

Utah State University

Retention Symposium

2007

Sponsored by the Office of Retention
and First-Year Experience



Retention &
First-Year
Experience

{think} RETENTION matters

Retention is a journey...

Previous administrations built partnerships between academic affairs and student services and gained success through intentional recruitment and enrollment initiatives.

Now we are moving ahead building upon the success stories you will hear about today.



What is retention?

Retention is defined as everything the institution undertakes to improve the quality of student life and learning for its students.

(Noel-Levitz)



Retention philosophy

“Retention should never be the goal of the institution. The more the students learn and are engaged by their experience, the more likely they are to be satisfied. Therefore, institutions should promote and strive to deliver quality education and student persistence will follow.”

(Lee Upcraft, John Gardner and Betsy Barefoot 2005)



Retention is action

The action of one individual determined to make a difference

The collective work of many, many individuals

A combination of data collection, interpretation, and usage



Ask yourself

What does the term “retention” mean to me as an administrator, advisor, faculty member, or staff member?



Take action

1. Build on today's success stories
2. Look for ways to gather and utilize data.
3. Question assumptions, assess and evaluate current practices
4. Create intentional initiatives to promote student success



Symposium overview

We are here to...

Introduce USU department and program efforts that are complementary and synergistic.

Highlight current efforts to promote student success.

Explore efforts to gather evidence to document effective retention practices.



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Symposium overview

Compare ourselves to national best policies and practices and determine where we have gaps to fill.

Project DEEP (Developing Effective Educational Practices.)

Develop intentional practices that are unique to USU.

Packet article “How to Help Students Achieve” by George Kuh

Educate the campus community as to why retention matters to each of us. Everyone counts in retention: Students, Faculty, and Staff



Figures of note:

- First-Year Retention Rate for 2005 Cohort: **72.2%**
- Avg. First-Year Retention Rate, 2002-2005: **72.6%**
- Initial 2005 Cohort: **1,906** Students
- Adjusted 2005 Cohort: **1,583** Students
- 2005 Exclusions, Leaves of Absence: **323** Students
- 2005 Cohort Retained to Fall 2006: **1,143** Students



(Sources: Office of Analysis, Assessment, and Accreditation, Office of Retention and First-Year Experience)



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Program data: Connections

- Connections and Retention

- Approximate adjusted 2005-2006 retention rate for students who completed Connections was **8.77%** higher than for those who did not.

- Connections Grades and Early Alert

- Adjusted retention rate for students with a B or higher: **78.33%**

- Adjusted retention rate for students with a B- or lower: **47.5%**

- Connections and Revenue

- A **3.5%** Increase in USU's First-Year Retention Rate (approximately 67 students) would result in over **\$525,000** in tuition revenue to USU over three years. This equates to approximately **one additional student** retained from **each section** of Connections.

(Sources: Office of Analysis, Assessment, and Accreditation, Office of Retention and First-Year Experience, Budget Office)



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