

# Using the Non-cognitive Factors of Beacon in Advising

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Beacon

Beacon is an **early alert** and **centralized notation** system that capitalizes on a myriad of data, including **non-cognitive factors**, to inform and coordinate **interventions** with at-risk and success-oriented students.

# Non-cognitives

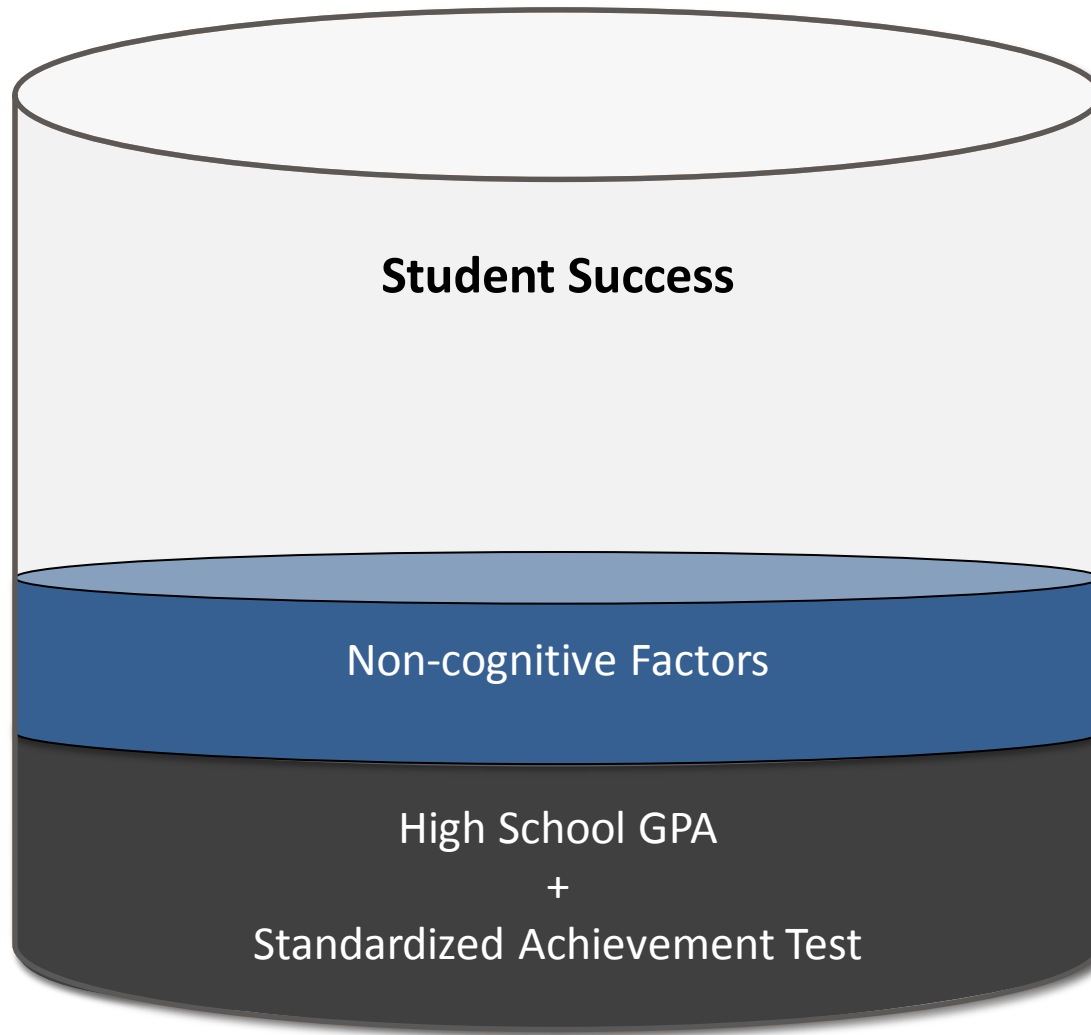
Non-cognitive attributes are those academically and occupationally relevant skills and traits that are not specifically intellectual or analytical in nature. They include a range of **personality** and **motivational** habits and attitudes that facilitate functioning well in school. Non-cognitive traits, skills, and characteristics include **perseverance**, motivation, **self-control**, and other **aspects of conscientiousness** (Borghans et al., 2008).

# Literature

Student characteristics including **psychosocial factors influence retention** (Brown et al., 2008; Tinto 1975, 1993).

Influence of psychosocial factors on retention **extend to two-year institutions** (Napoli and Wortman, 1998)

Robbins, S., Lauver, K., Le, H., Davis, D., Langley, R., & Carlstrom, A. (2004) examined 109 studies and found that **psychosocial and study skill factor** (non-cognitives) were predictive beyond traditional factors.



# Student Strengths Inventory

- 48- item assessment
- Measures 6 non-cognitive factors (alphas range from .81 to .90)
- Provides two indices
  - Academic Success
  - Retention
- Additional Items may be added
- Provides recommendations
- Student and Advisors may access data

# Student Strengths Inventory Origins

- Rational and factor analytic methods
- Homogeneous and objective measures of six factors
  - Academic engagement
  - Academic self-efficacy
  - Campus engagement
  - Social comfort
  - Resiliency
  - Educational commitment
- Initial pool of 243 items developed by team of 6 researchers
- Reduced to 81 and then 48 items through consensus and correlation analysis over 11 iterations
- 8 items for each construct
- 1 – 6 (strongly disagree – strongly agree)



# The Six Factors of SSI

# Academic Engagement

## Definition

The value an individual places on academics and attentiveness to school work.

## Sample Item

I turn my homework in on time.

## Related Index

Academic Success

# Academic Self-Efficacy

## Definition

An individual's confidence in his or her ability to achieve academically and succeed in college.

## Sample Item

I will excel in my chosen major.

## Related Index

Academic Success

# Educational Commitment

## Definition

An individual's dedication to college and the value placed upon a college degree.

## Sample Item

I see value in completing a college education.

## Related Index

Retention

# Resiliency

## Definition

An individual's approach to challenging situations and stressful events.

## Sample Item

I manage stress well.

## Related Index

Retention & Academic Success

# Social Comfort

## Definition

An individual's comfort in social situations and ability to communicate with others.

## Sample Item

I am comfortable in groups.

## Related Index

Retention

# Campus Engagement

## Definition

An individual's desire to be involved in campus activities and their attachment to the college/university.

## Sample Item

Being active in extra-curricular activities in college is important to me.

## Related Index

Retention

# Intervention Activities



# Preparation

- Become familiar with website and report data
- Develop comfort with 6 scales
  - Review student reports
- Develop scripts, practice interpreting
- Plan interpretation format
  - Classroom, small or large groups, individual
- Review reports ahead of time
  - All high or low scores
  - Discuss invalid reports

# Student Preparation/Preamble

- Prepare students for report
  - Reason for the assessment
    - Do students remember taking the assessment?
    - Did the student take the assessment seriously?
- How information can/will be used
- What are the students' expectations
- Self-assessment activity

# Group Interpretation Session

- Group/classroom setting
  - Invite students to voluntarily share their scores/reactions with the class
  - Invite students with higher scores to share successes
  - Organize students in groups to identify possible action steps
  - Provide resources/guides
  - Enlist peer mentors in the conversations
    - Small group breakouts

*The student's peer group is the single most potent source of influence on growth and development during the undergraduate years.*

Astin, A. What Matters in College? Four Critical Years Revisited. (p. 398). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1993.

# Individual Interpretation Session

- High ability/strengths
  - Engage students in ideas to leverage strengths
  - Reinforce current behaviors
    - “What are you doing to be successful in this area?”
- Moderate ability
  - Wide range of scores
  - Percentile Ranks are not equivalent to grades
  - Build on existing behaviors
    - “What could you do more of to be successful?”

# Individual Interpretation Session

- Low ability
  - Inquire about past success experiences
    - Everyone has had *some* success in each area, build upon
    - “What has worked in the past?”
  - Brainstorm possible action steps
  - Leverage moderate and high abilities
- Use the What’s Next statements
- Create a success plan

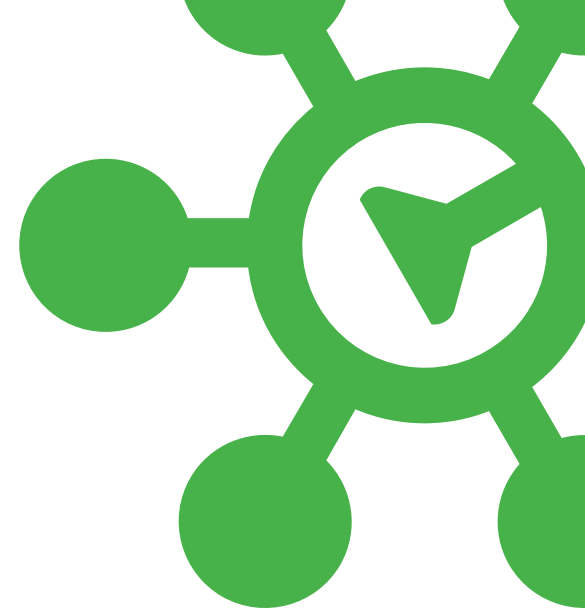
# Common Concerns

*This information seems very personal, I'm not trained in psychology/counseling.*

*Should I share the risk indices with students?*

*What if my conversation reveals an urgent issue?*





# To Learn More

## **Online Support Community**

[beaconsupport.zendesk.com/home](https://beaconsupport.zendesk.com/home)

## **More about Campus Labs & Beacon**

[www.campuslabs.com](http://www.campuslabs.com)

## **Twitter**

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