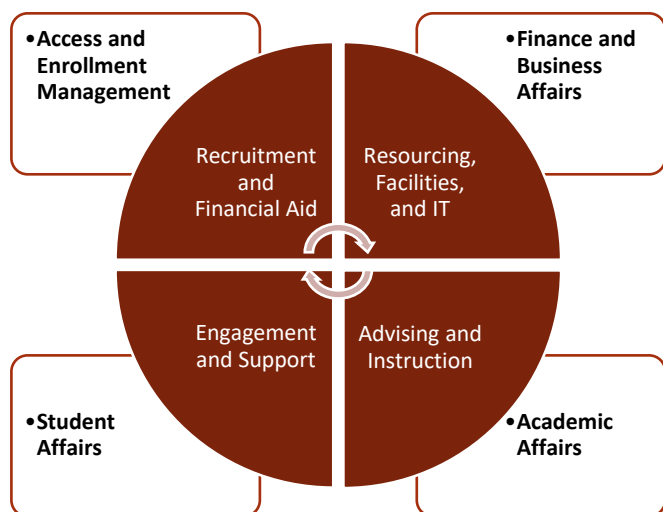


Winthrop University Board of Trustees Retention Quarterly Report

October 24, 2019

Our shared goal: To develop and enact a comprehensive retention plan designed to increase Fall-to-Fall retention for all degree-seeking students, reversing the downward trend in first-to-second year retention rates; identifying key drivers in student departures (academic performance, finances, health concerns, program fit, family); targeting efforts in response to the drivers we can impact; and maintaining strong graduation rates.

Retention at Winthrop as Coordinated Care Effort:



2019-2020 Actions taken: Starting in September, the Vice Presidents for Academic Affairs, Access and Enrollment Management, Finance and Business Affairs, and Student Affairs have held weekly meetings to develop an integrated plan for increased retention. This plan will leverage the activities of each individual unit, but will also benefit from a new integrated approach that prioritizes information and resource sharing and collaborative, data-based decision-making.

Global Membership to the Education Advisory Board (EAB) provides access to 1) the **Student Success Inventory**, allowing us to identify our strengths/weaknesses compared to industry benchmarks; and 2) EAB's financial aid leveraging model.

Academic Affairs:

- Academic Leadership retreat identified one **Wildly Important Goal (WIG) for 2019-2020: Increase Fall-to-Fall retention for all degree-seeking students from 80.9 to 82 percent by Fall 2020** (reversing three-year decline from 82.3% to 80.9% across all degree-seeking students, and a one-year drop of 4.9% in first-to-second year student retention from 74.7% to 69.8%).
- **Created Vice Provost for Student Success position as institutional lead on retention and graduation efforts:** restructuring Dean of University College position with broadened responsibility; posted with Jan 2020 start.
- **Creating Advising Hub/Professional Advising Center in University College:** restructuring one permanent FTE (now vacant) and hiring 1 temporary full-time professional advisor in two-year pilot to improve retention; will convert to permanent FTE position using revenue increases from improved retention and/or restructuring.
- **Restructuring former-LEAP program as advising pilot for students who meet provisional admit profile:** extending evidence-based intrusive advising and additional tutoring to students who will benefit most.
- **Increasing High Impact Practices:** career coaching and four-year degree plans in CAS; advising boot-camps and experiential learning in CBA; advising toolkit and program redesign in COE; one-to-one midterm advising and program redesign in CVPA; increased research and learning cohorts in Dacus Library; community-building and concierge-style supports for graduate, online, and adult learners in Graduate Studies and Extended Education.

Student Affairs:

- **First Day™, Barnes & Noble College's inclusive access model:** Partnering with Academic Affairs and the Bookstore to pilot First Day™. This project will ensure students have access to their required course book at a substantial discount on the first day of class through a link built into their Blackboard Course. This model ensures every student is prepared on or before the first day of class. Three courses are being piloted in 2020.
- **Exploring the adoption of *Presence* student engagement software:** This resource can be used to engage students and map learning, identify trends and behaviors, and manage student organizations, events, and forms. Ultimately, it provides data on students who are at risk through lack of involvement or over involvement allowing targeted intervention to students who need it most.
- Collaborating with AAAS to **identify vulnerable subpopulations of students** who consistently, year over year, fall below the average retention rate for the class. Preliminary findings yielded six vulnerable populations: Black/African American students, students who are neither Black nor White, male students, first-year students in suite-style buildings, non-residential (commuter) students, and transfers. Behavior-predictive data is needed to determine specific interventions. *Presence* would allow for tracking of engagement behavior and identification of appropriate interventions.

Access and Enrollment Management:

- **Helping students cross the finish line:** work with Student Financial Services, AAAS, and math faculty to develop and analyze data needed to create and automatically award **completion grants** designed to retain students in good academic standing who leave prior to graduation for financial reasons.
- **Leveraging Academic Work Ethic (AWE) data:** collaborate with AAAS staff and faculty to use AWE data in admissions model to ensure students with borderline admittance academic credentials are best prepared and likely to succeed at Winthrop.
- **Improving transfer yield and transcript evaluation process:** Requested new Transfer Advisor position that, if approved, will be available to provide unofficial transcript transfer credit evaluations on demand. This will help streamline the current process, which is currently time prohibitive.
- Via the **Enrollment and Retention Working Group**, continuing to implement best practices identified through the 2018-2019 campus-wide retention inventory.

Finance and Business Affairs:

- **Enhancing the annual budget process to properly align resources to strategic goals to advance retention efforts.**
- Providing initial investments in **revenue generating positions & activities to support student success and retention efforts** that will be monitored for future budget allocations based on new or increased revenues.
- Complete an **IT assessment** for improved business and customer service processes.
- **Continuous improvement in facilities master plan** activities that ultimately support our students in residence halls and the classroom.

Guiding documents:

2016 Student Retention Report: Compiled by the 2016 Student Retention Winthrop Plan working group.

2018-2019 Inventory of Retention Best Practices: Compiled by Enrollment and Retention action group.

2018-2019 Inventory of Student Affairs Retention and Student Success Initiatives: Compiled by Shelia Burkhalter in first-year environmental surveys.

Submitted by: **Shelia Burkhalter**, Vice President for Student Affairs; **Adrienne McCormick**, Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs; **Justin Oates**, Vice President for Finance and Business Affairs; **Eduardo Prieto**, Vice President for Access and Enrollment Management