# Call for Proposals

**November 2-4, 2015**  
**Orlando, FL**

Proposal submission deadline – **April 3, 2015**  
Notification of proposal acceptance – **April 15, 2015**  
Paper submission deadline – **June 5, 2015**  
Paper review and decision process – **June 16 – August 9, 2015**  
Notification of paper acceptance – **August 10, 2015**

## Summary of Submission Requirements

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| **Papers**           | Abstract no longer than 200 words. | Paper Required  
10 page limit (not including references) that conforms to [conference paper style guide](#). |
| **Panels**           | Abstract no longer than 200 words. | Paper Required  
The Panel Chair may choose to submit either one paper for the group (10 pages), or each panelist may submit a 3-5-page paper on their portion of the panel. Papers must conform to the [conference paper style guide](#). If the panel members are submitting individual papers, the Panel Chair is responsible for ensuring that all panel members submit their papers by the deadline. |
| **Posters**          | Abstract no longer than 200 words. | Paper Optional  
Papers are not required for these presentations; however, if you choose to submit a paper for peer review, papers must conform to the [conference paper style guide](#) and be no longer than 10 pages (not including references). |
| **Pre-Conference Workshops** | Abstract no longer than 200 words.  
Specify your request for either a half or full day presentation.  
Provide bio and learning objectives. | Paper Not Required |
| **Tutorials**        | Abstract no longer than 200 words.  
Specify your request for either a one or two 50-minute time block. | Paper Required  
Brief 3-5 page “how to” paper that conforms to the [conference tutorial paper style guide](#).  
**Note:** PowerPoint notes or handouts will not satisfy this requirement. |
| **Vendor Presentations** | | See [Exhibitor/Sponsor Application](http://csrde.ou.edu/web/symposium) |

[Conference paper style guide](#)
Proposal Submission Process - Due April 3, 2015
A separate submission must be completed for each proposal.

All participants interested in submitting a proposal for the National Symposium on Student Retention must first submit an abstract of no more than 200 words using the online Proposal Submission Site. This abstract will be used in the conference program and conference proceedings. The following information will be required for proposal submissions:

- Full contact information for all authors
  **NOTE: Email addresses for each author are required**
- Presentation Title
- Abstract (no more than 200 words)
- Presentation Track
- Presentation Type
- Level of Expertise

Proposal Submission Form
All abstracts should be submitted using the online proposal submission form at http://csrde.ou.edu/web/symposium. Please have all required information ready as you begin to complete the online form. The person who submits the proposal will receive an immediate acknowledgement email after submitting the proposal. It is our intent to notify you of the final decision on your proposal by April 15, 2015.

Submit Paper after abstract approval - Due June 5, 2015
Accepted papers, panels, and tutorials require the submission of a paper.

Authors with accepted abstracts will be notified on how to submit their papers online. Papers will not be accepted via email. Review the table on the previous page for deadlines and requirements. Papers and panels must be in the conference format. Tutorials must be in the tutorial paper format. Papers will be peer-reviewed, and we will notify paper submitters on the status of their paper by August 10, 2015. Authors may be required to make edits to their paper as directed by the editor and suggested by the reviewers in preparation for publication in the *Proceedings of the 11th Annual National Symposium on Student Retention*.

Conference Objectives

- Highlight emerging research in higher education that can inform efforts at four-year and two-year institutions to improve college student retention and graduation.
- Showcase successful, effective programs and strategies, as well as best practices of four-year and two-year institutions.
- Promote opportunities for dialog, networking, and shared understanding between colleagues who are working on issues related to student retention and success.
- Identify useful research and resources for supporting student success through the entire retention life cycle, from enrollment through graduation.

Areas of Special Interest for Proposals: Ideas for Authors
CSRDE is particularly interested in proposals which address current, evidence-based research that advances knowledge in student retention and success fields. Proposals may be submitted for audiences at introductory, intermediate, or advanced levels of experience. However, authors should be aware that while we will have some participants that are interested in introductory information, many of our participants are seeking more advanced levels of understanding.
If you are trying to select a topic area on which to write, we’d like to offer some of the following ideas:

- Programs and initiatives for the first year as well as research and initiatives which focus beyond the first year.
- Transfers and non-traditional students: issues, problems and strategies to improve their success.
- Strategies for maintaining momentum in retention initiatives.
- Research which focuses on unique issues of small institutions and/or community colleges that impact retention and completion.
- Methodologies for assessment and evaluation of incoming students and cohorts with an eye toward identifying at-risk populations.
- Methodologies and data tools for evaluating retention success.
- Methodologies for assisting under-prepared students.
- Successful institutional initiatives with lessons learned that have broad application.
- Financial aid, economic factors, and their relationship to student success.
- Bridging the preparedness gap - higher education’s relationship with K-12.
- Building successful early alert systems.
- Retention issues related to special populations, specific majors, or online/distance students.
- Role of faculty in retention initiatives: Particularly faculty-led efforts in curriculum redesign, learning engagement and teaching excellence intended to improve student completion while maintaining quality.

Conference Presentation Tracks

I. Transfers and Retention
Proposals in this track will explore a variety of issues related to transfer student retention, at community colleges and/or four year institutions. Topics may include but are not limited to: orientation, preparation, and integration of transfers into campus life; compare and contrast approaches to first-time freshman and the transfer population; examining institutional retention/graduation rates of transfers; and data collection issues.

II. Retention and Special Populations
The focus of this track will be to address the status of diverse student populations and retention efforts directed toward these groups, including but not limited to: minority students, military students, science, technology, engineering and mathematics majors (STEM) or other academic majors of concern, community college transfers, non-traditional and remedial.

III. First-Year Student Success
This track will focus on strategies and programs that have been proven to help first-year students succeed. Examples might include first-year experience, orientation, and summer bridge programs.

IV. Beyond the First Year Retention
CSRDE data indicates that the overall percentage of freshmen who do not continue after the second year and subsequent years is often equal to the percentage of students that do not continue after the freshman year. Proposals in this track will discuss what is being done to sustain institutional retention initiatives beyond the first year, research on students that do not persist during or after the second year and beyond to better understand this phenomenon, and retention interventions for these students.
V. **Academic Advising**  
The focus of this track will be the role of academic advising in student development and success. Techniques and proven models and practices are examples of the topics to be included.

VI. **Faculty: Teaching Excellence, Learning Engagement and Retention**  
The quality of student engagement in academic endeavors as well as the relationships they develop with faculty play a critical role in the success of students. Proposals are sought which highlight the importance of faculty-student interactions in retention. Examples might include the redesign of “gate keeping” courses which improve learning in order to increase the numbers of completers. Models of faculty mentorship, faculty-student research collaborations and other faculty led activities which have been demonstrated to improve student retention and completion are sought. Evaluation of new learning modalities intended to improve learning and student retention would also be welcome.

VII. **Online and Distance Students**  
Proposals in this track will address topics impacting or relating to the retention and completion of online and distance students. Topics may include: identification of characteristics of online/distance students at risk for drop-out; patterns of course taking and their relation to retention and completion; variables related to the successful retention and program completion with online students; methodologies for capturing retention and completion rates of online students; or policy changes or curriculum modifications that have favorably impacted online student retention and graduation.

VIII. **Data, Technology, and Methods**  
Proposals in this track will provide presenters with an opportunity to share analytical methods, statistical applications, or technology that is useful in the study of student retention issues. Specific topics of interest could include assessment methodologies for identifying at risk populations, data mining techniques, and evaluation of retention initiatives.

IX. **Theoretical Models of Student Retention and Success**  
This track focuses on concepts, principles, or relationships between concepts and principles, which effect the student retention life cycle. Examples might include research on theories of engagement; student perception; prediction of retention and graduation; and the influence of student, institutional or external variables (e.g. economy) on retention.

X. **Graduate Student Retention**  
This track will address issues related to the success of graduate students. Topics might include: tracking graduate student retention and graduation data; what strategies keep these students enrolled; what impedes their completion; and what are the special needs of this population.

XI. **Programs and Initiatives**  
Proposals in this track will discuss innovative programs and institutional initiatives at either 4-year or 2-year institutions which have been demonstrated to improve student retention and success. Papers that include a clear evaluation component which measures the effectiveness of the initiatives/interventions in improving retention and completions are preferred. Papers on new promising programs with preliminary findings will be considered. In some cases, papers on initial implementations will be invited to present as a poster or within a panel. General topics in this category might include: institution-wide,
multi-faceted initiatives; early alert programs; intervention programs (for poor math or English skills); or learning communities.

**Description on Presentation Types**

**I. Paper - Presented during 50 minute concurrent sessions**

Papers continue to be the preferred contribution to the National Symposium on Student Retention. One of the reasons for the great success of this conference has been the quality presentations backed by peer-reviewed papers. When choosing presentations for the conference program, proposals for papers will be given consideration over the other presentation types. Authors desiring to present a paper are asked first to submit an abstract of no more than 200 words. Once the abstract has been approved, the authors will then be asked to submit a ten-page paper. All papers will be peer-reviewed, accepted papers will be published in the conference proceedings and authors will be invited to present at the conference. Detailed instructions on the paper submission process will be e-mailed to authors whose abstracts have been accepted. All papers must be in the conference format. Papers not meeting those requirements will not be accepted.

The format for presenting accepted papers will be an informative session during which the author(s) will discuss their paper. This is not a session where the author “reads” the paper. Typically presenters use PowerPoint slides and interact with the audience to convey the key elements of their paper and findings.

**NOTE:** All accepted papers will be considered for one of three cash awards which will be presented to the submitting institution at the conference.

- The CSRDE Best Practices in Student Retention ($2,000).
- Institutional Research Leadership in Student Retention ($1,000).
- Director’s Award best addresses a current issue of interest ($750).

**II. Panel - Presented during 50 minute concurrent sessions**

A Panel consists of 3-5 people, including the Panel Chair. Its purpose is to expose the audience to well researched and reasoned views, programs, or approaches that focus on a common theme, issue, or question related to any of the conference topic areas. It is not uncommon, in the spirit of good academic discourse, for panelists to have opposing perspectives on the issue being discussed.

Panelists may not represent the same institution. A presentation by institutional colleagues on a joint project is best presented as a paper with multiple authors. Likewise, a panel is not an appropriate venue for a presentation by an exhibitor/vendor and a client using their services.

Panels must provide an opportunity for audience participation. Thus, the panelists should take no more than 30 of the total 50 minutes to make their case and then guide the audience through a discussion and series of questions and answers.

The Panel chair should provide a 200 word abstract describing the panel topic and the general issues that will be highlighted by the panel. Panel selection will be based on the importance, originality, focus and timeliness of the topic, as well as the potential for informative AND controversial discussion.

After acceptance, members of the panel have two options: the Panel Chair may submit one 10-page paper, or each member of the panel may submit a 3-5 page paper on their portion of the presentation. Papers must conform to the conference paper style guide or they will not be accepted. If members choose to write their own paper, the Panel Chair is
III. **Poster - Presented during “exhibit hall” type session**

Posters are presented using a poster board visual display and handout materials. We provide the 30” x 40” foam core board and presenters will provide the materials to attach to it. Poster sessions are perfect for the presentation of preliminary findings and conceptual models. Presenters will be on-hand to discuss their posters during the “exhibit hall” type session specifically dedicated to posters. Participants interested in sharing a poster will need to submit a 200 word abstract proposal on the topic and findings to be addressed by the poster. No paper is required. However, if the author wishes to submit a paper for peer review and present in the poster format, this is also acceptable. The paper must conform to the [conference paper style guide](#) or they will not be accepted. Historically, papers on preliminary program designs or preliminary results have been invited to present in this format.

**NOTE:** Paper submissions will be judged onsite for the CSRDE Best Poster Award ($500).

IV. **Tutorial - Presented during either one or two 50-minute sessions**

These “how-to” tutorial sessions provide the audience with the opportunity to learn a skill, methodology, procedure, or issue related to the conference topics. Examples of tutorials may include topics such as Using Excel and Microsoft Query for Manipulating Databases and How to Conduct a Survey on Student Satisfaction. Presenters of a tutorial should submit a 200 word abstract that discusses the topic and the learning objectives. It should provide a brief description of the activities and plans for audience participation.

Once the proposal has been accepted, the presenter will be required to submit a 3-5 page “how to” paper, which will be included in the conference proceedings and must conform to the [conference tutorial paper style guide](#) or they will not be accepted. Note: PowerPoint notes or handouts will not satisfy this requirement.

**NOTE:** No computers or internet access will be provided for tutorials. You may ask the participants to bring their laptops into the session by noting it in your abstract.

V. **Pre-Conference Workshop - Presented during one half-day or full-day session**

Pre-conference workshops are intended to enhance the skills and broaden the perspective of their attendees. They should be well organized with specific learning objectives and activities to support the participants in achieving the objectives. Workshops will be selected on the basis of the instructors' qualifications for teaching the proposed workshop and its coherence with the overall symposium. Presenters of a workshop should submit a 200 word abstract that discusses the topic. In addition, each presenter will be asked to provide their learning objectives, as well as a brief bio of 150 words or less. A paper is not required.

VI. **Vendor Presentation - Presented during 50 minute concurrent sessions**

The vendor presentation is intended to provide both commercial and not-for-profit organizations an opportunity to interact with interested symposium participants. Vendor presentations occur during the concurrent sessions and provide the vendor with 50 minutes to highlight the features and benefits of their services, products, or surveys. Please see the [Exhibitor/Sponsor Information](#) for more instructions on submitting an abstract. A limited number of these slots are available.