
Faculty/Staff Guide

Welcome to VandalStar

VandalStar gives you a convenient way to keep track of your students – raising flags when you observe a pattern of behavior that concerns you, ensuring that the people on campus who can intervene are aware, and connecting students with you or someone else who can help.

Getting started is easy. Accessible through www.vandalstar.uidaho.edu, VandalStar will automatically display all students that you have been assigned or are enrolled in your courses.

From there, you can raise flags for students, review flags that have been raised about your students, and provide additional information for student success.

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Introduction

VandalStar Phase II Fall 2018:

In alignment with the University of Idaho's Strategic Plan 2016-2025, VandalStar is a university-wide initiative focused on student success and increasing graduation rates. It is a web-based advising, retention, student tracking, early alert and appointment scheduling application that supports student success and engagement.

Objective: VandalStar is an online tool that provides students, faculty and staff a shared point of reference for communication, the ability to schedule appointments and it enables outreach to students we may not be reaching with our current practices. Ultimately, VandalStar is designed to enhance student success at the University of Idaho. Powered by Hobson's Starfish used at more than 400 institutions across the United States, VandalStar is a tool to help increase retention, student success and graduation rates.

VandalStar Capabilities:

- Single Sign-On (SSO) across platforms
- Shared note system enhancing communication across campus
- Two-way calendar integration for faculty/staff with the option to post office hours
- Appointment scheduling, reminders, and tracking
- View student lists and take action through messages, notes, flags, or kudos – in bulk or individually
- Student profile with picture and key information
- Enables a student success network for each student
- Alert system with flags, enabled close the loop features
- Early alert faculty progress surveys, taking the place of in house built early warning grade system
- Positive reinforcement (kudos for student)
- Kiosks, VandalCard swipe, and group sessions
- Referral system – tentative Spring 2019
- Program assessment and key participation metrics – tentative Spring 2019
- Customizable success plans – tentative Spring 2019

VandalStar was piloted in about 50 courses during Spring 2018 with instructors, ~ 1500 students, and advisors performing beta testing on several key features including five flags, three kudos, online appointment scheduling, and progress surveys.

On Monday, August 6, VandalStar will be available as a soft launch for Fall 2018. Orientation sessions will begin Tuesday, July 31 with in person and Zoom options. Resources will be available online at www.uidaho.edu/vandalstar. Over the 2018-2019 academic year, we will continue to onboard and implement tools available in student support offices across the university.

If you are interested in learning more or have questions, contact the implementation team at VandalStar@uidaho.edu or call 208-885-VSTR (8787).

Access VandalStar

1. You can access VandalStar through the following link:

Production (Live version): www.vandalstar.uidaho.edu

Pre-production (Test version, not live data): <https://uidaho-test.starfishsolutions.com/starfish-prod>

In the future, VandalStar will be accessible through VandalWeb as well as on the University of Idaho VandalStar webpage.

2. The first page you will see will be a request to set up your office hours. You can do so by clicking **Set up Office Hours** or simply select **Close** to set your office hours at a later date. You can choose to have this message show again when you next log into VandalStar by checking the box that states **Show me this Office Hours Setup Page again next time I login if I don't have any Office Hours.**

Starfish provides a simple and efficient way for people on campus to schedule time with one another; whether that time is face-to-face, over the phone, or even online. All you have to do to get up and running in Starfish is complete the information on the right, which lets people know when you will be available during the term. Then others on campus will be able to schedule appointments with you electronically. It's that easy!

Once you've signed up, you can elect to receive email notifications informing you about your upcoming meetings. Each notice will include the reason for the visit, the person's picture if available, and a link to their profile.

A well-connected campus is a better campus, so start using Starfish now!

Office Hours Setup Wizard
If your office hours don't repeat weekly, [click here](#).

Go ahead and get started by adding one time block for now! You can always add more later.

1. What day(s) do you have office hours?
 M T W T F S S

2. What time are your office hours?
Enter Start Time to Enter End Time

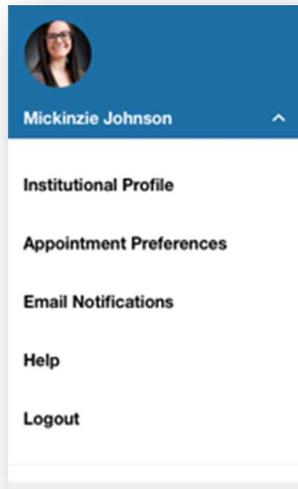
3. Where are they?
Type: in an office
Details: Enter an office location
Instructions: Knock once and enter

Show me this Office Hours Setup Page again next time I login if I don't have any Office Hours

Setup Your Profile, Appointment and Email Preferences

Some of your profile, such as your contact information, is already imported from Banner.

1. Click on your name from the main drop-down menu and select the **Institutional Profile** tab.



2. Edit your **Phone** information. If you choose to enter your cell phone information, it will not be shown to students, just faculty/staff.
3. Double check that the **Time zone** selected matches your time zone. This time zone will be used when including appointment times in emails from VandalStar.

A screenshot of a user profile edit page. At the top, it says "Please fill out as much of your profile as possible; students will see some of this information depending on your role." Below this is the user's name "Mickinzie Johnson" and a "Last Login" timestamp. There is a "Login Page" dropdown menu set to "Students -> Tracking". Under "Contact Information", there are fields for "Login" (337816), "Institution Email" (mickinzie@uidaho.edu), "Phone" (208-885-1506), "Cell Phone", and "Video Phone". There is an "Upload Photo" link and a checkbox for "Display all time zones". The "Time zone" is set to "(GMT-08:00) Pacific Time".

4. Add information to the **General Overview** and **My Biography** sections to let students know a bit more about you. This information will appear to students who can make appointments with you in VandalStar.
5. Click the **Submit** button to save your changes.

To adjust your appointment or email preferences:

1. Click on your name from the main drop-down menu and select the **Appointment Preferences** or **Email Preferences** tab.
2. Adjust your preferences for location, calendar managers, and notifications. *You must add an office location under Appointment Preferences in order to allow students to schedule appointments with you.*

My Locations

Enter locations for your meetings with students. Meetings can be in an office, online, over the phone, or anywhere else you like.

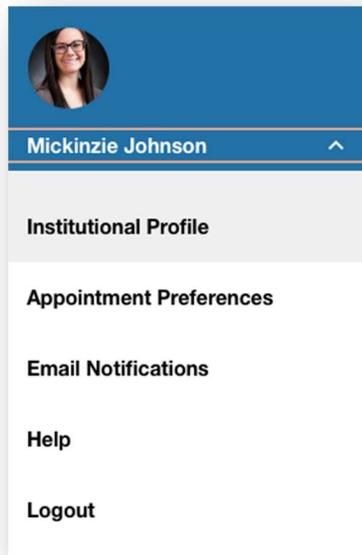


Type	Name ▲	Instructions
Office	Agricultural Science Room 71	Knock
Phone	Phone Appointment	208-885-1596

Syncing your Outlook calendar

You do not need to follow the instructions listed on VandalStar in order to sync your calendar – just follow the simple steps below.

1. If you would like your Outlook calendar synced to your VandalStar calendar, email vandalstar@uidaho.edu to request access.
2. Once you have received confirmation, go to your **Email Notifications** by clicking your name from the main drop-down menu.



3. Uncheck the **change to my Office Hours/Group Sessions** box and check the **Read busy times from my external Exchange calendar** box.

A screenshot of the "Appointments Notifications" settings page. The page has a light blue background and contains several sections. The "Planning Reminders" section has three radio button options: "send me a separate email reminder for each appointment", "send one email reminder with all appointments", and "don't send me an email reminder". Below this is a "Send Planning Reminders:" section with a time dropdown set to "9:00 am", a "the day of" dropdown, and "the appointments". The "Appointment Alerts:" section has a checkbox for "Send me an email" and a dropdown set to "15" minutes before the start of an appointment. Below that is a section "Send me an email with a calendar attachment for every:" with two checkboxes: "change to my appointments" (checked) and "change to my Office Hours/Group Sessions" (unchecked). The "Read busy times from external calendar" section has a checkbox for "Read busy times from my external Exchange calendar" which is checked. At the bottom, there is an "Important:" note in red text stating that this setting requires sharing the calendar with a specific email address and providing a link for further instructions.

4. Click **Submit**. Your Outlook calendar will now be synced with your VandalStar calendar. You can schedule and delete appointments from either program, and Office Hours will not block off time on your calendar until a specific student schedules with you.

Notes:

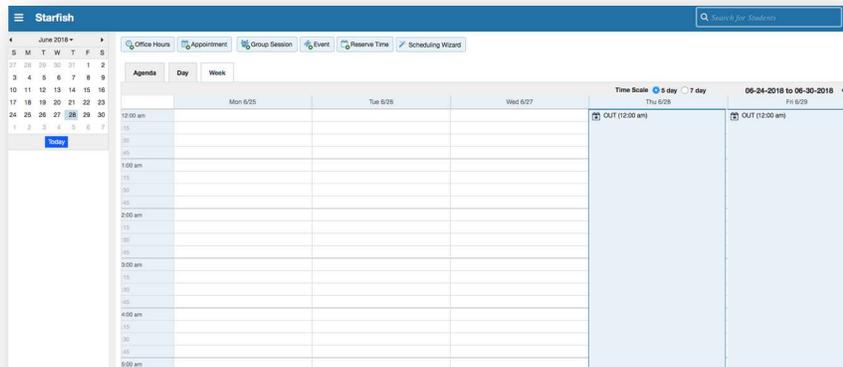
It may take 5-10 minutes for your Outlook calendar to be fully integrated into VandalStar. If you are having an issue seeing your calendar, please log out of VandalStar and try logging in again. If the problem persists, contact vandalstar@uidaho.edu.

You do not need to follow the instructions listed on VandalStar in order to sync your calendar.

Setup/Cancel Office Hours

You can use the **Scheduling Wizard** or the **Office Hours** tab to set your office hours. The Scheduling Wizard makes it easy for advisors and instructors to schedule multiple office hours blocks for multiple days in a single week. This is useful for setting up your calendar for advising rush periods and other times when you book several blocks of time for seeing students.

The first time you log in to VandalStar, it will provide a 'wizard' to walk you through setting up your office hours, which enables students to schedule time with you. If you did not complete this step during your first log in, you can access the Scheduling Wizard at any time by clicking **Appointments** from the main drop-down menu in the left hand corner of the screen.



1. To get started, specify the title, location, and other settings for the office hours blocks you are setting up.
2. If you are using Scheduling Wizard, select **Next** to setup the days and times for the week's office hours.
3. Click **Submit** or **Finish**.

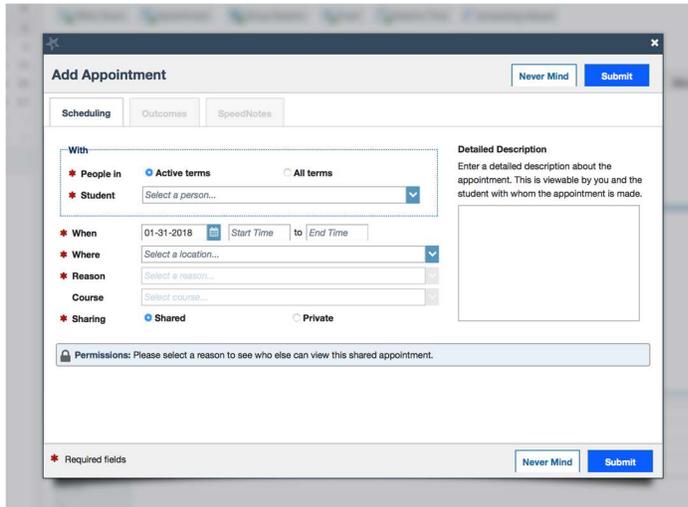
Notes:

To setup additional office hours or make any changes, use the buttons on your **Home** or **Appointments** page to add **Office Hours**, **Appointments**, or use the **Scheduling Wizard**.

Schedule Appointments

When you would like to schedule an appointment for a student, rather than the student scheduling their own appointment, you can use the **Appointments** tab located in the main drop-down menu.

1. Select the **Appointments** link and then the “Appointment” button.



2. Complete the fields necessary to specify:

- Who would you like to meet with? – you can select what term as well as a specific student by typing their name.
- When would you like to meet? – you can select the day, start time and end time.
- Where would you like to meet? – you can select from a list of locations in a drop-down menu. You can add locations on your profile.
- Why do you want to meet? – select a reason for this meeting from the drop-down list.
- Do you want this meeting to be shared or private? – most meetings are shared so the members of the student’s Success Network can see the appointment. Private meetings are to be used at faculty/advisor discretion.

Notes:

You can enter a **Detailed Description** of the appointment to provide more information regarding the appointment topic. This is viewable by you and the student.

The **Outcomes** tab can be completed during or after meeting with the student, where you list the actual meeting time as well as provide notes in the student’s file.

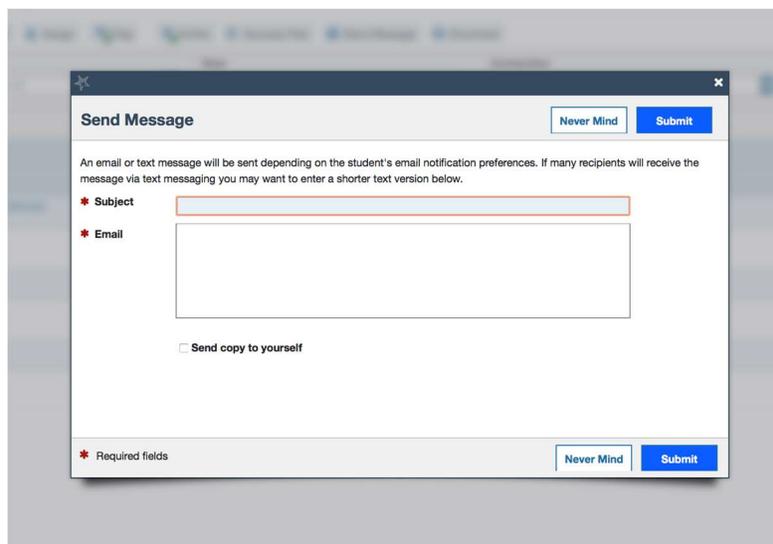
Message Your Student(s)

When you would like to communicate with students regarding coursework or advising, you can message them as a group or individually from the **Students** tab located in the main drop-down menu.

1. Click on the **Students** link to see your list of students.
2. Find the desired student or students by typing a name or using a filter. You may also need to adjust the **Connection** or **Term** to see a more accurate student list.



3. Check the box next to the student (or students) that you would like to message.
4. Select the “Message” button at the top of the page.
5. Draft your message, and select “Submit.”



Notes:

An email will be sent depending on the student’s email notification preferences.

You can choose to send a copy of the message to yourself by selecting **Send Copy to Yourself** when drafting your message.

As always, you can select **Never Mind** if you decide to not send a drafted message.

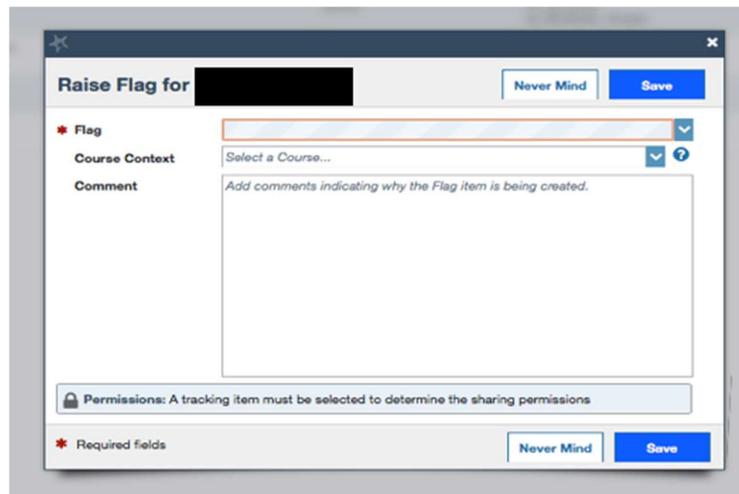
Raise and Clear Tracking Items (Flags and Kudos)

When you have a concern with a particular student, raise a flag to communicate your observations. When you want to congratulate a particular student, raise a kudo to let them know. The appropriate individuals will be automatically notified when you save the item.

1. Click on the **Students** navigation item to see your list of students.
2. Find the desired student by typing the name into the **Search** box.
3. Click on the student's name to bring up the **Student Folder**.
4. Click the item that you would like to raise on the student (Flag or Kudo.)

A list of categories for the tracking item that you have permission to raise on this student is displayed.

5. Select the type of flag or kudo you would like to raise from the list.
6. If relevant, select a course from the **Course Context**, drop down list, and enter notes in the **Comment** box.
7. Click the **Save** button.



8. To clear an item raised on a student, click on the **Tracking** navigation item to see current flags/kudos raised on your students. Select the item you would like to clear, and select **Resolve**. You will have the option to leave notes about resolving the action item.

The screenshot shows a web form titled "Clear flag for" with a redacted name. It includes a "Show flag details" link, a required field "Select a reason for clearing this flag:" with five radio button options, and an "Add a comment:" text area. The form also features a "Required fields" indicator, a "Never Mind" button, and a "Submit" button.

Clear flag for [REDACTED]

Show flag details

Select a reason for clearing this flag: *

- The concern was successfully addressed
- The concern was not successfully addressed
- The concern is no longer relevant
- The flag was raised by mistake
- I don't have enough information

Add a comment:

Provide some more details about why you're clearing this flag.

* Required fields

Never Mind Submit

Notes:

The **Student View**: indicates whether the student can view the flag and the notes you include in the **Comment** box.

The **Permissions** area lists roles that have permission to view the selected flag and the notes you include in the **Comment** box.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is VandalStar?

A: In alignment with the University of Idaho's [Strategic Plan 2016-2025](#), VandalStar is a university-wide initiative focused on student success and increasing graduation rates. Powered by Starfish, VandalStar is a web-based advising, retention, student tracking, early alert and appointment scheduling application that supports student success and engagement.

VandalStar provides an efficient way to offer coordinated support to all students, ensuring they receive the right type of assistance and intervention to keep them on track. The online system helps students connect with instructors, advisors and staff, as well as enhance communication across campus departments.

Q: How does VandalStar support student success?

A: VandalStar is based on the premise that a university community engaged with a student will lead to that student's success. Effective campus engagement happens through collaborative efforts between faculty, advisors and support offices. Individual outreach to students and face-to-face conversations are critical to letting students know that there are people at the university who care about their success.

VandalStar promotes these important interactions by providing a quick and simple way for faculty to notify advisors and support offices when they have a concern about a student, enabling these support providers to reach out to students. More effective support is expected to lead to increased student success, which in turn will lead to improved retention and graduation rates.

Q: When will VandalStar be implemented?

A: VandalStar will be available university-wide in fall 2018 with a soft launch August 6. Additional features will be implemented over the following semesters.

Q: What are the benefits of using VandalStar for students?

A: The benefits of VandalStar for students include a “Raise Your Hand” function that alerts appropriate parties to academic concerns. VandalStar is a communication tool that allows students to connect with instructors, advisors, and student service staff. Additionally, VandalStar can allow for an enhanced advising experience. It provides a tool for scheduling appointments with staff or faculty members.

Q: What are the benefits of using VandalStar for faculty?

A: Benefits for faculty include, but are not limited to:

- A central platform that gives you a comprehensive look at your students, allowing you to be more informed about how your students are doing;
- One click shares your student concerns with multiple campus service providers;
- Reaching out to your students has never been easier; simply raise a flag and VandalStar sends the appropriate message;
- Office hours sync with your Outlook calendar (two-way communication);
- Students use VandalStar to schedule appointments based on your preferences;
- Manage and interact with your students by role: advisor, faculty or both.

Q: As a faculty member do I need to run my class any differently if I use VandalStar?

A: You still conduct your courses as you usually would. Faculty are encouraged to place a VandalStar statement in the syllabus to let students know that they are using the system. VandalStar should not change any of the best practices you use in your classroom and does not replace face-to-face conversations about progress. VandalStar is simply a tool to enhance communication with your students.

Recommended Syllabus Statement:

This class will participate in VandalStar, which promotes student success through coordination and communication among students, instructors, advisors, and campus support service departments. If I observe that you are experiencing difficulties in the course (attendance concerns, low test scores or participation, in danger of failing, etc.), I may send an email to your vandals.uidaho.edu email account through the VandalStar system. My message will tell you about my concerns and ask you to meet with me or an academic advisor. Your advisor, TA, and/or I will work with you to create success strategies to address any difficulties you are

having. In addition, if I observe that you are doing well in my course, you may also receive “kudos” from me acknowledging your efforts.

VandalStar may involve taking advantage of various campus support services, such as academic tutoring or advising. If I recommend that you use campus support services, I or your advisor will redirect you to that support office so they will be better prepared to assist you. VandalStar provides essential notices by email and through your dashboard at www.vandalstar.uidaho.edu. Please check your vandals.uidaho.edu account or VandalStar account frequently and respond quickly if you receive an email from VandalStar.

Q: What is a flag and when should I use one?

A: Flags are designed to inform students when their performance is not meeting expectations. Faculty are encouraged to raise flags based on poor performance and/or attendance concerns. Raising a flag generates an automated email that is sent to the student, on which faculty can enter additional comments. Once a student has been flagged by a faculty member, academic support/advising is notified with an automated email in VandalStar. Flagging a student through VandalStar creates a transparent communication trail that allows all individuals working with the student to see a clear picture of the student’s performance.

Q: What happens when a faculty member posts a concern about a student in VandalStar?

A: Faculty members can use flags for students to signal different concerns. These flags generate an immediate notification to the student outlining the concern and directing them to support resources on campus. In addition, advisors or other support providers at the college may be notified, depending on the type of flag.

Q: What is a kudos and when should I use one?

A: Kudos can be course-based indicators that faculty (or teaching assistants) can send to students to encourage positive performance in class. Kudos can also be used for non-course based circumstances to provide positive reinforcement on healthy habits and engagement.

Q: Will early warning grades be collected via VandalStar?

A: During spring 2018, a pilot group will report midterm grades via VandalStar through a feature called “progress survey” to test the functionality of the tool. Early warning grades in Fall 2018 will be reported through VandalStar’s progress survey feature.

Q: Who can view early alert information?

A: Faculty and teaching assistants can view student information related to the courses they are teaching.

Academic support staff — including faculty and professional advisors — can view student information if they have an educational need to know for the student.

Each individual flag, kudo, to-do, and referral will give faculty and support staff the option to allow the student to view their respective information.

Q: Will VandalStar replace VandalWeb?

A: No, VandalStar is a tool that brings some student information together. VandalWeb is the system of record for student information and the Banner interface for faculty and staff.

Q: Will BBLearn be integrated into VandalStar?

A: The VandalStar implementation team is still exploring this option. The goal is for BBLearn to be integrated into VandalStar starting spring 2019 at the earliest.

Q: Will DegreeAudit still be available?

A: Yes. DegreeAudit is a student’s official degree requirements checklist.

Q: How will I access VandalStar?

A: Students, faculty and staff will access VandalStar through several avenues:

1. Directly through www.vandalstar.uidaho.edu

2. Through VandalWeb once programming is complete
3. Through BBLearn
4. Through the VandalStar resource website at www.uidaho.edu/vandalstar

Q: How is student data protected/secure in VandalStar?

A: Powered by Starfish Solutions, VandalStar is a hosted software-as-a-service application provided by Hobsons, Inc. System data is stored outside of the university and maintained by Hobsons. The university has completed a comprehensive security assessment to ensure the vendor facilities, products and processes comply with industry guidelines for protecting personally identifiable information. Per the [company's website](#), “Database and application servers are hosted in audited facilities with state-of-the-art infrastructure, constant monitoring, and established operational policies. All communications to these servers use secure protocols.” Access within the VandalStar application is driven by a powerful role-based security scheme that ensures users can view data only for students with which they have a scholastic relationship. The university controls authentication, determines what data to send to Hobsons and grants end user access and privileges in the VandalStar system.

Q: How are FERPA and other student privacy concerns being addressed?

A: FERPA allows the university to designate campus officials that can be allowed to see portions of a student’s education records: “A school may share education records, or information from education records, with anyone it has deemed a ‘school official’ and has determined to have a ‘legitimate educational interest’ in that information” (uidaho.edu/registrar/faculty/ferpa).

Q: What information can I see about my students?

A: Different information will be viewable depending on your relationship with the student, such as if you are a faculty member or an advisor.

Q: Are student-related comments/notes protected by FERPA?

A: Anything maintained electronically associated with a student’s file is considered confidential. Only staff (faculty, advisor or administrative) who have a need to see it will be able to see it. Any notes on a student can be subpoenaed by law.

Q: What are predictive analytics and will VandalStar use them?

A: Institutions are now recognizing that the data that they have can allow them to be proactive in supporting students. Information from student information and course management systems, combined with analytics tools can help identify students at risk. Outreach to those students can point them to resources such as tutoring, counseling or other campus services designed to help them persist and be successful. The VandalStar system provides those capabilities for the University of Idaho. Access to the predictive information can be restricted to those in roles that have been identified to provide support and that are part of a planned strategy to use that information in ways that encourage students toward completion. Predictive analytics will not be available for Fall 2018. However, we will be evaluating how our university will best use it to support our students in the near future.

Q: How much additional time will it take me to use VandalStar?

A: It depends on how much you would like to use the tool within your course. Faculty members are encouraged to send flags and kudos after the first major assignment, for early warning grades, and following midterm exams/projects and prior to finals. Faculty may send additional flags and kudos throughout the duration of the semester, or whenever they deem it necessary.

Q: I'm concerned about learning a new piece of software. How do I receive help using VandalStar, or schedule some training?

A: Workshops and professional development will be available for students, faculty, teaching assistants and academic support personnel starting spring 2018. Specialized training sessions for academic departments will also be available if requested. Handouts and video tutorials to explain how to use VandalStar will be posted on the VandalStar resource website at uidaho.edu/vandalstar. Please contact vandalstar@uidaho.edu for more information.

Q: Who can I contact with general questions about VandalStar?

A: Please contact VandalStar administrators with general questions and suggestions for our FAQ list at VandalStar@uidaho.edu or 208-885-VSTR (8787).

Glossary of VandalStar Terms

Calendar Manager: Select people to manage your calendar. Calendar managers can add and edit your office hours and schedule and edit appointments in your calendar.

Filters: Add filters such as Academic Standing, Class Level, Registration Hold, etc. to organize your list of students

Flag: Flags are designed to alert students to an area of concern. Students receive an email message that include any comments added by the raiser. Some flags also generate an email to the student's assigned adviser. Comments are associated with the flag and are recorded in the Notes tab of the student folder

Kudos: Kudos are positive alerts sent to students. Students receive an email message that include any comments added by the raiser. Some kudos also generate an email to the student's assigned adviser. Comments are associated with the kudo and are recorded in the Notes tab of the student folder.

Outcomes: The Outcomes of a meeting with a student are where you can enter notes about the meeting, both before and after.

Progress Survey: A progress survey is Starfish's term for progress reporting. Progress surveys include a class roster and two to three tracking items that can be raised by the instructor to flag a need for change or to reinforce positive engagement. Two progress surveys will be launched each semester, one in week three and one in week seven.

Provider: The faculty/staff person who provides a meeting with a student.

Raiser: The faculty/staff person who initiates a tracking item for a student.

Reserve Time: Time on your calendar that is not accessible for students to schedule appointments.

Referral: Referrals point students to a particular office where they need to take some action. Referrals can include a due date. Students receive an email message that include any comments added by the raiser. Some referrals also generate an email to the student's assigned adviser. Comments are associated with the referral and are recorded in the Notes tab of the student folder.

Scheduling Wizard: Similar to Paperclip in Microsoft Word, this tool allows you to quickly schedule office hours and other appointments on your calendar, all in one step.

Services: A list of departments across campus that may be available to students for academic success, such as tutoring, counseling and testing, disability support, etc.

SpeedNotes: SpeedNotes are the notes you can leave in appointment Outcomes that are already created for you, such as “Career Goals”, “Registration For Classes”, and “Transfer Credit Review.”

Success Network: A student’s Success Network is a list of people that the student is connected to across campus. For example: the student’s instructors for each of their courses, their professional academic advisor, and any other individual they may have a connection to.

Success Plan: A Success Plan is a specific to-do/referral list that can be assigned to a student for a specific academic concern. For example, if a student is assigned a “Registration Success Plan”, that student will have To-Dos such as “Make an appointment with your advisor” and “Review your graduation plan.”

Tracking Items: Tracking items are the generic name for Flags, Kudos, and Referrals in Starfish. All tracking items are recorded in the student’s folder and generate an email to the student and the student’s assigned adviser.

The Star Thrower

A man saw a boy collecting starfish on the beach and gently throwing them back into the ocean.

"What are you doing?" asked the man.

"The tide is going out. If I don't throw them back, they'll die," explained the boy.

"But there are miles and miles of beach and hundreds of starfish!" the man said. "You are hardly even making a difference."

The boy picked up another starfish, threw it into the surf, smiled at the man, and said:

"I made a difference for that one."

