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Plan It 4-Ward: Assessment of Student Awareness and Engagement

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Plan It 4-Ward

Assessment of Student Awareness and Engagement

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Plan It 4-Ward Assessment Sub Committee
Western Michigan University



Introduction

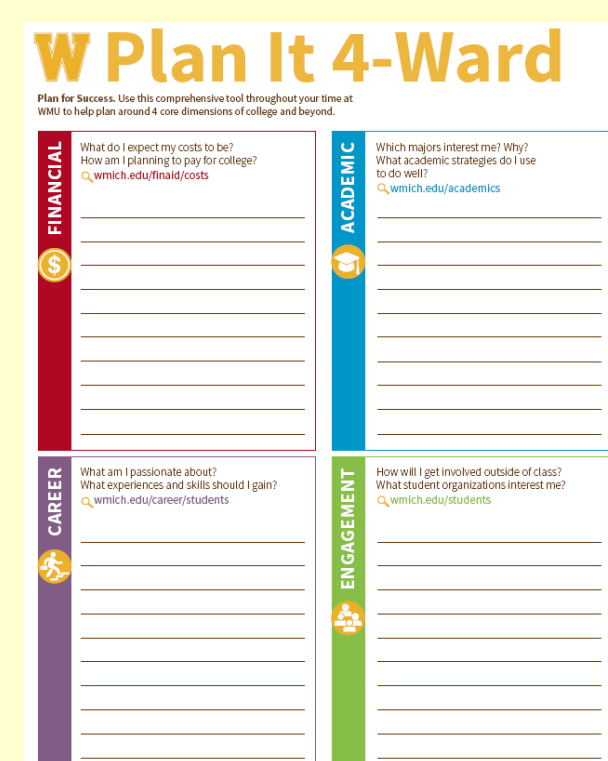
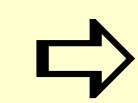
Plan It 4-Ward (PI4-W) is a tool students can use to strategically plan their path to graduation while considering specific areas impacting the overall college experience: Academic, Career, Engagement, Financial, and Wellbeing.



Students learn about Plan It 4-Ward at First-Year Orientation and in the First-Year Experience course (FYE 2100). In FYE 2100, students are introduced to the tool, given opportunities to practice use of the tool, and encouraged to continue using it beyond the first semester.

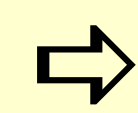
PI4-W Iterations

2017
Students were given access to a worksheet in Elearning (D2L)



2018
Students were given access to a fillable PDF in Experience WMU

2019
The tool was improved by adding an area for Wellbeing. Students were able to access a fillable PDF in Experience WMU



Assessment Objectives

The purpose of this assessment was to:

- Determine the overall effectiveness of Plan It 4-Ward
- Identify whether students found the tool useful in their first semester
- Understand if and how students continued to utilize the tool beyond the first semester
- Examine whether students were encouraged to use the tool across campus, especially within offices that directly relate to the identified areas

End of Semester Evaluation (Fall 2017, 2018, 2019)

Assessment Questions:

- Did the students find the tool useful in the first semester?
- Did the students connect with staff in offices relating to Academics, Career, Engagement, Financial, and Wellbeing?

Methods

- Student survey distributed through Elearning (D2L) *N=814 (2017)*
- Student survey distributed through Experience WMU *N=873 (2018), N=828 (2019)*

Results:

n=134 (2019), n=274 (2018), n=307 (2017)

Plan It 4-Ward Feedback from FYE-2100	2019		2018		2017	
	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
I was able to connect or communicate with a Bronco Express/Financial Aid representative or financial literacy team member this semester.	93 71.0%	38 29.0%	199 73.4%	72 26.6%	241 78.8%	65 21.2%
I was able to connect or communicate with an academic advisor this semester.	130 99.2%	1 0.8%	263 97.0%	8 3.0%	300 98.0%	6 2.0%
I was able to connect or communicate with a career advisor this semester.	91 69.5%	40 30.5%	183 67.5%	88 32.5%	184 60.1%	122 39.9%
I was able to connect or communicate with student engagement via a Registered Student organization (RSO), Service Learning Community, Engagement Advisor in my College, Study Abroad, etc.	113 86.3%	18 13.7%	227 83.8%	44 16.2%	166 54.2%	140 45.8%
I completed each quadrant of the Plan It 4-Ward worksheet tool.	127 96.9%	4 3.1%	250 92.3%	21 7.7%	277 90.8%	28 9.2%
I found the Plan It 4-Ward tool to be useful.	113 86.3%	18 13.7%	211 77.9%	60 22.1%	229 74.8%	77 25.2%
I have utilized one or more of the following Wellness services at WMU: SHC, Sports Medicine, Counseling, Dietician, SRC, etc.	106 80.9%	25 19.1%				

Three Major Themes from Qualitative Data - Student comments

n=126 (2019), n=271 (2018), n=307 (2017)

1. Reasons students found Plan It 4-Ward useful:

- Personal awareness
- Planning for the future
- Goal setting / Critical thinking / Time management
- Success / Resources / Connections
- Vision and organization
- Staying on track / Keeping the course
- Stress management

2. Reasons students did not find Plan It 4-Ward useful:

- Did not know about it
- Did not use it
- Did not understand it's purpose / confusing
- Felt it was just an activity or assignment for class
- Did not find it interesting

3. Reasons students did not connect, communicate, or utilize areas represented on Plan It 4-Ward:

- Chose not to
- Did not know how to
- Did not feel a need to
- Too busy / Not enough time

Evaluation 1-2 years After Initial Introduction

Students that completed FYE 2100 in 2017 and 2018 were invited to provide feedback on their engagement with the Plan It 4-Ward tool beyond the first semester. *N=1067*

Survey

Assessment Questions:

- Are students using the tool beyond the first semester?
- Do students find the tool useful in planning within the areas as they move toward graduation?

Method: Student survey designed in Qualtrics

Results: *n=49**

Plan It 4-Ward Feedback: 2020 Survey	% of respondents
Used the tool beyond the FYE course	24
Used the tool to access web links provided	27
Used the tool to plan - Academics	24
Used the tool to plan - Career	24
Used the tool to plan - Engagement	16
Used the tool to plan - Financial	18
Used the tool to plan - Wellbeing	18
Consider Plan It 4-Ward helpful	30
Received information about the tool from WMU Offices around campus after FYE course	17

WMU offices or events that provided information about Plan It 4-Ward

- Academic Advising
- An Entrepreneurship class
- Residence Life
- Student Orientation
- Student Organizations
- Success Office

* All academic colleges were represented through the respondents

Focus Group

Respondents of the survey were invited to participate in a focus group. Twelve students indicated interest and 2 students participated.

Student feedback revealed:

- Plan It 4-Ward is useful to
- Plan, "it helped me to project into the future"
 - Guide, "it helped me decide what to do"
 - Reflect, "it was helpful as a springboard for more individual way to plan"

- Plan It 4-Ward improvements suggested by the students
- Make the FYE assignments more engaging
 - Use an easily accessible digital format
 - Make it accessible for advisors and others across campus

Recommendations

To increase awareness and engagement of the Plan It 4-Ward tool:

- Use a digital format that students can hold in their hands
- Make the tool easily accessible across campus
- Create a check-in process
- Revise the FYE 2100 curriculum and provide more training to the instructors*
- Expand the promotion and implementation of the tool across campus to increase engagement of WMU Offices

*One WMU First-Year Experience Building Affinity for WMU committee has recommended a restructure of the First-Year Experience course to align with the *Eight Dimensions of Wellness* (Emotional, Environmental, Financial, Intellectual, Occupational, Physical, Spiritual, and Social). The Plan It 4-Ward Assessment Sub Committee supports the use of the Eight Dimensions of Wellness in FYE.

As part of the changing culture at WMU with Think Big and One WMU, we recommend the development of and support for holistic student centered initiatives designed to fulfill the primary goal of Plan It 4-Ward: helping students strategically plan across multiple dimensions while at WMU.

Our assessment revealed that, to be successful, these initiatives need:

- To be accessible to students on their phones 24/7
- To be accessible to advisors and mentors so they can support student success
- An assigned home and leader
- Financial support
- A continuous development and improvement process
- A strong communication plan and university-wide commitment

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