What Works in Student Retention?

Fourth National Survey

Public Four-Year Colleges and Universities Report*

ACT 2010

*Minor revisions were made to selected data in Sections I and II as of July 1, 2010.

TABLE of CONTENTS

Pul	blic Four-Year Colleges and Universities	1
	Section I: Background Information	1
	Section II: Retention and Degree-Completion Rates	2
	Section III: Factors Affecting Student Attrition at Your School	3
	Section IV: On-Campus Retention Practices	4
	Section V: Top Three Retention Practices	7
Арі	pendix A	
Apı	pendix B	

For more information on this survey...

This report is the culmination of a two-year project directed by a four-member planning team. Inquiries may be directed to any member of the team.

Wes Habley, Principal Associate in Educational Services (chair)

wes.habley@act.org

Michael Valiga, Director of Survey Research Services

mike.valiga@act.org

Randy McClanahan, Senior Research Associate in Survey Research Services

randy.mcclanahan@act.org

Kurt Burkum, Senior Research Associate in Statistical Research kurt.burkhum@act.org

What Works in Student Retention 2010 Study

Public Four-Year Colleges and Universities

This report presents the findings for public four-year colleges and universities that participated in ACT's 2010 What Works in Student Retention survey. The report contains information pertinent to only these institutions. For more information concerning the history of ACT's involvement in retention research; various aspects of the study's methodology (e.g., database, administration, etc.); response rates by type of institution; findings for background information; and retention and degree-completion rates for other types of institutions, the reader is directed to the *Report for All Colleges and Universities*. In that report the reader will find data for community colleges, private four-year colleges and universities, and public four-year colleges and universities. More indepth information can be found for each of these types of institutions in their respective executive summaries.

A copy of the survey instrument to which all colleges and universities in this study responded can be found in Appendix B of this report. The survey was mailed to the Chief Academic Affairs Officers at 598 public four-year colleges and universities, ≈18% of the total 3,360 surveys mailed. Responses were received from 258 of the public four-year colleges and universities, resulting in a response rate of ≈8%. Overall, public four-year colleges and universities represented ≈23% of the total responding group.

Section I: Background Information

The full base of respondents and computed percentages were based on the number of individuals responding to each item unless otherwise noted with the inclusion of the work "blank."

- Just over two-thirds (69%) of the responding public four-year colleges and universities indicated a person on their campus was responsible for coordination of retention programs, while 31% indicated there was no person responsible for such coordination. By far, the largest percentage selected Assistant/Associate Provost (27%) as the title most closely approximating that for the individual. Close to 20% selected no title.
- Over a third of the schools (39%) offered 5% or less of their instructional courses online, and 25% offered between 5% and 29% online. Only 3.5% offered 30% or more of their courses online.
- From among the three transfer enhancement programs, by far the largest percentage of public four-year colleges participated in articulation agreements with selected colleges (57%) and with other groups: selected group or consortium of colleges (23%), system-wide (27%), and statewide (28%). They were also more likely to participate in course applicability systems statewide (36%), with a selected group or consortium of colleges (30%), and system-wide (26%) than they were to do so with selected colleges..

Q1: Is there a person on your campus who is
responsible for the coordination of retention
programs?

Yes: 69.4% No: 30.6%

Q2: What title most closely approximates that of the individual?

Assistant/Associate Provost 27.3%
Director 16.5%
Provost 11.4%
Chief Enrollment Officer 10.8%
Chief Student Affairs Officer 8.6%

Q3: Approximately what percentage of undergraduate credit hours is offered through online instruction?

5% or less 5% - 14.9% 15% - 29% ≥ 30% Don't know/ unavailable/	39.2% 18.2% 6.6% 3.5%
blank	32.6%

Q4: Check all* of the transfer enhancement programs below in which your institution participates

A. Common Course Numbering System

with selected colleges	8.1%
with selected group or	
consortium of colleges	6.6%
system-wide	19.8%
statewide	19.0%
none of the above	50.4%
*Multiple responses possible. Percen	tages do not
sum to 100%.	

B. Articulation Agreements

with selected colleges	57.4%
with selected group or	
consortium of colleges	23.3%
system-wide	26.7%
statewide	27.5%
none of the above	1.2%
*Multiple responses possible. Percen	tages do not sum
to 100%.	

C. Course Applicability System

with selected group or	
consortium of colleges	29.5%
system-wide	26.4%
statewide	35.7%
multi-state system	8.9%
none of the above	14.3%
*Multiple responses possible. F	Percentages do not sum to
100%.	

Section II: Retention and Degree-Completion Rates

The full base of respondents and computed percentages were based on the number of individuals responding to each item unless otherwise noted with the inclusion of the work "blank."

- The median first-year to second-year retention rate was 75% for public four-year colleges and universities with a mean of 74%. Two-thirds (66%) of these schools reported having a specific goal for their first-year to second-year retention. The median retention goal was 80%. Achievement of that goal in a five-year timeframe was reported by the largest percentage of respondents (28%) followed by achieving the goal in a three-year timeframe (21%).
- The median degree-completion rate was 49% for the group; the mean completion rate was 50%. A little over half (53%) of the public four-year colleges and universities had a specific student degree-completion goal as opposed to the 35% that did not. The median degree completion goal was 52%. Achievement of that goal in a five-year timeframe was reported by the largest percentage of respondents (35%), with goals of three years reported by 19%, and four years and more than five years by 12%.
- Q1. What is your institution's current first-year to second-year retention rate for first-time, full-time students?

current retention rate

N	256
Mean	74.3
25 th percentile	68.0
Median	74.8
75 th percentile	82.0

don't know/unavailable/ blank

N 2 % 0.8%

Q2. Does your institution have a specific goal for its firstyear to second-year retention rate?

no don't know/unavailable/	27.5%
blank yes	6.2% 66.3%
a. Retention rate goal?	

 N
 170

 Mean
 78.8

 25th percentile
 73.0

 Median
 80.0

 75th percentile
 85.0

b. Timeframe for achieving that goal

no specific timeframe	14.1%
one year	9.4%
two years	13.5%
three years	20.6%
four years	11.2%
five years	27.7%
more than five years	3.0%

Q3. Assuming a 6-year timeframe for four-year institutions, what is your institution's current student degree-completion rate?

current degree completion rate

N	236
Mean	50.1
25 th percentile	38.0
Median	48.5
75 th percentile	60.0

don't know/unavailable/

blank

N 22 % 8.5 Q4. Does your institution have a specific goal for its student degree-completion rate (6-year timeframe for four-year institutions)?

no	35.3%
don't know/unavailable/	
blank	12.0%
yes	52.7%

a. If yes, what is your degree completion rate goal?

N	128
Mean	56.0
25 th percentile	49.2
Median	52.0
75 th percentile	65.0

b. Timeframe for achieving that goal?

no specific timeframe	10.0%
one year	2.3%
two years	9.9%
three years	19.1%
four years	12.2%
five years	35.1%
more than five years	11.5%

Section III: Factors Affecting Student Attrition at Your School

This section contained a list of 42 student and institutional characteristics or factors that can affect attrition. Respondents were asked to rate the degree to which these factors affected attrition at their school on a five-point scale where 5=major effect, 3=moderate effect, and 1=little or no effect. All 42 items are listed, in numeric order, along with means for each in Appendix A, Table A1. Tables I and II contain the attrition factors with the highest and lowest means, respectively, for public four-year colleges and universities.

Table I: Attrition Factors with Highest Means (Public Four-Year Colleges and Universities)

Item #	Item	Mean
2	level of student preparation for college-level work	3.90
20	adequacy of personal financial resources	3.90
31	student study skills	3.80
10	amount of financial aid available to students	3.65
21	level of student motivation to succeed	3.64
13	level of student commitment to earning a degree	3.56
27	level of job demands on students	3.52
9	student low socio-economic status	3.49
17	student educational aspirations and goals	3.36
42	student personal coping skills	3.34

Table II: Attrition Factors with Lowest Means (Public Four-Year Colleges and Universities)

Item #	Item	Mean
3	relevancy of curricula	2.59
40	distance from students' permanent homes	2.59
16	extracurricular programs	2.48
25	residence hall facilities	2.46
39	cultural activities	2.36
26	programs to support students' transition to residence hall living	2.30
22	student physical health issues	2.16
35	rules and regulations governing student behavior	2.10
37	campus safety and security	1.95

Section IV: On-Campus Retention Practices

A list of 94 programs, services, curricular offerings, and interventions, each of which may make a contribution to student retention, was presented in this section. For the remainder of this section, these will be referred to as "practices." Observation of the mean distribution was used, for each set of items, to determine where reporting breaks were to be made.

Respondents were first asked to indicate if the practice was offered at their college. If the practice was offered, they were asked to then indicate the degree to which the practice contributed to retention on their campus using a five-point scale where 5=major contribution, 3=moderate contribution, and 1=little or no contribution. All 94 items are listed, in numeric order, along with means and incidence rates for each in Appendix A, Table A2.

The incidence rate is the percentage of campuses offering/delivering/providing a given practice. Tables III and IV contain the retention practices reported by the largest percentages of respondents as being either major contributors or minor contributors, respectively, to retention for public four-year colleges and universities.

Table III: Practices with Highest Incidence Rates (Public Four-Year Colleges and Universities)

Item #	Item	Incidence
		Rate
34	internships	97%
48	tutoring	97%
64	faculty use of technology in teaching	95%
1	summer orientation	93%
36	individual career counseling	93%
87	student leadership development	91%
85	college-sponsored social activities	90%
46	writing center/lab	90%
33	career exploration workshops or courses	89%
11	advising interventions with selected student populations	88%
65	faculty use of technology in communicating with students	88%
92	residence hall programs	88%
78	programs for honor students	86%
57	library orientation, workshop, and/or course	84%
62	instructional (teaching) techniques	84%

8	parent/family orientation	84%
24	mandated placement of students in courses based on test scores	83%
67	interdisciplinary courses	83%
69	pre-enrollment financial aid advising	81%
63	assessing student performance	80%

Table IV: Practices with the Lowest Incidence Rates (Public Four-Year Colleges and Universities)

Item #	Item	Incidence
		Rate
31	vocational aptitude assessment	29%
46	reading center/lab	28%
84	freshman interest groups (FIGS)	27%
16	assessment of faculty academic advisors	26%
3	extended freshman orientation (credit)	24%
29	values assessment	22%
61	community member mentoring	14%
83	degree guarantee program	12%
82	other student sub-populations	10%
4	freshman seminar/university 101 (non-credit)	9%

Reported in Tables V and VI are the retention practices with the highest and lowest means for public four-year colleges. Highest means were those at 3.80 or higher and lowest means were those at 2.93 or lower.

Table V: Practices with Highest Means (Public Four-Year Colleges and Universities)

Item #	Item	Mean
14	academic advising center	3.98
12	increased number of academic advisors	3.98
11	advising interventions with selected student populations	3.93
43	comprehensive learning assistance center/lab	3.92
39	supplemental instruction	3.91
76	programs for first-generation students	3.90
94	required on-campus housing for freshmen	3.86
45	reading center/lab	3.86
48	tutoring	3.84
40	summer bridge program	3.83
3	extended freshman orientation (credit)	3.82
78	programs for honor students	3.81
13	integration of advising with first-year transition programs	3.80

Table VI: Practices with Lowest Means (Public Four-Year Colleges and Universities)

Item #	Item	Mean
30	interest assessment	2.93
16	assessment of faculty academic advisors	2.93
57	library orientation, workshop, and/or course	2.92
83	degree guarantee program	2.90

28	learning styles assessment	2.89
31	vocational aptitude assessment	2.89
20	recognition/rewards for non-faculty academic advisors	2.85
29	values assessment	2.84
19	recognition/rewards for faculty academic advisors	2.78
32	personality assessment	2.64

Tables VII-IX contain the combination of practices that are highly rated by public four-year colleges and university respondents with the incidence rates of those practices. Table VII contains the percentages of four-year colleges and universities reporting highly rated practices with incidence rates ≥76%. Table VIII contains the percentage of these same institutions reporting highly rated practices with incidence rates between 48% and 74%. Table VIII contains the percentages of these institutions reporting highly rated practices with incidence rates between 24% and 43%.

Table VII: Highly Related Practices with High Incidence Rates (Public Four-Year Colleges and Universities)

Item #	Item	Incidence	
		Rate	Mean
11	advising interventions with selected student populations	88%	3.93
48	tutoring	97%	3.84
78	programs for honors students	86%	3.81
44	mathematics center/lab	78%	3.76
5	freshman seminar/university 101 (credit)	76%	3.74
49	study skills course, program, or center	79%	3.73
24	mandated placement of students in courses based on test scores	83%	3.71

Table VIII: Highly Rated Practices with Moderate Incidence Rates (Public Four-Year Colleges and Universities)

Item #	Item	Incidence	
		Rate	Mean
14	academic advising center	74%	3.98
43	comprehensive learning assistance center/lab	66%	3.92
39	supplemental instruction	72%	3.91
94	required on-campus housing for freshmen	48%	3.86
40	summer bridge program	60%	3.83
13	integration of academic advising with first-year		
	transition programs	60%	3.80

Table IX: Highly Rated Practices with Low Incidence Rates (Public Four-Year Colleges and Universities)

Item #	Item	Incidence	
		Rate	Mean
12	increased number of academic advisors	38%	3.98
76	program for first generation students	43%	3.90
46	reading center/lab	28%	3.86
3	extended freshman orientation (credit)	24%	3.82
60	staff mentoring	35%	3.62

2	extended freshman orientation (non-credit)	33%	3.57
15	center that integrates academic advising with	34%	3.56
	career/life planning		

Table X contains a list of practices that differentiate institutions in the top quartile of first-to-second-year retention rate for all public four-year college and university respondents from those in the bottom quartile of first-to-second-year retention rates by retention practices. The top quartile included 66 institutions and the bottom quartile included 67 institutions. Highly rated practices included in Table X were those with a mean \geq 3.6 and a difference in incidence rate of \geq 10% between top quartile and bottom quartile institutions. The top quartile and bottom quartile for all 94 items, in item number order, can be found in Appendix A, Table A3.

Table X: Highly Rated Practices where Top Quartile Colleges Had Incidence Rates ≥ 10 than Bottom Quartile Colleges (Public Four-Year Colleges and Universities)

		Тор	Bottom
Item #	Item	Quartile	Quartile
12	increased number of academic advisors	43%	30%
11	advising interventions with selected student populations	96%	82%
39	supplemental instruction	75%	64%
40	summer bridge program	75%	49%
78	program for honors students	91%	73%
13	integration of advising with first-year transition programs	72%	48%
10	training for non-faculty academic advisors	84%	67%
59	faculty mentoring	74%	45%
6	living/learning communities (residential)	84%	42%
79	program for international students	87%	60%
60	staff mentoring	57%	31%

Section V: Top Three Retention Practices

In this section, public four-year college respondents were asked to review the pool of 94 practices and identify the three that made the greatest contribution to retention on their campus. Table XI contains the percentage of institutions that selected a practice as one of the top three; only nine practices were chosen by 10% or more of the institutions as among the top three. Forty-four practices were chosen by 9% or fewer of the institutions as among the top three; these items and the percentage choosing each can be found in Appendix A, Table A4. The remaining 41 practices were not identified by any of the colleges as one of the three top practices having an effect on retention.

Table XI: Three Practices Making the Greatest Contribution to Retention (Public Four-Year Colleges and Universities)

		% Selecting
		as Among Top
Item #	Item	Three
5	freshman seminar/university 101 (credit)	24%
39	supplemental instruction	16%
48	tutoring	15%
6	living/learning communities (residential)	14%

		% Selecting
		as Among Top
Item #	Item	Three
11	advising interventions with selected student populations	14%
24	mandated placement of students in courses based on test scores	13%
14	academic advising center	12%
1	summer orientation	11%
50	early warning system	10%

Appendix A

Data for Public Four-Year Colleges and Universities

- Table A1: Means for All Attrition Factors; All Items by Item Number Order
- Table A2: Contribution Means and Percents Using for all Programs, Services, Curricular Offerings, and Interventions; All Items by Item Number Order
- Table A3: Differentials between Top Retention Quartile and Bottom Retention Quartile Colleges; All Items in Item Number Order
- Table A4: Programs, Services, Curricular Offerings, and Interventions; Top Three Selected by Fewer than Ten Percent of Colleges; Listed by Percentage from Highest to Lowest

Table A1

Means for All Attrition Factors All Items in Item Number Order

Public Four-Year Colleges and Universities

Item #	Item	Mean
1	student employment opportunities	3.00
2	level of student preparation for college-level work	3.90
3	relevancy of curricula	2.59
4	student access to needed courses in the appropriate sequence	2.76
5	student first-generation status	3.32
6	accuracy of information provided by academic advisors	2.79
7	availability of academic advisors	2.84
8	level of academic advisors' concern for students	2.77
9	student low socio-economic status	3.49
10	amount of financial aid available to students	3.65
11	student access to financial aid advising and information	2.95
12	ratio of loans to other forms of financial aid	3.08
13	level of student commitment to earning a degree	3.56
14	student-institution "fit"	3.08
15	level of certainty about career goals	3.18
16	extracurricular programs	2.48
17	student educational aspirations and goals	3.36
18	commuting/living off-campus	2.79
19	level of certainty about educational major	3.00
20	adequacy of personal financial resources	3.90
21	level of student motivation to succeed	3.64
22	student physical health issues	2.16
23	adequate academic/learning support services	2.88
24	level of emotional support from family, friends, and significant others	3.14
25	residence hall facilities	2.46
26	programs to support students' transition to residence hall living	2.30
27	level of job demands on students	3.52
28	quality of interaction between faculty and students	3.16
29	consistency of instructional quality	2.86
30	out-of-class interaction between students and faculty	2.85
31	student study skills	3.80
32	student engagement opportunities in the classroom (active learning)	3.10
33	quality of interaction between staff and students	2.75
34	student mental or emotional health issues	2.95
35	rules and regulations governing student behavior	2.10
36	student family responsibilities	3.21
37	campus safety and security	1.95
38	student peer group interaction	2.83
39	cultural activities	2.36
40	distance from students' permanent homes	2.59
41	level of intellectual stimulation or challenge for students	2.76
42	student personal coping skills	3.34

Table A2 Programs, Services, Curricular Offerings, Interventions Percent Using and Contribution Means All Items in Item Number Order

Public Four-Year Colleges and Universities

		Incidence	
Item #	Retention Interventions	Rate	Mean
1	summer orientation	93%	3.61
2	extended freshman orientation (non-credit)	33%	3.57
3	extended freshman orientation (credit)	24%	3.82
4	freshman seminar/university 101 (non-credit)	9%	3.38
5	freshman seminar/university 101 (credit)	76%	3.74
6	living/learning communities (residential)	62%	3.67
7	learning communities (non-residential)	44%	3.56
8	parent/family orientation	84%	3.15
9	training for faculty academic advisors	74%	3.46
10	training for non-faculty academic advisors	74%	3.70
11	advising interventions with selected student populations	88%	3.93
12	increased number of academic advisors	38%	3.98
13	integration of advising with first-year transition programs	60%	3.80
14	academic advising center	74%	3.98
15	center(s) that integrates academic advising with career/life planning	34%	3.56
16	assessment of faculty academic advisors	26%	2.93
17	assessment of non-faculty academic advisors	49%	3.16
18	application of technology to advising	72%	3.30
19	recognition/rewards for faculty academic advisors	38%	2.78
20	recognition/rewards for non-faculty academic advisors	34%	2.85
21	specified student learning outcomes (syllabus) for advising	31%	3.09
22	online advising system	34%	3.39
23	campus-wide assessment/audit of advising	33%	3.08
24	mandated placement of students in courses based on test scores	83%	3.71
25	recommended placement of students in courses based on test scores	58%	3.54
26	diagnostic academic skills assessment	50%	3.54
27	outcomes assessment	70%	2.97
28	learning styles assessment	37%	2.89
29	values assessment	22%	2.84
30	interest assessment	42%	2.93
31	vocational aptitude assessment	29%	2.89
32	personality assessment	34%	2.64
33	career exploration workshops or courses	89%	3.11
34	internships	97%	3.70
35	cooperative education	52%	3.52
36	individual career counseling	93%	3.34
37	computer-assisted career guidance	79%	2.96
38	job shadowing	42%	3.27
	1 3		

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		Incidence	
Item#	Retention Interventions	Rate	Mean
39	supplemental instruction	72%	3.91
40	summer bridge program	60%	3.83
41	remedial/developmental coursework (required)	76%	3.49
42	remedial/developmental coursework (recommended)	46%	3.36
43	comprehensive learning assistance center/lab	66%	3.92
44	mathematics center/lab	78%	3.76
45	writing center/lab	90%	3.72
46	reading center/lab	28%	3.86
47	foreign language center/lab	50%	3.19
48	tutoring	97%	3.84
49	study skills course, program, or center	79%	3.73
50	early warning system	74%	3.53
51	mid-term progress reports	63%	3.38
52	performance contracts for students in academic difficulty	55%	3.53
53	organized student study groups	45%	3.52
54	service learning program	72%	3.14
55	ESL program	59%	3.11
56	online learning support	45%	3.19
57	library orientation, workshop, and/or course	84%	2.92
58	peer mentoring	65%	3.59
59	faculty mentoring	51%	3.68
60	staff mentoring	35%	3.62
61	community member mentoring	14%	3.00
62	instructional (teaching) techniques	84%	3.32
63	assessing student performance	80%	3.27
64	faculty use of technology in teaching	95%	3.35
65	faculty use of technology in communicating with students	88%	3.42
66	writing across the curriculum	63%	3.18
67	interdisciplinary courses	83%	3.01
68	enhanced/modified faculty reward system	31%	3.14
69	pre-enrollment financial aid advising	81%	3.49
70	workshops in money management	53%	3.01
71	short-term loans	63%	3.41
72	programs for adult students	39%	3.35
73	programs for commuter students	37%	3.04
74	programs for ESL students	47%	3.23
75	programs for female students	34%	3.36
76	programs for first-generation students	43%	3.90
77	programs for gay/lesbian/bisexual/transgender students	53%	3.17
78	programs for honor students	86%	3.81
79	programs for international students	79%	3.66
80	programs for racial/ethnic minority students	76%	3.70
81	programs for veterans	53%	3.37
82	programs for other student sub-populations	10%	4.20
83	degree guarantee program	12%	2.90
84	freshman interest groups (FIGS)	27%	3.50
85	college-sponsored social activities	90%	3.28
86	diversity information/training	74%	2.98
87	student leadership development	91%	3.49
88	time management course/program	64%	3.25

		Incidence	
Item #	Retention Interventions	Rate	Mean
89	health and wellness course/program	77%	2.96
90	personal coping skills course/program	50%	3.07
91	motivation and goal setting workshop/program	47%	3.19
92	residence hall programs	88%	3.50
93	fraternities/sororities	77%	3.12
94	required on-campus housing for freshmen	48%	3.86

Table A3

Programs, Services, Curricular Offerings, and Interventions Differentials between High Performing and Low Performing Colleges All Items in Item Number Order

Public Four-Year Colleges and Universities

Item #	Item	Top Quartile	Bottom Quartile
1	summer orientation	3.85	3.58
2	extended freshman orientation (non-credit)	3.59	3.62
3	extended freshman orientation (credit)	4.19	4.06
4	freshman seminar/university 101 (non-credit)	3.57	3.17
5	freshman seminar/university 101 (credit)	3.74	3.69
6	living/learning communities (residential)	3.93	3.41
7	learning communities (non-residential)	3.51	3.71
8	parent/family orientation	3.21	3.21
9	training for faculty academic advisors	3.43	3.53
10	training for non-faculty academic advisors	3.72	3.71
11	advising interventions with selected student populations	3.82	3.76
12	increased number of academic advisors	4.07	3.85
13	integration of advising with first-year transition programs	3.82	3.66
14	academic advising center	4.00	3.91
15	center(s) that integrates academic advising with career/life planning	3.60	3.43
16	assessment of faculty academic advisors	2.53	3.25
17	assessment of non-faculty academic advisors	3.03	3.43
18	application of technology to advising	3.41	3.04
19	recognition/rewards for faculty academic advisors	2.51	3.13
20	recognition/rewards for non-faculty academic advisors	2.73	3.00
21	specified student learning outcomes (syllabus) for advising	3.09	3.00
22	online advising system	3.56	3.28
23	campus-wide assessment/audit of advising	3.00	3.32
24	mandated placement of students in courses based on test scores	3.52	3.90
25	recommended placement of students in courses based on test scores	3.31	3.71
26	diagnostic academic skills assessment	3.36	3.75
27	outcomes assessment	2.77	3.21
28	learning styles assessment	2.96	2.76
29	values assessment	2.95	2.71
30	interest assessment	2.90	2.90
31	vocational aptitude assessment	2.92	3.00
32	personality assessment	2.82	2.64
33	career exploration workshops or courses	3.17	3.03
34	internships	3.68	3.72
35	cooperative education	3.42	3.52
36	individual career counseling	3.39	3.27
37	computer-assisted career guidance	3.00	2.94
38	job shadowing	3.32	3.25

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Item #	Item	Top Quartile	Bottom Quartile
39	supplemental instruction	3.76	4.02
40	summer bridge program	3.90	3.81
41	remedial/developmental coursework (required)	3.47	3.63
42	remedial/developmental coursework (recommended)	3.38	3.47
43	comprehensive learning assistance center/lab	3.91	4.11
44	mathematics center/lab	3.84	3.88
45	writing center/lab	3.73	3.92
46	reading center/lab	4.06	3.92
47	foreign language center/lab	3.22	3.25
48	tutoring	3.91	3.90
49	study skills course, program, or center	3.72	3.73
50	early warning system	3.51	3.47
51	mid-term progress reports	3.21	3.40
52	performance contracts for students in academic difficulty	3.41	3.30
53	organized student study groups	3.50	3.35
54	service learning program	3.12	3.29
55	ESL program	3.09	3.39
56	online learning support	3.04	3.37
57	library orientation, workshop, and/or course	2.78	3.07
58	peer mentoring	3.80	3.38
59	faculty mentoring	3.77	3.67
60	staff mentoring	3.80	3.65
61	community member mentoring	2.88	3.00
62	instructional (teaching) techniques	3.37	3.35
63	assessing student performance	3.26	3.41
64	faculty use of technology in teaching	3.31	3.44
65	faculty use of technology in communicating with students	3.33	3.53
66	writing across the curriculum	3.31	3.19
67	interdisciplinary courses	3.03	3.04
68	enhanced/modified faculty reward system	3.12	2.96
69	pre-enrollment financial aid advising	3.51	3.78
70	workshops in money management	2.92	3.40
71	short-term loans	3.48	3.56
72	adult students	3.29	3.21
73	commuter students	3.04	2.88
74	programs for ESL students	3.39	3.32
75	programs for female students	3.38	3.15
76	programs for first-generation students	3.97	3.91
77	programs for gay/lesbian/bisexual/transgender programs for students	3.42	2.58
78	programs for honor students	3.87	3.56
79	programs for international students	3.68	3.59
80	programs for racial/ethnic minority students	4.00	3.59
81	programs for veterans	3.43	3.37
82	programs for other student sub-populations	4.25	3.88
83	degree guarantee program	2.67	2.73
84	freshman interest groups (FIGS)	3.59	3.33
85	college-sponsored social activities	3.41	3.37

Item #	Item	Top Quartile	Bottom Quartile
86	diversity information/training	3.20	2.80
87	student leadership development	3.66	3.38
88	time management course/program	3.30	3.11
89	health and wellness course/program	3.08	2.85
90	personal coping skills course/program	3.18	2.73
91	motivation and goal setting workshop/program	3.19	3.07
92	residence hall programs	3.62	3.44
93	fraternities/sororities	3.09	3.05
94	required on-campus housing for freshmen	4.08	3.84

Table A4

Programs, Services, Curricular Offerings, and Interventions Top Three Selected by Fewer than Ten Percent of Colleges Listed by Percentage from Highest to Lowest

Public Four-Year Colleges and Universities

		% Selecting as One of Top Three
Item #	Item	Practices
43	comprehensive learning assistance center/lab	9%
58	peer mentoring	8%
40	summer bridge program	7%
59	faculty mentoring	7%
62	instructional (teaching) techniques	7%
12	increased number of academic advisors	6%
13	integration of advising with first-year transition programs	6%
7	learning communities (non-residential)	6%
41	remedial/developmental coursework (required)	6%
69	pre-enrollment financial aid advising	6%
94	required on-campus housing for freshmen	6%
78	programs for honor students	5%
44	mathematics center/lab	4%
51	mid-term progress reports	4%
2	extended freshman orientation (non-credit)	3%
10	training for non-faculty academic advisors	3%
34	internships	3%
49	study skills course, program, or center	3%
92	residence hall programs	3%
	center(s) that integrates academic advising with career/life	
15	planning	3%
54	service learning program	3%
84	freshman interest groups (FIGS)	3%
9	training for faculty academic advisors	2%
33	career exploration workshops or courses	2%
45	writing center/lab	2%
87	student leadership development	2%
28	learning styles assessment	2%
36	individual career counseling	2%
52	performance contracts for students in academic difficulty	2%
85	college-sponsored social activities	2%
3	extended freshman orientation (credit)	1%
4	freshman seminar/university 101 (non-credit)	1%
18	application of technology to advising	1%
35	cooperative education	1%
67	interdisciplinary courses	1%
76	first-generation students	1%
79	programs for international students	1%
16	assessment of faculty academic advisors	1%
21	specified student learning outcomes (syllabus) for advising	1%
22	online advising system	1%
27	outcomes assessment	1%
31	vocational aptitude assessment	1%
<u> </u>	1 - 1 - 1 - 1 - 1 - 1 - 1 - 1 - 1 - 1 -	1 / 0

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		% Selecting as One
		of Top Three
Item #	Item	Practices
32	personality assessment	1%
80	programs for racial/ethnic minority students	1%

Appendix B

What Works in Student Retention

Instrument

What Works in Student Retention?

Fourth National Survey

This study reiterates ACT's on-going commitment to help colleges and universities better understand the impact of campus practices on college student retention and persistence to degree attainment. Throughout the last three decades, ACT has conducted a number of research studies relevant to college student success. Postsecondary educators use the results from these research efforts to enhance the quality of programs leading to student success. These projects include, among others, the following.

- Three National Surveys on Retention: What Works in Student Retention?
- Six National Surveys on Academic Advising Practices
- Annual Report on National Retention and Persistence to Degree Rates

Your participation in this effort, the 4th National Survey on Retention, will make a significant contribution to a better understanding of retention practices.

Directions: Please complete each set of items on this survey, and then return your completed survey in the envelope provided or mail it to: ACT, Inc.; Survey Research Services 47; PO Box 168; Iowa City, IA 52243.



SECTION I: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1.	Is there a person on your car coordination of retention pro	npus who is responsible for the grams?			ransfer-enhancem Ition participates.	ent prog	grams below in
2.	☐ Yes What title most closely appre (Check only one.)	No (Skip to Question 3.) oximates that of the individual?	A.	☐ With seld ☐ With seld ☐ System-			
	☐ Chief Executive/President	☐ Chief Enrollment Management Officer ☐ Associate/Assistant Enrollment		☐ Statewic	de the above		
	☐ Provost	Management Officer	В.	Articulation	agreements		
	☐ Associate/Assistant Provost	Director		_	ected college(s) ected group or col	nsortium	of colleges
	☐ Chief Academic Affairs Officer/Campus Dean	Associate/Assistant Director		☐ System-☐ Statewic	-wide		
	Associate/Assistant Academic Affairs Officer	☐ Coordinator		☐ None of	the above		
	☐ Chief Student Affairs Officer☐ Associate/Assistant Student Affairs Officer	☐ Specialist	C.		oplicability system the applicability o		
3.		age of your undergraduate credit ne instruction?		☐ System-☐ Statewic	de	nsortium	n of colleges
	%	☐ Don't know/Unavailable		☐ Multi-sta ☐ None of	the above		
	SECT	TION II: RETENTION AND I	DEGREE	-COMPLE	ETION RATE	S	
1.	What is your institution's <i>cu</i> retention rate (for first-time	rrent first-year to second-year full-time students)?	3-ye	ear timeframe	ar timeframe for for for two-year institent student degre	utions, v	what is your
	% (percent retaine	d) Don't know/Unavailable	iiisti		_	_	netion rate:
2.	Does your institution have a second-year retention rate	specific goal for its first-year to		% (deg	ree-completion rate)		on't low/Unavailable
	No (Skip to Question 3.)Yes→ If yes: The goal for	☐ Don't know/Unavailable (Skip to Question 3.)	deg four	ree-completi -year institution	tion have a specif ion rate (6-year gr ons or 3-year grad	raduatio	n timeframe for
	(% of stude percent inc	nts who will be retained – <u>not</u> rease) and the schedule for	_	r institutions)? No (Skip to Sed			on't
	_	nat goal are: ent retained goal)	_			(S	ow/Unavailable kip to Section III.)
	b. Timeframe for achie			Yes→ If yes:	The goal for the sturate (% of students not percent increas	who cone) and th	nplete degrees –
	☐ No specific timef☐ One year☐	☐ More than five		a	achieving that goal% (degree-comp		e goal)
	☐ Two years ☐ Three years ☐ Four years	years		b. Timefram	ne for achieving th	at goal	
	3di yadia			☐ One y ☐ Two y	e years		Five years More than five years

SECTION III: FACTORS AFFECTING STUDENT ATTRITION AT YOUR SCHOOL

This section contains a list of student and institutional characteristics or factors that can affect attrition.

To what degree does each factor affect attrition at your school?

Major Effect on	attrition at your school	Major Effect on attrition at your school							
Modera	ate Effect on attrition at your school	Moderate Effect on attrition at your school							
	Little or No Effect on attrition at your school	Little or No Effect on attrition at your school 5 4 3 2 1 Factors							
	Student employment opportunities								
	 student employment opportunities level of student preparation for college- level work 	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 22. student physical health issues 23. adequate academic/learning support services							
	relevancy of curricula	24. level of emotional support from family, friends, and significant others							
	 student access to needed courses in the appropriate sequence 	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 25. residence hall facilities							
	5. student first-generation status	□ □ □ □ □ 26. programs to support students' transition to residence hall living							
	accuracy of information provided by academic advisors	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 27. level of job demands on students							
	7. availability of academic advisors	□ □ □ □ □ 28. quality of interaction between faculty and students							
	level of academic advisors' concern for students	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 29. consistency of instructional quality							
	9. student low socio-economic status	□ □ □ □ □ 30. out-of-class interaction between students and faculty							
	amount of financial aid available to students	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 31. student study skills							
	11. student access to financial aid advising and information	□ □ □ □ □ 32. student engagement opportunities in the classroom (active learning)							
	12. ratio of loans to other forms of financial aid	□ □ □ □ □ 33. quality of interaction between staff and students							
	 level of student commitment to earning a degree 	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 34. student mental or emotional health issues							
	14. student-institution "fit"	□ □ □ □ □ 35. rules and regulations governing student behavior							
	15. level of certainty about career goals	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 36. student family responsibilities							
	16. extracurricular programs	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 37. campus safety and security							
	17. student educational aspirations and goals	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 38. student peer group interaction							
	18. commuting/living off-campus	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 39. cultural activities							
	19. level of certainty about educational major	□ □ □ □ 40. distance from students' permanent homes							
	20. adequacy of personal financial resources	□ □ □ □ □ 41. level of intellectual stimulation or challenge for students							
	21. level of student motivation to succeed	☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ 42. student personal coping skills							

SECTION IV: ON-CAMPUS RETENTION PRACTICES

Listed below is a series of programs, services, curricular offerings, and interventions that may make a contribution to retention on your campus. First indicate if the practice is or is not offered at your school.

Then, if a practice is offered, indicate the degree to which you think it contributes to retention at your school.

		Offered at Your <u>Institution?</u>			Г	Major Contribution to retention				
		<u>No</u>	<u>Yes</u>			Г		Mode	rate Contribution to retention	
	ms, Services, Curricular Offerings, Interventions		(Then, what degree of contribution to campus retention?)		▼ 5	4	V 3	2	Contribution to retention	
First-Y	ear Transition								_	
1.	summer orientation			\rightarrow						
2.	extended freshman orientation (non-credit)			\rightarrow						
3.	extended freshman orientation (credit)			\rightarrow						
4.	freshman seminar/university 101 (non-credit)			\rightarrow						
5.	freshman seminar/university 101 (credit)			\rightarrow						
6.	living/learning communities (residential)			\rightarrow						
7.	learning communities (non-residential)			\rightarrow						
8.	parent/family orientation			\rightarrow						
Acade	mic Advising									
9.	training for faculty academic advisors			\rightarrow						
10.	training for non-faculty academic advisors			\rightarrow						
11.	advising interventions with selected student populations			\rightarrow						
12.	increased number of academic advisors			\rightarrow	Ш	Ш	Ш	Ш	Ш	
13.	integration of advising with first-year transition programs			\rightarrow						
14.	academic advising center			\rightarrow						
15.	center(s) that integrates academic advising with career/life planning			\rightarrow						
16.	assessment of faculty academic advisors			\rightarrow						
17.	assessment of non-faculty academic advisors			\rightarrow						
18.	application of technology to advising			\rightarrow						
19.	recognition/rewards for faculty academic advisors			\rightarrow						
20.	recognition/rewards for non-faculty academic advisors			\rightarrow						
21.	specified student learning outcomes (syllabus) for advising			\rightarrow						
22.	online advising system			\rightarrow						
	campus-wide assessment/audit of advising			\rightarrow						
Asses										
	mandated placement of students in courses based on test scores recommended placement of students in courses based			\rightarrow						
25.	on test scores	Ш		\rightarrow	Ш					
26.	diagnostic academic skills assessment			\rightarrow						
27.	outcomes assessment			\rightarrow						
28.	learning styles assessment			\rightarrow						
29.	values assessment			\rightarrow						
30.	interest assessment			\rightarrow						
31.	vocational aptitude assessment			\rightarrow						
32.	personality assessment			\rightarrow						

			d at Your tution?		Г	Major Contribution to retention					
		<u>No</u>	Yes				Г	Mode	erate Contribution to retention		
Progra	ms, Services, Curricular Offerings, Interventions		(Then, what degree of contribution to campus retention?)		▼ 5	4	3	2	Contribution to retention		
Caree	r Planning and Placement										
33.	career exploration workshops or courses			\rightarrow							
34.	internships			\rightarrow							
35.	cooperative education			\rightarrow							
36.	individual career counseling			\rightarrow							
37.	computer-assisted career guidance			\rightarrow							
	job shadowing			\rightarrow							
	ng Assistance/Academic Support										
	supplemental instruction			\rightarrow							
40.	summer bridge program			\rightarrow			Ш	Ш			
41.	remedial/developmental coursework (required)			\rightarrow							
42.	remedial/developmental coursework (recommended)			\rightarrow							
43.	comprehensive learning assistance center/lab			\rightarrow							
44.	mathematics center/lab			\rightarrow							
45.	writing center/lab			\rightarrow							
46.	reading center/lab			\rightarrow							
47.	foreign language center/lab			\rightarrow							
48.	tutoring			\rightarrow							
49.	study skills course, program, or center			\rightarrow							
50.	early warning system			\rightarrow							
51.	mid-term progress reports			\rightarrow							
52.	performance contracts for students in academic difficulty			\rightarrow							
53.	organized student study groups			\rightarrow							
54.	service learning program			\rightarrow							
55.	ESL program			\rightarrow							
56.	online learning support			\rightarrow							
57.	library orientation, workshop, and/or course			\rightarrow							
Mento	_										
	peer mentoring			\rightarrow							
	faculty mentoring			\rightarrow							
60.	staff mentoring community member mentoring			\rightarrow							
	y Development			<u>→</u>		ш		Ш			
	instructional (teaching) techniques	П		\rightarrow	П	П	П	П	П		
63.	assessing student performance			\rightarrow							
64.	faculty use of technology in teaching			\rightarrow							
65.				\rightarrow							
66.	writing across the curriculum			\rightarrow							
67.	interdisciplinary courses			\rightarrow							
68.	enhanced/modified faculty reward system			\rightarrow							

		Offered at Your Institution?		— м	pution to retention		
	<u>No</u>	Yes	Moderate Cont		rate Contribution to retention		
Programs, Services, Curricular Offerings, Intervention	ns	(Then, what degree of contribution to campus retention?)	▼ 5	4	V 3	2	Contribution to retention
Financial Aid							
69. pre-enrollment financial aid advising			$\rightarrow \square$				
70. workshops in money management			$\rightarrow \Box$				
71. short-term loans			\rightarrow				
Co-curricular Services/Programs for Specific Student Sub-populations	t						
72. adult students			$\rightarrow \Box$				
73. commuter students			$\rightarrow \Box$				
74. ESL students			$\rightarrow \Box$				
75. female students			\rightarrow				
76. first-generation students			\rightarrow				
77. gay/lesbian/bisexual/transgender students			$\rightarrow \Box$				
78. honor students			\rightarrow				
79. international students			\rightarrow				
80. racial/ethnic minority students			\rightarrow				
81. veterans			\rightarrow				
82. other (Specify.)							
Other Activities/Programs							
83. degree guarantee program			\rightarrow				
84. freshman interest groups (FIGS)			$\rightarrow \square$				
85. college-sponsored social activities			$\rightarrow \Box$				
86. diversity information/training			$\rightarrow \Box$				
87. student leadership development			$\rightarrow \Box$				
88. time management course/program			$\rightarrow \Box$				
89. health and wellness course/program			$\rightarrow \Box$	Ш	Ц	Ц	
90. personal coping skills course/program			$\rightarrow \Box$				
91. motivation and goal setting workshop/program			$\rightarrow \sqcup$	Ц	ᆜ		
92. residence hall programs			$\rightarrow \Box$	Ц	Ц		
93. fraternities/sororities			$\rightarrow \Box$		Ц		
94. required on-campus housing for freshmen	Ц		\rightarrow \Box		Ш	Ш	Ш
Other Programs, Services, Curricular Offerings, Interventions that contribute to retention at your school (Please specify.)	ool						
95							
96							

SECTION V SECTION VI From the 96 items in Section IV (beginning on page We will prepare a report containing the results 3), write the item number and text for the 1 to 3 of this survey. Would you agree to a brief items among the 96 that have the greatest positive follow-up survey or phone call should we impact on retention at your school. identify your retention program for inclusion? ☐ Yes ☐ No Item #_____ Text _____ If yes, please provide the following information. Name _____ Job Title Text _____ Item #_____ Mailing Address ____ Item #_____ Text _____

SECTION VII: COMMENTS

If you would like to share information or comments that would enlighten our understanding of retention problems and/or solutions at your school, please write them in the space below.

Thank you!

(Please return your completed survey in the enclosed envelope. If you no longer have the envelope, please mail your completed survey to ACT, Inc.; Survey Research Services 47; PO Box 168; Iowa City, IA 52243.)

