Student Experience Team

Project Description

Improve student experience, reduce confusion, improve efficiency of support requests for front line (tier 1) support, create a universal support framework and language for support staff at the university

My Role

Creator /
Co-Project Manager

The Challenge

After seeing recurring frustration in communications between support requests passed between teams, an opening to discuss with an ally on an academic unit arose, allowing us to identify her team's frustrations and questions and ways we can help delivery better support and referral to other university departments.

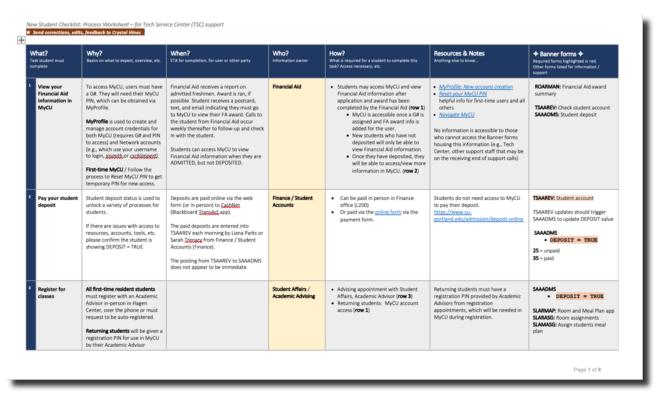


Image: First page of New Student Process Worksheet (internal use process map)

Brief Summary

Worked with stakeholders in Finance, Student Affairs, Registrar, Admissions, and more to map out the student journey for each process a student must complete, ensuring visibility of all intersecting pieces. Improvements to the student support experience and better understanding of the internal timeframes for each team's work, leading to more patience, communication, and team work, were amongst the positive outcomes of this project. Developed relationships with key stakeholders in other departments and teams around the university to better understand the processes involved in various student processes, forming the "Student Experience" project, a holistic approach to serving students and fellow employees better.

Developing new support processes and universal framework for onboarding students, through their entire student journey, by working with all stakeholders around the university to outline their processes and workflow so each member of our each team / department could better visualize their place in a student's experience and ensure support routing to the proper unit for assistance was engaged.

Approach

Teamed with a director from an academic department to work together on combating issues with onboarding and support, jumping onto a checklist project started by her project team and building the project and its internal counterpart from our many meetings and investigations.

Through networking and compassionate inquiry, with the aim to simply understand them better, we met with stakeholders from all affected teams and departments. We observed their work and asked how we can help.

We discussed process issues, grievances, things my team may be able to help with and pitched my idea for universal support framework, built on my teammate's checklist to get students on the same page from an onboarding new student perspective, as well.

Goals and Objectives

- Outline the student journey (user journey mapping)
- Improve student onboarding experience
- Increase communication between teams (reduce siloing)
- Understand processes from other teams as they relate to timelines and

- expectations for users in terms of account creations, next steps, etc.
- Adopt a universal framework and language for supporting and onboarding students
- Before strategic shift for university board, this universal framework was intended to be shared and adopted by any other team interfacing with students at our school

Ideation/Design

- Establish and adopt a universal framework and language for supporting and onboarding students
- New students and returning students provided a concise checklist that linked to instructions and relevant forms for each action necessary for students to complete.
 - Lists every action needed to get onboarded successfully and through the census period (first 10 days of each term)
 - o Printable, but also mobile friendly
 - o Could be sent to academic advisor for discussion
- An internal process worksheet that matched step-for-step each component of the student checklist was created for internal stakeholders on various teams, indicating what team handles the action and the timeline for turnaround.
 - o Information such as Banner forms to locate helpful data was identified through meetings with other teams and relationship building to understand team workflow for Finance, Academic, and more.

Outcomes & Accomplishments

Before the first phase of the project had even been fully-implemented, the initiative was already fostering goodwill among coworkers and smoothing out bumps in support delivery for various teams.

- Staff that had previously been confused about where a student with a
 certain type of problem should be referred now had a concise reference
 worksheet that used their common internal language to ensure students
 were sent to the correct department the first time.
- Created what was referred to as "the first" student journey roadmap folks
 helping with this project had seen matching step-for-step with the
 student checklist to ensure we were speaking the same common language

- and could communicate about bumps effectively and realistically.
- Created a special Microsoft Teams workspace for us to have quick access to real-time communication for support to help one another in times of crisis,
 - e.g., if a piece of technology breaks, I could alert the entire Student Experience Team so they also knew when Student Accounts began receiving calls about it and Academic Affairs, etc.
- Student frustration was reduced, collaboration and communication among staff increased (as well as morale!), and plans for further development of these initiatives together for other user types were in discussion.