STUDENT ACADEMIC SUCCESS

The Division of Student Academic Success is committed to helping Rutgers University – Camden students' take charge of their success. Our division promotes undergraduate excellence and persistence to graduation through a variety of services and supports including tutoring, supplemental instruction, academic coaching, and student support programs. Our goal is to challenge students to create educational plans that position them to thrive at our university and beyond. Finally, our team strives to empower students by providing the necessary academic resources and services that help build a foundation for success.

The Division of Student Academic Success includes:
- The Educational Opportunity Fund
- TRiO Student Support Services
- The RU-C Learning Center
- The Office of Disability Services
- The Student Success Coaches Office
- The Leadership Institute
- The Office of Experiential Education
- Raptor Connect

For additional information, visit our website at: success.camden.rutgers.edu

MISSION

The Division of Student Academic Success takes a personalized approach to students and their development. Our team engages all areas of the university to advocate for and empower our students. Collectively, we help them to identify and achieve their academic, personal, and professional goals on their path towards graduation and beyond.
Student Success Framework

The student success framework guides the work we do within the division and across the campus.

High Impact Practices are active learning practices that promote deep learning by promoting student engagement as measured by the National Survey on Student Engagement (NSSE).

Sense of belonging is, at the most basic level, whether or not students feel respected, valued, accepted, cared for, included, and that they matter, in the classroom, at college, or in their chosen career path (Strayhorn, 2012).

An ethic of care is a holistic approach to caring for and about students. Care involves a carer and cared-for engaging in a mutually agreed upon exchange of support.

Identity consciousness seeks to examine a students multiplicity of identities rather than one identity marker and to explore how each of those identities and their intersections are at play in student experiences.
My experience at the learning center has been nothing short of amazing. Being a tutor in the Learning Center, I am able to engage and connect with other students on a regular basis and aid them in any way that I possibly can. Not only do I get to help my peers who are in the same field of study as me, such as physics and chemistry, I am also able to work with students in many disciplines such as mathematics, business, nursing, biology and more. Working with such a breadth of students allows me to make connections all around campus and meet individuals from all different walks of life. My duties in the learning center not only aid me in personal connection, but also lend toward the progression of my academic studies and abilities. By tutoring classes that I have previously taken, it allows me to remain fresh and current in all aspects of my education here at Rutgers University. This is especially beneficial and important to me as I am an aspiring medical school applicant. For my medical school entrance exam, the MCAT, it is imperative that I remain practiced and retain all knowledge garnered through my coursework here at the institution. Tutoring is an effective and facile way to accomplish this.

Finally, my interactions with the staff here in the learning center are like no other. The environment is truly emanant of family, friendship and support. I have never met individuals who are more kind, caring, and genuinely invested in the lives of students. It is without fail, that if there is any way that they can contribute to my success, they do so with open arms. It is almost unfathomable that there are people so kind as to only want the very best for me, and who consider my success, their success. Without the aid of the staff in the learning center, it would not be possible for me to be as successful as I am. I am literally unsure of where I would be without them. I look forward to more fruitful semesters here at Rutgers University, and you can be sure that I will still be in that learning center everyday until I graduate.
Student Success At A Glance

PERMANENT EMPLOYEES

23

3,413
Course-Based Tutoring Sessions

6,143
Distinct Number of Students Served*

11,900
Total Number of Hours Staff Interacted with Students

*this number includes undergraduate and graduate students
2018-2019 STUDENT ACADEMIC SUCCESS ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

Jason Rivera
Vice Chancellor
Student Academic Success

Marsha Besong
Assistant Chancellor

Tom Dahan
Director of Student Academic Success

Matthew McCaffrey
Program Coordinator
Experiential Learning

Angela DeRocini
Program Manager

Christine Ulch
Academic Program Manager (IBMDL)

Rick Demirjian
Director Leadership Institute

Brian Everett
Assistant Director/Assistant Dean

Amber Davis
Student Counselor II

Terrence Jones
Sarah Blackman
Caroline Waters
Senior EOF Counselors

Alex Munoz
Administrative Assistant

Dyon Corley
Assistant Director TRIO

Randi Ferguson
Assistant Director EOF

Kendall Depew
Assistant Director Student Success
Coach Office

Raven Holloway
Senior Success Coaches

Fallon Conry
Aaron Helton-Holloman
Jaime Ramanaukas
Success Coaches

Ajeenah Nuridin-Little
Director Student Academic Success

RI Portella
Sarah Vanacore
Learning Specialist

Erin Leuthhold
Director Disability Services

Taryn Cooper
Accommodation Assistant

Carrie Delgado
Administrative Coordinator
Disability Services
# of Exams Proctored: 639
# of accommodations granted: 880
# of Students Serviced: 300

Experiential Learning
# of Faculty Supported: 24
# of XPL Courses: 43

TRiO Support Services
# of Advising Sessions: 136
# of Students Serviced: 160

Education Opportunity Fund
# of Advising Sessions: 3030
# of Students Serviced: 284

Student Success Coach Office
# of Students Served: 476
# of Coaching Sessions: 3341
# of student contact hours: 2234.73

Raptor Connect
# of progress reports: 20,689
# of students connected through Raptor Connect Platform: 6,143
# of Faculty using Raptor Connect: 513

Leadership Institute
# of Students Supported: 175
# of Special Programs: 30
# of Students in Honor Society: 53

Learning Center
# of Students Advised on First Term Probation: 156
# of Students Counseled on Continuing Probation: 56
# of Students receiving General Writing Assistance: 154
# of Distinct Workshops offered: 32
Retention Counseling

Retention Counselors (success coaches) are the first point of contact for any student seeking to withdraw from Rutgers-Camden for a full semester or more. The goal of retention counseling is to ensure that students exhaust all resources available to them via the University or the community before withdrawing.

The Advising & Retention Council

The Rutgers University - Camden Advising and Retention Council is a representative leadership body empowered to better coordinate advising practices to improve consistency in advising across the campus and support successful student outcomes. The Council meets monthly and provides the strategic direction and campus level vision for advising.

Raptor Rising Grant

In 2018, the division of Student Academic Success partnered with Enrollment Management to create the Raptor Rising Grant award. Raptor Rising Grants are awarded to graduating seniors with a balance of $2000 or less to help cover the final costs of tuition and help students graduate.
Raport Connect: Helping Students "Navigate" Rutgers-Camden

Rutgers University - Camden’s Student Success Management System, Raptor Connect, provides an integrative approach to student success that promotes shared ownership for academic progress among students, faculty, advisors, tutors, and staff. It serves as the foundation that connects services that help students to formulate and advance toward educational goals, including advising, tutoring, counseling, progress tracking, and academic early alerts. The platform contributes by documenting educational plans, improving data analysis, offering self-service resources that reduce advisor workloads, and triggering interventions based on student behavior or faculty input.

Raptor Connect is also a predictive analytics tool that allows us to track student progress and identify patterns of student success and failure, plan strategic interventions, coordinate student care, and measure the impact of our interventions. The platform allows us to provide students with important guidance at their most pivotal moments so they can get the most out of their college experience.

Through the platform, students can:
- Make appointments with academic and other student support staff
- Communicate with advisors
- Keep track of all of their classes and any appointments booked through the system on a handy, printable calendar page
- Get reminders for important tasks from their advisors
- Receive reminders about upcoming appointments via email or text

Raptor Connect also allows faculty to directly communicate with students about their academic progress. Through alerts and progress reporting, faculty can share with students in real-time how they are performing in a particular course.

Through Raptor Connect, we also work with students in groups, leading to impressive results. This year, in addition to individual advising, we created a group advising campaign that had a positive impact on first-year student retention.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Of students who attended group advising enrolled for Spring 2019</th>
<th>Of students who did not attend group advising enrolled for Spring 2019</th>
<th>Difference in re-enrollment rates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>91.9%</td>
<td>84.4%</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
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<tr>
<th>Of students who attended group advising enrolled for Spring 2019</th>
<th>Of students not in the campaign enrolled for Spring 2019</th>
<th>Difference in re-enrollment rates</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>91.9%</td>
<td>75.9%</td>
<td>16%</td>
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Student Testimonials

Aurelio Sotelo, '20
Business Major

In 2012, my doctor diagnosed me with brain cancer and explained that I would have to undergo surgery and chemotherapy. After I woke up from my surgery, I realized that I could no longer move my left arm and leg. Throughout my experience in the hospital, I lost my ability to read, write, and speak. During this time, my dream and hope to become an athlete came to an end. Thankfully, I learned to dream new dreams and with hard work and determination I was able to learn to read, write, and speak again. Now my dream is to be a CEO of my own fashion company. Fashion is something I'm passionate about--I love making others feel amazing about themselves.

Today, I work in the Center for Learning and Student Success. I had no idea when I started working there that it would connect me to so many incredible people that have impacted my academic success--people like Dr. Marsha Besong and Dr. Jason Rivera who both have helped me to develop the necessary skills to raise my GPA from a 2.4 to a 3.1. I am proud to be a student at Rutgers-Camden, and very fortunate to be part of the learning center team.

Iraida Izaguirre, '20
Childhood Studies Major

I applied to Rutgers-Camden’s TRiO Student Support Services because I felt like I needed the extra help for my academics. Not only did TRiO help me, but they also became the support system that I never knew I needed until I came into the program. My experience as a first-generation college student has been difficult but I would never trade it because of the memories and friendships I have cultivated.
Raptor Impact Retreat:
Responding to our students in changing times

In the fall 2018, the Student Academic Success division hosted the third annual Raptor Impact Retreat: Responding to our students in changing times. The daylong retreat addressed the dramatic change of the student body over the last 3 years. Keynote Speaker, Dr. T. Elon Dancy II, offered compelling remarks about how to support the academic achievement of all students, and particularly Black and Brown Students. Dr. Tacy Holliday, the afternoon keynote speaker, talked about the importance of change management and provided strategies for attendees to respond to the changing demographics of Rutgers-Camden students. The retreat was live-streamed and welcomed over 150 in-person participants, nearly 50 of whom were faculty members.

Experiential Learning Infusion Grants

Experiential infusion grants align with the Rutgers–Camden strategic plan by prioritizing a “First-Rate Undergraduate Education Grounded in Research and Experiential Learning.” Based on evidence that (1) participation in at least two high impact practices drives deep learning, retention, and attainment; and, (2) participation in high-impact practices has particularly strong positive impacts on students from historically underserved backgrounds, we designed a program that challenged departments to think collaboratively and holistically; to consider where experiential components could enhance the student experience; to imagine how historically underserved students would access high impact practices; and to think about how this work could be sustained year over year. Ten departments applied for awards of up to $5,000.00. In 2018-2019, faculty in Nursing, Urban Studies, Biology, Spanish for Health Professionals, Fine Arts, and the Honor's College were awarded funding. As a result of the grant, 17 experiential learning courses were created, 8 of which can fulfill major course requirements.
In the fall 2018, the division of Student Academic Success launched Roadmaps to Success (RM2S), a program designed to help first year and transfer students make successful transitions to college from their previous educational or life experiences. The RM2S program aligns workshop sessions and student engagement opportunities to affect a greater impact on the learning and growth of new students. Utilizing an engaging and informative cohort model, students learn academic success strategies, develop short and long-term goals, and understand and utilize Rutgers-Camden resources, policies and procedures.

RM2S was created with five primary goals:
- Goal 1: Awareness of Rutgers University-Camden resources and policies and how to access them.
- Goal 2: The acquisition of skills for academic achievement.
- Goal 3: Building supportive academic, emotional, and social support networks.
- Goal 4: The exploration of personal values, experiences, and beliefs to begin developing a sense of self.
- Goal 5: Retention of first-year and transfer students.

In the fall 2018, we enrolled 286 students in 13 sections of RM2S and boasted a 96.5% retention rate from fall to spring.

In May, 2019, Vice Chancellor Rivera led the School of Nursing through a four-hour session that focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion. The workshop asked faculty and staff to reflect on the student experience and identify some of the barriers students might encounter on their pathway to graduation. An examination of Nursing School data reflected the outstanding work being done to help students achieve success. The data also uncovered students who are most vulnerable and allowed for faculty and staff to share ideas about how to better support various student groups.
Student Testimonials

Victoria Adeyeri, '22
Nursing Major

The Learning Center has been very beneficial to my success here at Rutgers-Camden, receiving tutoring in biochemistry and English has helped me excel in all my classes with amazing grades. With the proper motivation and guidance that the learning specialists offers a student it will feel as though they belong in a community where they are nurtured and supported to have the best college experience.

Rashone Price, '21
Childhood Studies Major

EOF is an amazing program that has shaped the student I am today. I certainly would be lost without the help and guidance that I have received. I encourage all first generation students who are looking for the best college experience to apply to the EOF program without a doubt you college career would be filled with success as long as you are willing to work for it. The one piece of advice I would give is seek the help you need, your pride should not come before your future.
Creating Transformative Student Experiences

Study Away: Experiential Immersion

In 2018-2019, Student Academic Success launched our division's brand new Study Away program. Our first experiential learning trip "In Person: Racial Justice, Po'Boys, and Cultural Appropriation" immersed twelve undergraduates in the world of urban policy and activism in post-Katrina New Orleans.

A seven-day travel experience to the Big Easy followed a series of on-campus meetings that used critical texts and discussion to build foundational understanding. The travel component leveraged place-based learning to challenge students to delve deeper—through meetings and meals with local artists, grassroots community organizers, and nonprofit leaders—in a place that sits at a nexus of histories, geographies, and cultures.

Money Matters Symposium

In November, 2018, Rutgers University-Camden hosted the first annual Money Matters Symposium, which invited a variety of private and nonprofit financial organizations to facilitate workshops on topics related to budgeting, spending, saving, and investing financial resources. The Money Matters Symposium was created to serve high school and college students, as well as local residents. Through the symposium, we provided students with access to information and hands-on practice to navigate matters related to their financial futures—including college and career exploration and consideration of college financing.
Meet our Learning Center Specialist, RJ Portella

Robert J. Portella (aka R.J.) is a Learning Specialist in the division of Student Academic Success. RJ serves all undergraduate students through workshops on a diverse set of topics including time management, study skills, test-taking strategies, effective communication, self-advocacy, and utilizing university resources. Each semester, he and his colleagues train approximately 40 tutors who then become College Reading and Learning Association (CRLA) certified. The tutors then work in the Learning Center helping students achieve academic success. As a Learning Specialist, RJ also serves as an advisor to students who are either on probation for the first-term or who continue to be on probation from semester to semester. In his role, he works with students to build customized plans to help them develop more productive and lasting behaviors that positively impact their academic performance.

Student Testimonial

Shardé Taylor, '19
Social Work Major

I only came to the Learning Center because RJ’s email seemed so positive. I had a lot of baggage that I thought would keep me from graduating. I wasn’t talking to my professors. I just didn't care because my GPA was so low. But when I met RJ, I knew I was going to be ok. He taught me how to ask for help and speak up for myself. We made small goals and completed all of them. Any time I would feel like giving up he would always take time to listen. Just listening was all I needed sometimes. We got to know each other on a more personal level, and that made the difference in how I viewed myself. I believed in myself more, and my self-esteem soared. I had never come to the Learning Center before, and I had a 0.923 cumulative GPA. After I worked with RJ, I earned a term GPA of 3.875. Long after I went off probation, I would still come by for advice and tips from him and the tutors I worked with. This past Spring I became the first in my family to graduate from college. The next stop is graduate school.
How Students Think About Success

During the fall and spring semester, Vice Chancellor Rivera hosted a series of focus groups with various student groups across campus. The goal of these focus groups was to better understand how students at Rutgers University - Camden think about student academic success. After five focus groups, the following twelve themes emerged:

1. Growth mindset
2. Passing my classes
3. Completing short and long term goals
4. Feeling prepared to leave college and start a career
5. Engaged on campus and taking advantage of available opportunities
6. Academic recognition: Dean's List, Honor Societies,
7. Building deep, caring relationships with faculty and staff
8. Faculty inviting me to participate in class, in research, in labs
9. Internships
10. Breaking the cycle of poverty
11. Graduation
12. Acceptance to graduate school