

From University of Louisiana at Monroe. Suggestions from Noel Levitz.

74 Possible Retention-Related Actions/Strategies

1. Review all promotional materials to ensure that they are creating accurate pre-entry expectations of the institutions.
2. Develop well-designed campus visit experiences that realistically portray the institution to prospective students.
3. Determine if admissions criteria are enrolling students who are likely to be successful at the institution.
4. Clarify institutional expectations of students via contracts or other methods.
5. Develop outreach programs to inform, encourage, and prepare disadvantaged students for college.
6. Design an intake system that includes a seamless orientation, assessment, advising, and registration.
7. Encourage college credit courses for secondary school students.
8. Administer a retention instrument to identify dropout-proneness in new students.
9. Offer summer bridge programs for academically under-prepared students.
10. Conduct summer orientation programs.
11. Change emphasis of orientation program from providing information to activities designed to build more interpersonal affiliations and bonding to the institution.
12. Design and deliver orientation experiences for special groups of students (e.g. adults, transfers, international, athletes, selected majors, commuters, resident students).
13. Mandate pre-entry assessment and placement.
14. Offer developmental courses to improve academic skills.
15. Provide supplemental instruction for "killer courses."
16. Establish academic support services (e.g., learning center, math lab, writing lab).
17. Provide tutorial services.
18. Strengthen and offer a wide array of student extracurricular activities.
19. Implement an extended orientation course (e.g., freshman year experience).
20. Offer a student success course (e.g., Becoming a Master Student).
21. Provide a credit life/career-planning course.
22. Design high interest residential living programs and activities.
23. Establish a faculty/staff-mentoring program.
24. Develop strategies that will encourage formal and informal contact between faculty/staff and students.
25. Encourage cooperative and collaborative teaching/learning strategies.

26. Provide incentives and rewards for faculty and staff involved in retention-related initiatives.
27. Organize student-to-student interactions and groups (e.g. peer discussion groups, peer advisors).
28. Increase participation in campus activities whenever possible.
29. Conduct student satisfaction surveys on a systematic basis.
30. Focus on the "gaps" between student expectations and satisfaction of educational programs and services.
31. Conduct exit interviews to ascertain student reasons for leaving.
32. Provide personal counseling and referral services where appropriate to students experiencing personal or social adjustment problems.
33. Conduct special workshops on topics of interest to students (e.g. stress, time management, substance abuse, study skills).
34. Purchase a computer guidance system (e.g., DISCOVER, SIGI PLUS).
35. Offer an academic capstone experience for upper-class students.
36. Use telecounseling to contact students experiencing difficulty or planning not to return.
37. Organize a parent participatory/support program.
38. Pay attention to issues of diversity and the development of an inclusive campus climate.
39. Assure that there are appropriate faculty/staff role models for minority students.
40. Review availability and when and where classes are offered to be sure student needs are being met.
41. Require that students on academic probation participate in a "survival" program.
42. Communicate with students who are in good standing who fail to enroll.
43. Enhance the physical plan and facilities particularly important to students (e.g., residence halls, recreation, student center, computer lab).
44. Identify students who may be dropout-prone by observing "behavioral cues" (e.g., residence hall rooms, failing to apply for housing, financial aid, pre-registration, requesting a transcript).
45. Review all policies, procedures, and processes to ensure that they are student-centered and student-friendly.
46. Develop planned weekend activities for resident students.
47. Systematically survey/interview all new students within the first six weeks.
48. Establish appropriate student support groups (e.g., OWLS, multi-cultural).

49. Assist students with short-term loans for financial needs (e.g., childcare, transportation, textbooks).
50. Create a position of student ombudsman.
51. Establish a position devoted to providing financial aid counseling.
52. Conduct loan-counseling sessions.
53. Encourage students to participate in college work-study
54. Design an early monitoring and alert system that routinely identifies students who are experiencing some type of difficulty.
55. Track a cohort group and describe their enrollment behaviors/status each term by selected student characteristics.
56. Establish a centrally located integrated student success center to better meet student needs.
57. Develop a plan to routinely evaluate the effectiveness of all retention-related initiatives and programs.
58. Provide ongoing quality service training for all front-line support staff and supervisors.
59. Establish an office devoted exclusively to the improvement of the teaching/learning process.
60. Design an internal communication plan to keep faculty and staff informed about issues and initiatives related to the quality of student life and learning.
61. Appoint a retention coordinator.
62. Develop and communicate a clear service strategy at all levels of the institution.
63. Develop or acquire the computer software to implement an effective retention monitoring/tracking system.
64. Initiate an integrated freshman program.
65. Establish an academic advising center.
66. Implement a comprehensive ongoing advisor development program.
67. Develop an institutional academic advising plan that includes the components that are associated with successful delivery and organization of advising services.
68. Design an evaluation program that will assess the effectiveness of the institution's advising program, as well as individual advisor.
69. Develop or purchase a computerized degree audit system.
70. Eliminate low demand courses and increase availability of high demand courses.
71. If a student cannot enroll in a required course because it is filled, the tuition for the course would be waived when the student enrolls in a subsequent term.

72. Identify the student subgroups that have special needs and design appropriate educational programs/services for these special populations (e.g., honors, adults, academically unprepared, students of color, transfers, international, exploratory/undecided).

73. Establish a permanent institution-wide quality of student life and learning (retention) committee as a structure and forum for the on-going coordination, development, and review of all retention-related issues and initiatives.

74. Cross your fingers (Just kidding!)