CASE STUDY · SUNY DUTCHESS COMMUNITY COLLEGE

How Dutchess Community College coordinates texting across four teams

Overview

Dutchess Community College (DCC), a SUNY college in New York's Hudson Valley, launched a 2023 initiative to unify communication from recruitment through graduation. Four teams, Admissions, Advising, Student Financial Services, and Student Activities, now share Mongoose for texting and engagement.

INSTITUTION	SUNY community college
LOCATION	Hudson Valley, NY
TEAMS	4 departments
PARTNER SINCE	Early 2023
CHANNEL	Text
SYSTEMS	Slate, Starfish

The challenge

Departments relied on email, Starfish, and Slate's built-in texting, with little personalization, connection, or insight, especially for holds, registration, and financial aid. DCC needed teams to reach the same students without overlapping or overwhelming them.

- → Fragmented tools across departments
- → Little insight into student replies
- → Risk of overlapping messages

Why Mongoose

DCC rolled out Mongoose across four teams. Connected to Slate and Starfish, staff now track replies, opt-outs, campaign success, and sentiment, and respond in real time as one coordinated network.

- → Admissions and recruitment
- → Academic advising
- → Financial services and student activities

133% more admissions texts since January, while opt-outs fell.

> **"We don't have 4,500 staff members. But with Mongoose, we're giving 4,500 students the experience of someone who cares."**
>
> BRIAN SONDEY · ASSOCIATE VP FOR ENROLLMENT AND STUDENT SUCCESS

Results, team by team

Each department texts for its own priorities, and shared visibility keeps students from being overwhelmed.

01

Admissions: precision nudges

Slate queries drive application updates, event invites, and FAFSA reminders. Texting volume is up 133%, campaign reply rates run 10–15%, and opt-outs fell 0.5%. “And we’re seeing students flow from ‘submitted’ to ‘accepted’ and then RSVP to yield events, because of how we’re texting,” said Xavier Velasquez.

02

Advising: personal touchpoints

Advisors follow up on Starfish flags and missed appointments. Reply rates rose to 7% and opt-outs fell below 1%. “When they get a text from an advisor, it means something,” Brian said.

03

Student activities: Smart Messages

15,000+ texts in 90 days, including a weekly “Activities Informer,” with a 1.6% opt-out rate. “We want students to look forward to texts from us,” said Matt Hanlon.

04

Financial services: timely action

Texts about payment deadlines, residency documents, and overdue accounts led to more follow-through. “When we text, students respond,” said Cheryl Verdile.

WHAT THE DASHBOARD SHOWS

- → **Volume and resolution.** Conversation status at a glance.
- → **Trending topics.** Registration, holds, and payments.
- → **Sentiment.** Joy, confusion, interest, and anger in replies.
- → **Unresolved follow-ups.** Fewer students slipping through.

LOOKING AHEAD

Working toward a 2028 target of 5,000 degree-seeking students, DCC plans to expand Smart Messages and AI insights, bring Mongoose into retention workflows, coordinate on a shared calendar, and pilot new strategies based on reply and sentiment data.

> **“Mongoose helps us create a spiderweb of support. We’re reaching students with empathy and relevance, not just information.”**
>
> Brian Sondey

Want to see what coordinated texting could do across your campus?

BOOK A DEMO

hellomongoose.com/book-a-demo