FAST & SOC: Tools for Retention

• Observed behavior
• Alert
• Intervention
• Back on track
• MAP-Works
What is FAST?

- FAST stands for Faculty/Staff Assisting Students in Trouble

- It’s an online/electronic reporting tool for faculty and staff to report concerns about individual students to help students get assistance when needed AND to help keep our campus environment safe and conducive to learning for all

- Managed by Undergraduate Academic Services with assistance from the Office of the Dean of Students and the Students of Concern Committee
“Academic concerns” may include:
- Excessive absences
- Poor test scores
- Failure to complete assignments
- Poor quality or concerning content in written work
- Suspected learning disability

“Other concerns” may include:
- Disruptive classroom behavior
- Reported emotional/mental health issues
- Observed emotional or irrational behavior
- Threatening behavior (to self or others)
- Other undefined disruptive or concerning behavior

Academic concerns may exist alone, without “other” issues being present, or... Academic concerns may be a manifestation of behavioral, personal, or mental health issues that the student is facing.
Who responds to **FAST** reports?

- **All FAST reports are initially received and reviewed by UAS**

- **For FAST reports that are primarily about academic concerns:** UAS processes the report and intervenes to assist the student as needed

- **For FAST reports that are about mental health, behavioral, or personal/emotional, or safety concerns:** UAS forwards the report to be processed by the Case Manager in the Office of the Dean of Students— *The Office of the Dean of Students takes the most serious of these cases to the Students of concern Committee*
What is the Students of Concern Committee (SOC)?

- A small group of carefully selected professionals from Student and Academic Affairs that meets weekly to review cases of concerning student behavior

- Is operated out of the Office of the Dean of Students, where all referrals are received and processed and where case management/record keeping occurs

- Has been in place since 2003 (policies formalized in 2008)
SOC helps to **maintain a safe college environment** by…

- Receiving, reviewing, and responding to information about concerning student behavior
- Intervening with supportive services to assist students
- Providing support and feedback for faculty & staff who are concerned a student’s behavior
What makes a “Student of Concern?”

• Any student that is exhibiting concerning behavior may be referred to the SOC Committee. The SOC will determine if formal SOC intervention is warranted.

• **A few examples of “concerning behavior:”**
  • Verbal or written threats to self or to others
  • Evidence of substance abuse or suspected intoxication
  • Evidence of self injury or an eating disorder
  • Threatening, intimidating, or aggressive behavior
  • Any pattern of erratic, disruptive, odd or concerning behavior
  • Emotional distress (extreme tearfulness, anxiety)
  • Repeated or notable classroom disruption
FAST & The SOC Working Together

- UAS receives and routes all FAST reports and works closely with the SOC Case Manager when questions about the seriousness of a report arise.

- In 2011, the CofC launched a new database system that allows for:
  - **Easier access to the online FAST reporting** form for Faculty and Staff,
  - **More sophisticated routing of FAST reports**, and
  - **Greater collaboration between Academic and Student Affairs** for the success and well being of our students and the safety of our college community.
Some **FAST** Statistics: 2010-2011

- **Fall 2010**
  1. Total FAST submissions = 82 reports
  2. Students who scheduled appointments as a result of UAS contact = 16 (**19.5% response**)  

- **Spring 2011**
  1. Total FAST submissions = 78 reports
  2. Students who scheduled appointments as a result of UAS contact = 16 (**20.5% response**)
Some SOC Statistics: 2010-2011*

*Some statistics listed represent data from spring 2011 only. Contact DOS office for more information.

- **Total SOC Referrals: 196** - 51% female, 49% male

- **By Classification:**
  1. Freshmen – 32%
  2. Sophomores – 29%
  3. Juniors – 22%
  4. Seniors – 12%
  5. Graduate & Non-Degree Seeking Students – 4%
  6. Not currently Enrolled (Entering or Former Students) – 1%

- **By GPA:**
  - Greater than 3.0 – 31%
  - Between 2.0-2.99 – 54%
  - Less than 2.0 (*includes those with no GPA recorded*) – 15%
More SOC Statistics: 2010-2011*

*Some statistics listed represent data from spring 2011 only. Contact DOS office for more information.

- **Referral sources:**
  - Undergraduate Academic Services – 20%
  - **Faculty** – 19%
  - **Staff** – 13%
  - Parents – 12%
  - Residence Life & Housing – 11%
  - Public Safety – 9%
  - Remaining referrals from: **Fellow students**, **Self-referrals**, **Community members**, **Office of Victim Services (OVS)**, **Counseling and Substance Abuse Services (CASAS)**, **Student Health Services (SHS)**
A Closer Look: Faculty/Staff Referrals to SOC

- How do faculty/staff report concerns?
  - FAST/online report submissions
  - Direct email or phone to DOS or Case Manager
  - Indirect reports (e.g., to a department head/supervisor who contacts DOS on faculty/staff’s behalf)

- What concerns are faculty/staff reporting?
  - Observed emotional distress
  - Suspected substance abuse
  - Bizarre/unusual behavior
  - Classroom disruption
  - Deterioration in student’s appearance, attitude, or performance
Finding the FAST Form Online

• **Via MyCharleston:** FAST can still be accessed in the same location it has always been on MyCharleston.
  1. Log on to MyCharleston ([https://my.cofc.edu](https://my.cofc.edu))
  2. Choose the Employee or Faculty tab
  3. Click on the FAST link on the right hand side to be taken to the online reporting form

• **On the C of C website:** A link to the FAST form can be found on various pages throughout [www.cofc.edu](http://www.cofc.edu), including:
  - [Office of the Dean of Students web page](http://www.cofc.edu)
  - [Counseling & Substance Abuse Services](http://www.cofc.edu)
  - [Undergraduate Academic Services](http://www.cofc.edu)

• **OPTIONAL:** Save a shortcut the FAST link to your desktop or in your favorite places in your web browser: [https://publicdocs.maxient.com/incidentreport.php?CollegeofCharleston](https://publicdocs.maxient.com/incidentreport.php?CollegeofCharleston)
FAQ: I’m concerned about a student. What do I do?

• First decide: Is this an emergency? If yes to any of the following, call Public Safety immediately at 843.953.5611
  - Do you feel unsafe or threatened in any way?
  - Are concerned about imminent risk to someone else, including the student themselves?
  - Is the student in need of immediate medical attention?

• If it is not an emergency, you can submit a FAST report using one of the following options:
  • Online Reporting – see “Finding the FAST form…” for more information
  • Phone – Call UAS at 843.953.5674 or the Office of the Dean of Students at 843.953.5522
FAQ: Should I talk to the student before I make a referral?

- **It depends...** on your relationship with the student, your comfort level with addressing the issue, whether or not you wish to remain anonymous to the student, the nature of the concern, and other factors.

- If it seems appropriate and you feel comfortable, we recommend:
  1. **Tell the student you are concerned** and asking if he/she is okay.
  2. **Listen to what they have to say**... sometimes, an explanation from the student can clarify what you have observed and/or eliminate the need for a referral at that time.
  3. If you still believe a referral is warranted, **let the student know that there are individuals on campus who can assist** students in need, and that given your concern, you feel that you need to pass the student’s name along.

- Very often, the student will acknowledge that they could use some help and express appreciation for your concern.
FAQ: I’m concerned but not sure I should refer. What should I do?

- **Consider talking to the student** you have concerns about (see “FAQ: Should I talk to the student…” for tips). Hearing the student’s perspective may clarify whether or not a referral is necessary.

- **Contact the Dean of Students or Case Manager to discuss the situation in hypothetical terms.** We may be able to provide some feedback or suggestions on how to manage the situation… or we may let you know that based on the information you have shared, a formal referral would be appropriate.

- **When in doubt, you are encouraged to submit a referral.** Often times if you have concerns about a student, others may have concerns, too; the information you have to share may be an important piece of the overall picture.
FAQ: Can I make an anonymous referral?

• Unlike the old FAST form, the new FAST form DOES allow for anonymous reporting. If you feel most comfortable submitting a report anonymously, you are welcome to do so.

• We will respond as fully as possible to all referrals; however, an anonymous report may limit our ability to respond to or address the situation completely.

• If you choose to give us your name, there is a place on the FAST form where you may indicate your preference to remain anonymous to the student. If you choose this option, we will make every effort to keep your report anonymous to the student (Please note that we cannot always guarantee anonymity).
FAQ: What happens after I submit a FAST report?

- All FAST reports are initially received and reviewed by UAS
  - For FAST reports that are primarily about academic concerns: UAS processes the report and intervenes to assist the student as needed
  - For FAST reports that are about mental health, behavioral, or personal/emotional concerns: UAS forwards the report to be processed by the Case Manager in the Office of the Dean of Students

- For non-academic reports forwarded to the DOS office: the Dean of Students and/or Case Manager will request to meet with the student, and the Dean of Students/Case Manager will consult with other members of the SOC Committee to propose a plan of action to the student. The nature of the plan will depend on the nature and severity of the student’s concerning behavior.

- Regardless of the nature or severity of the FAST report, all reports are recorded and maintained confidentially in the event that additional reports on the same student are received at a later date.
FAQ: I submitted a FAST report. Will I find out the specifics of what happened next?

• As a referral source, you will be notified that your report has been received and, if applicable, that the student has been contacted and an action plan has been implemented. In high-volume case referral periods, please note that you may not receive this notice right away.

• If you ever have any concerns that your FAST report was not received and/or addressed, please feel free to contact UAS (843.953.5674) or the Office of the Dean of Students (843.953.5522).

• Regarding follow-up with the student: UAS, the Office of the Dean of Students, and SOC Committee are committed to protecting the student’s right to privacy as outlined in FERPA and, thus, is limited in what it may share with referral sources.
FAQ: Am I violating FERPA/student privacy laws by making a FAST report?

- FERPA applies **only to student education records** (anything personally identifiable that is kept in written/recorded form by faculty or staff)

- **FERPA does not apply to non-recorded information** heard, seen, witnessed, observed, or experienced by faculty or staff—*Concerns that are raised by what faculty/staff observe can be shared freely without concern about violating FERPA*

- Even in the case of protected information, **FERPA allows for the sharing/disclosing of information with appropriate officials within the institution:**
  - When there is a legitimate educational “need to know”
  - When there is a concern about the health/safety of an individual or group of individuals
  - When the sharing of information may be necessary for the protection of the institution, its students, its employees, or the greater community

- **Note:** If you have any question about the legitimacy of your disclosure, feel free to consult with the Dean of Students in hypothetical terms BEFORE sharing the personal identifiable information (843.953.5522).
Questions?

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