School of Social Sciences Humanities and Arts

Special Academic Probation Program

Summary

SSHA students on academic probation are required to participate in a semester long program intended to make them aware of the skills and resources needed to become a successful student. An analysis of students participating in the Special Academic Probation Program (Fall 2006 to Spring 2010, n=181) has provided evidence of this intervention's positive effect on student success: 42.5% of students return to good standing in the semester of program participation, compared to 31.31% of special probation students campus-wide. To evaluate the effectiveness of the program in addressing this population's needs and identify possible changes each participant is given an exit survey. This data is disseminated among the advising staff and to the deans as appropriate.

Table 1. A comparison of SSHA student academic standing after program participation with outcomes from all other special probation students across campus.

Standing in Next Term	Good Standing	Poor Standing	No Standing
SSHA Students (n=181)	42.5% (77)	50.8% (92)	6.6% (12)
All Other Students (n=577)	31.3% (181)	63.7% (368)	4.8% (28)

At the beginning of the Spring 2008 semester, an assessment of exit survey data showed that certain components of the program, primarily academic skills workshop requirements, were not relevant to students with advanced standing whose issues were beyond those of time management or test anxiety. Of the juniors and seniors who participated in the survey (n=8), three identified academic skills workshops as the least helpful component of the contract. With this realization, we have expanded this requirement to allow advanced students to complete workshops from counseling and career services that are more relevant to their needs and future success. The expansion of the possible workshops positively affected junior and senior level students in the following semesters: survey data gathered from students with advanced standing in Spring 2008 through Spring 2010, only one student (n=5) listed workshops as the least helpful component of the contract. This year, we have several students who are in the program for a second semester. Given that they have already successfully completed the program, we use the student's entrance and exit surveys to create a "2nd SP Contract" that specifically addresses each student's continuing needs. With appropriate staffing levels, assessment of the need for a 2nd SP Contract and the application of the program to students in their senior year, will being in Fall 2010.

Special Probation Interaction Plan

Week	Activity	Notes
Week 0	**Monday:** Contact students to set up appointments to sign Special Probation Contracts for Weeks 1 & 2.	Holds should be placed on students' records until they meet with an advisor to sign their contract. Students who do not meet with an advisor to sign their contract by the end of Week 2 are subject to dismissal from the university. When students respond to email with their availability, respond with a confirmed appointment time and ask them to complete the SP Entrance Survey and bring it to the meeting.
Week 1 & 2	**Monday - Friday:** Meet with students to sign Special Probation Contracts.	Remove student's hold once their SP Contract is signed. Be sure to give them a sample Study Plan, Special Probation Tips, and Contact Log sheets.
Week 3	**Friday:** Project Based Study Plans should be due at the end of this week.	Students who fail to submit their Study Plans – or who submit them incorrectly – should have holds placed on their records until a correct version is submitted.
Week 4	**Monday:** Send out Email Check #1, which will request students' availability for MINDSET meetings in Week 5.	Students who don't respond by the deadline should have a hold placed on their account until they respond to the email check.
Week 5	**Monday - Friday:** Meet with students to do MINDSET Inventory, and check that they attended Counseling Services (due by the end of Week 4).	Students who fail to attend their meeting or bring their Contact Logs to the meeting should have a hold placed on their record until they attend a rescheduled meeting and / or provide their advisor with their Contact Logs.
Week 8	**Monday:** Send out Email Check #2, which will request students' availability for midterm grade meetings in Week 9.	Students who don't respond by the deadline should have a hold placed on their account until they respond to the email check.
Week 9	**Monday - Friday:** Meet with students to discuss midterm grades, and check that they attended Career Services (due by the end of Week 8).	Students who fail to attend their meeting or bring their Contact Logs to the meeting should have a hold placed on their record until they attend a rescheduled meeting and / or provide their advisor with their Contact Logs.
Week 15	**Monday:** Send out Email Check #3, which will request students' availability for final Special Probation meetings in Week 16. (This email should also notify them of the final due date for Contact Logs and the SP Exit Survey.)	Students who don't respond by the deadline should have a hold placed on their account until they respond to the email check. When students respond to email with their availability, respond with a confirmed appointment time and ask them to complete the SP Exit Survey and bring it to the meeting. (This can also be submitted with their Contact Logs, which are due on the last day of the semester.)
Week 16	**Monday - Friday:** Meet with students to discuss anticipated final grades, and check their Contact Logs for completion.	Students who fail to attend their meeting or bring their Contact Logs to the meeting should have a hold placed on their record until they attend a rescheduled meeting and / or provide their advisor with their Contact Logs.
Last Day of the Semester	Deadline for students to submit their Contact Logs and SP Exit Survey.	

Special Academic Probation

- Holds shall be placed on all students who appeal their dismissals successfully and are allowed to continue on Special Academic Probation. These holds will be removed when the student meets with their academic advisor to create and sign their Special Probation Contract.
- Students continuing on Special Academic Probation shall be required to complete a contract. In this contract, students shall be required to utilize campus resources in an effort to assist them in the improvement of their grades. Some requirements will vary based on the student, but standardized requirements will be as follows:
    - The student must earn a minimum GPA (to be determined by their academic advisor) to bring their cumulative GPA to a 2.00 or higher.
    - The student must complete all courses with a C- or higher.
    - The student must attend tutoring sessions at least once every two weeks for each course in which they are enrolled for which tutoring is offered.
    - The student must attend office hours for their TAs or professors at least four times per course throughout the course of the semester.
    - The student must attend two workshops throughout the course of the semester.
    - The student must make and attend an appointment with Counseling Services by the end of the fourth week of instruction.
    - The student must make and attend an appointment with a career counselor at the Career Services Center by the end of the eighth week of instruction.
    - The student must check their UC Merced email account daily, and respond within twenty-four hours to all emails sent by their academic advisor.
    - The student must respond to two email checks, to be performed by their academic advisor. In these checks, the students will receive an email instructing them to reply within twenty-four hours with their availability for an appointment with their advisor. Failure to respond to the email check and schedule and attend an appointment with their advisor by the deadlines provided will result in a hold being placed on their record.
    - The student must submit a project-based study plan via email to their academic advisor by the end of the second week of instruction.
    - The student will be required to meet with their advisor at their advisor's request. Failure to set up and attend meetings with an advisor by the deadlines provided will result in a hold placed on the student's record.

School of Social Sciences, Humanities and Arts
University of California, Merced

Academic Probation Enrollment Contract Meeting Worksheet

Date: _____ Academic Term: _____

Name: _____ ID #: _____

My greatest obstacle to overcome this semester was:

Section I: Contributing Factors and Behaviors

Please evaluate what factors or behaviors prevented you from performing to your full academic potential. For example: "My difficult work schedule prevented me from completing my readings and studying as much as I should".

1.

2.

Please list specific actions you will take to help resolve the above issues. For example: "I will decrease my work schedule from 30 to 15 hours per week and take out student loans to help cover my expenses".

1.

2.

Section II: Goals

Please list two (2) goals that will help you return to good academic standing. For example: "I will better manage my time".

1.

2.

Please list two (2) actions you will take to achieve the two (2) goals listed above. For example: "I will better manage my time by: a.) making a study schedule and b.) using a daily planner".

1.

a.

b.

2.

a.

b.

Spring 2008 Special Probation
End of Semester Survey

Name: _____ ID# _____

Fall 2007 GPA: _____ Projected Spring 2008 GPA: _____ Actual: _____

I understand that the information included in this survey will be kept completely confidential. Any data gathered will be used anonymously. I also understand that information gathered in this survey is for program improvement only and will not be utilized in my probation evaluations or hearings.

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please answer the following questions as honestly as possible. The information you provide is very important and will be used to improve SSHA's academic probation program.

What part of your probation contract did you find most helpful as you worked to improve your academic standing? Why?

Which part of the contract did you find least helpful? Why?

What could we have done to help you become more successful as you worked to improve your academic standing?

Please provide any additional comments or suggestions that may help us improve academic probation processes for future students.