

# NEW STUDENT CONNECTIONS

## Keeping New Students Connected!

During summer 2016, fall 2016, and spring 2017 semesters, New Student Connections designed, implemented, and executed a series of large-scale societal, smaller community, and individualized programs and services to support the persistence of new students. These offerings included a more robust Summer B experience, expansion of Week of Welcome programming in the fall and spring semesters, development of spring pilot of The Network, and the creation of peer coaching services to help new students feel like they matter and have individualized support networks at USF. These expanded efforts support USF's path to Preeminence and AAU eligibility by contributing to increases in USF's persistence and completion rates.

### **IMPACT:**

As indicated from the data below, NSC programs and services assist students in normalizing and persisting through various stages of transition by helping them develop relationships and form peer support networks, which are associated with higher probabilities of degree completion (Astin, 1993; Bridges, 2003; Woosley, 2003). In addition, students are reporting high levels of a sense of belonging and self-efficacy to succeed at USF, which are linked to higher levels of persistence and degree completion (Moulton, Brown, & Lent, 1991; Strayhorn, 2008).

### **METHODOLOGY:**

New Student Connections created a set of standardized assessment questions to gather feedback on the impact of the experiences offered to participants engaged in each of our programs hosted in the 2016-2017 academic year. Questionnaires were administered via email and BullSync, as well as in person. There was a total response rate of 516 NSC participants. A forced Likert Scale was used ranging from a 4 (strongly agree) to 1 (strongly disagree). At the conclusion of each program, the data collected from these questionnaires was recorded and analyzed and guided the creation of this executive summary.

Assessment Question	% Strongly Agree or Agree
I have a [better] awareness of the diverse perspectives I will encounter while at USF.	96.76%
I have [increased] my knowledge of academic resources to utilize while at USF.	96.37%
<b>I feel [more] confident to succeed in my first year at USF.</b>	<b>95.99%</b>
I have [increased] my knowledge of involvement opportunities to engage in at USF.	95.99%
<b>USF feels like a place I can call home.</b>	<b>95.04%</b>
<b>I feel supported by members of the USF community.</b>	<b>94.66%</b>
I am [more] comfortable interacting with people different from myself.	94.66%
I have [increased] my knowledge of support services to utilize while at USF.	94.47%
<b>I feel like I belong at USF.</b>	<b>93.89%</b>
<b>I can see myself attending USF next Fall.</b>	<b>93.75%</b>
I feel [more] confident in making responsible decisions.	93.70%
I had a fun, positive experience during [insert NSC program].	91.98%
I feel like I can lean on my peers for support at USF.	90.65%
I have made friends I will keep in touch with during my time at USF.	90.08%

### **CONCLUSION:**

Engaging in New Student Connections programs/services positively impacts the experience of new students and is aiding in their success at the University of South Florida by supporting students' unique transitional needs and providing a sense of belonging and social connections and support networks. These expanded efforts support USF's path to Preeminence and AAU eligibility by continuing to contribute to increases in USF's persistence and completion rates.



#### **New Student Connections**

813-974-2896 • usf.edu/newstudent  
MSC 3200