

STRENGTHS AT THE U: CREATING A STRENGTHS-BASED UNDERGRADUATE EXPERIENCE

STRENGTHS INITIATIVE FRAMEWORK

On the Twin Cities campus we are using a Strengths approach to enhance student engagement and well-being which leads to improved retention, graduation and life success. StrengthsFinder® is a tool that contributes to the demonstration of the Student Learning Outcomes (www.slo.umn.edu) and the Student Development Outcomes (www.sdo.umn.edu).

Strengths Integration Strategies



Academic and Personal Growth

In addition to these strategies, colleges and units are encouraged to integrate a Strengths-based approach into their own programs, learning experiences and curricula.



INCREASED:

- Student Outcomes
- Career Fit
- Well-being

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
Driven to DiscoverSM

*Capstone: a final project, culmination of experiences and resources, reflection, or other experience that relates to preparing to transition from undergraduate student to graduated student.

GOALS FOR THE STRENGTHS INITIATIVE

Pre-Arrival

At the start of the first year, students will...

- Be familiar with the U of M strengths initiative and why we are doing it.
- Understand how they will take the assessment and how to access their reports.
- Have taken the assessment and be able to recall one or two of their Talent Themes.
- Be introduced to StrengthsFinder® and have a basic understanding of a Strengths-approach.

1st Year

At the end of the first year, students will...

- Be able to recall all of their five Talent Themes.
- Be able to articulate their Talent Themes in their own words.
- Have engaged in and initiated discussions about their own Talent Themes with others and learned about different types of Talent Themes.
- Understand ways in which their Talent Themes can apply to their student experience.

2nd Year

At the end of the second year, students will...

- Understand the difference between Talent Themes and Strengths.
- Use their Strengths to contribute to their academic success including group work, studying, time management, etc.
- Be able to apply their Strengths to their engagement experiences.
- Understand how their Strengths relate to their career and major exploration and decisions.
- Be aware of what happens when their Strengths aren't lived in healthy ways (aka, shadow side, barrier labels).

3rd Year

At the end of the third year, students will...

- Continue to integrate Strengths into their engagement opportunities.
- Integrate their Strengths into the career and post-graduation planning process.
- Utilize Strengths as they reflect upon their overall learning and development in relation to the Student Learning Outcomes and Student Development Outcomes.

4th Year

At the end of the fourth year, students will...

- Utilize Strengths as they reflect upon their overall learning and development in relation to the Student Learning Outcomes and Student Development Outcomes.
- Be able to apply and articulate Strengths to the post-graduation implementation process (interviews, applications, etc.)

Post-Graduation

After graduation, alumni will...

- Have advanced in their demonstration of the Student Learning and Development Outcomes.
- Experience greater well-being due to living in their Strengths.
- Experience greater post-graduation satisfaction by doing what they do best every day.

Clarifying Language

$$\begin{array}{l} \text{Talent} \\ \times \text{ Skill, Knowledge} \\ \text{and Time} \\ \hline = \text{Strength} \end{array}$$

- **Talent Theme:** A naturally recurring pattern of thought, feeling, or behavior that can be productively applied. There are 34 talent themes associated with StrengthsFinder®.
- **Knowledge:** What you know as a result of either formal or informal education.
- **Skill:** The basic ability to move through the fundamental steps of specific task.
- **Time:** Time spent practicing and developing your skills, and building your knowledge base.
- **Strength:** The ability to provide consistent, near-perfect performance in a given activity – reached only by applying and investing skill and knowledge to Themes.

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