Redefining Retention:
Designing Community College Enrollment Management

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Glendale Community College

The "Retention Problem"

At Glendale College

- About 40% of Fall applicants do not register for any classes (about 2,800 students)

- About 30% of new students who enroll in Fall do not return in Spring (about 800 students)

- About 50% of new students who enroll in Fall do not return the following Fall (about 1,400 students)

Retention Research

A) Identification of Persisters and Non-Persisters

- Logistic Regression

B) Surveys of Non-Persisters

- Telephone Survey of Applicants
- Mail Survey of Non-Persisters

Retention Research

Identification of Persisters and Non-Persisters

Logistic Regression

- 1,834 new students (persisters and non-persisters)
- Dependent variable: Fall-to-Spring persistence
- Stepwise, Likelihood-Ratio Test

Retention Research

Identification of Persisters and Non-Persisters

Predictor Variables

- On academic or progress probation
- Units attempted
- Units completed
- Age

- Semester GPA (thirds)
- Cumulative GPA (thirds)
- Known English/ESL placement
- Known Math placement
- Basic Skills English/ESL placement
- Basic Skills Math placement

- Transfer goal
- Vocational goal
- Undecided goal
- Full-time in Fall
- Took English in Fall
- Took ESL in Fall
- Took Math in Fall
- Sex

Retention Research

Goodness of Fit

Predicted 81.9% correctly

Indicator	χ^2	df	Sig
-2 Log Likelihood	1,542.89	1,828	1.00
Model Chi-Square	375.85	5	<0.0005
Improvement	5.48	1	0.019
Goodness of Fit	1,898.22	1,828	0.124
Residual	14.81	13	0.320

Retention Research

Significant Predictors

New students' persistence from Fall to Spring was associated positively with the following predictors:

- Not on academic or progress probation
- Units attempted
- Units completed
- Known English/ESL placement
- Known Math placement

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Retention Research

Significant Predictors

Variable	B	Wald	Sig	R
Probation	-1.53	128.54	<.0005	-0.26
Units Attempted	0.15	71.13	<.0005	0.19
Units Completed	0.01	9.22	0.002	0.06
English Unknown	-0.92	27.93	<.0005	-0.12
Math Unknown	-0.34	5.52	0.019	-0.04
Constant	0.96	24.21	<.0005	

Retention Research

B) Telephone Survey of Applicants Who Did Not Register

"Why did you decide not to register for classes?"

- Telephone survey of students who filed applications but did not register for classes
- 169 students contacted

Retention Research

B) Telephone Survey of Applicants Who Did Not Register

Primary Reasons for Not Registering:

	% Primary Reasons
Classes full	20%
Job hours conflicted with class times	15%
"Other" reasons	10%
Other scheduling problems	8%

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Retention Research

C) Mail Survey of Fall-to-Spring Non-Persisters

"Which of the following were reasons you decided not to enroll at Glendale College in Spring 2000?"

- 39 possible responses
- 4,809 surveys mailed
- 606 responses (13% response rate)

Retention Research

C) Mail Survey of Fall-to-Spring Non-Persisters

	% of Responses
Job hours conflicted with class times	29%
Parking too difficult	24%
Could not take classes at offered times	18%
Family changes	14%
Classes full	9%

Office of Retention Services

Student Services Coordinator - Retention

Office of Retention Services

February 2000

College administration created a new position in charge of student retention efforts.

"The Office of Retention Services is primarily an administrative service unit which provides information, coordination, and support to activities identified and associated with student retention through a program of assessment, collaboration, and coordination with the entire campus community."

A retention position can focus on retention issues across departmental lines and attempt to resolve them, involving the entire campus community.

Office of Retention Services

All Community Colleges face similar problems in the areas of student retention and persistence.

- Why don't students persist, and who are they?
- Why don't students succeed, and who are they?
- Why do students who <u>can</u> succeed decide to leave?
- Why don't students use the services available?

Office of Retention Services

Student Responses to Mailed Survey (Qualitative)

- Thanks for caring
- Willingness to return to college
- Need for further research on scheduling issues
- Need for personal outreach program

Office of Retention Services

Personalized outreach and interventions for existing students:

- Orientation reminder calls
- Welcome and information calls to new students
- Outreach calls to students who have dropped all their units
- Outreach letters to non-returning, first-time probation students

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Plans for future outreach and intervention:

- Tuition reminder calls
- "Early Alert" follow-up calls
- "SEP" invitation calls
- Non-returning student surveys (ongoing)

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Office of Retention Services

Retention Newsletter

- Involve the entire campus
- Retention information and activities
- Faculty and staff profiles
- Student testimonials

Office of Retention Services

There is not a lot of magic to this. If we do the following, we can help our students reach their educational goals:

- Coordinate our retention efforts
- Show students that we value them
- Track our results

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