



UCAN (UNLOCKING COLLEGE ACADEMICS NOW) Annual Report 2015-2016

Submitted by Marvin Williams, Coordinator

MISSION

“The mission of the UCAN program – “Unlocking College Academics Now” – is to help students facing a first academic suspension to improve their grade point average and thereby continue their education. The program works toward this goal by helping these students identify their individual academic needs and then develop methods for eliminating the barriers that have hindered them in attaining successful academic outcomes. To achieve these goals, the UCAN program allows students to remain in school one additional semester rather than placing them on suspension.”

STRUCTURE OF THE PROGRAM

- Every student enrolled in the program must submit an application, interview with the program coordinator and sign a contract agreeing to the following terms:
 - 1) *Enroll in and successfully complete the UCAN Seminar.*
 - 2) *Limit enrollment to no more than 14 semester hours, including the UCAN Seminar*
 - 3) *Maintain at least a 2.0 semester grade point average for the academic term on at least 6 credit hours.*
 - 4) *Spend a minimum of five hours a week studying in an approved study site on campus and provide documentation of those hours to their UCAN instructor.*
 - 5) *Adhere to the UCAN attendance policy, which allows no unexcused absences.*
 - 6) *Receive advising in the Academic Advising Center by the program coordinator.*
 - 7) *Take on-campus courses. NO online or correspondence courses are allowed.*
- Participants are required to attend an orientation prior to the beginning of the semester.
- Participants are required to attend a series of Academic Success Workshops. Topics include time management, personal responsibility, study skills, how to talk to professors, and motivation, etc.

- Participants are required to meet with all their professors at midterm to discuss their academic progress. The students are provided a progress report that must be signed by each professor. The progress reports are collected and evaluated by the program coordinator, who meets with the students to discuss potential problems.
- Ultimately, our goal is for participants to succeed in the program by achieving at least a 2.0 GPA for the semester, and to develop learning and life skills to acquire the motivation needed to complete their education.

SUMMARY

The **summer** semester began with **25** students enrolled in the UCAN program of whom:

16 Successfully completed the program.

9 Placed on first suspension.

The **16** students out of the **25** students reflect a **64%** success rate for the summer 2015 semester.

The **fall** semester began with **102** students enrolled in the UCAN program of whom:

4 Withdrew

38 Successfully completed the program.

60 Placed on first suspension.

The **38** students out of the **98** students who remained reflect a **38%** success rate for the fall 2015 semester.

The **spring** semester began with **57** students enrolled in the UCAN program of whom:

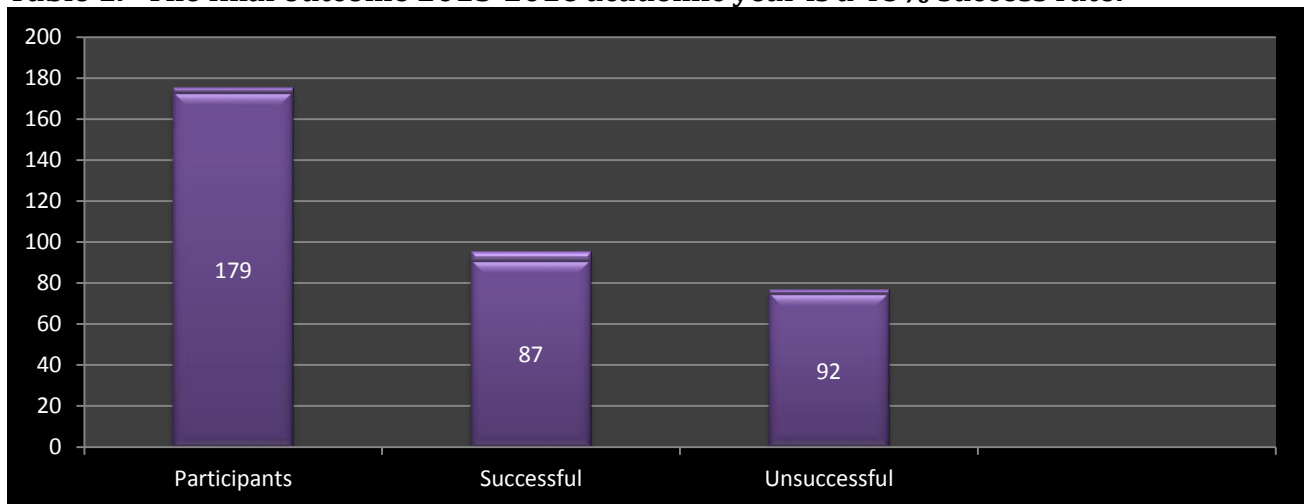
1 Withdrew

33 Successfully completed the program.

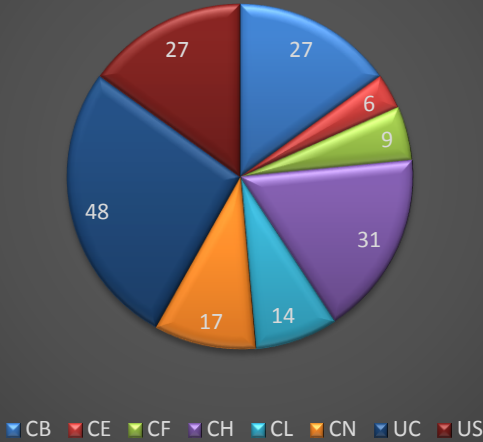
23 Placed on first suspension.

The **36** students out of the **56** students who remained reflect a **58%** success rate for the spring 2016 semester.

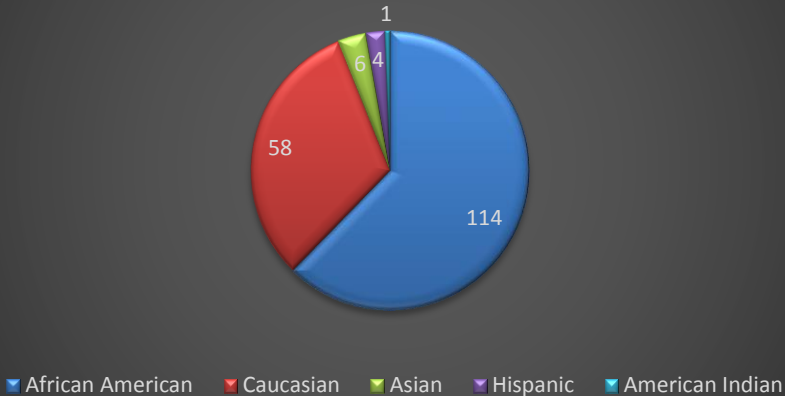
Table 1. The final outcome 2015-2016 academic year is a 48% success rate.



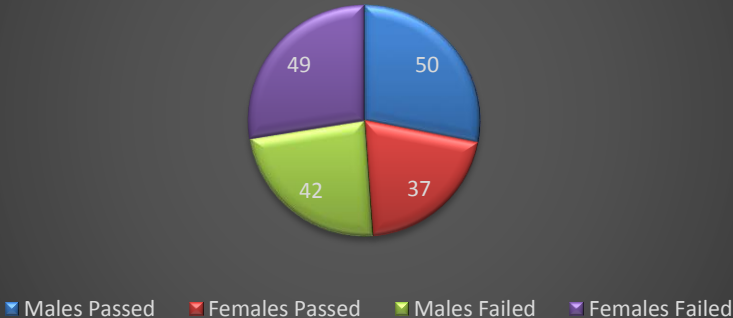
Colleges 2015-2016



Ethnicity 2015-2016



Gender 2015-2016



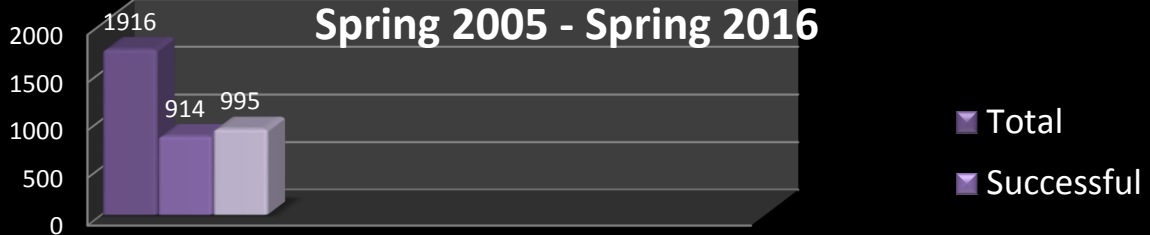
Classification 2015-2016



■ Freshman
 ■ Sophomore
 ■ Junior
 ■ Senior

UCAN Totals

Spring 2005 - Spring 2016



Academic Year	Enrolled	Failed	Completed	Success Rate
Spring 2005 (pilot)	79	41	38	48%
2005-2006	155	79	67	43%
2006-2007	189	102	79	42%
2007-2008	227	114	110	48%
2008-2009	204	118	86	42%
2009-2010	191	115	76	45%
2010-2011	173	82	91	53%
2011-2012	117	59	58	49%
2012-2013	127	51	76	59%
2013-2014	122	67	55	45%
2014-2015	173	75	91	52%
2015-2016	179	92	87	48%
Total	1,916	995	914	47%

HIGHLIGHTS and ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Since the program's inception, in spring 2005, approximately **1,916** students have participated in this program. Although not all students successfully complete the program, many students express gratitude for the opportunity, indicating that the skills and lessons learned changed their lives. As a result of the program, some UCAN students have decided to attend two year institutions or choose different career paths. Others have returned from their suspension having acquired tools that will help them academically as they continue to attempt to raise their grade point averages. Please see the appendix to read an email sent from a former student, who has graduated and now wants to give back to the program.

The UCAN program's reputation continues to grow and students, as well as faculty and staff are embracing the UCAN program. Other accomplishments include:

- Presented on the program during a panel discussion at Arkansas Student Success Symposium.
- Revised UCAN Semester Lesson Planner that provides weekly instructions for seminar facilitators.
- Organized and scheduled weekly Academic Success Workshops for summer, fall and spring. (see appendix)
- Added Wednesday Academic Success Workshops for the spring semester, although they were not well attended.
- Sent congratulatory certificates to all successful participants.
- Sent a personalized warning email letter to inform students of contractual infractions.
- Constructed and administered an online end of the semester survey. (see appendix)
- UCAN continues to generate revenue for UCA. Approximately 1916 students have participated in this program and paid tuition, rather than sit out their suspension.

GRADUATIONS (TO DATE):

363 degrees have been awarded to students, who may have sat out their suspension and not returned, have graduated since the spring 2005 pilot semester. Others' graduating status is pending.

GOALS

The UCAN program is evolving and constantly changing to meet the needs of the students served. In order to strengthen the program the following changes will be incorporated into UCAN:

- Although the proposal was denied this year, we will continue to attempt to implement a \$100 participation fee. Since the program's inception, students have not been required to financially invest in the program. The revenue gained from the

participation fee could be used to pay seminar instructors, as well as take care of program needs.

- Continue to try to assess successes that may not be indicated in the success rate, such as students who go on to be successful at another institution or choose another path.
- To expand the UCAN program's use of Gradesfirst to receive academic progress information from instructors (in addition to student's required progress report) in an effort to diagnose problems and make the appropriate referrals for advising, success coaching and tutoring.
- To improve the success rate of students completing the program to 70% by continuing to assess the needs of the participants and to provide them with the resources they need to be more successful.
- Continue to improve visibility and promote the academic success workshops in an effort to include more non-UCAN program participants each semester.

Survey Results

The results are from **100** students surveyed.

1. The UCAN Program has improved:	Response Percent	Response Count
My academic performance	82.0%	82
How I interact with professors	63.0%	63
Nothing	0.0%	0
My life	55.0%	55

2. The UCAN Program as a whole was a helpful and positive experience.	Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly Agree	79.0%	79
Agree	21.0%	21
Disagree	0.0%	0
Strongly Disagree	0.0%	0
N/A	0.0%	0

3. The UCAN Program motivated me to change behaviors that hindered my academic success.	Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly Agree	69.0%	69
Agree	30.0%	30
Disagree	0.0%	0
Strongly Disagree	0.0%	0
N/A	1.0%	1

4. The UCAN Program provided me with the academic support and skills I needed to be a better student.

	Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly Agree	76.0%	76
Agree	23.0%	23
Disagree	1.0%	1
Strongly Disagree	0.0%	0
N/A	0.0%	0

Comments:

- It gave me the tools and resources I needed to improve my academic career and succeed where I have failed before.
- Yes, it did. I was in the library more than I was last year trying to finish my homework. This program helped me with my time management skills.
- I really enjoyed this program because it was a big help and I saw several improvements this semester.
- The UCAN program taught me study habits that have helped me successful in the past semester.
- I have never obtained such vast will and want to be a better human being as well as a student until I was enrolled in the UCAN program. No one has ever pushed me to be the student I can be and try so hard, at not just school, but achieving my life goals.

5. The orientation before the semester began was informative and motivational.

	Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly Agree	57.58%	57
Agree	35.38%	38
Disagree	0.0%	0
Strongly Disagree	0.0%	0
N/A	4.04%	4

6. The small group seminar was beneficial.

	Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly Agree	58.16%	57
Agree	38.78%	38
Disagree	2.04%	2
Strongly Disagree	1.02%	1
N/A	0.0%	0

Who was your seminar instructor? This is your opportunity to evaluate your instructor.

- Ms. Mattison was the sweetest lady!! I think some days though we're pointless.
- Shannon Williams. At first I was a little skeptical of him because he wasn't the most positive person, but by the end, he's one of the best men I have ever met. Thank you for everything "Soulful Shannon"!
- Mrs. Pearlie Williams was my instructor; she was a good instructor.
- Shannon Williams, he was the best instructor.
- Mrs. Dickerson, she was a very good instructor throughout this program.
- I had Miss. Ann and she was absolutely the best. She always made you feel comfortable when you walk in her class and was very concern about our grades. She really inspired us all to keep pushing after hearing about her story back when she was a college student. She is a wonderful Seminar teacher.
- Shannon Williams. He brought a vibe to the table that was more than "I am your instructor and this is the lesson". He brought the room together as familiar friends and made us think.
- I had Ms. Ann. I really loved her. I think the small group was very beneficial. I was able to connect with other students and by the end of the semester we were all helping each other to make sure we were all on top of things.
- Mrs. Henderson she was great. Very helpful and really enjoyed being with her this semester.
- Stephen Mills. Very cool guy and had a lot of good experiences.
- My instructor was Whitney Dickerson. She was and is very motivating and so real. She actually told us real life stories and how she related to us. It was very helpful to know and hear instructors real life stories like the same thing we are going through now.
- Mrs. Henderson was a fantastic instructor! I feel that small group wasn't necessary every single week.
- My instructor was Mrs. Whitney Dickerson. I love her so much and she made me feel very comfortable!
- My seminar instructor was Mrs. Rudd, and she was a great teacher. She came to class determined to help us and teach us what we needed to know.
- Mrs. Ruud. She was amazing. Very nice and understanding, and always loved getting involved with students
- Whitney Dickerson Great instructor, seems to connect with students very well.
- Ms. Ann. She has a kind heart! A great person to be around.
- Marvin Williams, you have inspired me to be a better human being and student, I know because of you and all you have taught me, that no matter my circumstances in life, I can succeed, and you have fueled that fire inside of my being. I am forever grateful, and I could never forget you, and all you have taught me.

7. The mandatory study hour requirement was useful.	Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly Agree	61.0%	61
Agree	35.0%	35
Disagree	2.0%	2
Strongly Disagree	1.0%	1
N/A	1.0%	1

Comments:

- I have never been to the library so much before in my three years here at UCA. I really helped change my study habits.
- It should be upped by an hour or two
- You should make students get more hours.
- Yes....it kept me on task with visiting the library daily and making me sit down and do work.

8. The UCAN workshops were helpful.	Response Percent	Response Count
Strongly Agree	57.0%	57
Agree	41.0%	41
Disagree	1.0%	1
Strongly Disagree	1.0%	1

Favorites or least favorites:

- Some workshops were better than others but I enjoyed all of them equally.
- I really enjoyed the one on time management because that is a skill I lack in.
- I love the man that came and told us how his parents came over the speaker at the dance. His story was so inspirational. He explained that you don't have to be the best to become he best. Everybody struggle but dedication and hard work can go a long way.
- My favorite is when we got to see what type of learner we were to help with studying and/or taking tests.
- I felt it was just repetitive information that we got in seminar but still extra information was useful.
- My favorite was Mr. Marvin Williams' workshop.
- My favorite workshop was how to take notes. I didn't have a least favorite because all of them helped me in some time of way.
- I liked the workshops over studying and how to study
- I enjoyed hearing other peer experiences and the x-period speeches were amazing. I have learn so much and gain so much confidence and motivation in my academic success.

9. What did you need the most?	Response Percent	Response Count
Skills	44.9%	44
Motivation	82.0%	82
Accountability	58.0%	58

10. Do you plan to return next semester? If your answer is no, please explain.	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	74.0%	74
No	7.0%	7
Unsure	19.0%	19

Comments:

- Working on joining the army
- Not able to pay for school.
- Transferring to a new school.
- I need to take some time off to make money.
- I also plan to keep hold myself accountable to some of the same requirements as UCAN requires, for myself, for the continuation of holding myself accountable, and to never allow myself to play the victim.

11. This is your opportunity to evaluate the program coordinator, Mr. Williams.

- He is a man that can and will motivate you to succeed. His story of how he faced problems made me realize if he can do it and succeed then I can too.
- He was well thoughtful with every seminar and always had everyone laughing. Not by his jokes, but just who he is as a person. He's definitely someone you can go to when you need help and he's there to do that.
- I started off not knowing what to expect from Mr. Marvin. Now after finishing this process I can truly say he cares about the student. He showed me that my future lied in my own hands and if I was going to be successful I need to make some changes.
- He is a very stern instructor and very strict. These characteristics made me want to do better and not to mess up.
- Mr. Williams was great! I enjoyed his upbeat attitude! He definitely cared about us! He wanted to push us to succeed, even if that meant some tough love!
- Mr. Williams is more understanding then regular professors because he knows what most students go through just to prove that they are worthy of doing something . He identifies with his students unlike most professors.
- He was great, though a little corny.
- Marvin, I know you're reading this, please never forget how much you have truly touched my heart, mind, and soul. I have never had someone look out for me thus far in my life until you, until you I just thought, well I did my best, so why try harder? You gave me a reason and purpose again in my life! I am forever

indebted to you, Marvin. I could never forget you, I wish I could make you fathom how appreciative I am, but I will say this, on the days that everyone has when you feel like your purpose in life is missing. Know that you have achieved great strides in so many students, willing and unwilling. You warmed my heart, and have reminded me of who I truly am and will strive to be in my future! Anything I could ever possibly do to benefit you in anyway, I will be there! I will never be able to repay you, you have brought back the compassionate, fighter, and warm soul I once had. In the beginning of summer 2015 I thought, I will not make it through this program, CRAP, but with your aid, know I am leaving the program with the skills, will power, and knowledge that I will graduate from UCA with a degree. Your job is done, and well done the job sir. Best wishes to you, and thank you for showing me what a kind, giving man truly beholds. You are any girl without a father's greatest wish! I am forever grateful Marvin.
Anni Kay Sutherlin

12. General comments or recommendations:

- Don't stop the UCAN program. If it wasn't for Mr. and Mrs. Williams I wouldn't be here right finishing my education and had the semester I had where I succeeded. I didn't want to sit out on a suspension and this program gave me the chance needed.
- Fixing the computer study hours problem.
- This program is really good, it was enjoyably helpful. I'm still working on keeping myself motivated but its better now.
- Don't make changes to how you keep track of the study hours mid-semester.
- I recommend Dr. Marvin run for office. President to be specific.
- I'm probably going to start logging my own independent study hours
- I feel as though this class should be required for all freshman or at least replace the university studies course. The course is actually very irrelevant especially due to that fact that the reason we are in the class has nothing to do with what we are being taught.
- Thank you so much for this opportunity. I really appreciate Mr. Marvin & Ms. Ann for helping me get my life and my future back on track.
- Thanks for all you've done, this program has helped my life!
- Get a study hour log in the math building and anywhere else helpful on campus.
- I believe this is a great program. Some student are still not appreciating the fact of getting a second chance. Students don't show up to the workshops or seminars. Some students are taking the opportunity for granted.
- The classes and seminars helped a lot! I didn't want to go at all, at first, but it was so knowledgeable, and helped me get off my butt and actually work hard for my degree! I really am thankful for this program!
- I think that UCAN should replace University Studies as a class because UCAN actually holds you accountable for using your resources. In University Studies they don't require you to use your resources to become familiar with your campus.
- I think the UCAN program should replace University Studies.
- Make it a mandatory class for freshman
- He taught me more than just about academic life!

- The study hours were good for accountability but not really convenient for people that live outside of Conway. I see the need to do it like that but studying at home would have saved a ton of time and stress.

Academic Success Workshops provided include:

Topic	Presenter
• Financial Literacy	Leslie Knox
• Time Management	Amy Baldwin
• Student Academic Responsibility	Leigh Ann Denhartog
• How to Study	Renee LeBeau-Ford
• Note taking Strategies	Renee LeBeau-Ford
• Goal Setting	Eric Stuart
• Goal Setting	Shannon Williams
• Starting Your Semester Off Right	Adriian Gardner
• Effective Communication	Amy Hawkins
• Test Anxiety	Jim Guinee
• Study Styles/Learning Styles	Reesa Ramsahai
• Build Inner Strengths for Outer Challenges	Mark Cooper
• The Power of Choice	Marvin Williams
• Dealing with Difficult Personalities	Shaneil Ealy
• Traits of Successful Students	Charlotte Strickland
• Professional	Marvin Williams

Letter from Former UCAN Student:

Chris Weaver <Chris.Weaver@us.redbull.com>

Apr 14

Marvin,

I'm sure you don't remember me, but I went through the UCAN program back when I was at UCA from 2003-2008. I just wanted to reach out, and let you know if there's ever anything I can do for you just let me know. I'm based out of Little Rock, and cover the North half of the state so I'm always in the area. I'd be more than happy to visit with a group, or do what I can if anybody needed anything.

Hope all is well!

Chris