

Enrollment Plan

New Student Orientation

Over the past decade the college has offered several variants of new student orientation. Versions have included a one day orientation as well as overnight options for residential students. In 2017 the college made a decision to not hold student orientations at the Randolph Campus. The impact of not holding these events may have negatively influenced our 2017 “summer melt” numbers. From 2013 to 2016 while holding orientations at all campuses the number of students who withdrew after paying their deposits ranged from 75 students to 80 students. In 2017 when the college did not hold Randolph Orientations, the paid withdrawal number jumped to 93 students, a 24% increase over the previous year.

Academic coursework in the past five years has seen us significantly shift to using online, hybrid and telepresence delivery methods. The new classroom models are not fully incorporated into our current orientations or pre college advising. The college will work to create an orientation program that addresses the student’s transition into non-traditional classroom methods (BSN students, telepresence students, online students).

The goal of student orientation is to help create a smoother transition for new students to Vermont Tech. Benefits of a strong orientation include decreasing our summer melt, increasing early student connections with classmates, stronger retention, and allowing us to get critical information to the student and their family prior to the hectic start of the semester (billing, scheduling, IT, public safety....).

Over the next five years, we seek to:

- Create an “all hands on deck” awareness about the importance of new student Orientations at all our locations. A clear message about the importance of assisting with Orientation should come from the President’s Office and the Executive Team (Y1-Y2).
- Establish Orientation dates a year in advance for planning. Orientations will continue to be delivered onsite at Randolph, Williston, Bennington, Brattleboro, and Northeast Kingdom. (Y2)
- An expanded overview of the Telepresence platform is used at all Nursing Orientations (Y2)
- An online advising and orientation module is created for students who are taking classes 100% online (Y3)
- Observe best practices from institutions with a strong orientation program. Orientation leader(s) attend a regional or national conference for best orientation practices (Y2 &Y4).
- Move Nursing Orientation dates to 2 weeks prior to the start of classes to alleviate workload and create a better introduction to the telepresence platform (Y1)
- Evaluate Institutional trends around orientation (paid withdrawal numbers by site for those attending or not attending). Y1-Y5