A Comprehensive Program for College Student Retention

presented at the 2001 Midwest Regional Meeting of the College Board

William Collins

University of Michigan
The Retention Issue

- 63% of 4-year college students earn a bachelor’s degree by age 30 (within 11 years of high school graduation)
- 6-year graduation rate is about 50%
- Mean “time-to-completion” of bachelor’s degree is about 5 years

Factors Affecting Retention

- Household Income
- Parental Education/Occupation
- Quality of Prior Schooling
- Prior Levels of Achievement
- College “Climate”/ “Fit”
- Campus support and resources
How can we bolster academic achievement and social adaptation among college students so as to promote their retention and graduation?
A Related Issue

- There are many students with outstanding potential for college success, but who do not have the advantages of affluence that are known to be related to graduation.

- These students are often highly motivated to succeed and will make significant contributions to society if afforded access to college and early support.
A Comprehensive Model

- Summer Bridge Program
- Summer Orientation
- Developmental Academic Advising
- Intensive Course Instruction
- Tutoring
- Study Groups
- Mentoring Program
Summer Bridge Program

- Intensive Academic Development
  (English, Math, Computer & Study Skills)
- Developmental Advising
  (Decision-making, Conflict Management)
- Establishment of Support Network
  (Faculty, Staff, Students)
- Build Confidence in Realistic Setting
  (honesty, commitment, achievement)
Summer Orientation

- Placement Testing
- Course Selection
- Academic Advising
- Introduction to Support Network
Intensive Course Instruction

- Extended Meeting Time
- Smaller class size
- Collaborative Learning
- Active Learning
- Focus on Effectiveness Strategies
- Departmental Testing/Grading
Academic Advising

- Developmental Advising
- Academic Progress Monitoring System (Mid-term Estimate, Student Progress Report)
- Problem-Solving Strategies (Roommate, finances, peer expectations)
- Academic-Career Explorations (freshmen interest groups)
- Personal Adjustment Issues (existential crises)
Additional Programs

- Tutoring
- Mentoring Program
- Study Groups
- CSP 100 - Academic Socialization
- Summer Scholarship Program
- Campaign Excel
CSP Performance Measures

- Graduation Rate: 6-yr: 70%; overall: 76%
- Overall GPA: 2.6
- New Freshmen: 505
- Seniors: 523
- All CSP Students: 1,790
- Advising Contacts: 7,016
- Intensive Course Enrollment: 1,102
- Students in Good Academic Standing: 96%
Conclusion

- A comprehensive program of intensive instruction, systematic advising and student development can bolster academic achievement, retention, and graduation in college students.