

# Developing Retention Action Plans

Center of Inquiry in the Liberal Arts

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# Agenda

- What are the factors related to retention
- What are some of the best practices
- Know your pathway
- Example plan using data

# Factors Related to Retention

- Academic -Preparation and Progress
- Institutional Fit (Climate)
- Commitment to Educational Goals
- Social and Academic Integration –cumulative
- Social -Emotional
- Financial

# Best Practices

- First-Year Seminars
- Early Alert
- Learning Communities
- Active Learning and Engagement
- Student Faculty Interactions
- Enriching Experiences
- Caring Culture
- Clear pathways to student success

## What is a Path?

- Path has
  - Goal and therefore direction
  - Guideposts or markers
  - Turning points and possible stumbling blocks
- Path to graduation should include
  - Purpose
  - Specific course plan
  - Key transition points
  - Imbedded support



Promoting paths to graduation

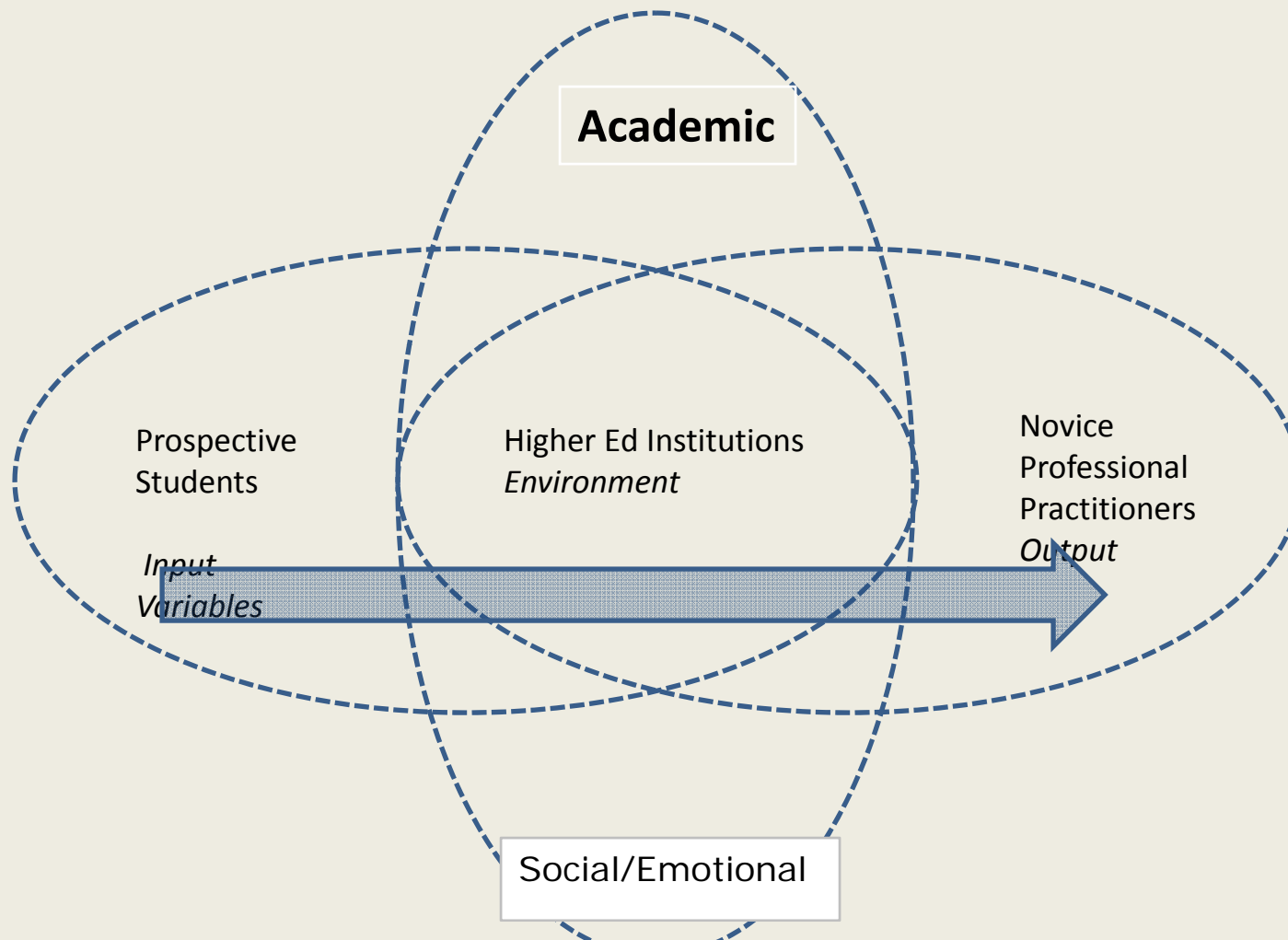
- Do you know your path to graduation?
- Where do students stop off the path?
- Why?

Promoting paths to graduation

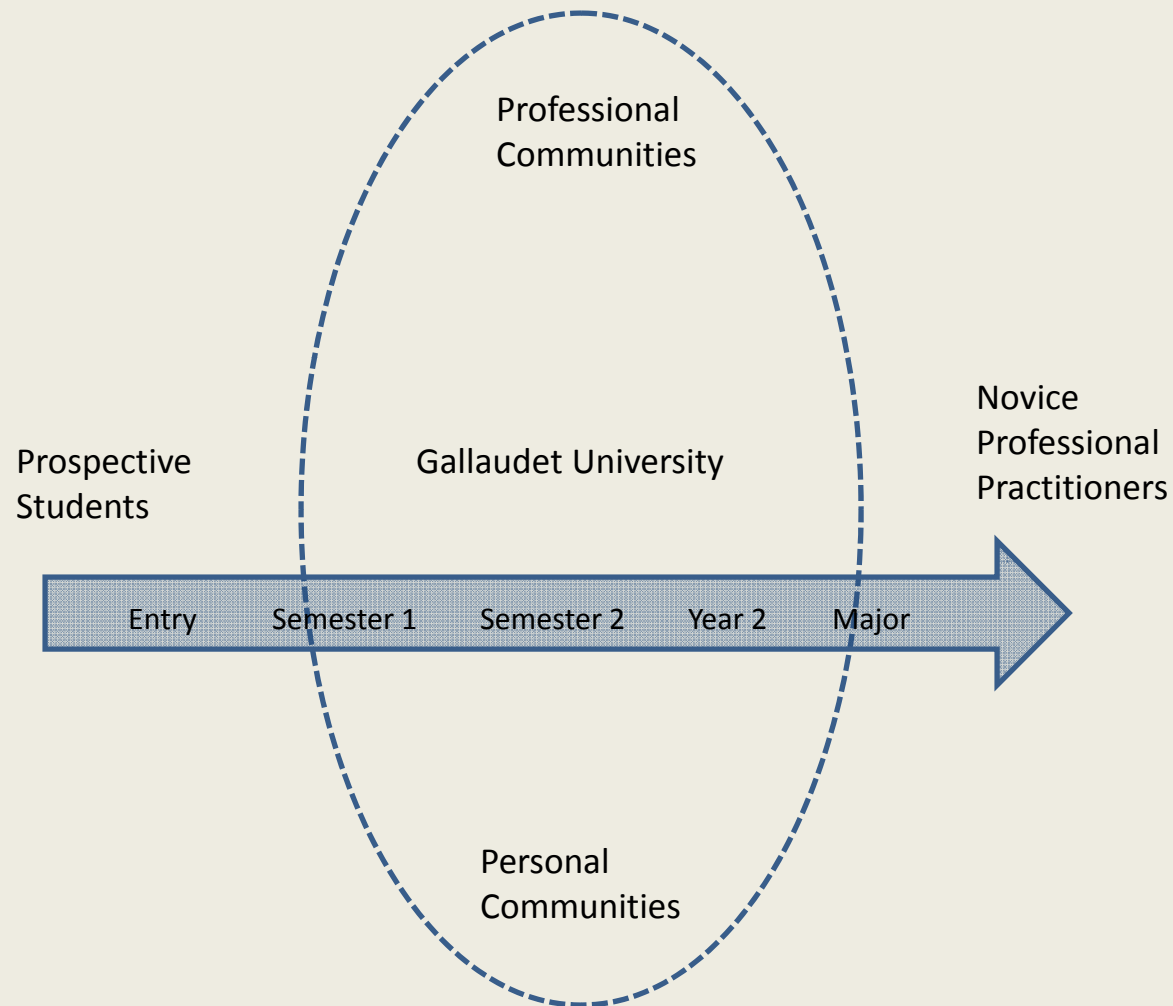
- You must have clear pathways for student success and know why students get off the path



# Conceptualizing Movement to Graduation



# Making the Path to Graduation Work



# Semester 1 and 2 Priorities

## Instruction

Multiple drafts  
Read before class  
Prompt feedback

Worked to meet expectations

Many short papers

Quality relationship w. faculty

Supportive environment

English skill

Shared learning vision

Teaching learning skills

Reflection & sharing

## Curriculum

High structure  
High challenge  
Sustained and engaging experiences

## Social / Emotional Development

Academic self-efficacy  
Expectancy for success  
Locus of control / self-efficacy

Letting go of high school friend and Attachment to college friends

Current friendship quality

# Year 2 Priorities

## Instruction

Completion of college English

Responsiveness

Enthusiasm

Student centered

Professionalism

Reciprocated personal regard

## Curriculum

Quantity of student reading & writing  
Sustained and engaging experiences

## Social / Emotional Development

Importance of liberal education

Relationship maturity

# Do you know your path and barriers?

- What prevents students from earning credit?
- Often trigger courses – those with a high (more than 30%) DFWD rate
- Frequently they are:
  - Math
  - Biology

# What are your action to address this?

- **Institution** (culture, policy and practice)
- **Department** (pedagogy, expectations)
- **Course** (triggers -points where students struggle – curriculum – add SI and modify)
- **Instructor** Reduce size or pace of assignments -- but not expectations or standards. If there are large numbers of failing students allow greater opportunity for success. i.e larger assignments with high percentage grades become several smaller sequential assignments. Are they available?
- **Student** (variables in input or present)

# Are students engaged?

Institutional fit, commitment to educational goals, social-emotional and  
Academic Integration

- Do they:
  - Turn in work on time
  - Respond to feedback
  - Come to class
  - Come to class prepared
  - Use resources
  - Participate

# SOCIAL- EMOTIONAL CHANGE IN SELF-CONCEPT DURING THE FIRST YEAR -KEUP

<b>% at least “above average”</b>	<b>At entry</b>	<b>End of FY</b>	<b>Diff</b>
Writing ability	51%	56%	5%
Spirituality	38%	41%	3%
Self-understanding	57%	59%	2%
Social self-confidence	49%	50%	1%
Leadership ability	61%	61%	0
Intellectual self-confidence	61%	59%	-2%
Emotional health	55%	53%	-2%
Physical health	55%	50%	-5%
Drive to achieve	79%	73%	-6%
Academic ability	77%	70	-7%

# PERSONAL CHALLENGES DURING THE FIRST YEAR

KEUP

*% of students reporting that they “frequently” or “occasionally” felt:*

<b>Lonely or homesick</b>	<b>65%</b>
<b>Isolated from campus life</b>	<b>50%</b>
<b>Had difficulty getting along with roommate(s)/ housemate(s)</b>	<b>48%</b>
<b>Worried about their health</b>	<b>45%</b>
<b>Unsafe on campus</b>	<b>21%</b>

*% of students reporting that they “frequently” felt:*

<b>Overwhelmed by all you had to do</b>	<b>41%</b>
<b>Depressed</b>	<b>12%</b>

# HEALTH AND WELLNESS

KEUP

- The number of student self-injury cases is rising.
- Significant increases in students who enter college already on psychotropic medication.
- Directors of campus counseling centers report:
  - 40%+ of their clients have “severe psychological problems.”
  - 9% have impairments such that they cannot remain in school or do so with extensive psychological or psychiatric help.
- HS drinking among new students is decreasing.
  - Consumption of beer, wine, & liquor goes up during the first year.
  - 46% of male & 31% of female colleges students regularly binge drink.
- 22% of first-year students spend 6+ HPW “partying.”
- First-year students experience a decline in HPW spent on exercising or sports & leisure activities.

# What are the non cognitive behaviors that support student success?

- **Strong self-regard**
- **Emotional self-awareness**
- **Assertiveness**
- **Independence**
- **Self-actualization**
- **Realistic**
- **Flexibility**
- **Solve problems**
- **Empathy for others**
- **Social responsibility**
- **Strong Interpersonal relationships**
- **Tolerate Stress**
- **Delay Impulses**
- **Optimism**
- **Happiness**

# Why Emotional Intelligence?

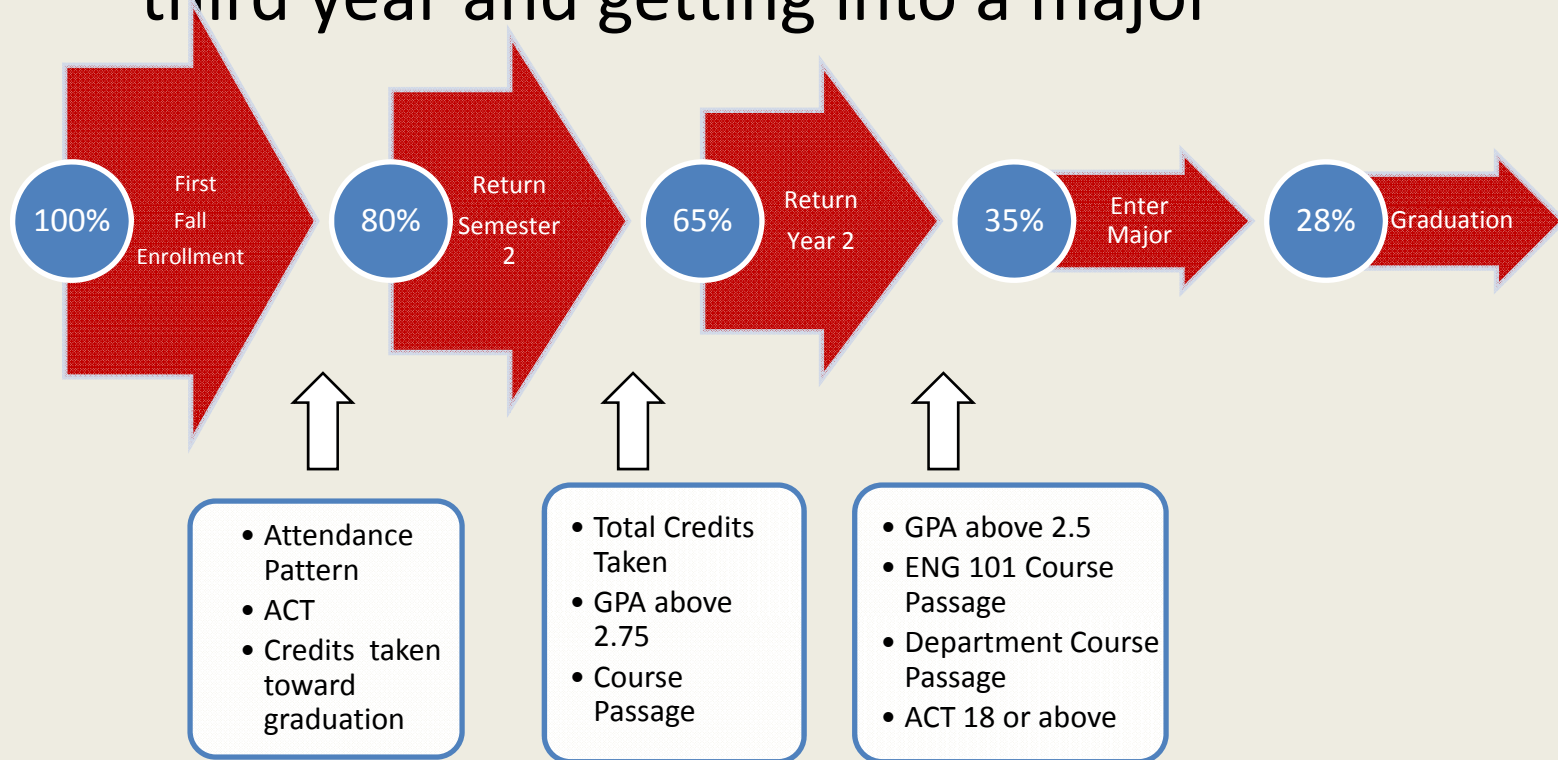
“It is clear that academic success goes hand in hand with emotional and physical well-being. College is a fresh start for many students, but dysfunctional coping styles can cripple their efforts. Even students who ‘get by’ or succeed academically can be at risk if unhealthy behavioral patterns follow them after college. Promoting emotional health in students is an investment in the future. It should be part of the mission of all colleges and universities.”

**Dr. Richard Kadison, Chief of Mental Health,  
Harvard University**

## Path to Graduation

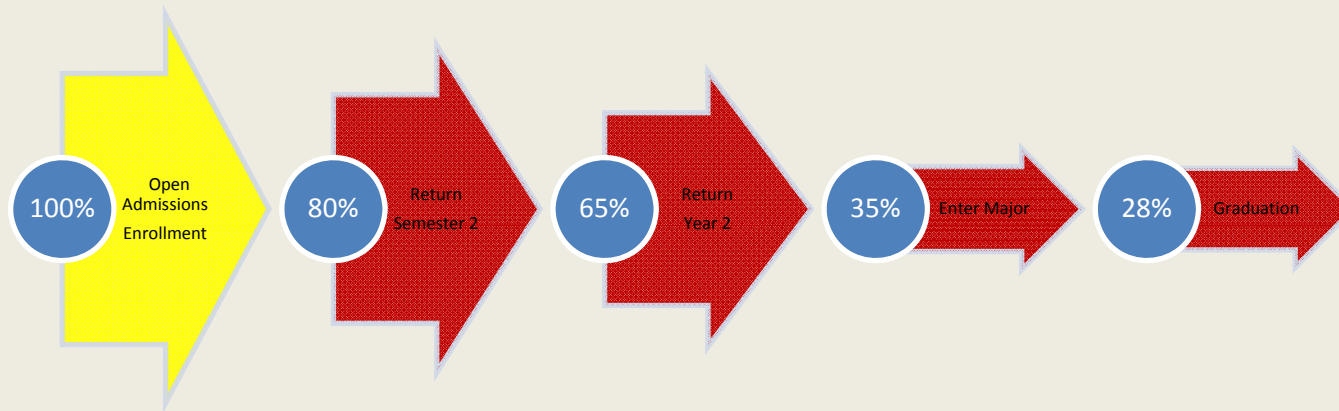
# Gallaudet University– A Case Study

The biggest barrier to graduation occurs around the third year and getting into a major

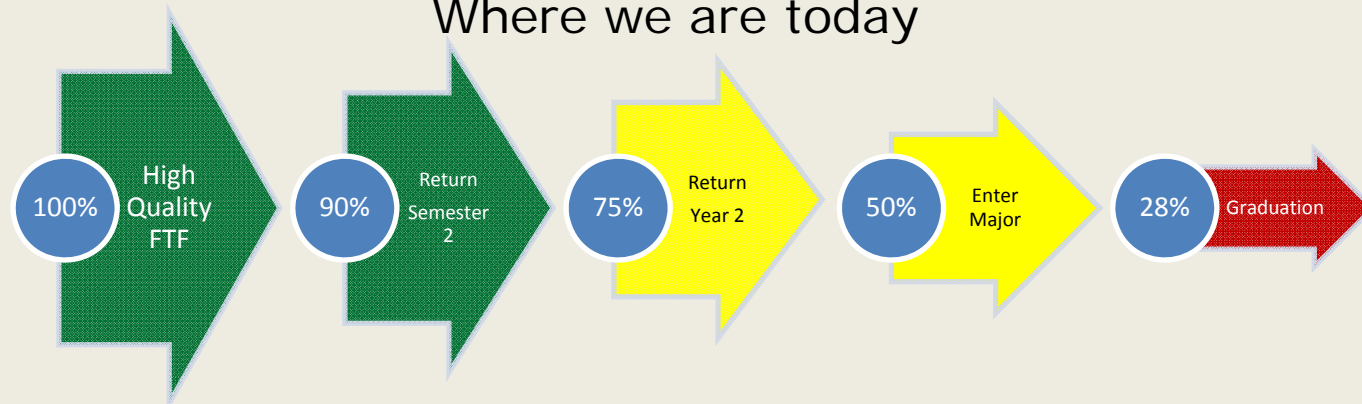


# Finding the path

Where we were two years ago

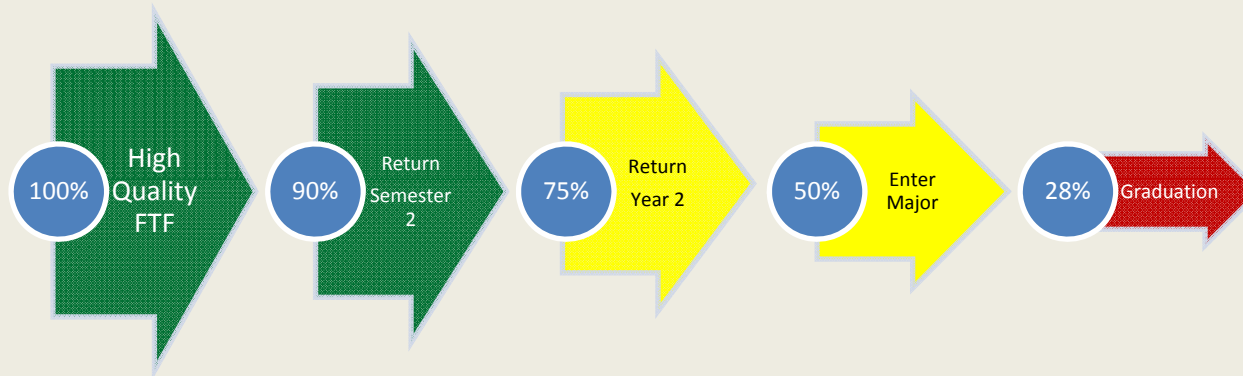


Where we are today

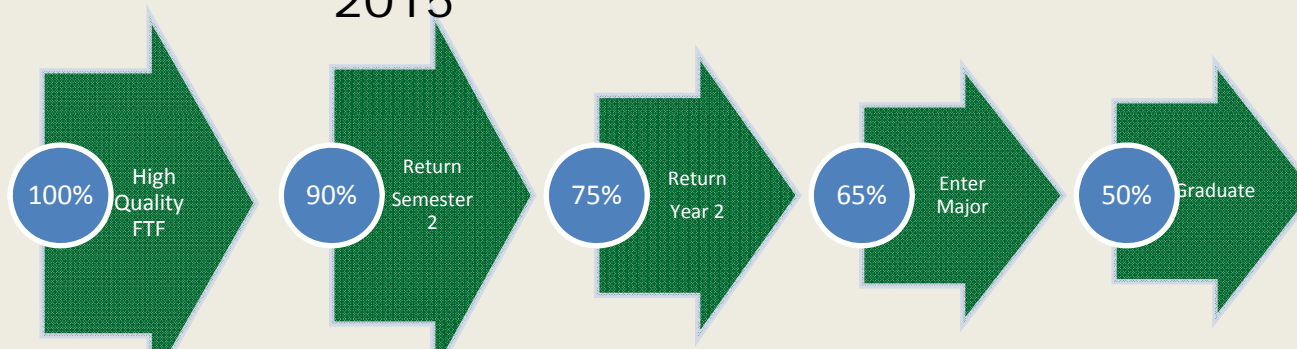


# Building the path

Where we are today



Where we want to be in 2015



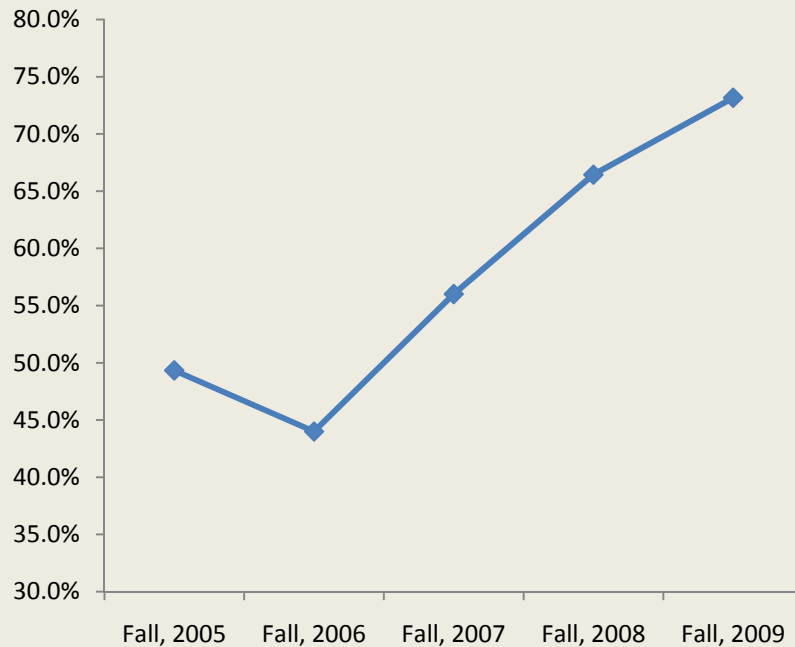
# Identifying the path: Higher standards is leading to more applications and better yield

	Fall 2006	Fall 2007	Fall 2008	Fall 2009	Fall 2010
INQUIRIES	1,598	1,348	1,466	1,428	1,595
APPLIED	238	218	233	231	359
ACCEPTED (in January)	87	100	29	67	96
INTENT TO ENROLL (in January)	3	3	1	18	40
FEE PAID (in January)	3	3	1	18	40
Accepted/ Applied	37%	46%	13%	29%	27%
ENROLLED	281	230	230	300	320

# Identifying the path: Recruit those who will succeed

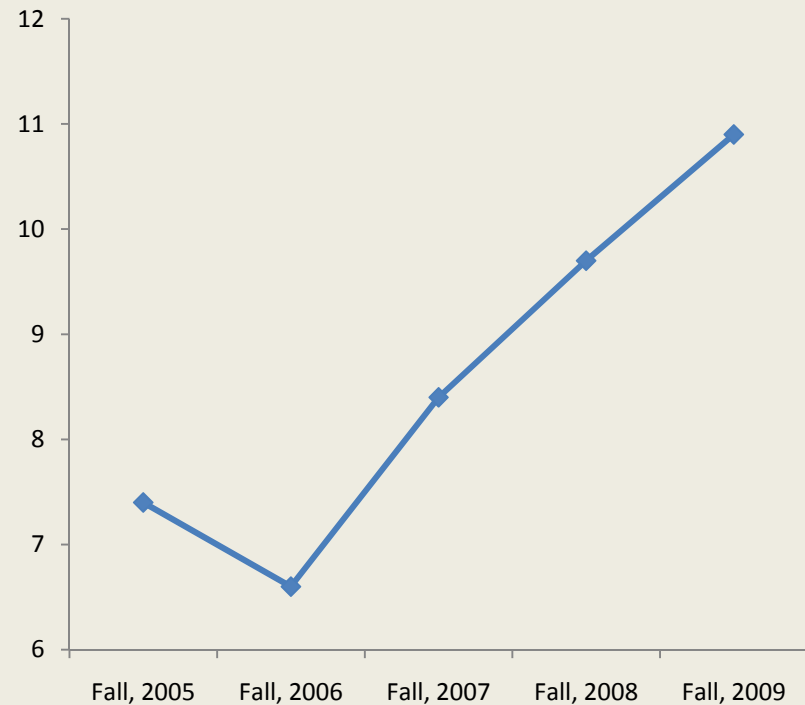
**Earned vs. attempted credits  
are up**

**FTF Earned credits as a percent  
of attempted credits**

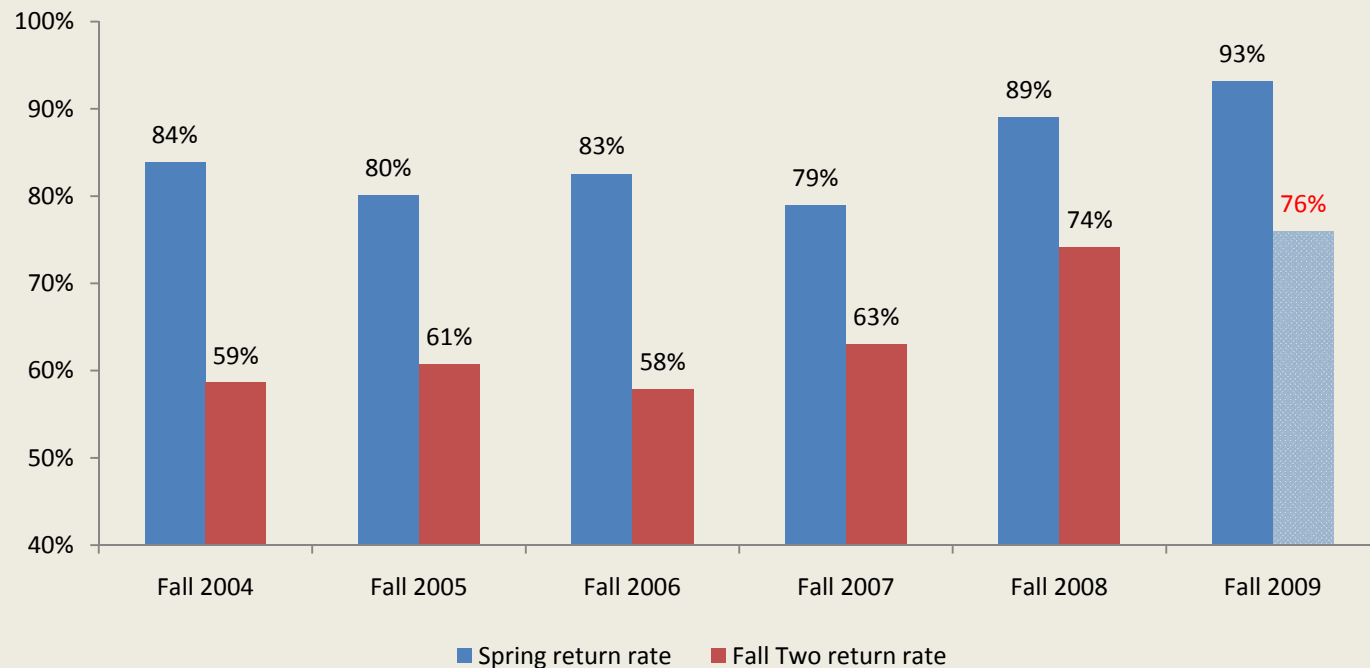


**Total number of credits  
are up**

**Total earned credits**



# Identifying the path: Provide intense, non-voluntary support in the first semester

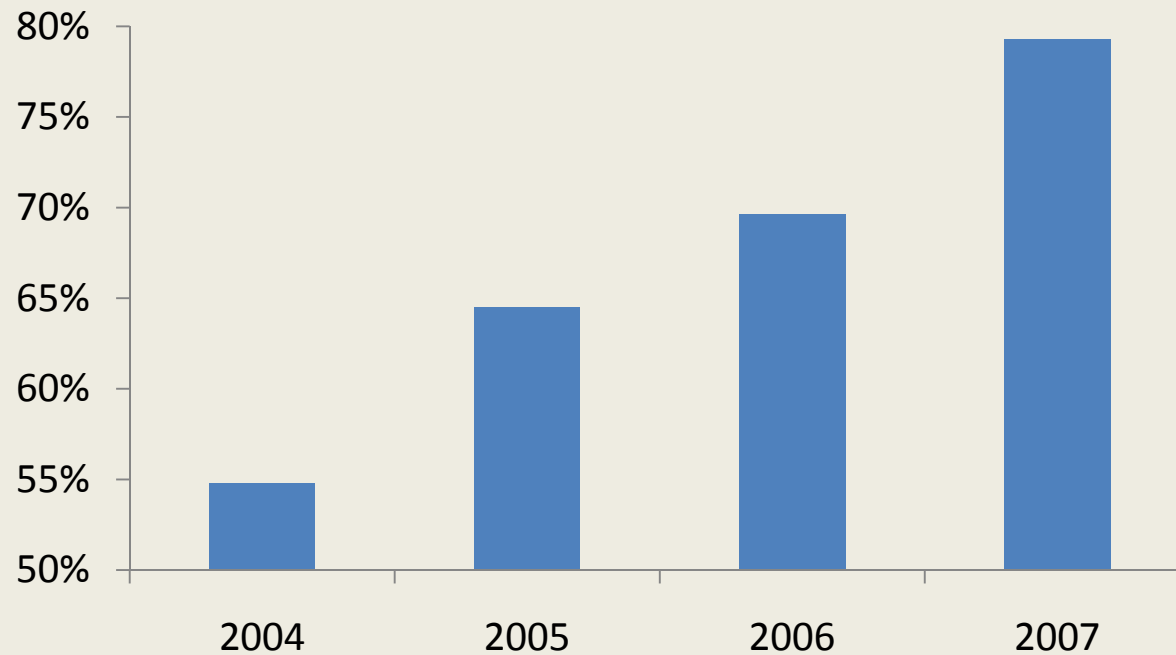


Spring and Year 2 enrollment as a percentage of initial freshman Enro

# Personal behavior that contributed to the retention of Fall 09 First Time Freshman

- Better class attendance
  - Retained averaged 3 instructor reported total course cuts versus 10 for leavers
- Less often referred for problems
  - Retained averaged 5 Starfish referrals versus 8 for leavers
  - Leavers almost two and one half times as likely to be recommended for tutoring
- More stable academic progress
  - Retained Fall term GPA (from mid-term to final) stayed the same while leavers declined 33%

# Identifying the path: Move them into a major



Percentage of entering first time  
freshmen cohorts  
who declare a major by their fifth  
semester

# What Supported the Improvement?

- High DFWD classes (43) had Supplemental Instruction
- Borderline Students admitted attended JUMP START & continued with Fall PLUS PROGRAM – academic coaching
- New Signers continued with Fall PLUS PROGRAM – support
- STAR FISH – Early Intervention identified students at risk
- Weekly intervention meeting with Directors of Student Success, Residence Life and Academic Advising
- Strong connections with athletics, and Keeping the Promise
- Costa Rica trip requires 2.5 or above GPA
- Stronger entering students
- Rigor and support in General Studies
- The “right people (faculty and Staff) on the bus”
- Focused Financial Aid

## Example:

### Institutional Initiatives Focused Student Aid

- Understand the kinds of need students have and when
  - Increased merit based aid to bring stronger students
  - Discovered a correlation between earning credit and financial aid
  - Discovered a correlation between GPA and financial aid
  - Discovered financial aid was critical at upper levels

# Next steps on the path

- Sustained retention of students with entering ACT Composite score less than 16
- Inconsistent and sometimes unrealistic standards for entrance to a major
- Address enrollment and retention unfriendly policies and practices
- Maximize program and instructional delivery system efficiency
- More detailed analysis of high WFWD courses
- More intentional use of EQ data for curriculum and intervention
- Feasibility studies of emerging instructional delivery systems

# Faculty Initiatives

- Early alert
- Early intervention
- Actions plans
- Faculty tutoring
- Understanding and addressing the whole student
- Faculty using best practices
- The right faculty
- Faculty taking ownership of the path

# Student Success in College

## What Campus Leaders Can Do

George Kuh

- Success is everyone's business
- Student success is in the mission
- Remind colleagues of the commitment
- Scale up policies, programs and practices that work
- Practice of continuous improvement
- Put someone in charge
- Recruit faculty and staff who are committed
- Create space for differences
- Stay the course

# References

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- **KUH, GEORGE ET AL. STUDENT SUCCESS IN COLLEGE: CREATING CONDITIONS THAT MATTER. JOSSEY- BASS 2005**
- **ANDERSEN, CATHERINE AND MOSES, WILLIAM. THE ROLE OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IN STUDENT SUCCESS. PRESENTATION, GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE CERTIFICATION, 2008.**