

October 7, 2009

MEMORANDUM

TO: State Board of Regents
FROM: William A Sederburg
SUBJECT: Utah State Board of Regents' Strategic Goal Progress Reports—Completion and Retention

Issue

This progress report for the Regents is to summarize, in a very brief format, some of the most significant retention activities on the USHE campuses. A list of the ten most effective national practices for both four-year and two-year institutions was identified by the Noel-Levitz group. Campuses in Utah were then queried to match this list with retention activities currently offered students. In every case, *all* activities were operational; and, in most instances, multiple comparable activities were being implemented.

Additionally, each campus set a retention benchmark for 2010. Attempting to predict retention in the current economic climate is difficult; and the benchmarks, as seen in the IPED's charts, are conservative.

Recommendation

The Commissioner recommends the Regents review the report and provide comments and/or recommendations. No action is required.

William A Sederburg
Commissioner of Higher Education

WAS/LS/MJL
Attachments

Attachment 1

Following are the results of a study that identifies the most effective retention practices of four-year and two-year colleges. Subsequently, the nine USHE institutions were surveyed to determine how many of these practices were being implemented on their campuses. Every campus responded positively on all retention strategies. Moreover, all reported multiple related practices not detailed in the list.

A significant void in this list of practices is their not reporting financial assistance practices, inasmuch as financial issues is one of the two most significant reasons students leave college, the other being academics. Particularly concerning is the omission of those financial assistance strategies targeting minority and disadvantaged populations.

It is clear from both the survey and the discussions that all campuses are working diligently to assist and retain students.

Most effective retention and completion practices:

Below, for each sector, are the "top 10" items respondents rated most effective among 60 items that were measured for their effectiveness in supporting student retention.¹

4-Year Public	4-Year Private	2-Year Public
Honors programs for academically advanced students	Orientation program for first-year students	Faculty development and support in online technology and online teaching pedagogy
Academic support program or services	Institution-wide emphasis on the teaching and undergraduates and undergraduate learning	Academic support program or services
Technical support to address online connection issues	Surveys or interviews to determine students' levels of satisfaction	Institution-wide emphasis on the teaching of undergraduates and undergraduate learning
Orientation program for first-year students	Academic advising program	Use of Web-based course engagement tools such as Blackboard, WebCT, etc.
Institution-wide emphasis on the teaching of undergraduates and undergraduate learning	Programs designed specifically for first-year students	Surveys or interviews to determine students' levels of engagement
First-year experience program	First-year experience program	Title II or Title V funding
Use of Web-based course engagement tools such as Blackboard, WebCT, etc.	Tracking of persistence and progression patterns among all students who articulate	Programs designed specifically for at-risk students
Tracking of persistence and progression patterns among all students who articulate	Use of satisfaction assessments to make changes	Programs designed specifically for first-year students

¹ 2009 Noel-Levitz, Inc. 2009 Student Retention Practices and Strategies at Four-Year and Two-Year Institutions

Attachment 2

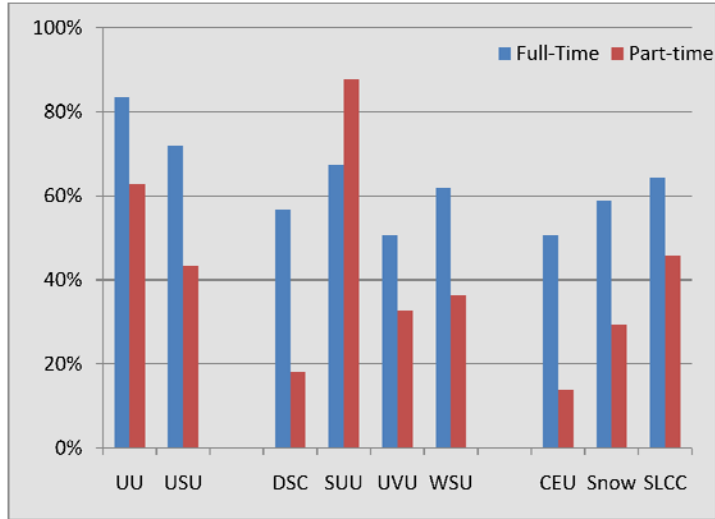
IPEDS Retention Rate Data

Full Time Fall 2007 Entering Cohort

<i>Institution</i>	<i>Beginning cohort</i>	<i>exclusions</i>	<i>adjusted cohort</i>	<i>Enrolled Fall 2008</i>	<i>Retention rate</i>	<i>Projected Rate Increase</i>
Research Universities						
University of Utah	2,374	339	2,035	1,697	83%	2%
Utah State University ^f	2,817	580	2,237	1,612	72%	0%
Comprehensive Colleges & University (For first-time freshmen in 4-year Degree programs).*						
Dixie State College of Utah**	126	6	120	68	57%	3%
Southern Utah University	1,040	219	821	554	67%	3%
Utah Valley University**	999	148	851	430	51%	2%
Weber State University	1,468	298	1,170	814	70%	0%
2- year Colleges						
College of Eastern Utah	523	45	478	242	51%	1%
Snow College	1,044	233	811	478	59%	2%
Salt Lake Community College	1,866	138	1,728	1,112	64%	3%

Part-Time Fall 2007 Entering Cohort

<i>Institution</i>	<i>Beginning cohort</i>	<i>exclusions</i>	<i>adjusted cohort</i>	<i>Enrolled Fall 2008</i>	<i>Retention rate</i>	<i>Projected Rate Increase</i>
Research Universities						
University of Utah	369	60	309	194	63%	2%
Utah State University ^f	346	47	299	130	43%	0%
Comprehensive Colleges & University (For first-time freshmen in 4-year Degree programs).*						
Dixie State College of Utah**	35	2	33	6	18%	3%
Southern Utah University	58	9	49	43	88%	3%
Utah Valley University**	513	54	459	150	33%	2%
Weber State University	718	50	668	242	36%	0%
2- year Colleges						
College of Eastern Utah	51		51	7	14%	1%
Snow College	152	26	126	37	29%	2%
Salt Lake Community College	2,001		2,001	915	46%	3%



***Part E: Retention Rates**

Retention rates examine the percentage of first-time bachelor's degree (or equivalent) seeking students enrolled in the fall of the prior year (including those enrolled for the first time the preceding summer term and those whose intent was not known upon entry to the institution) that have continued to the fall of the current year.

Institutions must report the following information for **both full- and part-time** students: Full- and part-time, **first-time bachelor's** degree (or equivalent) seeking Fall 2008 cohorts (Note: Do not include students who transferred into the institution. Student status should be based on the student's Fall 2008 status.)

£ Includes the data from The Logan and Regional Campuses (distance education reported separately in IPEDS)
 ** Long-term retention projections yield significantly higher numbers (as much as 10 percent in a 10-year period) because students leave and return again.
