



THE BEGINNING

FCC's new student welcome day – Ram Ready – is a collaboration of the college relations, student activities, and business offices, instructional and counseling faculty, outreach, student services staff, students, and other stakeholders. Taking to heart the anxiety around financial aid that students expressed in surveys, FCC focused on improving how students connect with the financial aid office. They are seeing positive results.

IMPLEMENTATION

All year, FCC talks to prospective new students about Ram Ready. When they register, their names are forwarded to the outreach office, which sends them an email and text message to highlight the benefits of attending Ram Ready. When they sign up for it, their names then go to the financial aid office, which emails them to let them know if anything's missing from their financial aid file and what they need to do to qualify, and reminds them the office is open all year.

What students learn in each element of Ram Ready:

- **Getting around:** Parking, bus passes, textbook options, where to find food on campus.
- **Technology:** How to use the web portal, connect to WiFi, access Canvas, and find the Ellucian GO app, and they learn the importance of checking email.
- **Financial aid:** Beyond FAFSA, where to find forms, deadlines to observe, how "satisfactory academic progress" works, and how to get more help.
- **Student success team:** Paired with the team for the division that includes their major, students learn about their division's resources. Students who are undecided explore majors and linked careers with a career center counselor.
- **Campus tour:** Students tour the college with their teams to learn about resources.
- **Resource fair:** Faculty from all divisions and staff from student services such as the Dream Center, the Career and Employment Center, and DSPS talk with students.

RAM READY

STUDENT EXPERIENCE: INCENTIVIZING FEEDBACK

Each year, FCC encourages students to fill out a survey about Ram Ready, offering prizes such as a \$75 gift card or a tablet provided by either Academic Senate or Classified Senate. They also give away gift cards donated by campus food truck vendors, parking passes donated by staff, and FCC swag. This produces meaningful information and helps ensure that students participate.

Emilee Slater, director of college relations and outreach, reports that 97% of Ram Ready participants say the event helps them feel prepared to attend college, “and a lot of the feedback is really positive.”

PROMISING RESULTS

- **Increasing participation:** 370 students attended Ram Ready in 2017, while 1,500 did in 2019.
- **More units attempted:** Ram Ready participants took more classes.
- **Greater persistence:** Students who go through the program persist at a higher rate than non-attendees.
- **More timely assistance:** Students are seeking information from financial aid, the business office, and other resource centers earlier than in previous years. “They are coming in (before Ram Ready),” says Slater, “to get things done.”

