Understanding Minority Male Persistence and Encouraging Student Success: One Year Later

Continuing Efforts at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Starting the Conversation: Learning from Each Other

• What is the state of minority male retention and graduation at your institution?

• What discussions are happening around minority male success in your department?
Discussion Points

Encouraging Student Success: The 2010 Retention Study

A report presented to
The Enrollment Policy Advisory Committee
by
The Retention Task Force
October 29, 2010

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Minority Male Retention Study
Preliminary Survey Data
UNIVERSITY OF N.C. AT CHAPEL HILL

First state university to open its doors, 1795. Chartered in 1789 under the Constitution of 1776.
Demographics

Fall 2011 first year undergraduates
• 4,026 admits from 23,753 applicants
• 80% admitted students in top 10% of high school class
• Average SAT 1300
• 18% first generation
• nearly 30% students of color
• 42% male, 58% female

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Introductions and Background

• Undergraduate Education
• Diversity and Multicultural Affairs
• Academic Advising Program
• Student Success and the Strengths-based approach
2010 Retention Study

Graduation Rates and Time to Degree for Carolina and Top Four Peer Institutions
2003 Entering First-Year Cohort

84.9%  89.0%  89.4%  90.2%  92.8%

UNC   UCLA   Michigan   Berkeley   Virginia

http://studentsuccess.unc.edu/news/2010-retention-study/
2010 Retention Study

Males by Race

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<td>70.8%</td>
<td>15.3%</td>
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<td>Other Males</td>
<td>78.9%</td>
<td>12.6%</td>
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<td>Native Amer Males</td>
<td>64.7%</td>
<td>23.5%</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hispanic Males</td>
<td>61.0%</td>
<td>24.4%</td>
<td>14.6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Black Males</td>
<td>49.2%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>34.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian Males</td>
<td>66.3%</td>
<td>20.3%</td>
<td>13.4%</td>
</tr>
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</table>

http://studentsuccess.unc.edu/news/2010-retention-study/
Minority Male Retention Study

Objectives

• Describe minority male persistence at UNC-Chapel Hill.

• Identify characteristics and behaviors of successful minority male students at UNC-Chapel Hill.

• Collect student recommendations for enhancing the support of minority male students.
Minority Male Retention Study
Themes of Significance

Academic Self-Management
• Development of self-efficacy, self-agency and self-motivation prior to college and during college

Mentorship
• Helpful, (but not essential?)
• Race, sex and occupation of mentors

Diversity
• Culturally-diverse experiences
• Frequent interaction with non-minority students
Minority Male Retention Study

Student strengths

• Intrinsic motivation for academic excellence

• Engagement with diverse people and on-campus learning experiences

• Take advantage of resources and services

• Aware of individual academic strengths and interests
Building Momentum after the MMRS

• Student conversations with Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs

• Conversation with campus partners led by Diversity and Multicultural Affairs

• Decision to invite Shaun Harper, PhD, as an expert guest for a working day around understanding minority male persistence and encouraging student success – a collaboration between Undergraduate Education, Diversity and Multicultural Affairs, Division of Student Affairs, and student leaders.
January 27, 2012
The Carolina Inn
Sponsors

The Office of Diversity and Multicultural Affairs
The Division of Student Affairs
The Office of Undergraduate Education
The Office of Undergraduate Admission
UNC Athletics
The UNC Black Alumni Reunion
Scope and Goals

This event will be a **working day** for faculty, staff and students from across campus to **explore the habits, perspectives and behaviors of successful male students of color**. The day is designed to be a dynamic, productive gathering focused on better understanding the success and the obstacles to success for undergraduate men of color. Additionally, this day will provide an opportunity to reflect on current and best practices and consider areas for enhancement.

1. Continue the momentum that has developed across campus to better understand the needs of Carolina’s undergraduate men of color.

2. Respond to student appeals for support, consideration and action on this critical issue.

3. Enhance communication and collaboration among groups working with undergraduate men of color at Carolina.

4. Take a strengths-based approach to understanding and supporting the recruitment, retention, graduation and overall success of our male students of color.

5. Examine current efforts and exchange new ideas concerning male mentoring opportunities.
Structure and Participation

• **Morning Session**
  - Breakfast
  - Keynote presentation
  - Panel discussion
  - Next Steps activity

• **Afternoon Session**
  - Lunch meeting with planning committee and key institutional partners
  - Meetings with students

• **Attendees**
  Over 130 participants, including faculty, staff and students and high-level administrators; representation across the departments and student support services and academic advising
Notable Participants

• Planning Committee Leadership
  o Director for Retention
  o Interim Chief Diversity Officer and Executive Director, Diversity and Multicultural Affairs
  o Associate Vice Chancellor, Division of Student Affairs
  o Other representatives included: Undergraduate student leaders, Dean of Students, School of Public Health, Carolina Union, Journalism and Mass communication, Chemistry, Athletics

• Panelist
  o 3 undergraduate students from diverse backgrounds
  o Director of Summer Bridge Program and member of the Lumbee Tribe
  o Founder of the National College Advising Corps
  o Assistant Principal with Chapel Hill – Carrboro City Schools
  o Professor of Education focusing on school trajectories of Latino males

• Participants from Upper-Administration
  o Chair of the Faculty (introduced keynote speaker)
  o Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs (gave closing remarks)
Dr. Harper’s Address: 
Key Points

• We have work to do
• Minority v. minoritized males
• Typical efforts vs. Better efforts
Suggestions of Better Efforts from Shaun Harper, PhD

• Inequities are transparent and data are used to guide institutional activities
• Undergraduate men of color are meaningfully engaged as collaborative partners and viewed as experts
• Actions are guided by a written strategy document that was collaboratively developed
• Learning, academic achievement, student development and improving degree attainment rates are prioritized over social programming
• Initiatives are grounded in research
• Efforts are enhanced by insights from minoritized male student achievers
Next Steps Activity

- Purpose
- Structure and conversation
- Diversity around the table

Table topics:
- Academic Advising
- Academic Services
- Community, Leadership and Engagement
- Housing
- Health and Wellness
- Learning and Instruction
- Orientation
- Recruitment and Admissions
- Student Organizations
- Student Athletes
Next Steps Activity – Your Campus
Next Steps Activity – Your Campus

To begin the activity:

• Do a quick round of introductions.
• Consider your institution and your work there. Then reflect on Dr. Harper’s message to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and initiatives and conversations at your own institution. Also consider your experiences and work with minority male undergraduates at your institution.
• As a group, discuss and respond to the questions on the sheet.
Next Steps Activity - Responses on academic advising at UNC

• Maximize and personalize each student interaction

• Strive to create trustworthy relationships with advisees – consider working outside of the advising building

• Seek research and participate in trainings and workshops to increase cultural competence
Post-Forum Efforts at UNC

- Carolina Millennial Scholars Program
- Carolina M.A.L.E.S.
- New positions within Diversity and Multicultural Affairs
- Elevating the Vice Provost position to the Chancellor’s cabinet, as well as the Provost’s cabinet
- Focus on Transfer Students
Post-Forum Efforts:

Carolina Millennial Scholars Program

- College Access Challenge Grant
- Cohort of 50 undergraduates (50% must be transfer students)
- Activities
  - Weekly meets on Thursday for the fall and Bi-weekly meetings in the spring
  - Roundtable discussions with Dr. Shaun Harper (fall)
  - Academic and Leadership Summit (Spring)
- Support
- Role of Advising
- Role of Mentoring
Post-Forum Efforts: Carolina M.A.L.E.S.

Purpose – Aims to develop/promote:
• Academic and personal successes for all minority men
• Sustainable networks between minority male students, faculty and staff
• Institutional support for minority men which ensures that every male who attends Carolina will graduate on time

Planned Events
• Leadership Retreat
• Student Faculty Staff Mixer
• Academic Success Sessions
• Guest Speaker
• Service Opportunity
• MALE Empowerment Night
The Vice Provost’s Position

• Vice Provost for Academic Initiatives, Carol P. Tresolini
• Vice Provost for Finance and Academic Planning, Dwayne Pinkney
• Vice Provost for Enrollment and Undergraduate Admissions, Stephen M. Farmer
• Vice Provost for Diversity and Multicultural Affairs, Taffye Clayton
New Positions in Diversity and Multicultural Affairs

- Senior Director for Education, Operations and Initiatives
- Director of Inclusive Student Excellence
- Director for Research, Assessment and Analytics
- Educational Program Coordinator
- Diversity Expert in Residence
Focus on Transfer Students

• Transfer Student Committee (Undergraduate Admissions)
• Transfer Advising Program (Academic Advising)
• Transfer United Living Learning Community
• Junior Transfer Success Group
• Junior Transfer Seminar
• Transfer Student Coordinator Position in Office of Undergraduate Education – Undergraduate Retention
Overall Lessons Learned

• About our students (strength and agency)
• Appreciating the unique needs of minoritized male students
• Balancing inclusivity with meeting needs for targeted groups
• About the process of collaboration on this issue
• Potential for continued work
What’s Next?

- Meeting with UNC System presidents and chancellors in November
- Continued discussion and collaboration across campus
- Changes at Carolina - Continuing the Chancellor’s vision
Best Practices
6 Tips for Academic Advisors

- Maximize and personalize each student interaction
- Appreciate and articulate individual student strengths
- Come to the students
- Read the literature and participate in professional development activities
- Collect and work from student data
- Meaningfully involve students in discussions on enhancing practice
- Consider the demographics of your advising team
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www.unc.edu/diversity

josmell@email.unc.edu