

# Empowering Through Technology: Unlocking a Virtual Landscape for Increased Student Support

March 22, 2024  
Dr. Torry Reynolds  
Jan Byrum  
James Whicker



COMPLETION • LEARNING  
EQUITY • POST-GRADUATION

# VISION 2025

THE 2020-2025 STRATEGIC PLAN



Pillar II TAP: Equitable Access and Success





# Advising Model

- Each student has an advisor assigned upon admission.
- Orientation and 1<sup>st</sup> Advising
- Registration for initial semester
- Assigned advisor begins relationship with appreciative advising session for full degree planning
- Student registers
- Meets learning outcomes
- Perfect retention
- Graduation
- Gainfully employed!

# This takes Time and Planning





But sometimes for the student that BIG decision to start school happens....

At the last minute!

# Evolving Methods

Year	Method	Style
Pre 2010	In-Person Automated phone service	Extremely long lines
2015	In-Person	Program specific
2020-COVID forces changes	Virtual Phone	Call back sheets
2021	In-Person Virtual Phone	Regular registration events and virtual advising



# The world of service has changed!

- Next or even same day delivery from Amazon and other online retailers
- Same day pick up of orders from places like Walmart
- Ordering food through apps like UberEats or DoorDash

We have to change with it!



# 2022-2023 Increasing Access

## On Campus

- Saturday before Fall and Spring Start
- Rock Enroll Events
- Drop/Add

## Virtual

- Virtual advising appointments

## Winter Break 2022

- Ticket system with call backs





# 2023-2024 Unlocking the virtual landscape

## On Campus

- Saturday before Fall and Spring Start
- Rock Enroll Events
- Drop/Add

## Virtual

- Virtual appointments
- Virtual Rock Enroll
- Virtual Drop/Add

## Winter Break 2023

- Virtual events with the full array of student services available.





## Process

How this actually works!

# Tools



Navigate360 | STUDENT SUCCESS

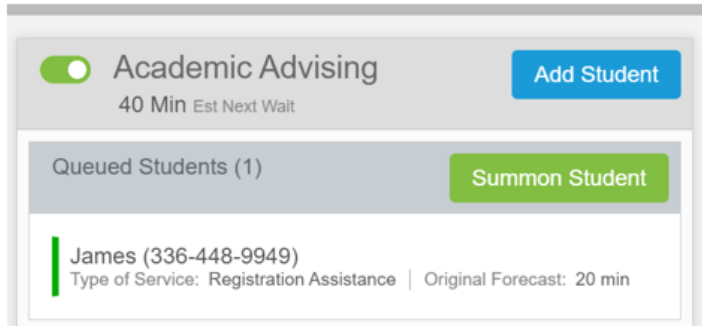
# Inviting Students to the Event

Element 451 is used to invite the targeted population to attend the event.

- Invitations are sent through email and text messages
- Students who RSVP are texted a link to the event at their appointed time.
- The number of RSVP's allowed per hour is dependent on the number of Advisors available. Generally, three students per advisor per hour is a good number.
- No show rate is around 50%



# Helping Students who did not RSVP



Student Care representatives can invite students who call in for assistance on the day of the event.

- QLess is used to invite these students.
- Their name and phone number are entered to the list.
- The event coordinator will then “summon” these students as time and space allows.
  - Students who RSVP skip this step and sent the link join at their appointment time.
- When the student is summoned, they are sent the event link in a text message.

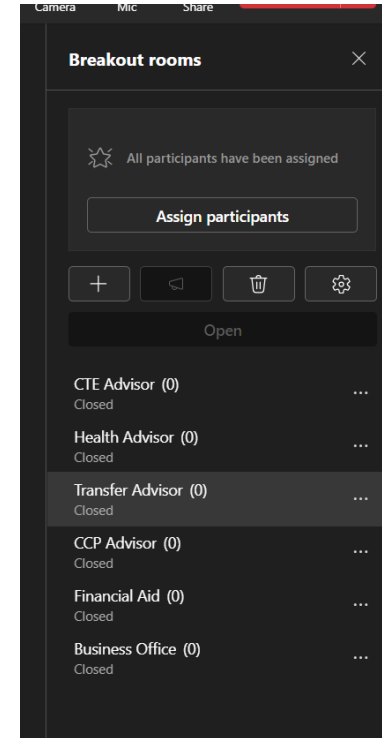
This allows the event coordinator to control access and limit chaos while giving priority to students who RSVP'd.

# The Event



Microsoft Teams is used as platform for the events.

- Event coordinator greets students as they arrive and assess what their needs are.
- Students are then assigned to a breakout room with an advisor or other staff member.
- Staff members stay in their assigned rooms and students are moved in and out by the coordinator
- Staff use a separate group chat to coordinate activities during the event.
- Immediate needs are served, and appointments are made with assigned advisors for long term planning.
- Staff use Navigate to create appointment summaries and notes in student files.



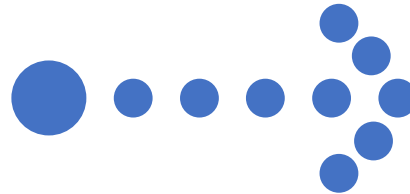
# Overview



Inviting targeted student populations.



Inviting students on day of event.



# Going Forward



Starting in April we will start daily Virtual Drop-In hours!

- QLess will be used to get students to the event.
- Peer Advisors will act as coordinators assessing student needs and assigning them to advisors.
- Advisors working remotely will join the event to work with students as needed.



# Flexibility- An Invaluable Asset

In the run-up to the start of Spring semester, the weather threw us a curveball.

- The prospect of winter weather on Saturday, 1/6, forced us to cancel the planned in-person registration event.
- Then, on the following Tuesday, the last day of drop/add registration, Forsyth Tech was forced to close at noon due to impending winter weather.
- In the past, this would cause a major disruption to our registration processes. But we were able to swiftly and easily transition everyone to our Virtual Drop\Add events that were already taking place.



# Lessons Learned

- Controlling access is the key to avoiding chaos!
- Training staff about the process was very important and was initially lacking.
- Be ready to help students access the technology.
  - Downloading the Teams app.
  - Can also be accessed through a web browser on a computer.
  - Providing students with an alternative dial-in phone number expands access. All Teams meetings have a number for this.

# Positive Outcomes

- Brought our student services team together
  - Greater appreciation for each other and what everyone does for students.
  - Big difference between “You need to go to Financial Aid” and “oh, let me connect you with Martha, who can help with that question”
  - Warm handoffs mean fewer students get lost in the process.
- Decreased wait times for in-person services.
- Easier and equitable access for the disabled, students with children, students with jobs, and those who lack transportation to and from campus.
- It is catching on....This spring we have served the same number of students but 50% engaged the online opportunity. Accessible and fast!

# Progress and Assessment

---

Face the Fear

---

Clear is Kind

---

Feedback is Critical

---

Actually USE the Feedback

---

We Built Bridges

---

Lead by Example

How did we do today?



Questions?



**Forsyth Tech**  
COMMUNITY COLLEGE