

Interstate Passport

Academic Advisors Toolkit



INTERSTATE[®]
PASSPORT
Study ▶ Transfer ▶ Succeed

Updated 10.26.2020



Table of Contents

Interstate Passport Overview	1
The Benefits of Interstate Passport	3
The Academic Advisors Role and Expectations	4
Key Facts for Academic Advisors	6
Academic Advisors FAQs.....	8
Interstate Passport Checklist for Academic Advisors	10
SMART Goal Worksheet.....	12
Interstate Passport Action Plan	14

INTERSTATE PASSPORT OVERVIEW

WHAT

Based at the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE), Interstate Passport[®] is a national program facilitating block transfer of completed lower-division general education based on student learning outcomes, rather than on specific courses and credits. Students who transfer with a Passport to another member institution are recognized as having completed all lower-division general education requirements prior to transfer, regardless of course titles and credits.

“... [T]he most pressing [barrier to completion is] the loss of credits that community college students experience when they transition to four-year institutions. ... [E]nsuring that students can transfer credits efficiently has the potential to substantially raise college attainment.”¹

WHY

Thirty-eight percent of all students transfer at least once,² and over 370,000 graduates in 2013-14 previously had attended college in another state³ – a transition that is especially fraught with loss of credits.

A Passport can be a confidence-building milestone for students, as well as a signal to employers about the knowledge and skills students have achieved early in their college experience.

Interstate Passport builds on the learning outcomes work of individual campuses and their related general education reforms. It is also consistent with and integrates well with campus-guided pathways work.

HOW

An institution determines if its own learning outcomes for lower-division general education are congruent with and cover the same range of learning as the 63 Passport Learning Outcomes (PLOs) included in the nine knowledge and skill areas. The institution identifies the courses and lists of choices (Block) by which students can achieve the PLOs, awards a Passport to students who earn it, and reports the awards to the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC). Participating institutions also report academic progress data on transfer students to NSC, which sorts the data and sends reports about their former students to each sending institutions for use in continuous improvement efforts.

WHO

Over 38,800 students earned Passports by May 2019. For the 4,72 Passport earners who transferred to other Passport institutions in AY 2018-19, grade point average (GPA) after transfer was consistently higher compared to those who transferred without a Passport in the same cohorts, regardless of race/ethnicity, gender, age, low-income (Pell), active military or veteran, first-generation, GPA before transfer, or credits earned before transfer.

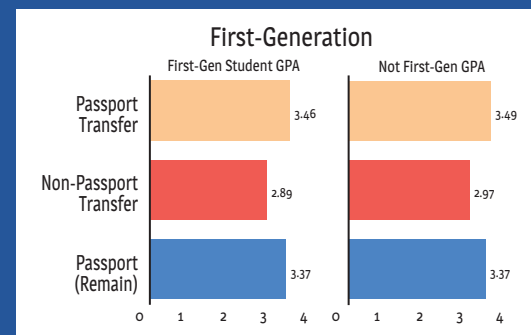
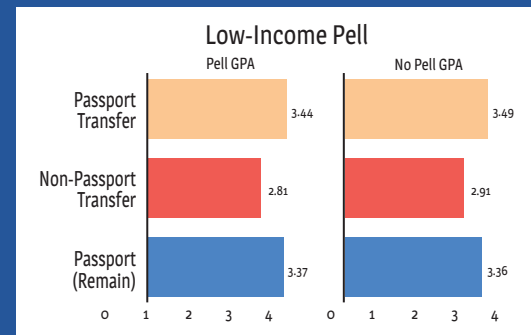
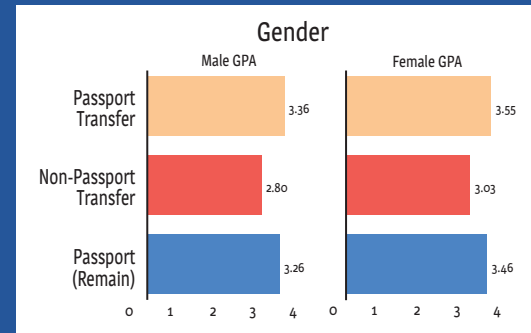
KEY DATA POINTS⁴ AY 2018-2019

Grade Point Average (Post-Transfer)

- Passport Transfers: 3.48
- Non-Passport Transfers: 2.93
- Passport (Remain): 3.37

Average Semester Credits (Post-Transfer)

- Passport Transfers: 11.25
- Non-Passport Transfers: 10.36



INTERSTATE PASSPORT OVERVIEW

FUNDERS



THE CARNEGIE CORPORATION



Lumina FOUNDATION

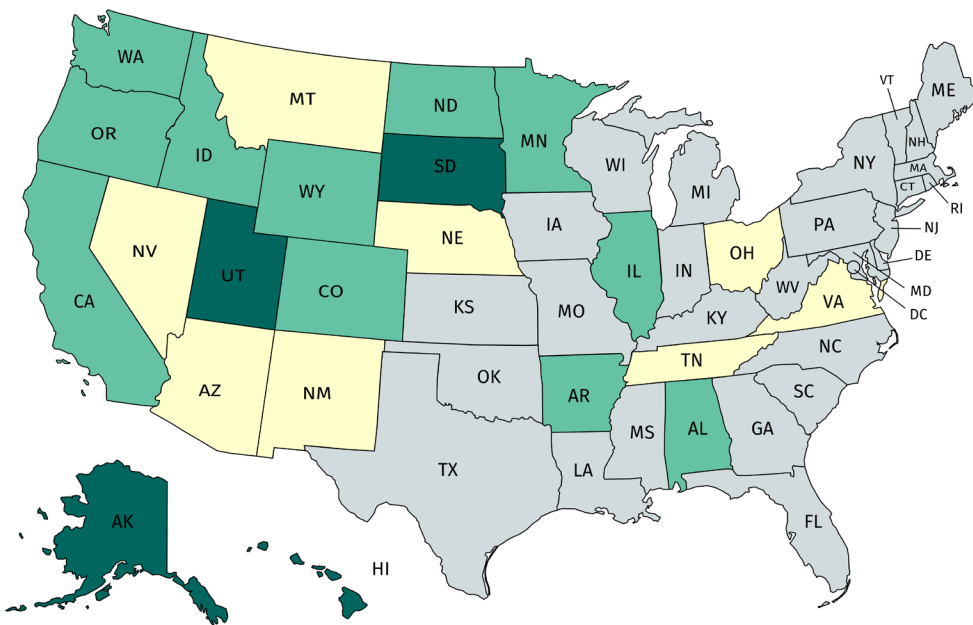
LUMINA FOUNDATION



THE BILL & MELINDA GATES FOUNDATION



THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION; FIRST IN THE WORLD



States with Membership Systemwide
 States with Member Institutions
 States with Institutions Exploring Membership

- Alabama**
 - Air University/Community College of the Air Force
- Alaska**
 - University of Alaska Anchorage
 - University of Alaska Fairbanks
 - University of Alaska Southeast
- Arkansas**
 - University of Arkansas Community College at Batesville
- California**
 - Cerritos College
 - College of the Siskiyous
 - East Los Angeles College
 - Los Angeles City College
 - Los Angeles Harbor College
 - Los Angeles Mission College
 - Los Angeles Pierce College
 - Los Angeles Southwest College
 - Los Angeles Trade-Tech College
 - Los Angeles Valley College
 - West Los Angeles College
- Colorado**
 - Adams State University
 - Western Colorado University
- Hawai'i**
 - Chaminade University
 - Hawai'i Community College
 - Honolulu Community College
 - Kap'i'olani Community College
 - Kaua'i Community College
 - Leeward Community College
 - University of Hawai'i Maui College
 - University of Hawai'i at Hilo
 - University of Hawai'i at Mānoa
 - University of Hawai'i - West O'ahu
 - Windward Community College
- Idaho**
 - College of Eastern Idaho
 - North Idaho College
- Illinois**
 - The Chicago School of Professional Psychology
- Minnesota**
 - Concordia University, St. Paul
- Nevada**
 - Nevada State College
 - Truckee Meadows Community College
 - University of Nevada Reno
- New Mexico**
 - New Mexico State University
- North Dakota**
 - Lake Region State College
 - North Dakota State College of Science
 - University of North Dakota
- Oregon**
 - Western Oregon University
- South Dakota**
 - Black Hills State University
 - Dakota State University
 - Northern State University
 - South Dakota School of Mines & Technology
 - South Dakota State University
 - University of South Dakota
- Utah**
 - Dixie State University
 - Salt Lake Community College
 - Snow College
 - Southern Utah University
 - The University of Utah
 - Utah State University
 - Utah Valley University
 - Weber State University
- Washington**
 - Washington State University
- Wyoming**
 - Casper College
 - Laramie County Community College
 - University of Wyoming

ENDNOTES

- ¹Jenkins, D., & Fink, J. (2015). What We Know About Transfer. New York, NY: Columbia University, Teachers College, Community College Research Center.
- ²Shapiro, D., Dundar, A., Huie, F., Wakhungu, P.K., Bhimdiwali, A., Nathan, A., & Youngsik, H. (2018, July). Transfer and Mobility: A National View of Student Movement in Postsecondary Institutions, Fall 2011 Cohort (Signature Report No. 15). Herndon, VA: National Student Clearinghouse Research Center.
- ³Snapshot Report: Interstate Mobility. (2015). Herndon, VA: National Student Clearinghouse Research Center. Research Center.
- ⁴Data represents academic progress two terms post-transfer for 472 students who transferred with a Passport to a member institution.

CONTACT

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THE BENEFITS OF INTERSTATE PASSPORT®

Students

- An early milestone of completion on the way to a credential.
- Advance knowledge that lower-division general education learning will be recognized upon transfer to another Network-member institution.
- The potential for faster time to degree, lower cost, less debt, and lower foregone earnings from unduplicated learning.
- A streamlined transfer process and a greater likelihood of successful transfer and completion.
- A marketing tool for use by students as an indicator that they have achieved competency in key skills and knowledge areas valued in advanced studies and desirable in the labor market.

Faculty

- Determine the Passport's relationship to the institution's general education program and construct the institution's Passport Block consisting of courses/learning experiences that best help their students achieve the learning outcomes.
- Flexibility to make curricular changes in Passport Block without triggering equivalency reviews.
- Opportunity to collaborate with colleagues on interstate faculty teams.

Institutions

- Supports persistence, and completion for improved accountability and/or performance funding.
- Simplifies the transfer process.
- Allows for greater curricular flexibility since courses can be changed without changing agreed upon outcomes.
- Includes faculty as central to the process.
- Receive academic progress reports for continuous improvement.
- Serves as an effective recruiting tool for institutions desiring to welcome transfer students.



THE ACADEMIC ADVISORS ROLE AND EXPECTATIONS

The Role of Academic Advisors

The role of academic advisors is key to communicating information about Interstate Passport consistently and accurately. As a student's initial contact in their academic career, it is critical for academic advisors to know how Interstate Passport works and how earning a Passport benefits students – both native students who may or may not transfer, and incoming transfer students.

Students who plan to transfer will have incentive to earn a Passport knowing that it will be accepted as evidence of completing the lower-division general education requirements. Particularly for two-year students, earning a Passport can also serve as a milestone, an achievement on their path to a degree. Likewise, incoming transfer students who arrive with a Passport will benefit by having all of their lower division general education requirements met and not having to repeat or take additional courses. These students can proceed more quickly on their path toward a degree. By providing this advantage the Passport can also serve as an effective recruiting tool for four-year institutions desiring to welcome two-year transfer students.

Expectations of Academic Advisors

Understand Interstate Passport: Gain a basic understanding of what Interstate Passport is and its benefits through staff orientations and/or professional development trainings. Your Institutional Liaison is a valuable resource regarding the implementation of Interstate Passport on your campus. Additional information including webinars, key resources, and reports on Interstate Passport can be found at <http://interstatepassport.wiche.edu/>

Promote the Interstate Passport program: Working with the Institutional Liaison, academic advisors share information about Interstate Passport with students. Not all students will transfer to another institution, and those who do will not necessarily transfer to another Network member institution. However, learning about Interstate Passport and understanding its advantages early on will benefit many students in a variety of ways.

Advise Students: Academic Advisors are key to advising students how to efficiently complete a Passport as they navigate the requirements of general education and prepare for a major program of study. See the electronic version of the Interstate Passport Academic Advisors Toolkit and the Academic Advisors Checklist for detailed information or visit <http://interstatepassport.wiche.edu/>

Participate in the Institutional Team: Academic Advisors are crucial members of the Interstate Passport Institutional team which is led and convened by the Institutional Liaison. Maintaining

regular communication with team members will ensure successful implementation of Interstate Passport at your campus. See [Interstate Passport Institutional Team Organizational Chart](#).

Provide feedback and recommendations: Academic advisors are encouraged to provide feedback to their Institutional Liaison, Interstate Passport staff, or to the Interstate Passport Academic Advisors Committee on policies and procedures related to their role with Interstate Passport. This includes suggestions for additional topics on the Frequently Asked Questions (<https://interstatepassport.wiche.edu/faq>) and recommendations for changes or additions to the *Academic Advisors Toolkit* (see, [new link here](#)).

Professional Development Opportunities: Academic advisors are encouraged to share best practices and materials with their campus colleagues and their counterparts at Network member institutions. If you are interested in making a presentation about Interstate Passport at a state or national conference, Interstate Passport staff are available to assist with the development of slides or handouts.



KEY FACTS FOR ACADEMIC ADVISORS

Welcome to the Interstate Passport Network – a growing consortium of institutions committed to improved transfer student success! These key facts about Interstate Passport will help academic advisors and counselors to better advise both native students and incoming transfer students. Interstate Passport offers an efficient process for transfer that is student focused and fosters persistence and completion.

Key facts:

- Interstate Passport facilitates block transfer of lower-division general education based on learning outcomes in nine knowledge and skill areas, rather than specific courses and credits.
- The Passport Learning Outcomes (PLOs) were created by faculty members from multiple states with expertise and experience in the nine knowledge and skill areas. For a complete list visit <http://interstatepassport.wiche.edu/sites/default/files/pdfs/PLOs-LDGE-reformatted10-13-2017.pdf>
- Each member institution constructs a Passport Block that is a menu of the courses, course sequences, and/or other learning experiences by which its students can achieve the PLOs and earn a Passport.
- The Passport transfers as a block to other Network member institutions; it cannot be unpacked by a receiving institution into separate lower-division general education requirements.
- Students must earn a minimum grade of “C” or its equivalent in all Passport Block courses to earn a Passport; a grade lower than C in one of these courses does not meet the proficiency level for transfer and precludes a student from using that course to complete a Passport.
- Students achieve the Passport in different ways at different member institutions which will include course completions, and may also include test scores, e-portfolio and/or other ways deemed appropriate by the awarding institution’s faculty.
- The number of courses and credits required to achieve the Passport will vary from one institution to another. For example, an institution’s Block may be identical to its lower-division GE curriculum menu; or it may be a subset of the GE curriculum menu or require an additional course or two.
- Interstate Passport only addresses lower-division general education requirements.
- Interstate Passport does not address prerequisites for entry into certain majors or specific state legislative-mandated course requirements for graduation. Receiving institutions may require incoming students with a Passport to complete these additional courses.
- The registrar’s office is responsible for noting the award of a Passport on the transcript of students who earn it, noting it on their student record, and for notifying students of the award.
- Earning a Passport does not guarantee a student’s acceptance to another Interstate Passport Network member institution.

- Students who wish to transfer to another member institution can find a complete list of members at <https://interstatepassport.wiche.edu/institute>
- Every Network member institution has its own Interstate Passport page on their website.

ASSISTANCE AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- For institution specific questions contact your Interstate Passport Institutional Liaison.
- See the Interstate Passport website for complete information on the program: <https://interstatepassport.wiche.edu/>
- Find answers to Frequently Asked Questions at: <https://interstatepassport.wiche.edu/faq>
- Check out Interstate Passport's webinar series – each webinar focused on a different component of the program: <https://interstatepassport.wiche.edu/webinars>

Current member institutions of the Interstate Passport Network:

<https://interstatepassport.wiche.edu/institute>

- The **Advisory Committee for Academic Advisors** is available for assistance. See the member list at <https://interstatepassport.wiche.edu/college-advisors>
- Still need answers? Contact Kay Hulstrom, Interstate Passport's manager for institution services, at khulstrom@wiche.edu



ACADEMIC ADVISORS FAQs

What are the “starting” points for talking with first-time enrolled students about the Interstate Passport?

Earning a Passport can be an important milestone for all students on a pathway to a credential that requires lower-division general education whether they intend to transfer or not. Academic advisors and admissions officers at both two- and four-year institutions are encouraged to talk with all incoming students about the benefits of earning the Passport. Similarly, at the end of the term students should be informed of their progress toward completion of the Passport, particularly if the student has expressed interest or intent to transfer.

What are the “starting” points for talking with incoming transfer students about the Interstate Passport?

For incoming transfer students, those responsible for evaluating and posting transcripts can determine if the student is entering with a completed Passport and, if so, ensure that the student understands that the new institution’s lower-division general education requirements have already been met. (The one exception would be a specific legislatively mandated course requirement – e.g., in that state’s history). For incoming transfer students with some lower-division general education learning from a prior institution, advisors and admissions officers should explain how that learning, if any, could be used toward earning a Passport at the current institution and the students be kept informed of their progress toward that end.

How does Interstate Passport fit into my institution’s program/curriculum?

Your institution’s Passport Block is a menu of lower-division general education courses selected by your faculty by which your students can achieve outcomes consistent with, similar to, and across the same range of learning as the Passport Learning Outcomes, thereby earning a Passport. The Block may be identical to your institution’s lower-division General Education requirements, a subset of them, or contain one or two additional courses. To earn a Passport, a student must have a minimum grade of “C” or its equivalent in all courses completed as part of the Passport Block.

When a student transfers to my institution with a Passport, does my institution need to identify the Passport courses at the sending institution? Should those courses be listed on the student transcript?

The Passport transfers as a block and cannot be unpacked, so examining individual courses for equivalency to meet lower-division general education requirements is unnecessary. However, it may be necessary to examine some of the courses to determine if prerequisites for major programs have been met. The Passport will also be listed on the transcript. A student transferring to your institution with a Passport may receive the number of credits earned in achieving the Passport at the sending institution with additional credits counting as electives as determined by the registrar. The specific courses the student took as part of the Block at the sending institution may or may not be identified on the transcript as having been taken for that purpose depending on regular campus procedures.

What are the benefits or implications of a Passport?

Network member institutions – through academic advisors and marketing efforts – are encouraged to promote completion of the Passport as a milestone achievement. Students who earn a Passport, even if they do not earn a degree, have completed coursework covering recognized knowledge and skill areas valued by both universities and employers and have achieved numerous learning outcomes in those areas. Thus, the Passport can be marketed by the students as an indicator that they have achieved competency in key skills and knowledge areas needed for advanced studies and valued in the labor market.

Does Interstate Passport define a minimum performance level on all components of the Passport block?

Yes. Students must earn a minimum grade of “C” or its equivalent in each course from an institution’s Passport Block to meet its lower-division general education requirements.

What happens if a student transfers from one Network member institution to another prior to completing the Passport?

The receiving institution will articulate the student’s previous learning using course-by-course or other equivalency methods to evaluate his/her transcript in the same way it evaluates students who transfer in without completing an AA or other credential. The student may go on to earn a Passport at the receiving institution by successfully completing the additional outcomes not yet achieved in that institution’s Passport Block.

If dual credit students take a large number of courses at a Network member institution, can they earn a Passport as well?

The home institution will articulate the student’s previous learning using course-by-course or other equivalency methods to evaluate his/her transcript in the same way it evaluates students who transfer in without completing an AA or other credential. The student may go on to earn a Passport at the home institution by successfully completing the additional outcomes not yet achieved in that institution’s Passport Block.

If a current student at a Network member institution brings in credits from multiple institutions that they accumulated as a high school dual credit student, can they use those dual credits plus any credits they take at their home institution to earn a Passport at the home (Network member) institution?

Yes. The home institution will articulate the student’s previous learning using course-by-course or other equivalency methods to evaluate his/her transcript in the same way it evaluates students who transfer in without completing an AA or other credential. The student may go on to earn a Passport at the home institution by successfully completing the additional outcomes not yet achieved in that institution’s Passport Block.



INTERSTATE PASSPORT® CHECKLIST FOR ACADEMIC ADVISORS

The Basics

- Understand the Interstate Passport program, how to earn a Passport, its benefits to students, and how it is implemented on your campus.
- Understand your institution's Passport Block. This list of courses may or may not include all of the general education courses that are currently available at your institution. The courses that have been selected by your faculty allow a student to transfer and develop proficiency in the 63 Passport Learning Outcomes.
- Communicate with all students about the Interstate Passport program and the benefits of earning a Passport.

Freshman-entry Students

- Describe benefits of earning a Passport.
- Based on student's educational goals, identify courses that are eligible toward earning a Passport and include in the student's academic plan.
- Periodically check-in with student to monitor progress toward completing a Passport.
- If student is planning to transfer with a Passport, inform student about the Interstate Passport Network Member institutions and the benefits of transferring within the Network.

Incoming Transfer Students

- Verify on the student's transcript if student has earned a Passport.
 - If the Passport does not appear on the transcript, but the student believes one has been earned, your registrar's office has access to PassportVerify – a service provided by the National Student Clearinghouse.
- If Yes, student has a Passport.
 - Inform the student that he/she has met your institution's lower-division general education requirements. Be clear that specific courses may need further review to be accepted for major program prerequisites, and that any unique, legislatively mandated courses required for graduation (in one state, e.g., your state's history) must be completed.
 - Advise according to student's educational goals.
- If No, student does not have a Passport.
 - First identify transfer courses that are eligible toward earning a Passport at your institution – i.e., usually courses that are accepted in transfer at your institution as equivalent to courses that are included in your Passport Block.
 - Explain how additional courses could be used toward earning a Passport at your institution.

- Then identify courses appropriate to the student's educational goals and earning a Passport from your institution and include those courses in the student's academic plan.
- Periodically check-in with student to monitor progress toward earning a Passport.

Important Considerations

- To earn a Passport, a student must have a minimum grade of "C" or its equivalent in all courses that are counted toward earning a Passport.
- A Passport transfers as a block. It cannot be unpacked by a receiving institution to accept or reject individual courses for lower-division general education requirements.
- Interstate Passport does not address prerequisites for entry into certain majors or legislatively mandated state-specific course requirements for graduation. Receiving institutions may require incoming students with a Passport to complete these additional courses.

If you have additional questions or concerns, contact your Interstate Passport Institutional Liaison or visit <http://interstatepassport.wiche.edu/>



SMART Goal Worksheet

Today's Date	Target Date	Start Date	Date Achieved
September 19, 2018	January 1, 2019	September 26, 2018	

Goal
Inform and/or train academic advisors and other identified stakeholders regarding the Interstate Passport by January 1, 2019.

Verify that your goal is SMART

Specific: <i>What exactly will you accomplish?</i>
Train new and current advisors/stakeholders on the purpose, requirements, and benefits of the Interstate Passport.

Measurable: <i>How will you know when you have reached this goal?</i>
Record how many people complete an online or in person training session.
Assess participants' understanding of the passport after training sessions.

Achievable: <i>Is achieving this goal realistic with effort and commitment? Do you have the resources to achieve this goal? If not, how will you get them?</i>
Yes. We have the online resources necessary to create an online training module as well as established programs for providing in person trainings.

Relevant: <i>Why is this goal significant?</i>
All schools in the Utah State Higher Education (USHE) system are using the Interstate Passport.
There is a growing network of institutions using the Interstate Passport.
The Interstate Passport can be an effective tool toward student success.

Timely: <i>When will you achieve this goal?</i>
Training will occur by January 1, 2019.
Ongoing training will continue after this date.

SMART Goal Worksheet

Today's Date	Target Date	Start Date	Date Achieved

Goal

Verify that your goal is SMART

Specific: <i>What exactly will you accomplish?</i>

Measurable: <i>How will you know when you have reached this goal?</i>

Achievable: <i>Is achieving this goal realistic with effort and commitment? Do you have the resources to achieve this goal? If not, how will you get them?</i>

Relevant: <i>Why is this goal significant?</i>

Timely: <i>When will you achieve this goal?</i>

Establish a Goal

Inform and/or train academic advisors and other identified stakeholders regarding the Interstate Passport by January 1, 2019.

Actions: Specific steps you need to take in order to achieve your goal.	Target Dates: Sets up a timeline for when you will take these actions.
Create an online module summarizing the IP	October 10, 2018
Schedule and facilitate an in-person information session about the IP	November 5, 2018
Require all new hires to complete online module as part of their onboard training	December, 2018

Available Resources:

This includes all people, places, and things that might help you to achieve your goal.

UAAC Canvas Course
Storyline Software
Sean Crouch
UAAC Training and Development Committee

Needs:

What do you need to successfully complete your actions and goal?

Time to create a visually compelling training module
Support from campus advisors to assist with implementation
Information from stakeholders outside of academic advising

Constraints:

These are the barriers or obstacles that might get in the way of achieving your goal.

Lack of time due to other commitments
Poor communication between stakeholders

Establish a Goal

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Actions: Specific steps you need to take in order to achieve your goal.

Target Dates: Sets up a timeline for when you will take these actions.

Available Resources:

This includes all people, places, and things that might help you to achieve your goal.

Needs:

What do you need to successfully complete your actions and goal?

Constraints:

These are the barriers or obstacles that might get in the way of achieving your goal.

