

**Plan 2008 Phase II Programs & Initiatives  
Outcomes Reporting Form  
January 2007**

<b>Your Institution:</b> University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee	
<b>Program/Initiative:</b> Early Warning System	<b>Year Established:</b> Fall 2005
<b>Target Audience (check all that apply):</b> Administration: <input type="checkbox"/> Faculty: <input type="checkbox"/> Academic Staff: <input type="checkbox"/> Classified Staff: <input type="checkbox"/> Students: <input type="checkbox"/> Campus Community: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other: <input type="checkbox"/> If other, please specify:	
<b>Race/Ethnic Groups Affected by this Program/Initiative (check all that apply):</b> African American/Black: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> American Indian: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Latino/Hispanic: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Southeast Asian: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other Asian: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> European American: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> If other, please specify: International and NA students	
<b>Cost of Program/Initiative:</b> Absorbed in operation <b>Funding Sources:</b> Department of Enrollment Services Funds	
<b>Description:</b> As part of the Access to Success, the campus-wide Early Warning System is implemented through a web-based inputting and data generation system. It provides communication from instructors to advisors regarding student performance after four weeks of classes.  All instructors of standard start-date sections with new freshmen are invited to assess the 4-week status of their students. This information is shared with advisors who, in turn, contact unsatisfactorily performing students and report by the 8 <sup>th</sup> week back to instructors regarding their recommendations to students.  In spring 2006, the Early Warning System was modified per advisor request and expanded per broad feedback to include all freshmen.	
<b>Point Person(s):</b> Associate Director Beth Warner <b>Department/Unit(s):</b> Department of Enrollment Services, Division of Academic Affairs	
<b>Departments/Units/Groups Involved:</b> All departments that offer courses to new freshmen (expanded to include all freshmen in spring 2006) are involved in this initiative.	
<b>Goals &amp; Expected Outcomes:</b> Goals are to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase first-year retention rate</li> <li>• Increase first-year probation and course completion rate</li> <li>• Increase sixth-year graduation rate</li> </ul> Data pertaining to the retention, probation, course completion, and graduation rates of students of color will be obtained and closely monitored to assess student success.	
<b>Actual Measurable Outcomes for Plan 2008 Goals, Including Impact on Enrollment, Retention, and/or Graduation, and/or long term potential thereof.</b> In fall 2005, 311 or 34% of the instructors invited to submit information reported on 3,880 new freshmen, which accounted for 90% of the freshman class. Unsatisfactory progress was reported for 25% of the students.  In turn, 36 advisors, or 53% of those who received input on their students, indicated that they contacted the students and shared their advice with instructors. Not surprisingly, students identified in the Early Warning System with unsatisfactory performance had lower first-year retention rate (61.4%) and a higher probation rate (13.6%) at the end of spring semester than those who received satisfactory reports (74.8% for first-year retention rate and 4.9% for probation rate). But students who received no early warning reports from instructors had the lowest first-year retention rate (47.9%). Therefore, students with instructor intervention (either positive or negative feedbacks) had better retention and performance than those without any early warning feedback.	

For fall 2005 targeted students of color\*, 253 new freshmen received satisfactory early warning reports and 351 received unsatisfactory reports in fall 2005. The retention rates of these students to the following fall semester were 66.8% and 50.7%, respectively. At the end of spring 2006, only 9.5% of the satisfactorily performing students were placed on probation and 8.7% were dismissed, while 15.4% of the unsatisfactorily performing students were placed on probation and 30.8% were dismissed. Of the 30 targeted new freshmen of color who did not receive any early warning report, only 23.3% were retained to the following fall semester, none were on probation and 3.3% were dismissed at the end of spring semester. This latter information suggested that many of the students who did not receive any early warning reports withdrew from the university before spring semester ended.

These are baseline data. The intent is to increase the first-year retention, and decrease the second semester probation and dismissal rates of students, especially students of color, who receive unsatisfactory early warning reports; and narrowing the gap of success measures between these students and students who receive satisfactory reports. Because data showed that students who received no early warning report performed significantly poorer, the intent is also to increase the "participation" rate so all new freshmen will receive early warning notifications from instructors.

**Intersections Across Plan 2008 Goals:**

**Goal 3:** closing the achievement gap. This initiative addresses the retention and graduation of all students, particularly students of color. The goal is to close the achievement gap between targeted students of color and non-targeted students.

**Goal 7:** accountability. Accountability and assessment measures are built into this system to ensure an effective feedback mechanism and communication among instructors, advisors, and students. Student success is tracked and analyzed for program improvement and modification.

**Assessment Practices and Program Changes in Response to Challenges:**

The Early Warning System has been very successful. By spring 2007, the instructor participation has increased tremendously. However, challenges will continue to include the need for instructors to respond (online) on a timely manner, as well as increasing the effectiveness of communication between instructors and advisors, advisors and students, and instructors and students.

To improve the program, it has recently been suggested that:

- All instructors should provide feedback not only on students who are performing unsatisfactorily, but also on those who are performing well in classes.
- All instructor feedback/comments should be shared not only with advisors, but also with students.
- The program should be expanded beyond freshman classes.

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\* Targeted students of color include African American, American Indian, Latino/a, and Southeast Asian groups.