

Starfish
2020-21 Annual Report
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Starfish Overview

Starfish is a retention technology tool that was launched at Weber State University (WSU) in the Fall of 2017. The purpose and goal of the tool is to enhance the way we work across campus to help students succeed by:

- Facilitating communication and connections between instructors, students, advisors, and support services
- Providing a streamlined means for faculty to give feedback to students on course performance and/or attendance through Progress Surveys
- Helping us prioritize and coordinate outreach for students; especially at-risk students
- Keeping students informed of their own progress and achievements and prompting them to action if needed
- Connect students to campus resources



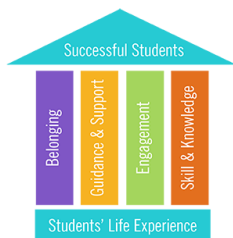
Starfish Vision: Engage. Connect. Succeed.

Starfish Goals: To increase student retention, persistence, and graduation rates.

WSU utilizes three Starfish products: Early Alert, Connect, and Analytics. The Student Success Center (SSC) has been charged to act as administrators of the tool for Academic Affairs and coordinate training, primarily for the Early Alert functionality.

The overall goal and function of Starfish ties directly into **Weber State University’s mission statement** by “providing excellent educational experiences for students through extensive personal contact among faculty, staff and students in and out of the classroom.”

Starfish is integral in fulfilling the **Student Success Pillars** as outlined by the Student Success Steering Committee. Starfish helps students be successful by helping them be “proactive in seeking and using resources to promote their academic and professional success and achievement (e.g., will take steps to get or leverage university resources when needed)” - SSSC



Starfish is leveraged to help students with a sense of *belonging, guidance & support, engagement, and gaining access to skills and knowledge* through Early Alert, Connect, and Analytics and is a campus-wide platform.

Program Goals

The overarching goal of Starfish is to improve student retention through increased communication and collaboration between WSU faculty, staff, and students. Starfish, for academic affairs, is ran by 1 FTE employee with the support of the SSC leadership team. The primary objectives for 2019-20 is to:

- Provide ongoing training and support to faculty, staff, and students who utilize the Starfish system (Including ongoing maintenance of the Starfish system)
- Expand the utilization of Progress Surveys
- Outreach to students who have received a tracking item (e.g. flag, referral, To-Do) :
 - Utilize Referrals and To-Dos within Starfish to promote student success
 - Make contact with students who use the “Raise My Hand” feature within two working days
 - Utilize Success Plans to promote student success
- Implement the Starfish Intake Survey (Get to Know You Survey)
- Gather feedback from students and faculty
- Utilize Starfish Connect (Calendaring and Kiosks) to promote connection to faculty, advisors, campus resources, and support staff
- Utilize Starfish for key retention initiatives
 - Semester to Semester Persistence (SEM to SEM)
 - Early Stop-Out Outreach- Student who cancelled all courses within the first 3 weeks of the semester (MELT)
 - Outreach to students who are nearing completion of a degree or credential

2019-2020 Assessment Measures/Results

Provide ongoing training and support for faculty, staff, and students who utilize the Starfish system (Including ongoing maintenance of the Starfish system).

Currently, all training and ongoing support is conducted on a one-on-one basis upon request and through email communications. Trainings were offered through Training Tracker for Fall 2020.

TERM	Starfish Email Support	One-on-one Training	Starfish Support Tickets
Summer 2020	441 emails	8	11
Fall 2020	646 emails	29 (14 through Training Tracker)	12
Spring 2021	878 emails	11	16

**Average per semester since 2018: 540 Emails, 11 One-on-one Training, and 12 Support Tickets*

Expand the utilization of Progress Surveys

One overarching goal is to expand the number of faculty who complete a Progress Survey through Starfish. The highest completion percentage was 53% in the Spring of 2018, and the lowest completion rate took place in the 2nd block Progress Survey of Spring 2020 with 31% completed.

Starfish Impact and Progress Survey Utilization: 2020 - 21 Overview

Semester (totals)	Students	Courses	Faculty	PS Sent	PS Viewed	PS Completed	% PS Completed
SUMMER 2020	4,570	1,313	464	1,009	446 (44%)	432	43%
FALL 2020	17,055	2,329	586	3,458	1,851 (54%)	1,760	51%
SPRING 2021	14,527	-	-	3,548	1,712 (48%)*	1,486*	42%*

*Due to an unforeseen integration issue, PS failed during the last 48 hours. For PS 2: Duplicates PS were sent, and failed during the last 24 hours. - Courses & Faculty data is incomplete as Hobsons deleted the data in efforts to fix the integration issues.

Detailed Progress Survey Summary - Summer 2020

Progress Survey	Sent	Viewed	Completed	Attendance Concern	Never Attended	In Danger of Failing	Missing - Late Assignments	Low Quiz/Test Scores	Keep up the Good Work
PS 1: 5/28/20 to 6/11/20									
1 st block and full-semester	896	392 (44%)	379 (42%)	90	64	218	512	158	4,257
PS 2: 7/16/20 to 7/30/20									
2 nd block only	113	54 (48%)	53 (47%)	37	28	54	104	39	436
Total	1,009	446 (44%)	432 (43%)	127	92	272	616	197	4,693

Detailed Progress Survey Summary – Fall 2020

Progress Survey	Sent	Viewed	Completed	Attendance Concern	Never Attended	In Danger of Failing	Missing - Late Assignments	Low Quiz/Test Scores	Keep up the Good Work
PS 1: 9/17/20 to 10/1/20									
1 st block and full-semester	3,458	1,851 (54%)	1,760 (51%)	435	215	1,068	2,099	1,149	18,094
PS 2: 11/ 5/20 to 11/19/20									
2 nd block only	72	41 (57%)	39 (40%)	87	39	154	357	150	1,591
Total	3,530	1,892 (54%)	1,799 (51%)	522	254	1,222	2,456	1,299	19,685

Detailed Progress Survey Summary – Spring 2021

Progress Survey	Sent	Viewed	Completed	Attendance Concern	Never Attended	In Danger of Failing	Missing-Late Assignments	Low Quiz/Test Scores	Keep up the Good Work
PS 1: 2/4/21 to 2/18/21									
1 st block and full-semester	3,368	1,643 (49%)	1,427* (42%)	463	161	778	1,397	715	14,795
PS 2: 4/1/21 to 4/15/21									
2 nd block only	180	69 (38%)	59* (33%)	23	39	26	56	22	364
Total	3,548	1,712	1,486 (42%)	486	200	804	1,453	737	15,159

**For PS 1: it did not work for the last 48 hours. For PS 2: Duplicates were sent, and it did not work for the last 24 hours.*

Manually-raised Tracking Item Summary - Summer 2020 to Spring 2021

Semester	Attendance Concern	Never Attended	Missing/late Assignments	Low Quiz/Test Scores	In Danger of Failing	Three Flag Notification (System Raised)	I Need Help (Student Raised)	Keep up the Good Work
Summer 2020	28	11	94	12	46	154	6	155
Fall 2020	199	74	286	100	403	751	4	631
Spring 2021	109	41	325	146	274	422	0	1,491
Total	336	126	705	258	723	1,327	10	2,277

Outreach to students who have received a tracking item (e.g. flag, referral, To-Do

The retention advisors continued to reach out to flagged students. It was important that there be some consistency in regard to outreach so the advisors continued with the minimum responsibilities that was agreed upon during the pilot year. Because students receive an automated email sent on behalf of their instructor when a flag is raised, advisors sent a follow-up email to students to check on the issues associated with the flag. Students who had three or more flags would also receive a phone call if they did not respond to the email.

Utilize Referrals and To-Dos within Starfish to promote student success

During the 2020-21 year, the Wildcat Scholars Referral was added to Starfish Connect by Student Affairs. Below are the total referrals made through Starfish, typically by retention advisors.

Referrals	Summer 2020	Fall 2020	Spring 2021
Academic Advisement Referral	13	22	17
Academic Peer Coaching	22	48	43

Career Services Referral	6	8	15
Referrals	Summer 2020	Fall 2020	Spring 2021
Center for Community Engaged Learning	0	0	0
Center for Multicultural Excellence	1	0	0
International Student & Scholars	1	2	0
Money Management Center Referral	13	23	34
Nontrad Referral	4	6	7
Peer Mentoring	4	5	3
Student Support Services	2	3	4
Tutoring Referral	7	17	30
Veterans Services Referral	2	1	3
Writing Center Referral	0	1	2
Wildcat Scholars Referral	10	4	5
Totals	86	140	163

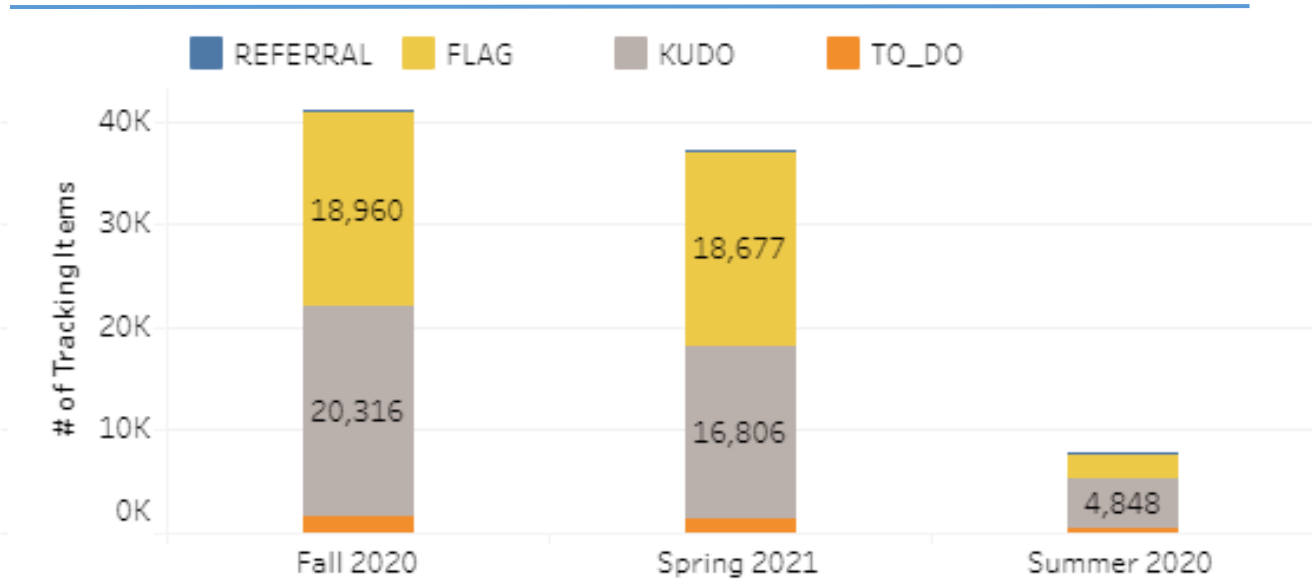
During the 2020-21 year, **13 To Dos were created** to accommodate the newly piloted “Get to Know You Survey” and new Success Plans. Each To-Do had the approval of the Retention Advisor Initiatives Committee. To Dos are notifications to students about services and events that are offered at WSU. Starfish To Dos give students detailed information that is document within the system and can help manage faculty and staff workloads.

To Dos	Summer 2020	Fall 2020	Spring 2021
Complete New Student Orientation	323	1,425	211
Meet with Your Academic Advisor	12	105	290
GS – Graduation App -100%	0	0	159
Update you Contact Information	0	86	153
GS – Graduation App -98%	0	0	151
Get to Know Campus Resources	0	4	73
Major & Career Navigation	12	20	71
Finalize your Financial Aid	4	3	50
Complete Safe@Weber	0	3	37
Make a Plan to Complete Course Assignments (BB Success Plan)	0	0	34
Review your Grades and Estimate Your Term GPA (BB Success Plan)	0	0	34
Review the Academic Calendar (BB Success Plan)	0	0	34
Money Management Center	0	0	32
College Readiness To-Do (Intake Survey)	0	0	19
Get to Know University Activities (Intake Survey)	0	0	14
Finding Employment (Intake Survey)	0	0	11

Basic Needs: Stable Housing (Intake Survey)	0	0	10
To Dos	Summer 2020	Fall 2020	Spring 2021
Meet with your Faculty Advisor	5	6	9
Basic Needs: Heat and Power Bills (Intake Survey)	0	0	6
Meet with Career Services	2	1	4
Register for classes	0	1	4
Basic Needs: Food Insecurity (Intake Survey)	0	0	3
Meet with the College of Science Learning Strategist	0	0	2
Declare a Minor	3	5	0
Declare an Area of Concentration	0	1	0
Review Academic Plan	0	2	0
Set-up Your Starfish Profile	1	2	0
Totals	362	1,664	1,425

All Tracking Items for the 2020-21 Academic Year

The following graph demonstrates the total number of tracking items that were raised in the 2020-21 academic year through Starfish.



Utilize Success Plans within Starfish to promote student success

A success plan, within Starfish, combines a set of tracking items (e.g. flags, kudos, referrals, and to-dos) into an integrated prescriptive plan that can be assigned to one student or many.

The following Success Plans were created in the 2020-21 academic year:

Center for Multicultural Excellence	11 Success Plans Raised
The CME Multicultural Scholars Program (MSP)	Nothing Raised, yet
First Year General Studies Student To-Dos	39 Success Plans Raised
Semester Check Up for Academic Success	34 Success Plans Raised

The following Success Plans were already in place:

College of Arts and Humanities-First Year Requirements	Nothing Raised, yet
College of Arts and Humanities-Sophomore Year Requirements	Nothing Raised, yet

Implement the Starfish Intake Survey (Get to Know You Survey)

The Starfish Intake Survey or “Get to Know You Survey” is currently 21 questions intended for all first-time students at WSU. The survey assesses questions around Student Life, Career & Major, Academics, Basic Needs, Financial Needs, and Personal Concerns. As students fill out the survey, they are directed to 14 different campus resources / departments depending on their selected answers.

- From Feb.1st to April 30th - 32 students completed the Get to Know You Survey
- For the 32 students, 9 (28%) indicated they had basic needs related to housing insecurity, food insecurity, or concerns keeping up with heat and power bills. A total of 148 tracking items (To-Dos & Referrals) were raised to follow-up on student’s responses.

Gather feedback from students* and faculty

During Spring 2021 semester, intensive, one hour interviews, took place with 10 faculty with another five interviews planned for Summer 2021. These one-on-one interviews will help discover, or unpack, faculty perceptions of early alert system to help improve faculty engagement with completing progress surveys and raising manual tracking items.

Major Themes	
Positive Themes	Starfish increases student’s capacities/abilities, facilitates communication, provides outreach from an advisor for student’s personal concerns, Starfish is functional and easy to use, it increases communication, aligns to institutional values, increases student’s knowledge and identifies students with academic concerns, connects students to campus resources, and demonstrates increases in student retention and persistence.
Critical Themes	Faculty have a lack of understanding of why we use the system, faculty have a lack of resources (teaching loads, time & financial incentives), there are poor communication flows, Starfish is non-personal in communication means, there is lack of feedback from raised tracking items, lack of functionality (ease of use), lack of student engagement / effort, worries on profiling students and a deficit approach to student’s abilities, unsure of the outcomes, concerned about poor interventions, and could impede on student’s autonomy along with concerns around equity of outreach/resources.

*A satisfaction survey was not sent to student during the 2020-21 academic year, although some qualitative data has been gathered by retention advisors. The previous years have demonstrated satisfaction among students with the utilization of Starfish.

Utilize Starfish Connect (Calendaring and Kiosks) to promote connection to faculty, advisors, campus resources, and support staff

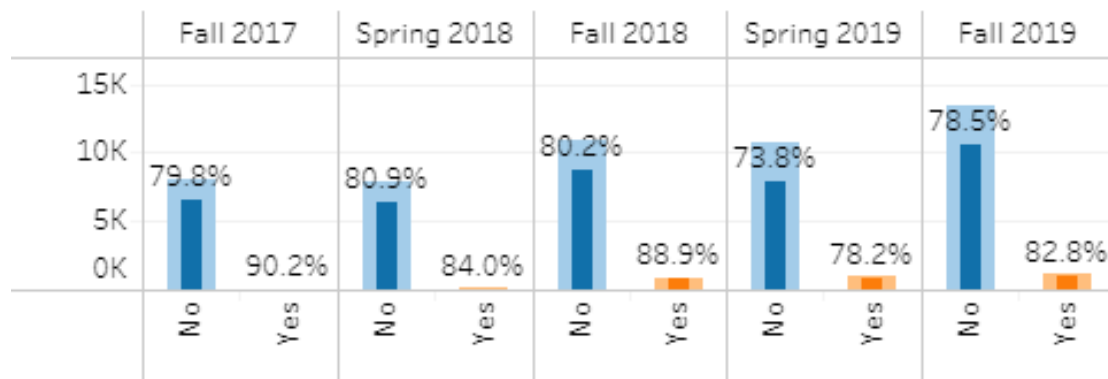
Starfish Connect allows for appointment scheduling to connect students to faculty, advisors, and support staff. Currently, there are over 30 end-users who use Starfish Connect for scheduling student appointments with 10 colleges/departments across campus utilizing Starfish Connect to some capacity (e.g. Student Success Center, College of Science, College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, Goddard School of Business & Economics, College of Arts and Humanities, Student Support Services, Money Management Center, and Veteran’s Services).

Persistence on appointments and academic flags/registration reminders

There is preliminary data on students who receive an academic flag (i.e. attendance concern, in danger of failing, etc.) and/or a registration reminder flag who follow up with an appointment that is recorded through Starfish. This population of students are showing higher rates of persistence than the general student population. The following is all WSU data:

Semester to Semester Persistence

Had Tracking Item & Appointment



Utilize Starfish for Key Retention Initiatives

Semester to Semester Persistence & Early Stop-Out Outreach

The following are the data concerning two retention initiatives that are conducted through Starfish. The POC retention committee conducts outreach through emails and phone calls for each initiative. During the Fall 2020 to Spring 2021 SEM to SEM initiative, the flags were divided between: The Registrar (Holds), Bursar (Repayment Hold), Financial Aid (FA Denied), Financial Aid Award (Receiving Aid), and a general Registration Reminder (Unaccounted For).

Semester	Early Stop-Out Outreach		Semester to Semester Persistence	
Summer 2020	457 Raised	273 Cleared (60%) 285 Registered (62%)	4,062 Raised	3,940 Cleared (97%) 2,924 Registered (72%)

Fall 2020	528 Raised	269 Cleared (51%) 125 Registered (24%)	6,248 Raised	5,310 Cleared (85%) 3,690 Registered (59%)
Spring 2021	456 Raised	211 Cleared (46%) 74 Registered (16%)	7,642 Raised	(Ongoing)

Early Stop-Out Outreach: Qualitative Data

The following are major categories or themes of student comments that retention advisors collected as they conducted outreach to students who cancelled all their courses in the first three weeks of the semesters. The following is an average of the 2020-21 academic year.

Category	Theme	Percentage
No Contact	Left voice mail, constant busy signal, no voice mail set-up	32%
Personal	Needs a break, church service, military, medical, other)	17%
Financial	Couldn't afford tuition/fees, encountered unexpected expenses, FASFA issues, or other financial reasons	12%
Academic Challenges	Courses needed not available, math & English placement issues, or other academic challenges	9%
No phone number	Only for a student who has no phone number or the wrong phone number listed in Banner	8%
COVID-19	Any issues, concerns, or problems related to COVID-19	6%
Other	Planning on registering, made an appointment with an academic advisor, scheduling or program issues, or transferring to another institution.	17%

Semester to Semester Persistence: Qualitative Data

The following are major categories and themes of student comments that retention advisors collected as they conducted outreach to students who did not register for the following major semester. The following is an average of the 2020-21 academic year.

Category	Theme	Percentage
No Contact	Left voice mail, constant busy signal, no voice mail set-up	45%
No phone number	Only for a student who has no phone number or the wrong phone number listed in Banner	15%
Personal	Needs a break, church service, military, medical, other)	9%
Holds	Bounce back holds, and/or repayment holds	6%
Transferring	Is transferring to another institution	4%
Financial	Couldn't afford tuition/fees, encountered unexpected expenses, FASFA issues, or other financial reasons	4%
Academic Challenges	Courses needed not available, math & English placement issues, or other academic challenges	2%
COVID-19	Any issues, concerns, or problems related to COVID-19	2%
Other	Planning on registering, made an appointment with an academic advisor, scheduling or program issues, or transferring to another institution.	14%

Outreach to students who are nearing completion of a degree or credential

During the Spring of 2021, the Student Success Center launched a new To-Do that was targeted to students who had either a 98% program of study degree completion or 100% degree completion listed in Cattracks. This new retention initiative was somewhat successful as 310 To-Dos were raised with 112 students filling out the graduation application (36% response rate). Plans to expand this to the WSU campus are underway for the 2021-22 academic year.

Goals from 2019-2020

The following are the goals, and explanation of how the goals were met, for the 2019-20 academic year:

- **Implement the Starfish Intake Survey**

With the support of Student Affairs, Academic Affairs, and various stakeholders at WSU, the goal is to pilot a 10 to 15 question survey through the implementation of the Starfish Intake Survey.

- This was completed with a 20 question survey that was named the “Get to Know You Survey.” Multiple committees and task forces were formed to create the questions. Up to 17 tracking items (To-Dos and Referrals) were created and/or being used as follow up to the student’s answering the questions. There were 38 students who filled out the survey for the pilot round of Spring 2021.

- **Implementation of the Starfish SSMX**

Implementation of a complete inventory of WSU interventions that will be documented within Starfish platform for utilization of the end users.

- This was not implemented as there is no current tie to tracking items, retention scores, or other items within Starfish. It is for a higher level of assessment for Directors, Deans, Provosts, etc.

- **Utilize and integrate Retention Scores within Starfish to help prioritize and manage flags**

The implementation will also include faculty awareness and support through various committees such as the newly formed SERTS (Student Engagement, Retention & Transition Success) committee.

- Training was developed and implemented for 14 retention advisors, Starfish Tenant Admins, and a selected Student Affairs personnel. It was agreed that the retention advisors would prioritize outreach to at-risk student.

- **Utilize Success Plans within Starfish to nudge students toward retention and persistence**

Utilizing the Success Plan feature within Starfish will allow automation of key communication and nudges to help promote student action.

- This was completed by the development and implementation of four new Success Plans.

- **Provide the Provost and faculty with concrete data on the success of tracking items**

With the support of Institutional Effectiveness, provide a statistical analysis of tracking items within the Progress Survey and the possible effect on retention and persistence to graduation rates for students.

- During the 2020-21 academic year:
 - A [back to school flyer](#) was sent to all pertinent stakeholders on the persistence and retention of students with tracking items.
 - A Dean's Reports for the 7 colleges/department was generated for each Dean. Follow-up meetings are being scheduled to review the data.

Goals for 2021-2022

- **Increase faculty participation in Progress Surveys**

From one-on-one interviews, to department level meetings, to the WSU Strategic Plan, engage faculty in the use of Progress Survey to increase the number of faculty who complete a Progress Survey each semester

- **Increase the utilization of tracking items among advisors, support staff, and faculty**

Increase the awareness and utilization of all available flags, referrals, and To-Dos. Add training for faculty, advisors, retention advisors, faculty advisors, and support staff into WSU Bridge training platform. Each track can be tailored to fit the training needs of each role in Starfish.

- **Conduct a comprehensive communication plan to increase the knowledge of Starfish**

Through comprehensive communication throughout WSU, increase the awareness of the early alert platform and predictive analytics as it relates to student retention efforts at WSU. Through partnerships with the Center for Multicultural Excellence and other key stakeholders, increase the awareness of how Starfish can positively impact faculty, staff, and students at WSU.