

Trellis Research Services for Project Success Schools

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About Trellis Research



- Trellis Research provides colleges and policymakers with insight into student success through the lens of college affordability.
- We invite you to visit our library of publications at www.trelliscompany.org/research.
- Please follow us on Twitter @TrellisResearch for notifications of new research publications and discussions of a variety of higher education topics.

Types of Issues Our Research Helps Schools Address

- Non-matriculation of accepted students
- Student difficulties navigating administrative processes
- Understanding student satisfaction
- Identifying student support and technology needs during the pandemic
- Reasons why students leave the institution (and what can bring them back)
- Identifying the drivers of retention, graduation, and student loan repayment

Research Strategies Used

- Literature reviews of best practices
- Secondary research
- Surveys
- Structured and semi-structured interviews
- Focus groups
- Descriptive statistics
- Predictive analytics

Scopes of Work

- Establishes the boundaries of the work
- Clarifies assumptions
- Specifies the deliverables
- Identifies data needs
- Sets timelines
- States how data will be protected and purged

Standard and Customized Surveys, Focus Groups, and Interviews

Standard Research Projects

- Non-matriculation surveys
- Stop-out and re-engagement surveys
- Student experience surveys
- Student retention focus groups

Non-Matriculation Surveys

- Survey designed to investigate why accepted students fail to matriculate
- Common survey questions
- Typical findings?
 - Problems with financial aid
 - Course/Major offerings
 - Family/personal issues
 - Campus tours or visitations

Stop-Out and Re-engagement Surveys

- Survey to capture the reasons students are no longer enrolled and how the institution can re-engage stop-out students
- Common survey questions
- Typical findings?
 - Issues related to financial aid
 - Personal financial reasons
 - Academic issues
 - Transfer intentions

Student Experience Surveys

- Surveys designed to provide institution with a better understanding of their students, enrollment patterns, satisfaction with faculty and staff, financial aid, etc.
- Common survey questions:
 - Enrollment plans for the upcoming semester
 - Adequacy of technology (laptops, software, etc.)
 - Satisfaction with different course delivery methods
 - Satisfaction with registration, financial aid, student affairs, etc.
 - Open-entry response items on how the institution can support the student at this time
 - Other items of interest to the institution

Student Retention Focus Groups

- Focus groups with former and current students, as well as faculty/staff, to investigate the experiences of stop-out students
- Typical findings?
 - Financial aid or affordability reasons
 - Issues with work/school balance
 - Personal/family issues
 - Personal finances

Customized Research Projects

- Trellis Research is also available to do custom research projects [surveys, focus groups, interviews]
- Common research questions:
 - What are the impacts of COVID-19 on our students?
 - How can we better support our students during the pandemic?
 - How satisfied were students during orientation, registration, or other activities?
 - What are the technology needs of our students?



What is required of schools to field these projects?

- To field most of our survey, focus group, or interview projects, we will need:
 - Approval of a scope of work (SOW) and survey documents
 - Contact information for study population
 - First Name
 - Last Name
 - Email Address (Personal or Institutional, depending on initiative)
 - Other variables of interest, as determined by the institution
 - Such as: GPA, gender, race/ethnicity, last semester enrolled, credits earned, first-generation status, etc.

Deliverables

- Trellis will deliver a report of findings and present (via Zoom or other remote interface) to relevant staff at the Institution.
- For select projects, institutions will receive a list of students interested in enrollment
- The institution will report to Trellis how the research findings were implemented (**Research to Practice**).



Data Analyses: Cohort Default Rate (CDR) and Retention Analyses

Cohort Default Rate Analysis

- Default and delinquency analysis using National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS) data files and institutional data.
- Trellis creates a file of unduplicated borrowers from the institution's most recently closed cohort.
- The Institution matches a set of institutional variables to that cohort of borrowers.



Cohort Default Rate Analysis (cont.)

Field Names	Comments	Business Rules
Pell Grant	Student received a Pell grant at any point while attending the institution.	Y=Yes; N=No
Enrollment Status		G=Graduated; W=Withdrew
Program CIP Code	8-digit cipcode for student's program of study.	Must be numeric
GPA	Cumulative GPA on a 4.0 scale.	Must be numeric
Developmental Education	Student enrolled in a developmental education course at any point while attending the institution.	Y=Yes; N=No
Enrollment Intensity	Enrollment during their last semester.	F=Full-time; P=Part-time
Dependency Status	Status during last their semester enrolled.	D=Dependent; I=Independent

Cohort Default Rate Analysis (cont.)

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Retention Analysis

- Trellis conducts an analysis of student characteristics and how they relate to retention.
- The Institution provides a data file or file(s) containing institutional student-level data.



Retention Analysis (cont.)

- Gender
- Age
- Race/Ethnicity
- Dependency status
- HS GPA
- College GPA
- Standardized test scores
- Credit hours earned
- Credit hours dropped
- Transferred in
- Enrollment intensity
- In-state or out-of-state
- First generation
- Student major or college
- Took a development course
- Received financial aid
- Borrowed student loans
- Parents borrowed parent loans
- Pell eligibility
- Unmet need

Retention Analysis (cont.)

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Student Financial Wellness Survey

Cumulative Participation

Overall SFWS Metrics Spring 2018 – Fall 2020

Survey Population	1,287,142
Responses	100,414
Response Rate	7.8%
Completion Rate	83%
Median Time Spent	14 Minutes
States Included	25
2-Year	108
4-Year Public	32
4-Year Private	22
Total Number of Schools	162

Survey conducted in Spring 2018, Fall 2018, Fall 2019, Fall 2020



The SFWS includes questions on:

- Financial Security
- Knowledge of Higher Education Finance
- Paying for College
- Perceptions of Institutional Support
- Use of Credit
- Basic Needs Security

Student Financial Wellness Survey

Why Participate?



- Self-reported, online survey that documents the financial well-being and student success indicators of postsecondary students.
- The SFWS is 100% free for schools to use.
- Provides evidence that can open doors that are currently shut.

How are schools using the findings?

Planning: Develop baseline metrics, assess areas for program growth, target resources...

Financial education: Inform topic areas and instructional design for student loan counseling and financial education, assist with financial plans for graduation, ensure enrollment in safe financial products...

Financial resources: Create resource networks, develop financial crisis intervention teams, distribute emergency aid...

Fundraising and community engagement: Demonstrate need for student support, advocate for resources, engage community partners...

Steps to Participate

- Contact your Institutional Support Consultant or Carla Fletcher, Senior Research Analyst. Carla.Fletcher@trelliscompany.org
- Provide letter of intent to participate.
- Work with Trellis to gain any Institutional Review Board approval.
- Provide a sample of students (i.e., email address and select demographics) to Trellis prior to survey administration.
- Ask your IT department to ensure email delivery
- Schedule outreach to students
- Promote the survey and consider incentives for completion

Research to Practice

Trellis Research will provide you with the evidence you need for change . . . and will help you translate that need into practice.

Questions?

Please follow us on Twitter: @TrellisResearch 

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