



Taking a Systems-Wide Approach to Early Alerts at BGSU

Kim Brooks, Director of Student Success Analytics and Technologies

Glenn Davis, Vice President for Student Engagement and Success

Sarah Jurden, Director of Student Success Strategies and Initiatives

Bowling Green State University



Care in Chaos

First U.S. Colleges Close Classrooms as Virus Spreads. More Could Follow.

Coronavirus closed colleges and sent students home. Some of them have nowhere to go.

COVID-19 again upending college life as campuses shut down

The Importance of Systems

Individual Students

Populations

Systems

Defining Student Success

- Establishing systems, conditions, and institutional mindsets that enable all students to learn, belong, persist, and graduate
- Addressing realities of being a student that inhibit learning and personal development
- Implementing equity-minded practices that address opportunity gaps
- Recognizing and repaying “debts” that prevent or slow student progress toward their degree

Guiding Questions

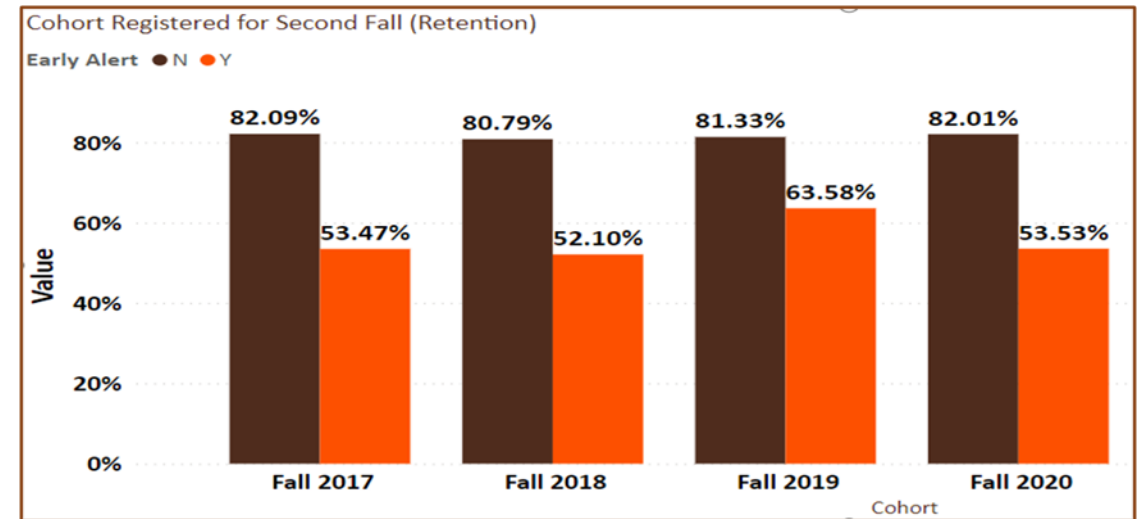
- What would BGSU look like if it established conditions and systems to support the academic, financial, and social-emotional needs of all students?
- What would BGSU look like if it identified and systematically addressed the distinct needs of students who have historically been underserved and underestimated?
- What would BGSU look like if students really mattered?

Guiding Principles for Initiatives

- aligned with the institutional strategic plan
- evidence-based and informed by data
- have defined metrics for success that are valued by multiple constituents
- have an empowered owner and team
- design and impact regularly assessed
- include both proactive and responsive approaches to student support
- contribute intentionally to eliminating gaps in participation, retention, completion

Why Early Alerts?

Cohort	Retention with Early Alert	Retention w/o Early Alert
Fall 2017	53.47%	82.09%
Fall 2018	52.10%	80.79%
Fall 2019	63.58%	81.33%
Fall 2020	53.53%	82.01%



Evolution of Early Alerts at BGSU

Original process

Only Academic Advisors were charged with providing outreach to students on their caseloads who received early alerts.

What would it look like if students mattered?

Each undergraduate would receive timely, personalized outreach if they received an early alert.



New Outreach Coordinator Role

- The outreach coordinator (OC) role leverages the relationship between a student and a staff member closely connected to them.
- Each student is assigned to one OC based on this relationship
- Through text or phone conversation, OCs determine underlying issues that might be hindering students' ability to succeed.
- OCs determine whether a referral to a campus partner is appropriate.
- BGSU currently has 98 faculty and staff members working in this capacity

Evolution of Early Alerts at BGSU

Original process

Automated early alert emails from Navigate were vague and impersonal.

What would it look like if students mattered?

Automated emails would use asset-based language that normalize academic challenges and provided clear action steps.

Revised Automated Message

██████████ you received an early alert from ██████████

for the following reason:

Alert Reasons:

5. Missing Assignments

The alert above is for POLS-1710 (WB) Introduction to Comparative Government and was issued to help you answer the question, "How am I doing?" early in the semester. We want you to know exactly how you can be successful in this course moving forward.

What happens now?

It's important that you take this email seriously and know we are here to help. Because you have received this alert, you have been assigned to a student success team. Your success team will call or text you very soon to discuss how they can help you.

What does this mean?

Receiving an alert in one of these areas from ██████████ does not appear on your transcript or negatively affect your grades or your overall GPA. It is being provided to help you take immediate action to get on track before the end of the semester. To view any submitted comments from your faculty member, please login to the Navigate desktop site. Within your student profile, under the Reports tab, you will see all your issued Progress Reports and any additional comments included for your review.

If you would like to reach out to someone sooner, you can contact ██████████ or you can contact me at any time. It's my job to help you, and I am pleased to have the opportunity to do so. You can also check out the [Falcon Launchpad](#) for a list of resources to help you succeed.

Sincerely,

██████████ Student Success Coordinator

Evolution of Early Alerts at BGSU

Original process

Faculty participants did not understand what happened when they issued an alert, which made them less likely to participate. Monitoring faculty participation was also inefficient.

What would it look like if students mattered?

Faculty would understand their critical role in identifying struggling students and would know what occurred when an alert was issued.

Communicating with Faculty

STUDENT SUCCESS AT BGSU.

!

Early Alert

Glenn,

Early Alert reporting begins today and ends at 11:59 p.m. EDT Feb. 2. Here is information about this important initiative:

- **Early Alerts help us identify** students who are struggling and would benefit from additional support.
- **Your participation matters.** The retention rate of first-year students receiving early alerts has increased nearly 5%.
- **Submitting an Early Alert** prompts a student's outreach coordinator to call or text them so they can learn more about their situation and connect them to campus resources.

Evolution of Early Alerts at BGSU

Original process

BGSU's tutoring center was the only referral partner in Navigate.

What would it look like if students mattered?

Multiple referral partners would be available to meet the complex needs of students facing difficulties.



Referral Partner Expansion

- **Learning Commons** – tutoring, academic peer coaching
- **Residence Life** – roommate, academic, social issues
- **Financial Aid** – college affordability, SAP questions, scholarship questions
- **Student Engagement** – student organizations, fraternity and sorority life
- **Dean of Students** – financial/food/housing insecurity
- **Recreation and Wellness** – exercise, lifestyle changes, mindfulness
- **Academic Advising** – all academic progress issues
- **Life Design** – goal setting, sense of purpose, using design thinking tools
- **Independent Falcon Network** – mentorship for students previously in foster care
- **Nontraditional and Military Student Services** – resources for specific populations
- **Early Intervention Team** – students facing multiple challenges
- **Education Abroad** – students interested in exploring education abroad
- **Career Center** – students looking for co-ops, internships, and post-graduation plans

Evolution of Early Alerts at BGSU

Original process

The same process had been in place many years without examining effectiveness.

What would it look like if students mattered?

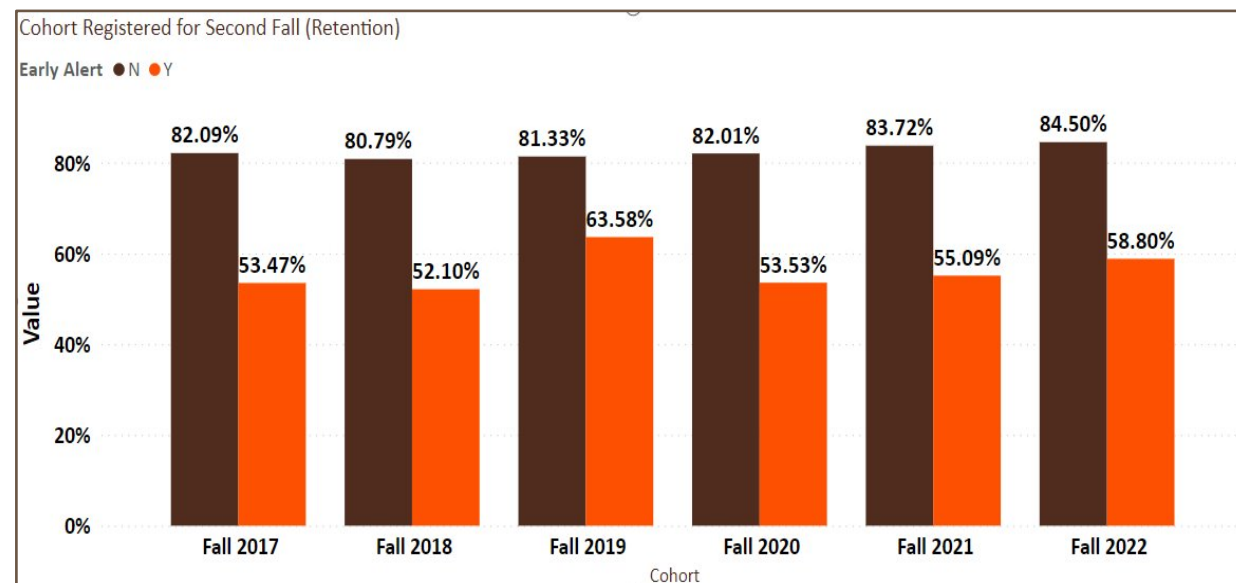
Each part of the process would be reviewed each semester and refined to improve student outcomes.

Cycle of Continuous Improvement

- Feedback from outreach coordinators
- Feedback from unit leaders
- Dashboards to monitor process
- Regular training
- Increasing partnerships
- Connecting students to resources
- Strategy discussions

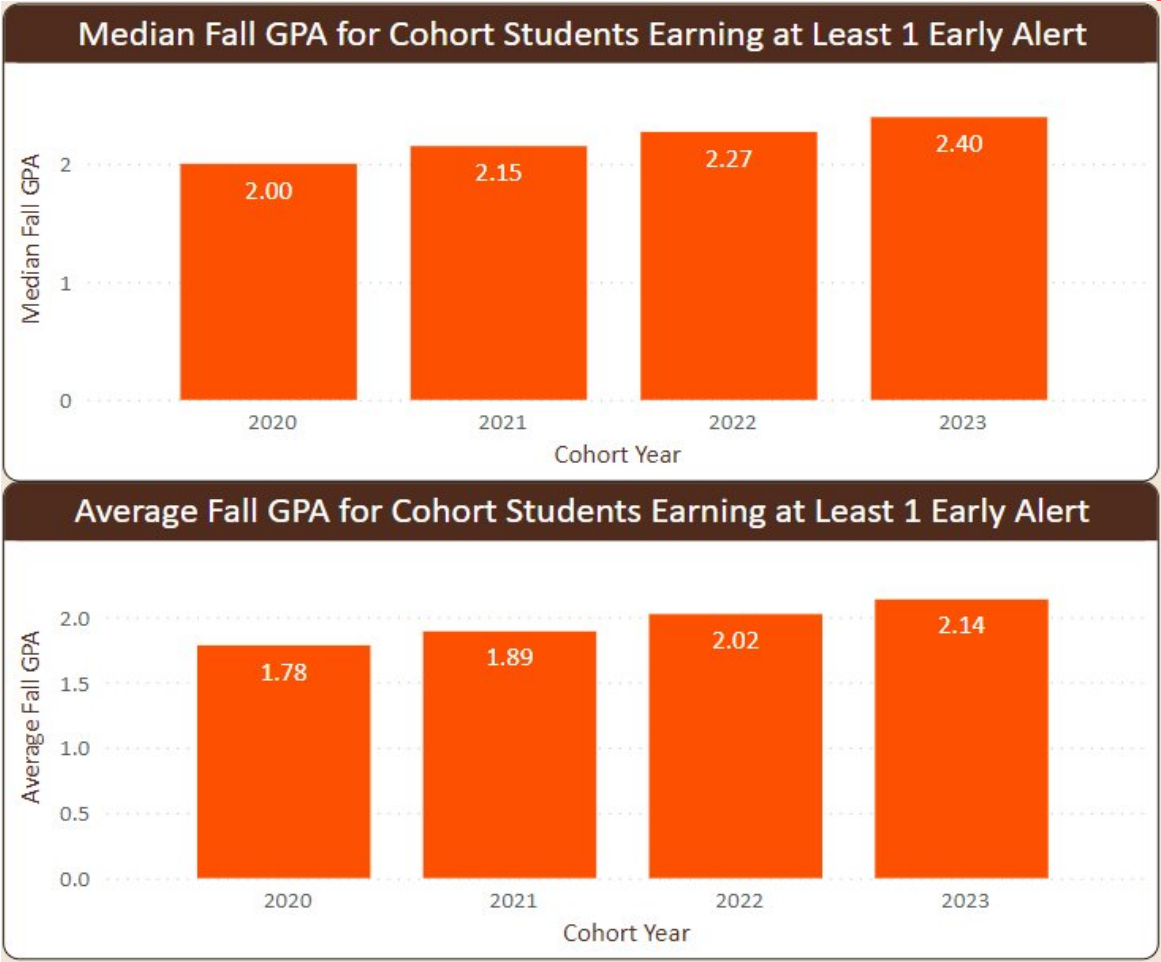
Results and Impact

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Fall 2017	53.47%	82.09%
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Fall 2020	53.53%	82.01%
Fall 2021	55.09%	83.72%
Fall 2022	58.80%	84.50%



Results and Impact

Cohort	Median Fall GPA, EA Students	Average Fall GPA, EA Students
Fall 2020	2.00	1.78
Fall 2021	2.15	1.89
Fall 2022	2.27	2.02
Fall 2023	2.40	2.14



Reflective Activity

Individual Reflection

- What is your institution's current model for early alerts?
- Where do you see opportunities for improvement?
- Who at your institution do you need to collaborate with to improve your process?
- What are your three next steps?

Questions and Comments

Kim Brooks – kbrooks@bgsu.edu

Glenn Davis – gmdavis@bgsu.edu

Sarah Jurden – sjurden@bgsu.edu



Thank You!

