First-year Responders/Student Case Management Group
Lesley College of Lesley University
2002-2003

What is it?

Group of administrators and faculty with responsibility for working directly with new students and students with academic or social issues who meet monthly to identify students with issues in these areas and discuss and design strategies for working with students to address the issues presented. The group is chaired by the Dean of Lesley College and represents advising and first-year seminar faculty, academic support services, residence life, and academic program chairs.

A core group meets monthly and additional faculty or staff are added to the discussion on an as needed basis.

How are students identified?

Student names are identified at the meeting and the discussion proceeds in a student-by-student manner with each participant adding information from one’s own perspective or scope of responsibility.

Students come to our attention when faculty contact one of the team members and cite a problem or concern, and/or through the residence hall communication channels.

What happens at the meeting?

The circumstances of each individual case is considered and discussed and the participants identify a strategy or strategies to address the issues identified. Responses range from contacting advisors to follow-up with a student about a particular class or social interaction, to finding a peer mentor for a student, to contacting parents when a case is significant enough to warrant parental involvement. All of the resources of the college are considered during the strategy sessions including: peer mentor network, residence life student support structures, counseling center, disability services, center for academic achievement, and faculty advisors. A team member is assigned to initiate the determined strategy and report back at the next meeting.

In some cases, a part of the strategy involves having a student develop a self-care plan, with guidance from a professional student affairs staff member, which identifies the student’s understanding of the issue, indicates steps and support services the student will utilize to address the issue, and establishes a communication channel between the student and a professional staff member.
Why did we do it?

- Need for college-wide coordinated, systematic and thoughtful response to student issues before they reached a crisis state or perception of a crisis.

- Helps to identify patterns of student behavior that can be responded to with direct programming from student affairs or academic affairs, including faculty professional development programs or residence hall discussions with students led by a professional.

- Establishes a sense of confidence and degree of competence in our ability to respond to student issues and de-escalates the atmosphere of crisis when working with students on a regular and progressive basis.

- Gives faculty and administrators a place to direct concerns about student behavior.

- Supports retention efforts to promote a quality undergraduate experience for all students by responding thoughtfully to situations that might detract from that experience.

Janet E. Schulte
Dean, Lesley College
jenschulte@mail.lesley.edu
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