



# TTU PEGASUS Program Curriculum

## 2009-2010

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The TTU PEGASUS Program is a recruitment and retention program that supports First Generation College (FGC) students through their first year to make a successful transition to college. Recruitment and retention are accomplished through academic advising, mentoring, and outreach. The purpose of PEGASUS is to ensure that FGC students have access to the resources necessary for them to effectively navigate their undergraduate careers. Assistance is provided in three main areas of concern for FGC students: academic, social/community, and financial.

On average, just over half the participants are Anglo students with other participants from underrepresented student populations. Additionally, both PEGASUS Mentors and Members complete their year with the program with higher GPAs than their second and third generation college cohorts. PEGASUS stands for: Pioneers in Education: Generations Achieving Scholarship and Unprecedented Success.

### Learning Domains for Recruitment, Transition, and Retention

- Skills for Success and Knowledge of Resources
  - Identification of College Challenges
  - Application of Skills and Knowledge
  - Utilize Support Resources
- Connection and Belonging
  - Progress from Individual to PEGASUS Team to College Campus
  - Development of Relationships
  - Grow from a Group Experience
- Self-Confidence and Self-Efficacy
  - Exploration of Self-Efficacy
  - Application of Self-Confidence to the College Experience
  - Application of Confidence to Life Experience

### TTU PEGASUS Program Components

- FGC ASUD Academic Advising
  - As the academic advisors for FGC ASUD students, PEGASUS staff work with FGC students who are ASUD majors until they declare their academic majors.
  - Like all other ASUD students, FGC ASUD students must participate in the DISCOVERY! Major Map and the Academic Physical processes, Major Map (MMap) appointment with a DISCOVERY! Advisor, and follow the same protocols.



- FGC Issues Advising
  - Advise through the College Student Inventory (CSI)
  - Serve as second/neutral opinion on academic direction
  - FGC Issue Categories
    - Straddle two cultures (home and college)
    - Experience profound changes in family and personal relationships
    - Adapt to competitive academic environment
    - Manage time, commitments, and events with little guidance
    - Live on and manage a tight budget
    - Wrestle with feelings of exclusion and being out of place
    - Learn to negotiate the sometimes unwelcoming, often confusing, university system
    - Defend the demands and rigors of college life to family and friends
- FGC Mentoring
  - Professional Staff Mentor PEGASUS Mentors
    - Personal and Professional Development
    - Mentors are encouraged to develop as leaders in their personal lives, academics, and professional experiences.
    - The Mentor training protocol includes initial training sessions, weekly contact with PEGASUS staff, event organization and attendance, bi-weekly individual face to face appointments with the Mentor Coordinator, and monthly Mentor meetings.
  - PEGASUS Mentors Mentor Members
    - Personal and academic development
    - The Mentor protocol includes weekly contact with assigned members, community building and academic event attendance, PEGASUS Team events participation, and outreach and community service events.
- POWER (Positive Outcomes with Educational Resources) Sessions
  - Knowledge and Resources
  - Professional Development
- FGC Study Sessions
  - Mentor to Member
  - Member to Member
- Community Building Events
  - Social Events
  - Pizza Lunch Days
  - Mentor Meetings
  - Program Assistant Lunch Dates
- Community Service and Outreach Giving Back Events
  - Service Learning
  - Leadership



## FGC Issues Advising

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FGC Advising at ACTT is a supplement to a student's academic advising services received from their departmental and/or college Academic Advisor(s). PEGASUS bases its FGC Advising services on three sources:

- the body of knowledge as ACTT Academic Advisors
- the body of knowledge present in the FGC literature
- the College Student Inventory (CSI) from Noel-Levitz

The CSI provides valuable data for use in the intrusive FGC Advising process through asking students to self-identify their cognitive and affective attrition indicators. Retention research has shown that dropout-proneness is often a function of students' attitudes and motivation. The implication is that looking at the combination of affective and cognitive indicators tends to be more predictive of dropout-proneness than standardized test scores and GPAs.

There are 4 categories of information that direct PEGASUS FGC Advisors to the specific issues that indicate what a student needs in order to be retained:

- Academic Motivation
- Social Motivation
- General Coping Ability
- Receptivity to Support Services

### Learning Domains

- Skills for Success and Knowledge of Resources
  - Identification of College Challenges
  - Application of Skills and Knowledge
  - Utilize Support Resources



## PEGASUS POWER Sessions

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POWER (Positive Outcomes with Educational Resources) Sessions are interactive workshops facilitated by PEGASUS Staff, PEGASUS Mentors and guest speakers that encourage identification of skills, knowledge and available resources to encourage student success. POWER Sessions focus on key college transition issues and are not only for PEGASUS Members, they are marketed to all FGC students at Texas Tech University.

### Learning Domains

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  - Application of Skills and Knowledge
  - Utilize Support Resources
- Connection and Belonging
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  - Exploration of Self
  - Application of Confidence to the College Experience
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### 1.Tech Traditions

This workshop allows students to experience the history of the university through learning about the exciting history and many traditions of Texas Tech University. Students will engage in an interactive presentation where they learn the words to the Fight Song and Alma Mater as well as sing-along while each song is played, learn fun facts about the buildings, statues and general layout of the TTU campus, learn about the many student traditions carried out through various campus events as well as other historical information about the university and the campus.

Some of the main points of focus for this workshop include: 1) sporting event traditions such as game-time etiquette, RaiderGate, Saddle Tramps, High Riders, Raider Red, the Masked Rider, and the Goin' Band, 2) university and campus history/facts such as the founding of the university, the construction of the first buildings on campus, the architectural styles of the buildings, the size of the campus in relation to others in the nation, the Victory Bell Towers, Bangin' Bertha, Will Rogers & Soapsuds and Memorial Circle, 3) other traditional events at the university such as the Carol of Lights, the Homecoming Bonfire, Homecoming, the Graduation Ceremony and many others. After attending this workshop, students should have a well-rounded understanding of the rich history and traditions surrounding Texas Tech University. Go Tech!!



## Learning Objectives

Students will:

- know the history and traditions of Texas Tech
- examine beneficial vs. harmful traditions
- participate in beneficial traditions

## 2.Academic Success (Academic Physical)

This workshop provides students with information on learning styles and discusses ways in which students can apply that information to their personal study habits in order to be successful in college. First, students complete the VARK questionnaire which allows them to identify their individual learning style based on four (4) main categories: Visual, Auditory, Read/Write, and Kinesthetic/Tactile. Once the students have identified which learning style category (or categories) fits them best, they will begin learning about the specific tendencies of and effective study strategies for each of the 4 learning styles, as well as engage in a discussion of how all of the information they have received can be applied to their own class work and study habits.

## Learning Objectives

Students will:

- identify their skills, talents, and abilities
- propose an action plan for achieving academic success
- gain an understanding of available resources on the TTU campus

## 3.Reality Check

This fun and interactive workshop provides valuable information on how a college education makes a difference. First, students begin by receiving an entry-level job which may be attained with a High School Diploma and are asked to walk around to various booths such as “Housing,” “Transportation,” “Health and Beauty,” and so on. At each booth the students must decide which package (basic, intermediate, or deluxe) they can afford according to the total amount of money their job affords them each month, keeping in mind that they must purchase something from every booth and stay within their monthly budget at the end. After the students struggle to stay within their budget and complete the first round, they may visit the “College” booth to trade in their job for a new one which requires a college education (either a 2-year Associate’s Degree or a 4-year Bachelor’s Degree or more). Then, students may re-visit all of the other booths to experience the difference that a college education can provide in day-to-day living. The students are given a workbook to complete each step of the Reality Check process which they may take notes in and keep as a reference.



## Learning Objectives

Students will:

- identify/calculate the value of a college education
- assess the importance of having personal/career/educational goals
- articulate a goal attainment plan, informed by valuation of educational success

## 4.Student Wellness I

This workshop provides useful information about how students can maintain their physical and mental health and well-being. By learning about and discussing topics such as eating habits, physical activity and stress management students gain an understanding of their personal state of physical and mental health as well as learn about positive ways to improve in the areas discussed. Students are able to engage in a peer-led discussion of what it takes to be healthy on a physical level as well as on a mental level, and the main points of discussion include: 1) the main components of a healthy diet according to the Dietary Guidelines for Americans in conjunction with the MyPyramid.gov website, 2) the differences between moderate physical activity and rigorous physical activity and which types of activities are best for different individuals, 3) the definition of stressors and identification of the students' personal stressors, 4) positive and negative coping strategies for stress, and finally 5) practical tips for managing and reducing stress in the life of a college student.

## Learning Objectives

Students will:

- identify the importance of healthy eating habits and integrating physical activity into their daily routine
- articulate the correlation between a healthy body and a healthy mind
- gain an understanding of available resources on the TTU campus

## 5.DISCOVERY! Major Map

This event is best described as a process which encourages the student to identify his or her personal skills, interests, abilities and values in order to start the journey of identifying the major that fits him or her best. The students begin by completing a questionnaire which helps them to identify their career interests based on the Holland Code scoring chart. After assessing which career cluster (or clusters) fits them best students use a “major map” to narrow down their focus to only those majors which fall into their career clusters and more specific interests. The students are given a workbook to complete the entire process and make note of their individual skills, interests, abilities and values based on the Holland Code assessment so that they have a personal reference guide when making their academic major and career choices.



## Learning Objectives

Students will:

- identify their individual values, interests and self-perceived abilities
- assess appropriate majors for possible careers
- articulate a plan for achieving educational and career goals

## 6.Goal Setting

This workshop is designed to give students information on effective goal setting strategies, along with tips on how to implement those strategies in order to successfully achieve their goals. By participating in a peer-led discussion students not only learn about effective goal setting strategies, but are also able to identify their personal goals and create an action plan in order to realistically achieve those goals. Students also discuss the difference between dreams and goals as well as the important links between values such as character, morality and ethics, and goals.

## Learning Objectives

Students will:

- know the process of effective goal setting
- identify academic and personal goals
- implement an action plan to achieve their academic and personal goals

## 7.Risky Business I

This workshop is facilitated by the TTU Police Department and provides information about the risky behavior to avoid while in college. The main focus of the workshop is on discussing the temptations that may arise due to peer pressure or other situations and how to deal with such situations in a positive way. This information is provided through an interactive discussion and demonstration in which students may volunteer to participate in one of several scenarios. The longest scenario involves the use of "Beer Goggles" in which a student wears the goggles and attempts to walk a straight line as if being tested for drunk driving. Students are given handouts with contact information and helpful tips to take with them as a reference guide.

## Learning Objectives

Students will:

- define what constitutes “risky” behavior as it pertains to college students
- identify safe practices to avoid potentially dangerous and/or harmful situations
- gain an understanding of available resources on the TTU campus



## 8. Gearing Up for Finals

This is a fun and interactive workshop that includes helpful and practical information about effective study strategies, as well as tips for helping students to de-stress and relax during a time of high stress such as finals. Students begin by discussing the components of a balanced lifestyle and identifying their personal lifestyle components. Then students review important information about time management, nutritious eating habits, and stress-reducing strategies—all of which are topics from previous workshops. Finally, the students engage in a peer-led discussion of valuable campus resources which are helpful during exam time and for de-stressing, as well as practical exam-time tips for success.

### Learning Objectives

Students will:

- evaluate personal health and lifestyle habits
- identify stress management strategies
- gain an understanding of available resources on the TTU campus

## FGC Mentoring

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The mentoring component of the TTU PEGASUS Program has two components. First Generation College (FGC) Student Mentors are FGC undergraduate or graduate students who serve as role models and sources of support for new FGC students enrolled at Texas Tech University. Throughout the semester, FGC Mentors help ease the transition of new FGC students by sharing their experiences as successful students. To be effective FGC Mentors, they also receive mentoring.

PEGASUS Staff mentor the FGC Mentors, guiding both personal and professional growth. Some FGC Mentors are also hired as PEGASUS Program Assistants. Mentoring the FGC Mentors occurs in both individual and group settings and is a significant piece contributing to the success of the program. The main objective of mentoring the FGC Mentors is to develop their leadership skills to mentor the new FGC students

### Learning Domains

- Connection and Belonging
  - Progress from individual focus to effective PEGASUS Team Member to confident College Campus Community Member
  - Development of relationships
  - Grow from individual attention
  - Grow from a group experience
- Self-Confidence and Self-Efficacy



- Exploration of Self
- Application of Confidence to the College Experience
- Application of Confidence to Life Experience

## **FGC Study Sessions**

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PEGASUS Study Sessions contribute to the development of study habits of first year students. One of the greatest disparities in academics between high school and college for most students is that in high school do homework and in college students must study. This component of the program is also used to promote a sense of camaraderie.

### **Learning Domains**

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  - Development of Relationships
  - Grow from a Group Experience

## **PEGASUS Community Building Events**

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Community Building Events are vital to fostering a sense of belonging at Texas Tech. One of the most common struggles of a FGC student on campus according to the results of the College Student Inventory is perceived social confidence. Community Building Events provide social enhancement opportunities and support the members and mentors in developing a sense of connection and team, sometimes resulting in the development of life-long relationships.

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## PEGASUS Community Service and Outreach

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PEGASUS Community Service and Outreach is divided into two components. The **Plant the Seed Program** is designed to plant the seed of a college education in the minds of families and students in grades 3-8. The **PEGASUS Prep Program** is designed to help families and students in grades 9-12 prepare for college.

PEGASUS works with students and families through numerous events both on campus and in the community. These projects allow students to give back and touch the lives of younger FGC students in a very positive way. At the same time participation in these projects develops leadership skills that carry throughout a lifetime.

The value of these efforts to Texas Tech is comprised of the following:

- a. PEGASUS is built on the conceptual beliefs that “Reaching Back and Paying Forward” provide opportunities for currently enrolled TTU FGC students to make a place for themselves through outreach to younger FGC students. This creates a retention cycle.
- b. The children and programs served benefit from the time, energy, and involvement of TTU FGC students.
- c. The TTU FGC students benefit as a group by learning about themselves and one another and enjoying their work together. “Debriefing” sessions are held after an event to help identify some of the learning through service to others.
- d. By communicating the advantages of a college education to others, TTU FGC students become more certain of their own potential and opportunities. By making their educational plans more public, they become more determined to accomplish their own academic goals.

### Learning Domains

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