



# Building "College Knowledge" through a First-Year Advising Communication Plan

Susie Brubaker-Cole, Jeff Malone and Tristen Shay



# Learning Outcomes

- How to inventory current communication to students
- How to evaluate that communication
- How to leverage current communication practices and to create new ones for student success

# **“What Does This Even Mean?”**

- How many emails DO students receive?
- What messages are sent and how many overlap or contradict?
- What assumed knowledge do we place on first year students?

# Starting the Inventory

- Started with communication around Academic Standing
- Sub-Committee requested templates of communication from all major offices
  - Academic advising at the “College” level
  - ROTC, Housing, Athletics, TRIO style programs, etc.

# Inventory Results

- Over 80 pages of templates collected with different terminology used in almost every template
- Up to 7 different points of contact per student, per term.



# Applying the Results

- Sub-Committee issued 13 observations, suggestions for best practices
- Things we considered:
  - Suggestions on terminology changes
  - “Voice” in emails
  - Consistency in referring to academic policies
  - Streamlining who communicates with students and how
- Full process completed in a month with only 4-5 meetings

# Creating a Communication Plan

- Are there conspicuous gaps or absences in your messaging?
- Are we, as university agents, speaking a language that students understand?
- Is our communication timely and pro-active?
- Are we giving them tools to succeed, or early signs that we want them out?

# Activity

- What do students at your institution not know that they need to know?
- What information gaps should a FY Advising Communication Plan cover?



# FY Advising Communication Plan

- Messaging should serve as a success “protective factor” that helps keep students in good academic standing by giving them the tools to succeed:
  - Key deadlines and milestones that a student needs to know to be successful
  - Key habits and practices of successful students

# Overview of FY Advising Communication Plan

- 2012-13:
  - Setup and Process
- 2013-14:
  - Adjustments to Automation
  - UHDS (University Housing and Dining Services) Posting

# Distribution and Implementation

## Distribution:

- Email
- Twitter
- Facebook
- Web sites

## Implemented by:

- Designated Academic Advisors
- Student Affairs staff and support offices (Academic Success Center, Educational Opportunities Program, etc.)

# Facebook and Email

facebook Search for people, places and things A. Tristen Shay Home

CLA Student Services, Ore... Timeline Now

CLA Student Services, Oregon State University shared a link. April 8

The First-Year Matriculation Ceremony is almost here: <http://blogs.oregonstate.edu/liberalarts/2013/04/08/freshman-matriculation-ceremony/>

**Freshman Matriculation Ceremony « College of Liberal Arts**  
blogs.oregonstate.edu

Freshman Matriculation Ceremony Posted on April 8, 2013 by milleker | Leave a reply By Alison Blazer We're a little over a week away from the

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CLA Student Services, Oregon State University April 5

Here's a quick refresher on how to add and drop classes: <http://oregonstate.edu/urm/webcomm/sites/default/files/partnering-email/fye-spring-end-week-1-3-26-2013.html>

**First Year Experience | Oregon State University**  
oregonstate.edu

The first week is nearly complete. This is a good time to assess the classes you're taking for the term, including classes you

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CLA Student Services, Oregon State University April 4

Sunday, April 7th is the last day to add a course by web!

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CLA Student Services, Oregon State University April 2

Avoiding spring fever: <http://blogs.oregonstate.edu/liberalarts/2013/04/01/avoiding-spring-fever/>

**Avoiding Spring Fever « College of Liberal Arts**  
blogs.oregonstate.edu

Avoiding Spring Fever Posted on April 1, 2013 by milleker | Leave a

Sponsored Facebook Home att.com See friends that you turn on with Facebook

Radiance Photographics Getting married out for half-on award winning photography.

Like · Mavis Ofelia Bysse likes Radiance Photographics.

Widmer Brothers Brewing Check in to an Alchemy on Untappd and unlock Alchemy Badge. Limited time only.

Like · Alison Wallingford and Megan Bae

From: Stubblefield, Ashleigh  
Sent: Tuesday, April 16, 2013 8:23 AM  
Subject: Get Ready for Midterms

## Web Version

It's already week 3, are you ready for midterms?

Also, hopefully we will see everyone at the First-Year Matriculation Ceremony tonight, it's at 5:30 PM in Withycombe 109. You'll meet your major advisor and have the chance to hear from our dean.



## Spring Term Week 3 – Get ready for midterms!



While it may seem like spring term just started, midterms aren't that far off. So here are some suggestions to help you get ready for them.

- Check your course syllabi.
- Ask! Contact your professors — after class, during office hours, or via email — to clarify questions and make sure you know what to expect from your exams.
- Consult these [study tips](#), especially the section on [test preparation](#).
- Get support! The [Academic Success Center](#), [Writing Center](#) and [Collaborative Learning Center \(CLC\)](#) are ready to help you. Taking classes online? Contact the [Ecampus Student Services Center](#).

Oregon State has lots of resources available to help you do well in your classes, so take advantage of them and have a good week!

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# Project Assessment Year One

Year One:

- Student Focus Group (attempted)
- Academic Advisor Feedback
- Bitly (<https://bitly.com>)
  - How was it used
  - What does it tell us

# Example of Bitly Tracking

w1 Released Jan 7, 2013/Build Date 12/5/12	
Link	clicks via your shortlink
Google Calendar	35 (as of 1/11/13)
Microsoft Outlook	15 (as of 1/11/13)
Apple iCal	31 (as of 1/11/13)
Google Docs	10 (as of 1/11/13)
Microsoft SkyDrive	9 (as of 1/11/13)
Apple iCloud	10 (as of 1/11/13)
FYE website (academic resources)*	39 (as of 1/11/13) out of 39
w2 Released Jan 10, 2013/Build Date 12/13/12	
Link	clicks via your shortlink
FYE website (main page)*	14 (as of 1/16/13) out of 14
FYE website (advising page)*	8 (as of 1/16/13) out of 8
MyOSU Portal*	11 (as of 1/16/13) out of 11
Registrar's Office Adding Courses*	6 (as of 1/16/13) out of 6
Registrar's Office Dropping Courses*	1 (as of 1/16/13) out of 1
Registrar's Office (main page)	4 (as of 1/16/13) out of 4
Registrar's Office (registration info page)	6 (as of 1/16/13) out of 6
FYE website (academic resources)*	3 (as of 1/16/13) out of 3
w3 Released Jan 16, 2013/Build Date 12/13/12	
Link	clicks via your shortlink
FYE website (advising page)*	13 (as of 1/22/13) out of 13
Registrar's Office Adding Courses*	8 (as of 1/22/13) out of 8
Registrar's Office Dropping Courses*	3 (as of 1/22/13) out of 3
Center for Civic Engagement*	9 (as of 1/22/13) out of 9
Study Abroad First Steps*	12 (as of 1/22/13) out of 12
Study Abroad International (main page)*	2 (as of 1/22/13) out of 2
Undergraduate Research*	6 (as of 1/22/13) out of 6
FYE website (main page)*	23 (as of 1/22/13) out of 23
w4 Released Jan 22, 2013/Build Date 1/8/13	

# Assessment Year Two

Ongoing:

- Analytics
- Student Focus Groups
- On-going Feedback

# Outcomes

- Greater integration and coherence of messaging
- Creation of a unified institutional voice about what it means to be a successful student
- Ubiquity of messaging across complex R-1 university structure
- Ultimately: creation of FYE Task Force and emphasis on integration and coherence.



## University First-Year Messaging Inventory

University Housing and Dining Services

First-year advising communication

CONNECT Crew pilot program

Other noteworthy events/occurrences

# University First-Year Messaging Inventory

## Fall

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Campus Living e-newsletter		Campus Living e-newsletter		Campus Living e-newsletter		Campus Living e-newsletter		Campus Living e-newsletter		Campus Living e-newsletter
		Video link			Video link					
A = Attendance	Term planning	Is your schedule manageable?	Are you ready for midterms?	Experiential learning	Have you met with your advisor?	How are you doing in your classes?	S/U/W?	Registration starts!	Make a study plan for finals	
	First week is done!									
Discussion topics: Learn about each other, meeting new people/ making friends		Discussion topics: meeting people/making friends, current student experience, prioritization/ time management		Discussion topics: current student experience, winter registration/tips, career exploration/ campus and online career resources				Discussion topics: current student experience, expectations vs. realities of OSU, ways to stay connected as a group		
				Homecoming				W registration begins		

## **Learn More About our FY Communication Efforts**

Join Jeff and Kerry Thomas at 9:15am on Wednesday for:

“Building a Cross-Campus, Collaborative Academic Success Intervention for First year Students”

To learn more about the “STAR” program supporting academic success at OSU.

# Questions?

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