

GENERAL OVERVIEW

✓	Description	Reasoning
	We have a written strategic retention plan	A written plan can be a blueprint for success – helping focus resources on a common goal, explaining who does what, when, why etc.
	We have a single position with the authority and responsibility for the retention program success.	Success by committee is far more difficult than success with one person with the authority and responsibility.
	We developed the retention plan with input and approval from key stakeholders representing student facing departments from around the college	Retention happens across campus, not just within marketing/enrollment
	We have clearly identified and defined “factors” that are common amongst current and past at-risk and successful students	Factors or causes are what must be addressed to improve retention
	We developed a plan that clearly identifies and defines “symptoms” of at-risk and successful	Symptoms help us realize there is a potential retention issue
	We developed a process for reconfirming the “factors” on a semi-annual basis so we can confirm the student’s status	Change happens so validating the accuracy of data helps you respond in a timely, appropriate manner when change happens
	We developed the factors and symptoms based upon research of current and prior at-risk and successful students	Learn from history (data) to impact today and the near term
	We have clearly defined segments of students for example “low”, “medium” and “high” risk, stop out, drop out etc.	Different segments require different responses to be successful
	We have clear action plans that are implemented for each segment of students	See above
	We have shared the written plan with all key stakeholders across the institution	Retention is an institution wide issue so the plan needs to be known by all so it can be effectively implemented
	We developed a clearly defined process for capturing and storing data for analysis	Avoid “Garbage In, Garbage Out” – seek quality data for analysis which requires an efficient process for gathering, storing
	We have specific tasks and requirements for monitoring data capture to ensure quality	See above

✓	Description	Reasoning
	We have a detailed data capture training process for staff that is required	Training helps everyone get off on the same foot – and helps bad habits from forming

RECRUITMENT STATE

✓	Description	Reasoning
	We defined our target audience based on the characteristics of our 'best most successful students' (demographic, psychographic, behavioral, geographic factors)	Retention starts with recruitment – so target those that are like those that have had the greatest success
	We have a clearly defined qualification process that identifies our segments [ex] not qualified, low risk, medium risk, high risk etc.	Treating everyone the same ignores their unique wants and needs – and that leads to attrition
	We have a process for capturing the data we need to define the individual as “qualified”, “not qualified”, and “low”, “medium” or “high” risk for attrition during the recruitment stage so that we can serve the individual more effectively.	See above
	We have a process for recruiting, enrolling, onboarding and retaining students we preliminary determine to be “High Risk”	See above
	We have a process for recruiting, enrolling, on-boarding and retaining students we preliminary determine to be “Low Risk”	See above
	We have a process for recruiting, enrolling, onboarding and retaining students we preliminary determine to be “Medium Risk”	See above
	We have a process for helping those deemed as “unqualified” to pursue more appropriate solutions for their wants and needs – and this process ensures that the individual is not pursued by the institution until they are reevaluated and reclassified as “qualified”.	See above

NEW STUDENT STAGE – YEAR 1

✓	Description	Reasoning
	We have a formal on-boarding process designed specifically for new adult/post-traditional students identified as “high risk”	Everyone gets the same basic foundation, but then customization to ensure the right message gets to the right people so they benefit
	We have a formal on-boarding process designed specifically for new adult/post-traditional students identified as “medium risk”	See above
	We have a formal on-boarding process designed specifically for new adult/post-traditional students identified as “low risk”	See above
	We monitor class performance in real time to identify where students seem to struggle so that portion of the course can be redesigned	Immediate access to key data is critical to success.
	We have created a ‘degree road map’ for all programs so that the adult/post-traditional student knows what courses they will take and when to graduate	Take the uncertainty out of the journey – it can lead to stop outs and drop outs
	We created the ‘degree road maps’ to account for students that desire to take more than the recommended number of courses per term so that their course work load remains manageable.	Eyes larger than stomach can lead to students falling behind and leaving before completing their program
	We closely monitor key symptoms of risk and have a clear action plan based on our findings	Know what to look for, how to respond so you can maximize your resources
	We offer tutoring services on the main campus, satellite campus, online and remote locations to meet the adult/post-traditional students’ needs for flexibility and convenience	Make service and support convenient for the adult student – don’t give them reasons to stop
	We offer classroom, hybrid and online options to adult/post-traditional students	Flexibility is important – and remember that there are some that will prefer different modalities for different courses
	We offer early morning, late evening and weekend courses (classroom and hybrid) to serve the adult/post-traditional students need for flexibility and convenience	See above
	We mix synchronous and asynchronous features into our online courses to provide adult/post-traditional students with the flexibility and convenience they require.	See above
	We offer all student services 24/7 to meet the needs of adult/post-traditional students	Offer fast, easy access to what they need, when they need it – convenient service.

✓	Description	Reasoning
	We offer all adult/post-traditional student services at all locations (main campus, satellite campuses, online) for easy, convenient access	See above
	All student facing departments have access to a centralized database/CRM that they utilize to record encounters with students and capture key data that helps us evaluate the risk of attrition	Capture the data you need to quickly, accurately identify factors and symptoms
	We immediately survey adult/post-traditional students after they have engaged with any student services to ensure that they were satisfied by the experience and so we can update their risk factor status.	See above
	We assign a mentor to all new adult/post-traditional students identified as 'high' risk to help them navigate our institution on campus and online	Proactive measures can improve retention
	We assign a tutor to all new adult/post-traditional students identified as "high risk" in subject matter areas such as math, writing, etc.	See above
	When an adult/post-traditional student begins to display symptoms of risk, we immediately initiate a process to help the student	Respond quickly, appropriately for greater success
	We have designed intervention strategies that have set goals, objectives and measurements to determine success	To prove that the investment of resources is delivering acceptable results
	We re-evaluate all new students at least 2 times during their first year to determine if their factors that lead to risk have changed	Frequent conversations to confirm your early evaluations help improve results
	We have developed processes for identifying the needs and expectations of the new adult/post-traditional student, so we can provide them with the most appropriate services and support	Proactive measures can improve retention
	We have created space dedicated to adult/post-traditional students, so they have places to congregate and socialize	Help them build their peer group for support – relationships help improve retention
	We have scheduled events on a wide range of topics (entertainment, sports, career development, financial planning etc.) to bring adult/post-traditional students together for socialization and networking outside the classroom around other areas of interest.	Help them develop an attachment to peers, and the institution to improve retention rates

CURRENT STUDENT STAGE – BEYOND YEAR 1 THROUGH GRADUATION

✓	Description	Reasoning
	We confirm and update the risk factor data at least twice per year	Change happens – so you need a process that gathers and updates, so you can respond appropriately and effectively.
	We immediately adjust the students support plan based on the updated risk factor update.	Part of the process is using the new data to update everyone involved so they know what they need to do for success of all involved.

STOP OUT STAGE

✓	Description	Reasoning
	We have a clear definition of what a 'stop out' is that is shared across the institution	Adults will take breaks but you need to know ASAP when the student is taking a break or has dropped out, so you can respond appropriately.
	We have developed an effective 'early warning system' that identifies the symptoms of attrition early in the process so that we can respond appropriately	Responding in a timely, appropriate manner is important – and that response must come from those with authority to do what is necessary
	We have an action plan that immediately goes into action when a student triggers the 'early warning system'	Knowing what to do when the alarm rings is important – with a process, wasted resources can follow
	We have an action plan that immediately goes into action when a student stops out	See above
	We have developed personalized retention plans based on the individual's factors and symptoms	There is no "one size fits all", you must address the individual's needs.
	We use a multi-channel effort to contact and work with the student, so they return to our program in a timely manner and prepared to succeed	Emails might be fast, easy, affordable – but the individual might respond better to direct mail, a phone call or something else so don't put all your eggs in one basket
	We use multiple points of contact in the multi-channel effort to connect with them through the appropriate contacts which might include their adviser, faculty, department chair, mentor, tutor, etc.	Sometimes the right person reaching out can make a significant impact
	All student facing faculty and staff are trained on how to engage with a student in this stage to help them determine their best course of action – returning to our program or formally dropping out.	Consistency of approach helps ID opportunities to improve and makes training easier
	Our goal for this stage is to help the individual come to the right decision for them – be it returning to our program or formally dropping out or transferring to another institution.	Do what's best for the individual

DROP OUT STAGE

✓	Description	Reasoning
	We have a clear definition for 'drop out' that is known and shared across the campus by faculty, staff and students.	Clearly defined terms that everyone in the institution understand improves opportunities for success.
	We have a process in place for interviewing those that have requested to formally withdrawal from the institution to determine reasons that we can impact.	Understand why and what, if anything you could have done better
	We have a process in place for interviewing those that have requested to transfer from the institution to another institution to determine reasons that we can impact.	See above

WIN-BACK STAGE

✓	Description	Reasoning
	For those student in either "stop out" or "drop out" stages that state that they plan to return at a future date, we have a "win-back" process that communicates with them at the appropriate times regarding what needs to be done to enroll in classes.	Some will come back and enroll to earn their credential – remember to remind them rather than assume they will return when ready.