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October 3-5, 2005
Dallas, Texas
Wyndham Dallas North by the Galleria

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Monday, October 3, 2005

**11:00 AM-8:00 PM**

**Room:** Pre-function Area Outside of Ballroom

Registration

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**1:00-4:30**

**Room:** Platinum

**Pre-Conference Workshop: Mr. Tim Culver**

*Developing your Campus-wide Retention Plan.*

Mr. Culver is Associate Vice President, Retention Consulting for Noel-Levitz. He consults directly with institutions, helping them identify retention enhancement opportunities.

With a technological and strategic planning background, Mr. Culver offers a unique perspective when developing and implementing successful enrollment management and student success programs. He has assisted in the creation of recruiting, enrollment management, retention, and communication plans, as well as the analysis of institutional research.

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**5:00-5:30**

**Room:** Bronze Ballroom

**Welcome Address**

Rosemary Hayes, The University of Oklahoma

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**5:30-6:30**

**Room:** Bronze Ballroom

**Keynote Address: Dr. Charles Schroeder**

*Student Engagement: The Key to Fostering Student Success.*

Charles Schroeder offers more than two decades of experience as a higher education administrator and writer on student affairs and the student experience. Dr. Schroeder has consulted with more than 100 institutions throughout North America. Dr. Schroeder served as a chief student affairs officer for 22 years, most recently at the University of Missouri–Columbia. He has also held that position at Mercer University (GA), St. Louis University (MO), and Georgia Institute of Technology. At Missouri, Dr. Schroeder was a professor of higher education as well.

A prolific writer and editor, Dr. Schroeder has published more than 60 books and articles on higher education. His most recent book (2005) is entitled "Achieving and Sustaining Institutional Excellence for the First Year of College".

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**6:30-8:00**

**Room:** Copper-Nickel/Silver/Gold

Reception
Tuesday, October 4, 2005

7:30-8:15  Room: Pre-function Area Outside of Ballroom
Continental Breakfast

8:15-9:30  Room: Bronze Ballroom
Tuesday Plenary Address: Dr. John Gardner

Dr. John Gardner, Executive Director of the Policy Center on the First Year of College.

Dr. Gardner is a visionary educator, author, consultant, speaker, and change agent. He is the founder of the National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition at the University of South Carolina and the co-founder of the Policy Center on the First Year of College. He is the recipient of numerous professional awards, as well as seven honorary doctoral degrees, recognizing him for his contributions to American higher education.


9:40-10:30  Room: Copper-Nickel
Enhancing Student Success in Post Secondary Education
Track: Theory, Research Methods, Data Tools, and Technology

Fiona Bain-Greenwood, Seneca College
Henry Decock, Seneca College

This paper describes a Canadian federally funded experimental retention project at Seneca College aimed at increasing student success at the post-secondary level. The study was conceived with the specific objective of determining the effectiveness of selected proactive intervention strategies on the persistence rate of students who are at risk for non-completion of their program of study. The long term goal is to extrapolate from the findings any policy implications and factors that will enable the replication of similar support services to adult learners in other contexts. With the project completing the pilot phase, the paper and presentation will discuss the origins of the project, the logistical and practical issues associated with implementation, and some preliminary assessment of the work to date.

The Freshman Integrating Tracking System (FITS) is being used to identify at risk student who will be randomly selected to participate and be assigned to one of three experimental groups. The first group will be supported by a Learning Support Centre and will be required to participate in one of four intervention strategies: Language Skills Remediation, Math Remediation, Career Clarification, Peer Mentoring; participants in the second will be invited, but not required, to partake of the strategies offered; and those in the third, which will be the control group, will have no intervention of any kind but may access the services at their own initiative. Both qualitative and quantitative data will be collected for the three groups over a period of two years and correlation between intervention strategies and student outcomes will be determined to assess any impact.
9:40-10:30  Room: Gold  
Let's Talk: Mentoring Freshmen in Academic Difficulty  
Track: Meritorious Programs and Initiatives  

Robert Stonebraker, Winthrop University  

Students often find their first college semester to be an academic shock. After cruising easily through high school, they suddenly find themselves struggling to earn passing grades. Some become discouraged and drop out. But with a bit more care and encouragement, many can and will succeed. Mentors can provide those links for success. Winthrop University has launched a program that matches students whose first semester grade-point average (GPA) falls below 2.00 with volunteer faculty and staff mentors. These mentors meet individually with their students on a regular basis. The mentors foster supportive relationships with students and work collaboratively to develop a plan for students' academic success. They supplement, not supplant, normal academic advising. Students who follow through with the program show a statistically significant increase in GPA compared to similar students not in the program. This paper will detail how the program works, present statistical evidence about its success, and discuss challenges still to be faced.

9:40-10:30  Room: Pearl  
Gates Millennium Scholars and Washington State Achievers Program Outcomes and Key Findings  
Track: Retention and Special Populations  

Carmen Arroyo, American Institutes for Research  
William Sedlacek, University of Maryland  
Steve Thorndill, Washington Education Foundation  
William Trent, University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana  

This panel will focus on program strategies and key findings from two scholarship programs; Gates Millennium Scholars (GMS) and Washington State Achievers (WSA). Each program selects recipients on characteristics other than grades and test scores. These non-cognitive characteristics are then developed in programs after students have enrolled in higher education. The GMS program emphasizes leadership seminars, and the WSA program has mentors and works with high schools. GMS is a national program focused on students of color while WSA is an in-state program with 41% white students. Those attending the session will learn about the specific correlates of retention for each approach from longitudinal studies of participants.

9:40-10:30  Room: Platinum  
Continuing the conversation…  
Track: Expert  

John Gardner, First Year Experience  

Participants will have the opportunity to interact with Dr. Gardner in a more informal setting, with opportunity for questions and discussions.
In the mid 1990's, Indiana University Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI) faced an embarrassing retention problem. Located in the capital city in a state ranked 48th in the nation for citizens twenty-five years of age or older with a college degree, IUPUI was not pulling its weight. Fewer than fifty percent of the 2000 entering freshmen enrolled for their sophomore year, and IUPUI stood in last place compared to its institutional peers for retaining freshmen. Dismal statistics called for innovative and, even daring solutions, a realization that gave birth to University College. IUPUI launched University College to serve entering students in 1998; the stated mission of the new academic unit was to coordinate existing university resources and develop new initiatives to promote academic excellence and enhance student persistence. A dean and forty faculty members, representing all the undergraduate and graduate schools on the campus, were appointed to collaborate with a large academic and administrative staff in an all-out effort to increase the retention and enhance the academic success of entering students. Within five years, the retention rates had climbed significantly, representing an increase of over eight percent in 2003.

In a limited-resource climate, University College experiences scrutiny despite its proven success and, as a result, is committed to an ongoing, comprehensive assessment process. All programs and personnel in University College, from academic advising, to orientation, to learning communities, and the summer bridge program, participate in regularly scheduled reviews. With the support of the campus institutional research office, University College utilizes an action research, feedback model to continuously improve all the retention programs housed in the unit. The paper and presentation will describe how University College personnel, working with all the undergraduate schools and the service offices on the campus, developed innovative courses, programs, and academic policies to increase retention. The unit’s comprehensive assessment model will also be described.

Graduation rates are one of the traditional ways a college’s success is measured, especially by outside agencies at the federal and state levels. As the Director of Institutional Research and Assessment I’m called upon to calculate retention and graduation rates (the easy part) for internal and external use as well as interpret these rates. It’s the latter that is the hard part but the job is much easier when you have CSRDE. This paper will explain how one 4 year public, moderately selective, four year university used the CSRDE reports in selecting graduation bench marks it sent to the State as well as the role CSRDE data played in choosing peer institutions.
Best Practices for Student Success at Bowling Green State University: A Comprehensive, Collaborative Effort

Track: Best Practices Award Track

Alberto Gonzalez, Bowling Green State University
William Knight, Bowling Green State University
Conrad McRoberts, Bowling Green State University
Connie Ruhl-Smith, Bowling Green State University

Bowling Green State University is a complex, state-assisted institution dedicated to student success. As opposed to an in-depth presentation on a few of BGSU’s student success initiatives, the paper presents a comprehensive array of student success initiatives that reflect the efforts of many “key players” campus-wide. On a large and complex campus such as BGSU, it is only possible to achieve desired levels of student success by focusing on multiple initiatives. Building student success requires a diversity of efforts consistent with the diverse student body that BGSU serves.

The presentation begins with a University Vision and Strategic Directions championed by BGSU’s President that view student success as a fundamental criterion for strategic investment and decision-making and a lynchpin for building a comprehensive and collaborative effort. The presentation highlights an array of initiatives that includes BGSU’s various learning communities, first year programs, course-based programs, and programs designed to meet the needs of students with specific attributes. The session offers background on efforts to employ institutionally funded student financial aid to attract and retain targeted student groups with increasing emphasis on student access.

This work describes the University’s development of an early warning system centered on the use of feedback from the “New Student Transition Questionnaire” and mid-term progress reports. The presentation includes various initiatives supported by the Ohio Board of Regents Success Challenge Program and includes discussion of evaluation, assessment, and planning support and outcomes, particularly those provided by the Office of Institutional Research. Various organizational changes and enhancements between academic and student affairs, including the creation of the Office of Student Academic Achievement and the Office of the Vice Provost for Academic Services, are addressed in the context of the University’s Strategic Enrollment Management structure.

Discussion includes attention to key task forces and standing groups such as the Strategic Enrollment Management Committee, the Retention Task Force, the Enrollment-Retention Management Group, Enrollment Network, the Advising Network, the Committee on Strategic Award Policy Planning, and the Office of Orientation and First Year Programs. Finally, the presentation concludes by conceptualizing the spectrum of student success efforts in BGSU’s Falcon Compact. This presentation addresses, in greater detail, the cross-cutting themes of collaboration, data-driven decision-making, tenacity, and recognition that there is no single “silver bullet” for student success. It is forming the base for ongoing achievement that has resulted in BGSU being identified as an institution “whose six-year graduation rate is unusually high….”


The Creation and Implementation of a "One-Stop" Student Support Services Approach to Improve Student Satisfaction and Retention at DeVry University

Track: Meritorious Programs and Initiatives

John Dunbar, DeVry University
Karen Martucci, DeVry University
Timothy Ricordati, DeVry University
Students at all age levels are becoming “consumers of education”, and therefore are demanding improved services. They want their problems solved, regardless of the school’s bureaucracy structure or administrative processes. Among the most promising recent innovations in the way student services are delivered is the implementation of “one-stop” service centers.

According to Habley (2004), one of the primary factors affecting college retention is the quality of interaction a student has with a concerned person on campus when they have a problem. In addition, Berger (2001-2002) proposed that one of the recommendations for organizational practice that can lead to student success and thereby increased persistence to graduation is to provide students with advocates to help solve their problems. Lastly, according to Rosenbaum (2004), schools can improve students’ success through organizational structures that remove barriers to progress.

In March 2005, the two campuses of DeVry University located in the Atlanta GA area embarked upon a transformation of the way student services functions are delivered, to enable students to have any of their “problems” solved by going through “one-door”. We created “Student Central” whereby all the previous dispersed functions of student finance, student activities, transcript evaluations, placement testing, housing, and academic advising are now all housed in one central location. In addition, the staffing model is based upon a Level I, Level II, and Level III service architecture whereby Level I consists of highly motivated, customer orientated Student Advocates that possess a broad general knowledge who represent the first line of assistance for our students. Level II consists of content specialists who can assist students with specific functional problems, and Level III are the functional area managers who are responsible for hearing appeals, and on-site decision making.

This paper will present the collaborative efforts between these various departments that were needed to launch this exciting and promising initiative. The student satisfaction results to date will also be presented.

10:50-11:40 Room: Platinum
Persistence of Transfer Students at DePaul University
Track: Transfers and Retention

Gerald McLaughlin, DePaul University

Transfer students account for more than a third of all new undergraduate students at DePaul. This study looks at retention and attrition of degree-seeking full-time and part-time new transfer students from 1995 through 2003. Students were grouped into cohorts, using the academic year to define the group (all summer, fall, winter, and spring of an academic year were grouped into a cohort). Each student is also identified by their term of entry. Their enrollments are then tracked for every quarter after the term of entry. Term1 is their first term, term2, second term, etc. With 5 terms per year, term6 represents the beginning of their second year, term11 the third year, term16 the fourth year, etc. Data for transfers were further analyzed based on number of hours transferred, age category and type of transferred institution. Students were classified as freshmen, sophomore or upper-level transfer equivalents based on the number of hours they transferred to DePaul University. Students transferring less than 44 hours were categorized as freshmen transfers, 44 to 88 as sophomore transfers and above 88 hours as upper-level transfers. Discussion will include observations regarding characteristics of transfer students and retention.

10:50-11:40 Room: Silver
Effective Academic Partnering For Retention: The Michigan Technological University ExSEL Program
Track: Retention and Special Populations

Chris Anderson, Michigan Technological University
Kerri Sleeman, Michigan Technological University
The ExSEL (Excelling in Science & Engineering Learning) Program is a partnership between Michigan Technological University’s College of Engineering and Department of Educational Opportunity, and the State of Michigan’s King-Chavez-Parks Initiative. Over the past four years the program has benefited the university’s minority students and lead to improved retention rates for all first year engineering students as well as increased support for under-represented students.

ExSEL combines courses, peer mentoring, and other support services to help incoming and current underrepresented minority and academically or economically disadvantaged students. ExSEL also demonstrates a strategy for improving the use of campus resources already in place including the Outreach and MultiEthnic Program Outreach Coordinators, Academic Learning Centers, student groups such as the National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE), the American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES), and the Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers (SHPE), and the Michigan Technological University Office of First Year Programs.

The ExSEL Program also provides support for special scholarship programs such as the NACME block scholarships and for students enrolled in our community college partnership program. By combining ExSEL services with other recruitment and academic enrichment programs we have helped to improve transfer rates and student academic and professional development, as well as their academic success. As a result, a broader range of students also benefit from the ExSEL Program.

This paper will describe the ExSEL Program, its collaborative efforts with existing campus resources and the support provided to the special scholar programs. Evidence of increased student retention, improved grade point averages and other data will be presented that indicate program and University goals are being met.

**Best Practices Luncheon**

**11:50-1:20**

**Room:** Bronze Ballroom

**Moderator:** Rosemary Hayes, Director CSRDE

**Honoree:** Dr. A. James Hicks, National Science Foundation

Dr. A. James Hicks, the National Science Foundation Director of the Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation, an initiative that has led to significant increases in the retention and graduation of minority STEM students.

Dr. Hicks was formerly Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at North Carolina A & T University and has more than 20 years of successful experience in administration, proposal reviews, and research evaluation.

Also at this luncheon the recipient of the 10th Annual CSRDE Best Practices Award will be named.

**1:30-2:20**

**Room:** Copper-Nickel

**Track:** Theory, Research Methods, Data Tools, and Technology

**Enhancing College Student Retention: Identification and Intervention**

James Maxey, ACT

Julie Noble, ACT

Justine Ritchie, ACT

Too few high school graduates are college or workforce-ready. To continue to successfully compete in the global economy, the United States needs an even more highly-educated and skilled workforce than now exists, one that can adapt to a rapidly changing and more technically demanding work environment. Today, six out of every ten jobs require some postsecondary education and training (Carnevale & Desrochers, 2003). By 2012, the number of jobs requiring advanced skills will grow at twice the rate of those requiring basic skills (U.S. Department of Labor, 2000; Hecker, 2004). To maintain the nation’s competitive
edge and prevent a skilled labor force shortage, our youth must have education and training beyond high school.

As a nation we have made significant advances in our college enrollment rates. However, college retention rates still need to improve, especially for underrepresented racial/ethnic minority groups. African American and Hispanic students continue to dropout of college at higher rates than do their Caucasian counterparts (Greene & Forester, 2003; Halsam & Rubenstein, 2001; The Education Trust, 2003). For example, in 1999-2000, the four-year college enrollment rate among Caucasian students was 46%, for African American students, 40%, and for Hispanic students, 34% (Harvey, 2003). However, only 55% of all undergraduates who began their studies at a given four-year institution in 1995-96 with the goal of a bachelor’s degree completed that degree within six years at that same institution (including 59% of Caucasians and 41% of both African Americans and Hispanics) (U.S. Department of Education, 2002).

In this study we examine the issue of college student retention from two perspectives: First, we examine the issue of college readiness and college retention. What are the relationships among measures of college readiness (meeting the ACT college readiness benchmarks, ACT scores, coursework taken in high school) and first-year college retention? Do these relationships differ by race/ethnicity, gender, and family income? Second, we examine current practices by postsecondary institutions to intervene with entering college students, and identify effective approaches to student retention.

1:30-2:20

Room: Gold

Using the Transition to College Inventory to Identify and Treat Freshmen At-Risk for Academic Difficulty and Attrition

Track: Meritorious Programs and Initiatives

James Calliotte, Old Dominion University
J. Worth Pickering, Old Dominion University
Stephen Zerwas, University of North Carolina at Greensboro

Identifying and intervening with at-risk freshmen early in their academic careers is critical for their success. Researchers at Old Dominion University developed the Transition to College Inventory (TCI) to identify freshmen who, in spite of good high school GPA and SAT scores, are at-risk for academic difficulty and subsequent attrition. The goal of the TCI is to use an index to identify at-risk students before the semester begins and treat them before they encounter academic difficulty. The TCI Index is an accumulation of specific issues that researchers and assessment staff use to identify low, above average, and high risk students. Academic affairs and student affairs staff and faculty in advising and counseling use the TCI Advising Profile to treat individual students. Tracking studies comparing the high risk group to the low risk group revealed significantly higher academic difficulty rates (42% vs. 18%) and attrition rates (36% vs. 20%) for high risk students after their freshman year and significantly lower six-year graduation rates (32% vs. 50%). As noted by Banta and associates in their 1996 book Assessment in Practice, ODU “uses assessment data to drive improvements in an area of particular concern, its persistence rates. Since it is imperative that students stay in school in order to obtain the benefits that accrue from a college education, the university has intentionally designed an assessment strategy focused on this one goal” (p. 22). The presenters will review the development and use of the TCI and engage participants in a discussion about treating at-risk students using sample TCI Advising Profiles.

1:30-2:20

Room: Jade

Gates Millennium Scholars and Washington State Achievers Program Research Design

Track: Theory, Research Methods, Data Tools, and Technology

Raymond Lodato, The National Opinion Research Center
Bronwyn Nichols, The National Opinion Research Center
Edward St. John, University of Michigan
William Trent, University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana
The National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago (NORC) is conducting longitudinal surveys of two scholarship programs funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. The first program (The Gates Millennium Scholars Program) is a 20-year, $1 billion effort to increase minority enrollment in the nation's colleges and universities. The program seeks to eliminate financial barriers that prevent qualified minority applicants from attending college or staying in school to the completion of their degrees. The second program (The Washington State Achievers Program) combines school reform at sixteen high schools in Washington State with the provision of college scholarships for their low-income students. Each program seeks to improve the persistence rate of low-income students and to help facilitate their retention in college through graduation.

This presentation will address research design methods and procedures related to this work that may be useful to other researchers.

1:30-2:20
Room: Pearl
The Match Factor: Exploring the Match Between Expectations and Experiences and Its Effect on Student Retention
Track: Theory, Research Methods, Data Tools, and Technology

Cathy Coghlan, Texas Christian University
Bolu Odelus, University of Texas-Arlington

One of the key factors in retention is how well student experiences match expectations. In order to assess how well the experiences of first-time, full-time students matched expectations at a mid-sized, private, doctoral-intensive university located in a suburban area in the Southwest, telephone interviews were conducted in Spring 2005 with returning and non-returning students who entered the University as first-time, full-time students in Fall 2004. There were three groups of students included in the study, students who did not re-enroll for Spring 2005, students who enrolled for Spring 2005 and plan to return in Fall 2005, and students enrolled in Spring 2005 who did not register for Fall 2005 classes.

Respondents in all groups were asked identical questions regarding how well their experiences matched the expectations they had upon coming to the University in a variety of academic and social areas. There were no differences among the Spring 2005 returners, Spring 2005 non-returners, or Non-enrolled for Fall 2005 students in regard to how well academic experiences matched academic expectations. However, the differences among the groups in regard to how well social experiences matched social expectations were statistically significant. The Spring 2005 returners were more likely to report that their social experiences matched their social expectations than were the Spring 2005 non-returners, or those enrolled in Spring 2005, but not registered for the Fall 2005 semester. Those first-time, full-time students enrolled in Spring 2005, but not registered for the Fall 2005 semester reported the lowest level of matches between social experiences and expectations. These findings suggest that new retention strategies at the University must address social integration issues and opportunities for first-time, full-time students. The results of this study support the idea that social integration is key to retention (Astin, 1993; Tinto, 1993) and are in line with recent studies which also point to the importance of social integration in regard to student retention (Alikonis, Guo, & Miller, 2005).

1:30-2:20
Room: Platinum
Marywood University’s Retention Initiative and Ongoing Retention Developments
Track: Best Practices Award Track

Ann Boland-Chase, Marywood University
Mary Anne Fedrick, Marywood University

Marywood University has experienced a remarkable increase in the retention rate of first-year students within the most recent three-year period; the rate increased nearly eight percent when comparing the Fall 2003 cohort to the Fall 2001 cohort. This improvement occurred as a result of specific strategies that were employed, many as a direct result of a Teagle Foundation grant which the University received in 2001. At the beginning of this three year period, several areas of concern were identified: 1) the retention rate was relatively flat and even decreasing among some cohorts; 2) there were an increasing number of students who
had not declared a major and this group of students typically retained at a lower rate; 3) the Enrollment Management area had just been restructured and was still evolving; and, 4) the seminar for first-year students was not formally required for degree completion, was not credit-bearing, and was weakly structured. Utilizing the grant monies and other institutional support, the University developed strategies to confront these challenges. As a result, the following accomplishments were attained over the three-year period: 1) a Retention Office was created; 2) specially trained advisors for “Undeclared” students were identified; 3) a Career Exploration course for “Undeclared” students was established; 4) New Student Orientation became a collaborative effort between Academic Affairs and Student Life; 5) the Institutional Research Office managed and analyzed data gleaned from the National Survey of Student Engagement, the internal Freshman Survey, and expanded collection of retention data; and, 6) the University was selected to participate in the Foundations of Excellence project as a “Founding Institution,” enabling the University to participate in an 18-month period of self-assessment. Concurrently, the Liberal Arts Core curriculum was revised and now includes a two-credit requirement for incoming students, entitled “Living Responsibly in an Interdependent World”, designed to introduce to new students the curricular focus of the Liberal Arts core. As a result of these outcomes, Marywood University is now positioned to focus on strengthening the first-year experience in order to maintain retention rates and student persistence towards graduation.

1:30-2:20
Room: Silver

Retention Initiatives at Grand View College: A Web of Support
Track: Retention and Special Populations—At Risk

Cathy Brent, Grand View College

Grand View College (GVC) is a small private, liberal arts college of 1700 students, located in Des Moines, Iowa. In the fall of 2003, GVC received a Title III Grant, with the goal of working "cooperatively through the Learning Communities model to improve the retention and achievement of the College’s predominantly at-risk student population.” Initially, retention efforts have been directed to freshmen students and the results have been encouraging. Retention of freshmen from fall 2004 to 2005 was 89.5%, a 4.5% increase over the previous year. Provisionally admitted freshmen were retained at 90.7% from the fall of 2004 to 2005, an impressive increase of 16.3% over the previous year. Freshman to sophomore retention looks very encouraging at present.

Various initiatives, which required the collaboration of faculty and staff, have contributed to this increase in retention. All first-time, full-time freshmen were enrolled in a learning community in the fall of 2004, consisting of a new student seminar and one or two other linked courses. For the provisionally admitted freshmen, their new student seminar instructor was also their academic advisor. Advisement initiatives included an early alert system. Learning community faculty completed an Academic Progress Report at week 3 of the semester for each student enrolled in their learning community course. A “Council of Concern” intervened with identified at-risk students using a case management approach which maximized the student’s strengths. In addition, freshmen who were placed on academic probation or continued on their provisional status were counseled by an Academic Success Team throughout the spring semester. Of these students, 60% were removed from probation or provisional status at the completion of the 2005 Spring semester.

In addition, a Learning Coach was hired to promote students’ academic success through a strengths-based approach and provide additional support to students beyond their faculty advisor. The Learning Coach piloted supplemental instruction in the Spring of 2005 and assisted students with low academic performance. These interventions and their results will be described during the session, as well as the future direction of GVC’s retention efforts.
This paper outlines an assessment paradigm using data mining “Decision Trees.” Readers will learn about research on a set of decision rules based upon the traits of incoming freshmen, university environmental factors and student retention. These decision rules assign a risk score to each entering freshman. The schools can then use these scores to develop individual-based retention programs.

The paper is based upon research at the University of Central Florida to develop and test a set of decision rules based upon the traits (Input variables) of incoming First Time In College (FTIC) freshmen, university environmental influences (Environmental variables) and student retention (Outcome variable) using a popular data mining technique called “Decision Trees” (Breiman, L., Friedman et. al., 1984). These decision rules can then be used as the basis to assign a risk score to each entering freshman. Since the data used to generate these scores were collected before students enter the university, this will provide a basis for developing early prevention programs based on individual student’s needs. As suggested by Seidman, early intervention during the second semester (or even the first semester) of students’ freshmen year is much more effective than intervention that might occur later, following a period of data collection after enrollment. The research question that guided the data collection and analysis was “What traits of incoming First Time in College Freshmen and university environmental influences can predict student retention?”

In fall 2002 the President of Black Hills State University appointed a full-time retention director and a 15-person Retention Task Force—comprised of administrators, faculty, staff, and students from the university at large—to develop a comprehensive retention program. Initial efforts focused on academic recovery for students most at-risk in an effort to increase retention rates, which had dipped to 51% among the freshman cohort. Over the past 2-1/2 years of its operation, the center has developed direct workings with institutional research, key service offices in Student and Academic Affairs, and Student Senate. Retention rates have also shown significant improvement over the past year. A critical collaboration has been with the institutional research director, who utilized the university database, along with his expertise in html, to develop the PASS (Program for Academic Success System). This secured record-keeping system allows retention staff to access key student information and to maintain case notes on each student served. Its key feature is an “early alert” system, providing all faculty immediate access to essential student information. Faculty can identify a student (from advisee or course rosters), note specific issues of concern, and forward the information electronically to the retention secretary, who immediately follows up on each alert and makes referrals as needed. Since its start in late 2002, there have been over 1000 alerts forwarded to the retention office by faculty. The research director has also provided access to live data so the retention secretary can run varied queries to examine program effectiveness in advising students at risk and comparing persistence rates of various cohorts—ACT scores, class levels, areas of study, ethnicity, gender, etc.

The Retention Center also collaborates with other key service offices on campus, bringing together their representatives to meet weekly and share updates on policies and procedures, as well as discuss particular
at-risk students and appropriate interventions. The center also employs part-time telecounselors and emergency hires to notify and advise students on such key concerns as midterm grade deficiencies and pre-registration. Lastly, the director reports regularly to the President, Vice Presidents of Academic and Student Affairs, Deans Council, Coordinating Council, and Student Senate to inform administration and student representatives at all levels regarding retention goals and progress to date.

2:30-3:20  
Room: Jade

Improving Retention and Graduation Rates for College Students Coming from Foster Care: Institutional, State and National Models that Work

Track: Retention and Special Populations

John Emerson, Casey Family Programs
Gene Howard, Orangewood Children’s Foundation
Tina Raheem, Orphan Foundation of America
Steve Thorndill, Washington Education Foundation

Students coming from foster care present multiple educational, financial and personal risk factors that make college retention and completion extremely problematic. A recent study (Findings from the Northwest Foster Care Alumni Study, Pecora, P. 2005, Casey Family Programs, Seattle) of Northwest foster care alumni report a college degree attainment rate of only 2%. Given that these young adults are ‘emancipated’ from state care at age 18 with no family support, low college enrollment, retention and graduation rates are not all that surprising. With recently enacted federal voucher funds available, increased private scholarship support, state tuition waivers, and emerging targeted support programs, the future is more positive for these students. With 20,000 foster youth leaving state care each year, the reality of a college education and its life long benefits is long overdue.

This panel will provide information on three model support programs for college students from foster care. They are: the twelve campus Guardian Scholars program sponsored by the Orangewood Foundation, the national Casey Family Scholars and OFA program serving students in 49 states, and the Washington Education Foundation’s programs serving first generation students and those from foster care. These innovative programs are successfully working with colleges, students, and community systems to dramatically improve the retention and graduation rates of these vulnerable young adults.

The audience will learn about unique barriers facing college students from foster care, outreach strategies, needs assessment, establishing targeted supports, and financial aid options that may not be well known. A student who is benefiting from one of the model programs will present a consumer view of critical retention strategies. Finally, information will be provided about a national convening on this issue will be provided.

2:30-3:20  
Room: Platinum

One Urban Research University: Bridging the Theory and Behavior Gap

Track: Looking Beyond the First Year Retention

Libby Barlow, University of Houston
S. Brooke Durbin, University of Houston
Susan Moreno, University of Houston

Undergraduate students at the University of Houston are largely commuter students who work, often attend part-time, and are often the first generation in their families to attend college. The national research on retention and persistence has been of limited use, so the University launched a longitudinal persistence study to examine what the primary factors are that influence retention and degree completion both within the university and in students’ lives, and what are the relative weights of those factors in their impact. Survey data were collected in the Spring of 2003 with students who entered the University Fall 2002. Follow-up data were collected Spring 2005 from the same students, so that information was obtained from students who are still enrolled, as well as from students who were no longer enrolled. This paper will share results, highlighting the factors that may impact persistence for a non-traditional population.
Since 1994 the Consortium for Student Retention Date Exchange at the University of Oklahoma has served Higher Education by coordinating collaborative retention data sharing. Over the past ten years the focus of this data sharing has expanded in scope and focus. Initially, serving only 4-year institutions by providing retention benchmarks on first-time, full-time freshman, the CSRDE now also conducts surveys on the retention and graduation of first-time full-time STEM majors and community college transfers into 4-year institutions. Most recently, CSRDE has opened membership to 2-year institutions who are willing to make a commitment to support the implementation of a retention survey specifically geared toward retention at their institutions.

This presentation will discuss the next phase of CSRDE: its development as a community of practice. The characteristics of a community of practice will be discussed and steps that will be taken to move the consortium in this direction will also be highlighted.

PAWS Preview is a one and one-half day “just-in-time” orientation experience held before the first day of classes each semester serving approximately 3,200 new freshmen and freshman-transfer students in the fall and 300 students in the spring. Students attend required sessions on diversity, college note taking, computer use, library use, and alcohol education; receive e-mail accounts and learn campus computer resources; meet their University Seminar instructors and classmates; participate in a student organizations and an on-campus job fairs; attend presentations on student services; and have opportunities to socialize, learn campus traditions, and become familiar with facilities, activities, and campus culture.

This program is a collaborative effort involving several university divisions. Academic elements include the New Student Convocation, a connection with the University’s for-credit orientation course, and the Common Experience reading program. Information Technology presents the computer training and library introduction. Alumni Affairs and the Parents’ Association participate in programming to assist with the transition issues and family support. The program showcases campus facilities, the transportation system, the bookstore, and food services. Success of PAWS Preview is measured and demonstrated through monitoring participation rates and program evaluation. In addition, outcomes assessment based on retention and GPA data, and student self-reports on follow-up surveys are conducted throughout the second semester.

Annita Alting, City College of The City University of New York
Ardie Walser, City College of The City University of New York
The School of Engineering at the City College of New York (CCNY) as part of its ABET accreditation cycle, is in the process of implementing a plan which incorporates both quantitative and qualitative approaches. As an urban institution of higher learning, one of the School's missions is to provide education to a highly diverse student body, including traditionally underrepresented minorities, women, working adults, and immigrants in the greater New York metropolitan area. The first objective of implementing a plan to meet ABET 2000 criteria is to gather accurate and reliable information, both in scope and in depth, about the School's present situation and its students' unique needs.

One method being used is a study on the retention and academic achievement of our students, to determine what actually influences our students' success or failure. This will help the School to develop more effective tools to increase retention and academic achievement. Both a specific cohort (Fall 1999) and a cross-sectional sample from a large number of cohorts were studied. This paper will focus on the influence of Math preparation on academic achievement and retention among freshmen and transfer students. Among freshmen, this paper will compare SEEK students with 'regular' freshmen, and among transfers, differences between students transferring from 2-year, 4-year, and foreign institutions will be explored.

3:40-4:30  
Room: Jade  
Informational Session on ACT-CSRDE Research Initiative  
Track: Showcase of CSRDE Resources  

Julie Noble, ACT  
Rosemary Hayes, The University of Oklahoma  

Please come and hear about the exciting research initiative proposed by ACT. CSRDE member institutions are invited to participate in a special data sharing project which will result in their receiving customized reports about special student characteristics which impact retention at their institution.

3:40-4:30  
Room: Pearl  
UT-Dallas Identifying Community College Transfer: FICE  
Track: Theory, Research Methods, Data Tools, and Technology  

Stan Gordon, University of Texas at Dallas  
Anna Moses, University of Texas at Dallas  

The University of Texas-Dallas is a contributor to the CSRDE Community College Transfer Study. This study requires institutions to be able to identify transfers from two year institutions. FICE numbers used to be a reliable source of information to use for coding institutions. However, the feds have indicated that they will not be maintaining this identification system. UT-D has compiled a list of 2-year institutions with FICE code. Participants are invited to discuss this and other methods for identifying these institutions in a consistent manner.

3:40-4:30  
Room: Platinum  
Peer Advising: The Link between Admission and Retention  
Track: Retention and Special Populations  

Sylvia Terry, University of Virginia
“Now that I am here, where is everybody?” This question is not uncommon. When arriving on a college campus for the first time, a freshman may feel isolated, lonely and as if no one cares. This is especially true for the African-American student who may be attending a predominantly white institution. Tradition, a seeming lack of sensitivity and concern may be off-putting as the student attempts to negotiate his college environment. Without support, he may simply choose to leave. At the University of Virginia, there are several initiatives contributing to its having among the highest African-American graduation rates nation wide, over 85%. This is especially significant in light of the institution’s past history of slavery and segregation. Perhaps one of its most important retention efforts is its Office of African-American Affairs’ Peer Advisor Program. Drawing upon the principles of retention, its work is to help provide an environment which is welcoming and supportive of new students. There is no denying that what happens during the first few hours, days, months, and year determines whether a freshman chooses to remain on the campus or to depart.

“Peer Advising: The Link between Admission and Retention” will discuss this support through explaining the program’s philosophy and structure (an outgrowth and extension of the admissions process), its practices and procedures (Peer Advisor outreach, programming, the director’s role, “the Raising the Bar” study initiative, and technology), the program’s effectiveness (for first-year students) and benefits (for the Peer Advisors themselves.) Given its comprehensiveness, its attention to entering students, and the hard work of the various constituents; it is not surprising that students have chosen to stay and to graduate. As one UVA alumna succinctly put it, “It was the Office of Admissions that attracted me to the University of Virginia. It was the Peer Advisor Program that kept me here.”

3:40-4:30

**Room:** Silver

**Collaborating for Student Success: The Broadly Representative Cross-Functional Task Force as a Mechanism for Change**

**Track:** Best Practices Award Track

Gerald Greenfield, University of Wisconsin-Parkside

This presentation focuses on enhancing student learning and success through collaborative efforts that cut across the silos that typify many institutions of higher education. To guide its participation as a Founding Institution in the Foundations of Excellence in the First College Year, University of Wisconsin, Parkside established a task force that brought together professionals from academic affairs, student affairs and enrollment management. That mix provided an important learning experience for its members and enhanced the Task Force’s legitimacy throughout the campus.

Because of that model’s success, as the campus move to implement its improvement plan, it established an even more broadly representative First Year Council. Preliminary results of this approach indicate that Council members act as ambassadors, advocates, and educators within their respective units. The model, then, enhances internal communication, promotes collegiality and buy-in, and ensures that initiatives benefit from the collective wisdom of the university community.

In addition to its focus on process, the presentation will discuss preliminary results from several initiatives, including a mentoring project, an expanded student orientation, and a research project on student attainment in general education courses. The presenters will then engage the audience in dialogue to identify and discuss collaborations with the potential to contribute to student learning and broaden the collective sense of all members of the university community as colleagues who share a concern with student success.

4:30-on

**Dinner on your own.**
6:15-9:45  
Tuesday Evening Event: Tour and Wine Tasting 101 Class at Delaney Vineyards
$35.00/Person

Participants will be taken to Delaney Vineyards in Grapevine, Texas for a tour of the vineyard and an introduction to wines during a Wine 101 class. Tickets are $35.00 per person. The Motor Coach will depart at 6:15 PM, giving you enough time to grab a bite to eat after the 3:40-4:30 concurrent session.

Wednesday, October 5, 2005

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<th>Time</th>
<th>Room</th>
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<td>7:30-8:15</td>
<td>Pre-function Area Outside of Ballroom</td>
<td>Continental Breakfast</td>
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<td>8:15-9:30</td>
<td>Bronze Ballroom</td>
<td>Wednesday Morning Plenary: The Role of Leadership in Student Retention</td>
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<td>Expert Panel will discuss the role of executive leadership in shaping systemic change with regard to student retention.</td>
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<td>Jennifer Beck, Associate VP Student Affairs, Texas State, San Marcos</td>
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<td>Gerald McLaughlin, Director Institutional Research, De Paul University</td>
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<td>Marsha Kelman, Asst. Vice Chancellor, University of Texas System</td>
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<td>Harriet McQueen, Dean, Enrollment Management/Academic Support, Austin Peay State University</td>
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<td>Glenda Wilkes, Retention Development Specialist, Faculty, University of Arizona</td>
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<td>Rosemary Hayes, CSRDE Director will serve as moderator</td>
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Compliance by baccalaureate conferring institutions with the IPEDS mandate for generating standardized six-year graduation rate for successive cohorts of first-time, full-time freshman has certainly enhanced the research environment of the higher education community. Investigators are no longer hampered by graduation data collected at irregular intervals or by changing definitions about who is a graduate. Moreover, they are no longer limited to chance observations compiled by institutions that voluntarily decided to calculate and disseminate graduation rates for public consumption. In time, we are confident that the implementation of standardized six-year graduation rates for community college transfers by the CSRDE will also be recognized as an important event in the development of graduation rate research. For many institutions, degree recipients are almost equally divided among students that entered as new freshmen or students that entered as undergraduate transfers. That said, our research on the 23 campuses that make up the California State University System indicates there are several inquiries regarding degree completion that require observations to go beyond the six-year interval that now bound IPEDS and CSRDE graduation rates.

If we confined ourselves to just six-year graduation rates we could not always tell whether differences in cohort rates were due to differences in the proportion of students completing bachelor’s degree programs or differences in when students completed their programs. The first issue we confront is six-year graduation rates comparisons between highly selective institutions and less selective institutions. For a variety of reasons, the former group is much more likely to capture nearly all graduation events within a six-year observation period than the latter group. The second issue we deal with is six-year graduation rate comparisons between native freshmen and undergraduate transfers. Here, again, one group is much more likely to complete degree programs within six years than the other group. The next issue we tackle is how to
effectively summarize time-to-degree for baccalaureate recipients. Clearly those interested in how many
students graduate from a cohort are also interested in how long it takes completers to attain a degree. The
last issue we take up is how to derive eventual graduation rates from six-year tracking rates. We address all
these issues with enrollment and graduation data generated from 12-year observation intervals.

9:40-10:30 Room: Jade
CSRDE: Community College Initiative
Track: Showcase of CSRDE Resources
Rosemary Hayes, The University of Oklahoma

Over the past two years, the CSRDE has received numerous requests for assistance with retention
benchmarks from 2-year institutions. In response to this need, CSRDE has developed and beta tested a
retention survey instrument geared towards the needs of the 2-year institutions. We are inviting community
colleges to partner with us in furthering the development of these extensive retention benchmarks.
This session will discuss the gap between publicly available data and data needed to monitor retention
efforts. In addition, information will be provided about the CSRDE Community College initiative and the
survey developed for 2-year institutions.

9:40-10:30 Room: Platinum
A Data-driven, College-based Strategic Retention Master Plan: From Precious
Individuals to Meaningful Data, And Back Again
Track: Best Practices Award Track
Lynette Cook-Francis, University of Arizona
Lynne Tronsdal, University of Arizona
Glenda Wilkes, University of Arizona

The University of Arizona has committed to an intense 8-year data-driven, college-based effort to increase
persistence and retention. This work was initiated by the creation of a new office of Enrollment Management
and the appointment of a senior vice president to head that office, which includes Assistant Vice Presidents
for Student Retention and Enrollment Research. The first item on our agenda was to establish an accurate
understanding of the current retention picture both locally at the UA and nationally at other public RI
institutions. This effort involved 18 months of gathering and analyzing data by all the stakeholders in student
success. These were parents, alumni, students, faculty, administrators, and professional staff.

This group of 45 individuals, representing a broad constituency of campus entities was brought together for
the purpose of creating goals, strategies and action plans drawn from the data above. A successful
relationship was formed with outside consultants, with all its “benefits, pitfalls and considerations.” Four major
goals, thirteen strategies, and 53 action plans resulted. Eight action plans were designated as top priorities
and three as urgent. The three urgent action plans will be initiated in Fall 2005. Of equal importance to the
database required to validate the strategic retention plan is the participation of the individual colleges and
their ownership of many of the initiatives which are best housed in the colleges. The UA retention team is
working over the summer and fall of 2005 with 12 college task forces to create specific college-based
retention plans. This paper will outline the process, the resulting initiatives, and progress to date of this
collaborative effort.
For several years, Northeastern State University (NSU) has taken aggressive measures to recruit and support freshmen students through our Enrollment Management Office and First-Year Experience program. However, when we discovered that we lose approximately 25% of our sophomore students and at least 10 percent of our freshmen cohort is still enrolled after 6 years, we quickly realized the need to develop a program that focused on the gap between first-year retention rates and six-year graduation rates. NSU obtained a $75,000 grant from the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education to develop a program to address retention of students after the first year. This presentation will focus on a pilot project to develop collaborative institution-wide approaches to address retention. The new Second Year Outreach program at NSU is designed to help students stay on-track to graduation after the first year. The primary group that has been targeted for assistance this first semester is students that are on continuing or new academic probation and academic notice. These students are at high risk of dropping out or being suspended from the institution. This past semester, the two Academic Commitment Specialists contacted over 150 students initially by letter, then by telephone calls or email, inviting them to stop by their office to discuss their academic progress. Approximately 75 percent of the students made an initial contact with the office and about 50% made all three meetings.

Although the program has just been in existence one semester, we are getting very positive feedback from students. Students tell us repeatedly that they appreciate our efforts and it is the first time someone has really taken the time to listen to their concerns. It is too early to determine the total impact of this program, but from initial data we know we are making a difference. We are trying to make student retention everyone’s concern on campus. At the beginning of this new program a campus wide email was sent to all faculty and staff announcing the services of this program along with information about student retention. The Academic Commitment Specialists have worked closely with the First-Year Experience office and will be working with Campus Connections (the new student enrollment program) this summer. The Office of Institutional Research is assisting in analyzing graduation cohort data and retention statistics. Changing the campus culture so that everyone thinks about student retention is an evolving process.

Project CHEER (Creating Higher Expectations for Educational Readiness) was established initially in the Summer of 2002 in an effort to strengthen the academic preparation of incoming freshmen. The program, which was developed out of a collaborative program between Fayetteville State University and Prairie View A&M University, has grown from 11 participants in the summer of 2002 to 150 in Summer 2005. In this presentation, I will summarize the development of the program, describe the components of the program as it currently exists, and present assessment data to show the program’s effectiveness. I will also explain how the program’s success has been made in possible by effective collaboration between distinct units within the university.

Program participants are performing significantly better than their counterparts. For example, at the end of the spring semester 2005, 95% of the 20 participants in 2003 have been retained with 80% on track to
graduate in four years (30+ earned hours; 2.0+ GPA). Of the 2004 cohort, at the end of the spring semester, 60% of the 63 participants are on track to graduate in four years, as compared to 25% of the freshman class as a whole. By the time this paper is presented, I will have updated outcomes data, including the results of a new component, namely, the inclusion of SAT preparation workshops. This presentation will be helpful to other institutions as a model for a simple, but effective, program that can have a positive impact on student success and retention.

**10:50-11:40**

**Room:** Gold

**Transformational U: A Systematic Institution-Wide Approach to Student Success and Retention**

**Track:** Best Practices Award Track

Joyce Kinkead, Utah State University

Melissa Miller Kincart, Utah State University

In 2001, Utah State underwent an administrative reorganization of the University that moved enrollment, recruitment, and retention units to Academic Affairs and put "raised expectations" in front of the faculty. Through the use of Enrollment Management, our university has been able to exert its historic ethic of care and shape the student body in deliberate ways, particularly through emphasizing quality. Enrollment Management has been an instrumental change agent at the University through raising expectations and standards of excellence throughout its units, building partnerships between academic affairs and student services, and by intentional recruitment and retention initiatives. At Transformational U, "everyone counts in recruitment and retention."

Utah State University has adopted a systematic, multi-faceted institution-wide approach to student success and retention. Intentional and active student recruitment underlines our efforts on the retention front. We help students navigate the college choice process, emphasizing "fit" between the student and the institution. Our Enrollment Management Plan incorporates territory management outreach, campus wide programming and yield activities, and integrated marketing and communication flow strategies, in an effort to seek out the best prepared students and enroll them in degree seeking programs. We continually remind our prospective families: "we don’t just care about admitting and enrolling students; we care about admitting, enrolling, and graduating students. Retention begins with recruitment, but additionally, we are intentional about student success by proactive tracking, advising, exit interviewing, and recruiting back our dropouts. We have significantly improved advising with a new advising center for undeclared students, where we employ intrusive techniques to encourage personal commitment to an academic goal and a USU degree program. We continue to advance first year student initiatives that place emphasis on "personalized attention". These efforts have greatly impacted our first-year, full-time retention rate which rose in 2003 to 75 percent compared with 66 percent just three years earlier. (We hit our 75% goal two years earlier than expected.)

**10:50-11:40**

**Room:** Pearl

**The Relationship of Worldviews of Advisors and Students and Satisfaction with Advising: A Case of Homogenous Group Impact**

**Track:** Theory, Research Methods, Data Tools, and Technology

Jose Coll, Saint Leo

Carlos Zalaquett, University of South Florida

The academic advisors’ impact on students’ satisfaction and retention has him or her an indispensable member of colleges and universities across the profession. Using a worldview perspective to advising, the advisor can reach a broader population and by using various tools of engagement can make the college experience a positive perspective and assist with retention. The purpose of this study was to measure similarities and differences among worldviews of traditional students, non-traditional students, and their academic advisors; and to compare student and advising satisfaction among traditional students, non-traditional students, and their advisors using a worldview assessment instrument. This study surveyed 115 students and 5 advisors from a four-year liberal arts university. Analysis of the data revealed no significant differences among traditional and non-traditional student worldviews. However, there was a significance of ($F = 4.398, p < .0148$) when comparing student self-worth and their perception of, their advisor understood
them. There was also a significance of \((F = 4.172, p < .0183)\) in student self-worth and their commitment to actively seeking advising. The last significance of \((F = 3.57, p < .0336)\) was meaningfulness and how students perceive the importance of advising. These findings lead us to believe that students who have a similar self-worth value as their advisor have a sense that they are being understood, students who scored high or were within the means of their advisors self-worth tend to actively seek advising, and students who scored high or above their advisors mean score in meaningfulness, felt that advising was an important element to them. When an advisor is aware of student worldviews, the above three variables and their correlated significance can be looked as powerful tools for advising, recruitment, and retention.

10:50-11:40  
**Room:** Platinum  
**University of Arizona Panel Show Casing Three Retention Supporting Programs**  
**Track:** Meritorious Programs and Initiatives

The three papers discussed in this panel are:

**Mastering Math: Boot Camp for College Students with Pre-College Math Skills**

Guillermo Uribe, University of Arizona  
Glenda Wilkes, University of Arizona

The recent effort to address student retention and graduation issues at The University of Arizona yielded much fascinating data. Among this data, we found confirmation that success in mathematics, at any level, is one of the best predictors of overall academic success, and also that failure to succeed in mathematics and other “gateway” courses greatly decreases student persistence. One fact that caused concern was that students who have taken pre-college mathematics at a community college (CC) don’t succeed in college mathematics at the rate college-qualified students do. Our institutional research suggests that students who “cross the boundary” from CC to college are much more likely to fail mathematics than students who stay in either CC or college for both their preparatory and required mathematics work. A study by the university’s Retention Analysis Group shows that students who took Intermediate Algebra at our local CC and came to take College Algebra between 1999 and 2004 have, at best, a 50% chance of earning a C or better in the college course. Furthermore, in that five year period, only about 20% of the students who placed into Intermediate Algebra ever attempted College Algebra at the university. This suggests that sending students to take remedial Math at a CC may close many doors in terms of majors and contribute to attrition. When these data were presented, the idea of offering an alternative pre-college mathematics course on campus rose to become one of the top institutional priorities. As a result, in Fall 2005, the University Learning Center will begin to offer a non-credit 30-40 hour class that will focus on the skills and abilities that the Math Department requires to place students in College Algebra. This class will be open to all, but is intended for students who have been placed at Intermediate Algebra levels by our Mathematics Readiness Test (MRT). This paper will present and discuss the statistical motivation for the class. The class itself will be described, including specific instructional objectives, teaching approach, tools, assessment and follow up.

**SuccessNet: Getting Everyone On Board**

Elizabeth Harrison, University of Arizona  
Glenda Wilkes, University of Arizona

Analysis of our institutional retention data showed that students who struggle academically very early in their first semester, especially in General Education, are at high risk of academic failure. One high priority action plan formulated to address this issue was the creation of an effective on-line early-alert system to identify students as early as possible in the semester who are struggling academically. We needed a system that would build a sense of collaboration and shared responsibility among all those who support student academic success—faculty, college administrators, academic advisors.

A team of four people based in the University Learning Center has developed a web-based on-line academic referral program called SuccessNet that will (1) collect referrals directly from instructors whenever they notice students who appear to be struggling in their classes, (2) automatically send those referrals to the appropriate academic advisor in the appropriate college (determined by the student’s declared major), and (3) house all referral data for later analysis. SuccessNet is linked to the central student information system...
so that it can draw on current course enrollment and student information. It leads an instructor through a short series of pages that allow her/him to select the name of the student to be referred, check off the reason(s) for the referral from a list of red flag problems, submit the referral, and review the referral at a later date. Preliminary meetings with the lead academic advisor in each college indicate high interest in the system as a cue for advisors to initiate early interventions with at-risk students before they end up on academic probation. We are piloting the program with the summer bridge program and summer Freshman Composition classes and will roll it out to all freshman-level General Education courses in August 2005. This paper will (1) discuss the processes of the design of an online system and negotiation with each of 14 academic colleges and the entire university academic advising community, and (2) present preliminary data regarding its effectiveness for each constituency.

The Retention Analysis Group (RAG): The Backbone of Retention at the University of Arizona

Rick Kroc, University of Arizona
Anthony Restar, University of Arizona
Glenda Wilkes, University of Arizona

The University of Arizona is a large, public, research institution with 27,000 undergraduate students. Although data gathering and analysis is a primary activity on this campus, it occurs in a variety of places and for a variety of purposes. Upon the creation in 2004 of the Office of Enrollment Management and the Office of Student Retention, it became clear that it would be necessary for data to both drive and inform the creation of the strategic plan for student retention. Consequently, a number of data-related initiatives followed: 1) the creation of the Retention Analysis Group (RAG), made up of representatives from all data-collecting entities on campus; 2) an 18-month study of existing data on student retention as well as numerous studies to locate data needed for decision making; 3) the generation of reports, which bring together critical data from all relevant sources, both inside and outside the university; 4) the use of that data to set data-driven priorities for future retention initiatives; 5) the integration of RAG members into each individual project team to lead the assessment and evaluation efforts. This paper will describe the formation and function of this innovative collaboration.

10:50-11:40 Room: Silver
Retention of Students in the MBA programs
Track: Retention and Special Populations

Gerald McLaughlin, DePaul University

This study assesses the outcomes of graduate students enrolled in the MBA program in the college of Commerce at DePaul University. Enrollment in MBA programs were higher in the fall quarter compared with winter and spring quarters. However winter and spring quarters combined accounts for about 45% of MBA enrollment. There were no significant differences in retention rates among students that started in fall winter, spring or summer quarters, so the data can be grouped by cohort years. Retention rates among full-time and part-time students differed significantly with a difference of ten percent points after 6 years. Average six year graduation rate for full-time MBA students was 85% compared to only 75% for part-time students.

11:45-12:00 Room: Bronze Ballroom
Closing Remarks
Rosemary Hayes, The University of Oklahoma
NOTES
NOTES
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