The current graduation rate for BSC is 49%, with an average rate over the past five years of 46.75%. Our current retention rate stands at 74% for full-time students and 39% for part-time students. The average retention rate for full-time students over the past five years has been 68%, with part-time students averaging 44.25%.

BSC is working to increase both retention and completion rates by 3% over the next five years, with either the implementation, or continued use, of the following tools and strategies:

**Starfish:**

- Fully implemented, used for an entire Academic Year.
- Faculty response and feedback have been positive.
- Two Alert Surveys, *Early Alert* and *Withdrawal Deadline is Near*.
- Several faculty ventured into Starfish and found *Kudos*, which they sent manually.
- 2840 *Early Alerts* sent, 2580 *Withdrawal Deadline is Near* sent, 474 *Kudos* sent.
- We are utilizing Starfish Cohorts to follow academic progress of: Student Athletes and Students receiving the Cultural Diversity Waiver.

**PAR:**

- PAR Data Training was January 30th, 2017.
- PAR Reveal was Feb. 7th, 2017.
- PAR Data Explorer Training was March 1, 2017.
- Data from Fall 2009 through Summer 2016 has been uploaded.
- Some data corrections are required. (Example: 16 Hawaii majors)
- Some program clarifications are required.
- Corrections and clarifications are in the works.
- NDUS User Group training, scheduled in Grand Forks June 27th – 30th.
Retention/Attainment Strategies showing promise:

- Starfish.
- Faculty Advising Workshops held during scheduled department meetings. (Upgrade advising skills and emphasize the importance of Academic Advising in student retention. This will be a practice utilized every semester.)
- New Student Registration improvements.
- Increased academic support for Student Athletes.
  1. 12 credit minimum enrollment hold.
  2. Enhanced academic advising.
- Math Boot Camp for remediation.
- New Student Orientation Improvements.
  1. Revised Format – “Mystic Monday.”
  2. Blackboard supplement to Mystic Monday for student reference and guidance.

Improving graduation rates to meet the SBHE goals:

- Increasing Student Retention will increase completion rates.
- Creation of the Retention and Completion Standing Committee.
- Emphasizing retention and completion in our Strategic Planning Goals.
- An AQIP Project specific to increasing retention and completion rates.
Retention and Attainment Efforts Underway at Dakota College at Bottineau

First Year Experience Program
All new freshman students at DCB are required to enroll in SOC 105 First Year Experience. The course orients students to college and examines topics that are important for student success and positive student outcomes.

Implementation of TRIO Program
The TRIO program was implemented in the spring semester of 2016. In the fall of 2015, Dakota College at Bottineau was notified by Senator Hoeven’s office that it was the recipient of a five-year federal Department of Education grant for $1.1 million dollars. This funding is part of the Department of Education’s TRIO Student Support Services (SSS) Program, which supports programs that provide academic and general support services to low-income, first-generation or disabled college students. The goal is to increase student success throughout the DCB campus, to increase student grade point average and graduation rates, and enhance faculty, staff and student relationships. The program will also facilitate career awareness and readiness, helping students transfer from two-year to four-year colleges or into their field of work.

This is the first time Dakota College at Bottineau received this grant. The TRIO program has been physically consolidated with the Learning Center located in Thatcher Hall. Four staff positions have been hired through the grant. These individuals provide personal and professional tutoring, study tables, homework sessions, career support information, resume writing, transfer assistance, test proctoring, and academic advising along with other student success support.

As the 2016-2017 academic year was the first full year of the program, staff will be documenting retention rates for participating students for the fall of 2017, compared to the fall of 2016 as well as other academic success measures, such as successful course completion and earned GPAs. Based on current funding levels, the program is on target to serve about 140 students. It served 103 in the past academic year. We anticipate reaching the target goal during the 2017-2018 academic year.

HLC Persistence and Completion Academy
In 2016, DCB applied (and was consequently selected) to participate in the Higher Learning Commission’s Persistence and Completion Academy. The academy is a structured, mentor-facilitated, four-year program that works with approximately 20 cohort colleges and
universities each year. The academy is focused on evaluating and improving student persistence and completion rates. Through this program, DCB is able to work closely with an assigned mentor and interact with other institutions through the Collaboration Network. DCB is currently in the mid-point of year 2 of the cohort experience. To date, DCB has participated in the Information and Planning Workshop, the Data Discovery Inventory and the Academy Roundtable. DCB recently completed a mid-point report. The college is working with an assigned mentor on building Academy Projects and Goals. The ultimate goal is to develop strategies to improve persistence and completion at DCB.

Departmental Reorganization
Previously, the college's Learning Center was involved in selected retention activities along with the college's Retention Program, which was administered cooperatively by the Dean's office and Student Services office. With the college's participation in the TRIO program, major retention and persistence activities have been consolidated in the college's Student Success Center, which includes student tutoring, retention advising, disability services, testing services, and TRIO.

Starfish
DCB implemented Starfish in the fall of 2016 and the program launch went reasonably well. Faculty have found the program easy to use and have been receptive to its implementation. One challenge is getting students to follow-up on needed changes after counselors and advisors have contacted them regarding issues identified through the Starfish system. A next step is to expand Starfish implementation to online courses, as the initial implementation focused solely on on-campus courses.

PAR
DCB is in the queue for PAR implementation. The DCB Registrar has reviewed preliminary data for PAR. DCB is ready for PAR implementation as soon as staff have received training and the campus data are ready for use.

Retention Committee
Through its existing Standing Committee structure, DCB has a Retention Committee that has provided input regarding needed retention and student success strategies, as well as identifying current college-based issues related to retention and attainment. Based on the various retention and completion initiatives in place at DCB, it was determined that the existing Retention Committee’s role would be revised. Beginning with the 2017-2018 academic year, this committee will also assume the role of serving as a “coordinating” committee. In this role, it will provide direction for ways in which to integrate the activities and functions of the various groups and departments working on retention and completion activities.
Dickinson State University Efforts on Retention/Attainment:

• Professional advising –
  - Advising is easily one of the most important guidance areas we offer to students. Being able to personally visit with the student to discuss academics, career goals, life goals, and to strategize a pathway toward attainment is irreplaceable. Advising can also place a large time burden on faculty, who are not always able to meet with each student for the amount of time they would like.
  - To help ensure advising remains at a high level for every student enrolled at the university, DSU has begun to use professional advisors. These are people trained to work with our incoming students and are adept at guiding students through the first few years of their university experience. Students will have a professional advisor for the first two years at which time they will be transferred to their corresponding department advisor.
  - In these early “pilot” stages, departments opt into this program as they wish. At present, all but three departments have done so, and we are enthusiastic about the outcomes of this program.

• Bridge/First Year Experience Program –
  - DSU has created a task force that will investigate best practices of a program that will include some type of summer component to enhance or build upon the academic year programming.
    EXAMPLE: As a cohort, students will enroll in a class such as speech each semester. Along with the course, students will have a required study hour(s) each week, coupled with intrusive advising, and then perhaps serve as peer mentors in year two after they have completed this program.
  - We hope to have our first cohort enroll in this program during the summer of 2018.

• Student Success Collaborative – The SSC is designed primarily to address retention of students from the point they enroll in courses at DSU through graduation. Three components comprise the SSC: 1) a student centered mobile app that guides students through targeted communication, 2) an advising platform that includes metrics to track students when they become at risk for failing to graduate on time so advisors can be proactive in helping students get back on track, and 3) predictive analytics to ensure we are offering the courses students need when they need them, among other things.

• Fall rollout of Starfish for all classes in Fall 2017.
  - The campus has spent much time training staff and faculty in the use of Starfish.
  - The university plans to use Starfish as an early warning system in which a student’s faculty member, advisor, coach, or other person working with student can utilize Starfish to issue an “early warning.” This warning may take the appearance of missed courses, missed athletic practices, missed work or internship areas. This warning may also flag a drop in the
student’s grade or other type of work. The warning will be entered using Starfish and will be disseminated to a select group of people on campus that may include the Director of Admissions and Enrollment, the VPAA, the student’s advisor and coach, etc. The goal is to find out if a student may be undertaking a pathway detrimental to his or her educational goal, and to contact the correct people on campus who may then reach out to that student in time to offer true help or guidance.

• PAR rollout:
  - DSU is not as advanced with PAR as with Starfish, but this software has been installed and readied for use.
  - The university just completed its PAR reveal and hired a data analyst who will begin on June 5. The university’s goal is to be able to analyze our data to determine particular demographics of non-returning students, which can be used to aid in the development of the bridge program discussed earlier in this document. The goal is to use PAR to more accurately target the students who will most benefit from a bridge program, thus retaining more students who may drop out of higher education otherwise.

• Formal Student Surveys:
  - Beginning in Fall 2017 DSU will formally survey students who fail to register for the following semester prior to the end of the semester.
  - The goal of the survey is: 1) To determine if the student plans to return, and if so what is preventing him/her from registering, or 2) If the student does not plan to return, what is the reason.
  - Along with PAR, the survey can be used to help identify students for the bridge program mentioned earlier. The survey may also be used to illuminate other areas of which we may be unaware that require focus to ensure better retention of our students.

As with any plan, the above areas will be used in concert with each other to cover as many areas of retention as possible. This endeavor will be a living plan; one that will be reviewed each year to allow needed changes and improvements to be integrated.
2017 Retention and Attainment | Lake Region State College

**RETENTION – IPEDS**
Includes first-time, full-time students who were retained fall to fall.

- 59% 2011-2012
- 52% 2012-2013
- 62% 2013-2014
- 65% 2014-2015
- 63% 2015-2016

**ATTAINMENT – IPEDS**
Includes first-time, full-time students who graduated within three years.

- 40% 2009
- 40% 2010
- 41% 2011
- 37% 2012
- 47% 2013

**RETENTION AND ATTAINMENT – SAM**
Includes first-time students to LRSC (first-year and transfer) who either graduated, are still enrolled, or transferred out to another institution within six years.

- 81% 2009
- 80% 2010
RECRUITMENT AND ATTAINMENT EFFORTS
The following initiatives have been implemented at LRSC to improve retention and attainment:

UNIVERSITY 101, Introduction to College Life. All incoming first-year, degree-seeking students are required to enroll in our first-year experience course, UNIV 101-Introduction to College Life. In order to increase student retention and persistence to graduation, this course is designed to better prepare students for college while providing tools, skills, peer communities, and campus resources necessary for success during the first few weeks of college. Students placed on academic probation and students returning from suspension who have not yet taken the course are required to successfully complete UNIV 101.

Enhanced Orientation. A three-day new student orientation is required for all new students. Students are grouped into their UNIV 101 class for each activity or session in order to build supportive and cohesive cohorts through icebreakers and collaborative sessions.

Risk Assessment. Built into new student orientation is a short survey designed to assess if a student has the possibility of withdrawing or other needs such as academic or financial support. These students will be contacted and tracked regarding their college experience. This effort assists stakeholders in developing strategies for at risk students before challenges are presented.

Early Warning - Starfish. Faculty are required to report students who have never shown up to class, students who have missed several classes, or students who are missing assignments three weeks into each semester through Starfish (online early warning system). The reports go to the Director of Counseling, TRIO and PowerSkills advisors, athletic coaches, and listed advisors, and students are contacted individually to develop a plan for success for each situation.

Increased Mental Health Services. The Department of Counseling offers collaborative mental health services between Dakota College at Bottineau and Williston State College while utilizing a Counseling Intern (PhD candidate) from the University of North Dakota. Students have ample opportunities for mental health support and resources.

Intrusive Academic Advising. This is a collaborative effort between faculty, Director of Counseling, Director of TRiO, Coordinator of Disability Services/PowerSkills who personally contact and reach out to students through different means including but not limited to: texting, personal phone call, social media, etc. Advisement includes a four-semester plan, transfer planning if applicable, and is individualized to each student.

Academic Advising Training for Faculty. Faculty will be trained on advising during faculty in-service. This will be executed via scenarios, discussing different conversations that may arise with students, i.e. first- generation, transfer, and dual credit students.

TRiO/PowerSkills/Disability Services. LRSC is one of two, two-year campuses in the state of North Dakota with a TRiO program, which is a federally-funded grant program designed to increase retention and graduation rates of students who are low-income, first-generation, or disabled. TRiO offers intrusive academic advising, transfer advising, early registration, career exploration services, financial aid and literacy services, and mentoring to its students. Students who do not qualify for services are offered the same supports in LRSC’s PowerSkills program, which is funded through LRSC. TRIO and PowerSkills are housed together along with Disability Support Services to provide a one-stop shop service to students. Approximately 250 students are served by these two programs each year.

Online Retention Coordinator. One person is designated to assist online students with 1) advising, 2) Starfish, and 3) outreach.

Increased Student Life. On-campus and off-campus students are offered a wide variety of clubs and organizations including nightly activities to participate. The Director of Housing, Student Activities Coordinator, and Student Senate work collaboratively to ensure a wide variety of activities are offered and will develop a club or organization per student request. Activities are offered during prime times and are free of charge to students.
Questions for the State Board of Higher Education Retreat  
June 2017

A. Implementation progress update for PAR and/or Starfish.

Mayville State is currently operational with both PAR and Starfish as of August 2016, holding over 40 training sessions for faculty and staff while making classroom visits to reach approximately 250 students. Due to the success of Early Alert and wanting to further expand our reach to students, Mayville State entered into a second implementation phase with Starfish Connect in October 2016. Starfish Connect went live in January 2017, adding to the functionality of the Starfish platform. There have been unforeseen obstacles with the integration between Connect and Moodle that have resulted in partial functionality with the platform, causing some implementation issues. MaSU, CTS, and Hobson’s are discussing how to resolve these issues. The level of buy-in and overall utilization of Starfish as has been very good. Implementation issues will continue to be addressed and we will modify the system further over the summer so that we can continue to refine the product of AY17-18.

Mayville State has been operational with PAR since June 2016. Due to implementing PAR at the same time as Starfish, it was determined to make Starfish the priority. Staff have attended webinars provided by Hobson’s and/or CTS. The implementation of PAR on our campus has been limited by resource constraints; however, we have utilized it on occasion for planning purposes.

Staff from Mayville State will be attending all three days of the joint Hobson’s/CTS training in Grand Forks in late June. Mayville State will also be sending a delegation to Hobson’s University in July to receive enhanced training with PAR and Starfish.

B. Retention and attainment strategies showing promise at Mayville State.

Perhaps the largest retention and attainment strategy that is showing promise is the implementation of Starfish itself, and the other campus-wide initiatives that have been initiated as a result. We are seeing increases in the number of interventions with at-risk students, which has resulted in some students getting the assistance they need in order to persist. More and more students are also beginning to “raise their hand” in Starfish, which allows them to self-identify when they need assistance. Referrals to campus services and resources are up and there appears to be more cross-campus communication occurring in order to better assist the student.

Mayville State has leveraged the onset of Starfish to start a campus conversation on student success and retention, which has resulted in additional learning opportunities for faculty and staff with our “Friday Fish Food” series and our periodic enrollment newsletter “Retention Roundup.” Topics have ranged from Starfish training and troubleshooting, enrollment numbers, discussions on appropriate student interventions and referrals, reasonable accommodations, universal design and other instructional design strategies, and case studies on how to work with challenging student situations.

Student Affairs has significantly increased the number of co-curricular/extra-curricular offerings in AY16017 in order to provide students a healthy outlet for social engagement, but to also assist in developing community and support resources for the on-campus cohort.
The establishment of a provisional admission team comprised of staff, faculty, and administration, and the implementation of student success plans for provisional students has been showing promise in that we are getting students the assistance they need immediately once they arrive to campus. These practices continue to be refined.

Academic Affairs has reviewed and revised its academic suspension and probation policies, which has allowed for more intentional decisions to be made regarding a student’s individual case. MaSU’s number of suspensions decreased for spring 2017 compared to the previous semester.

A revised enrollment and registration process has been created and implemented, beginning April 2017. Our new “Student Success Days” focuses on our new students. We also adapted them to re-enroll our current students to ensure barriers for their return are removed before the next term. We had 178 current students participate in April 2017. This initiative was done in partnership with Student Affairs, Athletics, and Academic Affairs in order to address our high numbers of at-risk student athletes and the attrition rates that tend to occur as a result.

C. Thoughts on how our campus intends to improve graduation rates to meet SBHE goals.

Mayville State intends to use a multifaceted approach in order to improve graduation rates and meet SBHE goals. Ensuring we are enrolling academically viable students at the start is essential; so continuing to enhance our admissions and recruiting processes while adhering to new admissions standards, will make us better stewards of the institution’s students.

Providing personalized, individual service to students to ensure they have the tools and support necessary to be successful will also remain a priority. We will do this by refining our student success plans, continual implementation and training efforts with Starfish, and providing more targeted student support services as budgets allow.

Academic advising has been a main focus for Mayville State over the last academic year and it will continue to be moving forward. Enhancing our academic advising practices across campus will provide students with better academic plans, personalized attention and supports, and increased interventions with the student should an issue present itself.

We have also begun “The Completers Project” where we have actively attempted to re-recruit former students that are at junior or senior status and in good standing with the institution. Personalized advising consultants work with these students to design a program of study that gives them a clear path and timetable to graduation.

Mayville State also submitted a Title III proposal during spring 2017. Should we be successful in attaining this grant, it will be a game changer for the institution and our students. We will be addressing a number of our campus needs, focusing mainly on academic advising, new student transitions, contemporary faculty professional development, modernizing classrooms and student learning environments, and enhancing our institutional research practices. By improving in these areas with the assistance of this grant, retention rates will improve and levels of student attainment will increase.
TO:          Mark Hagerott, Chancellor, NDUS
FROM:        Steve Shirley, President, Minot State
DATE:        June 14, 2017
RE:          Retention/Attainment initiatives update

1. **Implementation progress update for PAR and/or Starfish:**
   a) **PAR:** All members of Minot State’s Academic Affairs Council and all members of the Retention Committee were provided demonstrations of PAR. Additionally, academic chairs received PAR training in March 2017. They were given the following assignment:
      i. **Report the three courses with highest WDF rates (or lowest “C or better” rates) in your area(s) and indicate any common themes of those courses. Investigate further by filtering with other variables (gender, race, type of student at entry, etc.).**
         a. Inside PAR, use the Course Explorer, the C or better tab, Courses by Major tab, Individual Course Summary tab, and other filters to do this.
         ii. **Bring suggestions on how to address the issues you found in the data.**
         iii. **Also, consider and bring forth ways your department can use PAR as part of its assessment processes.**

      Results: Chairs found interesting trends in success rates by mode of instruction (online vs. face-to-face). More students were successful in face-to-face campus courses than online in a few areas, notably criminal justice courses in the core. This could be due to self-selection or to the course construction or to motivation or any number of factors. Typically fewer students are successful in online than face-to-face campus courses as noted by the data MSU’s Center for Extended Learning has collected in the past.

   b) **Starfish:** Training is ongoing. The Academic Advising Council held two Starfish workshops on Feb. 2 & 3. The Starfish Early Alert Team (comprised of faculty, IT staff, MiSU’s Registrar, etc.) met with academic areas to share information regarding new features, highlight some practices, and gather feedback on how to improve use of the system. Changes and improvements implemented in Starfish since the start of the year include more robust filtering of student lists, the addition of more student data in the advisors’ view, and the planned addition of athletic coaches to students’ network so coaches can see their student-athletes’ academic flags. Use of Starfish seems to increase when faculty are provided research that supports Starfish’s use and they hear anecdotal stories of its impact. Two MiSU employees will attend NDUS Starfish training and user group meeting on June 27 in Grand Forks. Additional professional development to learn about Starfish’s new features will be provided to faculty in fall semester.

2. **Summary of retention/attainment strategies that are showing promise:**
   a) **MiSU will begin Living /Learning communities in fall 2017 in the residence halls. Students will be able to choose from two areas of focus: leadership and wellness.**
b) MiSU reformed its Retention Committee in 2016-2017. The committee had not met since 2010 or 2011. The Committee is chaired by VPAA Dr. Laurie Geller and was quite active this year.

c) Redevelopment of new student programming, including a significantly revised orientation and welcome weekend schedule, along with revised student-leader training.

d) First-year learning communities supported by peer mentors which are required of all first-year students at Minot State.

e) Focus on improving academic advising: Active Academic Advising Council who established awards to recognize outstanding advisors at an annual campuswide celebration.

f) Creation of the Advising Team to support summer advising and advising of provisionally admitted students.

g) Academic Success Plans and enhanced advising will be implemented as part of advising students admitted with provisions.

h) Used appropriately, PAR and Starfish will become more important in retention/attainment efforts.

3. *Thoughts on how Minot State intends to improve graduation rates to meet the SBHE goals.*

a) Development and implementation of a 4-year, renewable scholarship beginning next year. This initiative required significant restructuring within several campus budgets.

b) Recruit-back program. A new strategy introduced last year to encourage members of recent FTFT cohorts to return to MiSU to complete their degree. A key intent was to positively impact 6 year graduation rates. Scholarship funds were made available with conditions. Invitations were sent to 194 students; 38 responded; and 19 enrolled in fall 2016 and 13 in spring 2017.

c) Ongoing engagement of students with faculty and peers via undergraduate research, capstone experiences, and other curricular and co-curricular offerings and activities.

d) Exploring the possibility of redoing the General Studies Program to be something innovative and different, and not just for students who fall out of other majors late in their academic careers or who cannot purposefully decide on their majors.

e) MiSU’s Academic Advising Council is exploring an advising assessment tool.

f) The Committee on the Evaluation of Teaching will provide support to the revised evaluation of teaching processes.

g) Enhance career services and increase meaningful experiential opportunities and internships.

h) MiSU will have an institutional funded emergency grant program in place for 2017-2018. These funds will be used to fund students who have unexpected emergencies (e.g., car breaks down, medical costs) and need a little bit of cash to continue their education.

i) Streamline and centralize student success services.

j) Newly selected faculty leaders of New Faculty Orientation are focused on helping new faculty understand the value of teaching and advising as well as the expectations in these areas. Establishing a positive, supportive culture for these new faculty impacts their interactions with students, which ultimately improves retention and graduation rates, as well as the overall student experience. These expectations are being communicated to academic chairs by the VPAA as well so the chairs can support these efforts and convey similar values and expectations.
Retention & Attainment Initiatives

Our initiatives strive to address issues and events that are central to students’ success and the needs our data has identified.

Starfish/PAR Implementation Progress

Starfish

- Fall 2016 we did a ‘soft roll-out’ of Starfish, replacing NDSCS’s internal referral system which reduced burden on staff and faculty time.
- Throughout the 2016/2017 academic year NDSCS worked with the early (faculty and staff) adopters to pilot the system and assist with training other faculty (Spring 2017).
- Full implementation will coincide with Blackboard implementation set for August 2017; which will include all-faculty training, as well as more intensive training for staff to integrate PAR and other important data into Starfish.

PAR

- Data was shared, for the first time, with NDSCS May 2017
- Student Explorer training scheduled for June 2017

Retention/Attainment Strategies

- Increased & enhanced new student acclimation: Earlier move-in, intentional activities focused on engaging students and support systems (family) with faculty/staff. Revised FYE 101 curriculum to better match desired/needed course outcomes to support students’ success. Devised a consistent process, across all learning modalities, to on-board students enrolling after the start of classes.
- Intentional Registration/Orientation Events: Expanded orientation to be two-part and focused on the location where the student will attend; with the first part focusing on students’ understanding of services/support and the second focusing on acclimation to student life and their academic department.
- Providing purposeful social engagement & leadership opportunities: Expanded and enhanced social/recreational events for all students, resulting in a 53.7% increase is student attendance from 2012/13 to 2016/17. Developed new and enhanced existing student leadership programs to be more intentional and inclusive (e.g. Science of Leadership, Wildcat Welcome Team). Enhanced student employment opportunities through increasing student employees’ pay scale to be competitive and promoting the benefits of working on-campus to incoming/current students.
- Student Success Center: With the renovation of Old Main the Student Success Center was developed and allowed for streamlined services, follow-up and access to needed information with a one-stop mentality to blend academics and support services - including: Academic Help & Questions, Tutoring, Class Schedule Changes, Academic Program Changes, Career Planning & Job Search Assistance, Test Center, Accessibility Services, Quiet & Group Study Spaces, Student Concerns & Complaints, and Veterans (VA) Benefit Assistance.
- Expanded Student Support & Advocacy: Dedicated 1 FTE to be a resource for students related to various non-academic concerns; equity, diversity, and sexual misconduct prevention/education initiatives; and implemented a one-stop for students and staff/faculty to report concerns or provide suggestions (www.ndscs.edu/concern); started a LGBTQ Roommate matching in 2016; revised EPO and non-discrimination statements to be more inclusive; devised a strategic plan to enrich diversity & equity initiatives.
Retention/Attainment Strategies, cont.

- **Intentional outreach to encourage registration & payment:** “Are you Registered” campaign was implemented to encourage students to get registered for the subsequent term and to raise awareness among faculty/staff on assisting students with common barriers to completing registration; related events include Late-Night Breakfasts with resources for registration, intentional outreach to family members about registration, and sending out department-specific registration numbers weekly College-wide. “Know before you Owe” aims to educate incoming students and their support systems to identify and realize the discrepancy between their financial aid award and the actual cost of attendance.

- **Identifying/support of high-risk students:** Program Admission requirements were established for all CTE programs Fall 2016. These requirements are minimum college-readiness standards (that were established through departmental discussions and data review – with the intent of ensuring students that start their program are college-ready. Each student that is placed on academic warning or probation is now contacted and meetings are set to provide students the assistance/service(s) based on their needs. Faculty and staff members are heavily encouraged to refer students that they have concerns about to the Student Success Center (through Starfish or by calling). Specifically, faculty are asked to refer a student if they have missed 3 or more classes in a row. Once a referral is received, it is triaged and forwarded to an academic counselor (more severe concerns) or to a Student Success Specialist. The students are then contacted and offered assistance/service(s) based on their needs.

- **Established administrative support and shared responsibility for student success:** Through retention data sharing [Daily (first 20 days), weekly (after 20th day – end of the semester)] President Richman sends college-wide messages with current college-wide and department-specific retention numbers; messages also include a ‘retention reminder’ that is aimed to help faculty/staff become knowledgeable about issues that students are facing at that time of the semester or commonly asked questions. President Richman also utilizes video messages to communicate retention information to the College community and he works closely with the Media Squad to creatively promote student/College events.

**Future Initiatives**

- Implementation of the 2017-2020 NDSCS Strategic Plan.
- Further develop partnerships with business and industry to meet workforce needs.
- Increase focus on assessment of student learning outside the classroom (co-curricular).
- Continue education and outreach to K-12 partners regarding College-readiness and Career Awareness opportunities.
- Research regarding the demographics/identifiers of high-risk students and/or non-returning students through the implementation of PAR and Accounts Receivable data.
- To enhance student success, build a more effective academic and non-academic program review process.

**Results & Recognition**

- **Retention** (IPEDS): increased from 63% (2012/13) to 70% (2015/16)
- Of students starting in Fall semester 2010, **77% have either graduated or successfully transferred** to another institution (SAM).
- 2017 “College of Tomorrow” Platinum Award from John Deere (3rd consecutive year)
- 2016 ACT College and Career Readiness: **Career Preparedness National Semifinalist**
Strategic Plan

“Improve Retention and Graduation Rates for Undergraduates” is a key component in NDSU’s Strategic Plan. The strategic plan lists ten strategies accompanied by tasks and metrics that support this strategic plan objective.

Listening to student input

NDSU gathers information from current and former students for the purposes of program and process improvement.

SERU (Student Experience in the Research University). This is an annual consensus survey of all undergraduates and graduate students and includes questions on study habits, integration on campus, climate, and more. By gathering data on the student experience, we have qualitative and quantitative information on how to change what we do and to improve our students’ experience.

STEPS to Success – This is a social norming campaign based on institutional survey data, including SERU. Social norming is a research-based intervention that seeks to reinforce behaviors that lead to persistence and graduation. Early results at NDSU show an impact not just on awareness, but on behavior as well.

Empowering students to achieve academic success

NDSU has a variety of programs that support the academic success of students and empower them to develop their academic skills and well-being. We do not approach student success as a one-size-fits-all endeavor, but strive to provide a diversity of programs to meet the diversity of student needs.

One Stop – This is a service center that provides information to students about student accounts, financial aid, scholarships, tuition, bill payments, registration and student records maintenance, all in one convenient, always open, online location and one on-campus location at the Memorial Union. Full-time professional staff are available to assist students in person, by phone, or by email. This office also runs proactive registration campaigns each semester to encourage students to register for the next semester and assists with questions about financial or other holds or barriers to registration.

Student Success Programs - supports students and the University by providing programs and services aimed at broadening access and fostering holistic student success. This encompasses several programs including Academic Collegiate Enhancement (ACE) tutoring services, TRIO Student Support Services, TRIO McNair Scholars Program, and college transition programs.

Exploratory Area Majors - Also known as meta-majors, this is a new advisement approach to allow undeclared students and students unsure about their major selection to explore majors that align with their interests. Based on research and the experiences at other public institutions, this approach to ‘undeclared’ students has been shown to enhance retention and time to completion through purposeful advisement that will help students make the right major choice the first time.

Learning Assistants – The College of Science and Mathematics Learning Assistants program partners talented undergraduates (learning assistants or LAs) with faculty teaching large-enrollment science and math courses to create learner-centered classrooms that are conceptually driven, cognitively challenging, and authentic to the discipline. LAs primary responsibilities include working with small teams of students, either within a large-lecture class meeting, in recitation, or in office hours. This pilot program will be expanded to other colleges.

Ensuring all students receive effective advising services

Student Success Collaborative - North Dakota State University is committed to giving every student the opportunity to experience academic success and graduate on time. NDSU is partnering with the Education Advisory Board to launch Student Success Collaborative Campus, an advising platform that unites technology, predictive analytics and advising excellence to boost student retention and success. The platform also includes an early alert component to proactively
interact with students who are at-risk for falling behind. Advisors will be able to identify students for proactive and targeted outreach campaigns, share notes about student interactions across the platform to provide a seamless advising experience as students change majors or advisors, and increase the ease of scheduling advising appointments.

**Advising Resource Center** – The center’s mission enhanced through a restructure that was implemented in August 2016. The mission of the ARC is to foster “student success by guiding academic exploration, providing supplemental advising services, and supporting university-wide advising”. The staff of professional advisors will provide academic advising to exploratory major students, students changing majors, conditionally-admitted students and others.

**Career Center** – With the new alignment of Student Affairs and Academic Affairs, the Career Center and Advising Resource Center have formed a partnership to use best practices in guiding students to integrate academic and career planning. Students are encouraged to use career services from their first step on the NDSU campus, and to plan for their careers throughout their time at NDSU.

**Improving Pedagogical Practices**

**Office of Teaching and Learning** - The Office of Teaching and Learning, formed in 2014, provides pedagogical assistance to individual faculty, training for graduate students, and best practice workshops on 21st century pedagogies. The mission of the office is to prepare instructors to use instructional methods that are based on best-practice research, thus contributing to student success in the classroom.

**Gateways-ND** - NDSU has received funding from the National Science Foundation to change how science, technology, engineering and mathematics courses are taught at the university. The ultimate goal is to help more students succeed in challenging courses in science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

**Gateways to Completion** - As a member of this program led by the John N. Gardner Institute for Excellence in Undergraduate Education, NDSU has committed to examining and improving success rates in several foundational, high-failure rate undergraduate courses through a structured, evidence-based self-study process. The successful techniques developed in these courses will be extended to other courses.

**Math Emporium Learning Center** – Based on successful models at other institutions, the Math Emporium is designed to accommodate all learning styles and give students personalized practice and feedback in College Algebra, Trigonometry, and Pre-Calculus courses.

**Strategic Enrollment Management** - Strategic enrollment management is an inclusive process which attempts to build upon the institution’s strategic plan in terms of defining specific enrollment goals and priorities. Part of the charge of this effort is to conduct an environmental scan of enrollment and retention context and identify gaps that need to be addressed. Initial gaps have been identified as bottleneck courses, and enrollment management funds are being allocated to colleges to expand capacity of identified courses.

**Looking to the Future**

There are several initiatives that are in various stages of implementation.

**PAR** – Predictive Analytics Research provides tools and data analysis to assess retention risk for groups of students. PAR will be incorporated with Student Success Campus to identify and intervene with students at risk.

**Ad Astra Optimizer** – this would be a very helpful tool for the strategic enrollment management initiatives. We are ready to benefit from the tool as soon as access can be granted. We would like to be able to use Ad Astra Platinum Analytics to ensure the most efficient course scheduling possible to ensure students are able to register for all required courses in the best timeframe. It would be an ideal complement to College Scheduler and other strategic enrollment management initiatives.
Strategic Enrollment Management Committee – representative from all academic and service units meet regularly; charged with reviewing and implementing recruitment and retention activities/initiatives

- Identified barriers to student retention, persistence, and success – successfully promoted policies/procedures changes to remove barriers
- Executed a process mapping exercise to identify activities/initiatives conducted in the Colleges/Schools and gaps in which additional outreach is necessary
- Addressed graduate recruitment and retention to reflect restructuring in School of Graduate Studies and needs in Colleges/Schools
- Identifying characteristics of courses with large DFW rates i.e., large class size, advising interventions, collaborative transfers, etc. Determining steps to reduce DFWs.

Policy/Procedure Changes to Remove Barriers – advanced proposed changes by obtaining approval by Academic Policies and Admissions Committee Senate

- Lowered the minimum credit hours required for a baccalaureate degree from 125 to 120
- Allowed grade changes by Registrar’s Office when approved by faculty member, rather than previous requirement for committee approval
- Transfer students:
  - Revised standard to 30 credits from UND/not last 30 credits for graduation purposes
  - Eliminated requiring 60 hours from four-year institutions
  - Allowed transfer credit from all institutions recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA)
  - Eliminated need for a high school transcript provided by transfer students with more than 24 transferable credits
- Multiple degree earners:
  - Approved the ability to double count credits for major/minor
  - Eliminated requiring 30 additional semester hours for additional baccalaureate degrees if degree requirements are satisfied
- Implemented College Scheduler – system to assist with course registration

Enhancing Student Connection to University – expanded proven programs to enhance retention

- Offered focused sections of U-Life to connect students with program of study (i.e., Nursing, Aerospace, undeclared)
- Increased Living-Learning Community opportunities (i.e., Engineering, Atmospheric Sciences) – plan to introduce 2-3 new LLCs each fall semester

Targeted Outreach - created to outreach to students based on needs throughout the academic year

- Implemented pathways to student success – intentional outreach to students not admitted into program of study (i.e., Nursing) to redirect to a different major
- Early registration outreach – phone calls and emails to students who have not registered for following semester
- Outreach to targeted populations (i.e., non-traditional students, online students, students on probation)
- Outreach and intervention with students receiving cultural diversity tuition waivers
- Outreach to: scholarship recipients; students who have not completed FAFSA by priority date; to encourage re-contracting to live on-campus; to students with hold on their account; to students with a delinquent account
- Mentoring programs in Colleges/Schools and for targeted populations
**Starfish** – retention solution tool to support academic advising, progress survey processes, and service unit operations/outreach/interactions with students

- Usage by faculty: 54% of spring 2017 semester courses participated in the early alert process, up from 45% in the fall 2016 semester. 65% participation was the goal for mid-term deficiency notification usage within spring 2017 semester – reached 71%.
- Extended use by support units and academic advisors – flags, kudos, notifications, success plans, notetaking, appointments scheduled
- Extended use by students – success plans, schedule appointments with advisor/faculty member
- Education provided to Colleges/Schools – focused on importance of using the Starfish system
- Tenant Administrators created in each of the Colleges/Schools – liaison to implement and increase usage
- Moved toward establishing electronic student files and processes
- Success plans created within Starfish to track and monitor students placed on probation, in danger of failing to meet academic requirements, and those receiving a scholarship/tuition waiver
- Intake form within Starfish gathers information on students to assist in the advising process
- System used as a means to track and outreach to student populations

**Academic Advising Council** – representation from undergraduate Colleges/Schools gather to strategize and put into place programs and services to establish consistency across campus

- Established probation program guidelines
- Established changes to improve academic advising structures and processes

**Predictive Analytics** - Aggressively pursued the use of predictive analytics to enable timely and targeted interventions. Due to limitations associated with the PAR framework, we have worked towards developing a more timely and robust internally-generated analysis to drive this process.

PAR assigns individual students a probability of not being retained. Such information on a timely basis allows units across campus to deploy interventions to at-risk students and increase their likelihood of being retained. Unfortunately, it takes approximately six months following the end of a semester for UND to receive the resulting data from PAR, meaning that by the time an at-risk student has been identified, he or she has already been retained or not retained. Action on information recorded in PAR, such as students who pass zero credits in a semester, are most actionable within a semester, or immediately following the conclusion of a semester. Furthermore, PAR's comparative benchmark schools do not optimally align with the characteristics of UND.

Recognizing the value of predictive analytics, UND created the Office of Institutional Effectiveness (OIE) in early 2017. Using methodological approaches similar to those implemented by PAR, paired with institutional-specific data that is not included in PAR's modelling, OIE is able to identify at-risk students in a timely manner throughout the academic year. Further, OIE is able to supplement this student-level data with broader information related to specific courses, programs/colleges, and general student risk factors that (at minimum) matches the analytical power of PAR, but can also be tailored to the parameters of specific requests. Moving forward, while UND will continue to populate PAR, our focus will be on continuing to develop analytical approaches to student success with a focus on designing, executing, and refining optimal interventions to enhance student success in real-time.

**Planned for 2017** - Implement degree planner software so students' degree "roadmaps" are accessible to all advisors.
**Select Retention & Attainment Initiatives at VCSU - Fall 2016 and Spring 2017**

- **Cohorts and Cohort Specific Flags in Starfish.** Cohorts were developed in Starfish for each academic department and for each athletic team. We piloted a cohort-specific flag in the spring term for students from our baseball team. The Baseball Gradebook Concern flag is raised anytime a student’s grade fell below 70% in a given course and cleared only when the grade went back above 70%. This provides an earlier intervention than gradebook flags used for the student body at large (60% threshold). There were 38 members of the baseball team tracked using this cohort.
  - Six baseball team members named 2017 Daktronics-NAIA Scholar-Athletes, most in program history.
  - Fifteen baseball team members named to President’s or Dean’s Lists for Spring.
  - Twenty-three baseball team members at or above a 3.0 GPA for Spring.

- **Establishment of the CAVE.** In 2016, the Center for Academic Vision and Engagement (CAVE) was established in the lower level of Vangstad Hall. The CAVE provides space for students for studying, completing homework, meeting for group projects, or taking exams. The CAVE is also home to services that previously were housed in separate locations in order to bring a more comprehensive student success model to the campus. These services include the Learning Center, Career Services, and Student Academic Services.
  - Services in the CAVE are working to develop additional metrics to measure usage and success rate.
  - The CAVE provided support to approximately 40 students with documented disabilities.
  - The Learning Center employed 12 tutors covering 35 or more hours each week, during and outside of regular business hours.
  - Student Academic Services carried an advising load of 30 undecided or University Studies students and met weekly with students on academic probation.
  - Career Services held meetings with 128 students in the Fall and 146 students in the Spring; Meeting topics included work study, on and off campus employment, job search and application material assistance, internships, and career or major decisions.

- **PAR Data for Business Retention and Success Rates.** The Business department has been amongst the earliest faculty group to embrace using PAR as a tool for retention. Student Academic Services and the Business faculty met to generate a list of assumptions about what is impacting retention and those assumptions are being tested against descriptive data in PAR. That data is being used to create interventions for at risk students currently enrolled in Business majors.
  - Based on major change rates, the Business department is considering major specific courses to be scheduled in the first term. Students that only want to take generals would be asked to move to undeclared, rather than declare Business.
  - PAR data was used to analyze whether the timing and combination of courses, ACCT 200/201 and ECON 201/202, correlated with success rates (C or better pass rates, year-over-year retention). It was recommended that the ECON sequence not be scheduled in the first year, while the ACCT sequence could be in the first or second year. Data for the combination of courses in the same year was not yet determined. Pass rates and retention rates will continue to be monitored.
• **Data Driven Advising.** The Science department has developed scheduling guidelines for incoming students in Science majors. Scheduling guidelines are intended to improve the quality and consistency of advising for new students in science majors.
  - These guidelines give a set of comparable data points through the Course Explorer component in PAR that will allow determination of whether a prescriptive approach to advising and course scheduling improves retention and student outcomes.
  - Scheduling guidelines are being updated to include data from PAR for C or better pass rates and retention rates for individual courses. Each major will have listed a set of required courses, recommended courses, and a set of courses to avoid based on the data listed. Advisors will be encouraged to advise students based on this data. The rates listed will serve as baseline data and will be compared annually to updated data to determine progress and outcomes.
  - The intent is to grow this process outside of the Science department, with Athletic Training being the next program targeted.

• **Celebrations of Academic Achievement.** Retention efforts should not focus solely on students that are struggling and need intervention. Positive reinforcement has been shown to be effective in promoting desirable outcomes in students. We continue to look for ways to recognize academic excellence and achievement to reinforce student behaviors that lead to retention and attainment.
  - The Student Scholar Symposium is a program that provides VCSU students the opportunity to present academic projects or research that have been completed or proposed as a part of their course work. Students showcase their work to peers, faculty, and staff. Projects are also evaluated and awards are given in the Best in Show category and also the Viewer’s Choice category.
  - The SOAR Program supports faculty-mentored research, artistry, and creativity projects for undergraduates at VCSU. Students interested in mentored research or artistry consult with a prospective faculty member on a project idea, then work together on the development of a short proposal that communicates the essence and scope of the intended work. Students are awarded funding to see their research work carried out.
  - Recognition is given at commencement exercises to students that have completed their degree in fewer than four years. This includes recognition in the commencement program and the wearing of stole with their regalia. Efforts to provide formal and informal paths to three-year graduation were a focus and will continue going forward.
  - Football program created a new Academic Honor Wall to celebrate the achievements of student athletes in the classroom. The Honor Wall also reinforces the student-first culture that the program is championing.

• **Development of Learning Communities.** A collaborative effort between faculty teaching ENGL 110 College Composition I and COMM 110 Fundamentals of Public Speaking lead to the development of a learning community model that will be piloted with Elementary Education students starting in the Fall 2017 semester.
  - Students will register for a common set of courses that will develop topics to fit the needs of the major.
  - Curriculum will be designed to teach and reinforce concepts across subject areas demonstrating the interconnectedness of subject matter.
  - Goals include the improvement of success rates within individual courses and improved retention for students in the major.
Student Support and Retention Initiatives
Williston State College

Student Support:

- Student study program (Sunday – Thursday) in the WSC Learning Commons with faculty support available
- Student grade checks (first week of each month) available for all WSC students
- Communication and Math Labs (tutoring and drop-in assistance M-S)
- Self-paced mastery learning mathematics programs (EdReady and ALEX) available for both placement and intervention
- EdReady Language Arts Program implementation (pilot Fall 2017)
- EdReady Mathematics and Language Arts programs are available to use at no cost for all students and staff members (including high school students)
- 2 instructional FTE’s are now staffed in the Adult Learning Center including one bi-lingual (Spanish) instructor for ELL support
- Full time Licensed Counselor on staff with additional counseling resources available through a quick response team made up of local clergy and Police/Fire resources
- Parent orientation now included with fall student orientation
- Freshmen convocation and related activities now included in fall student orientation
- WSC dual credit/early entry students now have on-site college advising available at their high school upon request

Student Retention:

- A student success and retention work group composed of representatives from Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, marketing, and the Athletic Department meet weekly to discuss student performance and to review and develop support programs to assist WSC students.
- First year mandatory advising for all freshmen and first time attendees at WSC
- Assigned First Term advisors for each Freshman and first term attendee at WSC separate from their program specific faculty advisors
- A graduated “handoff” process of advising duties from first term advisors to program specific faculty advisors that occurs during the spring semester of the first year
- Student probation and suspension notifications shared with Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, and all department chairs to facilitate immediate and personalized intervention
- Mandatory face to face reentry conference with the VPAA for each student returning from academic suspension