

How Defiance College reached 100% housing form compliance and cut no-shows

Overview

Defiance College, a private liberal arts college in Ohio, is built around a high-touch, student-centered experience. It adopted Mongoose for Admissions in fall 2019, then expanded across campus. Today Mongoose carries nearly all of Defiance's student communication, and students treat texting as a primary channel.

INSTITUTION	Private liberal arts college
LOCATION	Defiance, OH
DEPARTMENTS	Campus-wide
PARTNER SINCE	Fall 2019
CHANNEL	Text

The challenge

Students missed critical emails about conduct meetings, housing sign-ups, and registration. Calls and voicemails overwhelmed front desks, and departments worked in silos with no central way to track or segment outreach.

- A 50% no-show rate for conduct meetings
- No way to segment by hall, status, or need
- Front desks buried in calls and voicemail

Why Mongoose

Defiance moved to a campus-wide agreement just before the COVID-19 shutdown, and the timing proved critical. Student Affairs, Residence Life, and Housing Operations now text students in real time, using detailed segments and shared workflows. New students opt in at orientation each year.



opt-outs a year. "Most of them are by mistake," said Lisa Marsalek, VP for Student Affairs.



"Texting is now our primary communication tool. It's integrated into everything we do, from move-in to graduation."

NOEL BARRERA · ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF HOUSING OPERATIONS

What changed across campus

Each department texts its own way, while shared inboxes and segments keep messages relevant.

100%

housing form compliance

50% → ~0

conduct meeting no-shows, before and after Mongoose

<6

student opt-outs a year

01

Students show up the first time

Staff email the formal invite, send a calendar event, and schedule a reminder text. Nearly every student now shows up to conduct meetings the first time.

02

Housing forms, done

Students respond quickly on assignments, roommate agreements, and room selection. “We reach 100% compliance because we can track and follow up quickly,” Noel said.

03

No more summer surprises

Staff know who’s returning, who has withdrawn, and where housing is needed early enough to plan. “We know who’s coming back before spring ends,” Lisa said.

04

Used across campus

Residence Life, Student Conduct, Academic Support, Student Accounts, the Registrar, Career Services, and Admissions all rely on texting.

WHAT MADE THE DIFFERENCE

- **Smart segments.** For halls, class years, and special populations.
- **Manual opt-ins.** Students choose texting each year, so they’re engaged.
- **Shared inboxes.** Staff coverage and timely responses.
- **Scheduled texts.** Birthdays, reminders, and follow-ups.

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LOOKING AHEAD

Defiance plans to bring texting into more touchpoints across the year. Residence Life will keep refining segments, and Academic Support is exploring proactive outreach.

“Especially for small schools, this is the tool that helps you work smarter and faster.”

Lisa Marsalek, Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students

Want to see what campus-wide texting could look like at your school?

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