Educational Initiatives Specialist (Student Retention) - 005045

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Educational Initiatives Specialist (Student Retention) - 005045 Western Carolina University

Department: Office of Student Retention

About WCU:
Western Carolina University continues to rank high on Forbes Best Employers lists each year. Including:
2025 - Ranked 1st in the top 100 employers in North Carolina in Forbes Americas Best Employers by State list.
2024 - Ranking in the top 8.5% on Forbes Americas Best Midsize Employers list, WCU was ranked 34 out of the top 400 employers across all industries.
2023 - Ranked in the top 20% on Forbes Americas Best Midsize Employers list, WCU was ranked 97 out of the top 500 employers across all industries.
2022 - Ranked 14th in the top 100 employers in North Carolina in Forbes Americas Best Employers by State list.
Western Carolina University is the UNC systems westernmost campus and has been consistently ranked as one of the top 15 public regional institutions in the South.
Employees of WCU are provided a comprehensive benefits package as well as other resources, policies and programs to ensure a happy and healthy work/life balance. Benefit eligible employees have access to dental, vision and health insurance plans - eligibility begins on the first of the month following date of hire. Retirement plan contributions begin on the eligibility date following election and include employer contributions for either a defined contribution or a defined benefit plan. Optional disability plans are also available.
Eligible employees have access to tuition waivers for up to three courses per academic year; employee may enroll at any of the constituent UNC System campuses. Also offered are free group exercise classes multiple times per week, a discounted membership to the campus recreation center, free vaccine and booster shots offered on campus, pretax flexible spending accounts, 12 paid holidays and 24 hours of paid community service leave each year. Leave earning employees (staff and 12-month faculty) who work at least half of the working days of their first month of employment will begin accruing vacation and sick leave immediately. Paid parental leave after 12 months of continuous service.
WCU offers an abundance of training and development programs, certifications, workshops and conferences - many of which are offered free of charge.

Position Summary:
The primary location of this position is on-site in Cullowhee, NC. This position is designated as being exempt from the State of North Carolina Human Resources Act (EHRA). This position advances institutional retention and persistence goals by supporting instructional development, contributing to curriculum design, and informing assessment practices for retention-focused courses and initiatives. The position contributes expertise in pedagogy, assessment, and student development theory to ensure that student success programming is evidence-based, data-informed, and aligned with institutional priorities. This position also collaborates in cross-campus initiatives that support belonging, persistence, and graduation outcomes. **Responsibilities include:**

- Co-facilitating instructional training and professional development for First-Year Experience (FYE) and Academic Recovery instructors
- Collaborating on the development, revision, and refinement of curriculum for FYE and Academic Recovery courses, including alignment of learning outcomes, assessments, and instructional materials.
- Serving as a consulting resource on best practices in pedagogy, student development, and high-impact practices
- Leading AI initiatives for student success to ensure accuracy, tailored guidance, and alignment with academic policies
- Evaluating the effectiveness of courses and initiatives using student outcomes, assessment data, and faculty/student feedback
- Assisting in developing and implementing assessment plans for student success programs
- Collaborating with faculty, advisors, and campus partners to implement retention-focused initiatives
- Supporting OSRs foundational objectives of targeted support for at-risk students, policy oversight, and data driven improvements to cross-campus student success initiatives.

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities Required for this position:
Minimum Qualifications:

- Interested candidates must be legally authorized to work in the United States without the need for employment sponsorship or any other immigration-related assistance.
- Masters degree in Higher Education, College Student Personnel, Curriculum & Instruction, or a related field
- 2 years of experience in education supporting students, including teaching, advising, or student support services
- Experience supporting broad student populations and collaborating with a wide variety stakeholders

Preferred Qualifications:

- Knowledge of WCUs academic policies and student resources

- Demonstrated experience teaching or designing curriculum for FYE, academic recovery, or student success courses
- Strong understanding of student development theory and high-impact practices
- Experience with assessment and data analysis to improve student outcomes
- Familiarity with EAB Navigate, Canvas, Ellucian Banner, Qualtrics, or similar systems
- Strong facilitation and presentation skills for faculty/staff development
- Creative and data-driven problem-solving abilities

Position Type: Permanent Full-Time

Special Instructions to Applicants:
To be considered, you must apply online. Please include a cover letter, resume, and a list of professional references to complete the application process. For questions or additional information, please contact search committee chair, Mosisah Mavity, at pmavity@email.wcu.edu or 828-227-2957.

AA/EOE
Western Carolina University is an Equal Opportunity Employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race; color; ethnicity; religion; sex; pregnancy; sexual orientation; gender identity or expression; national origin; age; disability; genetic information; political affiliation; National Guard or veteran status, consistent with applicable federal, state and local laws, regulations, and policies, and the policies of The University of North Carolina. Persons with disabilities requiring accommodations in the application and interview process please call (828) 227-7218 or email at jobs@email.wcu.edu.

University Safety
The Western Carolina University Annual Safety Report is available online at University Annual Safety Report or in hard-copy by request at the office of the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, 227 HFR Administration Building, Cullowhee, NC 28723 (828-227-7147) or the Office of University Police, 111 Camp Annex, Cullowhee, NC 28723 (828-227-7301). The report, required of all universities participating in Title IV student financial aid programs, discusses crime statistics, procedures for reporting suspicious or criminal activity, security, police authority, crime prevention strategies, university policies on substance abuse and sexual offenses, workplace violence and fire safety.

To apply, please visit: https://jobs.wcu.edu/postings/32549

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