



Understanding the Importance of Retention and Student Success

Julie Bryant
Vice President for Student Success

1



At your institution:
Is retention
as important
as recruitment?

2



The “demographic cliff”
is coming!

3

Student success is critical for two reasons

Fiscal perspective

Mission perspective



4

4



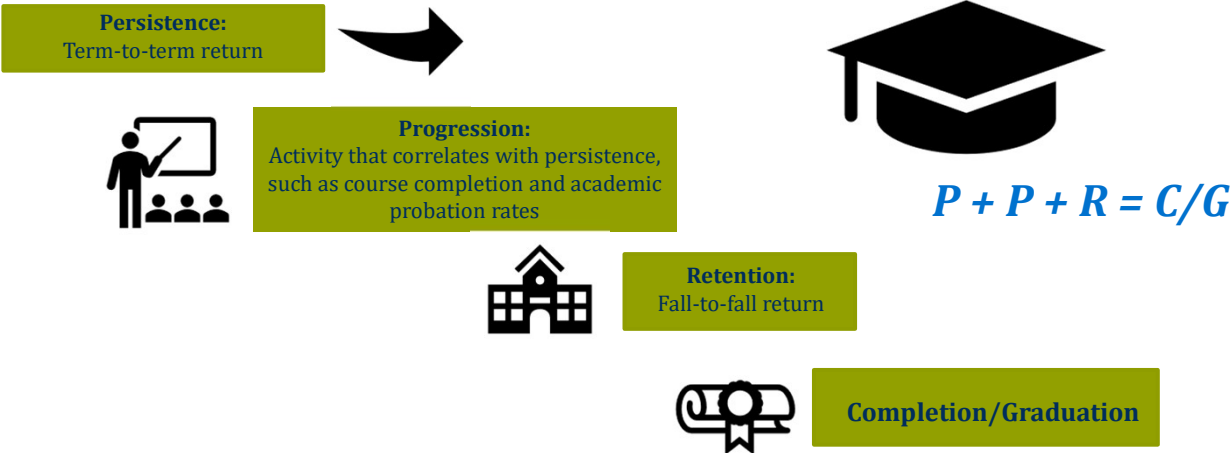
5



6

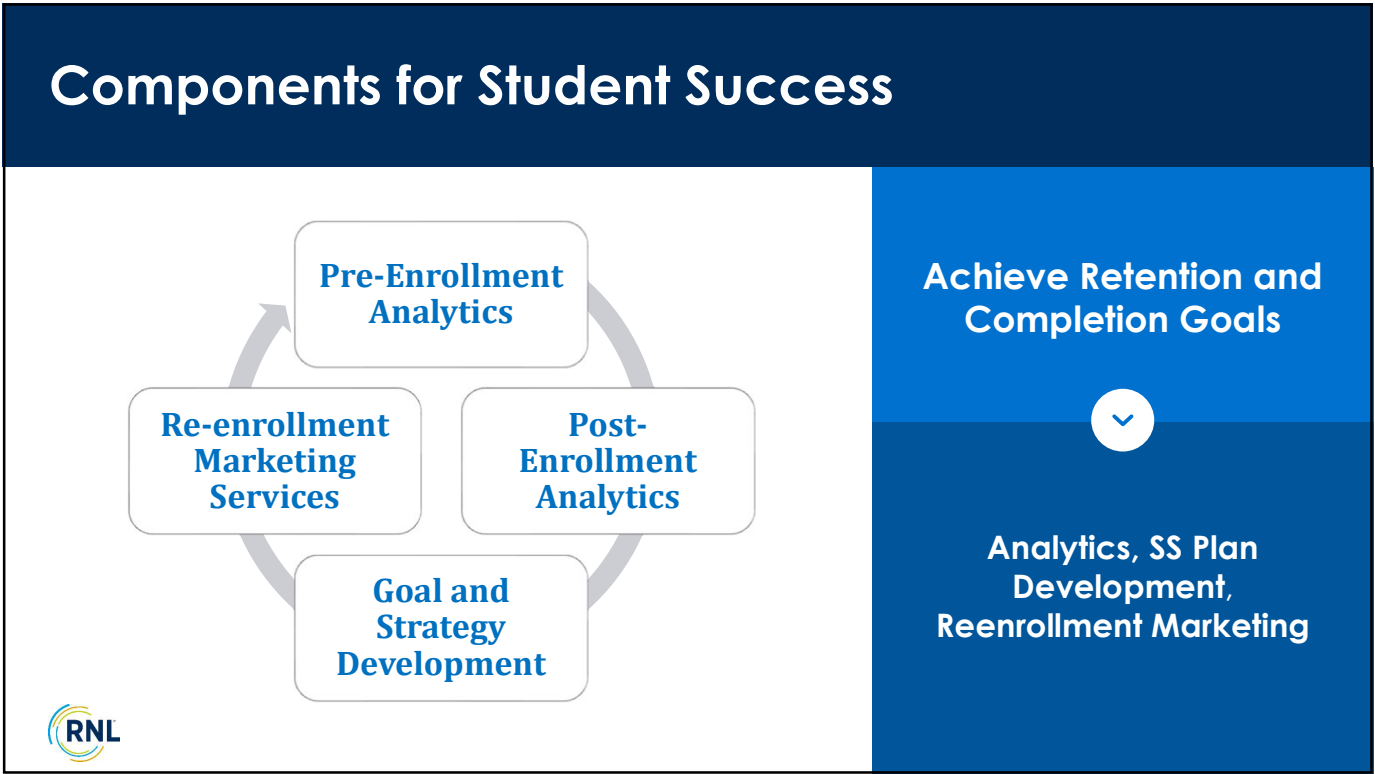
What are we trying to Impact?

Performance Indicators

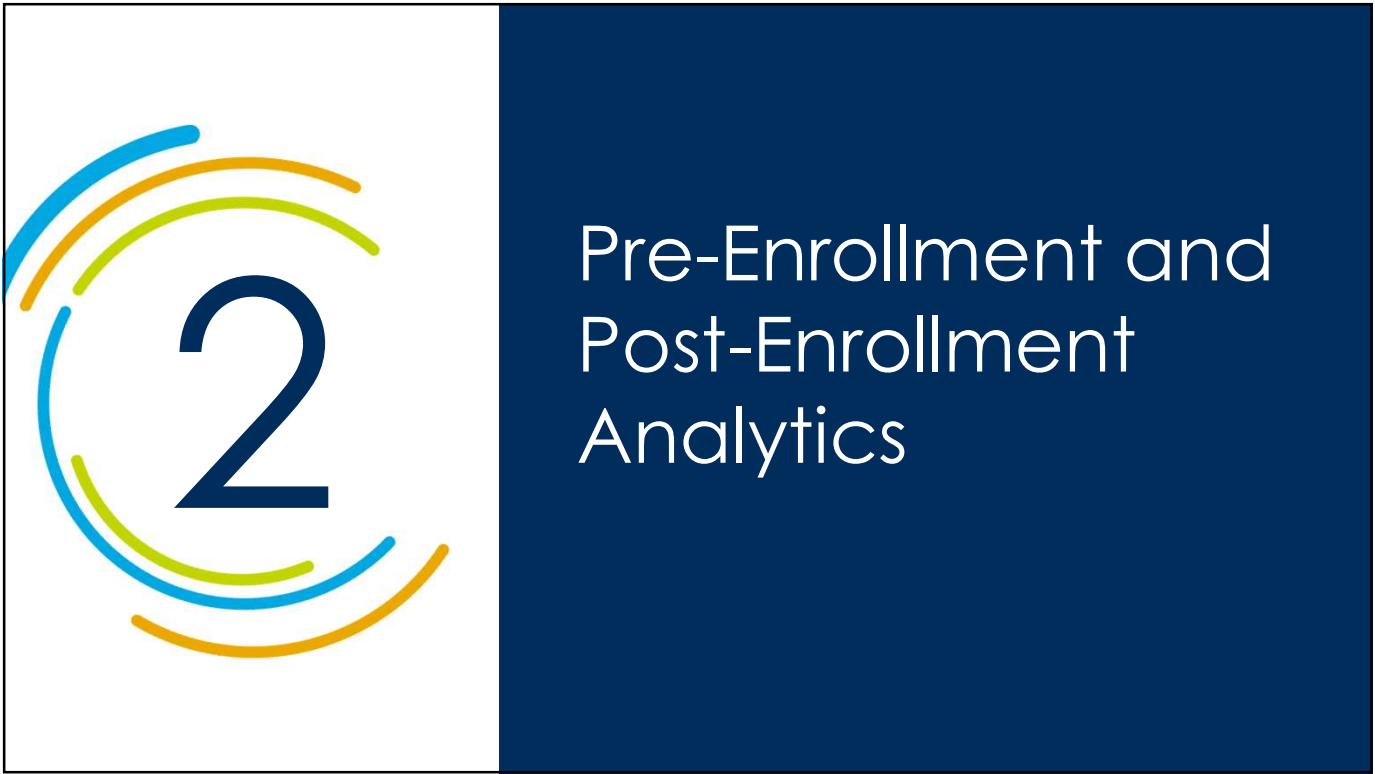


7

*Retention is an outcome
of a high-quality
educational experience
that puts students and
their learning
at the center.*



9



10

Formula for Student Success:

Entering Student Variables

+

Student Motivation Variables

+

Student Integration Variables

=

Student's Likelihood to Persist



11

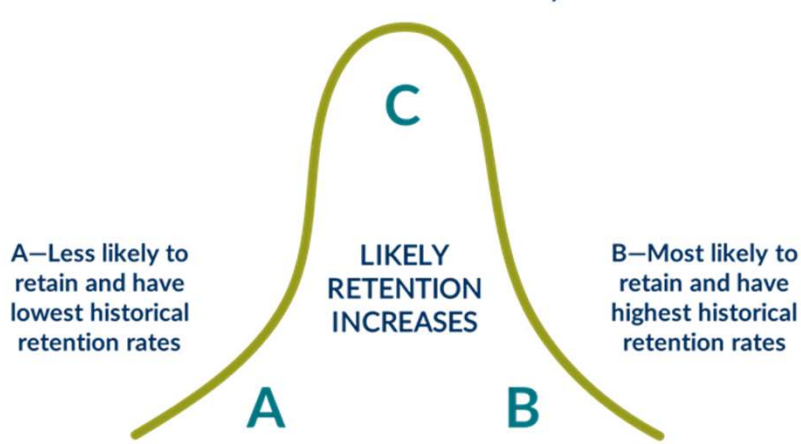
11

Retention Curve, Theoretical Framework

Focused strategies on focused targets

ATTRITION CURVES

C—What some have called the “Murky Middle”



A—Less likely to retain and have lowest historical retention rates

LIKELY RETENTION INCREASES

B—Most likely to retain and have highest historical retention rates



12

12

What Do First-Year Students Want?

Connections and Careers

Connections and careers dominate the top priorities of first-year students

TOP 10 PRIORITIES FOR INCOMING FIRST-YEAR STUDENTS	2020	2019
Meet new friends	75%	73%
Help selecting an educational plan to get a good job	70%	69%
Talk about qualifications needed for certain occupations	67%	69%
Find out more about clubs and organizations	66%	57%
Receive help to improve student habits	65%	69%
Receive instruction on how to take college exams	65%	68%
Talk with someone about getting a scholarship	63%	67%
Talk with someone about salaries and future occupations	57%	60%
Meet an experienced student to seek advice	55%	56%
Talk about advantages/ disadvantages of various careers	53%	55%



© 2021 Ruffalo Noel Levitz, LLC
2021 National First-Year Students and Their Motivation to Complete Report

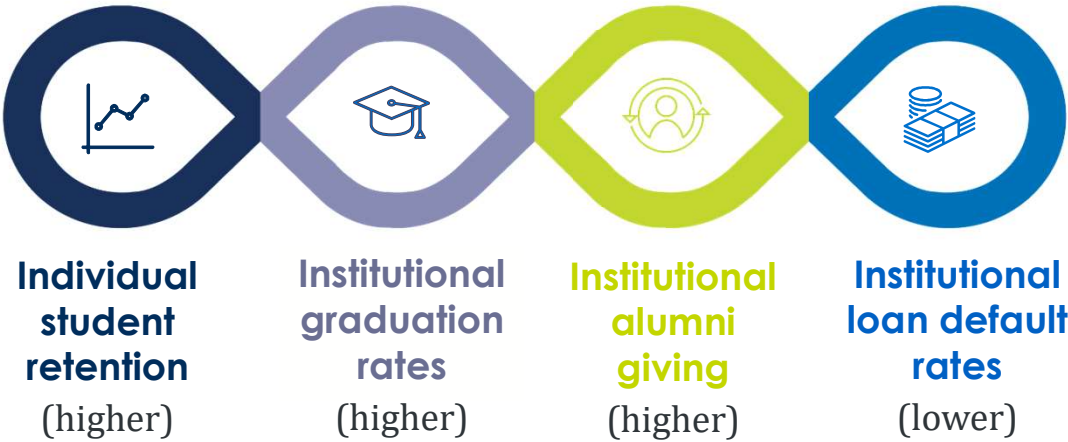
13

Formula for Student Success:



14

Student Satisfaction is linked with:

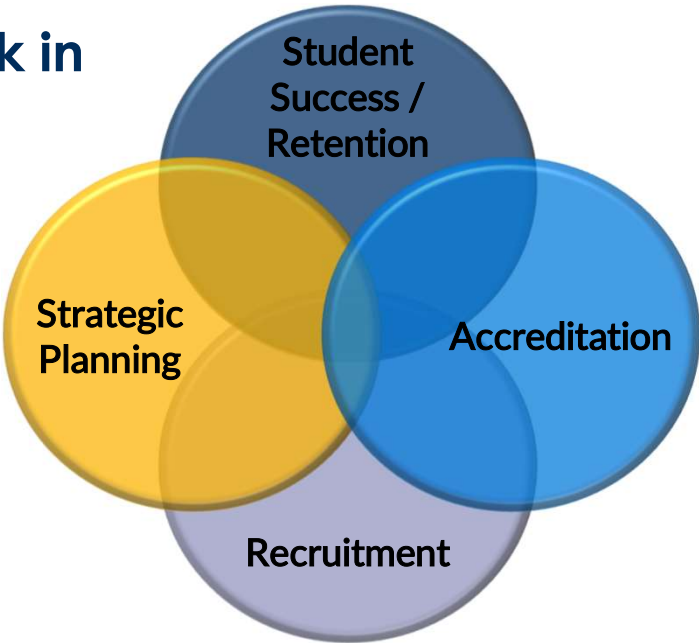


www.RuffaloNL.com/assessment

15

15

Informs your work in multiple areas:



16

16

Definition of Satisfaction:

“

When expectations are met or exceeded by the student’s perception of the campus reality

Schreiner & Juillerat, 1994



17

17

Matrix for prioritizing action

Very Dissatisfied

Very Satisfied

Very Unimportant

Very Important

Institutional Challenges

Institutional Strengths

Very Dissatisfied

Very Satisfied

Very Unimportant

Very Important



Copyright to 1994-2022 Ruffalo Noel Levitz

18

18

Julie Bryant
Vice President for Student Success, RNL

9



Multiple ways to impact student success

19

Student Success and Re-Enrollment Strategies

Student Success Strategies

- First-year transitions (orientation, FYE, and extended orientation)
- Academic advising/coaching/degree/pathways planning
- Course success assessment and planning
- Academic support
- Academic recovery
- Co-curricular programming
- Quality of housing and residence life
- Engaged integrated learning
- Quality services (minimization of run-around)
- Career development

Re-Enrollment Strategies

- CAN: Congratulating, Alerting, and Nudging
- Advising and registration campaigns each term
- Affiliation scans each term
- Value messaging
- Rhythm of the first-year parent and family campaigns
- Intent to re-enroll tracking
- Intentional connections to academic units
- Transcript request communication
- Financial aid reminders
- Hold management communication
- Housing/Residence life intent notices
- Qualified recruit-back (fall not spring, spring not fall)
- Second-year transitions beginning in term two
- Summer melt outreach



20

20



21



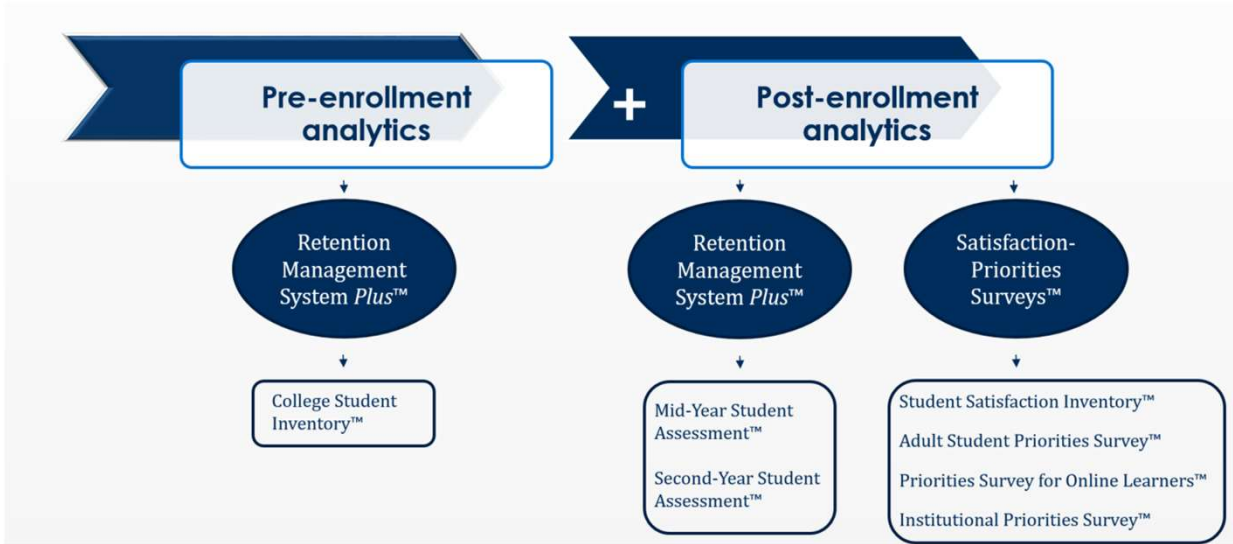
22

Effectiveness of key strategies

Practice	Institution Type	Using Method	Very or somewhat effective
Using student satisfaction assessments to make changes to address attrition	4-Year Private	89%	75%
	4-Year Public	77%	71%
	2-Year Public	90%	68%
Using an incoming student assessment to identify students' needs	4-Year Private	63%	70%
	4-Year Public	64%	72%
	2-Year Public	43%	61%

23

RNL Student Success



24

Improve retention by identifying the top needs of your newest students

Student-Identified
Priorities



Individual and
Institutional Action
Planning

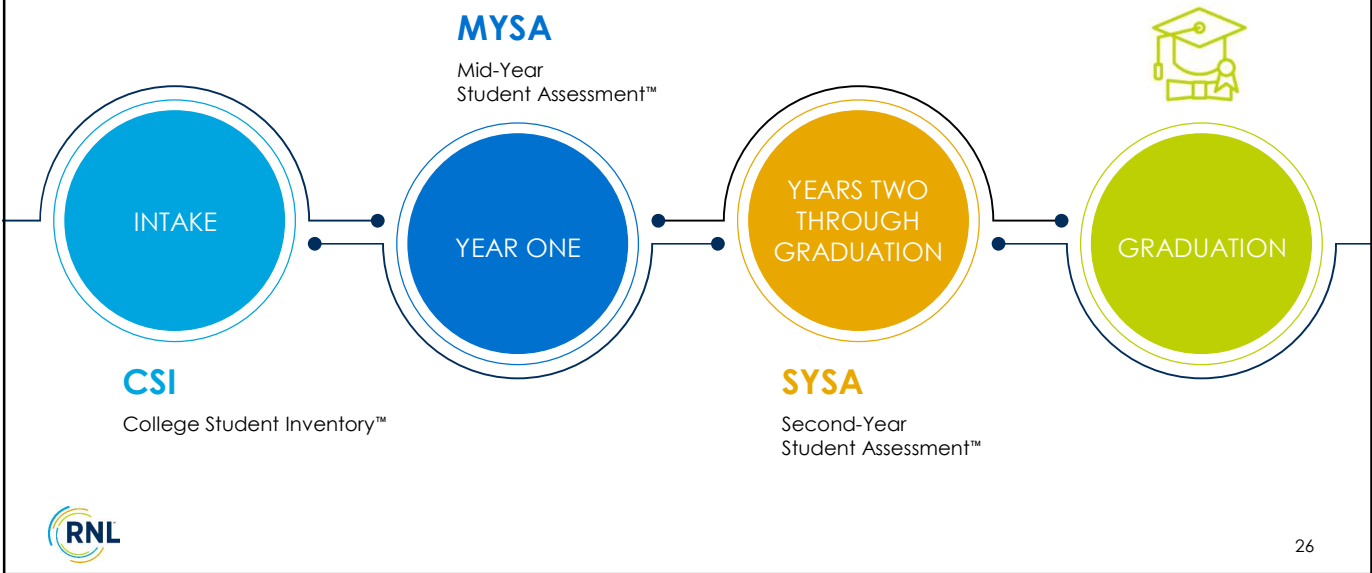
College Student Inventory™

- Administered to incoming first-year students (traditional/online/graduate); shortly before or early in their first term
- Results ready immediately
- Identify most drop-out prone, most receptive to assistance, and transfer/re-enrollment plans
- Pinpoint academic and non-academic risk factors
- Reviewed by student and advisor
- Retention Planning Reports provide summary data and top 10 recommendations for action

25

25

Early identification + early intervention to increase student success

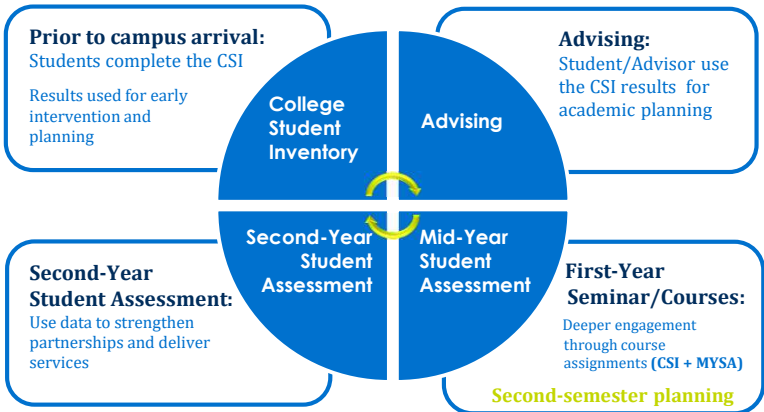


26

26

Integrating RMS Plus

Build a first- through fourth-term student success plan

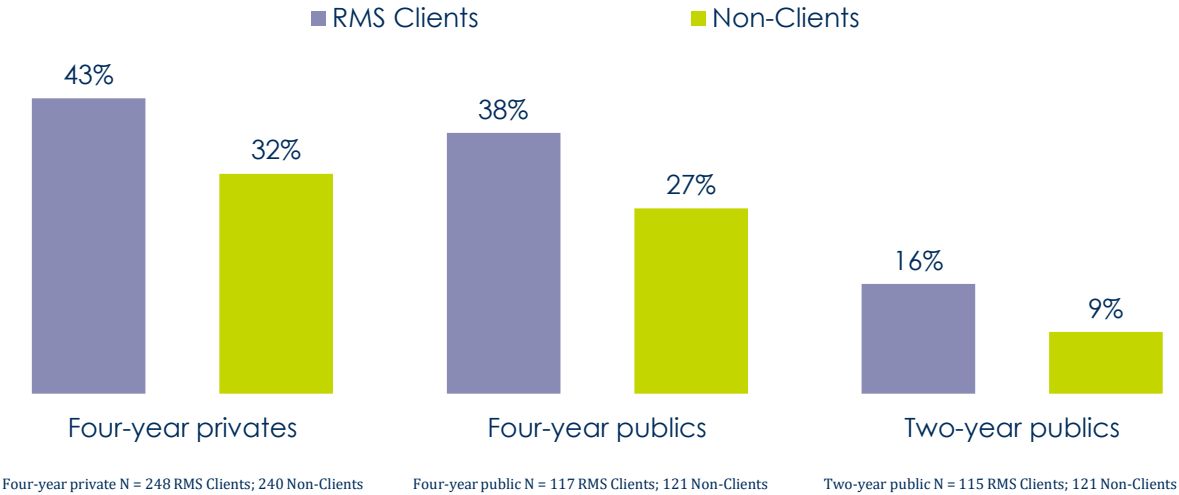


 For more information see: www.RuffaloNL.com/RMSPlus

27

27

Graduation Rates for RMS Clients vs. Non-Clients Across Institution Types



 RNL (2023). Internal Proprietary Data. Ruffalo Noel Levitz, Cedar Rapids, IA.
U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), [2018]. Graduation Rates. Retrieved from <https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/use-the-data-on-01/08/2023>

28

28

Understand the priorities of your currently enrolled students

Satisfaction within the context



of what is Important to your students

Satisfaction-Priorities Surveys™

- Comprehensive assessment across all class levels
- Captures experiences both inside and outside of the classroom
- Completed during the academic year (either fall or spring) with an online administration
- Results available in an interactive dashboard within three weeks
- Typically administered at least once every two years to track satisfaction shifts

www.RuffaloNL.com/SPSOoverview

29

29

Satisfaction-Priorities Surveys

Where is the institution meeting or failing to meet expectations?

Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI):
Traditional-aged students

Adult Student Priorities Survey (ASPS):
Adult Graduate and Undergrad

Priorities Survey for Online Learners (PSOL): Students in Online Learning Programs

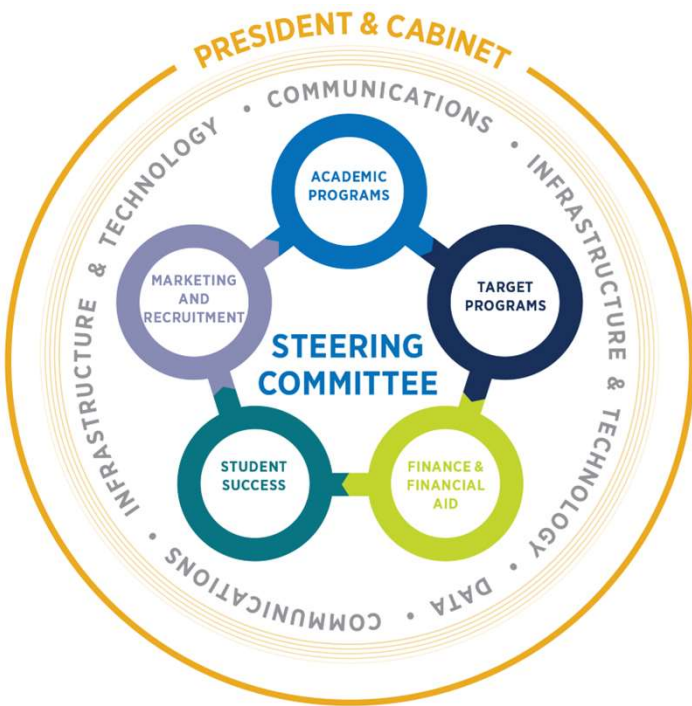


30

30

Share your
satisfaction data
with your
leadership and
key departments

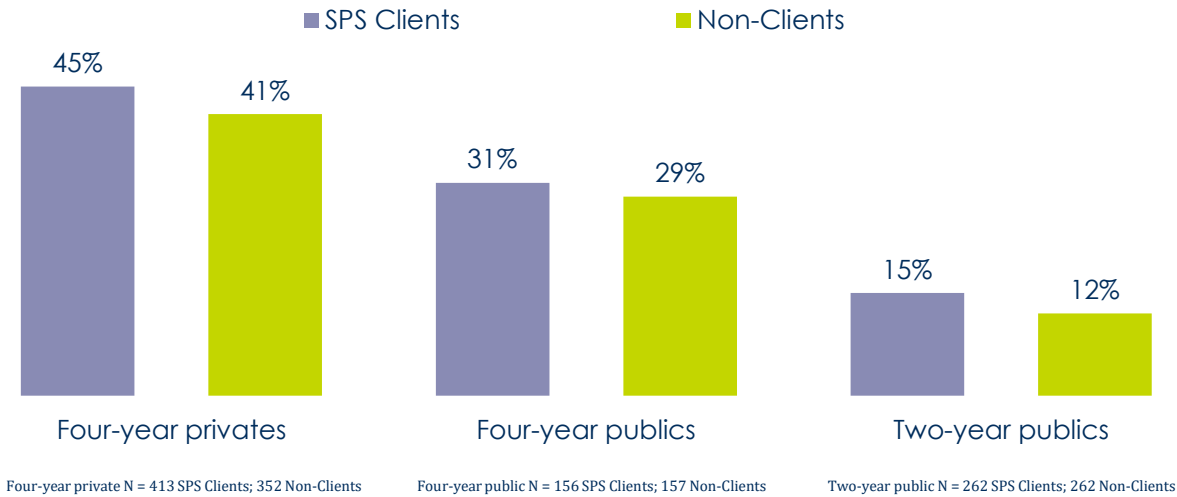
Consider creating a
satisfaction survey
steering committee to
distribute and discuss
the results and potential
actions to take



31

31

Graduation Rates for SPS Clients vs. Non-Clients Across Institution Types



RNL (2023). Internal Proprietary Data. Buffalo Noel Levitz, Cedar Rapids, IA.
U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), [2018]. Graduation Rates. Retrieved from <https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/use-the-data-on-01/08/2023>

32

32



Student
satisfaction at
ABHE Institutions

33

Data that matters to your
campus and other
ABHE institutions



34

ABHE Participating Institutions: Fall 2019-Spring 2022

SSI Form B: 21 institutions

- Alaska Christian College, AK
- Central Christian College of the Bible, MO
- College of Biblical Studies-Houston, TX
- Dallas Christian College, TX
- Emmaus Bible College, IA
- Faith Bible College International, ME
- God's Bible School and College, OH
- Grace Christian University, MI
- Hobe Sound Bible College, FL
- Johnson University, TN
- Kuyper College, MI
- Northpoint Bible College – Grand Rapids, MI
- Oak Hills Christian College, MN
- Ozark Christian College, MO
- Pacific Rim Christian University, HI
- Rosedale Bible College, OH
- Saint Louis Christian College, MO
- South Florida Bible College, FL
- Trinity College of Florida, FL
- Vanguard College, AB
- World Mission University, CA

SSI Form A: 15 institutions

- Allegheny Wesleyan College, OH
- Ascent College, VA
- Baptist Bible College, MO
- Calvary University, MO
- Davis College, NY
- Ecclesia College, AR
- Faith Baptist Bible College and Seminary, IA
- Hope International University, CA
- Lincoln Christian University, IL
- Manhattan Christian College, KS
- Penn View Bible Institute, PA
- Trinity Bible College, ND
- Union Bible College, IN
- Virginia Christian University, VA
- Washington University of Virginia, VA



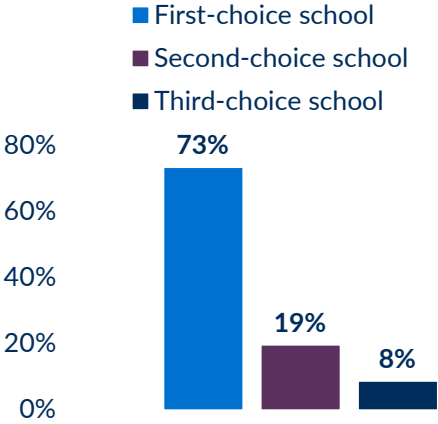
Recommend Form B going forward

35

35

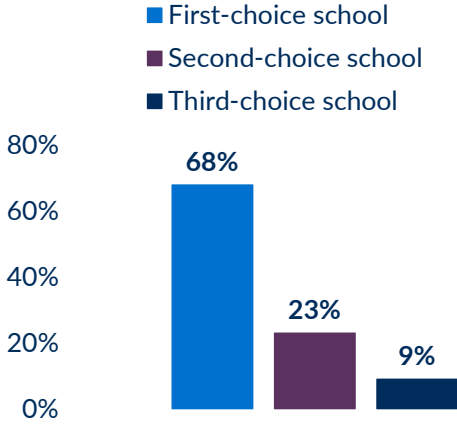
Demographic: Institutional Choice

ABHE Institutions



Choice	Percentage
First-choice school	73%
Second-choice school	19%
Third-choice school	8%

Four-year privates nationally



Choice	Percentage
First-choice school	68%
Second-choice school	23%
Third-choice school	9%



© Copyright 2022 Ruffalo Noel Levitz, LLC
2022 National Student Satisfaction and Priorities Report

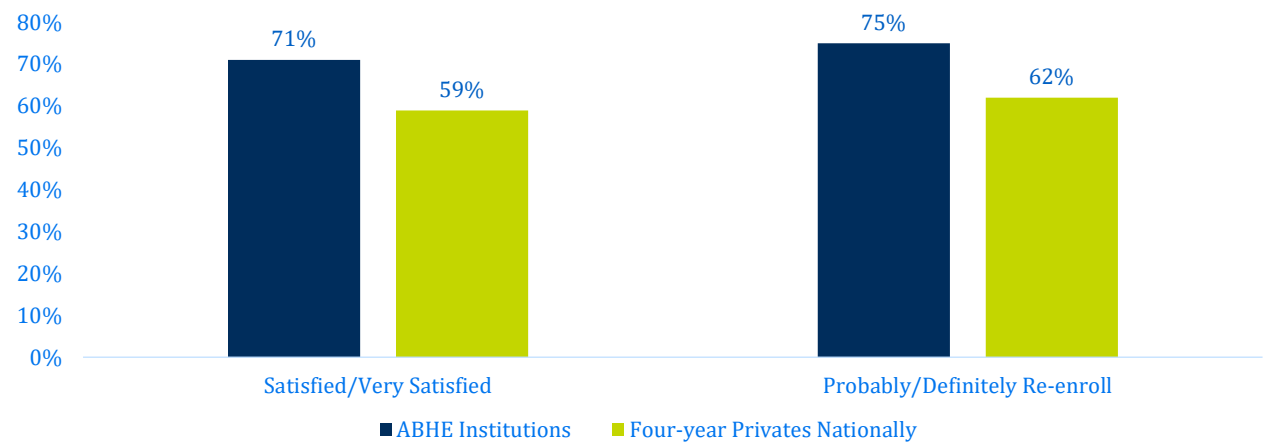
ABHE institutions 2019-22 (Form B) N = 2,169 from 21 institutions
Four-year privates nationally 2019-22 (Form B) N = 25,423 from 62 institutions

36

36

Overall satisfaction and likelihood to re-enroll

ABHE Schools compared with Four-Year Privates nationally



 © Copyright 2022 Ruffalo Noel Levitz, LLC
2022 National Student Satisfaction and Priorities Report

ABHE institutions 2019-22 (Form B) N = 2,169 from 21 institutions
Four-year privates nationally 2019-22 (Form B) N = 25,423 from 62 institutions

37

37

Top five strengths

ABHE institutions

Top strengths rated for ABHE institutions	Importance	Satisfaction
The quality of instruction I receive in most of my classes is excellent.	92%	74%
Students are made to feel welcome here.	91%	75%
The campus staff are caring and helpful.	91%	77%
The campus is safe and secure for all students.	89%	77%
My academic advisor is knowledgeable about requirements in my major.	89%	78%

Percentages indicate the proportions of "important"/"very important" and "satisfied"/"very satisfied" scores

Listed in order of importance

 © Copyright 2022 Ruffalo Noel Levitz, LLC
2022 National Student Satisfaction and Priorities Report

ABHE institutions 2019-22 (Form B) N = 2,169 from 21 institutions

38

38

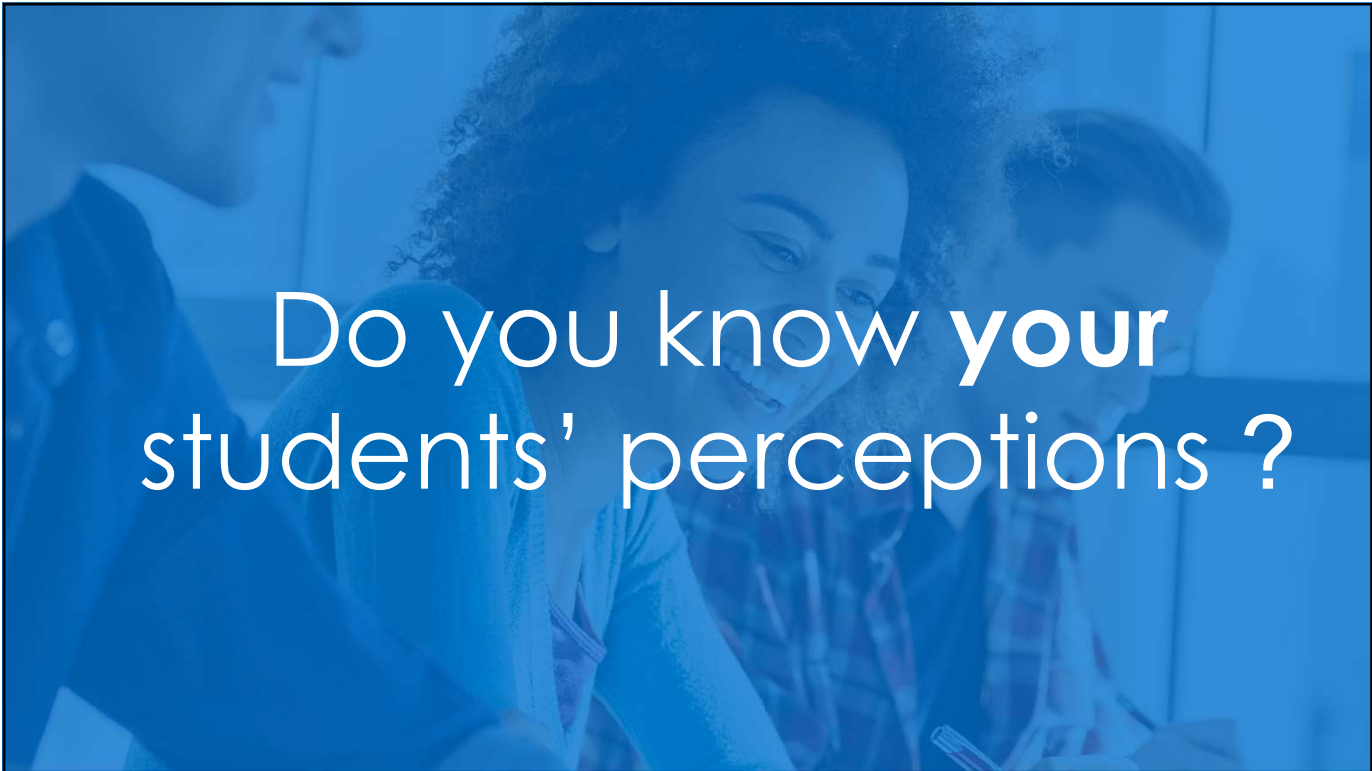
Top five challenges

ABHE institutions

Top challenges rated for ABHE institutions	Importance	Satisfaction
The content of the courses within my major is valuable.	92%	72%
Faculty are fair and unbiased in their treatment of individual students.	89%	69%
There are sufficient courses within my program of study available each term.	88%	66%
Students are free to express their ideas on this campus.	85%	65%
Faculty provide timely feedback about my academic progress.	86%	62%

Percentages indicate the proportions of "important"/"very important" and
"satisfied"/"very satisfied" scores

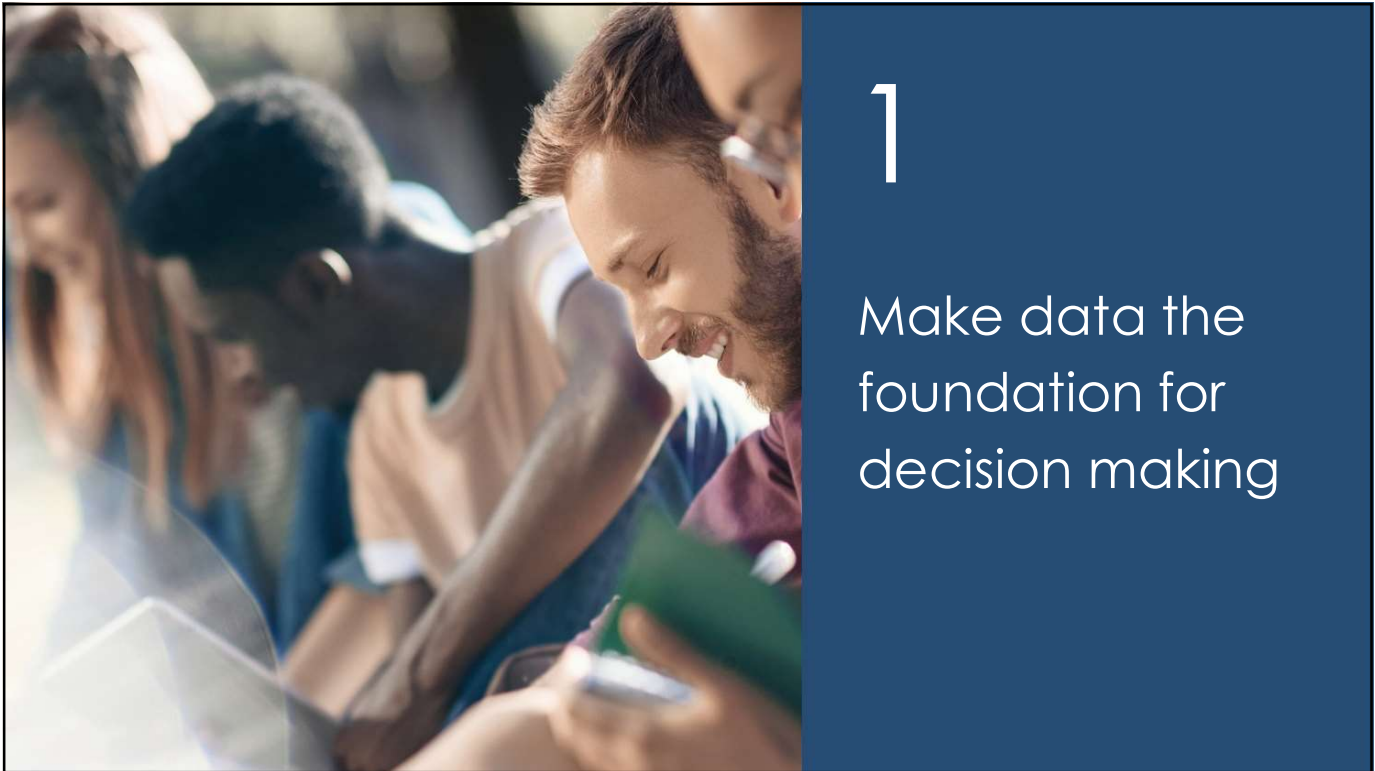
Listed in order of importance



Do you know **your**
students' perceptions ?



41



42



2

Collect all the data that are relevant to student success

43



3

Understand what the data are telling you

44



4

Take action
based on the
data

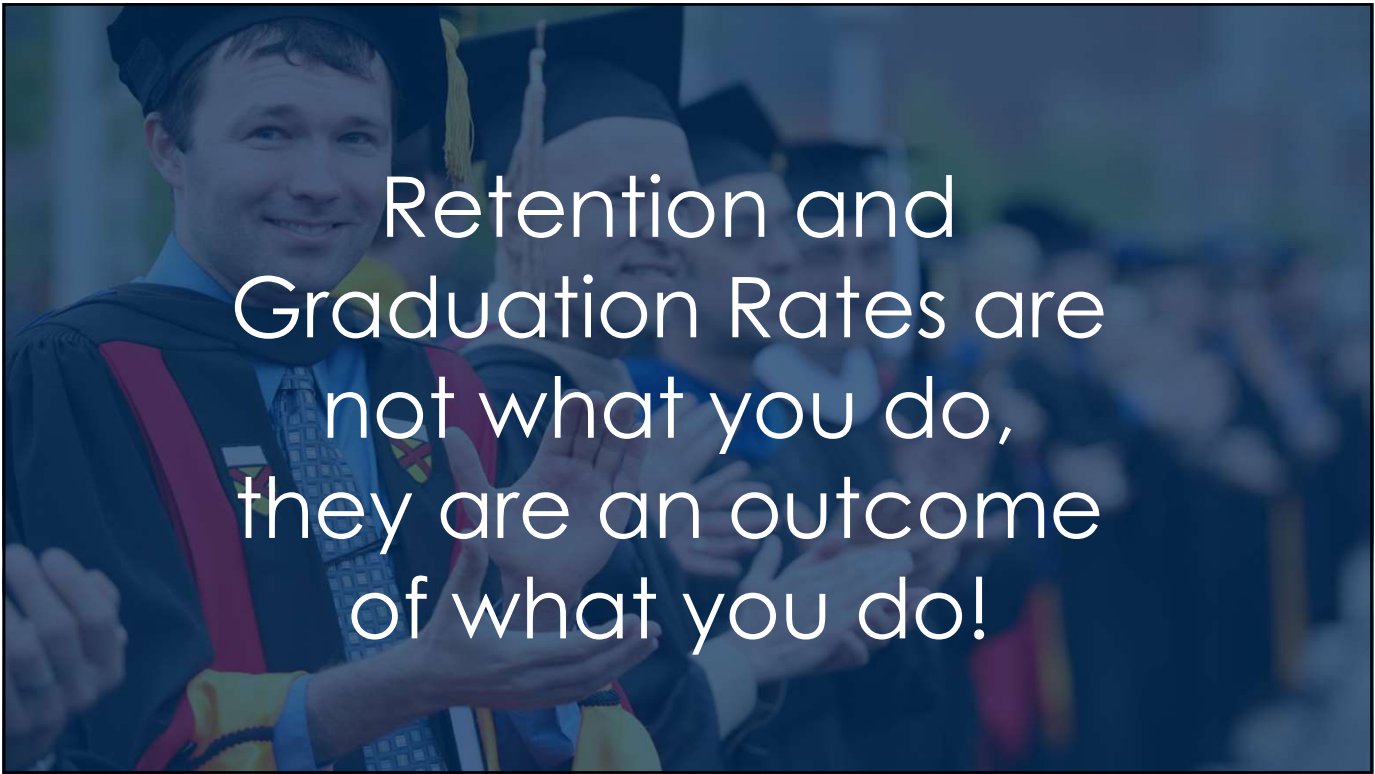
45



5

Use what you
know about
retention to
guide
recruitment

46



Retention and
Graduation Rates are
not what you do,
they are an outcome
of what you do!

47

Retention strategies & conversations for your campus

- 1 Do you know the priorities and expectations of your students?
- 2 Are you aware of the incoming students that are entering campus as retention risks?
- 3 How can you create more opportunities for student “investment” before classes begin?
- 4 What is the best way to ensure you have reliable and actionable data?
- 5 Who owns retention on your campus?



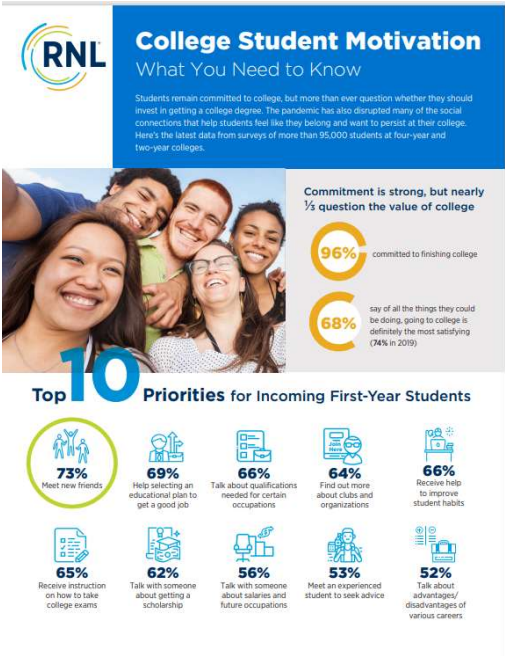
48

48

Final thoughts

Align strategies, resources, and tools

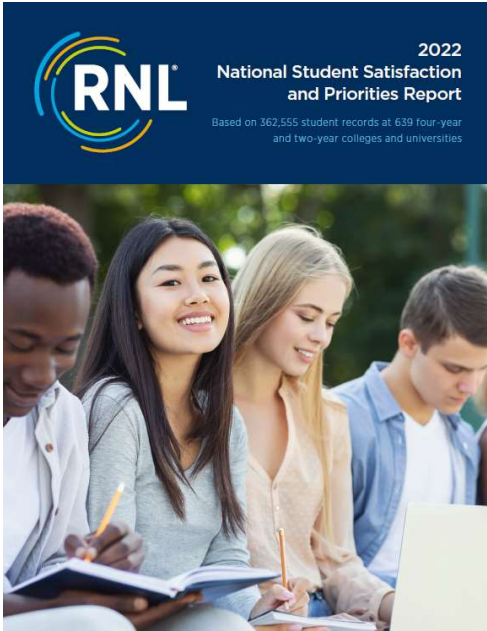
- Pre and post enrollment data are vital to identify at-risk students and essential services or programs that need to be strengthened.
- Tools are only as good as they are used – all efforts need to be coordinated and monitored using key enrollment/student success data throughout the process.
- Influencing students’ decisions to continue needs to happen early and throughout their enrollment at your institution.
- Focusing on student success yields positive results for both overall enrollment and future fundraising efforts.



Download the
2022 National Data
Infographic

www.RuffaloNL.com/RMSplus





Download the full
2022 National
Student Satisfaction
and Priorities Report

RuffaloNL.com/Satisfaction

 © Copyright 2022 Ruffalo Noel Levitz, LLC
2022 National Student Satisfaction and Priorities Report

51

51

Questions, Comments, Discussion





Julie Bryant
Vice President for Student Success

Julie.Bryant@RuffaloNL.com 800.876.1117 **toll free**
319.247.4735 **voice mail**
RuffaloNL.com

All material in this presentation, including text and images, is the property of RNL. Permission is required to reproduce information.

52

Julie Bryant
Vice President for Student Success, RNL