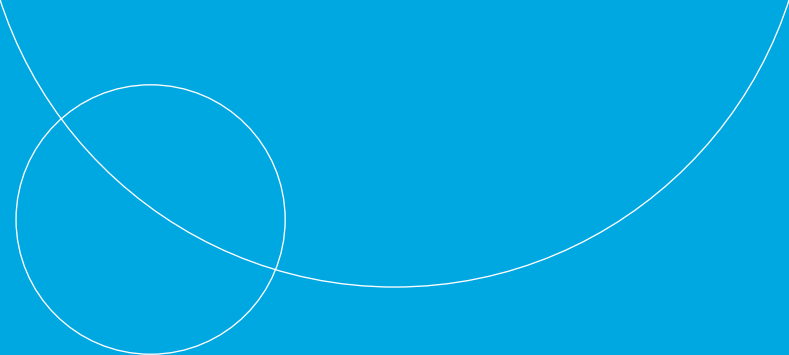rnl national conference
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Using Student Feedback Data at Community Colleges to Inform Student Success
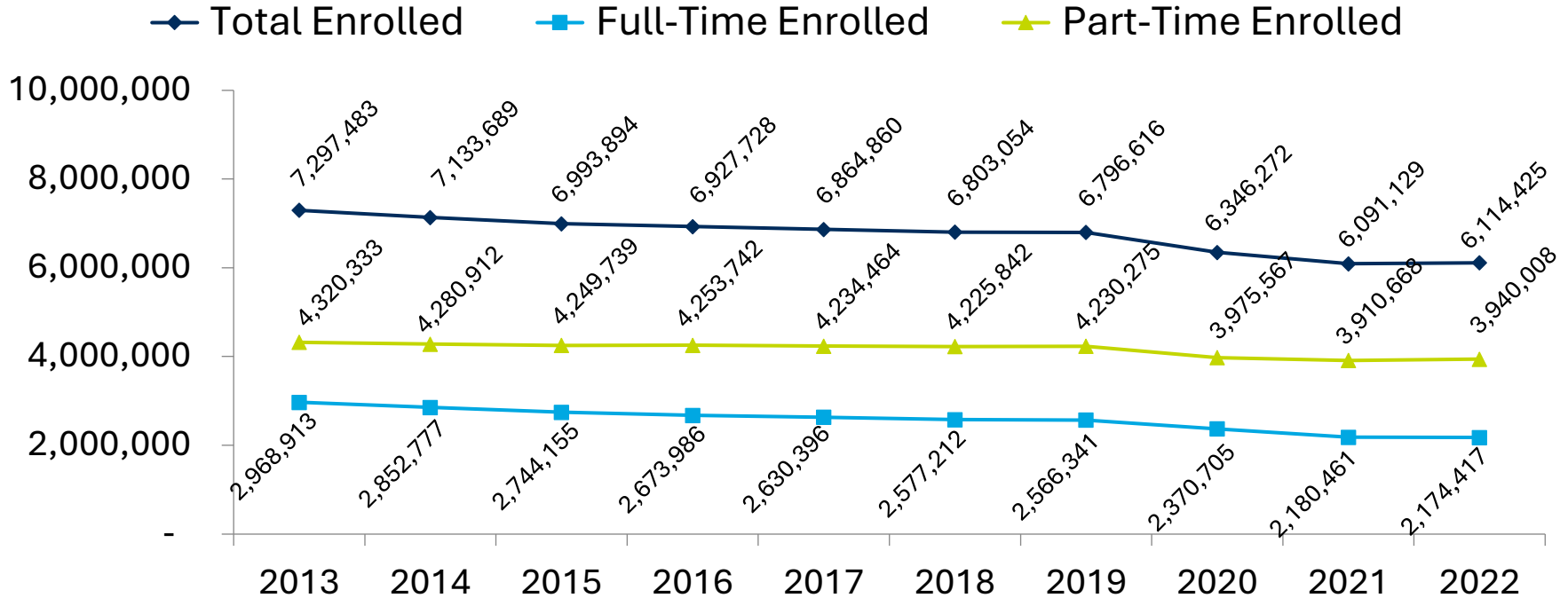
Julie Bryant
Shannon Cook

Setting the stage: Enrollment and retention trends at community colleges

2-year Full and Part Time Enrollment

National Totals

Legend: Total Enrolled, Full-Time Enrolled, Part-Time Enrolled

Total Enrolled: 7,297,483 (2013), 7,133,689 (2014), 6,993,894 (2015), 6,927,728 (2016), 6,864,860 (2017), 6,803,054 (2018), 6,796,616 (2019), 6,346,272 (2020), 6,091,129 (2021), 6,114,425 (2022)

Part-Time Enrolled: 4,320,333 (2013), 4,280,912 (2014), 4,249,739 (2015), 4,253,742 (2016), 4,234,464 (2017), 4,225,842 (2018), 4,230,275 (2019), 3,975,567 (2020), 3,910,668 (2021), 3,940,008 (2022)

Full-Time Enrolled: 2,968,913 (2013), 2,852,777 (2014), 2,744,155 (2015), 2,673,986 (2016), 2,630,396 (2017), 2,577,212 (2018), 2,566,341 (2019), 2,370,705 (2020), 2,180,461 (2021), 2,174,417 (2022)

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3

Data from the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center

Community colleges have seen the highest gains in retention rates over the last decade, with the retention rate for entering community college students rising 3.7 percentage points from 51.3 percent for those who started in the fall 2013 term to 55.0 percent for fall 2022 starters.

https://nscresearchcenter.org/persistence-retention/

Report on the Condition of Education 2024

National Center for Education Statistics

- The total number of undergraduates enrolled decreased by 13 percent between 2012 and 2022.

- In 2022, 17 percent of high school completers immediately enrolled in 2-year institutions versus 45 percent enrolling in 4-year institutions.

- The number of certificates and associate's degrees conferred in the 2021-22 academic year was about 1 million.

- In the fall of 2022, 30 percent of all undergraduate students were enrolled in 2-year institutions, with the remaining 70 percent enrolled at 4-year institutions.

- Between the fall of 2012 and the fall of 2022, enrollment decreased by 35 percent at 2-year institutions.

- The retention rate in the fall of 2022 at 2-year degree-granting institutions was 63 percent versus 81 percent at 4-year institutions.

https:nces.ed.gov/pubs2024/2024144.pdf

Community college numbers are decreasing

The number of 2-year institutions was 13 percent lower in 2022-23 than in 2012-13 for public institutions (817 vs. 934 institutions), with the number decreasing throughout the period.
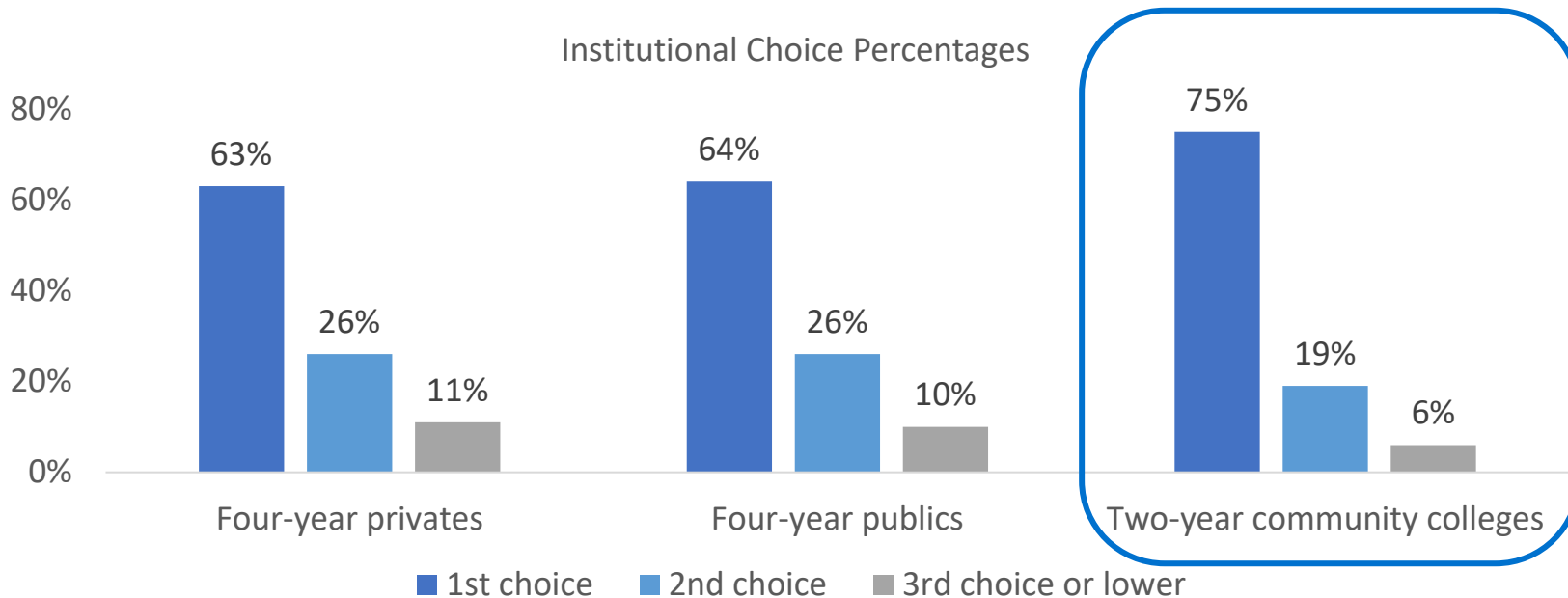
https:nces.ed.gov/pubs2024/2024144.pdf

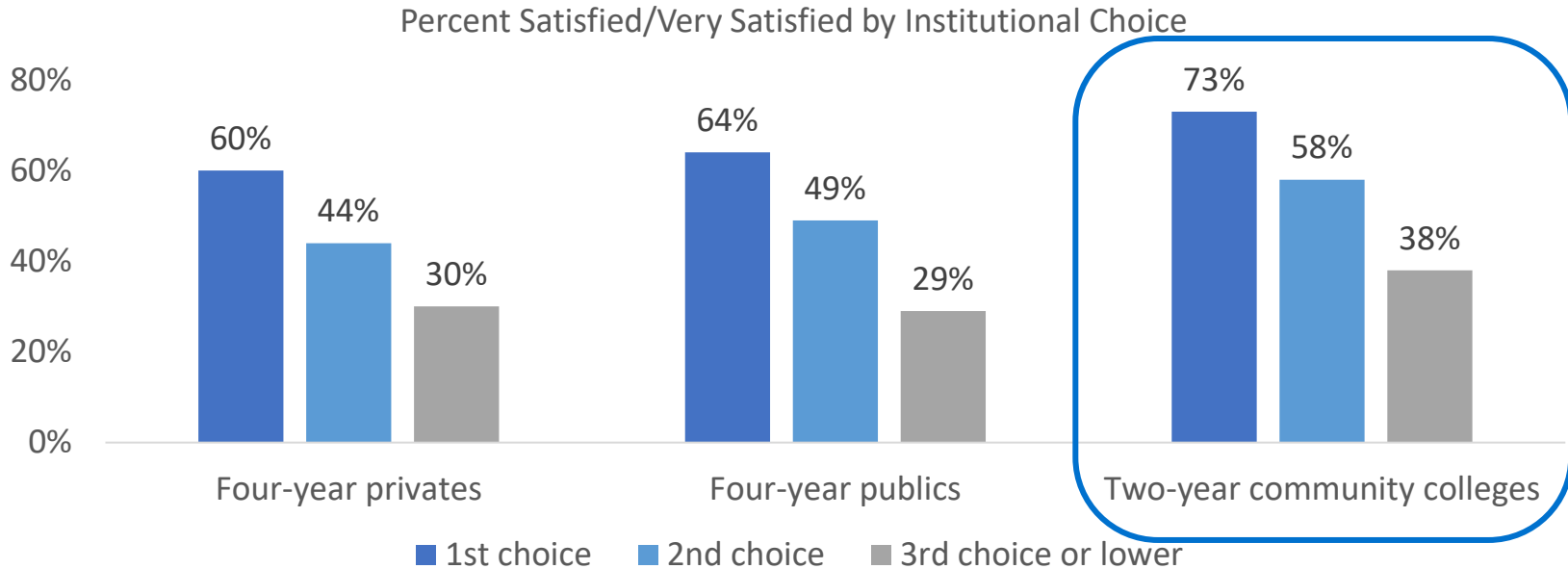# Student success matters for the health of your institution

Enrollment Factors: Why students are choosing to attend community colleges

What percentage of students indicate they are attending their first-choice institution?

Institutional Choice Percentages

Satisfaction Levels by Institutional Choice

First choice students are the most satisfied overall

Percent Satisfied/Very Satisfied by Institutional Choice

Legend: ■ 1st choice ■ 2nd choice ■ 3rd choice or lower

Four-year privates: 60%, 44%, 30%
Four-year publics: 64%, 49%, 29%
Two-year community colleges: 73%, 58%, 38%

Factors in the decision to enroll

Community colleges

Enrollment factors rated for community colleges	Importance
Cost	**85%**
Financial aid	**83%**
Academic reputation	**77%**
Geographic setting	**71%**
Personalized attention prior to enrollment	**67%**
Campus appearance	**61%**
Size of institution	**60%**
Recommendations from family/friends	**59%**
Opportunity to play sports	**43%**

Percentages indicate the proportions of "important"/"very important" scores

N = 82,886 students from 130 institutions

Questions to consider / Action items

- Are you acting like a first-choice institution?

- Do you know what factors influence your students' decisions to enroll?

- Are you prepared to provide adequate financial aid?

- How do you position your academic reputation?

- Is the opportunity to play sports a strong recruitment factor and if yes, how are you supporting your student-athletes?

Motivation Data:
What we know when students first enter community colleges

In what areas do you think students are looking for support?

Top 10 Priorities: First-Year Students

FIRST-YEAR COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENTS	2022
Receive help to improve study habits	68%
Would like instruction on how to take college exams	65%
Talk about qualifications needed for certain occupations	63%
Help selecting an educational plan to get a good job	62%
Talk with someone about getting a scholarship	59%
Meet some new friends at an informal gathering	55%
Help selecting an occupation suited to my interests	50%
Talk with someone about salaries and future occupation	49%
Find out more about clubs and social organizations	48%
Receive help to improve writing skills	46%

2023 National First-Year Students and Their Motivation to Complete College Results

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"I am dedicated to finishing college – no matter what obstacles get in my way."

At the beginning of the first year...

Commitment to college

POPULATION	2022 CSI
First-Year Community College Students	92%

2023 National First-Year Students and Their Motivation to Complete College Report

*CSI = College Student Inventory™

"I wonder if a college education is really worth the time, money and effort I have to put into it."

Is college worth the effort?

Commitment to college

POPULATION	2022 CSI
First-Year Community College Students	30%

2023 National First-Year Students and Their Motivation to Complete College Report

*CSI = College Student Inventory™

"Of all the things I could be doing at this point in my life, going to college is the most satisfying."

At the mid-point of the first year...

Commitment to college

POPULATION	2022 MYSA
First-Year Community College Students	64%

*MYSA = Mid-Year Student Assessment™

"I am dedicated to finishing college – no matter what obstacles get in my way."

Through the first year...

Commitment to college

POPULATION	2022 CSI	2022 MYSA
First-Year Community College Students	92%	85%

*CSI = College Student Inventory™

*MYSA = Mid-Year Student Assessment™

"I plan to transfer before completing a degree at this institution."

Re-enrollment plans by institution type

Commitment to college

POPULATION	2-Year	4-Year Public	4-Year Private
Incoming First-Year Students	26%	7%	6%

*CSI = College Student Inventory™

Questions to consider / Action items

- Do you know what your students need to be successful?

- Are you asking what their educational goals are when they enter?

- Do you know the non-academic factors impacting student success? (Food insecurities, childcare, housing, transportation)

- What resources do you have in place to support students?

  - Tutoring

  - Career Services

  - Social engagement

  - Transfer advising support / articulation agreements

Satisfaction Data: What to celebrate and what to improve

What do you think CCs are doing well and where can they improve?

Top five strengths

Community colleges

Top strengths rated for community colleges	Importance	Satisfaction
The campus is safe and secure for all students.	91%	83%
I am able to experience intellectual growth here.	90%	81%
There is a good variety of courses provided on this campus.	89%	80%
Students are made to feel welcome on this campus.	88%	80%
Nearly all of the faculty are knowledgeable in their fields.	86%	78%

Percentages indicate the proportions of "important"/"very important" and "satisfied"/"very satisfied" scores
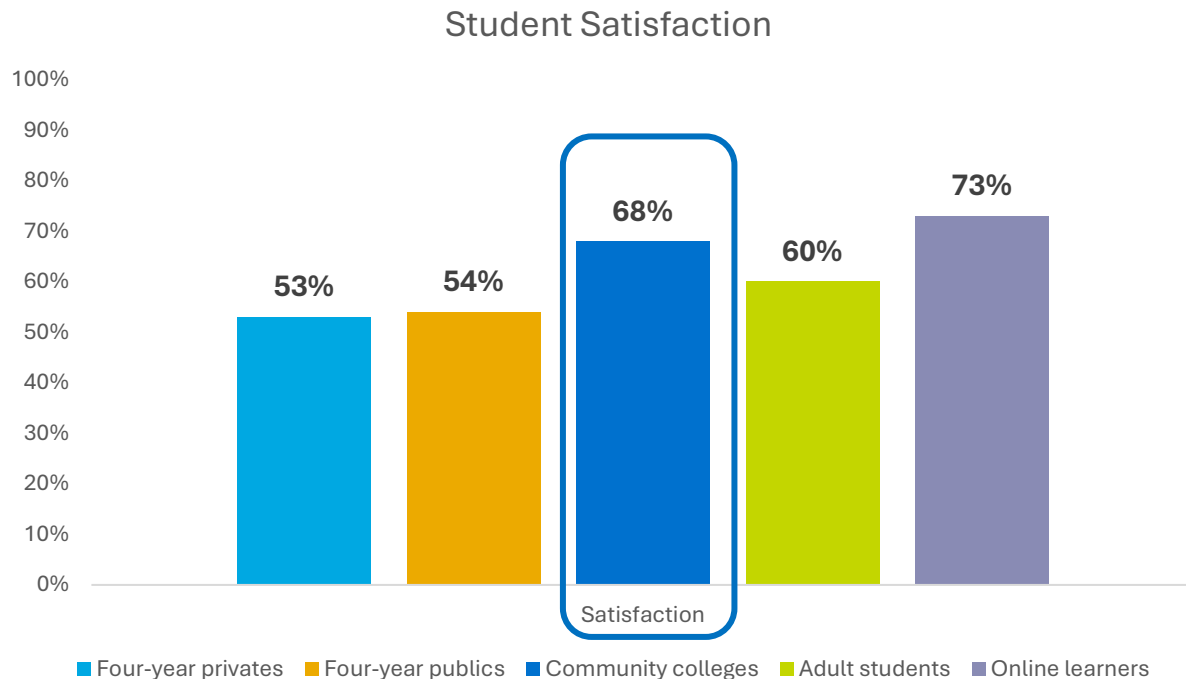
Listed in order of importance

N = 82,886 students from 130 institutions

Top five challenges

Community colleges

Top challenges rated for community colleges	Importance	Satisfaction
The quality of instruction I receive I most of my classes is excellent.	90%	69%
I am able to register for classes I need with few conflicts.	89%	73%
Faculty provide timely feedback about student progress in a course.	88%	70%
This school does whatever it can to help me reach my educational goals.	87%	70%
Faculty are understanding of students' unique life circumstances.	87%	69%

Percentages indicate the proportions of "important"/"very important" and "satisfied"/"very satisfied" scores
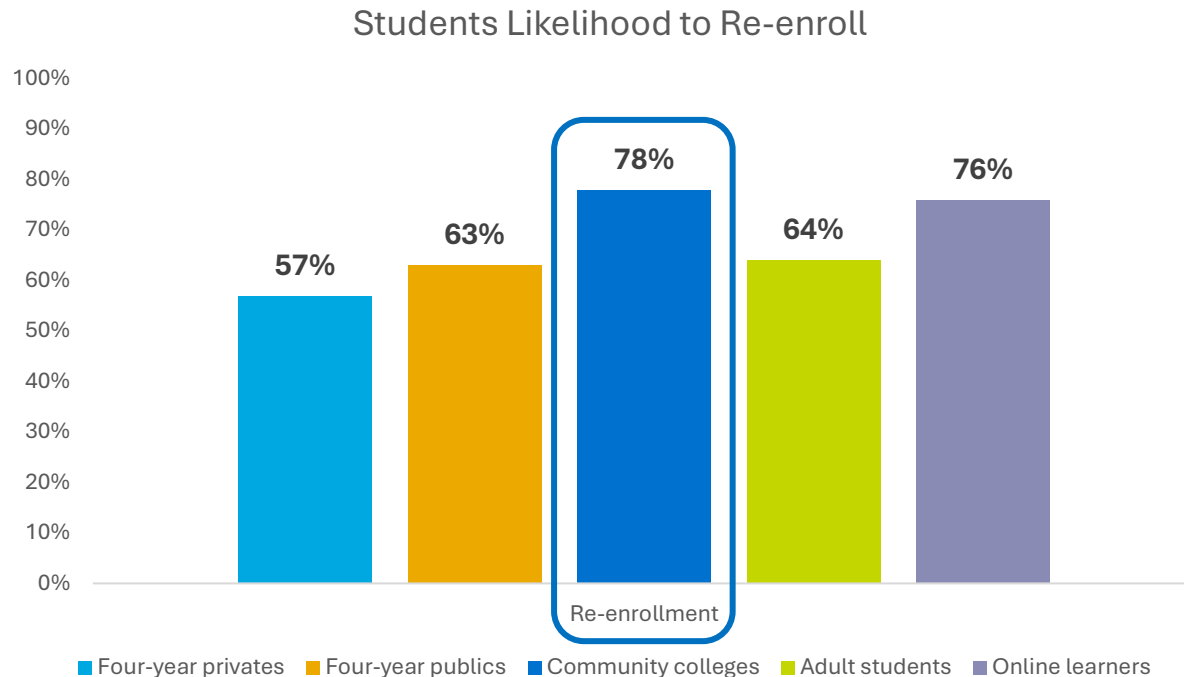
Listed in order of importance

2023 National Student Satisfaction and Priorities Report

N = 82,886 students from 130 institutions

How satisfied are college students?

Student Satisfaction

Bar chart showing student satisfaction percentages:
- Four-year privates: 53%
- Four-year publics: 54%
- Community colleges: 68% (highlighted)
- Adult students: 60%
- Online learners: 73%

Legend: ■ Four-year privates ■ Four-year publics ■ Community colleges ■ Adult students ■ Online learners

Rate your overall satisfaction with your experience here thus far

SCORING

- Not satisfied at all
- Not very satisfied
- Somewhat dissatisfied
- Neutral
- Somewhat satisfied
- **Satisfied**
- **Very satisfied**

Percentages indicates the proportion of "satisfied" or "very satisfied" scores

How likely are students to re-enroll?

Students Likelihood to Re-enroll

All in all, if you had to do it again, would you enroll here?

SCORING ⇕
Definitely not
Probably not
Maybe not
I don't know
Maybe yes
Probably yes
Definitely yes

- Four-year privates
- Four-year publics
- Community colleges
- Adult students
- Online learners

Percentages indicates the proportion of "probably yes" and "definitely yes" scores

Questions to consider / Action items

- How are you communicating your strengths to your students and within your larger community? Celebrate your wins!

- Are you creating a welcoming and caring environment for students to thrive?

- How are you training and developing your faculty, targeting within departments where it may be most needed?

- Are your advisors prepared to guide students for transfer requirements to four-year institutions (where you have articulation agreements)?

- Are you ready to assist students while "they are going through it" and while life is happening outside of the classroom?

Ideas from a community college partner: St. Louis Community College

What are you doing and/or what would you like to be doing?

Guiding principles for effective retention efforts

Build your strategies on a foundation of student success

Be intrusive and intentional	Integrate with other programs	Gather and integrate student feedback
Provide quality classroom engagement	Ensure student-centeredness	Empower students to develop relationships

Talk with our student success experts
Ask for a complimentary consultation
RuffaloNL.com/RetentionSuccess

Julie Bryant

Vice President for Student Success
Julie.Bryant@RuffaloNL.com

Shannon Cook

Senior Consultant Student Success Solutions
Shannon.Cook@RuffaloNL.com

Contact us with any questions

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Bonus content:
What are community colleges doing to impact student success?

Our latest effective practices poll: 2023

Two-year institutions

- 72% use institutional strategic plans to guide efforts

- 84% set measurable goals for college completion rates

- 36% ask incoming students to identify their needs

- 24% leverage predictive modeling to impact student retention

Participants

- 46 institutions

- 50% 1,001-5,000

- 50% 5,001+

- Representing 453,636 undergraduate students

Opportunities exist for two-year institutions to use more student-driven measures to support strategic goals

Effectiveness of key strategies

Practice	Institution type	Using method	Very or somewhat effective
Using an incoming student assessment to identify students' needs	4-Year Private	73%	83%
	4-Year Public	58%	77%
	2-Year Public	60%	76%
Using student satisfaction assessments to make changes to address attrition	4-Year Private	90%	75%
	4-Year Public	83%	73%
	2-Year Public	79%	70%

Most Widely Used Strategies: Top Five

Two-year institutions

STRATEGY/TACTIC	USING
Academic support (e.g., learning center, math lab, tutoring)	100%
Advising by professional staff, one-on-one	91%
Providing each student with an academic plan/roadmap of courses	91%
Student success coaching (internal)	89%
Giving students practical work experiences in their intended program (e.g., internships, volunteer work, experiential learning, service learning	85%

- How do these vary based on modality? Traditional, Online, Modality

The Most Effective Practices: Management Practices

Two-year institutions

PRACTICE	EFFECTIVE
Development of faculty skills in instruction	93%
Setting measurable goals for college completion rates	89%
Tracking persistence and progression patterns, term by term, for all students who matriculate	87%
Identifying courses with high withdrawal and/or failure rates	86%
Setting measurable goals to improve the retention rate from term-to-term or year-to-year	84%

Retention committees

Two-year institutions

61% have a retention committee

Which area is the committee chair from?	
Student Affairs staff	37%
Academic affairs staff	7%
Faculty member	4%
Academic leadership position	7%
This committee does not have a chair	4%
This committee has more than one chair from different areas	11%

Retention committees

Two-year institutions

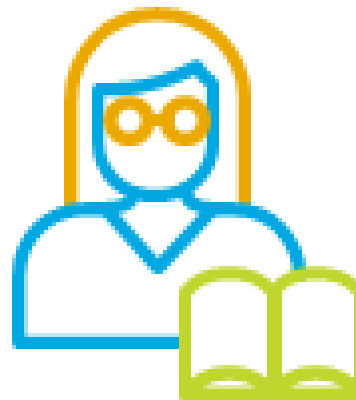|	
The committee is empowered to make decisions that affect multiple areas of campus	7%
The committee gathers and shares information that affects multiple areas of campus.	21%
The committee is charged to make recommendations that affect multiple areas of campus.	71%

Chief Retention Officer

Two-year institutions

72% have a Chief Retention Officer

Which office does the CRO report to?	
President	9%
Academic affairs	15%
Student affairs	42%
Enrollment management	12%
Other	21%

Questions to consider / Action items

- What does student success look like at your institution?

- What gaps exist in your current efforts?

- Do you have a committee in place to execute the plan, and does the committee understand the expectations?

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ready to lead the way with RNL?

Schedule a quick consultation

scan here