

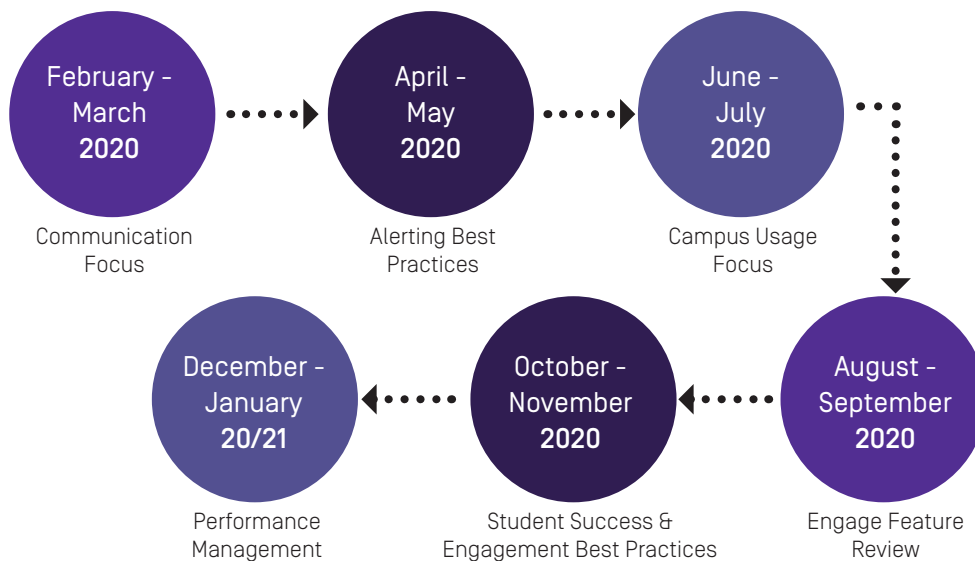
First Year Experience (FYE) Program: Accelerating Student Success Post-Implementation at North Central State College

Often, new initiatives on campus can lead to a significant cultural shift and an increase in time invested for key institutional staff – time they often don't have to spare. In some ways, it was fortunate that our FYE program with North Central State College began just weeks before COVID-19 shut down the country. With staff pushed to their limits, Watermark consultants were there to support further adoption of the retention software platform, initially launched in April 2019 and needed more than ever in a remote world. Through a combination of calls, training, support and reporting, Watermark worked with campus leaders to ensure that their use of the platform drove forward institutional goals, new processes, and wider campus adoption.

People

Monica Durham, Director of Student Success, Retention & Transition Services, spearheaded the project on NC State College's campus and brought in members of her team when needed. The first step of any FYE project is a discovery visit where we identify the college's top successes in implementing the software, the remaining barriers to implementation, usage statistics, and areas for growth. This day-long conversation with both advisors and non-advising staff is key to gathering input and tailoring the project to the institution's needs. In response to their virtual discovery visit in March 2020, we created a set of revised outcomes for the FYE program that included:

- Using the system to its full capabilities by implementing a monthly key feature focus
- Creating additional training and outreach to increase faculty use
- Revisiting alerts created during implementation
- Aligning all technology on campus and creating clear communication plans so faculty, staff and students know which tool to choose to meet their needs.



In December of 2021, Watermark Insights acquired Aviso Retention. Student Success & Engagement includes all former Aviso products.

Institution snapshot

North Central State College
Mansfield, Ohio

Institution Type:
Associate's College
Public

Enrollment: 4,700+

Full-time faculty: 45

Number of campuses: 1

"Student Success & Engagement allows me to limit the number of software applications I need to use to get prepared for a meeting with a student. Also, Student Success & Engagement allows me to monitor how my students are doing and gives me a way to communicate easier with my students. The filter list/saved list options are amazing and used daily to communicate/monitor my students. Everything with this software makes my job 100% easier. Thank you!"

North Central State College
Advising Staff Survey Response



watermark

Process

✔ Meet regularly to achieve goals

Watermark met with Durham and other members of the project team bimonthly for working status calls where we focused on the initiative at hand in addition to executing five training sessions and an additional presentation to the Success Committee on campus.

✔ Create a clear communication plan

It became clear during the discovery visit that many people did not understand all of Student Success & Engagement's capabilities, nor when to use it. As a result of our conversations, NC State built new sections on their website that outlined software applications available on campus and their key functions. In addition, the Watermark team supported Durham in the rollout of texting capabilities, providing connections to our most successful campus partners and examples of communication, especially to students during breaks.

✔ Provide deliverables that can be reused year after year

To ensure the gains during the FYE process continued, the team created a master calendar alongside Durham that plotted both the timing of alerts, alongside internal communication on process to faculty and staff and external communication to students for each month of the year. Watermark produced eight short videos for different users, including faculty, adjunct faculty and students that could be used for further training and adoption as new students and faculty arrived on campus.

Technology

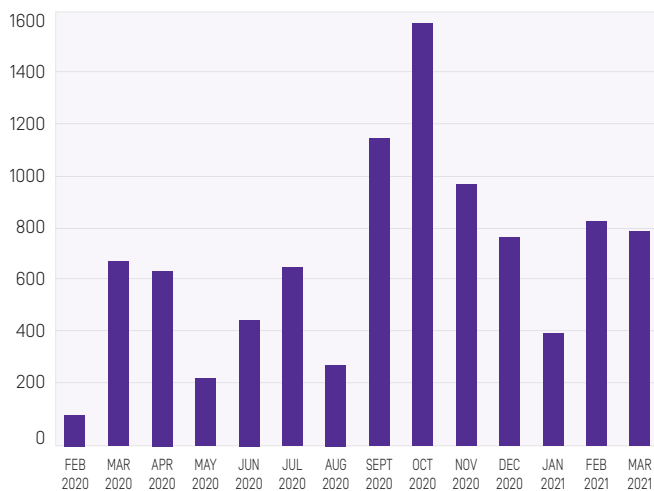
During the FYE process, NC State upgraded to the latest version of Student Success & Engagement and transitioned ownership of data to their IT team. This made it easier to troubleshoot any data inconsistencies that arose and provided additional visibility into the system. Communication and training for the advising and coaching staff focused on key features and included:

- Building out the Resource Guide (52 new resources loaded)
- Creating A Scheduled Message
- Creating a Note from a Message
- Using Early Alerts for Referrals
- Creating Helpful Filters to Monitor Your Caseload
- Building Custom Reports
- Creating Tasks/Action Plans (Grew from 1 to 8 Action Plans)
- Monitoring Key Engagements

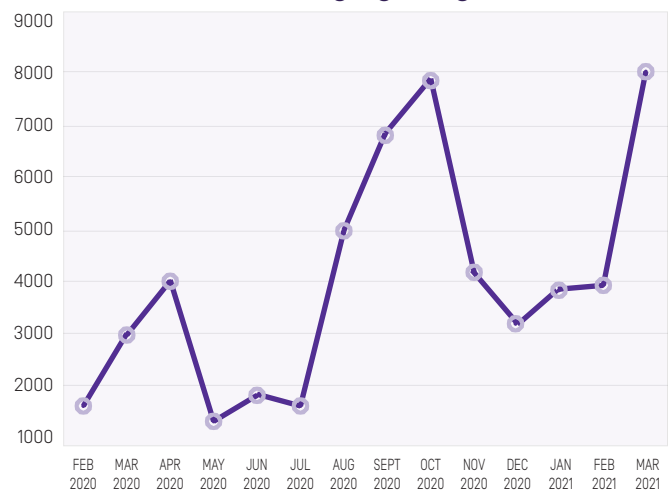
Results

Two of the most significant outcomes were increased utilization of both automated and staff-initiated alerts along with the usage of our messaging system to create bulk personalized outreach, especially around registration.

Alerts Created



Messaging Usage



In a survey of Durham's staff at the end of the project, 100% of respondents said Student Success & Engagement helped their work with students. 100 percent of respondents also said Student Success & Engagement alerts were at least moderately helpful in retaining students. One survey respondent wrote: "With automated and early alerts, this allows us to a) know right away the student is struggling and needs our help, and b) intervene faster to provide resources/assistance which allows for the student to have a higher chance for passing the class. Passing the class and overcoming the barriers leads the student to be more likely to continue on their educational journey." More than 85 percent said that they felt more comfortable using Student Success & Engagement after the FYE project.



To learn more, visit
<https://www.watermarkinsights.com/solutions/student-success/>.