The early warning catches the student

- Nuts and Bolts Session Plan -

Tanya Acheson - First Year Experience Project Leader.
Scott Bradey – Manager, Learning Technologies
Elizabeth Siataga –Manager, Student Equity
James Cook University

Objectives

Participants will have the opportunity to:

- Learn how to use the Blackboard Early Warning Function
- Explore how the early warning function can be supported by formative and diagnostic assessments pieces
- Discuss a range of intervention strategies to support successful transition
- Hear and learn from one university's experiences of the Early Warning System

Abstract

Using the functionality of Blackboard, the ON TRACK: Early Warning System assists staff to identify students in need and maximise their future success. This systematic approach facilitates a holistic response and promotes synergism across existing retention initiatives and student support services.

Minimal set-up time and automated reporting enables staff to carefully direct their limited resources. This is particularly beneficial to large first year cohorts.

The program enables subject co-ordinators to set their own criteria and implement interventions at multiple levels. Professional staff and student mentors can also be actively involved. The program provides the basic structure for a University-wide retention and/or pastoral care system, easily adapted across a range of disciplines.

Share James Cook University's experience in the design and implementation of the ON TRACK: Early Warning System, including technical "how to" aspects. Explore the opportunities to creatively design formative and diagnostic assessments pieces to support transition interventions.

Group discussion will focus on a range of transition interventions currently being trialled. Participants will have the opportunity to brainstorm how they may successfully utilise these strategies in their own practice.

Creating the Early Warning Rules to identify student groups

(10 minute presentation)

A practical demonstration will show how the Blackboard Early Warning System can be used to identify 'at risk' student groups. The creation of the Early Warning rules will be demonstrated.

The presentation will highlight factors known to inhibit student success and draw upon well-documented evidence supporting early school-based intervention strategies.

Each of the Early Warning Rules will be described enabling participants to consider how formative and/or diagnostic assessment may be used to identify specific student groups.

Participants will be invited to view a 1st year subject syllabus to consider how assessment pieces could be used to create early warning rules to support early intervention.

What happens next?

(15 minute interactive session)

The ON TRACK: Early Warning System currently being trialed at James Cook University supports a range of interventions. This enables the subject co-ordinator, school and/or faculty to determine the degree of intervention based upon available resources and/or preferred outcomes.

Levels of intervention include:
- Counsel to withdraw
- Follow-up email including assessment feedback
- Follow-up email including information about available resources
- Series of follow-up emails providing detailed feedback and referral points
- Request for meeting
- Follow-up via phone
- Referral to ON TRACK: Peer Support Programme

During this section of the session, participants will be invited to discuss intervention options and generate possible future directions with a panel of James Cook University staff. Panel members will answer participant's questions about the implementing the Early Warning System across a diverse range of disciplines using a range of intervention strategies.

What happened at James Cook University?
(5 minute discussion)

In summary, the presenters will highlight the lessons learnt from 2009 interventions using the ON TRACK: Early Warning System at James Cook University.