

Challenging Our Bears, Challenge Program for At-Risk Probation Students

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The *Challenging Our Bears* program is a College of Business initiative at Missouri State University. The vision of the program was to ensure that advisors had the necessary tools they need to provide effective advisement in difficult circumstances and to ensure that probation students were provided additional advisement support and targeted resources to address their individual situations. Advisors were instructed in intrusive advising techniques to challenge students to break cycles of poor academic performance. One of the first steps was to compile a variety of advising tools so that advisors felt more comfortable in their role of advising students on probation. Including retention information that affect a student's performance gave advisors and students foundational knowledge to address roadblocks to student success. Over 1,200 students have been served by the *Challenge Our Bears* Program. A large number of students raised their GPA, which was one measure we used to evaluate the program. Feedback from advisors and students has been positive. Another department on the Missouri State campus has modeled their advisement techniques for probation students on this program and we do believe this program could be easily transferred to different institutions. Evaluation of the program is conducted each academic year, with modifications implemented as necessary.