

Delaware Technical & Community College
Student Education Plan (SEP)

1. What is the SEP?

The SEP is a customized electronic resource housed in BANNER that advisors across the College use to help students set goals and maximize their education. The SEP has 10 sections and stores student enrollment information, placement test scores, course schedule planning, and students' responses to questions about their strengths, challenges, and use of College resources. It is an ongoing record that the advisors complete with students throughout their educational journey, and any advisor can view past entries and add to it. Each time an addition or change is made, students receive an email notification in case they would like to view their updated plan.

2. How does the SEP support advisement?

The SEP contains questions that prompt advisors to go beyond helping students decide what major to choose and what courses to take. It focuses on helping students develop attitudes, skills, and behaviors as a learner and decision maker, with success measured in terms of learner outcomes. In short, the SEP helps advisors teach students how to navigate a complex system and take ownership of their goals and education. The SEP includes: 1) Areas to electronically record advising notes; 2) Fields to track advisee appointments and type of advisement, 3) Student interface that allows students to access advising notes; 4) Ability to easily incorporate academic policies and procedures into advising notes; 5) Mechanism to allow advisors to easily create email lists of advisees; and 6) Integration with a user-friendly advisor database.

3. Why did the College develop the SEP?

The 2008 Collegewide Retention Committee researched the College's advisement delivery structure by conducting student focus groups to identify student perceptions and views on advisement, examining nominal groups of faculty, staff, and administrators to identify issues related to advisement at the campus, and analyzing the 2007 Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) results. Analysis revealed that students were not taking full advantage of advisement services. In comparison to the CCSSE cohort average, Delaware Tech students used advisement less frequently than their peers. The Retention Committee subsequently outlined an action plan for implementing a comprehensive Advisement as Teaching Model. One of the goals was to "Utilize technology to enhance effectiveness of advisement and encourage students to take an active role in this process."

4. How does the College ensure that students complete the SEP?

Advisors began using the SEP fall semester 2009. Starting spring semester 2010, the College started requiring that all new students have an SEP advisement session completed during their first semester at Delaware Tech. To ensure completion, reminder emails are automatically generated and then advisors call students. For students who fail to follow-up, registration holds are placed on the students' accounts 2 weeks prior to open registration. Once a new SEP is completed and submitted, the registration hold is automatically released allowing the student to register. In addition, an SEP update email is automatically sent to the student's college email address. As of June 2011, a total of 45,268 sessions have been created for 22,404 individual students.

5. Initial findings

In March 2011 initial data was collected. At that time, 15,018 students had been advised using the SEP. The data indicated that students who had SEPS were likely to have had multiple advisement sessions. Of the students with an SEP and were enrolled in the fall 2010 semester, 82% had either graduated or reenrolled the following spring. In comparison, only 64% of those students without an SEP had graduated or reenrolled. Students with SEPS were also more likely to register online using Banner Web resulting in an increase of 27% in online registrations during the 2010-2011 year.