Effective Practices for Retaining and Graduating Students

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EPI
WHY RETENTION?

√ Practical Reasons
√ Educational Reasons
“Retention” requires us to examine and address fundamental questions of educational quality on our campus. It responds to our greatest concerns as educators, including the teaching/learning process.
Choosing Retention Strategies and Activities

• Importance of a framework for evaluating alternatives
A traditional view: The Deficit Model

- Students are deficient, and need remediation/repair to accommodate to the campus environment.

- The institution is static. It is unchanged and unaffected by student characteristics experiences, needs, and strengths.
An “Asset” Model

- Student success and institutional quality are the result of interactions between students and the institution.
- The campus climate is a critical factor in facilitating student retention and success.
- The institution is dynamic. Institutional planners are intentional about promoting change in response to student experiences and characteristics.
The **Structural** Dimension

Effects result in changes to:

- Students and the Institution
  - Changes to Gatekeeper Courses
  - Audit of high D/F/W Courses
  - Supplemental Instruction
  - Tutoring
- Students only
The **Structural** Dimension Effects result in changes to:

- Students and the Institution
- Students only
- Structured First Year
- Freshman Interest Groups
- Block Scheduling
The **Intentionality** Dimension

- Intentional, Coordinated
- Random; effects or participation left to chance

**Institutional Retention Plans/Accountability**

**Structured First Year**

**Leveraging student behavior/connection**

**Letter to units encouraging effort. Optional Workshops**

**Departmental Retention Plans/Accountability**

**First Year Seminar**

**Training for Front-Line Staff**

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The **Intrusiveness** Dimension

Developmental Stages

- Institution designs key experiences and Influences student participation
- Decisions, feedback left to students

- **Data-driven discussions with all students**
- Instructors report absences, mid-term grades for all students
- Grade Monitoring for specific populations
- Probation Letters inform of status
The Cross-Boundary Dimension

Integrated

Senior Year Transition

Learning Center/ Faculty Development Center

Community College Connection

Supplemental Instruction

Common Readings

Isolated

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ACADEMIC IMPRESSIONS
Retention Strategy…

• ...should be connected to institutional situation and needs.

• ...should reflect institutional choices along dimensions of structure, intentionality, intrusiveness, and integration.