

## Rural Guided Pathways Project, Institute 1 Communicating Effectively From the Outset Exercise #1: Defining Audiences

In this exercise, you will think through audiences for two specific elements of your guided pathways work.

**STEP 1.** Identify two priorities for your pathways work and write them in the chart below. Use your own ideas or pick from these examples, which are drawn from earlier sessions of this Institute:

- Creating a college-going mindset
- Supports for students
- Programmatic changes
- Internal work to strengthen and expand community partnerships

Priorities for our college’s guided pathways work	
#1	
#2	

**STEP 2.** Identify and define audiences for the priorities you identified.

The chart on page 2 is an example that uses “redesign onboarding” as a guided pathways priority.

After reviewing the example, use the blank charts on page 3 to identify and define audiences for the priorities you wrote above. Use one chart for each guided pathways priority, and write the priority at the top of the chart. Use a separate row for each audience. (Add rows as needed.)

As you consider your audiences, be specific. For example, if you want to mobilize faculty, which faculty? Deans? Department chairs? Specific departments? Are you considering part-time faculty?

**EXAMPLE**

<b>Priority for guided pathways work: Redesign onboarding.</b>		
<b>Audience</b>	<b>What you want this audience to do</b>	<b>What this audience needs or wants to happen</b>
Advisors	<p>Take the lead in planning the new advising structure, including defining desired outcomes.</p> <p>Listen to and engage all advisors as well as other staff members, faculty, and students in this work.</p>	A process that helps them advise students effectively, a manageable case load, a clear understanding of their objectives, and autonomy to act.
Full-time faculty members	Participate in (or help lead) discussions about onboarding and the role of faculty in advising.	Having students engaged and successful in their subject area. Professional development or other support so they can effectively advise students.
Department chairs	Encourage/require faculty to participate in advising; make time for faculty to do so.	Having students engaged and successful in their subject area; having all staffing needs met.
Part-time faculty	Participate in advising, wrap advising into classwork, and/or support advising goals in their classes.	Successful students; having their time compensated.

<b>Priority for your college's guided pathways work:</b>		
<b>Audience</b>	<b>What you want this audience to do</b>	<b>What this audience needs or wants to happen</b>

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<b>Audience</b>	<b>What you want this audience to do</b>	<b>What this audience needs or wants to happen</b>

## Rural Guided Pathways Project, Institute 1 Communicating Effectively From the Outset Exercise #2: Crafting Messages

Effective messaging finds the intersection between what you want your audiences to do (column 2 in Exercise #1) and what your audiences need or want to happen (column 3 in Exercise #1).

Use the charts on pages 5 and 6 to think through messaging for each of the priorities you identified. Write the priority at the top of each chart. Use one row per audience. If the same messaging is appropriate for more than one audience, simply repeat it in that audience's row.

The charts provide space to work on a different types of messaging. You do not have to go in order, and you may not have time for all types of messages — or for both of your guided pathways priorities — during this workshop. Focus on the type(s) of messaging you need most.

The types of messages we discussed are:

- **Start with Why.** Make the case for your guided pathways priority so audiences understand why you are doing this work.
- **Just the Facts.** Give each audience the details they need so they can take the action you want them to take. Provide the most important information first and skip any background the audience doesn't need.
- **Be Impersonal.** Data can provide context and help you make the case for change.
- **Be Personal.** Brief anecdotes, or stories, put a human face on the facts and remind audiences of the real reasons for doing this work. They also tap into people's emotions, which makes content more memorable. If you don't have specific stories now, you can identify stories you want to find. For example, "A faculty member who can speak about students who need support but don't use it because it's not required" or "A student who can describe their experience with advising that focused on identifying what type of career they will pursue."

<b>Priority for your college's guided pathways work:</b>	
<b>Audience(s)</b>	<b>Messages</b>
<b>Start with Why</b>	
<b>Just the Facts</b>	
<b>Be Impersonal</b>	
<b>Be Personal</b>	

<b>Priority for your college's guided pathways work:</b>	
<b>Audience(s)</b>	<b>Messages</b>
<b>Start with Why</b>	
<b>Just the Facts</b>	
<b>Be Impersonal</b>	
<b>Be Personal</b>	