Retention and Student Success: A Study of FTFT First-Generation Students at UNC Pembroke

Dr. Mei Yao, Office of Institutional Research
Dr. Richard Kang, School of Business

Introduction

Purpose of the Study

• The purpose of this study is to explore what are the significant predicting factors of first-year retention and six-year graduation in the first-generation FTFT student group at UNC Pembroke.

Population

• Using the Fall 2008 – Fall 2010 student cohort data at UNC Pembroke, we study the first-time, full-time (FTFT), and first-generation students first-year retention and six-year graduation.

Research Questions

• Using the Fall 2008 – Fall 2010 student cohort data at UNC Pembroke, we study the first-time, full-time (FTFT), and first-generation students first-year retention and six-year graduation.

Conceptual Framework

Logistic Regress Models For Retention & Graduation

Findings

• As expected, students’ academic performance in high school and in first fall term in college were key predicting factors for student success, both for first-year retention and six-year graduation.

• The difference between students’ attempted and earned credit hours in first fall term had a negative impact on first-year retention, but it did not have significant impact on students’ long-term goal of six-year graduation.

• First-generation students who were from rural areas in NC were positively associated with first-year retention and six-year graduation, particularly the students from Tier 1 counties.

• First-generation students awarded with scholarships and grants showed positive impact on first-year retention, but not on six-year graduation.

• First-generation students from low-income family were negatively associated with both first-year retention and six-year graduation.

Recommendations for Further Study

• Focus on transfer-out in first year and senior year, particularly students who were from Tier 3 counties.

• Add other potential influential factors:
  – Information from Card Readers - EAB;
  – Students in Early Alert system;
  – Build high school performance index to include other influential factors (HS GPA+SAT/ACT).