

# DISCOVER

The path to major & career  
choice for Tigers



Academic Exploration  
& Advising Services  
University of Missouri



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## **Academic Exploration and Advising Services (AEAS)**

- Partnership between Vice Provost for Undergraduate Studies & the College of Arts and Science since 2001
- Student Success Center
- Student populations served
  - Undeclared & Students exploring majors
- Separation into stand-alone academic unit beginning March 2020

## What the research tells us....

Less time to graduation

Exploration is important so the major selected is a good fit & doesn't require a late change of plans that extends time needed to degree completion. (Beggs, et al., 2008; Cuseo, 2005; Straumsheim, 2016; Theophilides et al., 1984)

Higher graduation rate

for students who explore in 1st semester with final major selection in their 2nd semester or later than students who select their final major in their 1st semester (Venit, 2016).

Make fewer major changes

Undecided students, having intentionally explored interests & options, make fewer major changes than students who started in a declared major (Kramer et al., 1994).

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## Strategic Planning

UM System Strategic plan: Spring 2018

- Identified a specific first-time college retention goal of 93% by 2023 from 87% in 2017
- Ensure career outcomes of graduates to 95% by 2023

	Fall 2017	Fall 2018
Anticipated Enrollment	200	500
Enrolled	95	215
Sections	6	10

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## Advising Outcomes

- Break down barriers with exploring students
- Help students identify majors earlier in their academic career for better retention
- Make students aware of major & career paths related to their interests
- Provide valid assessments for career and/or major exploration to students

## Student Recruitment



- Pre-registration process
- During new student orientation advising sessions
- Listing in new student orientation materials/course listings
- Training with Admissions representatives and Tour Team members

## Enrollment

Term	Sections Offered	Students served
Fall 2017	6	93
Fall 2018	10	215
Fall 2019	13	288



## Course Curriculum

## Curriculum Collaboration

- Academic Exploration & Advising Services
- Career Center
- Learning Center
- Center for Academic Success & Excellence
- MU Connect



## Instructor Development

- Weekly meeting with instructors
- Review of lesson plans
- Mandated use of early alert systems
- Mandated use of Canvas for course & instructor resources
- Required assessments & assignments
- All instructors completed Career Development Network training



## Course Details

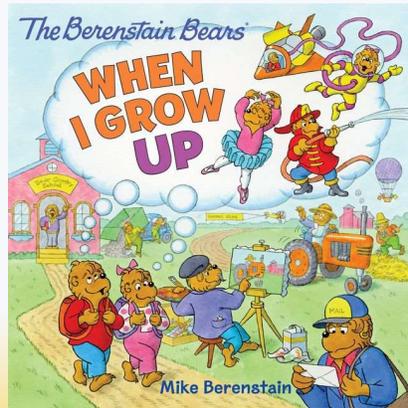
- 2 credit A – F scale course
- No textbook
- 25:1 student to instructor ratio
- Advisor teaches or partnered with sections taught by other student support services staff
- Cost for Clifton Strengths covered by Vice Provost for Undergraduate Studies
- Example of Course Schedule

## Lesson Plans

- Lesson plans coincide with academic calendar
- Lesson plans combine student success strategies with major & career exploration resulting in a final project
- Each lesson has outcomes, plans, resources, & prompts for instructors in facilitation guide
- "Safe Space" to discuss self-exploration & understanding the 'why' along with intentional choice of actions

## When I grow up

- Thinking back to when you were young (6 to 8 years old), what did you want to be 'when you grew up'?



## Talk with your neighbor



- What was your 'dream job'?
- What comparisons can you make with your current job?
- What influenced your 'dream job'?

# Lesson Plan Examples

- Focus 2 Assessment
- Clifton Strengths Assessment
- Values Auction
- Meaningful Work Statement
- Resume, LinkedIn, networking, professionalism
- Dreamweaver

A photograph of six tall, classical stone columns standing in a row on a grassy area. Between the columns are six yellow banners with black text. From left to right, the banners read: 'RESPECT', 'RESPONSIBILITY', a stylized 'M' logo, 'DISCOVERY', and 'EXCELLENCE'. The background shows trees and a clear sky.

**Impact** Metrics, actions, & future semesters

The logo for the University of Missouri, featuring a stylized 'M' with a 'U' inside, followed by the text 'University of Missouri'.

## Impacts: First Year Retention

	Fall 17 Undeclared Enrolled in SSC 1150	Fall 17 Undeclared Not Enrolled in SSC 1150
Persistence to Fall 18	84.7%	75.7%
Underrepresented/minority	100%	61.9%
Advising Group 4	75.9%	55.9%
Identify as Men	79.2%	65.1%
First Generation	76.9%	52%
<b>Most likely to stay at MU</b>	<b>83.6%</b>	<b>81.7%</b>

## Impacts: GPA

GPA	Fall 17 Enrolled in SSC 1150	Fall 17 Not Enrolled in SSC 1150
Predicted GPA Average	2.78	2.97
CUM GPA	3.06	3.04

## Impacts: Vocational Outcomes

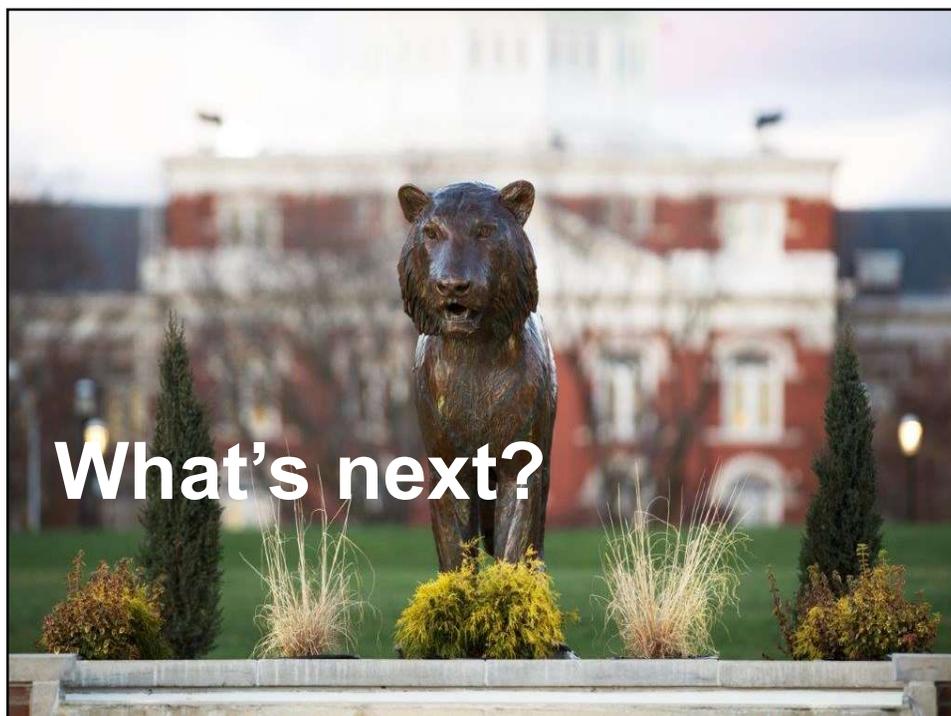
When survey was conducted	Fall 17 Undeclared enrolled in DISCOVER
Start of Semester	6.24 average
End of Semester	8.00

## Impacts: Advising

- Additional time to connect face-to-face with students/advisees
- Assignments provide more specific content to discuss in individual advising meetings
- Students are better able to identify classes that best fit their 'why'
- Early alerts help to better identify students in crisis/academic issues earlier than in previous terms

## Impacts: What students are saying

- “This course challenged me to learn about myself first, then decide the major.”
- “It’s helped me begin to find career options that would align with my skills and personal values.”
- “It definitely helped me narrow down and find what potential majors are best for me.”
- Good class to get adjusted to life in college and how to prepare yourself for the future.”



## Moving Forward



- Increasing course offerings
- Career coaching
- Providing alternative class format
- Academic coaching
- Probation hybrid

## What can you do?

- Explore first-year experience or freshman/sophomore seminars already offered
- Consider what offices/departments you can collaborate to create curriculum & fund teaching assignments
- Be intentional with assignment choice.
- Explore alternative funding opportunities: institutional or non-institutional grant programs

## No Class? No Problem!

- Utilize this information in individualized advising meetings
- Create group advising sessions
- Implement with a peer advising network
- Utilize learning management system to require assessments before advising meetings



## Questions?

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## References

- Bill Johnson (University of North Carolina-Greensboro): Life Design Catalyst
- Burnett, B., & Evands, D. (2018). *Designing your life: How to build a well-lived, joyful life*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

