

An abstract geometric design in the top-left corner of the slide. It consists of several overlapping, semi-transparent lines in red and grey, forming a complex, angular shape that resembles a stylized 'A' or a series of intersecting planes.

Reimagining Parent and Family Orientation

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Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

- 4 year, public university
- New Brunswick is the flagship institution, with Rutgers-Newark Campus in north Jersey and Rutgers-Camden campus in south Jersey
- Rutgers-New Brunswick is a Land-Grant institution
- Five campuses within one, in both New Brunswick and Piscataway



Rutgers University-New Brunswick

- Who's on campus?
 - 40,000 students including 32,206 undergraduate students comprised of 51% men and 49% women
 - 17% of students come from outside the state of New Jersey
 - More than half of the incoming class for the fall of 2016 identified themselves as non-Caucasian
 - Ethnicities of full-time student population include: 8% African American, 24% Asian, 11% Latino, 44% White, 8% International, 3% Multiethnic

New Student Orientation and Family Programs

- The mission of the office of New Student Orientation and Family Programs is to welcome, prepare, and engage new students and their families in their transition to Rutgers University-New Brunswick
- Over 6,000 students and 2,000 family members attended an orientation session in the summer of 2016



Current Orientation Session Structure

- New Student Orientation (NSO) for first year students is a two-day, overnight experience. Transfer students have the option of attending an evening, one-day or two-day program.
- Parent and Family Orientation (PFO)- one-day, separate but concurrent w/first day of the New Student Orientation program
- Students and Parents can attend orientation on the same day as student, but are not required to
- Nominal registration fee for PFO



Challenges for Orientation at Rutgers University

- New Student Orientation is not mandatory, and is separate from all academic advising and placement testing. Families often make multiple trips to campus
- High school graduation times
- Orientation sessions are only held on one of the five Rutgers campuses
- Ability to showcase more than one campus to parent and family members at orientation



Parent and Family Orientation Staff

- Dedicated staff is comprised of 5 Orientation Team Leaders (OTL) and 10 Senior Orientation Leaders (SOL)
- Staff have dual roles working Parent and Family Orientation as well as staffing the New Student Orientation and Family Programs office
- OTLs and SOLs are hired in the fall semester to foster team building and time for extra training



Hiring and Selection

- SOLs and OTLs are returning staff members who have served at least one summer as an Orientation Leader
- Application and interview process required reflection on orientation experience and presentation
- OTLs and SOLs together make up the Orientation Leadership Team
 - PFO Orientation
 - Clerical Duties
 - Peer supervision for Orientation Leader staff



New Student Orientation and Family Programs Office Staff

- SOLs serve as logistics coordinators for the NSOFP office
- Prepare PFO program materials
- Manage and troubleshoot registration for New Student, Transfer and Parent programs
- Correspond via phone and email with students and families throughout the summer
- Coordinate all housing accommodations for NSO



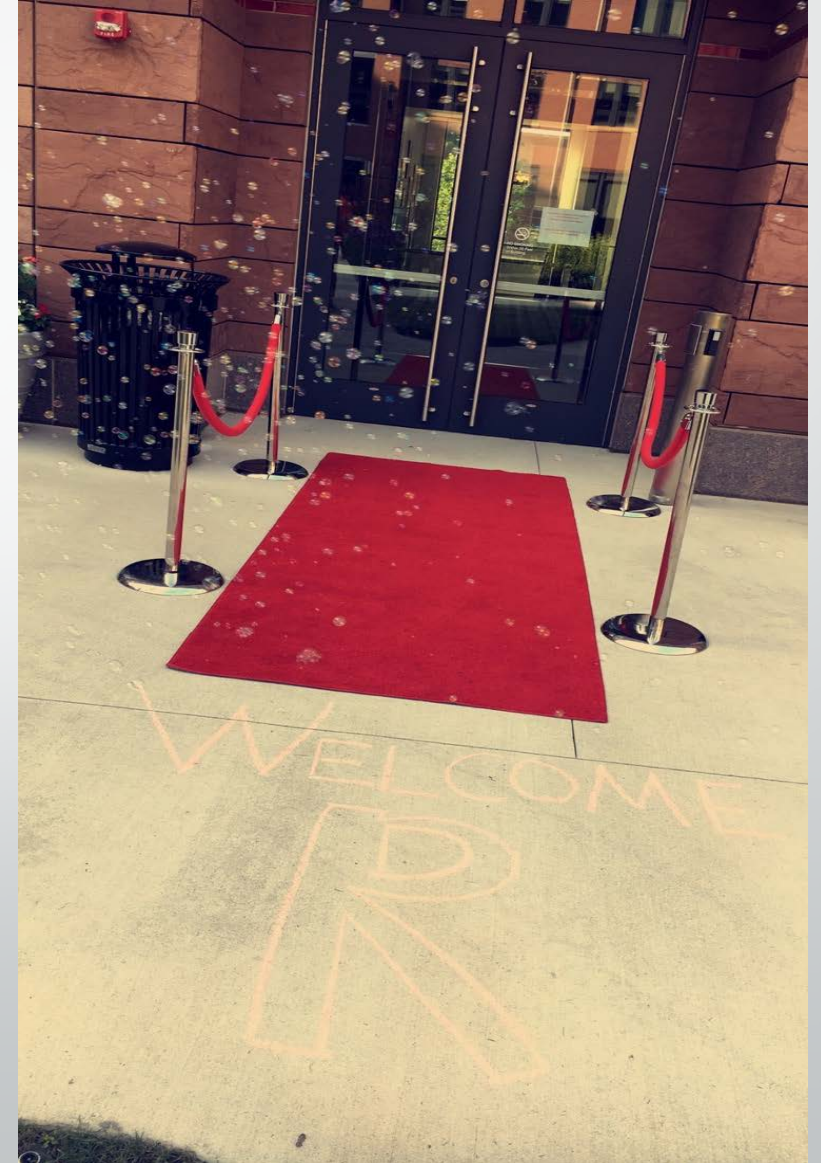


Training a Dedicated Staff

- Leadership team members are hired during the fall semester to allow time for extra training on:
 - Interacting with the parent and family population
 - Customer service
 - Communication Skills
 - Public speaking skills
 - Office and organizational skills

Parent and Family Orientation Sessions

- 14 full one-day sessions
 - 9:00am-5:00pm running concurrently to a New Student Orientation program
- Key messaging
 - FERPA/Communication Plan
 - Safety and Conduct
 - Financial Aid
 - Housing
 - Health and Wellness
 - Bystander Intervention and Resource Awareness





It's All About Delivery

- Too many talking heads
- “I read in the news..”
- More student voices
- Financial Aid most important but lowest rated
- Key Messaging from Pre-Assessment



Evening Consolidated Model

- 5-9pm
- Caters to a population that may not be able to leave work or younger children all day to attend a session
- Content is condensed so most important messages and resources are delivered to guests

Connecting with NSO

- Live stream with NSO
 - Parent and Family members begin the day watching a livestream of the University welcome to new students
 - Welcome from the NSO Director and Assistant Director
- Anthem Video
 - Instill pride in student and parent audience



Incorporating the Parent Voice

- Members of the Parent and Family Association have a presence at every Parent and Family Orientation session in the form of the Parent Advice video
 - Guests connect with peers who have had the similar experience of supporting Rutgers students
- Commercial Break



Incorporating Student Voice

- Student Perspective Panel
 - SOL answered a series of crafted frequently asked questions
 - Expressed different aspects of their own experience while also speaking to Rutgers campus culture and experience as a whole
 - Audience Q&A at the end for more specific questions
 - Lunch conversations as follow-up



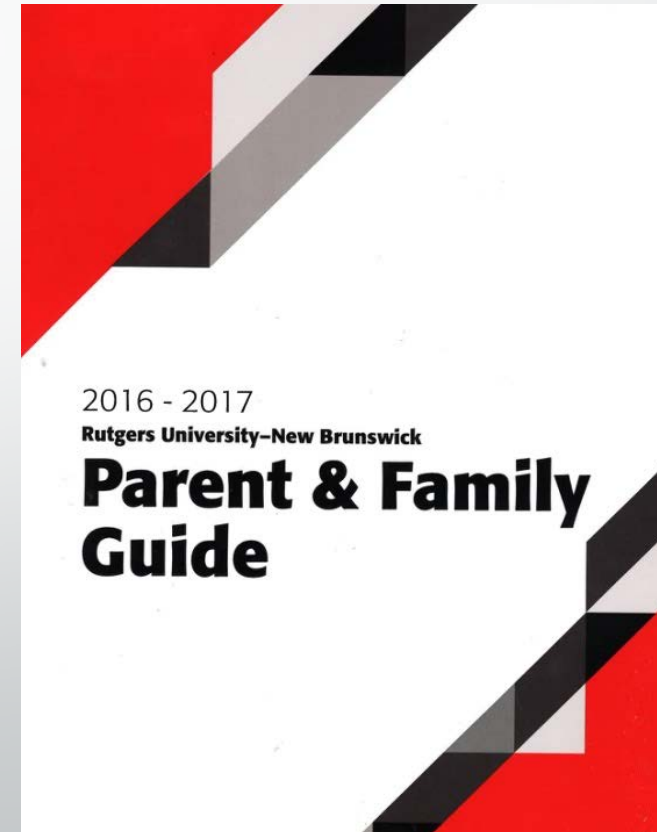
Incorporating the Student Voice

- My Rutgers Story
 - SOLs spend time in training crafting their own unique story
 - SOLs deliver their My Rutgers Story on a rotating basis



Orientation Guides

- A printed booklet designed with parent and family needs in mind
- Recapped important deadlines, campus partner presentation highlights and contact information
- Collaborated with campus partners to design content and produce Parent and Family Guide
- Every parent and family member who attended a session received one



Campus Partner Panels

- Grouped together campus partners to create more engaging concise delivery of information
- Interview Style
 - Housing
 - Money Matters (Student Accounting and Financial Aid)
 - The Justice League (RUPD, Student Conduct, Residence Life and DOTS)



Parent and Family Engagement Opportunities

- Letter writing activity
- Parent Coffee Hour @ Barnes and Noble
 - Parent and Family members connect with one another
 - Barnes and Noble offers a coupon for spirit apparel




Senior Orientation Leaders with Families

- Facilitating Parent and Family Orientation
 - Welcome and walking tours
 - Student Perspective Panel
 - Mingle and eat lunch with guests, engage in one on one conversations
 - Write post-cards to guests at the end of the day



Assessment

- 14% knowledgeable about Financial Aid
- 13% better understanding of what is expected of their students
- 6% more confident and prepared to send their students to Rutgers
- 350+ attendees from Summer 2015
- 100% recommendation rate for evening session



“Loved the format- having a moderator asking questions of the panel instead of the presenters just talking to us was helpful “

“Thank you for the opportunity to attend an evening session. My spouse and I heard the same information at the same time....better than me having to relay all the info to him later. Now we’re equally “experts”


“I enjoyed the student panel- very open and honest. Too many try to sugarcoat the experience.

Great representatives of the university!”

Challenges



- Not enough content for Out of State attendees (19%)
- Lack of academic information and presence
- FERPA
- Still “kinda” long



“A few more clues for out of state parents who are not from a place with four seasons would be helpful, especially to better prepare for winter”

“It would have been helpful to have representatives from the School/College of _____ to present and take questions.”

“Everything was helpful but a little too long. Don’t have a viable solution to offer, maybe some more stretch breaks. Not a huge complaint though.”



Next Steps

- Out of State Socials
 - SOL Lounge
- Academic Breakout Sessions
 - Newsletter Recaps

Questions?

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THANK YOU!