



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL 2015-6-1966-AWR

**THE UNIVERSITY OF AKRON IS SEEKING PROPOSALS
for**

Student Success Coaches

AS PER THE SPECIFICATIONS LISTED HEREIN

**PROPOSAL DUE DATE: 7/7/15
PROPOSAL DUE TIME: 9:00 AM LOCAL TIME**

**ISSUED BY: THE UNIVERSITY OF AKRON
DEPARTMENT OF PURCHASING
Contact: Andrew Roth**

NOTE: All questions and correspondences MUST go through the purchasing bidding tool Public Purchase. Bidders are not to contact the University department directly, in person, by telephone or by email concerning this RFP.

Vendor Name

RFP Contact Name

RFP Contact Email

RFP Contact Phone

ext

1.0 GENERAL INFORMATION

To be guaranteed the fullest consideration, all proposals should be submitted on or before 9 A.M. Local time, on July 7, 2015 via Public Purchase, an electronic bidding tool or a method approved by The University of Akron. All proposals are to be submitted through the Public Purchase bidding tool and must be in either Microsoft Word or Adobe PDF format. Responses that do not conform to these specifications may not be considered. **Also, one master version, hard copy binder with original signatures, must be delivered to: The University of Akron, Department of Purchasing, Lincoln Building, 2nd floor, Akron, Ohio 44325-9001. The hardcopy master will be accepted on, before or after the bid opening however, it must match the electronic version and the electronic version must be submitted prior to the closing date and time to receive fullest consideration. In addition, the bid tool will not allow late submissions.**

If sending via courier, overnight air, hand delivery, etc., please use the following address: The University of Akron, Department of Purchasing, 100 Lincoln Street, Akron, Ohio 44325-9001. Each response shall be placed in an envelope or package with the complete name of the Vendor and the RFP number printed on the envelopes or package's address label so that it can be properly identified upon arrival. Responses that do not conform to these specifications may not be considered.

The University of Akron reserves the right to request references based on the vendors response to the Request for Proposal (RFP).

All questions are to be submitted through Public Purchase, the electronic bidding tool, which will allow all bidders to see submitted questions and the answers.

To register to use Public Purchase navigate to the following:

Vendor Registration, view [here](#)

View Bid Board view [here](#)

Additional vendor support is provided via live Chat in the upper left corner, support@publicpurchase.com or call 801-932-7000.

1.1 Site History and Description

The University of Akron is a major public teaching and research institution that offers more than 300 associate, bachelor's, master's, doctorate and law degree programs – with accreditations by 26 professional agencies. With nearly 26,000 students and \$69 million in research expenditures, UA is a strong public university focused on innovation, entrepreneurship, and investment in community and economic growth.

At UA, you'll discover an energized metropolitan campus that has undergone a complete physical transformation with new buildings, major additions, acquisitions, renovations and many acres of new green space.

Academic programs are targeted to diverse groups of learners, including full-time, part-time and online students, veterans, and adults returning to the classroom. The University enhances post-graduate success through internships and co-ops, academic research (both undergraduate and graduate), study abroad, on-campus student employment, and service projects.

Additional information regarding The University of Akron is available [here](#). An interactive campus map locating buildings and parking is provided for viewing [here](#).

2.0 PROPOSALS

2.1 Scope

The University of Akron has implemented many initiatives to increase student success. While major efforts began in 2011 the University submitted a Completion and Retention strategy to the Chancellor of the Board of Regents in October, 2014. It is located at www.uakron.edu/retention.

The University of Akron desires that every new entering freshmen student be assigned a success coach beginning the fall of 2015. Success Coaches will work closely with academic advisors and stay connected to the student through graduation. Each success coach will follow his or her assigned students throughout their college career and assist these students with time management, exam preparation, financial planning, career planning and other drivers of success. Success Coaches should most likely be organized by groups of students with similar needs, interests and challenges. For example, groups may include underprepared students, honors students, adult learners, online students, post-secondary students, students on the satellite campuses, etc.

The Success Coach helps to ensure that every student feels supported to succeed and will meet with assigned students at least monthly. Success Coaches will be assigned students to proactively engage, monitor, and direct to various university resources that will most likely help those students persist, learn, develop, graduate, and begin their careers.

Examples of Success Coach performance activities, many in conjunction with the academic advisor, are as follows:

- Degree major exploration.
- Social integration.
- Time management / study plans.
- Introduction to campus services (counseling, tutoring, student organizations, etc.)
- Class registration.
- Exam preparation.
- Writing assignments and project management.
- Monitoring mid-term grades.
- Data input of student's unique needs and attributes.
- Financial planning and payment of tuition, fees, room and board.
- Alcohol and other drug awareness, sexual assault, and campus safety.
- Feedback loop for student complaints.
- Career planning
- Connection to experiential learning opportunities
- Career connections

Success Coaches will communicate with students at new student orientation, in group meetings and individual meetings, and via text message, phone calls, and across social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook.

Success Coaches will be evaluated, retained, and rewarded based on at least two metrics: assigned student retention and student satisfaction, which are measured each semester by the University.

The University is seeking proposals from qualified contractors/vendors to provide success coaches. Such proposals will design and maintain a success coaching program that enhances student success and is closely integrated with academic advising. This requires an enthusiastic, creative, and professional focus and coordination that offers a high quality, innovative and integrated program for students that optimizes their satisfaction that then helps to ensure their persistence, and graduation.

The University will consider proposals from companies vitally interested in building a success coaching program that is innovative, vigorous, imaginative, and well integrated into existing campus resources, particularly academic advising. It will be important for companies to demonstrate their success delivering such services in higher education settings if available. If not available, the company should demonstrate how it is predicted that such services will produce the desirable outcomes. The University seeks partners able to monitor and report on performance activities and who approach student engagement through innovative means.

2.2 Success Coaching Proposal Format and Required Elements

- Program Outline, Implementation Plan and Executive Summary
The University requires a program outline, implementation plan and executive summary that contains, at maximum, seven (7) to ten (10) pages, with focus on all success coaching programmatic and financial elements, expected metrics and plan to work closely with UA leadership to integrate success coaching with existing UA resources.

The submission should convince UA that outsourcing will provide the maximum direct benefits to The University of Akron students.

Proposals should be structured so the University is able to select parts, a combination of parts or the entire proposal. This will ensure that the University is able to move forward immediately with some portion or all of the Student Success Coaching Services depending on available funding at the time of award and will also allow the University to add additional services at later date if desired.

2.3 University of Akron Campus Profile

We have approximately 27,000 students representing 45+ U.S. states and 80+ foreign countries. They're a culturally diverse group and they come from a broad economic spectrum.

Student and Faculty-Staff Headcount for the Fall of 2012 through Fall of 2014 is as follows:

	Student	Faculty	Staff
Fall 2012	23,219	1,224	1,944
Fall 2013	22,430	1,009	1,843

Fall 2014 20,970 995 1,729

The anticipated 2015 entering freshmen student population impacted by this program is over 4,000 students.

The University of Akron is a vibrant community and beautiful campus in an urban setting, with more than 80 buildings on 218 acres.

2.4 Current Labor Agreements and the Potential Impact of School Employees Retirement System

The University of Akron has two collective bargaining agreements in place with the Communications Workers of America (CWA) that cover Staff employees currently working in Academic Advising.

The first agreement (referred to as the CWA Agreement) covers employees engaged in Academic Advising operations. This agreement contains specific language (Article 7, Contracting) which states that the University cannot contract for services if it will mean that a current bargaining unit member would be reduced in hours or be laid-off. Therefore, if the University were to enter into a contract for services, existing employees in this bargaining unit would have to be retained in their current positions.

The second agreement (referred to as the Staff Bargaining Unit or SBU Agreement) covers employees engaged in work related to the Academic Advising staff operations on campus. This agreement also contains specific language on Contracting (Article 21). Under this agreement, if the University contracts or sub-contracts work, it must provide the union with an opportunity to discuss what options/alternatives might be available to maintain the work in the bargaining unit.

The University is subject to the terms and conditions established by the School Employees Retirement System (SERS) regarding participation in the state retirement system. Under current regulations, the University is required to contribute 14% of the current rate of pay for each individual employed by the University in a Staff position or for any individual employed by a contractor providing services to the University in a position that would normally be considered as part of the University's regular operations. This means that the University will be required to make contributions to the retirement system on behalf of any individual employed by a contractor to provide services in Academic Advising. The selected Contractor will therefore be required to withhold from the compensation paid to its employees for services rendered by such employees at University facilities, the amount required to be withheld from employees' compensation under SERS, which is currently 10%. In addition, the selected Contractor will be required to pay to the University an amount equal to the social security tax under the Federal Insurance Contributions Act ("FICA") that the Contractor would have been obligated to pay under FICA on compensation paid to its employees for services rendered by such employee at University facilities. The FICA rate is currently set at 6.2% of such compensation.

The two collective bargaining agreements can be accessed at:

<http://www.uakron.edu/hr/hr-services/labor-relations/collective-bargaining-units/cwa/index.dot>
<http://www.uakron.edu/hr/hr-services/labor-relations/collective-bargaining-units/SBU/SBU.dot>

2.5 Selection Criteria and Evaluation Process

Steering Committee

The University has selected representatives from the campus community to assist the Office of Academic Affairs in assessing the submissions of the vendors. The Office of Academic Affairs via the provost will make a recommendation to the president who will make the selection.

2.6 Evaluation Process

Evaluation for all proposals that meet the basic criteria of adherence to all RFP instructions will be based on specific categories as assessed by the Steering Committee.

The full evaluation process for the Steering Committee will be a two-step process as follows:

Step 1 - The Steering Committee will assess the proposals and provide their evaluation, a summary and recommendations to the Provost.

Step 2 – The Office of Academic Affairs via the Provost will make a recommendation to the president.

2.7 Evaluation Criteria

SELECTION CRITERIA: INCLUDE MANDATORY/KEY ELEMENTS

MANDATORY ELEMENTS

(please provide responses on separate sheets)

CRITERION	Y / N
The firm’s performance history is often the best predictor of the success of our project. Please indicate if your firm has ever been relieved, removed or otherwise terminated from a project prior to its completion.	
Provide three (3) references of organizations familiar with your work and who may speak to your firm’s innovation and performance.	
Please provide a sample contract for our review.	
Describe in detail how your firm will achieve a higher rate of student success by providing a success coach to each incoming student.	

KEY ELEMENTS

(please provide responses on separate sheets)

CRITERION	WEIGHT	RATING (0 -5)	LINE SCORE
1. Describe how your company arrived at its best business practices for implementing a success coaching program and describe how it may be	10		

CRITERION	WEIGHT	RATING (0 -5)	LINE SCORE
superior to other firm's solutions.			
2. Provide any "lost business" campus clients in the same geography in the past 5 years. Include appropriate client name, title, email address and telephone number.	10		
3. A complete outline/operating chart of the Senior Management for your company that would manage the success coaching program and work closely with the University of Akron.	10		
4. Proposed plan to utilize University of Akron alumni and potentially existing employees (e.g., Academic Encouragers)	10		
5. Describe your annual business and program plan to include finances, program elements, metrics, integration with University of Akron resources, student participation, targets and cost management benchmarks.	10		
6. Provide a communications and social media plan for students assigned success coaches.	10		
7. Describe in detail options for new services and programs offered to students.	10		
8. Describe your company's human resources management plan and ability to provide supplemental resources on short term notice for temporary situations as they arise, including but not limited to: additional events, new programs and additional students.	10		
9. Describe the experience of staff proposed to be involved in this project including specific details of hands-on experience of key management team members and additional administrative personnel.	10		
10. Describe any financial partnerships with academic programs that the firm has participated in at other Universities. This should include student scholarships.	10		
11. Describe how you support the local economy through hiring of local and regional employees.	10		
12. Describe what types of student events you provide financial support for during an academic year.	10		
13. The University requires the submission of the Contractor's most recent audited financial	10		

CRITERION	WEIGHT	RATING (0 -5)	LINE SCORE
statement or other documentation acceptable to the University to ascertain your company's financial condition.			
14. Describe how the project will be implemented and the timeframe met as described herein.	10		
15. Cost	100		
Total	240		

2.8 Follow-Up Questions to Contractors

Once the Steering Committee has completed a preliminary review of all qualified proposals, a list of questions and clarifications may be sent to each prospective contractor.

All Contractor replies must be submitted to the Director of Purchasing within seven (7) business days.

2.9 Important Note Regarding Initial Written Response

The selection of the Success Coaching Partner with which negotiations will continue will be based on evaluation of the written response submitted and possibly interviews with contractor's proposed management and leadership team. The University retains complete discretion in the evaluation of proposals and in the selection of Success Coaching Partner for further negotiation, and reserves the right to formulate and apply any criteria it determines to be appropriate in assessing proposals. Due to the short duration between the release of this RFP and the desired contract inception date there will be no opportunity for formal oral presentations at this time. Any response that does not provide complete, accurate, and detailed answers to each question, or which indicates the Success Coaching Contractor prefers to defer providing complete details until a later date or portion of the process, may be declared non-responsive, and rejected without further evaluation.

2.10 Proposed Management Team

The University believes one of the most important success predictors will be the composition of the management team you propose. While we may not do comprehensive reference checks at this early process point, the people you propose for our campus must be able to fit to our campus outlook, and be able to acclimate to the Akron, Ohio environment.

2.11 University Decision

As previously noted, the University will include the following factors in the decision:

- Steering Committee summary submission and recommendations
- Contractor proposal to build the Success Coaching program on our campus
- Client references
- Proposed management team

- Qualifications
- Cost

The University may request that any Contractor clarify, supplement or provide additional documentation for any information contained in their proposal.

The University reserves the right to open discussions with any Contractor with the end goal of completing our evaluation process. The final decision will be made by the University based on our conclusions about the best direction for the University.

2.12 Contract Negotiations

The University understands the timed release of this RFP and any resulting decision will necessitate an expedited transition to meet the performance goals of FY 2015-16. Due to this, the University anticipates the start of a Contractor relationship may be based on a formal Letter of Agreement until contract negotiations are completed.

2.13 Miscellaneous

Support Materials and Details. Contractors are asked to submit all support information and details to validate proposed programs and services. Because the University of Akron is confident that all qualified contractors bring authority and experience, we do not require submission of full system manuals for your operating systems, but do require submission of the Table of Contents for these. However, submission of the Table of Contents indicates your proof of ownership of such systems or programs and the University reserves the right to request and obtain full documentation for any and all programs listed herein.

2.14 Extended Offer to Other Groups or Institutions

The University is also part or a member of several group purchasing organizations and groups. Several groups include Northeast Ohio Council on Higher Education (NEO) view website here, Inter-University Council of Ohio Purchasing Group (IUC) view website here, and Community University Education Purchasing Association (CUE) view website here, all located within Ohio. Please indicate if you wish to extend your proposal to these groups. Links to the websites of each group are provided for you to better understand the structure of the group, size, and mission. Questions concerning these groups may be directed to the Department of Purchasing at The University of Akron.

Do you wish to extend your proposal to any of these groups? Yes No

If yes, please identify one or more: NEO IUC CUE Other Non-profit Entity