

Remember...

- SOS is FREE and confidential!
- SOS is supportive and tailors a plan to fit your individual needs.
- Many SOS students improve their GPA, develop skills for academic success, and return to good academic standing. With effort, there is great opportunity for success!

Free

*"My mentor was very open and helpful to me. He motivated me to be successful and helped me develop confidence in myself."
~ University College student*



Student Success

University Center for Academic Excellence
University of North Carolina at Charlotte

9201 University City Boulevard

Charlotte, NC 28223-0001

Phone: 704-687-5478

Email: successful@uncc.edu

www.ucae.uncc.edu/sos/

STUDENTS
OBTAINING
SUCCESS



*A peer mentoring
program for students
on academic
probation*

Students Obtaining Success is a program for students on academic probation at UNC Charlotte. We realize that poor academic performance can have many different causes:

- You may have difficulty with time management, prioritizing tasks, or juggling demands of school, work and home.
- Personal issues may be interfering with your ability to concentrate on your work.
- You may have trouble with science and math courses or writing papers.
- You may be unsure of your major and lack direction or motivation.
- You may need help with certain skills like taking notes or studying for exams.

This program is designed to help you identify those reasons and develop a plan to improve your grades and return to good academic standing.

Plan



What would I do?

To participate in SOS, you must:

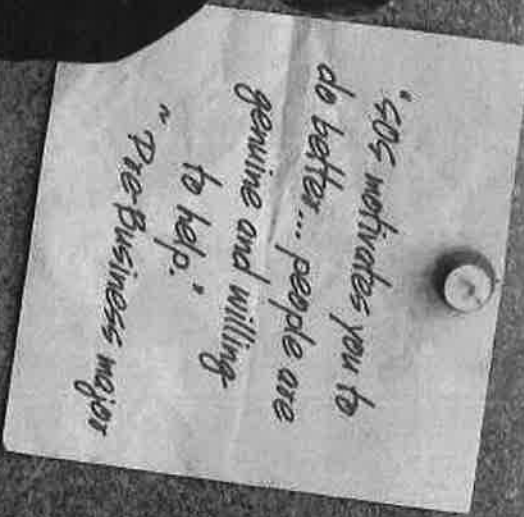
- Want to improve your performance.
- Complete an assessment designed to identify your strengths and weaknesses.
- Work together to create a personal plan to help you regain good academic standing.
- Commit to your plan and carry it out during the semester—a plan that is tailored to your own needs.
- Meet weekly with your peer mentor to discuss your academic situation and performance.
- Meet with your academic advisor and instructors to discuss course selection and performance.

Commit



Succeed!

- SOS participants achieve significant semester and cumulative GPA improvements—many have even made the Chancellor's List and Dean's List!
- SOS participants return to good academic standing at significantly higher rates than those who do not participate.
- SOS participants develop many skills, such as time management and effective study strategies, to help them become successful students.
- SOS participants highly recommend the program to other students!



Sign up today!

• Slots are limited. Please register quickly.

• Contact Student Success
704-687-5478
successfaj@unc.c.edu



Students Obtaining Success (SOS) Peer Mentoring Program for Students on Academic Probation

Background:

SOS began as a retention initiative in Spring 2006 with the goal of helping students on academic probation improve grade point averages and regain Good Academic Standing (2.0 cumulative grade point average). The pilot program enlisted five undergraduate peer mentors to serve about 25 mentees. The program has expanded to 25 mentors in Spring 2011. Extensive research was conducted as the program was developed and evolved, including focus groups and a survey of all students on academic probation with integrated institutional data. Collaboration among campus partners was essential to the creation and success of this initiative.

SOS Program Philosophy:

- Participation in this program is *voluntary*.
- The program operates from the belief that every student admitted to the University *can be successful*.
- *Peer intervention* is an effective model to deliver services.
- The SOS program is *individualized* and each student works with an SOS mentor and staff to develop a personal action plan with goals for the semester.

Program Components:

- Each mentor works with minimum of four mentees on academic probation. Mentors meet individually with each mentee for one hour every week.
- Each mentee completes an initial assessment, develops a personal action plan, completes a mid-semester update, and provides feedback through a program evaluation.
- Mentors are responsible for developing agendas for their meetings and preparing activities to assist the mentees in meeting their goals.
- The program seeks a balance between providing a consistent experience for each mentee and allowing for individualized approach based on mentor approach/style and mentee goals/needs.

Mentor Compensation:

Mentors are paid hourly and receive significant training and support, as well as professional development opportunities.

Mentor Selection:

- Faculty, academic advisors, academic services staff, and student affairs staff are asked to nominate qualified students to serve as mentors.
- Nominated students are invited to information sessions and given application materials.
- Application materials include: information sheet with position description and selection process timeline, application with short essay questions (no more than 2 pages typed); and one faculty reference form. Students with GPA below 2.75 are asked to address their ability to maintain academic success and serve as a mentor. We do believe there is value in hiring students who have had their own

academic struggles and who can relate to needs of mentees in program. Previous SOS mentees have been hired as mentors and been quite successful.

- Applications are reviewed and some candidates are invited to interview. Interviews are conducted (30-minute interviews) by a professional staff member and graduate assistant.
- Selection decisions are made and applicants are notified. We seek a diverse staff, representing a wide range of experiences (such as various colleges/programs, non-traditional students, gender, underrepresented groups).
- A meeting with new staff is held to make introductions and start the teambuilding process.

Mentor Training and Supervision:

All training and supervision sessions are mandatory.

- Mentors participate in three days of training prior to the start of the semester. This training focuses on skills development (interpersonal skills, mentoring skills), University resources and policies, SOS procedures, teambuilding (significant sharing between new and returning mentors is key to success), leadership development, and practical ideas for mentoring sessions.
- Mentors must attend a one-hour staff meeting every two weeks. Staff meetings provide a forum to discuss situations, share ideas and feedback, and provide program information. In addition, a "How-To Corner" is part of every staff meeting to cover a relevant training topic. For example, a How-To Corner may address strategies to help mentees communicate positively and proactively with professors; strategies for addressing procrastination/time management issues, or how to utilize learning styles to help a mentee succeed. The How-To Corners are an important part of mentors' ongoing training.
- Mentors meet individually with a supervisor (assistant director of student success or graduate assistant) for 30 minutes each week. These meetings offer individual support and provide the opportunity to discuss progress/needs of each mentee.

Program Outcomes:

- Performance measures: students who participate in SOS have significant GPA improvements (average semester GPA improvement of 0.955 for Fall 2010 SOS mentees). Students in the program also regain Good Academic Standing at significantly higher rates than non-participants.
- Student Learning Outcomes: Students self-report enhanced time management skills, improved ability to study effectively, and more. In addition, mentor observations reflected on rubric scores indicate statistically significant improvements on nine competency scales. Mentors also report benefits, including improved leadership and communication skills, enhanced self-confidence, and the ability to work with students different from themselves.

My mentor was very supportive. I was afraid that my peer mentor would be more of a teacher, but she felt like a friend to me as well so I was able to open up about anything. She was quick to find out anything that I needed to know about. She helped me out with all of the goals that I set in the beginning as much as she could. She didn't make me feel pressured or nervous at all to have a meeting with her.

Contact:

Carolyn Maxwell Blattner

Associate Director of Student Success

University Center for Academic Excellence

University of North Carolina at Charlotte

704-687-5478

cblattne@uncc.edu

ucae.uncc.edu