

# Student Success Alert Faculty Guide



**Updated: August 2022**

# Table of Contents

---

5

## Introduction to SSAs



- What is a Student Success Alert?
- Why are Student Success Alerts Important?

7

## Timing & Use of SSAs



- When should faculty send a Student Success Alert?
- What does a Student Success Alert allow me to highlight?

9

## How to Send SSAs



- How do faculty send a Student Success Alert?

10

### Effectiveness of SSAs



- Do Student Success Alerts Matter?
- Why not bypass the college's early alert system and email struggling students directly?

12

### Departmental Responsibilities



- What are departmental responsibilities around Student Success Alerts?
- Closing the Loop: What Happens After I Send a Student Success Alert?

14

### Additional Strategies for Student Success



- What are some other success strategies?

16

### Student Support Resource Directory



# 19

## Student Success Alert FAQs



- Q: Who may need to view a success alert?
- Q: What are the reasons I should send an alert?
- Q: When should faculty send alerts?
- Q: What methods are used to reach students when an alert is sent?
- Q: Do I need to include comments when sending alerts?
- Q: Should I send alerts before an assignment is due?
- Q: Should I send multiple alerts for the same student?
- Q: Should I send an email to a student before a success alert is sent?
- Q: Why is it important to send a success alert for students who are struggling in their classes or not attending classes?
- Q: Do I need to send alerts if I only teach Dual Enrollment classes?
- Q: What will happen to Success Alerts after Navigate is implemented?





# Introduction to SSAs

## What is a Student Success Alert?

Student Success Alerts (SSA) are a key component of the Frederick Community College Early Alert System, which are initiated by faculty through PeopleSoft. The SSA system is designed to identify struggling students and offer timely interventions to help them persist and complete their courses. Success Alerts also inform advisors so they can encourage students to take appropriate steps. Faculty teaching introductory and general education courses should be especially vigilant in quickly identifying struggling students by sending Success Alerts.

## Why are Success Alerts important?

Student Success Alerts let students know that there must be a change in strategy in a timely manner to ensure success in a course. Success Alerts will prompt students to speak with their instructors regarding the change in strategy to make improvements based on the recommendations of faculty. In some cases, students may not be aware of the significance of their academic performance until after a Success Alert is sent.

Through timely intervention, advisors or program managers may learn of significant non-academic factors that lead to poor academic performance. Because students do not always reach out to faculty for help, the Success Alert may spark an important dialogue that could impact student success, thereby opening the door to further communication.

Copies of all alerts are also sent to students' advisors, so they can help students take the necessary steps and seek out appropriate resources to ensure their success.

In general, students feel valued and appreciated when someone takes the time to reach out to them. Sometimes, students need confirmation that the faculty and staff care about them and are looking out for their best interests. Through faculty intervention, students may discover both academic and non-academic campus resources that can maximize their own success. When students do not feel like they are cared for, they may become isolated and feel alone. Additionally, students are



## Introduction to SSAs (Cont.)

more willing to share information to help faculty and staff create resources to improve student success. Without these alerts, vital qualitative data may be missing that may play a role in student retention.

These alerts may aid faculty in recognizing barriers students face to success that can be remedied by campus resources:

- Students may not inform faculty that they are sick which results in missing assignments
- Students may have significant mental health concerns
- Students may not be submitting assignments correctly (common in online courses)
- Students cannot afford course materials
- Students are dealing with personal matters
- Students are experiencing food and housing insecurity
- Students may not have reliable technology or internet access
- Students may not have reliable transportation
- Students may not have properly “transitioned from high school work to college work
- Students often are unaware of possible grade replacement policies
- Students are trying to be full-time students, full-time employees, and full-time caregivers which leads to time management concerns
- Students may not have time to use the resources offered to them

Ideally, the alerts will lead to positive outcomes:

- Students may interact with faculty and discover how to improve their performance
- Students may learn more about the services offered by the college
- Students may learn new strategies to help them succeed in their course  
Students may be rerouted to classes more appropriate to their program or interests
- Students who receive alerts may receive advisement regarding course completion options

If a student is having issues outside of the classroom that are impacting their classroom performance, faculty are encouraged to assist the student in contacting their advisor <https://www.frederick.edu/handbook.aspx?cid=resources-top-link>



# Timing & Use of SSAs

## When should faculty send a Student Success Alert?

Early intervention is important so that students have time to implement success strategies. It is beneficial to send alerts at different times throughout the semester.

Faculty should consider sending alerts:

- Alongside financial aid attendance reporting
- After poor performance on first major assessment or several minor assessments
- Before withdrawal deadline
- In conjunction with a poor midterm grade
- In accordance with departmental or program student success alert criteria

Faculty should also consider sending an alert as soon as they observe the following issues:

- Poor participation in online or in class activities
- Troubling academic patterns/concerning behaviors (SSAs should not be conflated with BERT interventions)
- Poor performance before the withdrawal deadline
- Course average below a C
- Course average above a C but below the threshold needed to advance in a program
- Missing multiple assignments
- When indicated through Blackboard Retention Center



Faculty can send multiple alerts as new issues arise or if the initial issue is unresolved. Please note that effective utilization of the student success alert process requires that faculty keep grades in grade center as up to date as possible.

When **NOT TO SEND** an alert:

- SSAs are not the same as the Student Behavior Incident Report form, which should be used for concerns of that nature that require immediate attention
- More than two alerts for the same issue are not needed. You can reach out to the



## Timing & Use of SSAs (Cont.)

student directly (or contact the SOAR Coordinator or advisor) if the issue persists.

- Be cautious of sending an alert before an assignment due date. Students may have a plan to complete assignments on or near the due date (even if such actions are not recommended)

### **What does a Student Success Alert allow me to highlight?**

The Student Success Alert form will ask you to identify if a student has been struggling in one or more of the following areas:

- Attendance
- Class Participation
- Incomplete/Missing Assignments
- Quality of Work Submitted
- Test/Quiz Performance

In addition, faculty comments that provide more specific information regarding student performance are strongly encouraged, as they help clarify next steps for students and provide advisors with a framework for successful student interventions. It is helpful to both students and advisors to understand the likelihood a student may have at being successful in the class at the time the alert is sent.





# How to Send SSAs

## How do faculty send a Student Success Alert?

Alerts can be sent via either the Class or Attendance Roster in PeopleSoft, and there is a link in Blackboard course menus that brings faculty members to the Search screen for Attendance rosters as described below.

To access via **Class Roster**:

1. Log in to **PeopleSoft**, and from Faculty Center, select a **Class Roster** using the head and shoulders icon.
2. Scroll to the far right of the roster to click on Student Success Alert for the selected student.

To access via **Attendance Roster**:

1. Login into **PeopleSoft** and click on the tab for **Attendance Roster** above the Faculty Center.
2. If the **Term code** is not listed, type in the code for the current term.
3. Click the **Search button for a list of courses** you are teaching. Click on the course you would like to view.
4. The **Attendance (Fin. Aid)** and **Student Success Alert Roster** will open for the selected course. Click Student Success Alert for the student.

To complete and send the SSA:

1. **Check off the concern(s)** you want noted in the Student Success Alert letter.
2. **Write additional comments** to be included in the letter to emphasize next steps for the student and provide the advisor with a framework for successful intervention. It is extremely important that faculty provide this additional context for both the student and advisor. This information may help inform what types of interventions are helpful and appropriate for the particular student.
3. Click **Send Email**.
4. The student, instructor, and advisor will all receive a copy of the SSA.



# Effectiveness of SSAs

## Do Student Success Alerts Matter?

- FCC data shows that early alerts work. For example, in Fall 2021 approximately 40% of students who were contacted by a SOAR coordinator after receiving an alert were successful.
  - National research confirms early intervention systems prevent many capable but struggling college students from dropping out, especially in their first year, by (re)connecting them to instructors, advisors, learning assistants, and campus resources invested in their success.<sup>1</sup>
  - National research has identified the first year of college as a major adjustment period for students—academically, culturally, emotionally, financially, intellectually, and socially. Early intervention initiated by faculty, often the most consistent presence for students, is vital to help them successfully transition and adapt to college-level demands and expectations.
- 

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://nacada.ksu.edu/Resources/Academic-Advising-Today/View-Articles/Maximizing-the-Use-of-an-Early-Alert-System-through-Advisor-Outreach.aspx>

<https://nacada.ksu.edu/Resources/Academic-Advising-Today/View-Articles/The-Art-of-Intervention-Partnering-with-Faculty-for-Early-Academic-Alert.aspx>

<http://www.ecsu.edu/documents/faculty-staff-conference/bestPractices-CaseExamplesinEarlyAlert.pdf>



## Effectiveness of SSAs (Cont.)

### Why not bypass the college's early alert system and email struggling students directly?

- Student Success Alerts also alert a student's advisor or departmental SOAR Coordinator, who will then be able to engage in outreach and intervention steps with a fuller understanding of the student's performance across all classes.
- Deploying alerts is one of the "Duties and Responsibilities" stated in full-time and adjunct faculty job descriptions: "Maintain regular communication with students, and when appropriate, use the Student Success Alert notification process."
- Alerts are part of the evidence gathered for final grade complaints. Useful data collected each semester informs decisions about how FCC can improve student persistence, retention, and completion.





# Departmental Responsibilities

## What are departmental responsibilities around Student Success Alerts?

Student Success Alerts are intended to be a tool to help ensure student success, and alert policies should be structured around early interventions, not just the documentation of struggling students. While alerts should be used in all courses, departments should, in consultation with other stakeholders (advisors, learning centers, retention specialists, student support offices, etc.), establish benchmarks, priorities, and procedures for alerts. Departments should share the following with their AVP:

- SSA training for faculty in department
- How to send alerts
- How to utilize dashboard and queries (as appropriate) to determine frequency and efficacy of alerts and make appropriate recommendations to the department
- Reference language for inclusion in syllabus
- Expectations around providing additional comments for the alert, recommended next steps, and other helpful information within the body of the alert
- List of courses where Success Alerts are prioritized, with a focus on developmental, introductory, and General Education course
- Benchmarks for compliance and follow up (see recommendations below)  
For example, 100% of ACCT 101 faculty will submit alerts when a student

- A). does not log into Bb by the end of week 1, and/or
- B). misses X assignments by X week, and/or
- C). earns a D or below on first test

Follow-up examples might include contacting the student; following up with academic and/or faculty advisor; referring student to Learning Centers; coaching student how to make an appt. with C&A or with academic coaching; requiring the student to attend a student success workshop



# Departmental Responsibilities (Cont).

## Closing the Loop: What Happens After I Send a Student Success Alert?

All students have an assigned advisor. Some departments have SOAR Coordinators. SOAR Coordinators are content experts that can offer more specific advice about individual courses (homework platforms, specific assignments, course design, etc.) when student success alerts are sent. Advisors and SOAR Coordinators are regularly monitoring when success alerts are sent to their students.

- Advisors will reach out to students directly if they have received multiple alerts in the same semester, whether these are multiple alerts in one class or individual alerts across multiple classes.
- SOAR Coordinators will reach out to both students and instructors to “close the loop” regarding potential interventions with students.
- Advisors may also reach out to students when an alert is issued during an abbreviated semester, when students are academically at risk, or other known factors necessitate earlier interventions
- Advisors and SOAR Coordinators also enter advising notes to assist other departments/services at FCC to address specific student concerns.





# Additional Strategies for Student Success

## What are some other success strategies?

In addition to filling out the Student Success Alert some additional strategies you may consider are listed below:

- Consider reaching out to students who received alerts either before or after a class session, encouraging them to set up an appointment to talk with you.
- Announce to the class and in Blackboard announcements, in advance of sending alerts, you will be sending them and to look for them in their FCC email accounts. If students prefer to use other accounts, share with them the directions for forwarding their FCC email to their preferred account.
  - Remember: SSAs will ONLY send to an FCC email account. For directions for forwarding myFCC to personal email accounts, please visit <http://www.frederick.edu/student-resources/it-services/faqs.aspx>.
- Offer other Student Success Tools, reminding them about "Student Resources" and/or making referrals to Learning Centers (please see "Student Support Resource Directory" on page 15)
- Consider a referral to the Academic Coach. Please visit <http://www.frederick.edu/tutoring> for more information about academic coaching.
- The Blackboard Grade Center should be set up from day 1 of a course to allow students to track their overall progress, including the grade column, which calculates students' final course grades as a Running Total (value = YES).
  - Note that items hidden from students (i.e. assignments and tests) don't appear in My Grades until they become available for a student to view)
- Track the need to send alerts for missed deadlines and overall grade/course



## Additional Strategies for Student Success (Cont.)

performance by making use of the Retention Center in Blackboard.

- Retention Center requires that faculty have a completed Grade Center setup with the total grade column calculated as a Running Total, and they are utilizing the due date for items like tests, quizzes, and assignments. The Retention Center uses this field to determine if an individual is delinquent in completing that item.
- Be sure that all assignment due dates and point values are accurate and up-to-date.



# Student Support Resource Directory

## **Adult Students & Family Virtual Resource Center**

[www.frederick.edu/student-resources/adult-services.aspx](http://www.frederick.edu/student-resources/adult-services.aspx)

## **Athletics**

[www.fccathletics.com/landing/index](http://www.fccathletics.com/landing/index)

## **Bookstore**

<http://bookstore.frederick.edu/home>

## **Career and Academic Planning Services (CAPS)**

[www.frederick.edu/student-resources/counseling-advising.aspx](http://www.frederick.edu/student-resources/counseling-advising.aspx)

## **Community Resource Directory**

[www.frederick.edu/student-resources/adult-services/community-resource.aspx](http://www.frederick.edu/student-resources/adult-services/community-resource.aspx)

## **Counseling and Wellness Services**

[www.frederick.edu/student-resources/behavioral-health-and-wellness.aspx](http://www.frederick.edu/student-resources/behavioral-health-and-wellness.aspx)

## **Disability Access Services**

[www.frederick.edu/student-resources/services-for-students-with-disabilities.aspx](http://www.frederick.edu/student-resources/services-for-students-with-disabilities.aspx)



# Student Support Resource Directory (Cont.)

## **Emergency Assistance (Food Pantry, Child Care, Mental Health, etc.)**

[www.frederick.edu/student-resources/virtual-resources.aspx](http://www.frederick.edu/student-resources/virtual-resources.aspx)

\*Please see “Emergency Assistance” section.

## **Financial Aid**

[www.frederick.edu/cost-financial-aid.aspx?cid=fa-top-link](http://www.frederick.edu/cost-financial-aid.aspx?cid=fa-top-link)

## **General Assistance/ Questions**

Email [assist@frederick.edu](mailto:assist@frederick.edu) or call 301-846-2469

## **Information Technology Services for Students**

[www.frederick.edu/student-resources/it-services.aspx](http://www.frederick.edu/student-resources/it-services.aspx)

Request online support: <http://apps.frederick.edu/cfm/myfcc/myfccassist.cfm>

## **Internet Access (Xfinity Wi Fi) – Free Access**

<https://wifi.xfinity.com/>

## **Learning Centers and Tutoring Services**

[www.frederick.edu/tutoring](http://www.frederick.edu/tutoring)



# Student Support Resource Directory (Cont.)

## **Library/ Learning Commons**

[www.frederick.edu/student-resources/gladhill-learning-commons.aspx](http://www.frederick.edu/student-resources/gladhill-learning-commons.aspx)

## **Office of Student Success Programs**

Please email [StudentSuccessPrograms@frederick.edu](mailto:StudentSuccessPrograms@frederick.edu) or call 301-624-2894.

## **Online Learning Resources**

<https://www.frederick.edu/student-resources/online-learning.aspx>

## **Student Resources**

[www.frederick.edu/student-resources/virtual-resources.aspx](http://www.frederick.edu/student-resources/virtual-resources.aspx)

## **Student Success / Emergency Assistance Funds**

Student Success Fund application:

<https://app.perfectforms.com/PresentationServer/Form.aspx/Play/dP1lgAYI?f=dP1lgAYI>

## **Veteran and Military Services**

[www.frederick.edu/student-resources/veteran-military-services.aspx](http://www.frederick.edu/student-resources/veteran-military-services.aspx)





# Student Success Alert FAQs

## **Q: Who may need to view a success alert?**

Academic advisors, instructors, Financial Aid, Disability Access Services, Veteran Affairs, Associate Vice Presidents, Student Affairs, and other FCC personnel.

---

## **Q: What are the reasons I should send an alert?**

Attendance, incomplete assignments and tests, lack of online activity on Blackboard and/or homework platform, poor academic performance, miscellaneous concerns.

---

## **Q: When should faculty send alerts?**

Contact the chair, program manager, or SOAR Coordinator of your department for appropriate times to send alerts based on course type, length, and departmental expectations.

In general, alerts are sent during the following times:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Week – Attendance Alerts
- 5<sup>th</sup> Week – Academic Performance
- 8<sup>th</sup> Week – Academic Performance
- 12<sup>th</sup> Week – Outreach to students in danger of not earning a C or better

Faculty can send alerts for other reasons (academic and non-academic) as needed.

Email, phone, text messaging, other FCC personnel in contact with the student.



# Student Success Alert FAQs (Cont.)

---

**Q: What methods are used to reach students when an alert is sent?**

Email, phone, text messaging, other FCC personnel in contact with the student

---

**Q: Do I need to include comments when sending alerts?**

Yes, comments are essential. Comments allow for the CAPS advisors or SOAR Coordinators to engage in an intervention based on specific concerns. Without the comments, students don't often know why they are being contacted and FCC cannot provide appropriate outreach and support.

---

**Q: Should I send alerts before an assignment is due?**

Students have complex lives and often may choose to complete assignments on the due date. Reminders about upcoming due dates can be sent to students without sending a success alert.

---

**Q: Should I send multiple alerts for the same student?**

If the reason for sending an additional alert is different from the reason for a previous alert, then an additional alert should be sent. Alerts should not be sent for students continuously not completing homework for the duration of the semester. Follow up on students should be handled on a case-by-case basis.

---

**Q: Should I send an email to a student before a success alert is sent?**



## Student Success Alert FAQs (Cont.)

Yes. If you are sending multiple alerts, this may be a great time to remind students about the meaning of the alert and to warn them that alerts and outreach are intended to support students and are not punitive in nature. Please ask students to respond to the alerts to increase opportunities for interventions. If you have a SOAR coordinator attached to your discipline, please share the name of the SOAR coordinator so that the student is aware of who will be communicating with them.

---

**Q: Why is it important to send a success alert for students who are struggling in their classes or not attending classes?**

There are many “success stories” resulting from faculty sending a success alert. Personalized intervention, increased access to and awareness of support services, and even knowing that FCC is invested in their success can all make a difference.

---

**Q: Do I need to send success alerts if I only teach Dual Enrollment classes?**

Yes. Please contact Mrs. Elizabeth Duffy (Executive Director of Dual Enrollment) at [eduffy@frederick.edu](mailto:eduffy@frederick.edu) or 240-629-7886 regarding sending alerts to high school students enrolled in your classes.

---

**Q: What will happen to Success Alerts after Navigate is Implemented?**

The next phase of the Navigate implementation will replace FCC’s Student Success Alert System by the end of Spring ’23. Through Navigate, alerts can still be initiated by faculty, but it also allows alerts and associated cases to be initiated and resolved by both faculty and staff.