



# OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY

Old Dominion University + InsideTrack  
**CASE STUDY**

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

**insidetack**®





# Driven by a commitment to enhancing the success of all students, especially first generation, low-income

A PARTNERSHIP BUILT ON A SHARED COMMITMENT  
TO STUDENT AND INSTITUTIONAL SUCCESS

**insidetrack<sup>®</sup>**



## Old Dominion University + InsideTrack

Driven by a commitment to enhancing the success of all students, Old Dominion University introduced success coaching for at-risk freshmen in 2016. Two years later, measurable improvements among this student population have created a ripple effect throughout the university. Coached students are persisting in higher numbers, fueling greater institutional success.

With support from InsideTrack, ODU built an effective and sustainable coaching program from the ground up. In addition to first-year success coaching, ODU also launched yield coaching to increase the number of qualified admits who enroll for freshman year, and a program to provide enhanced support to prospective students in ODU's distance learning program, *ODUOnline*. As the ODU team gained new coaching, management and quality assurance capabilities, ODU created the systems and infrastructure to bring its coaching programs in-house.

The result is a transformed approach to student success that's lifted the entire university, one ODU Monarch at a time.



## I. Mane Connect Coaching Program

### WHO, WHAT, WHEN

Historical trends in student outcomes and insights from predictive analytics helped ODU identify the group of first-year students who would be invited to receive coaching. Risk factors like high school GPA, financial need, and even whether a student was far from home all played a part. The students who elected to participate in the Mane Connect coaching program met with their success coach every other week for 20-30 minutes, and also attended workshops on topics like time management, career exploration and budget planning.

### TESTING FOR SUCCESS

InsideTrack's holistic coaching model supports students in developing the knowledge, skills, attitudes and beliefs critical to success inside and outside the classroom. A survey distributed to ODU students at the start of their coaching experience told coaches where improvement was needed. Another survey distributed after coaching wrapped up indicated how far students had come in developing their success skills.

Among the biggest jumps for the first cohort of coached students were greater familiarity with how to use support resources, better understanding of graduation requirements and less nervousness about attending ODU.



**We are making real-life impacts with our program, and we are part of the greater community that supports students and their success at ODU.”**

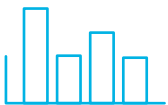
— Sherri Watson, director of Mane Connect

---

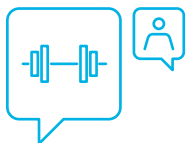
#### STUDENT SUCCESS LEADS TO INSTITUTIONAL GAINS



**5.5 percentage point increase in yield**  
of coached Fall term admits.



**18.7% higher first-year retention rate**  
compared with students who were eligible for Mane Connect but did not participate



**\$6.9 million in additional revenue**  
as a result of yield coaching, based on a four year projection





## II. Institutional ROI

### CONVERSION CURRENCY

In Fall 2017, ODU experienced a 5.5 percentage point increase in yield as a result of student coaching. By the time these admits finish their four-year degree, ODU will have generated \$6.9 million in additional revenue.

### THE REVENUE-RETENTION CONNECTION

In Fall 2017, ODU saw 9 percent more students persist from their freshman to sophomore year, resulting in \$0.5 million in additional revenue from the sophomore class that year.

## III. Organizational Transformation

How do coaches personalize support for every student? They spend a lot of time listening. When students talk about their triumphs and challenges, coaches pick up cues for what to focus on during a coaching session. Piecing together all of the cues from every session, institutions gain new insights into how to support the student experience. Based on what they learned from coaching, ODU introduced key changes to its support operations that are enhancing the success of all students.

## IN THE LOOP

A student's ability to succeed in school isn't just determined by their academic experience. Financial pressures, outside-of-school commitments, and the student's own mindset and habits can all play a part. That's why holistic coaching addresses the challenges students encounter inside and outside of the classroom. It's also why ODU introduced a new way for academic departments and the student support program to work together for student success. Liaisons from the coaching team communicate with academic advisors and faculty to share updates and trends that could impact student performance. These new partnerships broaden each student's support network, and ensure that student success is everyone's business.

## 74U

With coaching, student support becomes transformational, not transactional. Instead of focusing solely on deadlines and procedures, coaching sessions dig into the many issues that can impact students' overall development. But forms still need to be filled out and requirements still need to be met. To help students stay on top of the details, ODU introduced texting to student support. Coaches send appointment reminders and other updates via text, and students can text quick questions to coaches. Having personalized support at their fingertips keeps students on track toward achieving their goals.

## ALL ABOARD

Starting college can be overwhelming. In between registering for classes, buying books and learning to navigate a new campus, students may lose track of the resources that can support them on their journey. To ensure new students don't miss out on the benefits of coaching, ODU redesigned their outreach and onboarding process. Students now get connected with a coach right after freshman orientation. In preparation for a successful freshman year, students can access support resources during the summer months, and already have a coaching appointment booked when they arrive on campus.

---

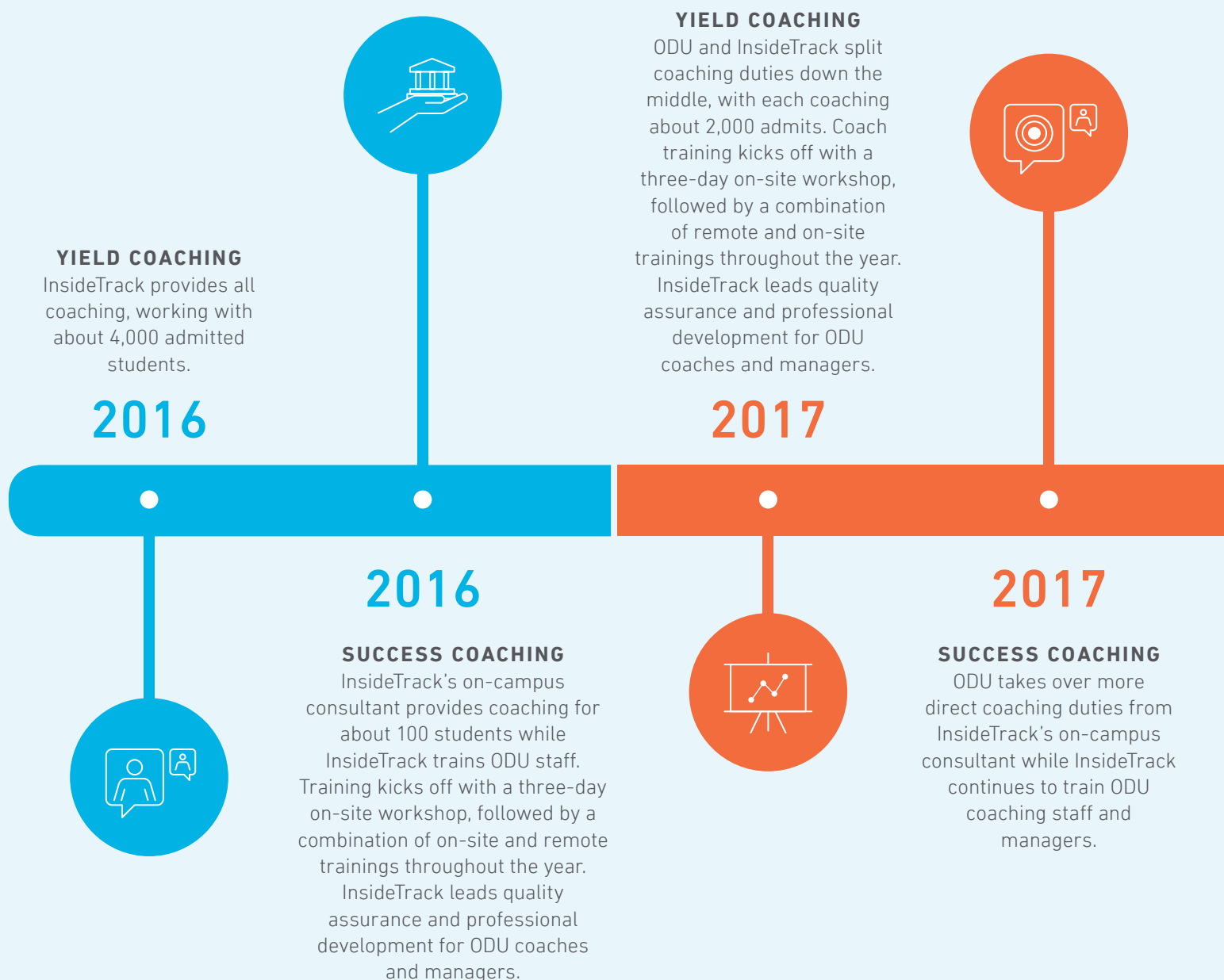
“

**Without the coaching I would not have felt as secure as I am now, and I would have struggled getting the important things done that I needed to achieve beyond grades. I am very thankful for getting the opportunity to have my success coach.”**

— Coached Student

## IV. Building Staff Capabilities: A Four-Year Plan

ODU partnered with InsideTrack to build out coaching programs over three years. At the start of the engagement, InsideTrack coached ODU students directly and trained ODU staff in coaching methodologies. As time went on, ODU gradually took over more direct coaching duties and managed its own staff training and development. By the time the partnership wraps up, ODU will have the people and processes in place to sustain successful coaching programs far into the future.





### YIELD COACHING

InsideTrack coaches about 1,500 admits with ODU coaching the rest. Coach training continues, and ODU reallocates resources to manage the yield coaching program going forward.

2018



### YIELD COACHING & TRAINING

ODU takes over all coaching, training and quality assurance for the program.

### ONGOING TRAINING

Training provided by InsideTrack as needed for Yield Coaching and Success Coaching programs.

2019



2018

### SUCCESS COACHING

ODU continues to take over more coaching duties, with InsideTrack's on-campus consultant coaching only about 20 students.



2019

### SUCCESS COACHING

ODU takes over all coaching, training and quality assurance for the program. InsideTrack will be providing Scalable Retention Coaching through 2021 to provide enhanced support in the form of nudges, campaigns and digital guidance to freshmen not selected for Mane Connect Success Coaching.





## **V. ODU*Online*: Changing demographics and technologies create new opportunities for student success**

In moving their distance learning program entirely online, Old Dominion University made it a priority to develop new, effective ways of delivering the same high level of support to online learners. To provide the best possible educational experience to online students, ODU realized it needed to offer convenience and connection in equal measures.

### **MAXIMIZING THE ONLINE EXPERIENCE**

In partnership with InsideTrack, ODU*Online* developed a new approach to recruitment that provides tailored support to online students before they ever click into their first digital classroom. This helps position them for long-term success — both in academics and in their career.

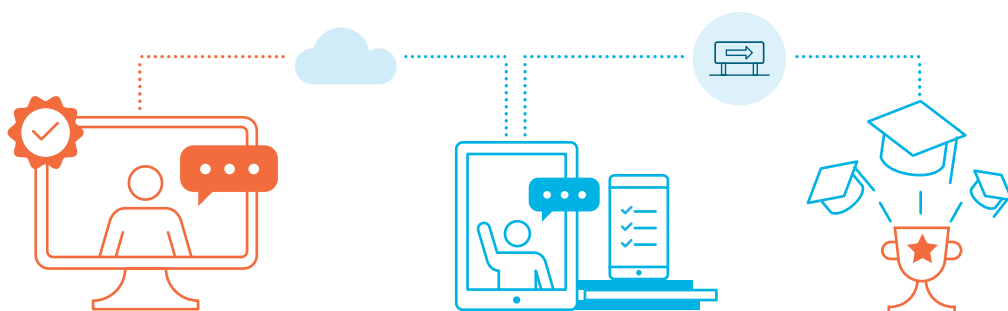
A thorough assessment that evaluated strengths of the online program and looked for areas of potential improvement concluded that providing enhanced outreach to prospective students was key. ODU and InsideTrack developed a plan for InsideTrack to coach new prospects while training ODU staff to provide this coaching themselves. The phased approach enabled ODU to immediately enhance student engagement while building a sustainable and highly scalable program to support ongoing advances.

“

**Learning how to assess each individual student's values, goals and motivations for the degree they are seeking helps me to work with them in a more enhanced capacity.”**

— Liza King, enrollment and operations coordinator for ODUOnline

Each month, hundreds of prospective students receive personalized outreach targeted to their specific questions, needs and concerns via phone, email and text. In addition, a new quality assurance and development program supports ODUOnline staff with ongoing training, professional development and recognition.



“One of our primary goals was to maintain our high-touch, best-in-class support services provided to prospective and current ODU students at a distance. With that goal in mind, we partnered with InsideTrack to develop an in-house online student coaching team and strategy modeled after their proven approach.”

— Heather Huling, assistant vice president, planning and development for ODUOnline





---

InsideTrack is passionate about student success. Since 2001, we have been dedicated to partnering with colleges and universities to create adaptive student success solutions that generate measurable results. These solutions combine professional coaching, technology and data analytics to increase enrollment, completion, and career readiness. Our coaching methodologies and uCoach® Platform optimize student engagement and generate valuable insights on the student experience.

---



Old Dominion University + InsideTrack  
**CASE STUDY**

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

