FREDONIA
STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

Scheduling is Key to Strategic Enrollment Management

SUNY Fredonia aligned course offerings and classroom capacity with student course demand resulting in substantial instructional cost savings and a more student-friendly schedule.

When Dr. Terry Brown joined the State University of New York (SUNY) at Fredonia as provost in 2013, she faced an uncomfortable, but unavoidable fact: the 5,000-student, four-year institution was heading toward a "fiscal cliff" of declining enrollment, increasing costs, and decreasing revenue.

After 15 years of steady growth where enrollment increased by 1,000 full-time students in 2010, the trend began to reverse, and by 2015, Fredonia experienced a 1,000 full-time student decline. The practice of "rolling the schedule forward" continued despite all the demographic changes that were occurring around them. Faced with increasingly larger gaps between the cost of instruction and tuition revenues, they needed a proactive solution.

Provost Brown and Associate Provost Dr. Lisa Hunter understood swift action

was needed to balance Fredonia's costs and revenue amidst the turbulence. Provost Brown presented an academic plan with three areas of focus: strategic enrollment management, reallocation of resources, and curricular transformation. After securing a grant from the State University of New York system, Fredonia partnered with Ad Astra to specifically address their reallocation of resources.

"Working with Ad Astra is a tactic within the broader framework and an overall plan to influence transformation of the institution."

Provost Dr. Terry Brown
State University of New York at Fredonia

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After discussing all options, the Fredonia leadership team selected the Higher Education Scheduling Index (HESI®)

About SUNY Fredonia

Sector: Four-Year Public
Carnegie Classification: Master's: Medium
Full-Time Equivalent Enrollment: 4,386
Full-Time Retention Rate: 79.2%
Six-Year Graduation Rate: 61.9%

The Challenge

Fredonia experienced a 1,000 full-time student decline.

As enrollment declined, Fredonia faced gaps between cost of instruction and tuition revenues, creating a widening budget

The Solution

Used advanced analytics to align course schedule with student needs for Fall 2016 and Spring 2017

The Result

An overall savings in instructional costs of $283,000

Increase average student credit hour production by 1.9%.

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CheckUp, a customized historical analysis of institutional capacity and course offerings coupled with professional consulting services, and Platinum Analytics™, to provide insight and predictive data for more informed scheduling decisions. This was a key step in understanding how to reduce instructional costs and improve scheduling to meet student need.

"Creating an optimal and student-centered course schedule is one of the most important things an institution can do to help students graduate on time."

Dr. Lisa Hunter, Associate Provost
State University of New York at Fredonia

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In early 2016, Ad Astra consultants and the Fredonia scheduling team analyzed five years of course enrollment data to identify sections that were either overloaded or under-filled. The team identified 86 sections with historically low enrollment to remove, and three sections that appeared to be "bottlenecked" to add. The revisions didn't stop there, though.

Ad Astra consultants continued to analyze student-specific academic information and found the exercise of refining the schedule for the Fall term had influenced a Spring schedule which was more aligned with student course demand. Although they were less substantial, changes for the Spring 2017 term were made, including the removal of 13 sections and the addition of 14 to address

SUNY Fredonia Average Full-Time Student Credit Hour Production (2015-2017)
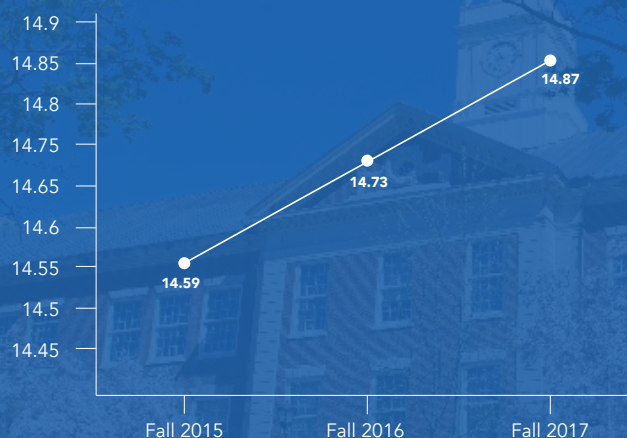
Fredonia's student course needs. The actions from these two terms netted an overall savings in instructional costs of $283,000 and increased the average student credit hour production by 1.9%. This increase in student credit hour production can positively impact student retention, time-to-completion, and graduation.

By engaging in a multi-tiered analysis over two terms, Fredonia leadership has demonstrated how a data-informed approach can lead to increased student course load, greater efficiency with institutional resources, and a positive impact on degree velocity.

About Ad Astra Information Systems

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Ad Astra Information Systems is based in Overland Park, Kansas, and serves higher education institutions and systems worldwide. We offer data-informed software solutions and professional services to effectively allocate space and faculty resources, forecast student demand, and accelerate student completions.