

Spring 2025 Training Day Program Schedule

April 11, 2025 | Lincoln Center, 140W

Retaining Rams: From First Year to Forever Fordham

9:30 am | *Platt Atrium (140W, Street Level)*

Coffee & Check-In

10:00 - 10:30 am | *McNally Amphitheatre*

Welcome | Keith Eldredge, Committee Chair; Michele Burris, Vice President of Student Affairs

10:30 am - 11:30 am | *McNally Amphitheatre*

Keynote Presentation | Fordham's Retention Data

11:40 am - 12:30 pm

Break Out Sessions | Part 1

Room 325 Enhancing the Student Experience with RamCentral Sara Sapienza	Room G74 Navigating Financial Aid: Applications, Appeals, and Beyond Jaime Lyn Harkin Brian Ghanoo	Room G73 New Student Orientation: Your Partner In Retention Daniel Patterson-Wallace	Room 213 Retaining Staff to Increase Student Success Stacey Vasquez Corbin Wong	Room 214 Building Community To Drive Retention Marisa Villani Jenna Cook Fr. Vin DeCola	Room 323 Hashtag Retention: Leveraging Technology in the Pursuit of Student Leader Retention Savanah Manos Melissa Gazal
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12:40 - 1:30 pm | *G76 (140W Garden Level)*

Lunch

1:40 - 2:30 pm | *G76 (140W Garden Level)*

Panel - Student Affairs Departments Enhance Retention

2:40 - 3:30 pm

Break Out Sessions | Part 2

Room 214 Website Wins: Welcoming Students at Our Digital Front Door Matthew Vincent Adam Kaufman	Room G73 Building a Commuter Community Daniel Patterson-Wallace	Room 213 Finding your Fordham Family: Yield, Melt and Retention Strategies from Admission to Enrollment Patricia Peek	Room 325 Introduction to Mental Health First Aid Dessa Shepherd	Room G74 Bridging Borders: Supporting International Student Success & Retention Rashain Adams	Room 323 Understanding Academic Advising in Fordham College Ashlee Burrs
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3:40 - 4:30 pm

Department Breakout Session - Retention Action Plan

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Break Out Session Offerings

Session 1 | 11:40 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Enhancing the Student Experience with RamCentral

Room 325

Sara Sapienza, Digital Campus Experience Manager

RamCentral is an evolving platform that aims to streamline how students access advising, support services, and campus engagement opportunities. This session will explore how RamCentral supports retention efforts through personalized tools and experiences and invite your feedback through a live poll to help shape what features and resources should be included as the platform grows.

Navigating Financial Aid: Applications, Appeals, and Beyond

Room G74

Jaime Lyn Harkin, Director of Scholarships & Special Programs

Brian Ghano, Associate Vice President, Student Financial Services

This session will educate staff on the financial aid application and appeal process. It will provide a comprehensive overview of the financial aid application and renewal process, explore the steps students can take to appeal their awards due to financial hardship, and offer practical guidance to support them through the process. It will include real-world scenarios based on pre-submitted questions and a live Q&A for an engaging and informative discussion..

New Student Orientation: Your Partner in Retention

Room G73

Daniel Patterson-Wallace, Associate Director for First Year Experience

Curious about what CPS offers to support the mental well-being of students in times of conflict and crisis? Come experience it for yourself! This breakout group will include elements of meditation, psychoeducation, and journaling.

Retaining Staff to Increase Student Success

Room 213

Stacey Vasquez, Director of HR Strategy and Operations

Corbin Wong, Director of Organizational and Leadership Development

This Human Resources presentation emphasizes the vital connection between staff retention and student success in educational settings. It details strategies for creating a supportive work environment, offering professional development, and recognizing staff contributions, all aimed at improving student satisfaction and retention.

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Building Community to Drive Retention

Room 214

Marisa Villani, Senior Assistant Dean for Undergraduate Studies

Jenna Cook, Assistant Dean for Seniors

Fr. Vincent DeCola, Assistant Dean

Join us in learning about GSB's approach to retention and engage in a discussion as to why retention is NOT the goal for driving student success and satisfaction.

Hashtag Retention: Leveraging Technology in the Pursuit of Student Leader Retention

Room 323

Savanah Manos, Resident Director

Melissa Gazal, Associate Director for Student Involvement

Are you struggling to connect with today's students? Are you frustrated that the strategies that worked in the past no longer engage students? Join the Office of Residential Life and the Office for Student Involvement for a presentation on strategies to effectively connect with Gen Z. We'll explore innovative approaches to communication and discuss best practices for retaining student leaders and staff members in this ever-changing technological environment.

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Session 2 | 2:30 p.m. - 3:20 p.m.

Website Wins: Welcoming Students at Our Digital Front Door

Room 214

Matthew Vincent, Senior Director of Online Communications

Adam Kaufman, Content Strategist, Brand Storytelling

As curators of the student experience at Fordham, your department's website may be one of the first impressions Fordham makes. This session will equip you with the latest in web design trends, UX/UI, and content strategy, ensuring our online presence resonates with both current and prospective students. Learn how to optimize your content for searchability, enhance user experience, and craft compelling narratives that highlight our care for the whole person. We'll delve into practical tips for maintaining website accuracy and relevance, emphasizing the critical role your sites play in attracting future Rams and supporting current students.

Building a Commuter Community

Room G73

Daniel Patterson-Wallace, Associate Director for First Year Experience

Melissa Gazal, Associate Director for Student Involvement

We all realize the unique experience commuters have with building connections on campus at Fordham. Hear how Commuter Student Services at LC has worked to retain commuter students through a culture of programming and engagement, and how these efforts have helped commuters create a home on campus, connect with University resources and support their needs as they navigate their time at Fordham.

Finding your Fordham Family: Yield, Melt and Retention Strategies from Admission to Enrollment

Room 213

Patricia Peek, Dean of Undergraduate Admission / Associate Vice President

This presentation will cover the key strategies we use to build affinity, community and a sense of belonging for our incoming students and families. We will discuss how communications, programming and interpersonal connections at each stage differ and complement each other. Admission and Marketing efforts are one important component but engagement from the university community, writ large, serve to enhance those efforts.

Introduction to Mental Health First Aid

Room 325

Dessa Shepherd, Americorps Mental Health First Aid Instructor

In your role at Fordham University, you may have some interactions with students across campus. Did you ever wonder how to effectively support students who may be distressed? How do I help students who may be distressed feel heard, understood and helped? During today's workshop, you will have the opportunity to explore the components of the Mental Health First Aid Action (ALGEE) and practice how to interact with students who may be in distress and/or navigating a mental health challenge. Learn how to

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assess and approach, listen non-judgmentally, effectively give reassurance, encourage professional support and self-help strategies to support students' wellbeing towards improving their collegiate experience and academic success!

Bridging Borders: Supporting International Student Success & Retention

Room G74

Rashain Adams, Assistant Director, Office of Multicultural Affairs

Retention of international students requires a proactive approach that addresses their unique academic, social, and cultural needs. This session will explore key factors influencing international student retention, including cultural adjustment, financial and visa challenges, campus engagement, and access to support services. Using first-hand feedback from students, we will discuss ways in which our areas can make adjustments in order to serve international students better.

Understanding Academic Advising in Fordham College

Room 323

Ashlee Burrs, Associate Dean for Academic Advising

Listen in on this presentation about the role of FC academic advisors and how they support student success. You'll hear from Associate Dean Ashlee Burrs and explore what advisors do, how they guide students through academic planning, and hear examples of possible academic pathways at FC. Additionally, you'll discuss some of the basics of advising and the common student concerns—such as "I don't know who my advisor is" or "What can my advisor help me with?"—and provide strategies for responding effectively. From this presentation you can learn how to direct students to the right resources and strengthen the connection between student affairs and academic advising.