



Student Success at Missouri State University

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INFORMATION FROM THE EXPERTS

Upcraft, Barefoot, and Gardner (2005) suggest that first-year students succeed when they make progress toward

- developing academic and intellectual competence,
- establishing and maintaining interpersonal relationships,
- exploring identity development,
- deciding on a career and lifestyle,
- maintaining personal health and wellness,
- developing civic responsibility,
- considering spiritual dimensions of life, and
- dealing with diversity.

Dr. Tom Kane is a professor in MSU's Psychology Department. He earned his Ph.D. in 1996 from George Mason University. His research interests include Goals, Self-Confidence, Performance, and Leadership.



Dr. Kane conducted four years of research on the retention of MSU students and found two factors affecting retention:

- 1) Affective Factor – students come with an intention to leave
- 2) Academic Performance – a far weaker predictor of retention

Four Conditions for Student Success (taken from 2009 speech given by Vincent Tinto at the FYE (First-Year Experience) Curriculum Design Symposium)

1) *Achievement:*

Students are likely to persist in settings that hold high and clear expectations for student achievement (revised General Education outcomes; focus on increasing transparency of student learning outcomes).

2) *Environment:*

Support an environment that promotes student retention (academic and social support, basic skills courses, tutoring, study groups, academic support programs, counseling, mentoring, multicultural student centers).

3) *Reinforcement:*

Feedback is a condition for student success. Feedback from faculty, staff, and students, including entry assessment of learning skills, and “early warning systems” to identify students having academic difficulties in time to make a difference. (**Student Success Committee is currently reviewing early alert systems.**)

4) *Engagement:*

Student involvement, or engagement, is a condition for student success. The more students are academically and socially involved, the more likely they are to persist and graduate (SOAR, Welcome Week, Freshman Convocation, Distinction in Public Affairs, student organizations, etc.).

MSU BY THE NUMBERS

Note: Retention rates capture fall-to-fall enrollment.

Retention Rates

Retention Rates for First-time, Full-time, New in College Students	
FA11 – FA12	75.35%
FA10 – FA11	75.43%
FA09 – FA10	73.47%

Retention Rates for New Transfers, Full-time Students	
FA11 – FA12	82.94%
FA10 – FA11	80.19%
FA09 – FA10	82.76%

Retention Rates for Continuing Students by Class						
	FA11 # of Continuing or Readmits	FA12 # Retained or Graduated	FA10 # of Continuing or Readmits	FA11 # Retained or Graduated	FA09 # of Continuing or Readmits	FA10 # Retained or Graduated
Freshmen	483	77.8%	465	76.1%	473	73.8%
Sophomore	2276	89.6%	2176	89.4%	2194	90.2%
Junior	2449	92.3%	2444	92.3%	2479	93.3%
Senior	1599	88.1%	1704	90.0%	2077	92.3%

Retention Rates for Undergraduate, Degree Seeking Students by Race/Ethnicity						
	FA11 # of Enrolled Student	FA 12 # Retained or Graduated	FA10 # of Enrolled Student	FA11 # Retained or Graduated	FA09 # of Enrolled Students	FA10 # Retained or Graduated
International	652	83.1%	604	84.6%	471	84.3%
Unknown	415	84.3%	534	83.7%	709	81.1%
Minority	1,579	77.9%	1,548	76.0%	1,327	78.5%
White or Caucasian	12,718	83.7%	12,550	83.3%	12,516	83.6%

Retention Rates for Graduate Level, Full & Part-time Students (includes Doctorate, Masters, Graduate-unclassified, and Post-baccalaureate)	
FA11 – FA12	85.11%
FA10 – FA11	85.14%
FA09 – FA10	84.12%

Graduation Rates

6-Year Graduation Rates for Full-time Undergraduate Students		
First-time, New in College	2002-2006	54.08%
First-time, Transfer	2002-2006	57.55%

Graduation Rates for Degree-Seeking International Students		
Period of International Student Entry at MSU	Student Number	Percent Graduation 4 years after entry
FA08 – SU09	148	79.7%
FA09 – SU2010	276	89.5%

Graduation Rates for Graduate Level, Full & Part-time Students (includes Doctorate, Masters, Graduate-unclassified, and Post-baccalaureate)									
	Student Count	Grad in 2 yrs	% Grad in 2 yrs	Grad up to 3 yrs	% Grad in 3 yrs	Grad up to 4 yrs	% Grad in 4 yrs	Grad up to 6 yrs	% Grad in 6 yrs
FA06 – SU07	1424	495	34.8%	734	51.5%	846	59.4%	912	64.0%

National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) 2012 Results Underrepresented Student Comparisons

As shown in the table below, there were statistically significant differences between Caucasian students and students from other ethnicities on three of the NSSE benchmarks: Level of Academic Challenge (LAC), Student Faculty Interaction (SFI), and Enriching Educational Experiences (EEE). Only senior students differed significantly on LAC, and only first-year students differed significantly on SFI and EEE. In all cases, students from other ethnicities showed higher mean responses to items in the three benchmarks than Caucasian students. In other words, underrepresented students reported a greater level of academic challenge, more student faculty interaction, and more enriching educational experiences than their Caucasian peers.

NSSE Benchmarks ^a		MSU Caucasian/ White		MSU Other Ethnicities ^b		Significance Level ^c	Effect Size
		Mean	N	Mean	N	p	Cohen's d
LAC	FY	50.82	245	54.51	43		.339
	SR	53.76	597	57.00	98	*	.401
ACL	FY	41.06	270	45.72	47		.392
	SR	50.95	625	52.61	102		.183
SFI	FY	33.48	246	41.99	43	**	.709
	SR	41.32	599	43.38	98		.202
EEE	FY	27.13	239	32.50	41	**	.674
	SR	37.45	586	39.84	98		.301
SCE	FY	60.88	233	62.92	40		.120
	SR	56.43	583	59.28	97		.266

^a See complete descriptions below dividing line

^b Includes the following ethnicity categories: African American/Black, American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian/Pacific Islander, Hispanic, Foreign, Multi-racial/ethnic, and Other. Those in the Unknown category were excluded.

^c * p<.05 ** p<.01 ***p<.001 (2-tailed)

“Education of our students is the ultimate goal, not merely retention. Retention and graduation are *merely by-products of effective student learning*. The educational tools of engagement: cooperative and problem-based learning, service-learning, and learning communities are a few examples of successful pedagogies.” – Vincent Tinto

WHAT WORKS AND OUR RESPONSE

The ACT Survey (2010) found three main categories with the greatest impact on retention:

- First-year programs
- Academic advising
- Learning support

First-Year Programs

Program	Description
GEP 101 (First-Year Foundations)	<p>Approximately 82-86 sections offered each fall with additional sections during the spring and summer semesters.</p> <p>Uses multiple modalities to reach different student populations. Includes sections that are fully online, blended, for veterans only, for non-traditional students only, for ELI/non-native English speakers only, are Agriculture-themed, as well as other designations</p>
Curricular Learning Communities (CLC) Living Learning Communities (LLC)	<p>Connected to GEP 101: CLCs are a cohort model in which students are co-enrolled in two or more classes together. Faculty work together in CLCs to integrate curriculum. LLCs group students together in residence halls.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 CLC sections during 2012 – 2013 • 14 LLCs for Fall 2013—some LLC’s are linked to GEP 101
Jump START (Summer Transition and Academic Readiness Training)	A summer bridge program for conditionally admitted students. – 45 students currently enrolled
Common Reader	<p>The Common Reader provides a common academic experience and creates a greater sense of community among students, faculty, and staff. Fall 2013, the Common Reader will be <i>Start Something that Matters</i>, by Blake Mycoskie.</p> <p>The Common Reader is now a “Community Read” in cooperation with OTC, Drury, Community Foundation of the Ozarks, City of Springfield, and Student Activities Council.</p>
Student Orientation, Advisement & Registration (SOAR)	<p>Connects with approximately 2,600 students and uses framework for structuring & delivering transitions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Confident</i> in their decision to attend MSU • <i>Comfortable</i> with campus resources and services • <i>Connected</i> to the University, faculty, staff, and students • <i>Curious</i> about intellectual issues and opportunities

Academic Advising

Program	Description
Take AIM (Academic Information and Motivation)	A non-credit online class designed for exploratory/undecided students on academic probation. Focuses on issues for probationary students, goal setting, motivation, University rules, regulations, GPAs, as well as others.
TRANSFERmation	New transfer orientation opportunity for incoming transfer students
Students and Academic Advisement Center	Structured efforts to provide exploratory/undecided students with support and information to make good decisions about majors. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Majors Fair • Websites for featured academic majors • Activities to help explore academic programs • Advisors communicate regularly with advisees • Individualized Majors
Faculty and Staff and Academic Advisement Center	Training and Developing excellent academic advisors campus-wide. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Master Advisor Workshops • Advising Basics Workshops • Academic Advisor Forum sessions • Advising International Students Workshop • Career Advising Workshop • Yearly Advising Conference

Learning Support

Program	Description
Citizenship and Service-Learning (CASL)	Experiential education that combines and pursues both academic achievement and community service while also requiring the use of effective reflection exercises: 295 Component students, 2,166 Integrated students, 15 Dual Credit Component students, and 32 Greenwood students during Fall 2012 & Spring 2013.
Study Away	Provides students with semester-long programs as well as short-term study away programs. From Summer 2009 to Spring 2012 there were a total of 945 students who participated in study away programs, which included 463 students in short-term faculty-led programs and 482 students in semester-long programs.

Bear CLAW (Center for Learning and Writing) and the Learning Commons	An interactive space that unites the resources and expertise of faculty, library personnel, and many specific programs in an environment that fosters informal, collaborative work and social interaction.
Subject Area Tutoring	Provided through the Bear CLAW. Free tutors are available for students in mathematics, science, business, and others. This program had a total of 5,531 visits during the Fall 2012 and Spring 2013 semesters.
Peer Assisted Study Session Program (PASS)	Provided through the Bear CLAW. A series of review sessions for students taking historically difficult courses. Spring and Fall 2013 included PASS for 14 Biomedical Science courses, 22 Chemistry courses, 23 Economics courses, and 3 Psychology courses.
Absent Professor Program	Provided through the Bear CLAW. Provides workshops by either substituting for faculty who cannot attend class or by providing workshops focusing on student success that supplement course material.
Writing Center Initiatives	<p>Provided through the Bear CLAW.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing consultants work with clients using face-to-face, online asynchronous (via email), or online synchronous (using Adobe Connect) methods. • Writing Fellows Program: Specialized undergraduate and graduate writing consultants trained to collaborate with faculty in a particular course to support writing within that course and consult with students one-on-one on writing assignments within multiple disciplines.
TRiO Student Support Services	Grant-funded program by the Department of Education. Tutoring, intensive academic advising, and study skills assistance are only a few of the many services offered to qualified students. Congress mandates that two-thirds of the students must come from families with incomes under \$28,000, where neither parent graduated from college. During the fall of 2012, 46% of these students had a 3.0 or better GPA and 78% of students had a 2.5 or higher GPA.

Residence Life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programs for probationary students • Approximately 120 academic programs throughout the year
Curriculum Transformation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statewide conference on Course Transformation (June 20-21) • Grants and workshops through the Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning • Extensive transformations: Psychology, Math, History, Theatre, Business...
Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning (FCTL)	<p>Assists the MSU instructional community to improve student learning outcomes by providing guidance and support toward the understanding and implementation of best practices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty Monthly Writing Retreats • <i>The Joy of Teaching</i> Workshops • Digital Professor Academy <p>28th Showcase on Teaching and Learning: Passion. Inspiration. Innovation. Keynote speaker is Dr. Ken Bain, author of the best-selling books, <i>What the Best College Teachers Do</i> and <i>What the Best College Students Do</i>.</p>