

Success Coaching program is a 'Model of Excellence'

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cscofiel@tulane.edu



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"Pairing students with a personal coach to identify and refine successful strategies on campus empowers students to redefine expectations of their schools, and more importantly, themselves," says *University Business* senior editor Tim Goral. "Tulane University demonstrates an innovative approach to academic support."

[Michele Oelking](#) started the [Success Coaching](#) program at Tulane University in 2012. The program pairs students with personal coaches who have received professional training and credentials through the International Coach Federation. The students meet with their coaches five to eight times throughout the semester to work on strategies to achieve goals, including better stress and time management. Students can "nominate" fellow students for coaching or they can apply themselves through a form on the Tulane website.

Oelking says coaches focus on the students' strengths, not their weaknesses, when building a plan for success.

"Students are excited to interact with a coach and often refer coaching to their peers," she says.

In post-coaching surveys, students report improved academic performance, a better emotional state and more self-efficacy.

"Everything I talk about helps me every day at Tulane and has helped me adapt to the college experience," writes one student. "I have discussed everything from my mental health to my social life to my class experiences with my coach and, after every session, I feel more comfortable walking out than walking in."

Launched in 2015, [Models of Excellence](#) is a national recognition program honoring colleges and universities that have implemented innovative, effective and interdepartmental initiatives that are bolstering student success. Tulane University is one of eight schools nationwide being recognized this year.

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