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Faculty Involvement:
The Key to Student Retention

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Overview

- A Critical Juncture
- A Theoretical Framework for Our Conversation
- The Importance of Student Engagement
- Retention Begins with Faculty Involvement in Recruitment
- Retention: The Impact of Faculty
- Examples for Faculty to Implement
- Focus Retention Efforts on the First-Year




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A Critical Juncture

- **PIVOTAL: of vital or critical importance: a pivotal event.**
- Changing demographics
- Cost of education
- Multiple options
- Consumer mentality
- Challenges in recruiting




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Theoretical Framework

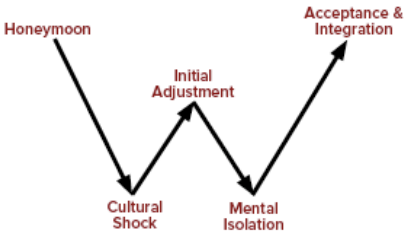
- Alexander Astin's I, E, O Model
 - Inputs, Environment, Outputs
- Zeller, Mosier
 - "W" Curve
- Tinto's Model of Student Retention
- Schlossberg's Transition Theory
- Cabrera, Nora, Castaneda
- St. John, Somers, Below, McCluskey



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Common Phases of a First-Year Student



Honeymoon

Initial Adjustment

Cultural Shock

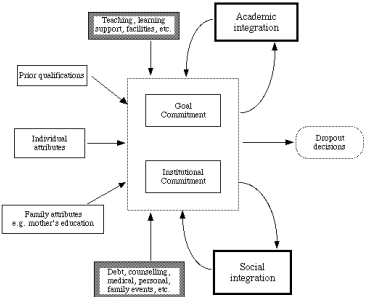
Mental Isolation

Acceptance & Integration

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Tinto's Model of Student Retention



Prior qualifications

Individual attributes

Family attributes e.g. mother's education

Teaching, learning support facilities, etc.

Goal Commitment

Institutional Commitment

Academic integration

Social integration

Disposit decisions

Debt, commuting, medical, personal, family events, etc.

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Seven Principles of Good Practice in Undergraduate Education

1. Student-faculty contact

2. Active learning

3. Prompt feedback

4. Time on task

5. High expectations

6. Experiences with diversity

7. Cooperation among students


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Cause for Pause...

From your perspective,
where is your institution strongest as it
relates to student engagement?

Where could you strengthen student
engagement?



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Retention Begins with Faculty Involvement in Recruitment

• Admissions

- Experts at the marketing and recruiting phase
- Peak student interest in your institution

• Faculty Involvement

- Critical in the final decision making process
- Savvy students/families know the role of admissions counselors is selling/recruiting vs. teaching/mentoring
- Passion for discipline illustrates the learning experience to students

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Retention Begins with Faculty Involvement in Recruitment

- Informing Admissions
 - Who is successful?
 - Key factors for success
- Participation in recruitment is win-win
 - Faculty are instrumental in a student's final college choice decision
 - Faculty are able to shape the class by their involvement in recruitment efforts
 - Students have increased clarity regarding academic expectations

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Retention Begins with Faculty Involvement in Recruitment

- Assist in the campus visit experience
 - Invite prospective students to classes
 - Meet one on one with students and their families
 - Promote Honors program to attract best and brightest
 - Provide dynamic presentations to prospective students and families
- Participate in advising and registration days
- Be an active participant during orientation
 - Welcoming New Students
 - Mock Class Session
 - Presentation to parents
 - Articulate expectations to students


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Faculty Involvement in Recruitment and Retention

Cause for Pause...

How can you personally impact your institution's faculty involvement in recruitment efforts?




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Retention: Impact of Faculty

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Why Do Students Depart?

Academic Reasons <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not challenged academically • Lack of academic focus • Desired major unavailable • Not academically prepared 	Personal Reasons <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institution too big/small • Medical issues (personal, parent, spouse, child) • Relationship issues (parents, significant other) • Poor social adjustment (lacking friends) • No sense of belonging • Discipline • Homesick
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Financial Reasons


- Value: Perception that product not in alignment with cost
- Insufficient financial aid
- Change in financial situation

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What Can Institutions Do About It?

Individual Intervention <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reach out to those in need of... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a challenge • a mentor • advice/direction • understanding the value of the institution • Listen • Learn • Help 	Institutional Change <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn about system-wide issues • Conduct student opinion surveys • Analyze retention data to identify who is staying and who is leaving – learn why • Provide top notch service • ACT on what you learn (focus for impact)
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Faculty Student Interaction

Can lead to *increased*:

- Academic performance
- Critical thinking
- Educational aspirations
- College satisfaction
- Perceptions of college quality (value)
- Satisfaction with faculty
- Retention and graduation rates




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Best Practices for Program Retention

- Meet with Deans of each School regarding their 'best practices'
- Introduction courses as cohorts (e.g., identify one Psychology 101 course for all PSYC majors, taught by full time faculty)
- Emphasis on faculty involvement in discipline-specific clubs
- Advisers meet with small groups of students to get-to-know-you
- Social interaction with faculty at orientation, in dining hall, throughout year
- Dinner on the Dean (students eat and attend event with faculty)


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Best Practices for Individual Interventions

- Learn students' names
- Require class attendance
- Require a low stakes assignment early in the term
 - Provide prompt feedback (positive and constructive)
 - Intervene one on one with students most at risk
 - Commend those who are top notch students
- Require students at risk in your courses to seek tutoring
- Early Alert programs
 - Provide notification regarding students of concern to adviser
- Assign and require study groups (e.g., note taking, test results review, reading, library research)

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Best Practices for Individual Interventions

- Build syllabi that allow students to turn it around at midterm
- Create mentors between your upper and lower division courses
- Recruit and appoint a successful upper level student to attend your intro level class and provide study sessions to those students
- Create a 'form' email educating students on services
- Submit recommendations for potential tutors
- Support out of class learning/involvement to promote social integration
- If your course is an 'obstacle course' in your discipline, identify strategies to assist with student success

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Sample "Form" Email

Dear Brian:


I am delighted to have you in my English 101 course this fall. In an effort to ensure academic success, there are many services and supports here for you. I am available to meet with you one-on-one. My office hours are Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 2p.m. – 5p.m. or by appointment. Staff members in the Center for Academic Success and First-Year Experience are available to meet with you to develop a plan to achieve your academic goals. Currently, the following support opportunities are available for you at Maryville:

- Peer tutoring is available in almost all subject areas. In addition, consultation regarding study and test-taking skills are offered. To utilize these services, call 314.529.9228, register online at www.maryville.edu/academic-support, or stop by the Center for Academic Success and First-Year Experience in the University Library to schedule a tutoring appointment.
- Personal counseling is available to discuss stress management or any personal issues that are negatively impacting your academic life. Please call 314.529.9556 or stop by the University Library to schedule an appointment.
- All faculty members have office hours and welcome the opportunity to talk with you.

Your success and achievement of your academic goals are very important. Please let me know if I can be of assistance to you. Feel free to call or stop the Center for Academic Success and First-Year Experience located in the University Library at any time.

I will see you soon!
Dr. McCluskey

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Personal Partnerships for Retention

- **Be a visible presence throughout campus**
 - At events (e.g., supporting student athletes)
 - In residential halls (e.g., faculty in residence)
 - Take office hours to the students (e.g., dining hall, student center)
- **Partner with student life to infuse service learning into coursework**
- **Invite students to assist with conference presentations, publications, research**

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MPTA Lobby Day 2012



Partnering for Retention

- Serve as an active faculty adviser to an organization
- Host discipline/school-specific events at Orientation
 - Academic Convocation
 - Breakfast with faculty
 - Dessert reception
- Assist Career Services with coordination of mock interviews, job fairs, etiquette dinners
- Attend meal/event with students
- Share your outside interests (e.g., running, scrapbooking, theatre, travel)



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PT Faculty 2010 Marathon Team



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What Does Partnering Look Like – University-Wide?


- Celebrate academic successes at Student Life sponsored events (e.g., Family Weekend)
- Partner with student life to create new and necessary programs/services that support students
- Create a systematic approach for follow up with students at risk
 - Student Success Team (aka Retention Committee)
 - Faculty stay actively involved in individual interventions and university-wide issues
- Invite student participation on appropriate committees/task forces
- Common Reading Program
- Create a Faculty Mentor or Academic Coach program
- Summer Bridge programs

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Cause for Pause...

What outside interest might you bring to students and student engagement?




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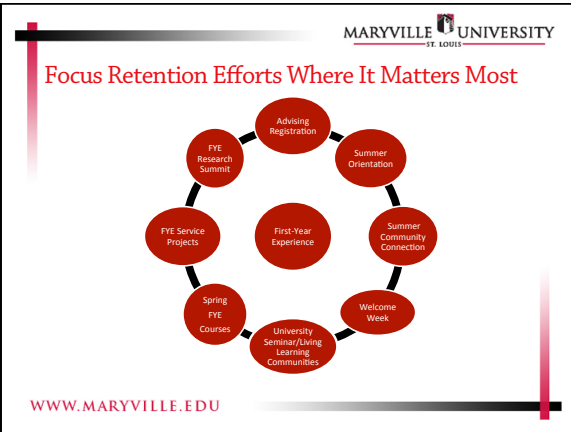
Focus Retention Efforts Where It Matters Most

Successful First-Year Experience Programs are...

- Coordinated
- Collaborative
- Comprehensive



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Assisting First-Year Students

To encourage students to devote time and energy to the right activities, faculty teach students:

- what the institution values
- what successful students do
- how to take advantage of institutional resources for learning
- that resources are available to all students

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Faculty Impact on the First-Year Experience

Resources

- Know the resources available
- Inform the students of the resources
- Connect students to the resource – early and often
- Connect first-year students with successful returning students

Mentoring/Advising/Coaching


- Institutionalized effort for faculty/student interactions outside of class
- Academic advising must be developmental
- Faculty mentors can make a significant impact on students' lives...and on retention

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Cause for Pause...

Name one retention-related area where you could assist your institution.



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