retention.<sup>v</sup>

As a concierge, you will play a hybrid role of advisor, mentor, and coach and become that single point of contact. Although your services will not replace any specialized advising happening in, for example, your academic departments, you should be broadly familiar with your campus culture, including but not limited to:

- Overall academic and degree requirements
- Financial aid
- Career services
- Tutoring and other academic supports
- Opportunities for fully online students to engage with the campus community at large

### Examples of the Concierge Model

To give an idea of the variation across the Open SUNY campuses, those in Wave 1 of have provided descriptions of their campus Concierge model. Although there might be slight variations, all contain the baseline of a single point of contact and robust student supports.

***SUNY Broome Community College:*** At SUNY Broome Community College, the concierge supports students in the fully-online Clinical Laboratory Technician program and Histological Technician certificate program. The students follow a very specific curriculum schedule that guides them efficiently through the program coursework. Students advise directly with the department chair or designee either in person or via Skype, Collaborate, or telephone. After this has happened, the concierge is introduced as the single point of contact for the student to help them navigate the college, their courses, and their eventual career. The concierge helps the student navigate the world of online learning by helping them solve technology related issues and also teaching those students where to turn for help with any issue they may face as an online learner. The concierge also works closely with faculty in the department to monitor student performance and is granted access to the course management system. Attendance, course progress, and grades can be reviewed by the concierge to identify students that may be struggling and to provide preemptive action to remediate the situation. Throughout the semester, the concierge initiates regular contact with the students to check their progress, remind them of important deadlines, and offer support. The concierge plays a key role in coordinating administrative tasks and managing online student documents and files. In addition, the concierge helps to gather and analyze data about student rotations, clinical affiliate sites, and other program parameters to continually improve the online program.

***Delhi:*** SUNY Delhi's School of Nursing's RN to BSN and MSN Online programs operate under a centralized advisement model where professional advisors who don't carry teaching load advise a load of online students starting after the admissions process (at enrollment) and through graduation. The role encompasses all the traditional functions of an academic advisor, however these functions are operationalized through phone, our learning management system, and e-mail. At this time, enrollment is about 800, and there are 4 advisors. Load is typically 200-250.

Key pieces of this model include:

- an introductory phone call to individual students by the advisor, to establish the relationship
- a robust and heavily used advisement 'classroom' within the LMS, which contains interactive degree planning functions, and activities such as appointment scheduling with advisors
- a required, comprehensive, 3-credit, 7-week orientation course to the RN to BSN program, which includes assignments that drive the to use the advisement classroom
- a carefully timed advisement communication plan for the semester

***SUNY Empire State College*** ESC has a long tradition of supporting and advising students throughout the duration of their studies. This is the mentor who acts as an academic guide for students when they are devising their own customized and individualized degree program. Students consult with mentors and negotiate a degree program that meets their individual learning and professional goals while addressing the guidelines of their chosen areas of study such as business, management or economics or human development. Currently the college has 12 Areas of Study and students develop degree plans in related concentrations working with their mentors. This regular and substantive contact takes place via the Learning Management System (LMS), phone or email and/or face to face, depending on the interests of the students. In addition, mentors may advise on aspects of prior learning assessment (PLA) where students can gain credit for college-level learning gained through previous educational, training or professional experience. Working together, the mentor and student synthesize all of these aspects into a coherent and fulfilling academic degree program in a supportive learning environment.

***Finger Lakes Community College*** Finger Lakes Community College has one Learning Concierge who supports about 1500 students taking online classes, 450 being exclusively online students. Support can be defined as assisting with administrative, technical, and academic concerns.

Primary types of support vary according to the time of year/semester. Because Maureen is also an academic advisor, the periods just prior to, and during, registration are focused on scheduled phone advising appointments with part-time online students who request advising and registration assistance. Additionally, she advises incoming freshman during the summer and early winter months (prior to each semester,) who self-identify as fully online students.

During non-advising and registration periods, the concierge assists students who reach out for assistance, academic resources, and any variety of issues that may arise for an online student. She also proactively contacts online students who have been identified either through the early alert system, Starfish, or their instructors, as being at risk and needing assistance, support, connection. Additionally, through various modes of communication such as emails, newsletters

and announcements, the concierge keeps students notified about important dates, training opportunities, reminders, best practices, etc.

Other responsibilities include developing and presenting training sessions in the use of Blackboard to both online and campus-based students. Upon instructor request, the concierge also visits campus classrooms to provide Blackboard orientation.

**Oswego:** We offer a well-rounded level of customer service. In our graduate MBA programs, we help traditional and non-traditional students find the answers to their questions, whether through us or by directing students to the appropriate campus office. This ensures that the students receive accurate information. We also cater to the flexibility and customization that our students are looking for in their graduate study. When students are first accepted into the program, we schedule an advisement appointment to construct a possible program plan based on the conversations our staff has with our students. We listen to their career goals and life commitments that influence their graduate study, then construct a suggested program plan to help the students receive the education and knowledge in their preferred subject areas. We want our students to know that we are here to help them with their educational and career goals. This is why our students can shape the concentration of their MBA program to fit their career goals, through electives, internships, and independent study courses. Our MBA Department has a dedicated staff of four full-time employees who are in regular contact with our 200+ matriculated MBA students and approximately 550 prospective and non-matriculated students. Through open communication in the office and detailed documentation, we are able to remain informed with the progress of our students before, during, and after their tenure as MBA students.

**Stony Brook University:** The Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering degree program offers a comprehensive range of student support services. Since the program only offers core electrical engineering courses, there is a set of minimum admission criteria including math and physics requirements.

During the application phase, applicants are advised based on their academic background and whether he/she meets the admission requirements. If not, we make suggestions on how the applicant can fulfill the admission requirements by recommending specific online courses from other campuses or higher education institutions.

Upon admitted to the program, students are advised in each semester on what courses to take to optimize their time to graduation. We listen to all their requests, needs and questions to come up with a specific set of recommendations. In case of unforeseen events in students' life, such as illness or family issues, we help with arrangement of academic absences. Our goal is to stay in touch with students and support their learning process.

## Section 2: Community of Learners in the Asynchronous and Online Environment: Who are Your Students?

As a concierge, you will encounter a tremendous variety of students, all united by one common path – the pursuit of an online post-secondary degree program. There are both academic and social engagement components to this model.

Generally speaking, and although there are overlaps, the needs of students taking courses in the asynchronous, on-line environment will be different from – but mirror - those of campus based students.

For example, effective time management is a skill with which many students struggle. Those in the face to face environment have a set time, place, and space for their courses – the lecture hall, the classroom. That part of the “time management” is essentially already taken care of. In the online environment, the asynchronous courses can be accessed at any time. This flexibility often means students forget to log on, or wait until a section of the course is about to close before engaging the material. The assumption is that students will have the necessary skills and self-awareness to create the time and place to complete their studies – and that is often a big challenge for students.

We also have to remember that technological skills are not equal among students – the fact is that learning is difficult, and this difficulty can be heightened by difficulties with the LMS, accessing courses, understating where to submit projects and essays, how to find help and support. We can imagine that if a student cannot even access a course, it is unlikely that this student will actually complete the work.

Research also supports the need to socially engage the student taking courses in the online environment. You might want to see if your campus has dedicated forums for student taking online courses. These forums are usually monitored by staff, and questions are answered by the appropriate faculty or staff. Many times, though, the forums are used to create a community in which students can talk about their courses, share successes, ask questions – think of it is a virtual student lounge.

To address both the social and academic needs of students in the online environment, the student supports model has five signature elements. The first is the Concierge.

The other four are tools and supports, including

- Early alerts – in general, these are tools intended to capture a snapshot of student academic engagement, and flag patterns or potential issues that may inhibit academic success
- [Readiness assessments](#) – various assessments to gauge preparedness for online learning
- Tutoring – either online or hybrid, with flexible student access
- 24/7 Help Desk Support

### **Describing a “typical online student”**

It is difficult to comprehensively describe students taking online courses. Generally speaking, they are students who cannot or choose not to take campus based classes. Perhaps, for example, there are employment or health considerations that make access to the campus inconvenient. Students might also be returning to college to attain degrees which support a second career path, or who wish to begin or restart formal learning, and who find the online or blended environments best suit their needs.

Colleagues from SUNY Oswego report that students who fall outside of the 18- 22 year old, campus based student might be described this way: *Students who are ages 24 and up; active duty, reserves, guards, or vet (and spouses thereof); potentially in a domestic partnership; potentially with dependents; working at least part time.*

Colleagues from SUNY Broome Community College describe a typical student taking courses online this way:

*Many students in the online CLT and HT programs at SUNY Broome are working adults with previous education in biology, chemistry, or other related areas. These individuals are seeking advancement in their careers as they are often employed as a phlebotomist or laboratory assistant in a clinical laboratory or as a technician in an industrial or environmental laboratory. The online student is juggling work, family, and personal commitments while pursuing their education. Students are able to build on the knowledge and experience they have in their current position by connecting concepts they are learning in class to what they see in their workplace. Many of these students do not live close to the SUNY Broome campus, and the college places them in clinical sites that are geographically close to the students.*

Our colleagues at SUNY Oswego offer these observations about students in their MBA program:

*In our MBA programs at SUNY Oswego, we have a mix of traditional and non-traditional students. Some students work full-time and have family commitments, limiting them to part-time study. Other students are full-time and have the ability to dedicate themselves to the MBA program. No matter the situation, the flexibility of our program allows students to take classes at the pace best suited for them. Our students know, through our consistent communication and support, that we are dedicated to ensure that they receive the education they are seeking. We want our students to enhance their career opportunities in whatever industry they desire. The knowledge gained through our MBA program is versatile in the job market and our students have the ability to shape their MBA program to fit their preferences. This is done through in depth conversations between advisors and students to construct the program that best fits the students. The vast mix of our students also helps enhance the educational experience within the class setting. Students are often asked to use real-life examples in their class discussions, so it is beneficial to have students from many different walks of life to share their experiences. The*



*diversity within the MBA programs at SUNY Oswego adds to the growth and high-level of education that our students receive throughout their program. We are always eager to welcome students with varying backgrounds to help diversify our MBA community.*

Regardless of the particular descriptors, as you work with students, please keep the following questions in mind:

What is the motivation for pursuing studies now, in this modality?

What are some potential barriers to academic success?

What are some strengths the students brings to academic goal attainment?

How can you use tools, colleagues, and other campus supports to close gaps and engage strengths?

In subsequent sections, we will discuss tools and other supports to help track some of these dimensions.

### Section 3: Understanding Your Campus Community and Our SUNY Community

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Your campus will address your overall orientation, and define the scope of your work. This section is intended to supplement that orientation – whether you are new to the role, or new to both the campus and the role. The policies across your own campus will help direct how you fit into the overall communication and support flow. As you work across your campus referral networks, and so that you can remain aware of various outcomes that could impact student success, you might encourage students to communicate outcomes back to you. For example, if you refer a student to Financial Aid, you might ask that the student send a quick email your way to close that loop, and ensure there are no other referrals or potential implications for the registration.

Since you are the main point of contact for students in the online environment, you will undoubtedly hear if students encounter difficulties navigating the resources on your campus. Our colleagues across the first Wave of Open SUNY campuses suggest that the concierge can play a key role in helping the campus to become sensitive to students in this modality. Notice, for example, if online learners are clearly and consistently directed to services that exist face-to-face across the campus. For example, is the link to the bookstore visible and obvious? Do students know how to access key offices such as Financial Aid or the Office of the Registrar? While you might not be able to “fix” the issues, you can play a key role in raising awareness about potential gaps in services to students who might never physically visit your home campus.

Here are some possible points to consider:

- Where does this role fit into the overall workflow of the campus?
- Who are your peers in similar roles? Can those peers become a cohort of support professionals?
- What do you know about the departments with which your students primarily work?
- How does your campus define student and academic support services?
- How will you encourage students to use these services and supports? For example, are the services easily accessed? Can students locate them? Are the services accessible to all learners? For example, if a student cannot utilize the full complement of services due to a particular disability, to who is that concern raised?
- Is there a student success team that focuses on retention? Are you a part of this team? How can you ensure that you are up to date on relevant policies that might affect the students with whom you work?
- How will student feedback and data regarding access be used to enhance your practice? (Section 6 includes a sample student survey)

To help organize your own support network, this chart can be modified to fit your campus culture. Yours might include website resources, or other key contacts.

## Sample:

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION	Name/Phone/email	Website (if relevant)
<b>Central Administrative Contacts</b>		
Main Campus Headquarters		
Office of the Dean		
Office of the Registrar		
Financial Aid Office		
Admissions Office		
Student Accounts		
Transfer Office		
<b>Academic &amp; Career Support</b>		
Academic Advising		
Career Advising		
Tutoring Services		
Cross-Registration		
Academic Departments		
(Customized student-based needs)		

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION	Name/Phone/email	Website (if relevant)
<b>Other Supports</b>		
Director of Online Learning		
Information Technology Support		
Disabilities Services		
Psychological Counseling		
Extracurricular		
Alumni Office		
Graduation Information		
Residential Life (hybrid)		
Library (main and specialized)		

### **SUNY Community**

As a campus concierge, you will join a broader family of professionals supporting online students across Open SUNY. You will share best practices and learn from one another, with the aim of developing and maintaining the highest quality of student supports for online education across the SUNY system.

The SUNY system will check-in periodically with each concierge to understand successes, challenges, and areas for improvement for the program as a whole.

## Section 4: Thinking About Your Role

Research shows that personalized interaction and support are instrumental in helping online students map their academic trajectories and overcome challenges along the way.<sup>vi</sup> Emerging best practices literature emphasizes the value of centralized, one-on-one touch points to address a wide range of student questions.<sup>vii</sup> Accordingly, the concierge role addresses three general functions:

- **Reference** – Accumulate and disseminate basic solutions to academic, professional, administrative, and other issues students may encounter.
- **Coach** – Encourage and motivate students as they proceed through their coursework, and guide them in resolving learning-related problems.
- **Advocate** – Be the voice of online students on campus and help them locate and access the resources they need.

Each of these roles asks that the Concierge practice open and active listening, be available to students (email, office hours, etc.), and remain focused on solutions based approaches to helping students through academic challenges. These roles can overlap, and your campus will determine the scope of your work. You might find yourself doing the following:

- referring students to supports in their departments
- referring students to campus-wide supports, including disabilities services
- answering basic questions about, e.g., academic advising, course selection, financial aid, registration, etc.
- helping students navigate their online learning experience
- helping students resolve a variety of learning issues and challenges
- advising students how to apply online learning success strategies to their day-to-day coursework
- connecting students with opportunities to engage with campus, or with peers taking courses online
- coaching student learning and helping student develop independent learning skills
- encouraging and acknowledging student success
- coordinating with campus resources to make sure the student's needs are met
- following up on student requests as needed

### **Campus Policies and Procedures**

A Concierge is not, though, “everything to every student,” and as such you should never handle students’ mental or other health issues nor should you address legal issues. You should also not assume a student does or does not have a disability. If a student requests guidance, you can refer to appropriate campus supports. Please ensure you know your campus protocol for handling potentially contentious issues. Here are some common scenarios in which you might have to make a specific referral.

#### **Emotional Distress**

Since the Concierge is often the primary point of contact, if you believe a student is experiencing mental health issues, *immediately contact your supervisor, follow campus protocol, and/or call 911.*

If a student reveals that there has been a death in the family, or another health emergency that will impact academics, you might facilitate connection with instructors, registrar, and other campus offices to help support the student in crisis.

#### **Harassment Policy**

Please consult your campus administration for detailed information on your campus-specific harassment policy, including procedures for filing complaints or grievances.

## **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)**

As our student population expands and becomes more diverse, we ask the concierge to be mindful and have a general understanding of the Americans with Disabilities Rights Act – usually referred to as “ADA.” The US Department of Education has excellent, general resources on this topic, and your home campus will have dedicated resources to support students with a range of disabilities.

Please refer students to your colleagues in the Office for Disabilities Services and as students present a need for supports, you can help facilitate connections. Students will directly work with that office to secure adequate confirmation and description of supports needed. Students and faculty will work together to ensure that all accommodations and supports are in place at the course level. Your role is to facilitate connection to these offices, and to follow-up with students in case there is a gap, or in case they are not connecting with the right support.

## **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**

Generally speaking, FERPA protects student educational records, and sets determinations around who can access these records, and how the information contained in them can be used. Your home campus will have specific protocols in place to ensure that student privacy is protected. Please consult with your supervisor as to the circumstances under which potentially confidential information about sensitive topics such as grade outcomes, academic supports, college conduct issues, or conflicts with a course instructor.

## **Common Student Questions**

As a concierge, you are not expected to have specialized technical knowledge of each student support service. When a question is beyond your purview, you should refer the student to the appropriate knowledge expert.

Some basic knowledge is required as part of your “reference” role, and as you grow into this role, you will become more familiar with these processes. Outlined below are some common student questions and scenarios. They are noted to help you consider how you might engage colleagues and help students connect with other campus offices.

Again, and as appropriate to situation and your campus protocol, ask students to let you know what they learned when they worked with another office. This practice not only keeps you informed of potential challenges and updates, but it also builds your own awareness of campus practice, how offices interact, and so on.

## **Financial Aid**

Paying for college is an important consideration in the lives of most students, and it is often a sensitive topic. In general, questions about financial aid packages and student accounts should be referred to those offices. Student aid packages can widely vary, and they should contact that office for specifics about their situation. However, it might be helpful to ask students if their registration is impacted by minimum or maximum numbers of credits per semester. This information will help you plan registration strategy, alert student to potential of falling into academic warning (which could impact financial aid), and so forth.

If a student is struggling with how to pay for college, make a referral to your campus student accounts or other appropriate office. Some campuses have plans by which students can pay over time, but that information is based on student need, and highly individualized.

Lastly, become familiar with scholarships available across your campus, and encourage students to research other opportunities for grants and funding. This is a great way to engage students with campus community.

## **Veteran Support**

Many campuses have offices dedicated to the specialized needs of current and former members of the armed forces. Our colleagues at SUNY Empire State College, for example, have developed robust supports for active duty and inactive veterans. We can imagine, too, that the convenience of the online modality is appealing to students on active military duty. Depending on a student's particular circumstances, military status might have implications for timing of registration, or entitle a student to specially curated supports. Please check with your supervisor as to how your campus supports this population.

## **Academics**

Depending on your role, you might be working with students to set up registration from term to term, helping to connect them with tutoring services, giving best practices and tips for finding academic success in their courses, and so forth.

Students often wonder how their degrees will lead to viable careers. Familiarize yourself with any career services on your campus, and ask students to engage that office to determine interests and to align academic and career goals. To help plan registration, that information will be helpful for you, too.

Questions about how a disability might impact student work should be referred either to the office in charge of disabilities services and/or the instructor for the course.



For other general academic challenges, be ready to connect students with tutoring services and writing support for general writing tips, how to cite sources, and so forth. Students often hear about tutoring, but then forget how to access it until they are experiencing academic difficulties. Reminders about the availability of these services can help students be more proactive than reactive.

You should be familiar with the basic information about AA/AS and BA/BS degrees, and with the general registration process, including how to drop and add a course, and the add/drop deadlines for the semester.

If questions specific to a course or to a major or department, you would likely refer the student to that area for accurate information most relevant to the degree.

If a student reports that an instructor is either not responding to communication or has not graded work, refer student to the department for follow-up.

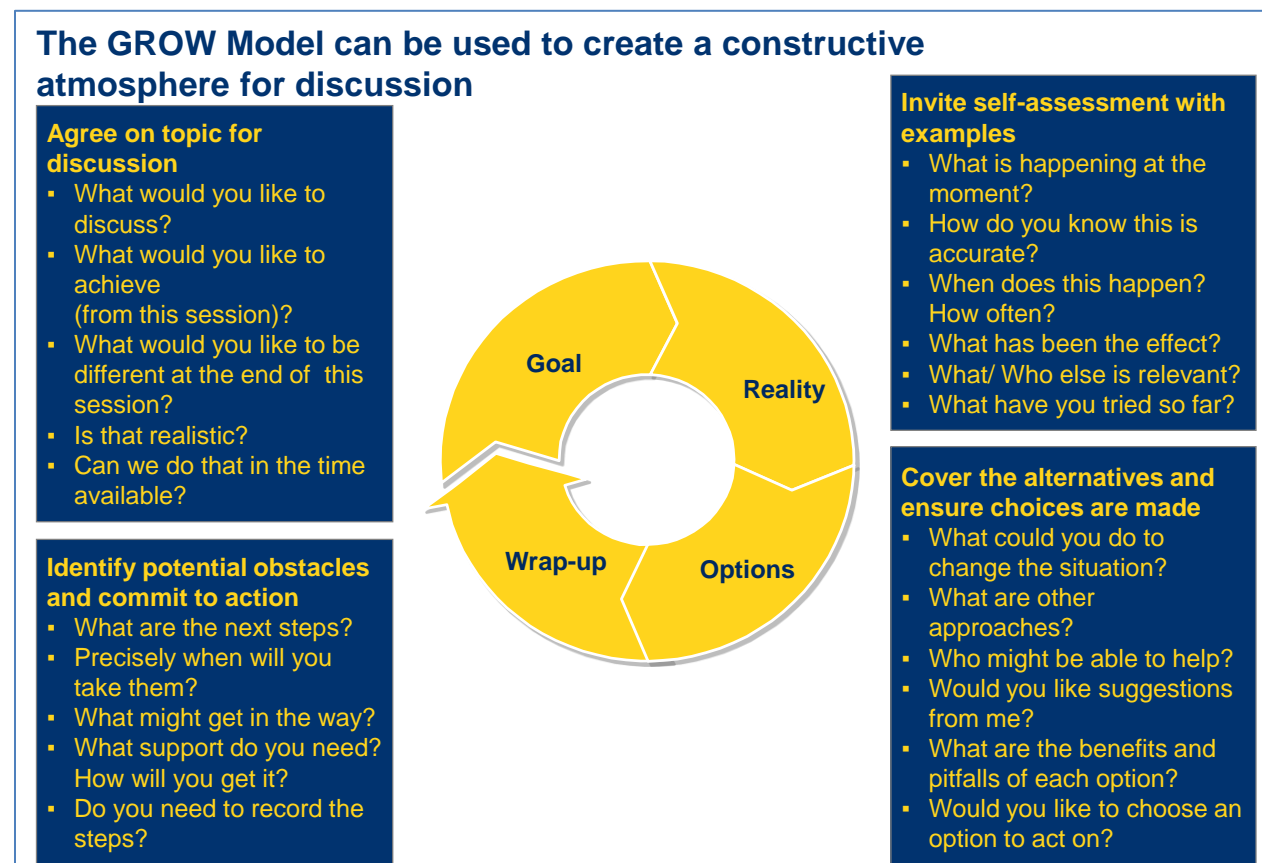
### **Technical Support**

If a student is having difficulty accessing courses, you might walk through the log-in process, or help the student submit a help desk ticket, or refer them to the correct campus office. Remind students about the Open SUNY 24/7 Help Desk, too. These issues can be very frustrating especially if students feel disengage from campus based help. Most likely, the student will have to be referred to the Help Desk, but just being there to answer questions, to refer, and follow-up can go a long way towards reducing student anxiety.

## Section 5: Features of Good Practice: The Arc of a Semester

### The GROW Model

One of the original developers of the GROW model, Alan Fine, used his experience as a tennis coach to inform development of this coaching model. Fine and his two collaborators devised the model around research pointing to the four significant points in the decision-making process: the “Goal” the individual wishes to attain; the contextual “Realities” that must be considered; the “Options” open to the decision-maker. According to *InsideOut Development*, the consulting company Fine eventually founded, the “W” has been differently interpreted. Fine intended it to refer to “Way Forward,” but can also be interpreted as the “Wrap-Up” to the decision making cycle – the point at which the decision is made, and a clear plan of action to move towards goal attainment is created.



The GROW Model is versatile and broadly applicable to most cases in which students seek your guidance. It will help students articulate their objectives and develop action plans to achieve their goals. The framework can be used in a broad variety of contexts, throughout the cycle of working with an individual student -- from introductory meetings, to developing a plan of action

with students who have fallen behind their study goals, with students who might have changed their mind about their academic goals, and with students preparing for graduation.

The primary components of GROW are:

**Goal:** Work with the student to clearly define a desired outcome. Make sure that the objective is specific and measurable. Some examples include:

- “I want to achieve a grade of B or higher in my English class.”
- “I want to submit all my assignments on time this semester.”
- “I want to participate regularly in class discussions.”
- “I want to work towards my Masters in Social Work”
- “I want to be an accountant”

**Reality:** Help the student understand her current situation and the root cause of any challenges. Ask student to describe what is currently happening, and help to drill down to identify the source or the obstacle. A few potential questions to ask:

- “What are the biggest limitations on your time?”
- “What aspect of that course is the most challenging? Why?”
- “What is happening now in your course?”
- “What are the effects of that?”

**Options:** Explore potential avenues toward achieving the desired outcome. When examining the universe of possible options, delve into the:

- Criteria the student is using to value her options
- Benefits and drawbacks of each alternative
- Relative certainty or uncertainty of the outcome of each option
- Costs (e.g., in time or money) of each option

**Wrap-Up:** Ensure that the student commits to a particular action or set of actions. Develop a tactical plan to execute the most appropriate option. Some questions you might ask include:

- “What is your plan for the upcoming day/week/month/semester?”
- “Do you foresee any obstacles?”
- “Do you have a strategy to overcome that obstacle?”
- “If this option doesn’t go as planned, what is your back-up plan?”

## Suggested Guide for Semester

Generally speaking, semesters have a beginning, middle, and an end - an “arc.” It might be helpful to organize communications with students around these touch points. These are suggested points of contact – your campus will determine your own practice.

Introduction (ideally a phone call, followed by email)

Ideally introductory email would include request for students to complete readiness assessment

Reminder email blasts and/or phone calls to all students regarding registration and other important deadlines

Email blasts to all students about achievements, new campus information, scholarships, reminders about tutoring supports, and so forth

Sorting your students based on need

Mid-point check-ins

Bi-weekly check-ins

End-of-semester wrap-up communications

An

Monitoring Starfish alerts

Timely interventions with at-risk students

Rapid responses to student inquiries

Logging student interactions

introductory email to all your students will be an opportunity to welcome them to the SUNY family, introduce yourself, and ask students to reserve slots on your calendar for their introductory meeting.

When you send the email, you might consider referring to any of the following elements. Or, you might choose to send a simple communication, and refer to these components after you have individually connected with the student via phone:

**The Individual Learning Plan.** Learning Plans are a well-established educational tool used at educational institutions worldwide.<sup>viii</sup> Although they appear in a variety of forms, they are based

on the same core principles – the student should drive her own learning path. The Learning Plan is a tool to help the student define her personal objectives and goals (both academic and professional), to identify potential roadblocks on the path to success, and to develop strategies to overcome those roadblocks.

- **Best Practices for Online Learning.** With more and more students pursuing fully online and hybrid degrees, a body of literature is emerging to define success strategies for online learning.<sup>ix</sup> We have summarized a select few of these strategies and included them in the kick-off packet for students to review before their semester begins.
- **Instructions for Readiness Assessment.** Open SUNY has created a web portal dedicated to online readiness. The portal includes a full-length readiness assessment which gauges both academic and behavioral preparedness, and a collection of tips, tools, and tactics for students as they embark on their online degrees. The kick-off packet will include an overview of the Readiness Portal and instructions for the readiness assessment.
- **Scheduling Instructions.** Students should be invited to schedule introductory meetings as soon as possible – phone call, face-to-face, Skype, and so on.
- **OPTIONAL: Scheduling** Students could schedule introductory meetings using an online scheduling tool of your choice. (A few options include Doodle.com and YouCanBook.me.)
- **OPTIONAL: Welcome Video.** Some concierges use smartphones or webcams to record short welcome videos of themselves. These videos are typically less than two minutes long and are often a more fun way of introducing yourself to your students via email. You can attach the video file to the email or include a link to hosting service, such as YouTube or Vimeo.

Workflow both within your program and across the various offices on campus will impact your practice. Each campus will have a different protocol of handling student appointments.

For example, SUNY Oswego notes that their campus currently has an advisement session with students when they first become matriculated to develop a possible program plan. They suggest that this appointment is essential for our MBA program because students only take 12-19 courses within the program. It helps them to together outline the suggested schedule of courses to fit their needs within course availability each semester.

SUNY Oswego is also in the process sending each student an Orientation Packet once they are matriculated to help with the process of starting a new school and program. Some of the information in the packet includes: MBA Department staff and contact info, contact info for other campus offices, directions on accessing the necessary systems including email and LMS. It will help students familiarize themselves with SUNY Oswego and to feel like part of the physical campus, even though they are online students.

Please remember that for many students, online learning will be a new, unfamiliar, and likely daunting experience. Many students think online learning is “easier” than campus based, face-to-face studies, and perhaps overly estimate their readiness.

Goals for this first contact might include:

- Establish a rapport with your student
- Apply the GROW model
- Offer personalized support
- Devise a mechanism for follow-up

However, it is also important to remember that students can be overwhelmed, and not recall everything you discuss on the phone. One suggestion is to send a summary email after each conversation. This not only provides a written account of the conversation, but it also acts as a reference point for both of you to ensure you are on the same page. This email can be short and to the point – we don’t want students to be further overwhelmed. It does, though, remind students that you are there, and that they can and should contact you should issues or questions arise. Please see Section 7 for sample introductory emails.

As part of the introduction, you can use the *Readiness Assessment* to begin discussion with a student:

Before you meet with your concierge, make sure you log into the Open SUNY Readiness Site and take the Smarter Measure™ readiness assessment.

To take the test, you should:

1. Request a username and password
2. Login and begin the assessment (you can save and continue it later, if you need to)
3. Dedicate about 35 minutes to take the readiness assessment
4. Review your assessment results and think about areas you would like to discuss with your concierge

### **Review of Readiness Assessment**

The SmarterMeasure™ Readiness Assessment is an important tool to evaluate students’ preparedness for online learning. The Assessment focuses on key metrics of success in online

education, including both psychological and technical aspects. Students will answer questions about their learning styles and preferences, their motivation for pursuing higher education, and their aptitude with computer technology.

You will have access to the assessment results of all your students through a central, password-protected database. Your campus concierge supervisor will provide you login information during the onboarding process, and you should review your students' summary results prior to the kick-off meetings. At the kick-off:

- Review the summary SmarterMeasure™ results with the student
- Highlight the student's strengths and weaknesses
- Ask the student to elaborate on potential trouble areas
- Discuss strategies to overcome or mitigate potential setbacks

### **Learning Plan**

You could focus some of the introductory conversation on understanding and advising the student's Individual Learning Plan (ILP). The ILP is composed of three main components: (1) the student's overall long-term learning goals, (2) potential obstacles to achieving those goals, and (3) strategies to overcome the obstacles.

The ILP is designed to let the student take charge of her own educational journey. It will push the student to identify her academic and professional motivations and act on them. You should use the ILP as a starting point to guide all your interactions with the student. A sample ILP is below, and there is also a template in Section 7.

### **Individual Learning Plan**

---

Name:

Expected Graduation Date:

**Goals:** What do I hope to achieve during my time at SUNY?

---

**Challenges:** What obstacles might I encounter along the way?

---

**Success Strategies:** What are some ways I can overcome these obstacles?

---

**Outcomes:** How will I measure my success?

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### **Generalized Best Practices**

Below you will find a selection of best practices for online learning. These suggestions were developed by working groups of concierges at a consortium of community colleges.<sup>x</sup> These suggestions are not exhaustive—over the course of your time at SUNY, you will refine and expand this list based on your interactions with students and colleagues.

These practices can be shared with the students with whom you work. You may choose to discuss one or more of the best practices during your introductory meeting, depending, in part, on the student's readiness assessment results.

#### *(1) Best Practice: Structured Learning Environment*

Encourage students to:

- Create a psychological time and place for online coursework
- Create and adhere to a consistent schedule -
- Establish a dedicated area to complete assignments
- Self-impose rules on interruptions, breaks, and time frames
- Have food/drink available for breaks

#### *(2) Best Practice: Goal-Driven Planning.*

Encourage students to:

- Log on daily
- Coordinate online work
- Anticipate and plan for technical problems
- If supported by your campus, use automated calendaring for important course assignments, events, and tasks
- If supported by your campus, use smart phone features or web apps to assist with time management

#### *(3) Best Practice: Efficient Study Habits*



Encourage Students to:

- Take notes
- Outline
- Underline
- Highlight and write in the margins of texts
- Print out, sort and mark up discussions
- Print out and mark up course materials, readings, and assignments
- Compose and edit discussion posts off-line
- Leverage Web 2.0 services to help manage, organize, and optimize instructional materials (e.g., diigo)

*(4) Best Practice: Help-Seeking*

Encourage students to:

- Seek help to clarify expectations on assignments
- Regularly check their progress
- Collaborate with others on assignments
- Get feedback on writing drafts from peers or family
- Seek online and offline interaction with instructor
- Get frequent and timely feedback from instructor
- Access technical help promptly
- Seek and offer technical assistance from/to classmates
- Contact peers to reduce loneliness and to stay motivated
- Use the course bulletin board to connect with peers
- Use web-based help sources
- Use peer posts as models
- Use model assignments posted on the course website
- Compare work or work in progress with that of peers

*(5) Best Practice: Self-Monitoring*

Encourage students to:

- Back up discussion posts using resources and ensure that course requirements are being met
- Monitor reading and writing for online discussions
- Frequently check the online grade book

- Use features in their LMS to monitor progress to ensure expectations and deadlines are being met
- Take extra precautions in monitoring the technical aspects of assignment submission (e.g., after submitting a post, check to see if it was successfully uploaded in the correct location)
- Save all submissions
- Compare numbers of submission posts/comments/replies to course expectations
- Leverage technology and the web to autosave and store course work
- Plan for technology failure (e.g., identify alternative computer access)

*(6) Best Practice: Self-Reflection*

Encourage students to:

- Use assignment checklists/rubrics to make judgments about their performance in assignments
- Use instructor feedback and grades to gauge progress in course
- Use self-reflection strategies such as peer feedback to assess performance
- Use an audience of peers to shape their discussion postings
- Feel pride in contributing something substantive to the discussion
- Use peers to add incentive for continuous self-evaluation of discussion postings; e.g., taking extra care to reread and edit posts submitted for discussion and thinking about their classmates that will read the posts

### **Best Practices for Supporting Students in Academic Risk**

Any student can be “at risk.” As we have reviewed, online student have particular hurdles.

Colleges that implement early-alert systems have observed significantly higher performance and completion rates compared to their peers.<sup>xi</sup> The ultimate purpose of using an early alert system is to guide at-risk students on the path to completion, and to reassure them that they will have continued support throughout the process.

Your direction will be especially valuable at this critical juncture in a student’s academic path.

Depending on how your campus supports students, the following are possible action items:

- Once you receive an early alert report, read the student’s file to get a better sense of the student’s learning history and performance patterns. Review the student’s Learning Plan, strengths and weaknesses.
- Contact the student to check in and see how she’s doing (email and/or phone call). Determine particular challenges, using the GROW model and other approaches you may know.

- Be positive and encouraging in your communications, and use active listening skills to guide next steps. In many cases, the alert is a one-time event and does not signify greater problems. In such cases, the student should not be made to feel anxious or panicked. Reassure her that you're simply checking in to see if you can help.
- Seek to understand what caused your student to fall behind. For some students – particularly graduate students with full-time jobs – it may be normal to see course participation more infrequently, such as only on the weekends. With this information, you can evaluate if your student is truly high risk.


**Concierge Corner:**



**Active Listening**

*Active listening is a critical skill for coaches. To help you listen actively:*

- *Keep track of what the student says*
- *Take notes so you can easily recall and use the information later*
- *Let the student know you're listening*
- *Try restating the student's needs to make sure you understand*
- *Ask clarifying questions if you're not sure about something*

 <b>Early Alerts</b>	
What is an at-risk student?	A student is considered “at-risk” when her performance or course participation falls below a certain threshold or her instructor expresses concern about her progress.
How can we increase completion for at-risk students?	Studies show that comprehensive early alert systems, combined with targeted interventions, can substantially increase online completion rates and improve academic performance. <sup>xii</sup>
What tools can we use to help at-risk students complete their degrees?	An early alert system can notify advisors and/or instructors when a student falls behind in her coursework. Open SUNY is planning to implement the Starfish EARLY ALERT™ technology, which flags students for your attention based on specific performance indicators and lets you know when to

	proactively intervene to coach the student back on track.
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### Tools to Support Your Efforts

The best tool you have is to develop an organized way to keep track of your advisees. Again, this practice might vary from campus to campus.

For example, at SUNY Oswego, the concierges have files in which detailed notes of any communication and interaction with each student are kept. They also print every email correspondence so there is no question on the conversations that were had.

At SUNY Empire State College, mentors also keep individual files on students. Some mentors use a “case management” strategy, in that each phone call is followed up by a summary email. That email is then printed so that virtual and hard copy student files are aligned and current.

<b>Tool</b>	<b>Function</b>	<b>Use</b>	<b>Location</b>
<b>Starfish</b>	Monitors student performance indicators and notifies concierge when student falls behind	Identifies at-risk students and triggers intervention	Depending on campus protocol, can be installed on campus LMS platform
<b>Scheduling Tool</b>	Allows students to quickly claim slots on concierge schedule for kick-offs and other meetings	Seamless, hands-off scheduling process. Especially valuable at the beginning of the semester	Some online services include <a href="http://www.doodle.com">www.doodle.com</a> or <a href="http://www.youcanbook.me">www.youcanbook.me</a>
<b>Readiness Assessment</b>			
<b>Tutoring (or Learning Centers, Writing Center)</b>			

<b>Tool</b>	<b>Function</b>	<b>Use</b>	<b>Location</b>
<b>Open Educational Resources (Kahn Academy, for example)</b>			
<b>Video conferencing</b>	Permits students to communicate remotely with concierges while maintaining visual interface	Obviates the need for face-to-face meetings in many instances	Available online (e.g., <a href="http://www.skype.com">www.skype.com</a> or <a href="http://www.google.com/hangouts">www.google.com/hangouts</a> )
<b>Microsoft Excel or Google Spreadsheets/ Forms</b>	Allows concierges to record certain essential data about interactions with students	Aids data-driven program adjustments each semester	A spreadsheet will be prepared for concierges to fill in (potentially online using <a href="http://docs.google.com/spreadsheets">docs.google.com/spreadsheets</a> )
<b>Texting tool</b>	Allows concierge to communicate with students via text messages	Enables texting communication without disclosing personal cell phone to students	Use Google Voice ( <a href="http://www.google.com/voice">www.google.com/voice</a> ) or try other services, though fees do apply (e.g., <a href="http://www.txtsignal.com">www.txtsignal.com</a> )

## Section 6: How to Measure Success: Capturing Data

Measuring the success of proactive and responsive connections are interventions is an important part of measuring our success in supporting students. As a Concierge, you play an integral part in this communication loop: you might hear important pieces of information not otherwise revealed to faculty or other colleagues in Student and Academic Supports.

Each campus will determine how it wishes to collect information about student satisfaction with services, student usage rates, and the connections between usage rates and the retention and success of students in the program.

### Student Success Metrics

As you serve your students throughout the semester, it is important to maintain a record of your interactions. These records will be very useful both to Open SUNY and to you.

For example, it might be helpful to keep a simple log of when a student calls, the general issue or concern presented, and how that concern was resolved. As we continue to improve our online support initiatives, this kind of information will help determine how resources are best allocated to ensure student success.

#### 1. Recording Individual Student Interactions

To help you track student interactions, the System-level Concierge Coordinator will provide you with a simple spreadsheet or form where you can log notes on each student. You should be diligent about tracking your interactions and provide periodic feedback to your supervisor, and your campus and Open SUNY colleagues. This information will be valuable in adjusting the model in the future.

Every time you interact with a student, you might consider how to best capture that interaction. Some ideas:

- Review the student's history of interactions with you
- Label the interaction by type (email, phone call, video chat, in-person meeting)
- Describe the reason for the interaction (e.g., question, concern, issue)
- Flag any recurring problems (e.g., student received inadequate help from another department)
- Schedule and log any follow-up communications you plan to have
- Record the purpose and outcome of any follow-ups with campus personnel

#### Concierge Corner:



##### Tips for logging interactions

- *Be consistent in your use of the tracking tool*
- *When recording your communications with a student, be as descriptive as possible. Detailed notes will be extremely helpful for future interactions with that student*

- Record the purpose and outcome of follow-ups with the student.

## 2. Aggregating Interactions

In addition to individual communications, it will be very important to think about trends in student needs over time. Open SUNY will use information on aggregate trends to tailor the concierge model closely to student demands.

To that end, as the semester winds down, you might review your interactions with a student to see if there are patterns or trends. Below is a sample form for that data aggregation; your Campus Concierge Supervisor may provide something different. Similarly, the System-level Concierge Coordinator may look to collect semester-end data on your student interactions. You will work with those individuals to determine the best methodology for collecting, recording and reporting that information.

<b>Sample of Student Success &amp; Service Metrics –</b> <b>(Your campus will determine how metrics are defined and used)</b>	
Introductory Meetings	
Midpoint Meetings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Total midpoint face-to-face meetings</li> <li>• Total midpoint emails</li> </ul>	
Total number of communications received <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Total number of follow-ups</li> <li>• Average communications per student</li> </ul>	
Type of early alerts flags and notifications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Average alerts per student</li> <li>• Average alerts per course</li> </ul>	
Type(s) of interventions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of communications required to resolve the risk</li> </ul>	
Post-intervention indicators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Average grade of students at time of early alert flag/notification</li> <li>• Average semester final grade of students who at some point triggered Starfish</li> </ul>	

## Student Feedback

Student feedback is an essential element of successful student supports. As part of the regular concierge evaluation process, your supervisor might include students as secondary sources to gauge overall satisfaction level with the concierge's service. Students may be surveyed in written form or in in-person discussions, such as focus groups.

You will likely receive feedback from your supervisor or director. The table below indicates common questions in a student satisfaction survey. We encourage you think about how this feedback can help you to opportunity to grow and develop your role as a concierge. Your success is integral to the success of the students on your campus, and is closely tied to the success of Open SUNY.

Sample Student Satisfaction Survey Questions
How satisfied were you with your concierge overall?
How satisfied are you with the response time of your advisor?
Do you feel supported by your advisor/concierge/mentor?
Did you receive information and resources to help your resolve issues?
How responsive was your concierge to your questions overall?
How helpful was your concierge in answering your questions?
How knowledgeable was your concierge about your own needs and learning goals?
How knowledgeable was your concierge about campus resources?
Did your concierge follow up with you to make sure your issue was resolved?



## Section 7 : Appendices and Templates

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### Sample Student Communications

#### Student Welcome and Introductory Email Samples:

**Please modify these suggestions to best reflect your practice and personality.**

**Basic outline:**

Dear [student name],

Welcome to **[campus name]**! I'm **[concierge name]** and I'll be your student concierge as you pursue your **[degree name]** degree, which is powered by Open SUNY+. My role is to help you navigate the online learning environment and become fully integrated in the campus community. I'm available via email or phone to answer your questions, assist you with any specific needs, or talk through any issues relating to your online degree program.

To ensure you're successful in your program, I would like to touch base with you at the beginning of each semester via phone. To kick things off this semester, please schedule a call with me as soon as you can using this link: **[link to calendaring tool]**.

I will plan to call you on the phone number you provided in your student profile. Please let me know if there is another number I should use, or if you prefer an in-person meeting or video conference instead.

The introductory meeting is very important – we'll use it to discuss your learning goals, your path to academic success, and strategies for online learning. Prior to our meeting, please:

- Complete the Individual Learning Plan
- Take the online Readiness Assessment *[if it's the student's first semester]*
- Read through the online success strategies.
- Enter and review (campus-specific online advising resource – like the RN to BSN Advising Site in Vaencko Hall ... Moodle ...)

If you have any scheduling issues, let me know and we will set up an alternative time. Remember, I am here to answer whatever questions you may have – please reach out to me!

Warmest regards,

[concierge name]

**Sample introductory email from SUNY Broome:**

My name is \*\* and I want to welcome you to the online Clinical Laboratory Technologies program at SUNY Broome Community College. Congratulations on being accepted into this rigorous and selective program.

While any college program is challenging, a fully online program has its own unique set of challenges. It can be much more difficult to get help and find answers and information because you are not here on campus.

That's why I am here; I am your personal concierge. Just like a concierge at a hotel offers advice and helps guests find what they are looking for, I am here to offer you whatever support you may need in your quest to complete your program. I want us to get to know each other, so please feel free to be yourself with me and let me know how I can help you to succeed.

My goal is to give you advice, help, guidance and answers. If you have questions about anything; admissions, transfers, financial aid, course work, technology, resources, tutoring or any other issue, feel free to give me a call at \*\*\* **or send me an email**. If I cannot answer your question, I will be sure to put you in touch with a person who can. I am not, however, your only support. If you know another person or department on campus who would be more helpful in answering your question, feel free to contact them directly.

Make sure to use our website to your advantage. Our One-Stop-Shop has links to many departments and most likely can answer your question. Make sure to visit at <http://www.sunybroome.edu/web/www/one-stop-shop>

As I aim to help you succeed, I may occasionally contact you to remind you of important deadlines and appropriate campus information.

Please use only your \*\*college campus\*\* email to communicate with anyone here on campus. Instructors and staff will not use your personal email. Even if you are communicating with an instructor within the ANGEL course, remember that important people like the department chair, secretary, registrar, financial aid and admissions cannot contact you through that.

Thank you and I look forward to hearing from you soon!

**Sample introductory email from SUNY Delhi:**

Hi NAME,

Welcome to the RN to BSN Program! We are glad you will be joining us for the Fall 2014 session. Please read and retain this e-mail for now.

I am writing to let you know that you have been scheduled for your first semester courses, starting September 1, 2014. You can view your schedule in BroncoWeb (see additional information below).

During this Summer (July/August), you can expect the following:

1. You will be assigned an **academic advisor** this summer, who will be your first point of contact for any questions you might have. Your advisor will **reach out to you via phone, before you first course begins**, to go over the program with you, and to address any questions you might have.
2. Before your first class, it is important that you are able to sign in to the following accounts:
  - **Vancko Hall (Moodle):** Vancko Hall houses all of the electronic classrooms and resource sites. This is where you will "attend class."
  - **Delhi email:** Each Delhi student is assigned a Delhi email address. This will be the official mode of communication between you and the College and you will be expected to use it and check it regularly once you begin.
  - **Bronco Web:** Bronco Web is an administrative portal where you can see your schedule, register for courses, update personal information (address, phone, etc.), and access your academic transcript (unofficial copies only).

You can also bookmark the [Current Students](#) page for quick access to these accounts and other resources.

You will need to purchase the textbook (APA Manual, 6th Edition) by the beginning of your first class. You can access your textbook requirements when you are logged into your schedule in BroncoWeb.

We look forward to working with you!

### **Finger Lakes Community College:**

The protocol for this campus foregrounds basic information, then establishes rapport with students as the semester progresses. An introductory email includes instructions for setting up LMS and email accounts. The concierge also includes a personalized list of student courses for that semester. So they learn her name, and become familiar with her role, the concierges makes frequent contact with student before the semester begins. For example, the concierge might send along information especially targeted to online learners, general campus updates, important dates, and so forth. The Concierge then formally introduces herself in a newsletter.

### **SUNY Empire State College:**

Welcome to SUNY Empire State College and the Center for Distance Learning!

I will be your mentor here at SUNY Empire State College.

I *highly* recommend we speak before you register for classes. It is important that we discuss a range of options, and set a good foundation for your studies and degree completion plan. Mentoring is a collaborative process where students take the lead in designing their own degree programs. I will help guide you through the various SUNY and other ESC guidelines.

Please note that registration for this term begins on \*\*\* and ends on \*\*\*\*.

I recommend bookmarking the Student Degree Planning Guide, found here:

<http://www.esc.edu/media/academic-affairs/ocar/2013/StudentDegreePlanningGuide2013-2014.pdf#search=student%20and%20degree%20and%20planning%20and%20guide>.

Here is a link to my website where you can find some helpful links within the Mentoring tab:

My schedule can get booked quickly so contacting me as soon as possible to schedule a time is highly advisable. You should expect our first meeting to be approximately one hour.

If you plan to talk with me via phone, ideally you should have an internet connection for our call so that we can view screens together. If you are local to Saratoga Springs (or will be in the area), you are welcome to meet with me in my office.

Email is the best way to reach me: \*\* note email address\*\*.

I can also be reached (Monday through Thursday) at \*\*\*.

I hope to hear from you soon, and I look forward to working with you!

*Email for Students at Academic Risk*

*The concierge should collaborate with faculty to understand their preferred approach to interventions. Some faculty may prefer to intervene on their own. Some may prefer to be notified if the concierge contacts a struggling student. Various preferences will dictate exact intervention method.*

Hi [],

I hope you're having a good week. I just wanted to check in because I see from the Starfish flags that you might be struggling, and I'd like to see if I can be helpful with anything.

Please email me or call me back at [] today so we can chat. I look forward to hearing from you!

Kind regards,

[Concierge]

*Intervention Text Message*

Hi []. I saw a few starfish flags and wanted to check in. How are things going?

*Encouragement Email*

Hi students,

It's mid-terms! I wanted to wish you all good luck and let you know I'm available if you need to talk or if you need help with anything.

Keep up the good work!

[Concierge]

**Individual Learning Plan\*** (all questions might not be appropriate for all students – use your good judgment)

---

Name:

Expected Graduation Date:

**Goals:** What do I hope to achieve during my time at SUNY?

---

**Challenges:** What obstacles might I encounter along the way?

---

**Success Strategies:** What are some ways I can overcome these obstacles?

---

**Outcomes:** How will I measure my success?

---

## Selected Online Success Strategies: Tips for Success in Online Learning

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### *(1) Create a Structured Learning Environment*

- Create a psychological time and place for your online coursework
- Adhere to a consistent schedule for class attendance and assignments
- Set up a quiet area in home to “go to class”
- Have food/drink available for breaks

### *(2) Plan Ahead to Achieve your Learning Goals*

- Log on daily
- Coordinate online and off-line work
- Anticipate and plan for technical problems
- Use automated calendaring for important course assignments, events, and tasks

### *(3) Develop Efficient Study Habits*

- Take notes, outline, highlight, and underline where possible
- Print out, sort and mark up discussions, course materials, readings, and assignments
- Compose and edit discussion posts off-line

### *(4) Seek Help When You Need It!*

- Clarify instructor expectations on assignments
- Regularly check your progress and seek feedback from peers and instructors
- Collaborate with others on assignments
- Access technical help promptly

### *(5) Self-Monitoring*

- Back up discussion posts in multiple ways
- Monitor reading and writing for online discussions
- Frequently check the online grade book
- Take extra precautions in monitoring the technical aspects of assignment submission (e.g., after submitting a post, check to see if it was successfully uploaded in the correct location)

### *(6) Self-Reflection*

- Use assignment checklists/rubrics to judge your own performance in assignments
- Use self-reflection strategies such as peer feedback to assess your progress
- Use an audience of peers to shape your discussion postings

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<sup>i</sup> Burke, Jody. "Advising to Retain: Academic Advising in Online and Distance Education." Memorial University. [http://media.wix.com/ugd/57ba0e\\_14e9516ace5ccdc05898e43b42ff167f.pdf](http://media.wix.com/ugd/57ba0e_14e9516ace5ccdc05898e43b42ff167f.pdf)

<sup>ii</sup> *See supra* note i.

<sup>iii</sup> Scott, Doug et al., "Transforming Community Colleges: Developing a Comprehensive Student Support System." Practice Document 780381, March 2011.

<sup>iv</sup> National Academic Advising Association, Distance Education Advising Commission, "Standards for Advising Distance Learners"  
<http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Portals/0/Commissions/C23/Documents/DistanceStandards.pdf>.

<sup>v</sup> *See supra* note i; Michelau, Demaree K. and Patrick Lane, "Bringing Adults Back to College: Designing and Implementing a Statewide Concierge Model." Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, 2010.

<sup>vi</sup> Ludwig-Hardman & Dunlap, International Review of Research in Open and Distance Learning  
<http://www.irrodl.org/index.php/irrodl/article/view/131/211>.

<sup>vii</sup> *See, e.g.*, Western Cooperative, "Guide to Developing Online Student Services"  
<http://www.mnonline.project.mnscu.edu/vertical/Sites/%7BDF3FAE8D-FD97-4C7A-A66D-778FC8DAFB25%7D/uploads/%7B4265D224-1104-416F-88CF-D537242883C0%7D.PDF>;  
Sloan Consortium, "Practices for Improving Student Retention"  
<http://sloanconsortium.org/conferences/2011/aln/practices-improving-student-retention>.

<sup>viii</sup> *See, e.g.*, State of Rhode Island Department of Education,  
<http://www.ride.ri.gov/Portals/0/Uploads/Documents/Diploma-System/ILP-Framework-Final.pdf>;  
University of Wales Institute Cardiff;  
[http://www3.uwic.ac.uk/English/LTDU/Documents/JISC\\_projects\\_library/Individual%20learning%20plans%20and%20learning%20contracts.pdf](http://www3.uwic.ac.uk/English/LTDU/Documents/JISC_projects_library/Individual%20learning%20plans%20and%20learning%20contracts.pdf).

<sup>ix</sup> NGLC Grant Program, Concierge Workshop  
<http://wiki.sln.suny.edu/pages/viewpageattachments.action?pageId=9900471&metadataLink=true>.

<sup>x</sup> *See supra* note v.

<sup>xi</sup> *See supra* notes viii, ix and xi.

<sup>xii</sup> Ludwig-Hardman & Dunlap, International Review of Research in Open and Distance Learning  
<http://www.irrodl.org/index.php/irrodl/article/view/131/211>.

<sup>xiii</sup> *See, e.g.*, Western Cooperative, "Guide to Developing Online Student Services"  
<http://www.mnonline.project.mnscu.edu/vertical/Sites/%7BDF3FAE8D-FD97-4C7A-A66D-778FC8DAFB25%7D/uploads/%7B4265D224-1104-416F-88CF-D537242883C0%7D.PDF>;  
Sloan Consortium, "Practices for Improving Student Retention"  
<http://sloanconsortium.org/conferences/2011/aln/practices-improving-student-retention>.



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<sup>xi</sup> *See supra* note i; Michelau, Demaree K. and Patrick Lane, “Bringing Adults Back to College: Designing and Implementing a Statewide Concierge Model.” Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, 2010.

<sup>xi</sup> *See, e.g.*, State of Rhode Island Department of Education, <http://www.ride.ri.gov/Portals/0/Uploads/Documents/Diploma-System/ILP-Framework-Final.pdf>; University of Wales Institute Cardiff; [http://www3.uwic.ac.uk/English/LTDU/Documents/JISC\\_projects\\_library/Individual%20learning%20plans%20and%20learning%20contracts.pdf](http://www3.uwic.ac.uk/English/LTDU/Documents/JISC_projects_library/Individual%20learning%20plans%20and%20learning%20contracts.pdf).

<sup>xi</sup> NGLC Grant Program, Concierge Workshop <http://wiki.sln.suny.edu/pages/viewpageattachments.action?pageId=9900471&metadataLink=true>.

<sup>xi</sup> *See supra* note v.

<sup>xi</sup> *See supra* note i.

<sup>xi</sup> Burke, Jody. "Advising to Retain: Academic Advising in Online and Distance Education." Memorial University. [http://media.wix.com/ugd/57ba0e\\_14e9516ace5ccdc05898e43b42ff167f.pdf](http://media.wix.com/ugd/57ba0e_14e9516ace5ccdc05898e43b42ff167f.pdf)

<sup>xi</sup> Scott, Doug et al., “Transforming Community Colleges: Developing a Comprehensive Student Support System.” Practice Document 780381, March 2011.

<sup>xi</sup> National Academic Advising Association, Distance Education Advising Commission, "Standards for Advising Distance Learners" <http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/Portals/0/Commissions/C23/Documents/DistanceStandards.pdf>.

<sup>xi</sup> Iowa Community College Online Consortium (ICCO) Analytics Report on At-Risk Student Success <http://www.iowaconline.org/NGLC>; *see supra* note viii.

<sup>xi</sup> Chafkin, Max. “Mission Impossible: Why is Udacity now Focusing on Corporate Training?” *Fast Company*. 14 November 2013.

<sup>xi</sup> *See supra* notes viii, ix and xi.

<sup>xi</sup> Hulbert, Ann. “How to Escape the Community-College Trap” *The Atlantic*. 22 December 2013

<sup>xii</sup> Iowa Community College Online Consortium (ICCO) Analytics Report on At-Risk Student Success <http://www.iowaconline.org/NGLC>; *see supra* note viii.