

## **Progress Report: EAB Navigate Implementation at Queens College**

[QC's EAB Leadership Team](#)

November 1, 2019

We are pleased to report strong enthusiasm from across Queens College for the EAB Navigate application and the potential for this new platform to enhance college-wide student success efforts. There is wide agreement that this new tool will support and augment our existing academic momentum and success initiatives. The leaders of our five Navigate pilot units—Academic Advising Center, SEEK Program, Writing Center, Veteran Support Services and CUNY EDGE—have been especially supportive of this project. Unit leaders and their staff members have devoted, and continue to devote, substantial time and effort to learning the technology, thinking about how the platform can be leveraged to enhance or revise current practices, imagining how our students will utilize the app, and developing ideas for how Navigate can make the delivery of student services more effective and efficient. These pilot units are helping to pave the way for adoption by staff in other service units, by faculty, and by students. We are pleased to report that we have benefited from a productive relationship with our EAB launch consultants and the Central Office implementation team from OAA (Bob Maruca, Duffie Cohen, and Vivek Upadhyay).

### **Phase 1 and Phase 2 Users**

To date, our Academic Advising Center and SEEK unit are actively using Navigate to set up their availability and help determine appropriate configurations, as well as plan their communication campaigns using Navigate. The Writing Center, Veteran Support Services and CUNY EDGE are just beginning those steps now. The leadership team is developing a schedule to expand access to other units in the spring while finalizing plans for rolling out Navigate Student to a pilot group of students beginning in January.

### **Progress to Date**

Highlights of our work over the past two years include:

1. Initial planning and formation of QC leadership team
2. Recruiting leaders and participants for engagement teams
3. Identifying Pilot groups
  - a. Academic Advising Center
  - b. Veteran Support Services
  - c. SEEK
  - d. Writing Center

- e. CUNY EDGE
- 4. Developing Identifying and defining relevant Navigate Student Categories
- 5. Determining Advising Best Practices and sharing these among the pilot units
- 6. Determining Communication Best Practices
  - a. Identifying current communication strategies and levels of effectiveness, understanding how to use the tool to improve communication effectiveness

The timeline below details milestones achieved thus far. We are currently live, with Phase 1 users actively training to use the faculty/staff-facing system. In addition, we are in active discussions with the EAB launch consultants leading to a decision about the predictive model that will be rolled out in the spring.

### **Methodology**

Even before the CUNY-wide project kick-off, our campus was actively planning for the implementation of this student success platform. Most notably, we engaged in a college-wide effort to identify and map the many technologies that support the student life-cycle from recruitment through graduation. That exercise has helped us understand where Navigate fits into our technology landscape and identify redundant systems and practices we can plan to sunset.

Our leadership team meets weekly in order to maintain momentum on the project and to provide a forum for ongoing communication about progress, including identifying issues and strategies for resolving them. Early in the implementation process, we created a website to share important information with our campus community about EAB Navigate and our implementation progress (<https://eab.qc.cuny.edu>). This site is updated frequently and easily when new information or materials to share are available. We have received very positive feedback about this site from our colleagues at QC as well as from colleagues at other Wave 1 and 2 schools.

Queens College has been actively reviewing data, identifying data quality/coding issues and sharing that information with relevant Central Office staff and other Wave I colleges. In addition, we are developing our own Configuration and Change request processes to integrate with those established by the Central Office.

### **Aspirations**

Technology implementations are notoriously more time-consuming than we ever think they will be, and that is true as well with the EAB Navigate implementation, despite the incredible level of support we receive from our EAB launch consultants. The details are

vitaly important but sometimes we do not have all the relevant information to help us make the right decisions up front. An agile approach is required, since it builds in the capability of iterating on decisions made prior to knowing how the technical and configuration decisions manifest in the application. Once we have more information, can view data in the application, and can practice with some real-life scenarios, we identify tweaks (and sometimes more major changes) that are needed to the CUNYfirst data, roles, and Navigate configurations.

EAB Navigate gives clients the tools to configure the system—there is great flexibility. However, because some decisions are made centrally, the colleges are not necessarily able to benefit from the full flexibility of the system. That is to be expected with a university-wide implementation, but can be frustrating. Some decisions are being made without sufficient consultation, as we feel was the case with the development of the data feed from CUNYfirst to EAB, and the logic used to define “student categories.” And some of our requests are addressed with a certain amount of resistance, as was the case with the request for one-time uploads of notes from our current advising/tutoring platform and as continues to be the case with our request for email logging. We would have preferred CIS to consult more directly and specifically with campus personnel knowledgeable about relevant practices and data details. We believe that closer consultation will enable us to better close information gaps, more clearly communicate changes and updates, help bring issues to resolution faster, and better assist Navigate users at Queens College and possibly at other CUNY colleges as well.

In addition, typical change management issues surface periodically and we expect this will be the case as new user groups are onboarded. Encouraging staff and faculty to leverage the technology to work more efficiently and effectively often means getting our colleagues to embrace or at the very least begrudgingly accept change to current practices. That can be especially difficult for those not fully comfortable with technology generally, or with the Navigate platform, specifically. Other challenges include finding sufficient time to manage this large implementation project and to learn the application well enough to guide others and answer questions. Everyone involved already has overflowing portfolios of responsibility and our budget does not support bringing on any additional staff to support this project. So the implementation work is often interrupted by our “day jobs.”

On the positive side, the implementation process has encouraged us to begin to develop a more strategic approach to the acquisition of academic technology platforms to ensure better integration with existing technology (and to advocate for the same for the Central Office). Importantly, Navigate implementation has also provided an opportunity to revisit some long standing practices to consider improving the way we

communicate with students, for example, or deliver services in support of their success. In addition, this project has encouraged us to work more collaboratively and opened up opportunities to integrate our work and learn from one another.

## Timeline

Below is a timeline of activities at Queens College with major milestones highlighted.

