

Supporting Students on Academic Probation through the Strive Program

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by Lina Zacharopoulos and Kathryn McMillan, Learning Centres

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Students who struggle often feel alone; they are unsure of why they have difficulties and how to overcome them. To address this concern, the Learning Centre developed the **Strive: Strengths, Resilience, Excellence** program. The goal was to help students develop the learning strategies to succeed academically while building awareness about the positive psychology of resilience, grit, and optimism to better learn about themselves and how they can be successful. Offered in conjunction with Counselling and Accessibility Services, Student Life, and Career Development, Strive was piloted in fall 2018 and winter 2019 with a select number of academic departments, including SSW, ECE, and HR and Leadership.

Strive is adapted from the *Thriving in Action* program developed at Ryerson University. Elements of positive psychology and academic learning skills development are presented through a holistic approach that sees the interconnection of learning in both affective and cognitive realms. Strive acknowledges that which is meaningful or “relevant” for students, and allows them to apply the academic learning strategies in a purposeful way to achieve their personal definition of success.

As a student retention initiative, Strive consists of seven learning modules:

- Persistence
- Perseverance
- Perspective
- Optimism
- Habits that Support Success
- Career Envisioning

Strive transfers learning skills to the workplace, influences academic commitment, and sees

the normalization of psychological difficulties in learning. Struggles are perceived as a natural learning developmental milestone that builds professional/personal character and resilience in individuals who wish to develop themselves.

Currently, Strive is offered as a one-and-a-half-day intensive program to students on academic probation. Students must register for the program and can be referred by student advisers and faculty. Strive has the potential to be offered as an a-la-carte model in conjunction with academic program areas as in-class modules. There is also potential to provide online and blended opportunities in the future.

For more information, visit the [Strive webpage](#) on the Learning Centre website; you can also contact Kathryn McMillan, Manager, Learning Centres, and/or Lina Zacharopoulos, Programs Coordinator, Learning Centres.

View the [September 2019 issue of the Academic Newsletter](#).

September 2019 issue

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