

BEHIND THE METRICS: SPOTLIGHT ON SBD SUCCESS



SBD Pillar: Access

NKU's Military Leadership Minor Leads to Military Student Success

Starting in Fall 2024, NKU will begin offering a minor in Military Leadership. The minor will give 15 - 18 credit hours to military & veterans based on their Joint Service Transcript (JST) for their military skills and life learning. The minor is through the History Department and was chaired, advocated, and developed by Dr. Burke Miller.

Rusty Mardis, Coordinator of the [Veterans Resource Station](#), is very excited about this program and mentioned it is one of the first of its kind nationwide. According to Mardis,

“This should potentially save our military and veteran students a semester or two of benefits and help them to graduate quicker. In addition, they will have a dedicated advisor for the minor to work with each student one-on-one to finalize the minor based off their already earned credit by being in the military.”

Prospective student, SSG Jason Moertle of the Kentucky Army National Guard, will be one of the first students to enroll in the minor at NKU. SSG Moertle echoes the same sentiment as Mardis about the benefits for the Military Leadership minor. For Moertle the biggest advantage to pursuing this minor is “knowing that the training [he’s] received from the military will benefit [him] with obtaining [his] college education.”

When asked why SSG Moertle chose NKU, he praised the work being done within VRS by Rusty. “I’ve worked a lot with Rusty Mardis and the VRS helping Kentucky Army National Guard soldiers with tuition, building relationships with the KYARNG and NKU, etc. The work he’s doing is second to none to any other university. NKU and the veteran community is blessed to have him here.”

Mardis hopes the new minor will continue to attract and support new and continuing veteran students to NKU.



VRS ribbon cutting ceremony.



First Year Student Success Hub (FYSSH) Enhances Academic Advising

The [First Year Student Success Hub](#) (FYSSH or “Hub”) officially launched in Fall 2022. Jennifer Davis (pictured right), Team Lead Advisor and NKU double-alum, shared that the Hub works by centralizing first-year advising. According to Davis,

“Centralized advising is great for first-year students who are often uncertain about their major, or make a lot of changes early in their college career. But even students who are confident in their major and won’t make significant changes get the benefit of having a ‘person,’ an advisor they can bring any of the questions that first-year students often have. How do I drop a class? Where can I meet other students who share my hobbies? What on this green Earth is a Registrar?”



Jennifer Davis, FYSSH Team
Lead Advisor

Students enjoy the centralized model as well and in a recent FYSSH advising survey, several students shared positive remarks about the Hub:

“My advisor was very helpful with answering my questions and guiding me through my classes.”

“[my advisor] was wonderful! Made the experience very personal and was a great help.”

Additionally, 99% of survey respondents were satisfied with their advising experience. Davis explained that FYSSH is about helping students “find their footing” and gain independence as they learn the twisting roads of college. “We give them a hand to hold while they figure out how to college, and once they’ve got the foundation laid, they’re much more prepared to shift focus to becoming a rockstar in their field.” Because of the Hub’s coordinated efforts, first-year retention has reached an all-time high of 77.8%.



First Year Research Experience (FYRE) Sparks a Passion for Student Research

We are celebrating the success of the [First Year Research Experience](#) (FYRE) program, which began in Fall 2022. When first-year students apply for FYRE they can expect to engage in faculty-mentored interdisciplinary research experiences through enrollment in UNV 150 (in Fall) and UNV 155 (in Spring). These early research experiences cultivate project work skills and professional traits that are relevant to employers and thus contributes to students' career readiness after college.

When asked about the program, FYRE Coordinator Shauna Reilly (pictured right) said,

“This past year was a highlight of my career to see so many eager first year students engage in the FYRE program from diverse perspectives and embrace the full breadth of research and creative opportunities. This past fall, 32 faculty and staff members gave presentations to students and I took students on three site visits to see what research looks like beyond campus. The FYRE program also has 18 faculty mentoring students this spring. It is a huge ask of faculty time to mentor students and to embrace this experience, I’m grateful for the support from our faculty and staff in making this program a success!”



Shauna Reilly, FYRE Coordinator

FYRE participants had a lot to add as well. Some quotes from participating students are found below:

“At the start of this semester, I had a limited understanding of what research was and what research looked like across different fields of study. Through this class, I have gained a more accurate understanding of research and how it varies across majors. Additionally, through FYRE, I have also started thinking more about my career development and started working on planning the classes and activities that I want to get involved in so that I make the most of my time in college.”

“The FYRE program has opened my eyes to just how much research is happening at NKU. Basically, every department is doing some sort of research. That’s crazy to me. I honestly didn’t know what research was before this class. Of course, I knew what research was, but I didn’t realize it was such a big part of colleges. In the STEM fields, research is pretty much expected, but there is so much more than that.”

“As I embark on my college journey, I am equipped with a solid foundation in research and a clear vision for my future endeavors. I am eager to immerse myself in academic pursuits, contribute meaningfully to research initiatives, and ultimately, make a positive impact through my passion for research and analytical thinking... FYRE really helped me with my confidence and has given me a lot of opportunities. ... I really think that this is a good opportunity for freshmen, especially for networking.”



FYRE students at the Geier Collections and Research Center.



FYRE students tour the NKU Simulation Center.



FYRE students attend a presentation in NKU's Haile Digital Planetarium.



SUCCESS BY DESIGN: METRICS UPDATE

Success by Design has helped achieve several positive trends in our key student success metrics since its launch five years ago, including institutional records in both retention and graduation rates. In addition, we have successfully narrowed equity gaps among our URM students and reduced the time to degree – evidence of our continued progress in increasing access and removing barriers to completion.



+9.3

RETENTION RATE

Percentage-point Increase
2017 Cohort to 2022 Cohort



5.5% to 3.3%

URM EQUITY GAP REDUCTION



+5.7

GRADUATION RATE

Percentage-point Increase
2012 Cohort to 2017 Cohort



4.54 to 4.24 years

TIME TO DEGREE REDUCTION

To learn more about the ways we monitor student success, please visit the [Success the Design](#) website, which includes updates on current SBD initiatives and metrics on many key student success indicators. Please note that more recent data will be available in the near future along with updated institutional targets.

ANNOUNCEMENTS!

Annual Assessment Reminder

Annual Assessment is an Ongoing Process! Have you reviewed your 2023-24 annual assessment plan recently? Continuous monitoring and feedback throughout the year help ensure that your department/division goals are on track and adjustments can be made as needed to adapt to changing circumstances.

2023-24 Assessment Plans are to be completed in Weave by **September 15, 2024.**

Need assistance with using Weave or have questions about annual assessment planning, contact:

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Save the date!

Management Dashboard
virtual training session
Wednesday, **March 20.**
Learn how to use this data
tool to pull enrollment,
course enrollments and
more! Click to enroll.

