

Building Connections Retention Summary Fall 2012 to Spring 2013

Descriptive Statistics

| | | Returned for Spring Semester | | |
|--------|------------------|---|---|--|
| | | Yes | No | All New Freshmen |
| Mentor | Yes | N = 971 WIU GPA = 2.75 ACT = 21.1 DP = 48.4% | N = 164 WIU GPA = 1.59 ACT = 19.9 DP = 62.0% | N = 1,135 Retention = 85.6% |
| | No | N = 443 WIU GPA = 2.46 ACT = 20.8 DP = 54.2% | N = 145 WIU GPA = 1.04 ACT = 19.5 DP = 65.7% | N = 588 Retention = 75.3% |
| | All New Freshmen | N = 1,414 WIU GPA = 2.67 ACT = 21.0 DP = 50.0% | N = 309 WIU GPA = 1.33 ACT = 19.7 DP = 63.5% | N = 1,723 Mentor = 65.9% Retention = 82.0% |

DP = Dropout Proneness, scaled with national sample on percentile (higher = more likely to dropout)

Independent Sample t-Tests

CSI - Mentor vs. No Mentor

| | Variance | Mean Difference | F | Prob>F |
|-------------------|----------|-----------------|--------|--------|
| FL-SP Retention | Unequal | 10.3% | 104.12 | *** |
| WIU GPA | Unequal | 0.475 | 51.14 | *** |
| ACT | Unequal | 0.37 | 7.86 | ** |
| Dropout Proneness | Unequal | 6.4% | 0.95 | NS |

***<.001; **<.01; *<.05

New freshmen who met with a mentor had a 10.3 percent higher retention rate than students who did not meet with a mentor, $c^2(1, N=1,723) = 27.4, p = .000$. Although we cannot infer that meeting with a mentor had a causal relationship with retention, the statistically significant relationship between meeting with a mentor and retention does underscore the importance of helping students to develop a cogent map for their success, develop the basic vocabulary to navigate the university, and identify academic resources to help students get the help they need.

Given the nature of the intervention of meeting with a faculty or staff mentor, it is possible that the students who were the most receptive to receiving help were also the most likely to choose to meet with a mentor and subsequently be retained. In other words, students who met with a mentor may have been more likely to be retained, not because of the meeting with a mentor, but because they were more likely to seek out help. Differences in Fall to Spring retention between students who met with a mentor compared with not meeting with a mentor remained significant, even after accounting for possible self-selection bias (Rosenbaum & Rubin, 1984), by using students' receptivity to institutional help ($\alpha = .891$). For the students who are least likely to seek out institutional help, meeting with a staff mentor had a 4.1 percent difference ($p < .05$) in retention from the Fall to Spring semester. For students in the middle range of receptivity to institutional help, the advantage of meeting with a mentor increased to 18.1 percent ($p < .001$).

Rosenbaum, P. R., & Rubin, D. B. (1983). The central role of the propensity score in observational studies for causal effects. *Biometrika*, 70, 41–55.

Profile of Students Not Persisting Fall 2012 to Spring 2013

Fall 2012 New Freshmen not continuing to the Spring 2013 Semester = 309

| | | | |
|----------------|-------|--|----------------------|
| Female | 54.7% | Neither Parent Graduated College = 186 | |
| Race Ethnicity | | Account Balance | |
| White | 117 | < \$500 | 152 |
| Black | 126 | >= \$500 | 157 |
| Hispanic | 36 | | |
| Other | 16 | WIU GPA | |
| 2 or More | 12 | >= 3.0 | 43 |
| Foreign | 2 | 2.00 – 2.99 | 50 |
| | | 1.00 – 1.99 | 64 |
| ACT | | < 1.00 | 152 (73 Suspensions) |
| 16 – 18 | 121 | | |
| 19 – 21 | 102 | Desire to Transfer Prior to Enrollment = 75 | |
| 22 – 24 | 61 | Average Predicted Academic Difficulty = 66.33 (25.0) | |
| 25 – 27 | 13 | Average Dropout Proneness = 63.49 (23.5) | |
| 28+ | 5 | | |
| Missing | 7 | | |
| OAS | 130 | | |
| Regular | 179 | | |

National Student Clearinghouse Report

Where do students go if they don't come back? (Fall 2010-to-Fall 2011)

| | | | |
|------------------------|-----|---------------------------|-----|
| Illinois 2-year | 225 | No College | 200 |
| Not Enrolled | 200 | College of DuPage | 32 |
| Other | 48 | Spoon River College | 23 |
| Illinois 4-year Public | 26 | College of Lake County | 18 |
| Total | 499 | Chicago CCs | 17 |
| | | Elgin Community College | 13 |
| | | Triton College | 13 |
| | | Harper College | 12 |
| | | Moraine Valley CC | 12 |
| | | Joliet Junior College | 11 |
| | | McHenry County College | 8 |
| | | Lincoln College | 8 |
| | | Oakton Community College | 8 |
| | | Illinois State University | 7 |