Student Success

Improving Retention and Graduation Rates at UMKC
Why Retention Matters
Why is Retention Important?

- When students are successful it benefits the student as well as their community; earning potential and career opportunities increase with the level of education.
- Departments are losing top performing students.
- Retaining students is less expensive than recruiting new students.
- First year persistence and graduation rates are standard measures of academic quality as well as measures of institutional effectiveness.
National Retention and Graduation Rates
National Retention at a Glance

- Improved freshmen persistence increases the likelihood that students will complete a program of study and graduate. This creates an important link between persistence and graduation rates.

- Freshman year is the most critical period for student retention; approximately 20% of students are not retained their second year.

- Approximately 41% of all college students drop out within 6 years of entry.

- Although we are focusing heavily on freshmen persistence, the ultimate goal is to improve student success and retention at every level and, ultimately, our graduation rates.
National Attrition Rate by Year in College

- First Year 20%
- Second Year 10%
- Third Year 8%
### National Graduation Rates in Public Institutions by Selectivity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Selectivity</th>
<th>1st Year Retention Rate</th>
<th>4 Year Graduation Rate</th>
<th>5 Year Graduation Rate</th>
<th>6 Year Graduation Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Highly Selective</td>
<td>86.7%</td>
<td>49.5%</td>
<td>67.2%</td>
<td>70.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selective</td>
<td>76.6%</td>
<td>28.0%</td>
<td>47.0%</td>
<td>52.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UMKC</td>
<td>69.3%</td>
<td>18.2%</td>
<td>30.9%</td>
<td>46.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderately Selective</td>
<td>73.2%</td>
<td>23.3%</td>
<td>41.4%</td>
<td>46.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less Selective</td>
<td>69.8%</td>
<td>16.1%</td>
<td>32.7%</td>
<td>39.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: CSRDE, 2007-08 Cohort from Public institutions with undergraduate enrollment from 5,000 to 17,999
Retention and Graduation Rates at UMKC
Average Rates of Cohort Departure for Fall 2000-Fall 2006 Cohorts

- During 1st year:
  - With Medicine and Pharmacy: 31%
  - Without Medicine and Pharmacy: 33%

- During 2nd year:
  - With Medicine and Pharmacy: 12%
  - Without Medicine and Pharmacy: 14%

- During 3rd year:
  - With Medicine and Pharmacy: 6%
  - Without Medicine and Pharmacy: 6%
Retention and Graduation of Minority Students are of Particular Concern

Retention and graduation rates are consistently lower for under-represented students.
# National Retention and Graduation by Minority Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Selective/Public Institutions</th>
<th>1&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; Year Retention Rate</th>
<th>4 Year Grad Rate</th>
<th>5 Year Grad Rate</th>
<th>6 Year Grad Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>UMKC</td>
<td>UMKC</td>
<td>UMKC</td>
<td>UMKC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian</td>
<td>65.8%</td>
<td>53.5%</td>
<td>15.2%</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>77.4%</td>
<td>64.5%</td>
<td>21.2%</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>77.3%</td>
<td>69.3%</td>
<td>21.7%</td>
<td>11.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>83.7%</td>
<td>82.6%</td>
<td>26.7%</td>
<td>13.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonresident International</td>
<td>77.4%</td>
<td>83.2%</td>
<td>30.5%</td>
<td>33.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>78.0%</td>
<td>68.7%</td>
<td>31.0%</td>
<td>21.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Average</td>
<td>78.1%</td>
<td>69.3%</td>
<td>29.3%</td>
<td>18.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Consortium for Student Retention Data Exchange, 2000-06 cohorts at 105 selective public institutions
4 Retention Myths
Myth #1

Myth: UMKC students are not “good” students or not as good as students at other urban institutions.

Reality: Incoming UMKC freshmen have high school performance and standardized test profiles similar to peer institutions.
## UMKC Peer Comparison

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Acceptance Rate</th>
<th>Top 10%</th>
<th>SAT/ACT 25%-75%</th>
<th>Grad Rate</th>
<th>Full-time Undergrad</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UMKC</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>21-28</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>5,486</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UAB</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>21-27</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>7,765</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UofL</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>21-27</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>11,537</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VCW</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>20-26*</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>17,456</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UIC</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>21-26</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>14,378</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George Mason</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>22-27*</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>13,931</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cinci</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>21-27</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>16,841</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Myth #2

Myth: A large proportion of UMKC students are admitted to the university by exception.

Reality: On average, UMKC admits 26% of an incoming class by exception.
Proportion of Freshmen Students Admitted by Exception

Admitted Without Exception: 74%
Admitted by Exception: 27%
Myth #3

Myth: UMKC freshmen are working too many hours.

Reality: UMKC freshmen do NOT work significantly more than the national average for freshmen in urban institutions.
UMKC Freshmen Who Work >10 hours – Comparison to Urban Consortium

Source: National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE).
Myth #4

Myth: UMKC freshmen do not perform well academically; most non-persistors receive academic disqualification.

Reality: Approximately 2 out of 3 freshmen who leave UMKC leave in good standing.

68% leave with an overall GPA of 2.0 or above. 33% leave with an overall GPA of 3.0 or above.
GPAs of First-time, Full-time Freshmen Who Left UMKC in 2008

Source: UMKC Institutional Research, Assessment & Planning
The Truth About Retention at UMKC

- No single factor adequately explains UMKC’s lower-than-expected persistence and graduation rates.
  - “…the isolation of factors or groups of factors is misguided because departure is a complicated interplay among many factors.” Braxton & Lee, 2005

- Multiple factors influence persistence & graduation rates and require comprehensive and multi-faceted interventions.

- We must intensify our efforts at enhancing student retention/success university-wide.
Example: Factors predicting student retention

*Identified by ASU Institutional Analysis*

**Credentials**
High school (HS) GPA, HS rank, academic rigor of high school, HS study habits, placement test scores, AP courses, SAT/ACT scores, pre-enrolled ASU courses success, HS level & recency of mathematics and sciences

**Connection**
Residence status, financial support/stress, family contribution, involvement, contact with faculty outside classroom, expectations of self/university, making friends, parents’ education attainment, cultural experiences available, number of large classes, satisfaction with course schedule, access to retention & student success programs and services

**Commitment**
Early application, ASU first choice to attend, work load outside class, perceived value of degree, major/change of major, percent of attempted hours completed, student expectations of performance, motivation, understanding of expectations, social/emotional difficulties, ASU gateway course(s) success, continuous enrollment
Tinto’s Model of Departure: Multivariate Modeling

- Pre-Entry attributes
- Goals/Commitments
- Institutional Experiences
- Integration
- Goals/Commitments
- Outcomes

Academic System

- Academic Performance
- Faculty/Staff Interactions

Family Background
- Intentions
- Goals and Institutional Commitments

Skills and Abilities
- Intentions
- Goals and Institutional Commitments

Prior Schooling
- Intentions
- Goals and Institutional Commitments

External Commitments
- Intentions
- Goals and Institutional Commitments

Social System
- Academic Integration
- Social Integration

Academic Integration
- Goal and Institutional Commitment

Social Integration
- External Commitments

Departure Decision

Time
Figure 6.1
Student/Institution Engagement Model Theoretical Framework

Pre-college Factors & Pull-Factors

Psychosocial Factors
- High School
- Home
- Environment

Financial Assist./ Need
- Tangible
- Intangible

Encouragement & Support from Family

Environmental Pull Factors
- Family Responsibilities
- Work Responsibilities
- Commuting to College

Initial Commitments

Educational Aspirations
Commitment to Attending a Specific Institution

Academic & Social Experiences

Formal/Informal Acad. Interactions with Faculty

Involvement in Learning Communities
- In-Class Experiences
- Outside of Class Collaborative Learning

Social Experiences
- Peer Group Interactions
- Involvement in Organizations

Campus Climates
- Perceptions of Prejudice/ Discrimination
- Tolerance versus Acceptance

Validating Experiences
- Encouragement & Support from Faculty/Staff

Mentoring Experiences
- Faculty
- Peers
- Counseling/Advising Staff

Cognitive & Non-cognitive Outcomes

Academic Perf.
- Grade Point Average

Academic & Intell. Development
- Perceived Cognitive Gains
- Actual Gains

Noncognitive Gains
- Apprec. of Fine Arts
- Valuing Diversity
- Acceptance of Others
- Member of Global Society
- Self-esteem
- Self-efficacy

Final Commitment

Educational Goal
- Degree Attainment

Institutional Commitment
- Sense of Belonging

Persistence

Reenrollment in Higher Education Institution

Source: College Student Retention: Formula for Student Success. Alan Seidman, Editor.
Principles of Effective Retention (Tinto)

- Institutional commitment to students; put student welfare first
- Institutional commitment to educate all, not just some, students
- Commitment to development of supportive social & intellectual communities that attempt to integrate all students
- Early identification of students at risk for dropping out combined with intensive and continuing interventions focused specifically on the needs of students (Seidman)
“We must build partnerships across campus. Student success takes the collaborative efforts of all members of the campus, faculty, staff and administration.”

Vincent Tinto, *Leaving College*