

Innovation and Changing Culture at Temple University

Educational Writers Association National Seminar

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Overview

- **Risk-based retention program:**
 - Passive/reactive to data driven, strategic and highly proactive
- **Fly-in-4 program**
 - study grants, critical paths
- **Temple Option**
 - the challenge of maintaining access

Risk-based retention

- What is needed?
 - ✓ Change of culture – passive to proactive
 - ✓ Risk of what?
 - ✓ Use empirical, validated risk models
 - ✓ Must have... advising, student supports
- What's possible
 - ✓ Change thinking campus wide – 4 x 400
 - ✓ Improve retention
 - ✓ Improve graduation rates
 - ✓ Generate revenue
 - ✓ Increase size of incoming class – more opportunity

Results: Retention Data

Retention

- 2001 freshman 1st year retention **81%**, 2nd year retention **70%**
- 2014 freshman 1st year retention was **90%**, 2013 freshman cohort 2nd year retention **82%**

Graduation

- 2000 freshman 4-year graduation rate **30%**; 6-year rate **59%**
- 2010 freshman 4-year graduation rate **44%**; 2009 freshman 6-year **70%**

Fly-in-4

“While many colleges have suffered declines in their graduation rates in recent years, some have increased their rates significantly. In fact, 150 colleges saw their rates rise by at least 10 percentage points between the six-year periods ending in 2003 and 2008. Four of the fastest gainers among public research institutions were San Diego State, George Mason, Georgia State, and Temple Universities.”

(Chronicle of Higher Education, Rachel Louise Ensign, 12/5/10)

- Fly in 4 is example of a range of programs implemented nationwide to reduce student indebtedness.
 - Some programs focus directly on cost – either freezing or reducing tuition.
 - Some specifically target time-to-degree – fast-track programs (3 year graduation)
 - Some guarantee to pay tuition beyond four years.
- For Temple, Fly in 4 is an important institutional statement about student debt

Fly-in-4: The Agreement

Students commit to:

- Affirmatively accept the agreement
- Consult with an advisor each semester and plan ahead
- Register for classes during early registration
- Advance in class standing (30,60,90)
- Complete graduation review prior to senior year

Temple commits to:

- Provide 4-year plan for every major
- Offer access to quality academic advising
- Provide progress reports for every student
- Conduct a graduation review
- Ensure alternatives are available when a required course is not
- If a student meets all obligations of the *Fly in 4* agreement and still cannot graduate in four years, Temple University will enable the student to complete his or her degree free of charge.

Fly-in-4: Study Grants

- Temple found Pell and working 20+ hours major risk factors
- National research confirms and shows high needs, working students more likely to register for fewer credits, earn lower grades, take longer to graduate and increase their level of debt.
- Temple committed to 500 'study grants' \$4,000 per year to students with highest financial need.
- Fly In Four study-grant recipients required to maintain Fly In Four standing, not work for pay any more than 15 hours/week during the academic year, and to use their additional time for academic study.

Fly-in-4: Early Results

- Early results encouraging but room for continued development and improvement.
 - Sign-up rates for Fly In Four were **89%** in 2014 and **93%** in 2015.
 - 2014 entry cohort participants more likely to be retained to second year - **90%** for participants and **86%** for non-participants.
 - Of the 3,973 2014 entry cohort students who signed on to Fly In Four 1,363 (**34.3%**) did not meet program requirements and were demitted at the end of the academic year.
 - However, ~600 more current sophomores on track - \$15 million savings in college costs
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- Results for study grant program are provoking.
 - For study grant students who met Fly In Four program requirements and kept grants... retention to sophomore Fall semester was **98.6%** - exceptionally high for this student group.
 - But.. 147 (**29.4%**) of the 500 grantees did not meet Fly In Four program requirements, were demitted and lost their study grant.
 - Of these 98 (**66.7%**) retained to sophomore Fall semester; 49 (**29.4%**) dropped out of Temple.
 - For some students the challenge of completing a freshman year are beyond even the additional benefit of a \$4,000 study grant.

Temple Option

- Reflects Temple's historic mission and commitment to access, excellence and student opportunity.
- Potentially one of the most transformative programs – certainly, one of the most challenging for a university moving into highest Carnegie research classification.
- Concerns about standardized test bias to high-SES, male and white applicants
- Questions about predictive value for college success – though HSGPA not sufficient
- Many institutions adopting test-optional admission policies.
- Temple tests motivational (“non-cognitive”) characteristics - 4 essay questions
- Score replace SAT in admissions score - decisions/opportunities made blind to mode of admission.

Temple Option: Early Results

- In 2014 over 7,000 applicants (**24.0%** of the total 30,031)
- Of completed applications (4,329, **59.7%**), **half were admitted** (2,127, **49.1%**) and over a **third attended** (883, **41.5%**). Comprise **17%** incoming class.
- Among those attending, 68.5% are women, 54.4% students of color (23.7% African American; 10.2% Hispanic), with overall lower SES than standard admission students (35.5% vs. 19.7% of < \$40,000 family income).

Early findings:

- Develop a **matched group** of standard admit students (to the test optional students) on parents' income, father's educational status, and mother's educational status
- Comparable retention rates for the standard admits (**93.3%**) and the test optional admits (**93.5%**)
- First semester GPA slightly lower for test-optional (**2.95** for standard vs **2.82** test optional).