

NORTHWEST COLLEGE

Retention Plan 2006-2009

June 2006

Target: Aggressively implement a two-year Enrollment Management Plan to increase enrollment.
Strategy: Maintain a retention rate above the state and national averages for first-time, full-time freshmen.

Current Retention

Retention at Northwest College has remained above the National Average for the past five years. Based on reports to the Wyoming Community College Commission (Persistence rates) and IPED data Northwest College has significantly improved retention rates. The focus is now to both maintain these high levels and to continue to improve upon them.

Retention at Northwest College

Northwest College determines and reports Retention in two ways:

1. Persistence = **61%** - the number of first time students who return the next fall for at least one class
2. Full-time Freshmen = **67%** - The number of full-time freshmen returning the next fall as full time students

National Data Comparison on Retention: (Based on Persistence data)

Two-year Public 52.5% Northwest College 61%

Longevity Comparison – Average Northwest College Full-Time Freshmen returning as Full-Time Students data

1994-1999 51% 2000-2005 60%

Retention Planning Process

Activities in the Retention Plan were determined by a sub-committee of the Enrollment Advisory Team (EAT). Input was also provided by the retention sub-group at the Enrollment Services Assessment Workshop.

EAT – Sub-Group members:

Virginia Fish and Cynthia Garhart - Coordinators
Mark Andreasen
Marlys Ohman
Susan Richards
Stephanie Rose
Robert Stothart

Statement on Retention:

Retention is a campus-wide effort that literally begins with our first interactions with students and involves every area and process on campus from human resource management to sidewalk maintenance. The retention planning committee focused on an analysis of nine key retention issues to identify focus areas for the next planning cycle. All retention efforts, however, are dependent upon the institution's total commitment to excellence in education and service. Students choose to stay or go based on numerous reasons. Financial aid, student success programs, curriculum, course offerings, program options, math placement, housing, job opportunities, advising, instruction, and business practices all impact retention decisions, as well as a myriad of personal reasons. To be effective at retention activities requires that the campus maintain and improve quality in every area.

Focus Areas:

The following are areas on campus that have a significant impact on retention and have been targeted for the retention plan.

- Advising
- Career/Transfer Support
- College Preparation
- First College Year Experience
- Residential Life
- Student Support Services
- Accreditation Issues
- Outreach Centers and Programs

Based on discussions on these areas, suggestions and revisions by the EAT Committee, work of the Enrollment Services workshop and feedback from others, five goals were established for 2006-2009.

Retention Goals – 2006-2009

Priority: Students

Target: Aggressively implement a two-year Enrollment Management Plan to increase enrollment.

Strategy: Maintain a retention rate above the state and national averages for first-time, full-time freshmen.

Goals:

- I. Strengthen Academic Advising – Peach Section

- II. Improve Access and Coordination of Student Support Services – Tan Section

- III. Develop a Sustainable First College Year Program – Orchid Section

- IV. Strengthen Student Engagement – Buff Section

- V. Strengthen Residence and Campus Life Services – Salmon Section

Priority: Students
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Strategy: Maintain a retention rate above the state and national averages for first-time, full-time freshmen.
Goal: Strengthen Academic Advising

Tactics or Actions	Assessment/ Measurement	Staffing & Responsible Team or Person	Budget, Marketing and Other Resources	Timeline
I. Enhance academic advising <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Revise and distribute advisor handbook b. Implement advising workshops system c. Utilize advising mission & learning outcomes for assessment d. Enhance advisor information in areas of Transfer and Career e. Provide workshops to strengthen advisor and student usage of electronic resources 	Student/Faculty Surveys Assessment Data	Advising Work Group & Associate Dean for Academic Affairs (ADAA)	Title III Current Budget	10/2006 ongoing
II. Investigate and evaluate strength based assessment and programming for students	Student/Faculty Surveys Assessment Data	ADAA & Title III	Title III Current Budget	ongoing
III. Develop Advising Information Web Site including Advisor Handbook materials	Student Surveys Assessment Data	ADAA & Title III	Title III Current Budget	10/30/06
IV. Develop programs to enhance advising to Extended Campus students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance advising opportunities in Cody and Worland • Investigate electronic advising resources 	Student Surveys Assessment Data	ADAA Director of Extended Campus Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA)	Title III Current Budget	ongoing

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Goal: Improve access and coordination of student support services

Tactics or Actions	Assessment/ Measurement	Staffing & Responsible Team or Person	Budget, Marketing and Other Resources	Timeline
I. Evaluate pilot program- walk-in student services resource center. Track and report on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Usage • Outcomes • Staffing • Mission 	Student Surveys Faculty Surveys Assessment Data	ADAA Research Asst.	Title III Current Budget	10/30/2006
II. Organize on-going walk-in student services center based on evaluation	Student Surveys Assessment Data	ADAA Research Asst.	Title III Current Budget	1/30/07
III. Reinvigorate student success programs including the Academic Student Success Program, strengthening Counseling Alerts and assessing other programs to determine effectiveness	Student Surveys Assessment Data	Student Success Center (SSC) staff	Current Budget	5/30/2007
IV. Assess mental health needs and develop programs to reduce drop outs	Student Surveys Assessment Data	SSC staff	Current Budget	5/30/2007

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Goal: Develop a sustainable First College Year Program

Tactics or Actions	Assessment/ Measurement	Staffing & Responsible Team or Person	Budget, Marketing and Other Resources	Timeline
I. Develop an Orientation Class to be offered in conjunction with Kick Off Weekend	Student Surveys Curriculum Information Assessment Data	Orientation Group ADAA VPAA Vice President for Student Affairs (VPSA)	Current Budget	10/2006
II. Develop a First College Year Program Task Force To: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review current data, processes and procedures in relation to First College Year Program • Review, develop and/or and make recommendations on the following aspects of First Year Experience at Northwest College including: Mission, Procedures, Programs, Learning Outcomes, Coordination and Communication, Evaluation/Assessment • Review, develop and make planning recommendations for FYE Programs 	Student Surveys Assessment Data	Orientation Group ADAA VPAA Vice President for Student Affairs (VPSA)	Current Budget	10/2006 10/2006 1/30/2007 5/30/07

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Goal: Strengthen Student Engagement

Tactics or Actions	Assessment/ Measurement	Staffing & Responsible Team or Person	Budget, Marketing and Other Resources	Timeline
I. Investigate procedures and processes to promote student engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a task force to investigate activities to promote student engagement in and out of the classroom • Develop an action plan designed to promote student engagement in and out of the classroom • Develop an assessment plan to measure student engagement in and out of the classroom 	Enrollment Student Surveys Assessment Data	ADAA	Current Budget	1/30/2007 5/30/07 5/30/07
II. Develop a Pilot Project to implement student engagement program in and out of the classroom <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement Pilot Project • Assess Pilot Project Develop implementation plan to integrate student engagement into curriculum	Enrollment Student Surveys Assessment Data	ADAA	Current Budget	8/30/07 8/30/07
III. Collaborate with other colleges on activities to promote student engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with other colleges on National assessment instrument • Collaborate when possible with other colleges on student engagement activities 	Enrollment Student Surveys Assessment Data	ADAA	Current Budget	8/30/07 12/30/07 5/30/08

Priority: Students
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Strategy: Maintain a retention rate above the state and national averages for first-time, full-time freshmen.
Goal: Strengthen Residence and Campus Life Services

Tactics or Actions	Assessment/ Measurement	Staffing & Responsible Team or Person	Budget, Marketing and Other Resources	Timeline
I. Assess impact current and new initiatives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change in summer orientation • Simpson Hall • Expansion of Kick-Off Weekend 	Student Surveys Assessment Data	Director Residential and Campus Life (DR & CL)	Current Budget	Ongoing
II. Regularly evaluate benchmarking factors that influence retention including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • student’s costs • privacy/personal space • dining services 	Student Surveys Assessment Data	DR&CL	Current Budget	Ongoing
III. Develop a long-range plan for renovation and improvement in existing residential facilities	Student Surveys Assessment Data	DR&CL	Current Budget	Ongoing
IV. Enhance Theme Wing Opportunities	Student Surveys Assessment Data	DR&CL	Current Budget	Ongoing
V. Strengthen opportunities for students to interact, learn and grow in the Residence Halls	Student Surveys Assessment Data	DR&CL	Current Budget	Ongoing