

Numbers Talk – The first in a series of Title III blogs (7.7.09)
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This blog serves multiple purposes:

- It provides a forum for sharing the learning from the analyses of retention data.
- It allows each of you time to review these analyses and pose any questions/thoughts you might have
- It documents the work being done under the Title III grant.

The key objective of the data analyses is to provide an understanding of the factors that impact retention rates. The retention issue is multi-faceted; data will be analyzed from a variety of perspectives. It is expected that many of the analyses will show similar results (convergence); when the same result is supported by a variety of analyses, the stronger the result and more confidence we have in the learning. Ultimately, we hope to weave a comprehensive story around the factors related to retention and design interventions that keep students in school.

At this date, retention analyses are underway amongst

- Cohorts, first time, degree seeking, full and part time students
- Students taking Gateway classes

The factors that may influence retention amongst these student groups (and the focus of the analyses) includes:

Gender	Number of credit hours	Disability Status
Age	Veteran Status	Declared Major
Academic Year	Income level	
GPA	First in family to go to college	

There are challenges to the analyses; every effort will be made to find acceptable solutions:

- There are multiple data bases. It is difficult to merge information across data bases.
- Some information has never been collected.
- The level of detail associated with specific variables may be missing.
- Some information may be available on a group level only and not on an individual student level.

Retention Percentages by Major

Base: Fall to Fall semester cohorts of first time, degree-seeking students

major	2005-06 to 2007-08		
	return	total	retention rate
Boat Mfg	0	0	n/a
Biotechnology	1	1	100.0%
Radiography	8	8	100.0%
Esthetics	14	16	87.5%
Pract Nursing	6	7	85.7%
Med Asst	3	4	75.0%
BLET	20	27	74.1%
Ther Massage	14	19	73.7%
HRM	11	15	73.3%
Aquaculture	8	11	72.7%
Paralegal	12	17	70.6%
Respiratory	9	13	69.2%
ADN	7	11	63.6%
OST	4	7	57.1%
Marine Propulsion	8	14	57.1%
Criminal Justice	15	28	53.6%
Assoc. in Arts	118	225	52.4%
Horticulture	4	8	50.0%
Medical Office	1	2	50.0%
Interior Design	7	14	50.0%
Photography	14	28	50.0%
Culinary	17	34	50.0%
Cosmetology	13	27	48.1%
CIT	11	23	47.8%
AFA	8	17	47.1%
Assoc. in Science	39	86	45.3%
GOT	72	163	44.2%
Bus Adm	23	57	40.4%
EMS	5	14	35.7%
Early Childhood	13	38	34.2%
Web Tech	3	10	30.0%
Sum/Average	488	944	59.6%

Retention rates are typically displayed by major, i.e., the total number of returning students in a program is divided by the total number of students enrolled in that program.

This is an alternative way of displaying the same data. Instead of calculating retention based on the number enrolled in a major, the percentages are based on sum of those returning and the sum of the total number enrolled across major.

There are two advantages to reviewing the data in this format:

- It provides a real perspective on the data in the context of the total student body
- It allows the creation of an index by major. The index of 100 is expected if, in this case, retention rates observed by major are much greater – or much less – than expected.

The power point presentation that follows this section goes into greater detail on the value of the index.

Retention Percentages by Major

Base: Fall to Fall semester cohorts of first time, degree-seeking students

major	2005-06 to 2007-08				Index: Retention/Total
	return		total		
Boat Mfg	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	
Biotechnology	1	0.2%	1	0.1%	195
Radiography	8	1.6%	8	0.8%	195
Esthetics	14	2.9%	16	1.7%	171
Pract Nursing	6	1.2%	7	0.7%	167
Med Asst	3	0.6%	4	0.4%	146
BLET	20	4.1%	27	2.8%	145
Ther Massage	14	2.9%	19	2.0%	144
HRM	11	2.2%	15	1.6%	143
Aquaculture	8	1.6%	11	1.1%	142
Paralegal	12	2.4%	17	1.8%	138
Respiratory	9	1.8%	13	1.4%	135
ADN	7	1.4%	11	1.1%	124
OST	4	0.8%	7	0.7%	112
Marine Propulsion	8	1.6%	14	1.5%	112
Criminal Justice	15	3.1%	28	2.9%	105
Assoc. in Arts	118	24.0%	225	23.5%	102
Interior Design	7	1.4%	14	1.5%	98
Photography	14	2.9%	28	2.9%	98
Culinary	17	3.5%	34	3.5%	98
Horticulture	4	0.8%	8	0.8%	98
Medical Office	1	0.2%	2	0.2%	98
Cosmetology	13	2.6%	27	2.8%	94
CIT	11	2.2%	23	2.4%	93
AFA	8	1.6%	17	1.8%	92
Assoc. in Science	39	7.9%	86	9.0%	89
GOT	72	14.7%	163	17.0%	86
Bus Adm	23	4.7%	57	5.9%	79
EMS	5	1.0%	14	1.5%	70
Early Childhood	13	2.6%	38	4.0%	67
Web Tech	3	0.6%	10	1.0%	59

Sum/Average	488	59.6%	944	3.2%	
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