

Orientation - Orientation, Transition and Retention

1. Department Purpose and/or Mission Statement

Orientation, Transition and Retention provides in-person and online opportunities for students and families to learn about and connect with resources to drive successful transitions into the university. Orientations are offered to first-year first time, transfer, veteran, and adult students, as well as to families and guests of those students.

2. List of Major Departmental Programs

- In-person orientation sessions including SOAR (Student Orientation Advising and Registration), Transfer Student Orientation, Adult Student Orientation, Veteran Student Orientation, and Fall/Spring/Summer Start Orientations.
- Online Orientation programming, primarily for incoming transfer students (details provided in the Family, Spanish, and Special [FSSP] Program document).
- Student community programming including SOAR Guest program and Family Weekend (details in FSSP document).
- Orientación Familiar and other Spanish programming (FSSP document).

3. Departmental Fast Facts

- **Number of employees** - There are 23 employees in this area, including two professional staff members as well as 26 student employees.
- **Annual Budget** - \$338,000
- **Number of students served per year** - We serve roughly 8,000 incoming students each year, along with their guests and family members. Roughly half of those students attend an in-person orientation and the other half complete the online orientation programming.

4. Unique departmental attributes/characteristics

- Every incoming MSU Denver student is required to complete orientation programming, and that programming is one of the last definitive requirements of each student in the university.
- The orientation experience introduces almost every element of the undergraduate experience at MSU Denver, which emphasizes our need for strong cross-campus collaboration.

5. Noteworthy accomplishments/highlights

- Implemented engagement rotations in SOAR programming, giving students choice in their programming and the opportunity to connect with university resources in a smaller, intimate setting.
- Overhauled our online orientation programming to include videos and quizzes.

6. Most salient departmental challenges

- Facilitating equitable programs to better serve myriad student populations and their intersecting identities.
- Coordinating space reservations within a tri-institutional campus.
- Balancing duration of sessions, amount of information, and opportunities to connect.

7. Brief description of how program impact/efficacy is assessed – We track numbers of students completing orientation through our various programs, review matriculation numbers based on orientation type, and collect qualitative information in surveys.