# A Case Study on Proactive (Intrusive) Faculty Contacts' Influence on DFW Rates in Introductory Psychology Courses

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*Increasing student attrition rates (often in the form of growing DFW – D, F, and Withdrawal grades) are a concern for open-access, 2-year colleges, such as UC Blue Ash, whose students often enter academically underprepared. The greatest number of DFW grades tends to be in developmental and introductory courses, such as Introduction to Psychology, which has DFW rates from 20% to 50%. Intrusive advising (a.k.a., proactive advising), which includes emailing students about registration dates, calling students concerning appointments, and walking students to student resource centers, has been recommended to address DFW rates and attrition rates. In this study, two faculty members sent proactive weekly reminder emails to students who exhibited poor academic behaviors (e.g., missing class or an assignment and/or low exam scores) in Introductory Psychology to examine whether we could influence DFW rates compared to controls. Results indicated that the weekly "intrusive" emails did not influence the rate of DFW grades across sections, though students noted the value of these emails. With mixed results in the literature and this study, it is still unclear as to whether proactive (intrusive) emailing by faculty members can be a useful activity to improve student performance and retention.*

While college enrollments have been increasing over the last three decades, administrators and faculty members face concerns regarding the high rates of attrition (Horn & Weko, 2009; Shapiro, Dundar, Wakhungu, Yuan, Nathan, & Hwang, 2015; Skomsvold, Radford, & Berkner, 2011). In fact, 30% to 40% of all college students entering a post-secondary institution between 2003 and 2009 left before earning a degree (Horn & Weko, 2009; Shapiro et al., 2015). Dropout rates are especially high for community college students, with as many as 62% leaving without any degree after six years, and even higher attrition rates exist for minority

students. Because community colleges tend to be the backbone of higher education, serving the greatest number of diverse and underprepared students (Shapiro et al., 2015), while continuing their longstanding dedication to open access, they may face the greatest challenge. As an open-access regional campus in a community setting, the University of Cincinnati Blue Ash College (UC Blue Ash) is facing these challenges. UC Blue Ash serves approximately 5,000 students (Mage = 23 years), offering a variety of associate degrees and transitional programs, while also offering developmental courses in math, English, and reading (University of Cincinnati Blue Ash College [UCBA], 2015). The majority (64%) of students are fulltime and 58% are female. Similar to many community colleges across the nation, 40% of UC Blue Ash students are first generation college students, and 31% are from ethnic minority backgrounds, with the majority (21%) of those students African American.

Faculty members at UC Blue Ash often notice growing attrition at the college in the form of increasing DFW course grades (where DFW stands for grades that are below a C or indicate some form of withdrawing from a class). The increasing number of DFW grades is a particular concern in Introduction to Psychology courses, which are taken by students from many major programs to satisfy a social science general education requirement. Moreover, Introduction to Psychology is often taken during a student's first semester because there are no prerequisites for taking the course, which leads to a number of underprepared students taking the course even though it is a science-oriented overview of psychology that includes challenging concepts from biology to chemistry, physics, and math. Therefore, it is not surprising that this confluence of factors leads to a DFW rate ranging from 20% to 50%, depending on the instructor, class times, and whether the class is offered during fall or spring semester. What is more surprising is the of number college students who do not seek out help with academic difficulties before the problem is insurmountable.

During the mid-1970's, Robert Glennen (1975, 1983; Glennen & Baxley, 1985) successfully reduced the attrition rate at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas while increasing academic performance in a test-group of students by utilizing intrusive advising, which Glennen (1975) put forth as a blend of academic advising with aspects of counseling. This methodology grew out of the belief that faculty members needed to have enough time (faculty advisers were given release time from other duties) and information

about their students to offer the best guidance, build strong faculty-student relationships, and ensure student success.

Today, intrusive advising, now termed proactive advising, is enjoying a resurgence. According to Varney (2007, 2012), proactive advising, involves understanding the essence of a student's problem. This approach entails a wide range of deliberate actions on the part of advisers that meet students' needs before they request it. For example, advisers become involved with students to educate them of their options through such actions as proactive emails that remind students of registration dates and routine calling of students to request appointment times and to inquire as to why students missed appointments. Advisers are also encouraged to approach a student before situations develop and, in some cases, physically walk students to campus resource centers to ensure students are knowledgeable of the assistance that is offered for a wide-range of problems before these problems influence a student's academic success. In sum, advisers are encouraged to make multiple connections with every student to build a relationship through a multidimensional approach (Fowler & Boylan, 2010; Glennen & Baxley, 1985).

Investigations into the effectiveness of multidimensional programs have had generally positive outcomes. Fowler and Boylen (2010) showed that underprepared students who participated in a Pathways To Success (PWAY) program had significantly higher college grade point averages (GPAs) than students who did not, which included intrusive advising and faculty participation in an Early Alert program that required faculty members to contact advisers when students were missing class or doing poorly with coursework. However, the two student groups came from two different cohorts, with the non-PWAY students attending college 5 years prior to the PWAY students, thus adding a confound of a potential cohort effect.

Tovar (2015) examined another multidimensional program by looking at the overall effects institutional agents' interactions (faculty members and academic counselors) and student support programs had on Hispanic-Latino students' academic success as measured by GPA and persistence to complete their degree at a community college. Results indicated that GPA improved. However, the data was gathered from three different support programs and only from students who self-reported GPA and who had self-selected into those programs, therefore introducing a possible self-selection bias into the outcome. Thus, multidimensional

approach programs, such as PWAY, appear to have a positive influence on students' learning, GPA, and persistence toward degree completion. Most of these programs include proactive advising built in to a systematic, comprehensive approach with multiple resources to address the academic and the non-academic, psychosocial needs of the student. However, results of multidimensional programs do not seem to suggest a single component that might directly affect student retention and student success.

Some researchers have tried to tease apart the components involved in multidimensional approach programs. For example, Vander Schee (2007) worked with a small group of probationary students at a private university. He examined the effectiveness of adding "insight-oriented" aspects to intrusive academic advising that primarily focused on students' non-academic issues, such as time management, study styles, and financial and family issues. The adviser identified and reviewed the problem and then followed up with multiple meetings to constructing a learning contract that established goals and a concrete plan. Students who attended a greater number of adviser meetings (3 to 8) significantly improved their GPA when compared to students who attended zero to two adviser meetings. However, students were given the choice of how many meetings they would attend, therefore adding a possible confound of motivation, with only the most motivated students choosing to attend a greater number of meetings.

Outreach reminders as a way to increase the probability of students scheduling and keeping an advising appoint have also been investigated as a separate component of the proactive advising approach. Schwebel, Walburn, Jacobsen, Jerrolds, and Klyce (2008) sent a series of outreach reminders, including emails and direct phone contacts, to a randomly selected sample of first year students (not just those on academic probation), who were enrolled in pre-nursing, psychology, or were undeclared. The outreach-advising group received scheduling reminders by email or phone contact, while the no-outreach did not. When the two groups were compared, the outreach reminder group significantly improved their rate of making and keeping advising appointments. They also made advising appointments in a timelier manner, which helped to spread advising sessions over the course of the term, giving advisers more time to cover additional topics, such as goals and career development, college success strategies, and adjustment and personal issues rather than a quick session regarding registration alone. However, in a subsequent 4-year

longitudinal study by Schwebel, Walburn, Klyce, and Jerrolds (2012), which also found significant improvement in the rate of making and keeping advising appointments when students receive a series of outreach reminders, there were no differences between the two groups when it came to academic progress, achievement, and retention and attrition.

Up to this point, proactive advising has been more greatly encouraged, utilized, and studied with academic program advisers, who may or may not be faculty members. In fact, professional staff advisers, who do not teach courses at the college, now advise the majority of UC Blue Ash students. This means that their contact with students is generally less and can be more sporadic when compared to faculty members who see students more often and on a routine basis in the classroom. Little, if any, work has been done to systematically investigate the use of proactive advising by faculty members who are also teaching a course. Related to this idea, Lundberg and Schreiner (2004) investigated student-faculty relationships for students from seven different racial/ethnic backgrounds. They found that the student-faculty relationship was a stronger predictor for learning than student background characteristics such as sex, class level, and degree plans. However, while African American and Native American students reported the greatest number of interactions and responses, they also reported less satisfying relationships, suggesting that these students may gain fewer benefits despite increased interactions with faculty members. Similarly, Tovar (2015) found that contact with instructors predicted higher GPA's in Hispanic-Latino students at a community college, but this influence disappeared when it came to predicting retention and persistence. These limited results suggest a mixed bag for faculty members when it comes to the use of proactive advising techniques with students in their classroom.

The purpose of this case study was to determine if basic components found in the proactive advising model and used by faculty members teaching an Introductory Psychology course at a 2-year community college might influence DFW rates. When we ask faculty members about what they do to reach the students who are on a path to a DFW grade, we are consistently told that faculty members speak to students after class, email individual students and the class as a whole, sign students up for office hours to help them get caught up on material, and hold review sessions outside of class time. To this point, there is no clear indication that these methods, which are often aspects of a proactive advising approach,

are working since researchers have not yet engaged in a systematic review of the effectiveness of even the most basic faculty member involvement methods, such as detailed announcements and targeted weekly email communications. Therefore, this case study asked the question: Will a systematic use of targeted weekly email communications to students who exhibit behaviors inconsistent with academic success (such as missing class, missing homework, or performing poorly on assignments or exams) lead to lower DFW rates in an Introduction to Psychology course compared to students in class sections who do not receive targeted emails?

**Method**

*Participants*

Overall, this case study included 117 undergraduate students in four class sections of Introduction to Psychology. The experimental classes sections were Cummins-Sebree's Monday, Wednesday, Friday (MWF) class section meeting for 55 minutes beginning at 8:00 AM (n = 29), which filled late in the registration period, and Frame's Tuesday, Thursday (TH) class section meeting for 1 hour and 20 minutes beginning at 2:00 PM (n = 29), which filled earlier. The control class sections were the 55-minute MWF 11:15 AM class section for Cummins-Sebree's (n = 29) and the TH 9:30 AM class section for Frame's (n = 30). The researchers had one section that tended to fill quickly for the experimental (TH 2:00 PM) and control (MWF 11:15 AM) conditions, while there was also one section that tended to fill later in the registration period for both the experimental (MWF 8 AM) and the control (TH 9:30 AM) conditions. The overall arrangement of the experimental and control conditions provided a form of counterbalance across the two faculty members to reduce a possible confound of teaching style interacting with popularity of class time on DFW rates.

All participants were recruited via class offerings, which were included in the fall 2015 undergraduate college course offerings. The majority of these students were first-time college students starting their college careers during the fall semester. Class make-up in terms of gender, race, ethnicity, and age could not be controlled based on how students registered for their classes; therefore, this study is considered a quasi-experimental case study without random assignment.

*Instruments and Measures*

Research instruments consisted of a general welcome statement email sent to all students in both the experimental and control class sections and an email template from which all proactive emails were crafted. Although all students in both class sections received the Welcome Statement, only students who were in the experimental class sections and who met the "at risk" criteria received the Course Performance Reminder Emails. The following is a transcription of the *Welcome Statement*:

> Welcome to PSYC1001! This course is an overview of the field of psychology. This means we will cover a wide range of topics, from anatomy of the brain to how we perceive the world to how we treat various mental disorders. You will be expected to attend class, read the textbook, review any online materials provided on Blackboard before coming to class, complete individual and/or group assignments, and take quizzes and/or exams. There will be much to learn, but I will do my best to present the material to you in an engaging fashion so that we can maximize your ability to master the concepts. Please, take a few minutes to check out our Blackboard course site so that you can become familiar with what is on it, where things are located, and how to contact me when you have questions or concerns. Can't wait to see you on the first day of class!
> *Professor's Signature*

The template below served as the basis for the proactive reminder emails, which were sent to encourage students to consider the relationship between their current course performance and their final course grade. Reminder emails also included encouragement for making adjustments and an invitation to meet with the instructor. Reminder mails were personalized each week by following students' weekly performance on the responsibilities noted in the template, which were attendance, assignment performance, quiz and exam performance, and/or overall course grade. Template emails were adapted to fit with one or more specific concerns from each week's prior performance so that reminder emails did not become general form letters, but were specific to the students' current performance.

*Course Performance Reminder Email Template*
Hi (Student's Name),
I noticed that you (missed class last week; missed an assignment last week; did not do well on the last quiz/exam; and/or are currently below a 70% for the course). I want you to know that this can potentially lead to a poor final course grade if this continues throughout the semester. Please, consider making adjustments to improve your performance in this course. I am happy to offer suggestions or ideas on how to do this, so feel free to email me, talk to me before or after class, or come to my office hours.
Sincerely, *Professor's Signature*

Research measures consisted of mid-point and end-of-semester surveys (see Appendix), which were given to assess students' perceptions of the usefulness of receiving proactive emails. Both surveys included questions concerning how often they read their university email, whether they received proactive emails, whether proactive emails did (or would have) changed their behaviors toward the course requirements, and other questions to help us determine the utility of sending proactive emails. Survey responses were provided on paper and transcribed into Microsoft Excel for data storage and analyses.

**Procedure**

On the Monday, one week before the start of the semester, both faculty members posted the Welcome Statement to the course management system (Blackboard). The Welcome Statement was also emailed to all students in all class sections via Blackboard to welcome students, invite students to begin review of Blackboard, provide a list of expectations for the students concerning the course, and remind students as to how often they should check Blackboard for course information and updates.

Beginning the second week of class, both faculty member researchers sent weekly emails to students in the experimental groups who met one of the following criteria that might suggest the students is at risk for a DFW grade in the course: 1) missing a class session without notification to the faculty member of the absence, 2) missing an assignment that was to be completed either in class or online, 3) earning less than a 70% on an exam or missing the exam altogether, and/or 4) exhibiting overall course performance that was less than C- level (i.e. 70%) for the week in question.

These emails continued through the last week of regular class sessions. Students in the control groups did not receive individualized emails, but did receive one blanket class email (as did the experimental class section) that reminded the entire class that college success requires class attendance, completion of assignments, and doing well on exams.

At the approximate mid-point of the semester (mid-October), the mid-point survey was given to all students to assess their perceptions of the proactive emails and their influence on motivating students to improve their performance in Introduction to Psychology and other classes. Students were asked how often they read their class emails, whether they changed behaviors toward the course requirements because of the emails, and other questions to help us determine the utility of the proactive emails. An end-of-semester survey was also given during the final exam period. The end-of-semester survey was completed by all students after students had turned in their completed final exams. Throughout the semester, both faculty members taught the courses in their normal, preferred manner, but engaged in identical proactive emailing and use of survey questions to gauge students' perceptions of faculty engagement and effectiveness of the email notifications.

**Results**

Before determining any influence of intrusive emails on DFW rates, we compared the frequency of passing versus DFW grades between instructors to make sure any differences in final course grades could not be due to different teaching methods. A 2x2 chi-square test indicated that there was no influence of type of instructor on course grades, $\chi 2\ (1) = 0.003$, $p = .955$ (see Figure 1). Therefore, we moved forward with analyses, and the data were collapsed across instructor to investigate the possible influence of intrusive emails on DFW rates.

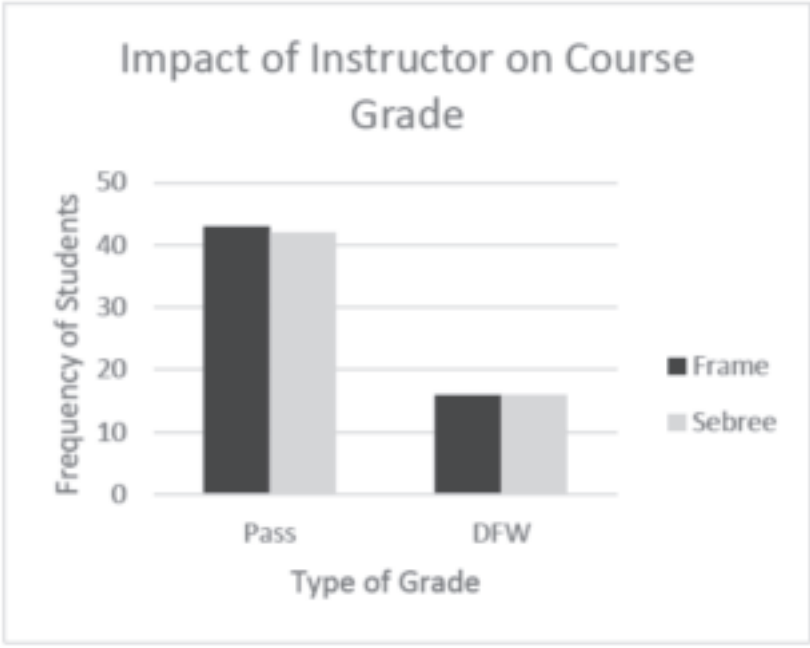


*Figure 1*. Frequency of students with passing vs. DFW grades based on instructor.

When combined across instructors, a 2x2 chi-square analysis indicated there was no effect of receiving intrusive performance emails on course grades, $\chi 2$ (1) = 1.693, p = .193 (see Figure 2). However, we did separate the data based on instructor to see if there might be some difference in rates for each instructor's classes. Although no differences in DFW rates occurred for Frame (Experimental: 21 Pass, 8 DFW; Control: 22 Pass, 8 DFW), $\chi 2$ (1) = 0.006, p = .937, a trend towards a difference in DFW rates occurred for Cummins-Sebree (Experimental: 18 Pass, 11 DFW; Control: 24 Pass, 5 DFW), $\chi 2$ (1) = 3.107, p = .078, albeit in the direction opposite of what was expected.

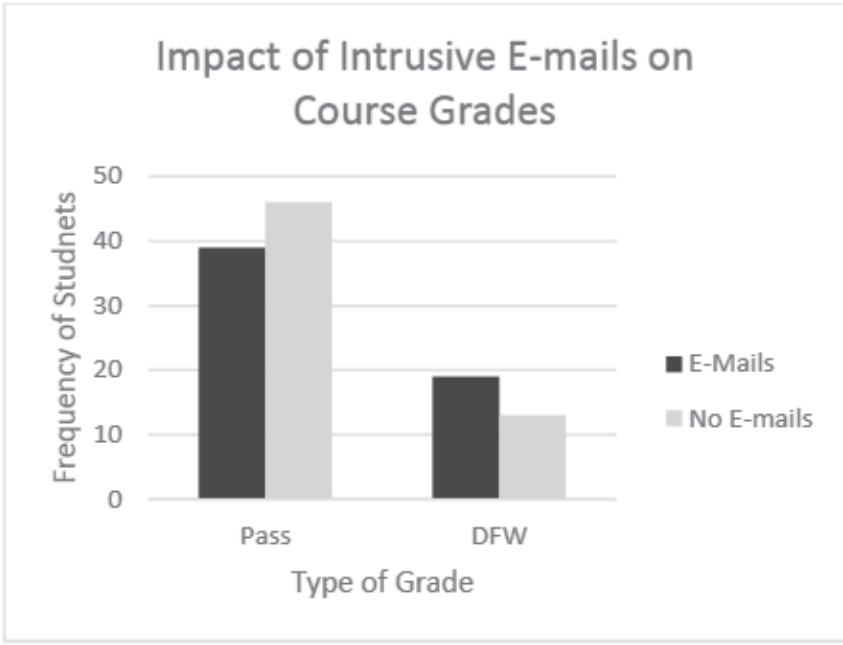


*Figure 2. Frequency of students with passing vs. DFW grades based on receiving emails.*

Although it does not appear that the emails made a positive influence on final course grades, students perceived the value of these emails (see Table 1). Those who received the emails agreed or strongly agreed (Mean of 4.0 or higher) that the information helped them to change their behavior towards the course and that they were happy to receive them. Students who did not receive the emails indicated that these types of emails would lead them to change their behavior and appreciate them if they ever needed the notification. However, it is important to note that students had to be present in class to take the survey, with the primary one of interest being the one given towards the end of the semester when a few of the students contributing to the DFW rates had stopped coming to class. Thus, the bulk of the students reporting their perception of the usefulness of the emails were more likely to be the ones who either adjusted their behavior to improve in class early in the semester, or were already performing well and thus did not need any proactive emails.

Table 1. Means and Standard Deviations for Selected Survey Questions on Perception of E-mails

| Students Receiving E-Mails | |
|---|---|
| M, SD | Survey Question |
| 4.17, .76 | Q3: The course performance reminder email information helped me to improve my grade in the course. |
| 4.21, .83 | Q4: The information in the course performance reminder email influenced me to change or modify my approach to the course (for example, I changed my study habits, I attended more classes, or I completed coursework, etc.). |
| 4.46, .59 | Q7: I am glad that I received the course performance reminder email from my professor. |
| | |
| Students Not Receiving E-Mails | |
| M, SD | Survey Question |
| 4.15, .88 | Q10: I would expect that the course reminder email would help me improve my grade in a future course. |
| 4.27, .87 | Q11: The information given to me in a course performance reminder email would lead me to change my behavior to improve my performance in a future course (for example, I would change my study habits, I would attend more classes, or I would complete coursework, etc.). |
| 4.46, .71 | Q9: I would appreciate this type of course performance reminder email from my professor in a future course. |

**Discussion**

The purpose of this case study was to determine if intrusive, or proactive, emails from faculty members would influence the DFW rates for students in Introduction to Psychology. We predicted that providing weekly emails encouraging students who were performing poorly to meet with us or to ask for help in finding ways to improve their grades would be the not-so-subtle push to students who needed to focus on doing better in the course. Unfortunately, this is not what we found.

Although students agreed that receiving intrusive reminder emails from instructors would help them change their behavior in a way that should benefit their course performance, as was noted in their survey responses, the weekly intrusive advising emails did not reduce the DFW rates in our Introduction to Psychology courses across instructors. Even

when data is separated by instructor, the class section with the worst DFW rate (38%) received the emails as part of being one of the experimental groups. With this in mind, it is also important to note that this class section was also an 8:00 AM class that did not fill until a week or two before the semester began, suggesting that other factors, such as class meeting time or characteristics of students who wait until shortly before a semester starts to register for classes, may have a greater influence on DFW rates.

Though the number of participating classes and students limits this study, the lack of effect was such that we do not expect replication with additional classes to produce a different result. In fact, previous research into the use of intrusive or proactive advising suggests that the value of this approach may be quite limited with previous work offering support for our results. For example, Schwebel, et al. (2008) increased the probability of students making and keeping academic advising appointments by offering a series of outreach reminders. However, the outreach reminders were not significantly associated with improvement in academic progress and student retention over a 4-year period (Schwebel et al., 2012). Schwebel et al. suggested that outreach reminders might not have been "intrusive enough," which may also be true for the current study. Our outreach emails were weekly reminders of what is important for academic success in our classes. In the emails, we "invited" students to email us or to meet with us before or after class or during office hours; however, we did not mandate those communications or meetings. A mandatory approach, similar to that of Vander Schee (2007), may have been necessary to reach those students who were not likely to seek out help on their own even when they were invited to do so. Moreover, Vander Schee utilized "insight-oriented" intrusive advising that primarily targeted non-academic issues such as time management, study styles, and financial and family issues, which were meant to support students in their development of an internal locus of control. As faculty members, we did not have the time or the resources to address similar non-academic issues appropriately, even when we may have suspected a student had them.

Jeschke, Johnson, Williams (2001) compared intrusive advising, using intrusive advising parameters developed by Glennen (1975), with a prescriptive advising approach, which is a quicker and more efficient approach that deals with immediate student concerns, such as suggesting courses to help students stay on track. The research was completed across a 3-year period with students who were psychology majors, most of whom

commuted to a larger urban campus. Researchers were most interested in the effects of type of advising on student satisfaction, students' feeling of connectedness with faculty members and the program, and academic success outcomes. Jeschke et al. found students had more satisfaction with intrusive advising and felt more connect to the department when they were advised intrusively. In fact, 37% of prescriptively advised students wanted to "jump tracks" and moved to make appointments with the intrusive advising faculty members. Nevertheless, students' preference for intrusive academic advising did not lead to improvements in academic success. The Jeschke et al. outcomes are consistent with our students' preference for receiving intrusive reminder emails from an instructor due to the belief that it would help them change their behavior in a way that should benefit their course performance, even when it did not do so.

There are additional considerations when deciding if faculty members advising students in their courses is still a worthy path to take in order to help students' academic success. First, a program to train faculty members on proactive advising techniques may improve students' odds for lowering DFW rates, which should lead to improvements in overall college retention rates. In his groundbreaking (Glennen, 1975) and subsequent programs (Glennen, 1983; Glennen & Baxley, 1985), Glennen included extensive training programs for volunteer faculty advisers who were given release time from teaching and as much as bi-weekly training to learn the curriculum, college rules and regulations, and a wide-ranging number of counseling techniques. Faculty advisers met with students to handle pre-admission counseling and were able to review the files of every student to identify any special problems that might impede learning. Faculty advisers also contacted and met with students face-to-face for intrusive counseling throughout the term to ensure student success.

Wiseman and Merritt (2010) also detailed an extensive training program for faculty advisers with a focus on faculty members' perception of the training program and its influence on student compliance with advising. This program noted that retention rates for students who were advisees of faculty members who underwent training were higher than for those students whose advisers were not part of the training program. Most faculty members are not trained, either as part of a faculty orientation session or through professional development workshops, on how to incorporate techniques that are typically used during proactive advising into their course plans. We created the reminder emails ourselves and decided on the timing

mechanisms, with no viable resource to turn to on our campus as to whether our methods might be "best practices" or not. It may be that formalized training in proactive advising techniques that are consistent with "best practices" would lead to more strategic and effective use of those methods by faculty such that DFW rates would decline.

An alternative solution to adviser training programs for faculty members may be having a specific set of resources, including personnel, dedicated to improving student performance in certain courses. Faculty members could refer struggling students to these resources and personnel, who might serve as a bridge between proactive advising and improvement in course performance. For example, UC Blue Ash has a Writing and Study Skills Center, a Math Lab, and a Science Learning Lab. However, we do not have other tutoring centers or individuals devoted to psychology courses. We have been able to get small amounts of funding to have exceptional undergraduate students hold study sessions in the week leading up to final exams, but this does not help students struggling halfway and throughout the semester. Hence, we see a need for increased funding to assist students after they receive proactive advising from a faculty member, which may improve DFW rates in those courses not directly served by the specific learning labs offered on ours and other college campuses.

**Conclusions**

In closing, outcomes from this case study suggest that simple email reminders by faculty members to encourage students to get assistance in improving their course grades is not enough to reduce DFW rates in introductory-level courses, such as psychology. For any form of proactive advising by faculty to succeed, in-depth training and new ideas must be incorporated into professional development opportunities for faculty members. Moreover, additional research studies are needed on a number of fronts to develop a set of "best practices" for proactive advising by faculty members. Expanded research studies involving faculty members from a variety of disciplines, for example, biology, math, chemistry, and so on, would allow us to determine if the lack of effect in this and other studies is due to a systemic issue with student apathy or to a lack of motivation to seek assistance. Additional studies would also help to ascertain if results are due to the types of courses students are taking; for example, students taking biology may be more motivated to seek assistance than those taking psychology. Future research should also investigate more deeply student

perceptions of proactive advising and its influence. Students who took the end-of-semester survey tended to see the value of the proactive email reminders and indicated that they would like to receive reminder emails if a situation arose in one of their courses. However, it may be that the students who received the reminder emails and stopped attending class before the survey was given found the emails to be overwhelming and "too intrusive." We hope to address these issues in future studies, and encourage others to do the same.

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## Appendix

PSYC1001 Survey on Reminder Emails

Dr. C(Removed) and Dr. F(Removed) are engaging in a study this semester on course performance reminder emails to students and their impact on academic success. Some of you may have received one or more of these reminders so far this semester, while some of you may not have. The following is a survey to see what you think of these emails up to this point. Completing this survey is voluntary; you have the right to decide not to do any or all of this survey, and there is no penalty for making that choice. In addition, this survey is anonymous – you should NOT put your name on it so that your responses are not linked directly to you if you choose to fill it out. We hope you choose to complete this survey, though, because it will help us figure out ways in which we can help you keep on track with your coursework so that you can be successful academically. By completing this survey and turning it in to the front of the classroom, you are indicating your consent to use your responses in our research project.

Please answer the questions below by circling your responses or placing checkmarks next to them; there is also opportunity to write comments. When you are finished, please put your survey in the grey campus envelope on the table at the front of the classroom. Thank you for your time and participation in helping us find ways to support our students' academic success!

1) Did you receive at least one email reminder for PSYC1001 about your current performance in the course and what you need to do to improve your performance?
a) Yes
b) No
c) I Don't Know

**If you answered Yes, continue with Question 2. If you answered No or I Don't Know, continue with Question 8.**

2) The information in the course performance reminder email was new to me – I didn't realize the impact on my course performance.

| Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|

3) The course performance reminder email information helped me to improve my grade in the course.

| Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|

4) The information in the course performance reminder email influenced me to change or modify my approach to the course (for example, I changed my study habits, I attended more classes, or I completed coursework, etc.).

| Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|

5) Please, check the behavioral changes that you made after receiving at least one course performance reminder email. (Check all that apply).

Attend class
Complete coursework
Adjust study habits
Set up a meeting with the instructor, or an adviser
Other (Please be specific.)

_____

_____

6) The changes I made in response to the course performance reminder email helped me to improve my grade in the course.

| Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|

7) I am glad that I received the course performance reminder email from my professor.

| Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|

**If you answered Questions 2-7, you can stop now and go directly to Question 14.**

8) If you answered No or I Don't Know in Question 1, which of the following reasons apply?

a) I don't check my UC email regularly so if I received one, I don't know I did.

b) I may not have recognized that it was an email from my professor because it was sent through Blackboard.

c) I thought it was just another full class reminder about course stuff and not specialized for me and my course performance.

d) I already know I am doing well in the course, so I know I didn't receive a course performance reminder email.

*Imagine you were in a situation in which your performance in this course led to the professor sending you a course performance reminder email. Now answer the following ratings questions.*

9) I would appreciate this type of course performance reminder email from my professor.

| Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|

10) I would expect that the course reminder email would help me improve my grade in the course.

| Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|

11) The information given to me in a course performance reminder email would lead me to change my behavior to improve my course performance (for example, I would change my study habits, I would attend more classes, or I would complete coursework, etc.).

| Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|

12) Please, check the behavioral changes that you would be willing to make if you received a course performance reminder email. (Check all that apply).

Attend class
Complete coursework
Adjust study habits
Set up a meeting with the instructor, or an adviser
Other (Please be specific.)

_____
_____
_____
_____

13) I expect any changes I would make in response to a course performance reminder email would help me improve my grade in a course.

| Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|

14) Please give us any suggestions or comments you may have about our use of the course performance reminder emails.

_____
_____

PSYC1001 End of Semester Survey on Reminder Emails

Dr. C(Removed) and Dr. F(Removed) are engaging in a study this semester on course performance reminder emails to students and their impact on academic success. Some of you may have received one or more of these reminders so far this semester, while some of you may not have. The following is a survey to see what you think of these emails up to this point. Completing this survey is voluntary; you have the right to decide not to do any or all of this survey, and there is no penalty

for making that choice. In addition, this survey is anonymous – you should NOT put your name on it so that your responses are not linked directly to you if you choose to fill it out. We hope you choose to complete this survey, though, because it will help us figure out ways in which we can help you keep on track with your coursework so that you can be successful academically. By completing this survey and turning it in to the front of the classroom, you are indicating your consent to use your responses in our research project.

Please answer the questions below by circling your responses or placing checkmarks next to them; there is also opportunity to write comments. **Please note that this survey focuses on the second half of this semester (i.e. since we did the first survey in mid-October).** When you are finished, please put your survey in the grey campus envelope on the table at the front of the classroom. Thank you for your time and participation in helping us find ways to support our students' academic success!

1) Did you receive at least one email reminder for PSYC1001 about your current performance in the course and what you need to do to improve your performance **since the last survey** we did in mid-October?
a) Yes
b) No
c) I Don't Know

**If you answered Yes, continue with Question 2. If you answered No or I Don't Know, continue with Question 8.**

2) The information in the course performance reminder email was new to me – I didn't realize the impact on my course performance.

| Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|

3) The course performance reminder email information helped me to improve my grade in the course.

| Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|

4) The information in the course performance reminder email influenced me to change or modify my approach to the course (for example, I changed my study habits, I attended more classes, or I completed coursework, etc.).

| Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|

5) Please, check the behavioral changes that you made after receiving at least one course performance reminder email. (Check all that apply).

Attend class
Complete coursework

Adjust study habits
Set up a meeting with the instructor, or an adviser
Other (Please be specific.)

_____
_____

6) The changes I made in response to the course performance reminder email helped me to improve my grade in the course.

| Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|

7) I am glad that I received the course performance reminder email from my professor.

| Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|

**If you answered Questions 2-7, you can stop now and go directly to Question 14.**

8) If you answered No or I Don't Know in Question 1, which of the following reasons apply?

a) I still don't check my UC email regularly so if I received one, I don't know I did.

b) I still may not have recognized that it was an email from my professor because it was sent through Blackboard.

c) I still thought it was just another full class reminder about course stuff and not specialized for me and my course performance.

d) I already know I am still doing well in the course, so I know I didn't receive a course performance reminder email.

e) I received a course performance reminder email in the first half of the semester, and I made changes in my behavior that are helping me keep my course grade up so I didn't receive any additional course performance reminder emails.

*Imagine you were in a situation in which your performance in this course led to the professor sending you a course performance reminder email. Now answer the following ratings questions.*

9) I would appreciate this type of course performance reminder email from my professor in a future course.

| Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|

10) I would expect that the course reminder email would help me improve my grade in a future course.

| Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|

11) The information given to me in a course performance reminder email would lead me to change my behavior to improve my performance in a future course (for example, I would change my study habits, I would attend more classes, or I would complete coursework, etc.).

| Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|

12) Please, check the behavioral changes that you would be willing to make if you received a course performance reminder email in a future course. (Check all that apply).

Attend class
Complete coursework
Adjust study habits
Set up a meeting with the instructor, or an adviser
Other (Please be specific.)

_____
_____
_____
_____

13) I expect any changes I would make in response to a course performance reminder email would help me improve my grade in a future course.

| Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|---|---|---|---|---|

14) Please give us any suggestions or comments you may have about our use of the course performance reminder emails.

_____
_____
_____

**Personal Biographies**

Dr. Deb Frame is an Associate Professor of Psychology at the University of Cincinnati Blue Ash College (UCBA) where she has served as an academic advisor for pre-psychology and is the UCBA Program Coordinator for Pre-Psychology. Her teaching responsibilities include Introduction to Psychology, Sensation and Perception, and Adulthood and Aging. Dr. Frame focuses her research in the area of cognitive processing as it applies to technology in the classroom and instructional material design with a special interest in the interactive classroom and the benefits of intergenerational community projects and service learning.

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Dr. Sarah Cummins-Sebree is Professor of Psychology and current Academic Unit Head in the Behavioral Science Department at University of Cincinnati Blue Ash College. Her primary teaching responsibilities include Introduction to Psychology, Research Methods and Statistics in Psychology, Cognition and Learning, and Comparative Psychology. She has researched, presented, and published on a number of student-related topics, including the benefits of flipped classroom teaching, self-regulated learning, and students' reading of textbooks.

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