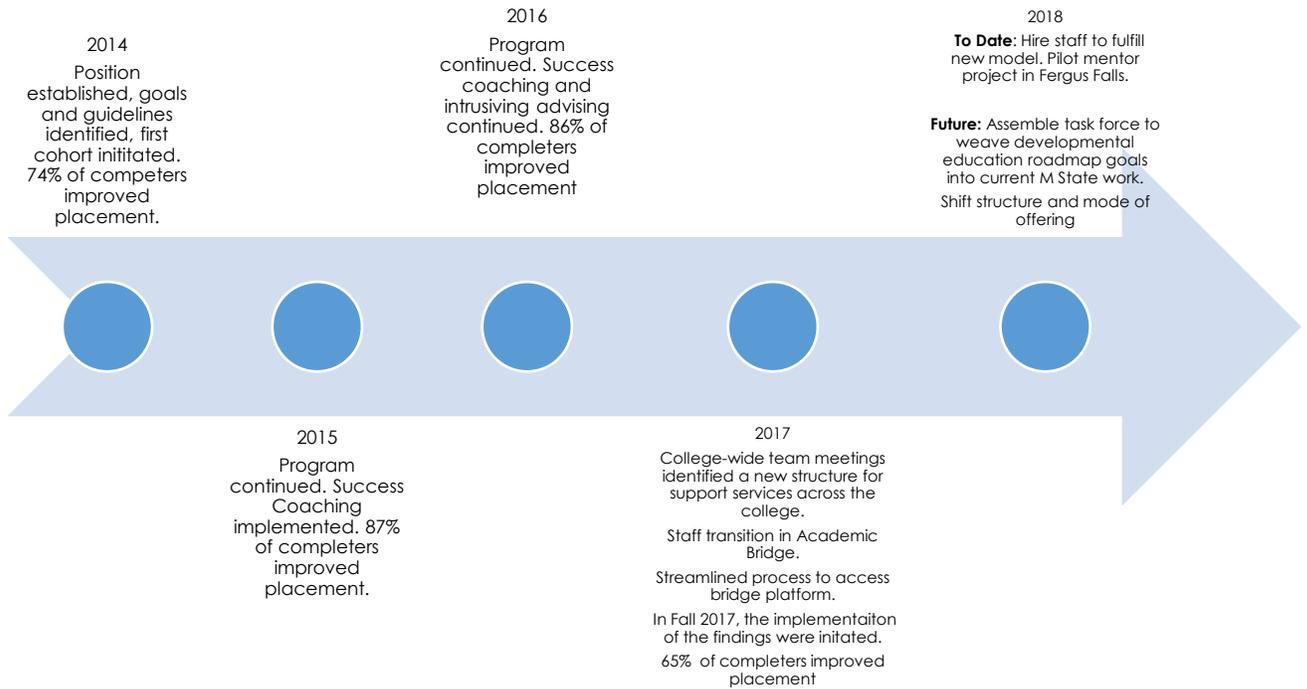


Project Objective 3:

Design and implement student support initiative to improve student success in developmental and online courses



3.a.

The intrusive advising efforts that were done in conjunction with the Academic Bridge process were melded into the general experience of the Bridge student for the 2016-2017 fiscal year due to staffing adjustments. The advancement of the previous Director to a new role at M State required that the college identify someone quickly to continue the work for the Bridge. Rebecca Matinda, with a 0.40 FTE capacity for Bridge, integrated regular contact with each student and any supporting or referring faculty and/or staff.

From spring 2017 through current date fall 2017, 718 students were invited to bridge, 66 participated, and 66% of the completers increased their placement.

For the 2017-2018 year, the Minnesota State System's Developmental Education Road Map will be integrated with M State's work with the Academic Bridge and Intrusive Advising. The convergence of the Developmental Education Roadmap with M State's completion of the Title III grant will aid the continued exploration and institutionalization of the program. Full implementation of the programs is legislatively mandated by fall 2020 with a strategic goal of increasing affordability for students by implementing student-cost-saving approaches, such as an Academic Bridge.

3.b.

For FY17 participants, 37% of completers tested at college level. While the goal of increasing student scores to 25% was attained, a few areas of opportunity were identified within the overall assessment of this year. In addition, some unforeseen staffing situations affected the program's overall success this year.

Among the students who began work within the Bridge but did not complete, it became apparent that they often participated for a few weeks and then outside obligations began to creep into the lives. These life events affected the amount of time that students had to devote to the modules and students often began to slip in their involvement. Further examining the appropriate length and workload of the program will provide a more robust understanding of possible adjustments to a one or two week in-person training rather than the online modules. It may be prudent to decrease the time commitment associated with the experience. A shorter, more consolidated experience that is supported by available faculty when students are in need of assistance is one avenue to explore

While the metrics for participants completing the Bridge were positive, the College sees the rate of participation among the students invited as an opportunity for improvement. Increasing that rate from 3-5% to 10-20% would dramatically improve the overall impact of the Program. As exploration continues for institutionalization, scaling options will be considered to ensure that staff would have capacity to serve the number of students that may be generated from increased participation.

Also this year, a few adjustments were made to the onboarding process for the Academic Bridge. Rebecca Matinda took over the Bridge in January 2017 when the previous Director assumed a new role at M State. Rebecca assessed the intake process and was able to improve that experience by providing seamless transitioning from the assessment modules to the work modules. This adjustment allowed students to forego the cumbersome process that required additional meetings. By preventing the stopping or stalling, we were able to capitalize on the student excitement to get started in the program.

Finally, the unfortunate diagnosis and unexpected loss of Rebecca Matinda impacted the program's fall 2017 numbers dramatically. While the Dean of Academic Quality and Support stepped into the role intermittently, the experience for students was not the same. The Bridge has transitioned to another staff member and a continued focus on improving participation and testing outcomes is occurring.

Amidst the work of the Academic Bridge, the Dean of Academic Quality also initiated, and carried out, a redesign of the Academic Support Services provided through the College's Spartan Centers. A team of 10 individuals met during the spring of 2017 and made recommendations to the President's Cabinet. From these conversations, new staff have been hired and goals related to improved communication, student usage tracking, and student tutor training have also made progress. As staff are settled into their new roles, opportunity to explore how tutoring staff play a role in the Academic Bridge is also warranted.

In conjunction with the Minnesota State system, M State will be held to the metrics within the Developmental Education road map. Timelines and deliverables have been provided with clear expectations for options related to cost-savings for students. For FY18, the goal for Academic Bridge will be to increase student participation while simultaneously improving student outcomes.