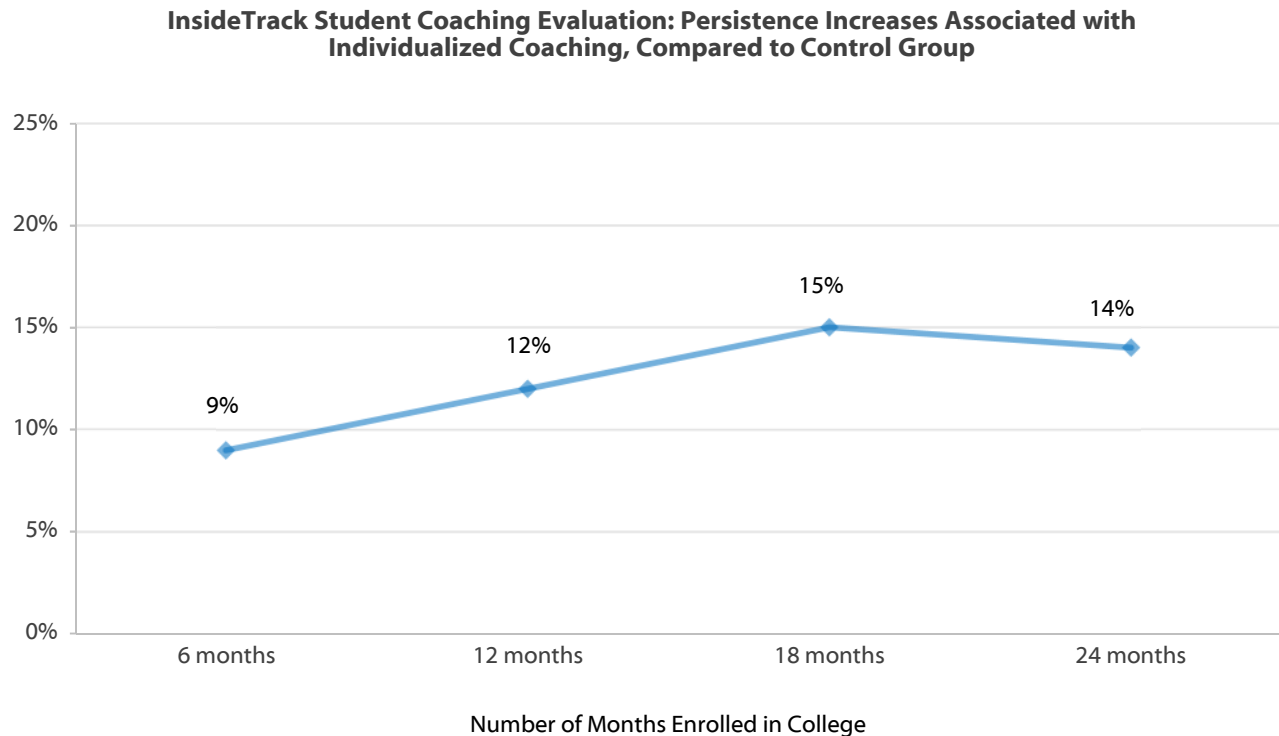


Individualized Coaching is Effective for Increasing Attainment and Persistence



A Portland-based company, InsideTrack, contracts with higher education institutions in all sectors to provide individualized student coaching to improve student success. The company conducted randomized trials at multiple institutions where they randomly divided students at a school into two groups, providing coaching to one group and not to the other, in order to observe the effect of the coaching experience on retention and graduation. The National Bureau of Education Research evaluated many of those experiments, selecting those from the 2003-04 school year, to enable comparisons with certain national survey data, and the 2007-08 school year, as the most current year available at the time of evaluation.

The evaluation found that, when controlling for covariates (i.e. age, gender, high school GPA, SAT score), individualized coaching was associated with an approximately five percent increase in retention after six months, a 12 percent increase after 12 months, and a 14 percent increase after 24 months compared to the control group. Groups receiving coaching also saw levels of completion four percent higher than groups who did not receive coaching.

Individualized student coaching, in addition to more traditional advising financial and academic advising and counseling, has the potential to increase persistence and attainment rates and was more cost effective, in the case of this InsideTrack evaluation, than other previously studied methods of increasing attainment, such as increasing financial aid.

Source: Bettinger and Baker, The Effects of Student Coaching: An Evaluation of a Randomized Experiment in Student Advising, March 2014 (<http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.3102/01623737135005230>).

