

University of Louisiana at Lafayette
Undergraduate Student Retention Plan
2003 - 2005

Table of Contents

Introduction	2
Institutional Mission and Goals	4
Situation Analysis	6
Organizational Structure for Retention Efforts	9
University Retention Committee	10
Retention Subcommittees	11
Retention Goals	12
Action Plans	13
First-Time Freshmen, Action Plans # 1 through 4	13 - 17
Continuing Freshmen, Action Plans # 5 through 6	18 - 19
Sophomores, Action Plans 7 through 9	20 - 24
All Students, Action Plans # 10 through 13	25 - 31
Summary	32

INTRODUCTION

Since the implementation of admission standards in the Fall 1999 semester, the University of Louisiana at Lafayette has changed fundamentally, both in its mission as it pertains to undergraduate education and in the academic milieu in which that education occurs. Selectivity has changed the academic profile of the student body. Students are better prepared academically, having taken a 16.5 unit core of required high school courses in order to be admitted. In the four years since the advent of selective admissions, the average ACT composite score of entering freshmen has risen 1.4 points, from 19.5 to 20.9. Selectivity has also, predictably, decreased total enrollment. Since the adoption of selective admissions, first-time-freshman enrollment declined, from 2,934 in the Fall 1998 semester to a low of 2,299 in the Fall 2000 semester, before rebounding to 2,379 in Fall 2002.

The University's planned implementation of more restrictive admission standards in two more stages (Fall 2003 and Fall 2005) requires that it address enrollment issues on two fronts: recruiting and retention. Clearly as the pool of eligible freshman students shrinks, it becomes even more imperative that the University improve its performance in retaining and graduating students who are already enrolled. To that end, the University has directed the creation of this three-year Retention Plan.

The Retention Plan, written by members of the University Retention Committee under the guidance of consultants from Noel-Levitz, delineates a set of retention goals for three groups of students: first-time freshmen, continuing freshmen, and sophomores. These goals are very specific numeric goals to increase retention over the 2003 - 2005 period in each group. The

Retention Plan further delineates strategies and definitive action plans for achieving the goals.

The Plan will serve as the University's road map for retention activities over the next three years.

The process of its implementation will be overseen by the University Retention Committee.

INSTITUTIONAL MISSION AND GOALS

As iterated in its own *Statement of Purpose* and in the Board of Regents *Master Plan for Public Postsecondary Education: 2001*, the University of Louisiana at Lafayette is a Carnegie Doctoral/Research-Intensive institution. The University offers sixty baccalaureate degrees, twenty-seven master's degrees, and doctoral degrees in eight disciplines. Consonant with the loftiest ideals of higher education, the University "takes as its primary purpose the examination, transmission, preservation, and extension of mankind's intellectual traditions."

The University serves diverse constituencies, most directly through its educational programs and its research activities. It expands that impact through its extensive outreach to Acadiana and the state, through research centers, continuing education, and cultural and athletic events. Additionally, the University envisions itself as a principal player in enriching the economic, social, and cultural life of the area and the state.

Available data gives at least a superficial profile of the students served by UL Lafayette. The student population is 90% undergraduate, with 92% from in-state. A relatively small percentage of students live in campus housing (11%); the University is a "commuter campus." A large percentage of undergraduates are first-generation college students. Over 57% of all students are female, and racial demographics indicate that 73.3% of the student body is white, while 17% is African-American. Nearly 21% of the University's students attend part-time, and 39.1% are so-called "non-traditional" students over 23 years of age. Another significant statistic derived from the Student Opinion Survey—one clearly related to retention and graduation—is that over 35% of the undergraduate student population self-report that they work over twenty-one hours a week, and 63.3% report that they work over eleven hours a week.

The University of Louisiana at Lafayette is committed to continuing its pursuit of greater excellence in undergraduate education, to expanding its role and its reputation as a graduate institution, and to developing additional premier programs which are nationally competitive among research institutions.

UL Lafayette's Strategic Plan, 2001 - 2005

In its *Strategic Plan for 2001 - 2005*, the University committed itself to achieving three goals: 1) to increase opportunities for student access and success; 1) to ensure quality and public accountability; and 3) enhance service to community and state. The goals of this Retention Plan clearly support the three stated goals of the Strategic Plan, for greater student retention leads inevitably to improved graduation rates, the ultimate litmus test of public accountability.

SITUATION ANALYSIS

In a series of meetings and workshops held between December 2002 and April 2003, representatives of the University's faculty, administration, and students discussed the institution's strengths and weaknesses, threats and opportunities, both internal and external, as they relate to student retention and graduation. These discussions focused particularly on the University's position relative to undergraduate enrollment: recruitment, marketing, financial aid, scholarships, retention rates at each level, and graduation rates. Some of these meetings were conducted under the guidance of consultants from Noel-Levitz, while others involved only members of the campus community. The meetings produced the following analyses.

University Strengths (Internal)

- Excellent faculty and quality academic programs
- Freshman retention efforts in place (mandatory orientation; upward bound; summer success; some freshman seminars)
- Honors Program
- Support services (Day Care Center; Student Health Services; tutoring centers; academic and personal counseling; computer labs; disabled students services)
- Improving facilities
- Internships, Co-Ops, and other experiential learning
- Community support (scholarships; professorships)
- Stable leadership

University Weaknesses (Internal)

- Inadequate communication from administration to faculty and staff (failure to use technology to assist)
- Inadequate web site and interactive online student services
- Facilities needing renovation (particularly residence halls)
- Parking
- Academic Advising (limited professional advising; uneven faculty advising; “drop” mentality)
- Lack of student participation in campus activities
- Funding (inadequate administrative staff; resources funneled away from undergraduate programs into graduate programs and research; need for additional faculty in growth areas)
- Little use of alternative educational formats (distance courses, online courses, compressed scheduling)
- Resistance to change (entrenchment of leadership across campus; centralization of management decisions)
- Faculty mindset on retention and other undergraduate issues

University Opportunities (External)

- Selective Admissions
- Community College system
- TOPS program
- Emerging technology (for pedagogical and administrative use)
- Political support

University Threats (External)

- Competition with other state institutions
- Unfunded Board of Regents mandates
- Decreasing numbers of high school graduates
- Inadequate funding from the state
- Negative public image (UL Lafayette seen by some as the institution of choice by default)
- Student priorities (college education not a high priority in area families; work is first priority to support life style)

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE FOR RETENTION

In November 2002, the University created a University Retention Committee, chaired by Dr. Carolyn Bruder, Director of Academic Planning and Faculty Development. The Committee consists of representatives from administrative staff, faculty (at least one representative from each college), and students. The Retention Committee has been charged with developing and implementing the University's Retention Plan. Membership on the University Retention Committee is listed in Table I.

The Retention Committee developed a set of three primary subcommittees to devise the plan to achieve each of the three retention goals: First-Time Freshmen, Continuing Freshmen, and Sophomores (see Table II). Additional subcommittees with overlapping membership were created to work on more specific areas, as indicated in Table II.

**Table I: UL Lafayette Retention Committee
2002 - 2003**

Student Affairs

Pat Cottonham*
Dan Jurek

Junior Division

Bette Harris*
Kimberly Young
Lucy Gammon

Special Services

Bobbie Decuir*

Minority Affairs

Kathleen Sparrow*

Student Government

Jason Wright

Enrollment Management

Cindy Perez
DeWayne Bowie

Academic Affairs: Administration

Carolyn Bruder, chair
Bradd Clark
Phebe Hayes
Kay Riedel
Carolyn Dural

Academic Affairs: Faculty

Donna Fatheree* (SCI)
Monica Busby (LIB ARTS)
Hector Lasala (ARTS)
Pat Andrus (ALS)
Melinda Oberleitner (NURS)
Mary Farmer-Kaiser (LIB ARTS)
Nona Etheredge (SCI)
Jim Underwood (BADM)
Jeff Sandoz (EDUC)
Robert Buckman (LIB ARTS)
Pegge Alciatore (SCI)
Tom Rizzuto (SCI)
Rachel Fournet (ALS)

* Members of previous University Retention
Committee

Table II: University Retention Committee Subcommittees

<i>First-Time Freshmen</i>	<i>Continuing Freshmen</i>	<i>Sophomores/Juniors</i>
Harris & Sandoz, co-chairs	Fatheree & Alciatore, co-chairs	Oberleitner & Underwood, co-chairs
Young	Farmer	Clark
Decuir	Gammon	Bowie
Perez	Dural	Hayes
Busby	Andrus	Riedel
Etheredge	Cottonham	Rizzuto
Jurek	Sparrow	Buckman
Fatheree	Fournet	Wright
LaSala		
<i>FTF Subcommittees</i>	<i>Continuing Freshman Subcommittees</i>	<i>Sophomores Subcommittees</i>
Academic Advising: Harris (ch), Clark, Sandoz, Riedel, Gammon [Academic Advising created three subcommittees on Communication (Clark, ch, with Timmons*, Gammon, and Huner*), User Friendly Tools (Gammon, ch, with Sandoz, Bowie, and Ozbirn*), and Online System (Timmons*, ch, with Riedel, Bowie, Harris, Hernandez*, and Totaro*)]	Academic Policies: Dural (ch), Gammon, Fatheree, Bowie, K. Young*	Career Orientation: full committee
Course Scheduling: Fatheree (ch), Etheridge, Harris, Bruder, Bowie, Oberleitner, Timmons*, Huner*	Academic Support: Alciatore (ch), Farmer, K. Young, M. Busby	Campus Connections: full committee
Student-Centered Campus: Jurek (ch), Decuir, Perez	Target Populations: Fatheree (ch), Sparrow, Rivers*, Rizzuto, Fournet	Target Populations: Sonnier (ch), Dural, Riedel, Fatheree [Target Populations includes a further subcommittee on Transfer Students, chaired by Sonnier]
Parent Outreach: Cottonham (ch), Bruder, Hernandez*, Perez		
Academic Programs: Sandoz (ch), Fatheree, Decuir, Busby, Dural		

* resource persons

Retention Goals

The University has delineated three-year retention goals for three groups of undergraduate students:

1. Increase first-to-second year retention of first-time, full-time freshmen for 2003 to 72.2%, up from 71.2%; for 2004 to 75%; and for 2005 to 77%.
2. Increase the retention rate of continuing freshmen students for 2003 to 70.0%, up from 68.5%; for 2004 to 71%; and for 2005 to 72%.
3. Increase the retention rate of sophomore students for 2003 to 76.9%, up from 76.1%; for 2004 to 79.1%; and for 2005 to 80%.

ACTION PLAN # 1		
Goal: Increase first-to second year retention of first-time, full-time freshmen for 2003 to 72.2% (up from 71.2%); for 2004 to 75.0%; for 2005 to 77.0%.		
Key Strategy: Improve course scheduling for first-time freshman.		
Description/Explanation/Vision: Currently first-time freshmen who attend the last three to four Orientation Sessions face a problem in scheduling their Fall courses principally because of inadequate seat space in many common freshman courses. The University must improve its management of scheduling processes for FTF core courses.		
Implementation/Timetable		
Steps	Responsibility	Completion Date
Request departments to reserve seats for summer orientations, raising maxima incrementally at each orientation	Carolyn Bruder	April '03
Develop a "watch list" of courses needed by FTF	Carolyn Bruder/ DeWayne Bowie	Done
Monitor the "watch list" on a weekly basis during the summer and notify departments of shortages.	DeWayne Bowie	June through August '03
Recommend a coordinator to monitor enrollment in freshman courses for the College of Engineering	Steve Landry	Done
Develop a program evaluation instrument for orientation	Mary Hernandez	May'03
Survey students at orientation for satisfaction in scheduling. Analyze the surveys.	Mary Hernandez	SU03, FA03
Using profiling and student surveys, predict courses required for FA04	Mary Hernandez/ Tom Rizzuto	Sept.'03
Recommend number of seats for FA04 to deans/ departments for FA04 schedule	Carolyn Bruder	Oct. 1 '03
Develop profiling instrument to be administered to all participants in Freshman Orientation to assist University in determining students at risk for academic failure	Carolyn Bruder and Mary Hernandez	Spring 2004
Add five instructorships in departments with heavy enrollment of first-time-freshmen that currently depend heavily on adjunct faculty	Ray Authement	Begin Fall 2004, continue following two years
Budget:	Item	Budgeted Amount
	Printing Survey	\$240
	Five instructorships (over 3 years), to be added pending funding assistance from the Board of Regents and/or pending generation of additional dollars by University meeting retention goals in 2004 and 2005	\$160,000
Total:		\$160,240
Assessment/Evaluation/Control		
Use program evaluation from student surveys to establish a baseline for future evaluation. Track students for % who are "on track" academically (GPA, hours completed, a reduction in the number of drops among first-time freshman).		

First-Time Freshmen

ACTION PLAN # 2		
Goal: Increase first-to second year retention of first-time, full-time freshmen for 2003 to 72.2% (up from 71.2%); for 2004 to 75.0%; for 2005 to 77.0%.		
Key Strategy: Improve freshman academic success rate.		
Description/Explanation/Vision: The University has used learning communities (a group of students taking common courses together) sporadically over the last ten years. The success of students who enroll in such linked classes suggests that we should continue to use them in colleges that now use them and expand their use in other colleges.		
IMPLEMENTATION/TIMETABLE		
Steps	Responsibility	Completion Date
Continue learning communities in the College of Liberal Arts. This fall CajunLincs allows a group of first-time freshmen to take three common courses together. Students in the College of Liberal Arts will take English 101, Humanities 101 and either Math 092, 100 or 105.	David Barry/ Carolyn Dural	Fall '03
Implement learning communities in the College of Business Administration. CajunLincs allows business students to take English 101, Business Administration 100 and either Math 100 or 105 together.	Colleen Timmons	Fall '03
Survey other colleges to identify three core courses common to majors	Donna Fatheree /Deans	September '03
Establish a schedule for other colleges to implement learning communities	Steve Landry	Fall '03
Identify and invite qualified students to participate in learning communities in other colleges	Bette Harris	Spring '04
Budget:	Item	Budgeted Amount
	Printing of Brochures	\$500 in Spring '04 and \$500 in Spring '05
Total:		\$1,000
Assessment/Evaluation/Control		
-Compare retention rates and GPA of UL Lafayette first-time freshmen participating in learning communities with first-time freshmen in participating colleges who would have been eligible for the learning communities but who did not participate and with first-time freshmen in the entire University not in learning communities.		

First-Time Freshmen

ACTION PLAN # 3		
Goal: Increase first-to second year retention of first-time, full-time freshmen for 2003 to 72.2% (up from 71.2%); for 2004 to 75.0%; for 2005 to 77.0%.		
Key Strategy: Improve academic programs for first-time freshmen.		
Description/Explanation/Vision: Promotion and development of freshman seminars with a common set of goals and objectives designed to assist students in their transition into college life and to introduce them to the major fields of study in the college in which they have enrolled. National data indicate that freshman seminars have improved retention markedly.		
IMPLEMENTATION/TIMETABLE		
Steps	Responsibility	Completion Date
Develop seminar core objectives for standardization in freshman seminars	Carolyn Bruder	SP03
Identify a coordinator from each college to assist in dissemination of core objectives and disseminate the twelve core objectives to incorporate in freshman seminars.	Donna Fatheree/ Carolyn Dural	May 03
Develop program evaluation for freshman seminar students	Carolyn Dural	SU03
Implement freshman seminar in College of Sciences	Bradd Clark/ Donna Fatheree	FA03
Analyze program evaluations from freshman seminar students	Harry Hebert/ Tom Rizzuto	SP04
Budget:	Item	Budgeted Amount
	Adjunct faculty salaries (College of Sciences) - 5 sections @ \$1800.00	\$9,000
	Printing	\$250
	Total:	\$9,250
Assessment/Evaluation/Control		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Use program evaluation data to set a baseline using a five-point Likert scale. 2. Compare retention rates and GPAs of UL Lafayette first-time freshmen (general FTF population : students who scheduled a seminar : students who successfully completed the seminar) in the same college if possible. 		

First-Time Freshmen

ACTION PLAN # 4

Goal: Increase first-to-second year retention of first-time, full-time freshmen for 2003 to 72.2% (up from 71.2%), for 2004 to 75.0%, and for 2005 to 77.0%.

Key Strategy: Form partnerships with parents to ensure a successful college experience for their students.

Description/Explanation/Vision: Parents play a critical role in the academic, social, emotional and overall success of their students. The University wants to ensure that parents are well informed about University processes so that a collaborative and cooperative relationship can be established and maintained.

IMPLEMENTATION/TIMETABLE

Steps	Responsibility	Completion Date
Improve parent meetings at each Orientation Session beginning in the Summer 2003 by adding presentations by current parents, preferably a mother and father of both a male and a female student. Interest sessions will be offered on Academic Support, Business Services, Housing, Scholarships/TOPS, Financial Aid and Services for Students with Disabilities.	Patricia Cottonham	Summer 2003
Put the <i>Parent Handbook</i> on the web.	Lucien Gastineau	Summer 2003
Develop a <i>Parent Newsletter</i> to be mailed to parents of first-time freshmen and other new students each Fall and Spring semester. Student Affairs, Faculty Development and Enrollment Services will contribute information and/or secure information from various sources for the newsletter. Articles will include but, are not limited to important dates, deadlines, TOPS, profiles, etc.....	Gregory Zerangue	Fall 2003
The Dean of Students' Office will conduct a parent meeting on dormitory move- in days in the Fall and Spring semesters. As part of that program, Student Affairs, Enrollment Management, and Business Services will be available to assist students with general information on move-in-days.	Patricia Cottonham	Fall 2003

“Freshman First Down,” a program through which parents are given two tickets to a home football game early in the season, will continue to be held each fall semester. A Parent Basketball Night will be added each Spring semester for parents of first-time freshmen who enter in the spring semester. Free tickets will be offered to parents of first-time freshmen with the option to buy more tickets at a discount rate.	Anthony Daniel	Fall 2003 and Spring 2004
Add a parent page to the UL Lafayette web site where Parent Handbook, Parent Newsletter, financial aid information, etc. can be posted.	Dan Rosenfield	Fall 2003
Develop a satisfaction survey (using 5 point Likert scale) to be completed by parents at all parent orientations.	Pat Cottonham and Mary Hernandez	Spring 2004
Begin to build a data base of e-mail addresses for parents of incoming students.	Dan Rosenfield	Spring and Summer 2004
Schedule two evening meetings for parents who were unable to attend regular parent orientations	Patricia Cottonham	Summer 2004
Invite parents to semi-annual TOPS Workshops	Bette Harris	Summer 2004
Schedule a weekend parent orientation for parents who were unable to attend regular parent orientations.	Patricia Cottonham	Summer 2005
Budget:	Item	Budgeted Amount
	Newsletter Printing (annual budget)	\$280
	Newsletter mailing (annual budget)	\$805
Total		\$1085
Assessment/Evaluation/Control		
Distribute and collect data from satisfaction surveys distributed at Parent Orientation sessions.		
Distribute and collect data from satisfaction surveys distributed at all TOPS workshops.		
Record the number of “hits” on the Parent link on the web site, as well as the number of requests for information generated by the Parent link.		

ACTION PLAN # 5

Goal: Increase the retention rate of freshman students to 70.0% (up from 68.5%) for 2003; to 71% in 2004; and to 72 % in 2005.

Key Strategy: Improve academic support.

Description/Explanation/Vision: Continuing or second-year freshmen often have previously withdrawn from and are now repeating difficult courses. The University must continue to monitor freshman-level courses for grade distribution and passage rates, thus identifying those courses which are most problematic for freshmen. Identify programs that have proven reliable in improving performance in these courses, and implement these programs to help students succeed. Specifically, during the next three years, the University should continue its implementation of Supplemental Instruction in select courses and increase the use of study groups.

IMPLEMENTATION/TIMETABLE

Steps	Responsibility	Completion Date
Identify academic problem areas, which impede students' progression to degree, as determined by failure rates, withdrawals, and faculty recommendations.	Kim Young	May 2003 and annually thereafter
Redesign and implement Study Groups and/or Supplemental Instruction Programs to meet the needs of students in problem area courses. Hire and train personnel for both programs: continue SI for Biol 101 and 102; improve study groups for Math 92, 100, 105 and 201 and Chem 107 and 123; improve effectiveness of individual tutoring in the Writing Center, STEP Computer Labs, Math lab and Physics Tutoring.	Kim Young Theresa Sonnier Pegge Alciatore	August 2003, ongoing
Survey academic departments regarding the effectiveness of current tutoring programs and their recommendations for improvement.	Kim Young	Spring 2004
Evaluate effectiveness of programs presently in place: study groups, tutoring sessions, supplemental instruction, and individual tutors.	Theresa Sonnier	July 2003 ongoing every semester

Budget:	Item	Budget Amount
	Supplemental Instruction in Biology: Colleges of Nursing and Sciences and VP Landry (annual)	\$7,000.00/year
Total:		\$7,000.00

Assessment/Evaluation/Control Effect on Retention:
 Compare pass rates of students participating in the SI program with those in the same courses who do not participate.
 Compare pass rates of students who participate in Study Groups with those in the same courses who do not.
 Compare pass rates of students who schedule individual tutoring with those not participating.
 Generate longitudinal data to evaluate any long-term changes and/or trends in student performance.

ACTION PLAN # 6

Goal: Increase the retention rate of freshman students to 70.0% (up from 68.5%) for 2003; to 71% in 2004; and to 72 % in 2005.

Key Strategy: Identify target populations of at-risk students and develop intervention strategies.

Description/Explanation/Vision: Develop strategies to identify at risk students at UL Lafayette, indicated by national data to be students who attend part-time, who have a high drop rate, who transfer in, and who have a low GPA. Implement interventions to help retain these students and help them to graduate in a timely manner.

IMPLEMENTATION/TIMETABLE

Steps	Responsibility	Completion Date
Perform a statistical analysis of available student data to find indicators for at-risk students and compare indicators with national data indicators.	Tom Rizzuto	SU03
Develop interventions depending on indicators: develop contact system for the identified at-risk students, and determine incentives for participation in programs designed to elevate their success rate (e.g. quizzes for study groups, bonus points, etc.) and consequences for lack of participation.	Continuing Freshmen Subcommittee of Retention Committee	FA03
Begin implementing interventions	Continuing Freshmen Subcommittee of Retention Committee Academic Deans Bette Harris	SP04

Budget:	Item	Budgeted Amount
	Mailings/postage	\$1,500 annually
Total:		\$1,500

Assessment/Evaluation/Control
Compare specific continuing freshman cohort success rate to pervious year's cohort success rate.

ACTION PLAN # 7

Goal: Sophomores: Increase the retention rate of sophomore students to 76.9% (up from 76.1%) for 2003; to 79.1% in 2004; and to 80% in 2005

Key Strategy: Target Populations
Identify at-risk sophomores. Devise implementation strategies targeted to students identified.

Description/Explanation/Vision: Before intervention strategies can be devised, at-risk students must be quantified. Some at-risk factors can be identified using local data; other factors are recognized nationally as indicators of at-risk or high risk factors (including, for example, students without a declared major, having a low GPA, etc.). Students categorized as at-risk or high-risk would then be closely monitored by advisors and faculty. Strategies could then be developed to correct deficiencies which would be identified before the student drops out or fails a course(s).

IMPLEMENTATION/TIMETABLE

Steps	Responsibility	Completion Date
I. Focus on TOPS students		
1. Send letter to parents of TOPS students reminding them of the academic requirements for maintaining TOPS funding. Include information on parent link on the web.	VPAA	August 31, 2003
2. Using student email banks, Academic Deans remind TOPS students of the academic requirements for maintaining TOPS funding.	Pilot in NURS and BADM Academic Deans	September 15, 2003 September 15, 2004
3. Initiate media coverage (print, TV, radio) such as PSAs related to TOPS and how to keep TOPS. Consider spot narrated by Dr. Clausen. Consider collaborating with SLCC and LSUE to produce and run the PSAs	Julie Dronet	August 31, 2003 October 31, 2003 January 30, 2004 March 12, 2004
4. Determine number of courses dropped by students continuing on TOPS as compared to students who lost TOPS to determine if drop rate is a risk factor	IR/Tom Rizzuto	July 31, 2003
5. Profile successful graduating TOPS students; determine success factors (as opposed to risk factors)	IR/Rizzuto	July 31, 2003
6. Sponsor TOPS focused information and seminars in ways that will enhance student attendance (food, entertainment, door prizes). Develop mechanisms and incentives to attract off campus students to attend. Place information on web page. Develop a call-in program on AOC related to TOPS.	Cindy Perez (Financial Aid) and Dan Jurek (Student Affairs)	January 2004
7. Develop a mechanism to block payments to TOPS students until they have received and reviewed information on how to maintain TOPS. Consider placing information on the web portal for easy student access.	Cindy Perez and Bette Harris	January 2004

Sophomores

8. Add additional “mini-courses” which begin at midsemester as a way to maintain full-time status for TOPS students who may have dropped too many courses	Academic Deans	Spring 2004
II. Focus on at-risk sophomores		
1. Identify and quantify factors which may place sophomores at high risk at UL including: a. sophomores without a declared major b. sophomores in Junior Division c. sophomores repeating courses or lacking pre-requisites Develop specific interventions to correct deficiencies identified	IR/Rizzuto	July 31, 2003
2. Communicate with sophomores with low grades (post-card describing/outlining risk factors)	Junior Division/ Academic Deans	Summer 2003 – prior to start of Fall 2003 semester and each semester thereafter
3. Re-analyze 2002 SOS sophomore data; determine relevant correlations; devise specific recommendations based on results of analysis	Rizzuto & Sub-committee	Fall 2003
4. Analyze 2003 SOS sophomore data; determine correlations and trends based on 2002 and 2003 data; devise specific recommendations based on analysis	Rizzuto & Sub-committee	Spring 2004
Budget:	Item	Budgeted Amount
	VPAA mailout postage – TOPS parents	\$1000
	TOPS focused seminars – cost of entertainment, food, door prizes for several sessions (solicit corporate sponsors to defray costs?)	\$1000
	Post card mailout to sophomore with low grades – postage and printing	\$500
Total:		\$2500
Assessment/Evaluation/Control		
Evaluate TOPS students retention rates before and after interventions. Measure number of courses dropped by TOPS students before and after interventions. Evaluate after interventions: (1) number of sophomore students without a declared major, (2) number of sophomore students remaining in JD, (3) number (%) of sophomores repeating courses or lacking pre-requisites.		

Sophomores

ACTION PLAN # 8		
Goal: Sophomores: Increase the retention rate of sophomore students to 76.9% (up from 76.1%) for 2003; to 79.1% in 2004; and up to 80% in 2005		
Key Strategy: Promote career counseling and orientation in programs, activities, and curriculum.		
Description/Explanation/Vision: Identify career interests that are consistent with the student's goals, abilities, etc. and provide them with a plan to fulfill those goals. A contributing factor to sophomore loss is lack of a connection to a career.		
IMPLEMENTATION/TIMETABLE		
Steps	Responsibility	Completion Date
1. Implement career exploration seminars supported by Junior Division; Have faculty/advisors go to the Career Development Center in JD to use the career exploration software/tools matching a student's interests with experiences to obtain career options; pilot in College of Sciences. Establish an evaluation mechanism which is preferably web-based.	Lucy Gammon	June 2003 (College of Sciences); then expand to other colleges by June 2004
2. Advisors and students use new degree progression templates on ISIS (or U portal) as part of advising	VP Information Technology (Della Bonnette) and Registrar's Office (DeWayne Bowie)	Fall 2003 advising sessions
3. Promote community service projects connected with majors	Academic Deans	Begin Spring 2004, then continue every semester thereafter
4. Add six PCs to Career Development Center in Junior Division to expand capacity for student use of career counseling software (funding contingent on Board of Regents allocation for retention or on meeting goals of Retention Plan and generating additional funds through that source).	Bette Harris and Lucy Gammon	January 2005
Budget:	Item	Budgeted Amount
	Additional computers (6) in Junior Division to support career exploration programs--6 @ \$1800 each	\$10,800
	Additional software licenses for career exploration programs in Junior Division:	
	Choices Program - \$1065/yr times 3 years	\$3,195
	SIGI Plus site license - \$2500/yr times 3 years	\$7,500
	Printer (1) to support additional computing capability	\$1,500
	Total:	\$22,995
Assessment/Evaluation/Control		
1. Track the number (%) of advisors in the College of Sciences who reviewed and evaluated the career software available in Junior Division. Review web-based evaluation data.		
2. Evaluate the use of the new advising portal; conduct random audits of advising folders in each College to determine use of the new portal in advising sessions		

Sophomores

ACTION PLAN # 9		
Goal: Sophomores: Increase the retention rate of sophomore students to 76.9% (up from 76.1%) for 2003; to 79.1% in 2004; and up to 80% in 2005.		
Key Strategy: Increase (enhance) student connections with the campus community.		
Description/Explanation/Vision: Students who are more connected or engaged in some way with the campus by involvement, in for example, student organizations, are more likely to remain in college.		
IMPLEMENTATION/TIMETABLE		
Steps	Responsibility	Completion Date
I. Strategies targeted to transfer students:		
1. Identify faculty/staff in each dept. or college to serve as transfer advisors.	Theresa Sonnier, Transfer Coord.	May 2003
2. Train the transfer advisors.	Theresa Sonnier	October 2003 and then annually
3. Implement transfer advising during regular advising period.	Registrar's Office	October 2003
4. Automatic evaluation of core courses using the state articulation plan.	Vicky West – OIS	May 2004
5. Send out an Early Warning Bulletin to at-risk incoming transfer students (use same at-risk factors as identified for at-risk sophomore students)	Theresa Sonnier	Summer 2004 and every semester thereafter
6. Implement "Speedy," electronic transfer of grades from other institutions and high schools	Registrar's Office	Fall 2004
7. Initiate mandatory, formal orientation to campus/campus life/academic expectations, specifically for transfer students; consider implementing in a virtual environment	Theresa Sonnier, Carolyn Bruder, & Enrollment Management	January 2005 and every semester thereafter
8. Set application/admission deadlines for transfer	VPAA	Fall 2004
9. Include transfer students in ticket "give aways" to campus athletic, cultural, and other events. Each transfer student will receive 2 tickets to a university-sponsored athletic and cultural event	Anthony Daniel	January 2004, continuing in regular semesters thereafter
II. Strategies targeted to all students:		
1. Provide, in writing (and on the web), explicit expectations of all students/prospective students to include "keys to academic success" at UL: A. Focus is on academics B. Provide students with written and didactic information related to : - developing and honing study skills - improving time management skills - communication skills - budgeting skills - "just say no skills" to maintain psychological and physical health	Enrollment Management and Academic Deans	Fall 2004

2. Provide students and parents with specific guidelines related to the hours per week of study required per course, major, or credit hour. Include in all course syllabi.	Academic Deans	Fall 2004
3. Provide students and parents with specific guidelines related to the impact of outside work hours on academic performance. Include in written materials and in web orientation.	Academic Deans	Fall 2004
4. Educate employers about the impact of outside work commitment on academic performance. Educate by major, if possible (i.e., hospitals employing nursing students).	Academic Deans	Fall 2004
5. Survey all majors/departments to determine existence and participation level in student clubs and organizations related to the major. Encourage development of a club/organization if not currently active or available.	Carolyn Bruder and Student Affairs	Spring 2004
Budget:	Item	Budgeted Amount
	Transfer Coordinator Training:	\$1000
	1. Advisor training refreshments	
	2. Printing for advisor training	
	3. Paper for evaluating transcripts	
	4. Paper for early alert and early monitoring	
	Printing costs related to:	\$650
	1. Keys to academic success document	
	2. Study/outside work guidelines for students and parents	
	3. Employer education related to impact of outside work on academic success	
	Mailing costs related to:	\$1000
	1. Study/outside work guidelines – mail to parents	
	2. Employer education related to work/academic success – mail to large employers	
Total:		\$2650
Assessment/Evaluation/Control		
1. Advisor Training – Survey all transfer advisors to determine efficacy of advisor training. Impact on Retention – Compare Sp 03 transfer retention to Fa 03 student rates; compare with subsequent semesters.		
2. Measure effectiveness of Speedy and automatic evaluation of core courses using state articulation plan by users of both methods. How many transcripts have been evaluated; evaluate for accuracy.		
3. Evaluate pertinent SOS data related to satisfaction with services for transfer students, timeliness of transfer process, effectiveness of transfer advisors, etc. and compare to previous years.		
4. Conduct small focus groups involving students, parents, employers to determine effectiveness of literature educating each group about study and work guidelines for university students.		

ACTION PLAN # 10

Goal: Increase first-to-second year retention of first-time, full-time students for 2003 to 72.2% (up from 71.2%); for 2004 to 75.0%; for 2005 to 77.0%. Increase the retention rate of returning freshmen students to 70.0% (up from 68.7%) for 2003; to 71.0% by 2004; and 72.0% by 2005. Increase the retention rate of sophomore students to 76.9% (up from 76.1%) for 2003; to 79.1% in 2004; and to 80.0% in 2005.

Key Strategy: Change academic policies and procedures to promote student success.

Description/Explanation/Vision: Improve, develop and implement academic policies such a new drop/resignation policy and an early warning policy that will assist students in successful achievement of their academic goals. Currently, students at UL Lafayette show a higher drop rate than national averages indicate should occur, and their propensity to drop at the deadline allows for little counseling by their advisors. A new system of dropping and resignation would offer advising via non-traditional means and would allow the University to collect better data regarding reasons for drops and resignations. Additionally, the University now has no effective early alert system, to warn students who are in danger of failing a course. Developing better academic practices and policies will lead to greater student success.

IMPLEMENTATION/TIMETABLE

Steps	Responsibility	Completion Date
Check with other institutions on current processes	Drop Committee	April 2003
Develop new form that incorporates Drops and Resignations	Drop Committee	May 2003
Present new form to CAAS, students, and Faculty Senate for approval/comments	DeWayne Bowie Drop Committee	October 2003
Conduct training on proper use of new form	DeWayne Bowie	March 2004
Implement new form	DeWayne Bowie	Fall 2004
Get feedback from students, faculty and staff on effectiveness and usefulness of new form	DeWayne Bowie	Fall 2004
Review statistics on number of Drops and Resignations per semester	DeWayne Bowie	Fall 2004
Add question to the Student Opinion Survey regarding student satisfaction with the new drop/resignation policies	Carolyn Bruder	Spring 2005
Solicit input from students, faculty, and staff on proposed process of early alert system	DeWayne Bowie	October 2003
Develop form to collect early alert data from faculty, perhaps online	DeWayne Bowie	March 2004
Set up form and collection of responses on the Faculty Portal	DeWayne Bowie	August 2004
Train faculty on proper use of online form/process	DeWayne Bowie	Sept./Oct. 2004
Implement new early alert system	DeWayne Bowie	Spring 2005

Get online feedback from students, faculty and staff on new process	DeWayne Bowie	Spring 2005
Budget:	Item No increased costs.	Budgeted Amount
Total:		
Assessment/Evaluation/Control <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Collect data in reports to monitor the number of Drops and Resignations. Look at historical and current data to look for improvements (i.e., a decrease in drops and resignations). 2. Evaluations from students, faculty and staff on effectiveness and usefulness of the new drop/resignation form collected online at the time of the drop or resignation. 3. Examine results of Student Opinion Survey, particularly question regarding new drop/resignation procedures. 4. Online survey of student satisfaction for early alert system 5. Collect statistical data to assess how retention/drop/resignation rates are impacted 		

ACTION PLAN # 11

Goal: Increase first-to-second year retention of first-time, full-time students for 2003 to 72.2% (up from 71.2%); for 2004 to 75.0%; for 2005 to 77.0%. Increase the retention rate of returning freshmen students to 70.0 percent (up from 68.7 percent) for 2003; to 71.0 percent by 2004; and 72.0 percent by 2005. Increase the retention rate of sophomore students to 76.9 percent (up from 76.1 percent) for 2003; to 79.1 percent in 2004; and to 80.0 percent in 2005.

Key Strategy: Launch the existing student online system

Description/Explanation/Vision: To allow students access to information via an online system, which will provide more efficient and timely communication of university processes and procedures. Begin implementation of use starting with FTF in the Fall of 2004 and convert current students through advising and printed material (i.e. brochures/class schedules/*Vermilion*, etc.)

IMPLEMENTATION/TIMETABLE

Steps	Responsibility	Completion Date
Pilot Student Information System in College of Education	Kay Riedel	Spring 2003/ Summer 2003
Advertise Student Online System access in the <i>Vermilion</i> and generate feedback from students	Dewayne Bowie	Summer 2003
Develop redesign of existing online system and link from UL homepage	Bette Harris/ Dewayne Bowie	Fall 2003
Begin to train faculty advisors and colleges on website functions and availability and pilot degree Progression	Bette Harris and college advising coordinators	Fall 2003
Create printed promotional materials for continuing students to advertise the online system	Bette Harris/Colleen Timmons	Fall 2003
Create brochure for incoming students to be distributed during orientations	Mary Hernandez	Summer 2004
Have registration access available for all students using online system	Dewayne Bowie/OIS	Summer 2004
Announce website existence and uses to all freshmen seminar courses	Instructors/Department Heads	Fall 2004
Add degree progression program for all colleges	Sam Bullard/Deans	Fall 2004
Add response questions to SOS specifically for the online system use	Carolyn Bruder	Fall 2004
Explore possibility of adding access to drop courses and change majors after 4 th day of class for students not at-risk	Dewayne Bowie/ OIS	Spring 2005
Hire personnel to manage the online system (the position depends on Retention Plan funding by the Board of Regents or meeting retention goals for 2004)	Search Committee, chaired by D. Bowie	Spring 2005

All Students

Budget:	Item	Budgeted Amount
	1 full-time permanent position as Student Online Systems Coordinator reporting to the Registrar, to handle operation, upkeep, and maintenance of online system. Will also serve as support to Institutional Research (see job description attached)	\$50,000 annually w/ fringes
	1 graduate assistant assigned as technical support personnel	\$10,000 annually
	Printing Cost of 16,000 bookmark size printed promotional material	\$1,250
Total:		Approx.\$60,000 annually One time printing fee \$ 1,250
Assessment/Evaluation/Control		
A survey form will be added to the online system for students to complete indicating satisfaction with the online services. Student feedback from initial <i>Vermilion</i> ad will be used to make modifications. The online system will be monitored to determine the amount of time it is operational and the amount of student use received.		
Longitudinal data from Student Opinion Surveys will be used to measure success of online system		

All Students

ACTION PLAN # 12

Goal: Increase first-to-second year retention of first-time, full-time students for 2003 to 72.2% (up from 71.2%); for 2004 to 75.0%; for 2005 to 77.0%. Increase the retention rate of returning freshmen students to 70.0 percent (up from 68.7 percent) for 2003; to 71.0 percent by 2004; and 72.0 percent by 2005. Increase the retention rate of sophomore students to 76.9 percent (up from 76.1 percent) for 2003; to 79.1 percent in 2004; and to 80.0 percent in 2005.

Key Strategy: Improve student-centered attitude on campus

Description/Explanation/Vision: Develop student centered attitude campus wide. Encourage faculty and staff to deal with students as consumers. Encourage students to make campus connection with faculty, organizations and traditions.

IMPLEMENTATION/TIMETABLE

Steps	Responsibility	Completion Date
Develop online training modules on “student centeredness” for faculty, staff, and student workers.	Dr. Bruder SCA Committee HR Department	Fall 2004
Offer a centralized training course on “student centeredness” to student workers	SCA Committee/Recruited Staff/ faculty members	Fall 2003
Offer training services during orientation to present training modules. Orientation meetings at the beginning of each semester with the following groups: Residence Hall Housekeepers, Janitorial staffs, faculty/staff meetings, secretarial staffs, etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will start with new faculty and staff. • Pilot programs to “kick off” in the Fall 2003. 	VP Academic Affairs VP of Student Affairs Deans SCA committee	Begin Fall 2003 Complete Fall 2004
Encourage departments to offer incentives to those who have demonstrated a student centered attitude on campus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an incentives plan to present to the various departments for those who have demonstrated a student centered attitude on campus • Offer a “Thank You” reception for faculty and staff who have been honored. • Offer a student-centered employee of the year program – award to be given at the Christmas luncheon • Ask SGA, UPC, RHA, etc. to assist in helping us “catch” faculty and staff that demonstrate a positive student-centered attitude. • Add a link to the web-page for students to nominate faculty and staff. 	VP Academic Affairs VP of Student Affairs Deans SCA committee	Begin Fall 2003 Complete Fall 2004

All Students

Encourage faculty and staff to participate in campus wide activities with students as part of a student-centered attitude – such activities could be welcome week, lagniappe week, student orientation, etc.	VP Academic Affairs Deans SCA committee	Begin Fall 2003 Complete Fall 2004
Continuous communication through various mechanisms to faculty and staff encouraging them to create a student centered attitude on campus.	SCA committee	Ongoing
Budget:	Item	Budgeted Amount
	\$50.00 a year per department for incentive items such as plaques, certificates, etc. Multiplied by an estimated 100 departments at the university. \$3000.00 a year. Utilization of funds from the following organizations: UPC, SGA, RHA.	
Total:		\$8,000.00
Assessment/Evaluation/Control		
Using the longitudinal data from the SOS survey, we will examine the results to determine progress in the area of student-centered awareness. Analyze existing exit surveys. Work with other committees on retention to create an on-line assessment.		

All Students

ACTION PLAN #13

Goal: Increase first-to second-year retention of first-time, full-time students for 2003 to 72.2 percent (up from 71.2 percent); for 2004 to 75.0 percent; and for 2005 to 77.0 percent. Increase the retention rate of returning freshmen students to 70.0 percent (up from 68.7 percent) for 2003; to 71.0 percent by 2004; and 72.0 percent by 2005. Increase the retention rate of sophomore students to 76.9 percent (up from 76.1 percent) for 2003; to 79.1 percent in 2004; and to 80.0 percent in 2005.

Key Strategy: Improve Academic Advising by making the advising process a smoother and more rewarding experience for both the advisor and advisee with the use of better tools.

Description/Explanation/Vision: Provide each advisor with user-friendly tools that will be informative, helpful and concise in aiding students with their academic progress. Giving the student at more efficient advising session will, it is hoped, make the advising a strong retention tool in itself.

IMPLEMENTATION/TIMETABLE

Steps	Responsibility	Completion Date
Revise ISIS screens to be more user-friendly and provide more information on a single screen. Also make navigation of ISIS an easier process for advisor.	DeWayne Bowie, Lucy Gammon	Fall 2004
Create a standard university tracking (a.k.a., distribution) sheet for all majors approved by each Dean and including information about courses and prerequisites at a glance. Sheet can be updated by advisor and student each semester and may include a personal comment section that will aid in reminding advisors of previous sessions with student.	College Deans, Lucy Gammon, Jeff Sandoz, Sue Ann Ozbirn	Fall 2004
Develop a screen that would give advisors information pertaining to each advisee such as holds, financial aid, appeals, TOPS and other valuable information that could be vital in properly advising students.	Lucy Gammon, Jeff Sandoz, Sue Ann Ozbirn, DeWayne Bowie	Fall 2004
Ensure that each advisor has access to current occupation information about each major. Give advisors websites and other materials that could be helpful answering student questions.	College Deans, Lucy Gammon	Fall 2003
Require departments to participate in a Majors Fair. Departments could give out brochures, tracking sheets and other information that could make the advisors' jobs easier.	Lucy Gammon, College Deans, Dan Jurek	Fall 2004

Budget:	Item	Budgeted Amount
	Majors Fair brochures	\$1000.00

Total	\$1000.00
-------	-----------

Assessment/Evaluation/Control: Use the longitudinal data from the Student Opinion Survey to determine progress in advising as well as the Advising Survey administered to all students advised during the fall pre-advising period every other fall semester. An additional advisor survey would be helpful in knowing if the new systems and screens are helpful to the advising sessions.

All Students

Summary

The University of Louisiana at Lafayette has devised this Retention Plan to improve the educational experience for undergraduate students, which will in turn improve the University's retention rate and students' rate of progression to degree. In this plan, the University commits itself to achieving improved retention rates among three cohorts of students: first-time freshmen, continuing freshmen, and sophomores.

The thirteen Action Plans—collectively constituting the engine that drives the Retention Plan—outline specific changes and improvements in the University's processes, procedures, and basic culture. The Action Plans also include assessment mechanisms to determine which of the proposed activities and changes actually do impact retention positively, so that future actions can be guided by the knowledge of what works well. Success in implementing these Action Plans will effect improved student retention in the first two years of college, and, we believe, will have a “trickle-up” effect at the junior and senior levels as well.

The Retention Steering Committee will meet at least once a semester during the next three years to assess progress and to ensure that the Action Plans are being implemented according to the timeline indicated. The entire Retention Committee will meet at least once a year. Communication among Retention Committee members will be facilitated by an active Blackboard site where all committee documents, meetings, and announcements are posted. The Committee has also discussed a number of ways to disseminate information about the University's retention efforts to ensure broad participation by all constituencies on campus.

Retention Plans are dynamic documents, revisited and re-evaluated regularly; thus, the

Retention Committee anticipates making revisions and additions to this plan. Whatever success the University enjoys from the actions proposed in this Plan, problem areas such as the following remain to be addressed: facilities (particularly residence hall) improvement; the development of a living-learning environment in residence halls; improvement in junior and senior retention and graduation progress; and the issue that our committee has come to believe is the key to improvement, reducing the hours students spend working off campus. Solving these large-scale issues will require not just leadership from the Retention Committee but determined commitment by many areas of the University community.

The University Retention Committee welcomes the challenges of implementing this initial Retention Plan because of the promise it offers of improved student success and looks forward to tackling other retention issues that arise in future years.