*RET = E_{ID} + (E + IN + C)_{IV}

A RETENTION FORMULA FOR STUDENT SUCCESS. FINALLY, PUTTING THE PIECES OF THE RETENTION PUZZLE TOGETHER

Dr. Alan Seidman
- Executive Director: Center for the Study of College Student Retention (www.cscsr.org)
- Editor: *Journal of College Student Retention: Research, Theory & Practice*
- Author: *College Student Retention: Formula for Student Success.*
"You have until he rolls his eyes and looks at his watch."
Education Department Will Emphasize Retention Issues in Next Higher Education Act, Official Says

The U.S. Education Department will emphasize student-retention rates and other issues of interest to for-profit colleges as it works with Congress in the next year to reauthorize the Higher Education Act, a top department official said Friday at the annual meeting of the Career College Association. Data indicate that the record of all kinds of colleges on retaining first- and second-year students "is not good," said Ms. Stroup. The Education Department will examine retention policies "and look at ways to use federal money in an incentive fashion to reward programs that work," she said.

Ms. Stroup also hinted that President Bush's emphasis on quality through the examination of outcomes-based education could extend to the postsecondary level. "I think you'll see that now we'll be pushing for outcomes and results," she said, noting that the Education Department will look specifically at retention and completion rates. "These are things we need to be able to show to be accountable to the taxpayer," she said.

“OVER THE YEARS, COLLEGES HAVE SPENT A LOT OF MONEY TO HELP IMPROVE RETENTION AND GRADUATION RATES. IN SPITE OF ALL THE MONEY SPENT ON THESE PROGRAMS AND SERVICES, RETENTION AND GRADUATION RATES HAVE NOT IMPROVED OVER TIME”

SEIDMAN SAYS
## College Retention Trends

1983-2005

First to Second Year Retention Trends

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Highest %</th>
<th>Lowest%</th>
<th>2005%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Two-Year Public</strong></td>
<td>53.1 ('83)</td>
<td>51.3 ('04)</td>
<td>51.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Two-Year Private</strong></td>
<td>72.6 ('92)</td>
<td>61.7 ('05)</td>
<td>61.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>BA/BS Public</strong></td>
<td>70.0 ('04)</td>
<td>66.4 ('96, '05)</td>
<td>66.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>BA/BS Private</strong></td>
<td>74.0 ('89)</td>
<td>60.1 ('97)</td>
<td>70.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MA Public</strong></td>
<td>70.1 ('05)</td>
<td>68.1 ('89)</td>
<td>70.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MA Private</strong></td>
<td>78.0 ('85)</td>
<td>74.3 ('03)</td>
<td>75.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PhD Public</strong></td>
<td>78.1 ('04)</td>
<td>73.3 ('86)</td>
<td>77.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PhD Private</strong></td>
<td>85.0 ('85)</td>
<td>82.1 ('05)</td>
<td>82.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>National</strong></td>
<td>68.3 ('04, '05)</td>
<td>66.6 ('96)</td>
<td>68.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ACT Institutional Data File, 2005
# College Retention Trends

## 2004

### First to Second Year Retention Rates by Admissions Selectivity

#### 4 year colleges

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Selectivity Level</th>
<th>ACT</th>
<th>SAT</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Highly Selective</td>
<td>27-31</td>
<td>1220-1380</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>93.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selective</td>
<td>22-27</td>
<td>1030-1220</td>
<td>198</td>
<td>82.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional</td>
<td>20-23</td>
<td>950-1070</td>
<td>315</td>
<td>70.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal</td>
<td>18-21</td>
<td>870-990</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>66.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open</td>
<td>17-20</td>
<td>830-950</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>68.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>All Institutions</strong></td>
<td><strong>772</strong></td>
<td><strong>75.1</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ACT Institutional Data File 2004
### College Completion Rates

**1983-2005**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Highest %</th>
<th>Lowest %</th>
<th>2004%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Two-Year Public</strong></td>
<td>38.8 ('89)</td>
<td>27.5 ('05)</td>
<td>27.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Two-Year Private</strong></td>
<td>66.4 ('90)</td>
<td>51.9 ('04)</td>
<td>57.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>BA/BS Public</strong></td>
<td>52.8 ('96)</td>
<td>39.5 ('05)</td>
<td>39.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>BA/BS Private</strong></td>
<td>56.7 ('04)</td>
<td>53.3 ('01)</td>
<td>56.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MA/MS Public</strong></td>
<td>46.7 ('86)</td>
<td>37.0 ('00)</td>
<td>38.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MA/MS Private</strong></td>
<td>58.4 ('88)</td>
<td>53.5 ('01)</td>
<td>55.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PhD Public</strong></td>
<td>50.6 ('89, '90)</td>
<td>45.0 ('01)</td>
<td>46.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PhD Private</strong></td>
<td>68.8 ('86)</td>
<td>63.1 ('05)</td>
<td>63.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>National</strong></td>
<td>54.6 ('90)</td>
<td>50.9 ('01)</td>
<td>51.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Three years or less
** Five years or less

Source: ACT Institutional Data File 2005
SEIDMAN SAYS

“FOR INTERVENTION PROGRAMS AND SERVICES TO BE SUCCESSFUL THEY MUST BE POWERFUL ENOUGH TO EFFECT CHANGE”
How Do You Get From Talk To Action?

FORM A CROSS-FUNCTIONAL COMMITTEE

OF COURSE!!!

RETENTION COMMITTEE
Statement of the Problem
Definition (s)
Data Gathering
Model
What Are You Planning To Do?
Implementation
Assessment
Keep Campus Informed

EM = Optimum recruitment, retention and graduation
Retention Is An Institution Wide Process

Linking Services

STUDENT

CAMPUS

ACADEMIC
“BUT I ALREADY HAVE TOO MUCH TO DO. TEACH, ADVISE, RESEARCH, COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT, DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEES, COLLEGE COMMITTEES. RETENTION IS ‘NOT MY JOB’. ”
IMAGINE. THEY WANT US TO DO MORE WORK. WHAT IS THIS RETENTION FORMULA ANYWAY?
“Tough day at the labyrinth?”
### There Is A Role For College Community In Retention

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>College Community</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Who Helps Maintain Enrollments?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who Helps Retain Students?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who Helps Students Meet Their Academic &amp; Personal Goals?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who Helps Link Academic &amp; Student Services?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who Helps Increase Student Satisfaction?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

IT IS A FACULTY, STAFF, STUDENT & ADMINISTRATIVE PARTNERSHIP
Top Level Support Needed
RETENTION COMMITTEE

Chair: Faculty Member
Recruit Members From The College Community

Statement of the Problem
We Can/Want To Do Better

Define Retention/Attrition
What Is Your Definition of Retention?

Gather Data/Benchmark
Compare with Peers (are you satisfied with your results?)

Model for Your Interventions
Tinto Model

What Do You Plan to Do?
RET = E_{ID} + (E+IN+C)_{IV}

Assign Responsibility
Faculty, Student Affairs Staff, Institutional Research etc.

Evaluation Plan:
Evaluate/Modify Where Necessary
“I can’t live in a glen that has such a narrow definition of what it is to be elfin.”
Defining Retention/Attrition

PROGRAM RETENTION: Tracks the full-time, first-time student in a degree program over time (6yrs/4yr college, 3yrs/2yr college) to determine whether the student has completed the program.

COURSE RETENTION: The number of students enrolled in each credit course after the course census date and the number of students who successfully complete the course with an A-D grade at the end of the semester.

STUDENT RETENTION: If a student does not enroll for two consecutive regular semesters, determine whether the student has achieved his/her academic and/or personal goals.

Your College Definition Of Student Retention/Attrition
SEIDMAN SAYS

“BENCHMARK WITH PEER INSTITUTIONS. DO YOU KNOW WHO YOUR PEERS ARE? DO YOU HAVE A RETENTION AND/OR GRADUATION PROBLEM?”
Tinto Model Major Concepts

Stages Of Passage In Student College Careers

- **Separation** From Communities Of The Past
- The **Transition** Between High School And College
- **Incorporation** Into The Society Of The College

**Interactions**

- Individual Pre-entry College Attributes Such As Family Background, Skill And Ability, Prior Schooling Form Individual Goals And Commitments
- Individual’s Goals And Commitments Interact **Over Time** With Institutional Experiences (Formal And Informal Academic And Social Systems)
- The Extent The Individual Becomes Academically And Socially Integrated Into The Academic And Social Systems Determines Departure Decision

Tinto Model Of Institutional Departure

"Student involvement" refers to the amount of physical and psychological energy that a student devotes to the academic experience.

Highly involved student who devotes considerable energy to studying, participates in student organizations, and interacts frequently with faculty members, is more committed to the institution.

The more committed to the institution, the higher likelihood of success.

Anything that is done to enhance a student's commitment to a goal and to the institution should further enhance his/her social and academic integration, and therefore promote retention.

Person-Environment Fit Theory

• Person-environment fit theory predicts that congruence between the person and the social environment results in satisfaction

• Institutional programs that promote student institutional "fit" from the beginning and programs, which promote student development and involvement in the institution, should produce satisfied students.

• Satisfied students should achieve their academic and personal goals more fully than those students who are not satisfied with the institution or its environment.

A Retention Formula For Student Success

“FOR INTERVENTION PROGRAMS AND SERVICES TO BE SUCCESSFUL THEY MUST BE POWERFUL ENOUGH TO EFFECT CHANGE”

*\[ \text{RET} = E_{\text{ID}} + (E + \text{IN} + C)_{\text{IV}} \]*

*\[ \text{RETENTION} = \text{EARLY}_{\text{IDENTIFICATION}} + (\text{EARLY} + \text{INTENSIVE} + \text{CONTINUOUS})_{\text{INTERVENTION}} \]

*©Seidman2001*
EARLY IDENTIFICATION

Prior To Enrollment

At The Earliest Possible Time Identify “The Student At Risk” Academically & Socially

What Is The College Profile Of Previous Unsuccessful Student?

Use College Specific Data As An Initial Screening Tool

“FOR INTERVENTION PROGRAMS AND SERVICES TO BE SUCCESSFUL THEY MUST BE POWERFUL ENOUGH TO EFFECT CHANGE”
Identifying Students

At Application Through The Examination Of Academic Records & Recommendations

- Essays
- Standardized Assessment
- College Assessment
- Academic Goals
- Personal Goals
- Parents Educational Attainment
- Economic Level
- Family Structure

“FOR INTERVENTION PROGRAMS AND SERVICES TO BE SUCCESSFUL THEY MUST BE POWERFUL ENOUGH TO EFFECT CHANGE”
EARLY IDENTIFICATION

After Enrollment

As Early In The Semester As Possible

Use *Faculty Knowledge* of Student Behaviors To Help Define The “Student At Risk” Faculty Know Their Students

Faculty Should Be Able To Submit Names Anytime During The Term

Follow-up With Faculty

“FOR INTERVENTION PROGRAMS AND SERVICES TO BE SUCCESSFUL THEY MUST BE POWERFUL ENOUGH TO EFFECT CHANGE”
Faculty Know Their Students

Characteristics Students Exhibit In Class That May Indicate A Need For Intervention?
- Poor Attendance
- Distracted Easily
- Failing Tests And/or Quizzes
- Does Not Participate In Class Discussions
- Falling Asleep In Class; Always Tired

Faculty Should Be Able To Submit Names Anytime During The Term
- Use Opscan Form
- Enter Information Directly From Office Computer

Follow-up
- With Faculty Indicating That The Student Has Been Contacted
- Feedback From Faculty The Effectiveness Of The Intervention

Retention = Early Identification + (Early + Intensive + Continuous) Intervention
**EARLY INTERVENTION**

**ASSESSMENT** (Identification)

Either Prior To Enrollment or As Soon After As Possible

**DIAGNOSIS** (Directly After Assessment)

Student Needs To Meet With A Professional To Interpret Assessment With The Student

**INTERVENTION**

Develop Prescription (Contract) With The Student

- Remediation
- Restriction Of Credits
- Attend Campus/Off Campus Programs/AA
  - Tutorials
  - Peer Counseling
  - Psychological Counseling

**FOLLOW-UP**

Schedule Follow-up/Monitoring Sessions
Keep Faculty Informed of Student Progress/Give Feedback

Retention = Early Identification + (Early + Intensive + Continuous) Intervention
"FOR INTERVENTION PROGRAMS AND SERVICES TO BE SUCCESSFUL THEY MUST BE POWERFUL ENOUGH TO EFFECT CHANGE"

Intensive Enough And Meet Regularly To Be Effective

Must Be Focused On Identified Problem(s)
Regular Feedback To The Student On Progress (Outcome Measures)

Modify Intervention Where Necessary

Retention = Early Identification + (Early + Intensive + Continuous) Intervention
CONTINUOUS INTERVENTION

“FOR INTERVENTION PROGRAMS AND SERVICES TO BE SUCCESSFUL THEY MUST BE POWERFUL ENOUGH TO EFFECT CHANGE”

Continue As Long As It Takes The Student To Demonstrate That He/She No Longer Needs The Intervention

Regular Contact With A Professional To Ascertaining Student Progress

Adjust Intervention Where Necessary

Retention = Early Identification + (Early + Intensive + Continuous) Intervention
Look At Your Programs And Services

Do They:

• Help Bond Students To Students?
• Help Bond Students To The College?
• Identify Specific Deficiencies?
• Remediate Deficiencies?

Seidman Says:

“Do Not Recruit Students To Your Campus Who Will Not Be Successful Unless You Are Willing To Provide Programs And Services To Help Overcome Deficiencies. Philosophy Does Not Have To Follow Finance”
Implementing the Seidman Formula

Retention = Early ID + (Early + Intensive + Continuous) Intervention

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RETENTION COMMITTEE

“FOR INTERVENTION PROGRAMS AND SERVICES TO BE SUCCESSFUL
THEY MUST BE POWERFUL ENOUGH TO EFFECT CHANGE”

- Statement of the Problem
- Define Retention/Attrition
- Gather Data/Benchmark
- Model for Your Interventions
- What Do You Plan to Do?

Assign Responsibility
- Faculty, Student Affairs Staff, Institutional Research etc.

Evaluation Plan:
- Evaluate/Modify Where Necessary

Retention = Early Identification + (Early + Intensive + Continuous) Intervention
“The dip in sales seems to coincide with the decision to eliminate the sales staff.”
Is It Cost Effective To Keep Students?

Tuition & Fees = $10,000 per year
(Three Year Loss Per Student = $30,000)

ONLY
10
STUDENTS

$50,000 ONE TERM

= =

$300,000 THREE YEARS

This does not count auxiliary services money
So, Does The Seidman Formula Work?

Reisberg’s (1999) article in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* states, “Ohio State University...has turned to a high-priced consultant to identify incoming freshmen who are most at risk of dropping out before their sophomore year... (p. 54).” He continues, “Using admissions applications, high-school transcripts, and surveys of freshmen... and noted the common characteristics of the students who returned, as well as those of students who did not. The company used that data to assign "at-risk" scores to freshmen who enrolled in 1998 (p. 56).”

“The report also found that Seidman’s retention model does apply to the colleges studied, with early and intense intervention providing a positive influence on retention rates.”

“What does he know, and how long will he know it?”
Thank You

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