MEASURING AND MONITORING STUDENT PROGRESS

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Plan for Today’s Workshop

1. What do we mean by student progress? Why measure and monitor? (10 minutes)

2. Successes: Drawing on our collective experience with what works well today (40 minutes)

3. An extended example: Florida State University’s system for tracking graduate student progress (60 minutes)

4. How to improve for tomorrow: Steps toward more successful monitoring and assessment systems (40 minutes)
What do we want to know about student progress?

- Student/Adviser (academic progress, funding)
- Graduate Program (admissions data, milestones, academic progress, funding commitments)
- Graduate School (enrollment, milestones, degree audits, visa status, valid dissertation committee, program review, funding eligibility for students, funding allocations to programs)
- Registrar (registration, course taking, course grades, degree conferral)
- Financial Aid/Payroll (payments to students, benefits eligibility and benefits enrollment)
- Other Service Providers (Health service, counseling center, library, etc.) (eligibility for services)
- Accreditors, Professional Associations
  - Student/Adviser (academic progress, funding)
Challenges

- How to combine attention to student academic progress (highly variable across fields of study and across students) with collective and administrative indicators of progress (standardized, comparable across fields and students)
- How to link these different levels in useful ways given differing capacities and agendas
Why Tackle These Challenges?

- Measuring student progress enables students to know where they stand, and compare themselves to realistic expectations.
- Measuring student progress enables faculty to understand the status of their own graduate programs and may motivate and guide the improvement of those programs.
- Measuring student progress enables administrators to see where the institution is working well, where resources are needed and where intervention is appropriate.
Just a Few of the Barriers to Measuring and Monitoring

- Diversity of graduate requirements and experiences by field and by level
- Decentralization of faculty advising and knowledge of student outcomes
- Absence of central systems for tracking key data
- Lack of coordination across central systems
- Variety of funding mechanisms and associated student performance measures (teaching, research, fellowship, loans)
Identify one concrete practice at your institution that helps you to monitor student progress. With the example, suggest one reason why it works well in your context. Take 2 minutes to write it down, with the reason why it is successful.

Example from University of Michigan

Share these at the tables. Each person gets 3 minutes to talk with no questions or interruptions. After everyone has had their 3 minutes, then open up questions and discussions.
Share and Compare, Part II

- Given what you’ve heard so far, write down one idea about how to improve tracking and monitoring at your home institution. How will you get started?
- Share these ideas at your table. Use the group to help each other to brainstorm about the steps to make this improvement.
- After 30 minutes, we’ll move toward a whole group conversation about steps toward improving monitoring.