

Spring 2005 Report
Student Success and Retention Committee
Student Retention Plan

1. Create an institutional culture where student persistence and success becomes the overreaching goal of all academic and support units.
 - A. Invest in the building and maintaining of a student-tracking database directed at organizing--and making easily accessible--information related to student persistence and success. IRO will utilize this database to track retention statistics of various student groups (resident, non-resident, first-year, transfers, various majors, grant program participants, etc.) and report results to campus constituents. Include year-to-year persistence/graduation rates in the major as a parameter for self-study in program review.
 - B. Track course completion rates (completion with at least a C average) and seek to increase them through prerequisites, modifications in pedagogy, peer mentoring, instructor assignment, etc. Include course-completion rates as a parameter for self-study in program review.
 - C. Have the director of advising attend administrative academic council meetings to help make academic advising a central concern of all academic colleges and departments.
2. Increase opportunities for students to establish connections with one another, staff and faculty of UH Hilo and the surrounding Big Island community.
 - A. Shift focus of new student orientation or expand it into the first part of the semester to promote new-student connection with students, faculty and staff. Incorporate a “merging cultures” theme. Related programming to introduce “local” students to the cultures of our visiting students as well as orient visiting students to “local” culture.
 - B. Create de-facto cohorts: redesign selected sections of introductory courses of the various disciplines and/or general education components of a “first-year curriculum” to include instruction in academic success skills. Reserve these sections for freshmen. Designate university 101 as a required course for all undeclared students and redesign it to include the merging cultures theme and learning outcomes directed toward the persistence and success of first-year students. Create a first-year programs office under the purview of Academic Affairs and hire a curriculum and teaching specialist as program director to work with other faculty and staff to enhance the first year experience (and help advise first-year students).
 - C. Increase opportunities for students to gather together on and off campus for organized or unorganized interaction with one another and with faculty and staff. Hire additional staff person to organize and coordinate student activities.
 - D. Increase student involvement in co-curricular activities, service learning and undergraduate research.

3. Ensure that our students acquire the academic skills and attitudes they need to succeed in their disciplines and persist to graduation.
 - A. Design freshmen sections in the majors or in the general education components of a first-year curriculum that help students increase academic survival skills.
 - B. Use a peer-mentoring model in gate-keeping courses.
 - C. Adequate tutoring resources and academic sections to provide accepted students the reading, math and English skills they need to persist and succeed in their chosen fields.
 - D. Require university 101 course for undeclared majors.
4. Provide enhanced resources to assist students with the process of deciding on an academic major and career goal.
 - A. Upgrade current advising position to a permanent position.
 - B. Hire additional advisors and/or career counselors that would share advising responsibilities at peak times.
 - C. Implement advising model that would 1. increase percentage of students who seek and receive academic advising each semester, 2. provide “better” academic advising (per indicators in the spring retention survey), 3. contribute to increased student persistence and success.
5. Identify students at high risk of attrition and provide interventions designed to help them persist: during the first five weeks of attendance and periodically throughout the first year.
 - A. Upon administration of the incoming student survey, utilize predictive models developed by Lynne Stamoulis to identify at-risk students.
 - B. Assign responsibility for early interventions (to decrease the possibility those students will leave) to academic and student services personnel.
6. Utilize enrollment planning and carefully-orchestrated marketing and recruitment strategies to recruit students most likely to persist to degree at UH Hilo. Coordinate enrollment and academic planning—and resource allocation-- to achieve the mission of UH Hilo and fulfill the current strategic plan of the university.