Non-Returning Student Survey
Fall 2012

Southeastern Louisiana University
Office of Institutional Research and Assessment

July 2013

Table of Contents

Introduction

The first Strategic Priority for Southeastern is "To engage a diverse population of learners with powerful experiences." In order to better understand the reasons why students leave Southeastern before graduating, Institutional Research & Assessment conducted the Non-Returning Student Survey, a phone survey of Fall 2011 cohort students who were not enrolled in Fall 2012. Students who had been suspended were excluded from the sample. This report details the results of the Non-Returning Student Survey.

Method

Participants

The population for this study were the 688 students of the Fall 2011 cohort who were not enrolled in Fall 2012 and had not been suspended. After repeated attempts, 317 students remained unreachable by the available phone numbers, 152 refused to be part of the survey, and 219 surveys were completed, for a response rate of 59%. Table 1 provides a demographic comparison of the population and the sample.

Table 1
Characteristics of the Sample vs. the Population

	Sample	Population
Size	219	688
ACT Range		
17 or Below	2.7%	4.7%
18 or 19	17.8%	17.0%
20-23	48.4%	54.1%
24 or Higher	18.3%	24.3%
Housing		
Off Campus	54.8%	70.8%
On Campus	32.4%	29.2%
Gender		
Female	48.4%	51.2%
Male	38.8%	48.8%
Race		
Asian	0.9%	2.8%
Black or African American	9.1%	9.0%
Hispanic or Latino	2.7%	4.1%
American Indian or Alaska Native	0.0%	0.1%
Two Or More Races	5.9%	8.7%
Unknown	0.9%	1.0%
White	67.6%	74.3%

Procedure

The Office of Institutional Research worked with Admissions to identify responsible, personable orientation leaders to conduct the phone survey. These students were trained and supervised by Institutional Research staff. The survey was conducted from 6 pm - 9 pm Monday through Thursday.

Instrument

The survey first asked a series of questions to determine if students planned on returning to Southeastern in the future, and if they had intended to obtain a degree when they began at Southeastern. Respondents who indicated they did not plan on returning to Southeastern were given a list of possible reasons why a student might leave college, and were asked to rate whether it was a major reason, a minor reason, or not a reason at all in their decision to leave Southeastern. Students who indicated that they did plan to continue their education at Southeastern were first asked when they planned to return to Southeastern. They were then given a list of possible reasons why a student might stop attending Southeastern for a while, and were asked to rate whether each item was a major reason, a minor reason, or not a reason at all in their decision to "stop-out." The final section asked for demographic information that is not collected as a part of the application or registration process, such as the number of children a student has and how far they have to travel to campus. The entire survey can be found in Appendix A.

Results

The first set of questions was to determine whether students were: 1) Drop-Outs, those students who no longer plan to continue their education at Southeastern, including those who plan on or have transferred elsewhere; 2) Stop-outs, those students who plan to return to Southeastern at some point. Based on these definitions, 70% (n=154) of the respondents are Drop-Outs and 30% (n=65) are Stop-outs.

Stop Outs

The majority of the Stop-outs (37%, n=24) plan on returning to Southeastern in Fall 2013, while 22% (n=14) planned on returning to Southeastern within the next year. Eight percent (8%, n=5) plan on returning within the next two years, and 15% (n=10) are not sure when they will retrun.

Next, Stop-outs were asked to indicate whether each of nine possible reasons was a Major Reason, a Minor Reason, or Not a Reason for their decision to stop attending Southeastern for a while. "Had family responsibilities to take care of" was the item with the largest endorsement, with 60% of respondents indicating it was a reason they stopped attending Southeastern. This was followed by "Academic Problems" which 54% of respondents indicated was a reason they stopped attending.

Table 2 provides the percentage of endorsement for Major Reason, Minor Reason, and Not a Reason for each item.

Table 2
Stop-Out Reasons

	Major Reason	Minor Reason	Not a Reason
Had family responsibilities to take care of	35.4%	21.5%	26.2%
Academic problems	29.2%	24.6%	29.2%
Need to earn more money	35.4%	16.9%	30.8%
Needed a break from school	16.9%	27.7%	38.5%
Work interfered with school	18.5%	10.8%	53.8%
Could not schedule the classes you needed	7.7%	9.2%	66.2%
Health reasons	4.6%	10.8%	67.7%
Military obligation	6.2%	6.2%	70.8%
Religious obligation	4.6%	6.2%	72.3%

Drop Outs

Most of the Drop-outs (81%) intend to finish their education elsewhere. When asked what school they have or will enroll in, the most commonly cited school was Baton Rouge Community College. Table 3 provides the schools students identified as having enrolled in or planning to enroll in.

Table 3
Schools Where Respondents Have or Plan to Enroll

School	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
Aveda	4	4.1%
Boston University	1	1.0%
BRCC	15	15.5%
Calhoun Community	1	1.0%
Compass Career	1	1.0%
Culinary Institute of Baton Rouge	1	1.0%
Delgado	14	14.4%
Fauker State Community College	1	1.0%
Fullsail University	1	1.0%
Grand Canyon University	1	1.0%
Hans Community College	1	1.0%
IPT	1	1.0%
Louisiana Culinary Institute	1	1.0%
Louisiana Tech	2	2.1%
LSU	10	10.3%
LTC	1	1.0%
Med Lance	1	1.0%
New Orleans Seminary	1	1.0%
Nicholls	1	1.0%
Northshore Technical Community College	5	5.2%
Nunez Community College	2	2.1%
Our Lady of the Lake	2	2.1%
Palamar Community College	1	1.0%
RPCC	4	4.1%

School	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
South Central LA Tech	1	1.0%
Southern Univeristy	3	3.1%
Southwest Community College	2	2.1%
Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary	1	1.0%
Tarrent Community College in Texas	1	1.0%
Trade School	1	1.0%
Tulane	2	2.1%
ULL	2	2.1%
ULM	1	1.0%
University North Florida	1	1.0%
University College of Dublin	1	1.0%
University of Phoenix	2	2.1%
UNO	5	5.2%

Respondents were then asked what was the <u>main</u> reason they decided to attend another school. Thirty-four percent (34%) of the respondents indicated Southeastern did not have the major in which they were interested. Seventeen percent (17%) said they decided to attend another school because it is closer to home. An additional 11% transferred because of financial reasons. All the responses can be found in Appendix B.

Next, Drop-outs were asked to indicate whether each of thirty-eight possible reasons was a Major Reason, a Minor Reason, or Not a Reason for their decision to leave Southeastern. "Decided to attend a different college" was the item with the largest endorsement, with 66% of respondents indicating it was a reason they left Southeastern. This was followed by "Dissatisfied with your grades" (54%) and "Moved to a new location" (48%).

Table 4 provides the percentage of endorsement for Major Reason, Minor Reason, and Not a Reason for each item.

Table 4
Percentage of Endorsement for Major Reason, Minor Reason, and Not a Reason

	Major Reason	Minor Reason	Not a Reason
Decided to attend a different college	45.4%	20.2%	34.5%
Dissatisfied with your grades	18.1%	35.4%	46.5%

Table 4 Percentage of Endorsement for Major Reason, Minor Reason, and Not a Reason cont.			
	Major Reason	**Minor Reason**	**Not a Reason**
Moved to a new location	28.2%	19.8%	51.9%
Tired of commuting to Southeastern	18.5%	23.8%	57.7%
Too much conflict between the responsibilities of family and school	13.8%	27.6%	58.6%
Family responsibilities were too great	16.3%	24.8%	58.9%
Family or personal health-related problem	22.0%	16.7%	61.4%
Too much stress	10.3%	26.7%	62.9%
The major you wanted was not available at Southeastern	23.4%	12.1%	64.5%
Southeastern was too large for you	1.9%	16.9%	64.9%
The cost of gas was too high to commute	9.5%	22.4%	67.2%
Too much conflict between the responsibilities of work and school	6.9%	24.1%	69.0%
Suspended or placed on probation	15.9%	15.1%	69.0%
Tuition & fees too high	8.2%	22.7%	69.1%
Dissatisfied with your major	13.7%	16.1%	69.4%
Wanted a break from your college studies	9.9%	20.6%	69.5%
Wanted to get work experience	10.3%	19.7%	70.1%
Encountered unexpected expenses	8.4%	21.0%	70.6%
Did not receive enough financial aid	11.8%	16.0%	72.3%
Did not have the study skills required to succeed in college	7.3%	20.2%	72.6%
Lost your TOPS Scholarship	12.9%	12.9%	74.2%
You were disappointed with the quality of instruction at Southeastern	7.3%	18.5%	74.2%
Could not find part-time work	5.1%	19.5%	75.4%
Accepted a full-time job	12.9%	10.3%	75.9%
Did not feel like you fit in	3.1%	20.5%	76.4%
Courses were too difficult	4.0%	18.3%	77.8%
Dissatisfied with the social life at Southeastern	5.0%	16.5%	78.5%
Had problems scheduling classes	6.5%	14.5%	79.0%
Did not intend to get a degree when you started at Southeastern	5.4%	15.4%	79.2%
Table 4			

Percentage of Endorsement for Major Reason, Minor Reason, and Not a Reason cont.	Major Reason	Minor Reason	Not a Reason
Academic advising was inadequate	3.2%	16.1%	80.6%
Southeastern was too small for you	0.8%	17.8%	81.4%
Courses were not challenging	3.2%	14.5%	82.3%
Could not get into the program you wanted	7.3%	8.1%	84.7%
Could not find and/or afford child care	4.7%	8.5%	86.8%
Could not find affordable housing you liked	3.3%	9.8%	86.9%
Your parents and/or other relatives influenced you to quit	2.4%	10.2%	87.4%
There were too many required courses	2.4%	15.3%	82.3%
Impersonal attitudes of college faculty and/or staff	3.3%	9.9%	86.8%
Southeastern did not promote an atmosphere that was conducive to learning	3.2%	8.9%	87.9%
Unhappy with Southeastern's rules and regulations	2.5%	7.4%	90.1%
Inadequate facilities for physically handicapped students	4.2%	5.0%	90.8%
Credit card debt was too much	1.8%	5.3%	92.1%
Experienced racism, prejudice or sexism	1.7%	5.8%	92.6%
Dealing with hurricane related problems	1.7%	4.3%	94.0%

Difficult Course(s)

Students were asked if they had problems with any particular course. Eighty-three respondents (38%) identified a particular course or courses with which they had problems. Math was the most commonly cited course, with 59 respondents (71%) indicating a particular math course or just math in general. The next most commonly cited type of course was biology (8 respondents - 10%), followed by English (7 respondents - 8%). All courses and any comments made about them can be found in Appendix C.
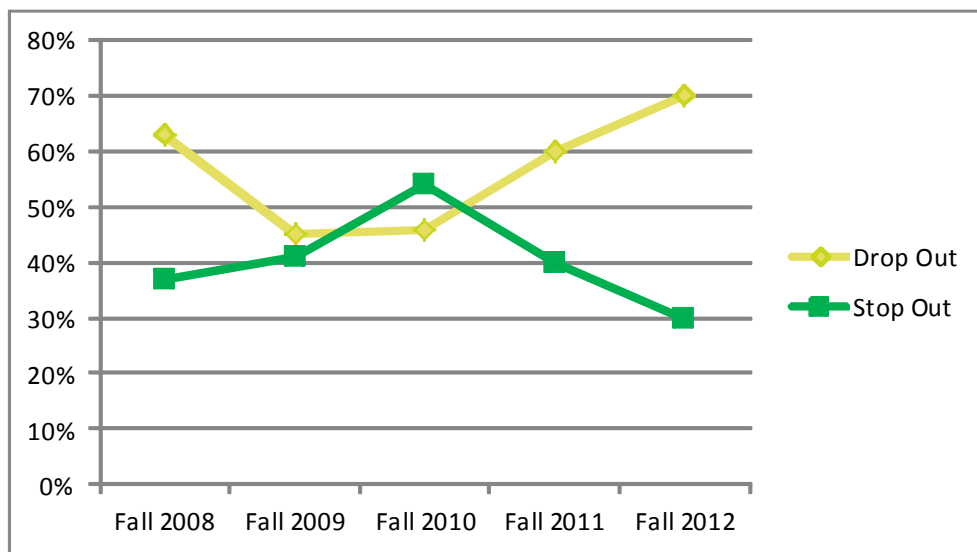
Demographics of Drop-Outs and Stop-Outs

The last portion of the survey asked participants for demographic information that is not readily available as part of the student record system. Answers to these questions help give a better understanding as to what type of student will leave Southeastern either temporarily or permanently. The vast majority of students (85%) have never been married, and do not have children (80%). Over a fourth (27%) of the respondents traveled more than 30 miles (one way) to Southeastern's main campus, while another 27% lived on campus. Over half (55%) of the respondents worked off campus. An additional 5% worked on campus. Twenty-five percent (25%) of those who worked, spent more than 30 hours a week working, with an additional 35%

spending 21-30 hours a week working. Twenty-five percent (25%) of the respondents are first-generation college students, which according to Terenzini et al (1996) is a student who has no parent with any college or university experience.

Comparison to Previous Years

The proportion of students who are stop-outs (plan to return to Southeastern) vs. drop-outs is decreasing. In Fall 2010, the proportion was 54%, it was 40% in Fall 2011, and this year it was only 30%. The graph below shows the change over the past five years.

For the past 5 years, "Need to earn more money" was the first or second ranked reason for students stopping out. This year it was number 3, with "Had family responsibilities to take care of" and "Academic problems" ranking above it.

As in the past, the number 1 reason students dropped out was "Decided to attend a different college".   However, the second ranked reason, "Dissatisfied with Grades" is different from the past. In 2010 and 2011, this was not in the type five reasons, and in 2009 and 2008 it was ranked number five.

References

Terenzini, P.T., Springer, L. Yaeger, P.M., Pascarella, E.T., & Nora, A. (1996). First-generation
  college students: Characteristics, experiences, and cognitive development. <u>Research in
  Higher Education</u>, <u>37(1)</u>, 1-22.

Appendix A
Non-Returning Student Survey

Hello, my name is _____ and I am calling from the Southeastern Louisiana University. To better serve our students, we are conducting a confidential and voluntary survey of former Southeastern students who are not enrolled here this semester. The survey will take only a few minutes. Keep in mind that all answers are strictly confidential. Your participation is voluntary. You may stop at any time without penalty, and if you wish not to answer a particular question, please say so. For quality control, your call may be monitored. All questions pertaining to this survey should be addressed to Dr. Michelle Hall. My supervisor may call once our interview is completed to insure that I am conducting it properly.

Intro questions

1. Do you plan to continue your education? *(1=No, 2=Yes)*
    If no, go to Non-Returning
    If yes continue to intro 2

2. a. Do you plan to continue your education at Southeastern or somewhere else?
        If Southeastern, go to Stop Out questions
        (1=Southeastern, 2= somewhere else)
    b. Have you enrolled in another school yet?
        1=No 2=Yes
        If No got to Non-Returning
    c. What school have/will you enroll(ed) in?

    d. What is the main reason you decided to attend _____ ?
        Go to Non-Returning Questions

Non-Returning:

I am now going to read some reasons why a student might leave college. For each reason, please tell me whether it was a major reason, a minor reason, or not a reason that you decided to leave Southeastern.
(1=Major Reason, 2=Minor Reason, 3=Not a Reason)

1. Family or personal health-related problem
2. Wanted a break from your college studies
3. Moved to a new location
4. Did not intend to get a degree when you started at Southeastern
5. Tired of commuting to Southeastern
6. Could not find and/or afford child care
7. Family responsibilities were too great
8. Southeastern was too small for you
9. Southeastern was too large for you
10. Did not feel like you fit in
11. Your parents and/or other relatives influenced you to quit

12. Dissatisfied with your grades
13. Suspended or placed on probation
14. Courses were too difficult
15. Courses were not challenging
16. Southeastern did not promote an atmosphere conducive to learning
17. There were too many required courses
18. You were disappointed with the quality of instruction at Southeastern
19. The major you wanted was not available at Southeastern
20. Could not get into the program you wanted
21. Dissatisfied with your major
22. Academic advising was inadequate
23. Had problems scheduling classes
24. Lost your TOPS Scholarship
25. Did not have the study skills required to succeed in college
26. Could not find affordable housing you liked
27. Unhappy with Southeastern's rules and regulations
28. Impersonal attitudes of college faculty and/or staff
29. Dissatisfied with the social life at Southeastern
30. Experienced racism, prejudice or sexism
31. Inadequate facilities for physically handicapped students
32. Encountered unexpected expenses
33. Did not receive enough financial aid
34. Decided to attend a different college
35. Could not find part-time work
36. Wanted to get work experience
37. Accepted a full-time job
38. Too much conflict between the responsibilities of work and school
39. Too much conflict between the responsibilities of family and school
40. Too much stress
41. Dealing with hurricane related problems
42. The cost of gas was too high to commute
43. Credit card debt was too much
44. Tuition & Fees too high

Stop-Out questions

1. When do you plan to return to Southeastern
   1 - Next semester
   2 - Within the next year
   3 - Within the next two years
   4 - Within the next five years
   5 - Not sure at this time

For the following reasons I read, please tell me if they were a minor reason, a major reason, or no reason at all for why you decided to stop attending Southeastern for a while.
(1=Major Reason, 2=Minor Reason, 3=Not a Reason)

2.   Needed to earn more money
3.   Had family responsibilities to take care of
4.   Needed a break from school
5.   Military obligation
6.   Religious obligation
7.   Work interfered with school
8.   Academic problems
9.   Health reasons
10.   Could not schedule the classes you needed

Demographics:

Southeastern is looking for ways to help students remain in school. The following information may help us better meet the needs of students like yourself.

1.   Did you have problems with any particular course?
                If yes, which course(s)?

2.   What is your marital status?
        1-Never Married
        2-Married
        3-Divorced
        4-Separated
        5-Widowed
        6-Refused

3.   Do you have any children under the age of 18 living with you?
                1-None
                2-One
                3-Two
                4-Three
                5-Four or more

4. The last time you attended Southeastern, how many miles did you have to travel (one way) to reach Southeastern's main campus, or did you live on campus?
    1-Lived on campus
    2-Less than 5 miles
    3-Between 5 and 10 miles
    4-Between 11 and 20 miles
    5-Between 21 and 30 miles
    6-More than 30 miles

5. Did you work on or off campus?
    1-Did not work   **(Skip to Question 6)**
    2-Worked on campus
    3-Worked off campus
    4-Worked both on and off campus

6. How many hours did you work a week?
    1-No more than ten hours
    2-Eleven to twenty hours
    3-Twenty-one to thirty hours
    4-More than thirty hours

7. What was your Mother's highest level of education?
    1-No high school diploma
    2-High School diploma/GED
    3-Some college
    4-Associate Degree
    5-Bachelor's Degree
    6-Graduate or Professional Degree
    7-Unknown or refused

8. What was your Father's highest level of education?
    1-No high school diploma
    2-High School diploma/GED
    3-Some college
    4-Associate Degree
    5-Bachelor's Degree
    6-Graduate or Professional Degree
    7-Unknown or refused

Thank you for your time. If you have any questions regarding this survey, please contact:
Dr. Michelle Hall
in the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment
(985) 549-2077

Appendix B
What is the main reason you decided to attend _____?

- semester at selu, acted irresponibly, lost financial aid and couldn't afford selu
- animation program
- at the time they did not have the radiology program
- Because he has a warrent out for his arrest in hammond
- Because she wanted to move back home.
- Because southeastern didnt have the major she wanted
- because we did not have sonography or ultrasound, ZT was junk, 2nd floor flooded, DISGUSTING
- Better engineering program
- better law program at lsu and no law program at southeastern
- changed majors to engineering
- cheaper
- cheaper than Southeastern
- classes were easier
- Close to home for the time being
- close to my house and work
- closer to family
- closer to family and job
- closer to home
- Closer to home
- Closer to home, baseball
- couldn't pick major, classes were unsatisfactory, thinks math was a joke
- Didnt like the math program at southeastern
- family moved 2 years go; moved with them
- financial reasons
- focuses more on what your going to school for
- for a degree in p-tech
- for architecture
- for general hygiene program
- for lpa program and wll come back to southeastern
- friendsattended/ wanted to be in the mission
- from floria wanted to play soccer
- get a business degree in office technology
- going back to UNO, closer to home
- good culinary program, close to home
- good lpn program
- got pregnant & would rather take care of daughter and go to class one night a week
- had to move back home because of pregnancy
- handles paper work very unprofessionally and leaves the student in a bind
- have major that she wanted to major in... computer science, concentration in multimedia & visual communication
- its cheaper
- Liked New Orleans and location.
- live in slidell, closer to home, taking online classes

- living the dorm and commuting during br was too much
- Lost tops and couldnt afford to pay without a long.
- Main reason she left southeastern is because she couldnt pass math.
- Major, LSU had a better criminal justice major
- Money
- Money issues
- moved to Indianapolis
- moving to Ireland, one of the best engineering programs in the world
- moving, to arizona
- needed to be closer to home
- nursing program agreement w oll
- One of the famous universities, sister is a graduate there, great teachers, problem finding an on campus job, being an international student can not work outside, intern, anything would have helped. build resume.
- original goal, many scholarship opputrunities for incoming freshmen, came to just complete prereqs., do not have mechanical engineering program
- pick up grades before returning to selu
- prices, cheaper to attend
- quicker route. ready to start working
- really hands on
- scholarship
- SELU did not offer major that student wanted to major in
- selu didnt have medical coding and billing degree
- selu had no programs to finish required classes cheap
- slu did not have internation studies
- smaller classes, smaller school
- Sonography program is not listed at southeastern
- southeastern didn't offer what he was looking for
- suspended for low GPA boosting GPA
- teachers werent great, had to drive a lot, started having car troubles.started a business
- that was what i went to school for
- the nursing program
- the price
- they had her major, vet-tech
- They have an automachanic program
- To be closer to home
- to pursue a degree in culinary because i want to be a chef.
- to raise my GPA
- tuition was cheaper
- tuition was cheaper and wanted to get pre-reqs out of the way
- two year program, to do a process technology, more hands on learning, methonal unit, quicker to achieve a job
- uninterested in classes
- wanted to do hair and makeup

- was not working well for me
- we moved
- welding

Appendix C
Did you have problems with any particular course?

- all
- Alot of problems with Math, the 155.
- Art History- too much information to take in at one time, not that many tes
- bio/biolab
- biology
- biology 106
- Biology, Math
- chem freshman
- Chemistry
- Chemistry 101- teacher disabled her from achieving a satisfactory grade
- Chemistry, spent $1,000 on tutor, studied very much, grade did not reflect
- computer science
- English 101
- English 101, and Math 161, hated the math lab, did not learn and not helpfu
- English 102
- English, math
- English. history
- English
- history
- honors history
- math
- Math
- math 151
- math 155
- Math 155
- Math 155, not understanding, teacher did not respond, hated online
- math 161
- Math 161
- math 165
- math 92
- math 92
- math 92
- MATH 92
- Math 92, everything with the computer was just difficult
- math 92,155
- math 92A
- math computer
- math lab
- math, just tire
- math161
- online courses
- Online math
- Online math, did not get enough instruction math 92
- Political science and math 161

- SE 101
- Se 101 was pointless because i took it my semester