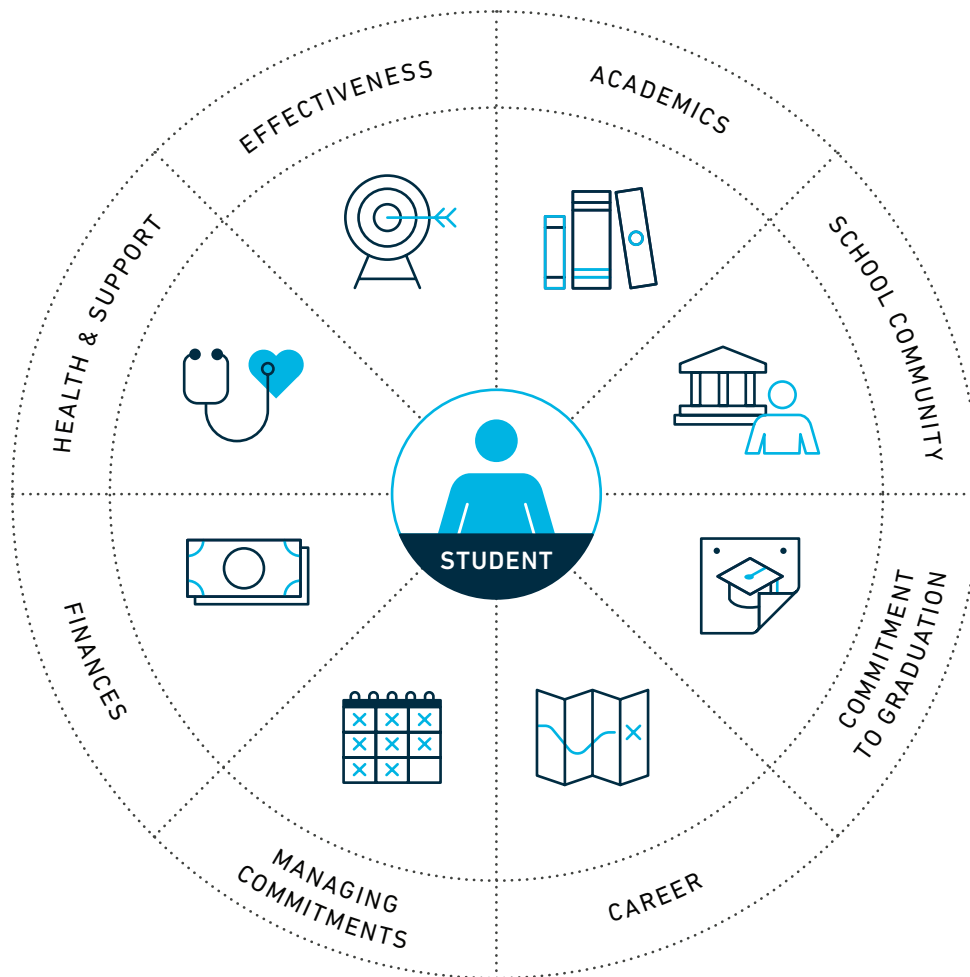


# Focus Wheel

Take a holistic approach to assessing by asking questions in each of these eight focus areas



## Focus Areas: Assessment Questions

Each student has a unique background and experience, and you will better serve each student by understanding areas of strength and challenge. We will explore each area in turn and examine ways to assess a student's level of efficiency in that particular area. Example questions are included.



### Finance

This includes how a student plans to pay for school, develops financial literacy, and ensures they handle the financial side of life to support their educational goals.

#### EVERYDAY QUESTIONS

- How comfortable are you with managing money? How well do you think you handle your personal finances?
- How well do you understand your plan to pay for school? How confident are you in that plan?
- How well do you understand your financial aid package?

#### COVID-19 QUESTIONS

I'm hearing from a lot of students about current financial struggles related to COVID19,

- How have your finances been impacted in general?
- How are unexpected financial stressors impacting school?
- How has your financial aid been impacted due to changes in course scheduling/offerings?
- How confident are you in managing financially now and in the coming months?
- We want to be sure you are aware of resources that may be able to provide some support and/or relief. What resources are you aware of that may be helpful for you?



### Academics

This area is about a student's performance in the classroom, including their grades, study skills, academic habits, and use of available resources.

#### EVERYDAY QUESTIONS

- How satisfied are you with your academic performance this semester/term?
- How confident are you in your current study skills?
- How comfortable are you asking for help - professors' office hours, tutoring, advising, etc. - if you need it?
- How prepared are you for the next semester/term?

#### COVID-19 QUESTIONS

Moving to online can be challenging. The various formats - synchronous (at a specified time) or asynchronous (not at a scheduled time) or a mixture of both - each pose their own pros and cons.

- What learning challenges are you facing?
- Since moving online, how has the academic load changed for you?
- How or where has your access to the internet changed since moving online? Do you have the reliable internet access you need?
- How have you been able to access resources you became accustomed to using on-campus, like the library and tutoring, remotely?
- Your professors are relying on you to speak up when you need help. What is your comfort level with reaching out for clarification/help?



## Commitment to graduation

Is a student committed towards successful completion of a program? Whether a degree, certificate, or successful transfer, the extent to which a student has a vision for the future in which completion is essential dramatically impacts their likelihood of success.

### EVERYDAY QUESTIONS

- How committed are you to getting your degree? How will it benefit you personally and professionally?
- How well does your degree/major connect with your long-term goals? How does getting a degree/certificate fit into your career plans?
- How do you think this school meets your needs as a student?

### COVID-19 QUESTIONS

Dramatic changes and uncertainty about “what’s next” often give us pause and a moment to reflect on our priorities,

- Has the reason you decided to attend college shifted?
- With these added distractions how are you staying rooted in your “why”?
- What items has COVID brought up that might prevent you from graduating?
- How are you motivating yourself to keep going during COVID?



## Career

Understanding a student’s career aspirations, and/or current work situation directly ties to education.

### EVERYDAY QUESTIONS

- Do you know what you want to do after getting your degree?
- How comfortable are you networking and building professional relationships with others?
- How confident are you with interviewing and resume writing?

### COVID-19 QUESTIONS

For many, earning a college degree is just one milestone in their career aspirations,

- With certain industries being affected by COVID, how, if at all, has that shifted your goals?
- What disruptions have you experienced related to internships, career fairs or other career related activities?
- How has your current employment been impacted?



## Effectiveness

How well a student follows through on action magnifies success in all the other areas. Topics might include skills in planning, organizing tasks, and follow through.

### EVERYDAY QUESTIONS

- How good are you at planning and completing the actions you set out to do?
- How well do you avoid procrastination on important tasks?
- How confident are you in your ability to react and adjust to changes in plans?
- How good are you at solving problems? What about making decisions?
- What tools/systems do you use to keep on track with your schoolwork?

### COVID-19 QUESTIONS

Your schedule and how you manage your time has shifted in the online format,

- What does your schedule look like now?
- How are you holding yourself accountable with the format being asynchronous?
- What used to work for you as an on-campus student but doesn't work well for you in the online environment?
- How have you managed to complete time-intensive assignments, like group projects and papers?
- What needs to be in place for you to feel like "you've got this?"



## School community

How well a student connects with classmates, instructors, and administrative staff is key to staying in school. Often this sounds like a student "feeling like they fit-in."

### EVERYDAY QUESTIONS

- How well do you understand the campus resources that are available to you?
- How connected do you feel to students and staff at the school? How do you establish personal connections with classmates, faculty, and staff?
- How well do you feel your school fits your needs as a students?

### COVID-19 QUESTIONS

Many students choose an on-campus experience because it offers them an opportunity to meet new people, join clubs and activities that interest them, etc.,

- How are you staying in touch with your classmates, study groups?
- How are you finding ways to participate in clubs and activities in the remote environment?
- How are you making connections with classmates?
- What has your communication with your professors been like?



## Health and support

How does a student stay healthy while completing an academic program? Students who develop good habits for sleep, nutrition, exercise, and stress management are more effective. Additionally, we thrive in community: ensuring a student has a support network can make an enormous difference.

### EVERYDAY QUESTIONS

- How well do you manage anxiety and stress?
- How strong is your personal support system (family, friends, etc.)?
- How healthy are you? How are you taking care of yourself by finding time to exercise, eat right, and get enough sleep?

### COVID-19 QUESTIONS

The health of you and your family is important, especially now. So is the encouragement to keep pursuing your degree despite challenges,

- Have you, or someone close to you, been impacted by COVID? How are you feeling?
- How are you taking care of yourself during this stressful time?
- What has been the level of support from family/friends as you go to school during this time?



## Managing commitments

A student's ability to manage school with other responsibilities like work, family, and extracurricular responsibilities is a primary challenge. Figuring out what is important and regularly prioritizing helps a student honor all their responsibilities.

### EVERYDAY QUESTIONS

- How well do you plan your time and prioritize what you need to get done?
- What are all of the priorities that you are juggling right now? How good are you at balancing schoolwork with all your other responsibilities?
- How confident are you that you'll be able to devote enough time to schoolwork?

### COVID-19 QUESTIONS

We are living in a world that is outside of our norm right now. Many people report added responsibilities with work, child care, home schooling children, etc.

- How have your commitments changed since COVID?
- How are you fitting school into these added responsibilities?
- How do you prioritize your commitments?
- What are some things you can let go of right now?
- What support, if any, can you ask for?

InsideTrack partners with institutions to improve student outcomes while generating insights about the student experience. We've supported more than 2 million students since 2001 and serve over 4,000 programs.