



Improving Student Retention in Colleges and Universities

By Star Learning Solutions



Improving Student Retention in Colleges and Universities

By Star Learning Solutions

Contents

Improving Student Retention in Colleges and Universities	1
The College Graduation Crisis	2
The Mission of the Star Student Success Program	3
Definition of the Star Student Success Program	3



Rochelle Clarke, M.Ed.
Star Learning Solutions, Inc.
O. 954.636.6133
C. 214.223.9867
Rochelle@starlearning.solutions
www.starlearning.solutions

Executive Summary

The College Graduation Crisis

“More than 40% of American students who start at four-year colleges haven’t earned a degree after six years. If you include community-college students in the tabulation, the dropout rate is more than half, worse than any other country except for Hungary.” -- New York Times, “Who Gets to Graduate?” May 15, 2014

Student attrition is a serious problem – for students, for colleges, and for the United States as a whole.

According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES):

- 41% of first-time, full-time students who began seeking a bachelor’s degree at a four-year degree-granting institution in the fall of 2006 failed to complete that degree within six years.
- At private for-profit institutions, the six-year drop-out rate was 68%.

Students who fail to graduate tend to be:

- In the first generation in their families to attend college
- From families in the bottom 20% in terms of income
- Members of ethnic and racial minority groups
- Older students

Earning a four-year college degree is often the key to economic mobility. It increases by 300% a student’s chances of making the jump from the bottom 20% of family income to the top 40%. According to the US Labor Department, workers with bachelor’s degrees earn 54% more, on average, than people who attended some college but failed to graduate.²

Students who leave college without a degree are often burdened by student loan debt without the corresponding increase in earning potential that a degree confers.

1 “Who Gets to Graduate?” New York Times, May 15, 2014.

2 “Colleges Are Failing in Graduation Rates,” New York Times, September 8, 2009.

The Mission of the Star Student Success Program

The mission of the Star Student Success Program is to assist a specialized group of “at-risk” students by providing opportunities and resources that fosters academic excellence, stimulates intellectual inquiry, cultivates research skills and develops great leaders.

Definition of the Star Student Success Program

The Star Student Success Program, defines, develops and implements a student attrition program for a specific audience of growing “at risk” students. These students typically require greater support to improve retention. This mentoring program is focused on providing the necessary resources to understand the hidden curriculum of higher education and adjust to the psychosocial aspects of college life.

1. 1st Generation College Students
2. Economically Disadvantaged students
3. Freshmen over 35 years old
4. Military Students

Star Learning Solution’s Higher-Education retention strategy works to measure, track and support students using a system-wide engagement program to establish successful integration into the school environment using the following tools:

1. The students’ first step in The Star Student Success Program is taking a Student Profile Assessment. Each student is assessed to determine his or her behaviors, motivators and competencies to facilitate communication, fuel motivation and reveal areas for competency development.

2. The backbone of The Star Student Success Program is a Formal Mentoring Process with simulated situations that students discuss openly with their cohorts. Then, students confidently submit their final answer to each mock assignment to a personal mentor. Star Mentors coach each student one-to-one on how he or she would solve the issue. This structured mentoring environment provides a safe setting to tutor students through typical new student issues. Additionally, mentoring sessions present an opportunity for the mentor to check in and discuss any current issues with the student and establish trust to discuss potential problems later.

3. The eAdvising Tool is available for students to gain immediate advice on academic and financial aid, beyond normal business hours where ever a student is located. If an academic or financial-aid advisor is unavailable at school, the student can make an appointment with the eAdvisor.

Star Learning Solution's goal is to provide each specialized "at-risk" student with a mentor and to develop the skills that will prepare them for success in their careers.

