Launch Pad to Splash Down: Online Everything from Orientations, to Student Services and Career Services

Session Presenters

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Agenda

- Introductions
- Orientation
- Student Services
- Career Services
- Q&A

Orientation
Launch Pad

Program Background

*University of Florida MBA Programs Portfolio*

Online MBA (hybrid and fully online models)
Professional MBA (Gainesville & Fort Lauderdale)
Executive MBA
Full-Time MBA
Orientation
Launch Pad

(Internet) Online MBA Program – Launched 1999
- Hybrid format – Campus visit requirement once per term
- Technology advances, re-branding to Online MBA
- Focus Areas (curriculum choice) introduced in 2016

Fully Online MBA Program – Launched 2018
- Increased flexibility
- Response to student feedback
  • Breaks between terms
  • Number of courses
  • Campus visit requirement
  • Travel considerations (Gainesville)

Orientation
Launch Pad

New Program Launch – Stakeholder Considerations
- College Leadership – Deans
- Faculty – Course format change
- Admissions – Recruiting strategy
- Instructional Design Team – Technology
- Career Services Team – Advising at a distance
- Student Affairs Team – Orientation & Scaling Services
Orientation Launch Pad

How do we adapt our current orientation structure?

• Tap into campus resources
• Technology considerations
• Ensuring student understanding of content

Creating a connection to campus

• Video shoots throughout campus
• Welcome video including Deans and UF President
• Use existing LMS (Canvas)
Orientation
Launch Pad

Delivering content historically covered in person

- Determine critical topics
- Coordination of staff
- Create scripts based on in-person dialogue
- Varied media types

Challenges

- Lack of connection with students
- Some topics not as clear online
- Admissions timeline
- Changes to student information system
- Staff confidence with videos and technology
Orientation
Launch Pad

Lessons Learned

- Start planning as early as possible
  - Workflow
  - Faculty and staff schedules
  - Campus stakeholders
- Put yourself in the students’ shoes
- Expect the unexpected
  - Questions from students
  - Scheduling
- Testing...1..2..3

Student Services
Orbit

Program Background:

Penn State Online MBA Program, led by The Smeal College of Business
- Professional Graduate Programs Portfolio—Resident MBA, Executive MBA, Online MBA (partner model), Professional Masters Programs, Graduate Certificates

- MBA Model to re-designed Online MBA, led by The Smeal College of Business
  - Opportunities to distinguish new program, align with other Smeal programs, collaborate across the portfolio
  - Needed to consider program differentiators
  - Services must be scalable
Student Services
Orbit

What is going well...

Advising Model
Scheduled as soon as they commit—also a retention tool
One on one
Personalized/customized
Keeps students connected with Program
Tracked in Salesforce
Takes robust staffing focus

Pre-Advising Video: https://youtu.be/KRXfywjj8HE.

Student Services
Orbit

What is going well...

Advising Model
Advising and Case templates
What is going well...

Advising Model
Degree Audit

Student Ambassadors
Sounding board/Brain Trust
Regular team calls
Student Driven Peer and Prospect Communication
Zoom sessions
Email connections
Events—First Annual Tailgate!
### Student Services: Orbit

**Challenges...**

**Student Organizations**
- Some receptivity—WIIFM not strong enough
- New models required
- Time constraints

**Mentoring Program**
- Low use
- Many details/maintenance
- Good way to engage alumni
- Time constraints

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**Online MBA Mentoring Program**

**Become a Mentee**

- As you begin your MBA journey, you may have many questions about what it’s really like to be an online MBA student. Why not tap into the wisdom of someone who has successfully navigated the program? You may even select a mentor who has a similar educational, training, or professional career path that you are looking for.

**Opportunities:**
- **Provide feedback on your experience in the MBA program:**
  - Offer helpful tips on time management, learn dynamics, virtual team meeting best practices, and study skills.
  - Share stories about how the program has allowed you to hit your personal and professional goals.
  - Be accessible to new students throughout the first year in the program.
  - We met regularly by phone, email or through a Live Conferencing.
  - Direct new students to the appropriate MBA staff member when they have a question they cannot answer.

To apply to the program, find your target mentor and click on the “Select Mentor” button to begin the application process.
Challenges...

**Other Services**—a “mixed bag” (i.e., counseling support/some shared services)

Lessons Learned...

Some services transfer and adapt easily from resident to online delivery

...but, not everything you may think is transferrable is needed or wanted

Let the students guide your decisions

- Be proactive
- Ask for the good, the bad and the ugly

Be open to continually iterating

- Collect data
- Re-visit and revise
Career Services
Splash Down!

Program Background:

Fox Online MBA Program, Temple University
Graduate Programs Portfolio
• Global MBA
• Executive MBA
• Online MBA
• Part-Time MBA
• Professional Masters Programs
• Graduate Certificates
Career Services
Splash Down!

What is going well...

Meridian University Solutions (Partner)
• Professional career management consulting firm
• Seasoned experts – personal career enhancement coaching
• Provides career transition, career management and entrepreneurial coaching services
• One-on-one 24/7 coaching
• Access begins at 6 mos after start of program through 6 mos after graduation
• Enrollment information provided by Fox
• http://www.meridianresourcesuniveristysolutions.com/about
Career Services
Splash Down!

What is going well...

Center for Student Professional Development (CSPD)
• Career/industry awareness and research tools
• Digital resume feedback tool (VMock)
• Interview preparation software (Big Interview)
• Professional development videos (Fox Video Vault)
• Job boards

CSPD Graduate Professional Development Canvas Group
Houses above CSPD tools/resources

Challenges...

Resources (initially)
• Hired outside firm because in-house cannot support 24/7

Engagement
• Communication plan
• Extension of time for services

Changing demographic of Online MBAs
• More information at orientation
• National Conferences
• Recruiting schedule
Career Services
Splash Down!

Lessons Learned...

Provide options – FLEXIBILITY!
• Giving students the option to choose between external and in-house providers
• Online tools and on-site options
• Timing of services

Communication
• Ensure students know what options they have and REMIND them

Q&A

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