Purpose: To increase degree completion rates by defining and implementing universal accountability measures, which will provide an integrated accountability structure for the University’s Retention and Completion Plan. This plan supports the achievement of the student academic success goals established in the University’s strategic plan Vision 2020.

Informed by:
The University of Akron Students, Faculty and Staff
Student Success Steering Team
Division of Student Success
Office of Academic Affairs
Department Chairs and School Directors
University Council Student Engagement and Success Committee
The Council of Deans
The Vice Presidents
Office of the President

Board of Trustees:
Academic Issues and Student Success Committee
Strategic Issues Committee

Endorsed by the Board of Trustees:

(Date TBD)
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The University of Akron Retention and Completion Plan

Introduction

The University of Akron (UA) is an institution with much pride and extraordinary history – an institution that values student development and academic success above all other goals. As a metropolitan university, Akron is experiencing many of the challenges that higher education faces today, particularly public institutions that are inclusive in nature. The University of Akron provides greater access to more students with diverse needs and has in place programs to enhance the success of all students, including efforts to close the achievement gaps that limit college preparedness levels. While the University’s total degrees awarded have risen 8% from 2011-12 to 2012-13, a challenge remains to increase retention and completion.

Over the last 10 years, the University’s 6-year graduation rates have ranged from 35% to 40% and first-year retention rates have ranged from 65% to 72%. Since student success is the institution’s ultimate goal, these numbers must be improved. All UA employees must work harder together to ensure the short and long term success of our students and consequently, the fiscal health of our institution. All employees at The University of Akron are accountable for student success. We call this Universal Accountability for student success. It is time to closely examine academic and student support services, develop a plan for improvement and execute that plan through strong collaboration and teamwork among all university units.

Nationally, the six-year graduation rate at public institutions has remained fairly unchanged at 56% for the last five years. How does The University of Akron compare with other graduation rates in Ohio and in the nation? Ohio ranks 21st in the nation with a six-year graduation rate of 57.1% and The University of Akron ranks 9th out of thirteen Ohio public institutions with a 40% graduation rate. While we acknowledge the graduation rates at The University of Akron must improve, it is important to ask how student success is measured. As President Luis Proenza has stated many times so well, “We seek to be measured by the value we add in enabling the success of our students, not by how many we exclude.” If an institution accepts only the most-prepared students, then it is no surprise that those well-prepared students do well. There are related challenges with measures like graduation rates, in that they do not count thousands of successful students who earn their degrees because the 6-year graduation rate only includes first-time, full-time bachelor’s degree-seeking students who graduate from the institution where
they first enrolled. On a national basis, fully one-third of all students transfer from the institution where they started and thus, are not counted for graduation rate purposes. We need to establish measurements, which comprehensively recognize the degree earning progress of the individual student. There has been some progress in this regard, as the College Portrait reports completion at any institution, as well as continuation as a more comprehensive assessment of student success and persistence. The Student Achievement Measure is another example of holistic measurement of student success, which tracks student movement across postsecondary institutions to provide a more complete picture of undergraduate student progress and completion within the higher education system.

The measurements of student success in this Retention and Completion Plan are inclusive of the diverse students the University serves and are measured in multiple ways. This “retention infrastructure” is comprised of data and progression measures to support a culture that clearly values degree completion for all students, including annual public reporting of progress. Ohio is one of 33 states in the alliance Complete College America. The completion metrics established in this Retention and Completion Plan strategically complement and align with the state’s Complete College Ohio taskforce recommendations and the University’s Vision 2020 metrics. Public institutions in Ohio are required to submit a Board of Trustees approved Completion Plan biennially, beginning May 2014.

The retention and completion strategies selected for this document have been chosen based upon the following principles: the University accepts a broad range of student preparedness levels and strives for inclusive excellence to grow a diverse population of students; the University is strengthening admissions criteria at a gradual pace in response to poor completion rates of students most severely underprepared; the University focus on retention and completion primarily includes the student’s first year, where most attrition occurs; specific strategies and related goals were selected based upon best practices and a current literature review of student development and persistence; this document is part of a broader plan of the University’s retention and completion initiatives.

Increasing college completion in Ohio is essential in building a productive and innovative workforce, one that can compete globally. This written plan is a commitment to the academic success of our students. As we become more accountable as an institution, we become more accomplished in serving all our students, the primary reason we exist.

University Mission

The mission of The University of Akron is articulated in the Board of Trustee rule 3359-20-01: Institutional mission and goals, affirmative action statement. The mission statement: The
University of Akron, a publicly assisted metropolitan institution, strives to develop enlightened members of society. It offers comprehensive programs of instruction from associate through doctoral levels; pursues a vigorous agenda of research in the arts, sciences, and professions; and provides service to the community. The university pursues excellence in undergraduate education and distinction in selected areas of graduate instruction, inquiry, and creative activity.

In 2009, the University built upon its strategic plan, Charting the Course, by creating a new strategic plan titled Vision 2020: Toward 150 Years of Distinction & A New Gold Standard of University Performance. The development process clearly suited the nature and culture of the institution. The rigorous development process took approximately two years and importantly, was created with the contributions and engagement of more than 3,500 faculty, staff, students, trustees, alumni, community leaders and others. Vision 2020 was unanimously endorsed by the Board of Trustees in January 2012 as a plan that will guide the University’s collective actions through the sesquicentennial in 2020.

The University’s mission statement in Vision 2020 does not replace the University’s mission in Board rule 3359-20-01. It summarizes and focuses the mission to emphasize student success and the importance of the University to the region, and beyond, in the creation of knowledge and application of research. The University’s mission statement in Vision 2020: To ensure student success and leverage our region’s unique assets in the creation of knowledge and application of research that benefits humankind.

The University’s enrollment profile flows from the mission of the institution, which is defined as a metropolitan university serving the community, region, and beyond. Students enter the University across a spectrum of academic preparation, from associate degrees to baccalaureate degrees of varying competitiveness, to world-ranked graduate programs. Certificates are also offered for a variety of disciplines to enrich academic degrees or provide assistance to workforce development skills. Approximately 25% of the University’s students attend part time and most of these students are adults. The adult student population continues to grow and the University is ramping up support services, such as evening and weekend courses, veteran services and online courses and programs.

Also important to the University’s mission of student success is diversity, part of Inclusive Excellence in Vision 2020. Approximately 20% of UA students are from underrepresented populations and the University has several support systems in place to close achievement gaps and ensure academic success of all students. Examples of programs include Rising to the Occasion, a comprehensive recruitment and retention model aimed at increasing the graduation rates of African-American males; the African-American Male Learning Community; the Black Male Summit, an annual program that draws over 1,000 participants from the region and
beyond that explores the critical issues impacting black males in higher education; Increasing Diversity in Engineering Academics Program (IDEAs); and a new scholarship for underrepresented students beginning in fall 2014.

Because of the broad range of academic preparedness of our students, retention and completion can present complex challenges. In general, we found the reasons for our student attrition are varied. Along with college preparedness, students withdraw or stop out mostly due to financial or personal reasons. With approximately 33% of our students first-generation college goers and 45% of our students Pell eligible, navigation to degree may involve several starts and stops. First-year retention rates have decreased over the previous two years, partly due to a substantial number of students less prepared for college leaving the University, as well as standardizing probation and dismissal policies. Baseline measurements have been established and as mentioned, a retention infrastructure is being built to support our Universal Accountability for student success. A consistent data driven structure will inform the progress of strategies or the need to change course to reach retention, completion and placement goals.

**Barriers to Persistence and Completion**

In general, barriers to persistence and completion are inherent in the diverse population the University serves. Over 8,200 of our students attend part time and many juggle work and family responsibilities. In Ohio, part time students seeking a bachelor’s degree have eight-year graduation rates less than 15%. This measurement does not include the “swirling behavior” of students who earn credits from several institutions.

The University of Akron student profile includes a vast range of academic preparedness levels. Summit College, serving approximately 5,000 students, is an open access college that awards mostly associate degrees. About 65% of new associate degree-seeking students require remedial coursework. For students seeking bachelor’s degrees, college preparedness has been increasing as the University has put in place Pathways for Student Academic Success, a multi-year strategy beginning in fall 2012, to guide students to the academic path best suited to their needs.

The Pathways strategy is a multi-faceted strategy, in-part calling for a gradual shift, where students who are particularly under-prepared for college coursework (e.g., predicted first semester college GPA <2.0) first enroll at a partner community college or at our Wayne College, thereby enabling us to focus efforts on attracting more academically prepared students and sustain and increase the success of our current students. The Pathways strategy addresses the varied student preparedness levels by offering various entryways, such as direct admission to a degree program or first beginning in a pre-major, where upon successful completion of
coursework and college GPA requirements, students transition into degree programs. Student advising support is strategically structured and targeted to student preparedness levels.

While college preparedness is increasing, progress is gradual, as many bachelor’s degree seeking students fall below the “college ready” level of a 21 ACT and 3.0 high school grade point average. In fall 2013, 43% of entering bachelor’s degree seeking full-time freshmen were below the college ready level. Looking ahead to fall 2014, college preparedness is increasing significantly, as the percentage of currently admitted students who are underprepared is 24%.

Another challenge to persistence and completion occurs largely due to the fact that the University’s focus has been on enrollment and less so on completion and job placement. In Complete College Ohio, the state chancellor’s office notes that 60% of Ohio jobs in the future will require a college-level certification and that we are not producing enough college degrees to meet workforce needs. For these and other critical reasons, there is a changing landscape of higher education in Ohio and national. One of the critical impacts is that state subsidy is now more directly tied to degree completion vs. enrollment. As a result, it will be critical for the University of Akron to fully change the campus culture to focus strategically, for the benefit of our students, on completion and job placement.

Finally, a remaining challenge to persistence and completion occurs due to the large percentage of first-generation students and Pell eligible students, among other underserved populations, pointing to both transition to and persistence through college issues as well as financial ones. As mentioned, approximately 33% of our students are first-generation college attendees and 45% are Pell eligible. The University has several support programs in place to help all students navigate the road to their degree, and is working to both improve and expand existing successful program as well as develop new ones to mitigate the barriers to completion our students face. These programs will be discussed further in the upcoming retention and completion strategies sections of this report. Also, a list of student support services is provided in the Appendix.

Retention and Completion Goals for 2020

In order to address the barriers to completion outlined in the previous section, the University developed goals for the academic plan Vision 2020. In doing this, a benchmark project was put together to establish an estimated trajectory to achieve goals, measure the progress to goals and compare the measured achievement with other universities.

The methodology used was to first focus on a few core characteristics as measures and review IPEDS, plus other regional data to find best matches to select peer and aspirant institutions.
Also, best practices were evaluated for key measurements and aspirant institutions were selected because of their success using practices we wish to emulate to achieve our goals. In the Appendix, comparison data is shown for both peer (Ohio and out of state) and aspirant institutions.

The retention and completion goals of this plan offer a clear vision for improving student academic success and eliminating the aforementioned barriers to completion at the University. Throughout this plan, we will outline several engagement strategies to increase first-year retention, persistence to degree and career placement. The major goals include:

- 80% 1st year retention rate
- 60% six-year graduation rate
- 80% job/graduate school placement
- Close all student cohort achievement gaps

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vision 2020 Retention Completion and Placement Goals</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First-year retention</td>
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<tr>
<td>Six-year graduation rates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job/graduate school placement (six months after graduation)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The measurements of student success goals in this Retention and Completion Plan are inclusive of the diverse students we serve and measure progress in multiple ways. These data and progression measures support a culture that clearly values degree completion for all students. In addition to measuring the major goals, additional retention and completion strategies with accompanying targets are outlined in the next sections of the document. For clarity and reference purposes, the table below shows the links between the identified barriers to completion, the overall university-level retention and completion goals, the retention and completion strategies to reach those goals and the more specific targets under those strategies.

A robust retention metrics system has been developed to accompany this plan and measure progress to our goals. A list of retention and completion metrics is shown in the Appendix.
## Retention and Completion Plan Map: Barriers to Completion, Vision 2020 goals and Retention and Completion Strategies

### Barrier: Academic Preparation

*Improving programs to give students a better start and the best support*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vision 2020 Goals</th>
<th>Retention and Completion Strategies</th>
<th>Targets</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improve first year retention to 80%</td>
<td>Pathways to Student Academic Success</td>
<td>3.5 average high school GPA 24 average ACT composite score</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Restructured Advising Offices</td>
<td>100% of full time enrolled pre-major students with 48 credit hours or more and in good academic standing to be matriculated into a degree granting college</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Redesign New Student Orientation</td>
<td>98% of students participating in Orientation enroll the following fall semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Summer Bridge for Bachelor’s Degree Seeking Students at Risk</td>
<td>Establish summer bridge program by summer 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ZipStart</td>
<td>Increase the number of ZipStart student headcount 20% per year to result in serving at minimum, 1/3 of the entering freshman class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>First Year Student Success Seminar</td>
<td>By fall 2014, implement a <strong>required</strong> student success course for new bachelor’s degree seeking freshman not directly admitted into a college</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| | Expand Learning Communities | By fall 2014, improve learning community programs to reach more students, especially at risk populations  
Success indicators will include 1st semester retention, 1st year retention and completion rates  
Increase the percentage of learning community student credit hours taught by full time faculty |
| | Early Alert Initiatives | By fall 2014, 80% faculty participation for early-term progress reports in 100-200 level courses |
Develop a process for attendance reporting for 100-200 level courses to begin fall 2014

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alternative Forms of Credit</th>
<th>Increase alternative credit hours awarded by 10% annually</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peer Mentoring</td>
<td>Increase participation in peer mentoring programs to serve 1,000 students by fall 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Assistants</td>
<td>Increase the number of learning assistants to reach at minimum, 75% of students in selected gateway courses by fall 2015 and 100% of students by fall 2016. Decrease DFW rate in gateway courses that have learning assistants by 5% per academic year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bottleneck Majors</td>
<td>By fall 2014, add pre-engineering learning communities. By fall 2015, add pre-nursing learning communities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Barrier:** Loose focus on degree completion and career placement

*Changing the University’s culture to focus strategically on completion and placement*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vision 2020 Goals</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improve six-year graduation rates to 60%</td>
<td>Zips Retention Scholarships</td>
<td>Close retention and completion rate gaps for Pell eligible students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three-Year Accelerated Degrees</td>
<td>60% of bachelor’s degrees available in an accelerated format by June 2014 (Legislatively mandated)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finish in Time</td>
<td>Increase 5 percentage points per year for full time undergraduate students enrolling in 30+ credit hours per year</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retention Analytics</td>
<td>Implement the retention analytics system for identified pilot programs (pre-major students) by fall 2014</td>
<td>100% of enrolled pre-major students with 48 credit hours or more and in good academic standing to be matriculated into</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vision 2020 Goals</td>
<td>Retention and Completion Strategies</td>
<td>Targets</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve first year retention to 80%</td>
<td>Emerging strategies that must be defined by a core team dedicated to this area</td>
<td>Improve existing learning communities and other programs dedicated to minority students. Create additional first-year programs, based on data analysis, for strong support of minority students and other underrepresented groups. Improve existing support programs dedicated to minority students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve six-year graduation rates to 60%</td>
<td>Emerging strategies that must be defined by a core team dedicated to this area</td>
<td>Create a scholarship program dedicated to minority and low-income students with appropriate criteria for eligibility and with strong program coordination. Create a completion scholarship program for underrepresented students.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Barrier:** Achievement Gaps for under-represented populations of students

*Need to ensure strategies to close all achievement gaps*

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<td>Emerging strategies that must be defined by a core team dedicated to this area</td>
<td>Create a completion scholarship program for underrepresented students.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reduce Credit Hours to Degree

120 credit hour compliance for all programs except for those with specific program accreditation requirements by July 2014

60 credit hour compliance for associate degree programs by July 2014

Implementation of new General Education program by fall 2015

Career Placement of Graduates

Increase student participation in career-relevant learning experiences by 1-2% per year over the next 6 years to reach 75%

Improve job/graduate school placement rate in a degree-relevant position six months following graduation by 1-2% per year over next 6 years

Barrier: Achievement Gaps for under-represented populations of students

Need to ensure strategies to close all achievement gaps
Retention and Completion Strategies: Addressing academic preparation, giving students the best start and the right support

Pathways to Student Academic Success
Guiding students to the academic pathway that will contribute most to their success is paramount to providing a remarkable academic experience. The Pathways strategy, which calls for a gradual shift of students who are not yet prepared for college coursework to first enroll at a partner community college or at our Wayne College, began in fall 2012. As mentioned, the strategy also focuses efforts on attracting more academically prepared students and sustaining and increasing the success of our current students.

The need for this strategy was evident in the data collected, as we found the most underprepared students (ACT<17 and HS GPA<2.5) had less than a 10% chance of obtaining a bachelor’s degree in six years. The Pathways strategy addresses the varied student preparedness levels by offering various entryways, such as direct admission to a degree program or first beginning in a pre-major, where upon successful completion of coursework and college GPA requirements, students transition into degree programs. Student advising support is strategically structured and targeted to student preparedness levels.

While it is early to measure this initial year of the Pathways strategy, we are seeing very positive results. Our fall 2013 first time full time (FTFT) bachelor’s degree seeking students are the most academically prepared to date, with an average ACT of 23.2 and a 3.3 high school grade point average. With freshman profile goals of a 24 ACT and a 3.5 HS GPA, the University will be on target to reach the goals of 80% first- year retention and 60% six-year graduate rate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FTFT Bachelor's Degree Seeking</th>
<th>Average ACT Scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2011 Census</td>
<td>22.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2012 Census</td>
<td>22.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2013 Census</td>
<td>23.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Targets:
- 3.5 average high school GPA
- 24 average ACT composite score

Restructured Advising Offices
In fall 2012, the University closed University College and advising offices were reorganized. Prior to this, students who were not directly admissible to a bachelor’s degree program entered University College to begin General Education requirements and when academic requirements were met, matriculated to a degree program. The decision to close came after the retention and completion data were extensively evaluated. Progress to degree was found to be inadequate and too many students had not yet matriculated, even though they had earned credits beyond freshman and sophomore levels.

The new advising structure designed for pre-majors focuses on two levels of student preparedness: an at-risk group who enter college with ACT scores between 17-20 with high school grade point average of 2.5 and above and a college ready group with ACT scores of 21 and a 3.0 high school grade point average. The major benefits of this reorganization include: the advising is tailored to students’ academic preparedness; students are connected to majors and potential careers during first year; and advising centers and college advisors work together to streamline pathway to major, graduation and career/graduate school.

While it is early to assess the effectiveness of this new structure, we are seeing some encouraging results. First semester retention of the college ready group has risen from 86% (fall 2012 to spring 2013) to 91% (fall 2013 to spring 2014). Also, the rate of matriculation of pre-major students into degree programs has significantly risen, from 840 in 2012 to 1,565 in 2013, an 86% increase.

Target: 100% of full time enrolled pre-major students with 48 credit hours or more and in good academic standing to be matriculated into a degree granting college

Redesign New Student Orientation
The New Student Orientation program has been enhanced to focus advising strategically, by college preparedness level, enrolling eligible full-time students in a minimum of 15 credit hours and introducing career opportunities. Our data indicate that 7% of students who attend orientation never enroll. While some attrition is expected, we need to increase the number of students who enroll after attending orientation.

Target: 98% of students participating in Orientation enroll the following fall semester
Summer Bridge for Bachelor’s Degree Seeking Students at Risk

The University plans to offer a summer bridge program for incoming freshman students at risk (17-20 ACT and < 3.0 HS GPA) in summer 2014. For the initial year, the target population will include the at-risk students who enrolled for ZipStart summer courses. The start of the freshman year can be an overwhelming experience for students. Identifying student needs and addressing them before the fall semester begins is ideal. Reaching at-risk students early enables the University to help prepare them for successful outcomes during their freshman year, thus increasing their retention rates and likelihood of succeeding.

Target: Establish summer bridge program by summer 2014

ZipStart

Another initiative is called ZipStart, an innovative way for incoming freshmen to complete requirements and save money. Approved by the Chancellor in 2013, the program was offered in summer 2013 to freshmen enrolled at UA for the first time. Students have the ability to save anywhere from $570 to $3,500 by taking up to six credits over the summer. For out-of-state students, location was not an issue, since several courses were offered in a combination of online and on-site delivery.

Target: Increase the number of ZipStart student headcount 20% per year to result in serving at minimum, 1/3 of the entering freshman class

First Year Student Success Seminar

The University has offered various student success courses for first year students. Currently, a first-year experience course is not required for students. With the restructuring of advising offices to support students who are not directly admitted to a degree program, a required student success seminar has been approved and developed for fall 2014. This new course combines the previous student success seminar with career-planning elements to engage students early.

Target: By fall 2014, implement a required student success course for new bachelor’s degree seeking freshman not directly admitted into a college

Expand Learning Communities

The University is currently reviewing student success outcomes of learning communities to identify retention challenges and expand learning communities to strategically target at risk populations.
Students participating in learning communities engage in structured learning experiences that foster connections with their peers, establish relationships with their faculty members and academic advisors, as well and enable them to form positive connections to the campus community. Identifying and utilizing the information that can be gathered from these experiences will enable the identification of the aspects that most influence retention for learning community students. Our data indicate that the living learning community structure shows much promise in increasing first-year retention rates, with current success at 84%.

Beginning fall 2014, students will have the opportunity to register for 40 thematic academic learning communities that range from global issues to tools for academic and professional success. Additionally, faculty teaching in learning communities will work in collaboration to increase integration across the curricula and provide experiences that promote both the academic and social integration of first-year students. In addition, a more comprehensive assessment of the program will include first semester persistence as well as first-year retention, GPAs and overall student satisfaction for all students who participated in a learning community.

Targets:
- By fall 2014, improve learning community programs to reach more students, especially at risk populations
- Success indicators will include 1st semester retention, 1st year retention and completion rates
- Increase the percentage of learning community student credit hours taught by full time faculty

Early Alert Initiatives
The earlier students have contact with full-time faculty, the more likely they are to remain in school and succeed. The combination of full-time faculty contact, in concert with professional advisor and staff guidance and intervention, will improve retention and persistence. Although faculty and staff contact take many forms, measureable feedback in relation to student progress includes the use of early-term progress reports, primarily for the 100 and 200 level courses, where faculty enter satisfactory or unsatisfactory indicators during the 2nd to 5th week of the term. The initiative began in fall 2013 and faculties are increasing their participation, from 42% to 60% in spring 2014.

Targets:
- By fall 2014, 80% faculty participation for early-term progress reports in 100-200 level courses
- Develop a process for attendance reporting for 100-200 level courses to begin fall 2014

Alternative Forms of Credit
Decreasing the time to degree completion is a top priority and several initiatives are currently in place. For example, students can earn alternative forms of credit, which include advanced
placement, CLEP, credit by exam and military credit, to name just a few. In 2012-2013, more than 3,300 University of Akron students were awarded 30,000 student credit hours in the form of alternative credit. One of those methods is through the Akron Early College High School, where Akron Public School students, mostly first-generation college students, graduate with a high school diploma and an associate’s degree from the University. Last year alone, over 5,000 credit hours were awarded to these students who are well on their way to attaining a college degree.

Target: Increase alternative credit hours awarded by 10% annually

Peer Mentoring
The program coordinated through the Office of Multicultural Development, a component of the Student Success Center, has expanded its focus to all students and has increased its number of mentored students to nearly 800. Peer Mentors are successful sophomore, junior and seniors who have demonstrated the ability to relate well with first-year students from varied ethnic, social and cultural backgrounds. They serve as role models who lead and support incoming first-year students by setting a positive academic example, encouraging mentees to make good decisions as well as utilize campus resources that include tutoring, counseling, meeting with their academic advisors and faculty members, as well as getting involved with campus activities. Peer Mentors are committed to an affirming environment that facilitates students’ success by challenging and supporting them through their first year in college. The goal below is dependent upon increased funding of the program.

Target: Increase participation in peer mentoring programs to serve 1,000 students by fall 2015

Learning Assistants
The learning assistant initiative was created in 2001 to help students succeed in the traditionally difficult courses that tend to be the “gateway” course to successfully completing the degree program. The program has grown to serve over 2,000 students with almost 7,500 contact hours with learning assistants. Compared with students who do not have learning assistants, students with learning assistants earn 3-4 more credits per semester, are less likely to drop courses and have a greater chance in successful course completion. The goal below (increasing the number of learning assistants) is dependent upon increased funding of the program.

Targets:

- Increase the number of learning assistants to reach at minimum, 75% of students in selected gateway courses by fall 2015 and 100% of students by fall 2016
- Decrease DFW rate in gateway courses that have learning assistants by 5% per academic year
**Bottleneck Majors**

The University of Akron, like many universities, has challenges with “bottleneck majors,” where demand is significantly higher than the capacity available. Since many students are turned away, retention challenges exist. Students who enter as pre-nursing or as pre-engineering are the students typically at most risk of attrition. We will be addressing this challenge by adding learning communities for these two groups of students, as well as having advisors specialize in serving the pre-major populations of the two disciplines.

**Targets:**
- By fall 2014, add pre-engineering learning communities
- By fall 2015, add pre-nursing learning communities

**Retention and Completion Strategies: Changing the University’s culture to focus on completion and placement**

**Zip Retention Scholarships**

The new Zips Retention Scholarship targets a group of academically eligible students at risk for attrition. Specifically targeted are students who a) are at risk for being dropped for non-payment prior to the beginning of the fall semester; b) have completed at least 15 credits in good academic standing; c) are Pell eligible; and d) have unpaid balances that typically total less than $2,000.

For some time, we have believed retention to be an academic issue, however our own data suggest the top two reasons students stop out of college are financial and personal. Additionally, as is the case at institutions across the nation, a high majority of our students who are dropped from classes for non-payment are in good academic standing and simply cannot return due to finances.

To help address attrition due to personal reasons, the University offers comprehensive psychological services at the Counseling Center free of charge. A culturally diverse staff of licensed psychologists and doctoral trainees provide psychological counseling and psychotherapy, career counseling, testing services, outreach and consultation to the university community. A full list of student support services is provided in the Appendix.

**Target: Close retention and completion rate gaps for Pell eligible students**

**Three-Year Accelerated Degrees**

Accelerated degrees are another important time saver available for students. The University currently offers 34 bachelor’s degree programs that can be earned in three years, many taking
advantage of the alternative forms of credit available to students. Due summer 2014, the University will be adding another 70 bachelor’s degrees that can be earned in three years.

Target: 60% of bachelor’s degrees available in an accelerated format by June 2014 (Legislatively mandated)

Finish in Time
Our data indicate that approximately 50% of full-time bachelor’s degree seeking students enroll in 15 or more semester credit hours each term. In working with various stakeholder groups, we have found the major reasons for this are: many students work and enroll in the minimum 12 credit hours to maintain full time status; at risk students may be advised to take 12 credit hours; students may be advised to “start out” by taking 12 credit hours; students who enroll in 15+ credit hours may drop perceived difficult courses. This percentage needs to improve to move students toward their degree at a faster rate.

Since the University has a significant number of students who are underprepared for college, this initiative was discussed and researched extensively. Many have expressed concern that the at-risk population of students with an ACT range of 17-20 and a high school GPA of 2.5 could not carry a 15 credit hour load. Surprisingly, our data showed that this group of students performed better with a 15 credit hour schedule.

Finish in Time is an initiative to move the culture of the University to on-time completion. It is both a communications strategy and a marketing strategy. The target audiences include students, parents and the campus community. The benefits are clear. Students who complete on time accrue less debt and reach their career or graduate school goals sooner.

Target: Increase 5 percentage points per year for full time undergraduate students enrolling in 30+ credit hours per year

Retention Analytics
The University purchased a retention analytics system in fall 2013, called the Student Success Collaborative, from the Education Advisory Board (EAB). In our research and RFP process, we found key attributes of this system that could have a positive impact on student retention and completion. EAB developed this product as a tool to focus advisor efforts to best impact student success. By measuring completion of gateway courses, the system uses predictive analytics to identify challenges and solutions for student academic success. The system predicts graduation rates based upon the student’s performance and can suggest other potential majors.
If a student has difficulty progressing past gateway courses, advisors are able to help them choose another major or receive the tutoring resources necessary. Identifying students who may be struggling is essential for intervention.

Targets:
- Implement the retention analytics system for identified pilot programs (pre-major students) by fall 2014
- 100% of enrolled pre-major students with 48 credit hours or more and in good academic standing to be matriculated into a degree granting college

Reduce Credit Hours to Degree
The University’s undergraduate degree programs have a range of required credit hours to degree. Some programs have mandated credit hours in relation to accreditation standards, while others do not. Evaluating the accumulated credit hours to degree by completion cohort will support the identification of possible barriers to degree completion. For spring 2012, the average credit hours to complete a bachelor’s degree were 149 student credit hours. We must do a better job at keeping students on track for degree completion. This focus on reducing the number of credit hours to degree includes the reduction of course choices students have for major electives and streamlining General Education requirements.

Over the past two years, campus-wide feedback has led to significant progress towards completing General Education curriculum reform. This foundation for baccalaureate education includes a notable focus on standardizing General Education coursework across majors to support timely progress to graduation. It calls for the reduction of General Education credit hours, which also supports our Board of Trustees recent approval of 120 minimum credits for a bachelor’s degree and 60 credits for an associate’s degree.

Targets:
- 120 credit hour compliance for all programs except for those with specific program accreditation requirements by July 2014
- 60 credit hour compliance for associate degree programs by July 2014
- Implementation of new General Education program by fall 2015

Career Placement of Graduates
Students attend The University of Akron to achieve their goals and fulfill their dreams. For the large majority, part of this includes meaningful and rewarding employment. It is our responsibility to ensure our graduates are well prepared for the job market. That is, students must understand themselves and know what career areas fit their personalities, interests and skills. Important to this discovery process is the opportunity to have relevant career-related
work experiences, like internships and co-ops, which are highly desirable to employers. In survey and interview data from 2012-2013, employers recruiting at The University of Akron reported the number one student attribute they look for is career-relevant experience. Currently, 67% of University of Akron students report participating in a career-relevant learning experience prior to graduation. These include internships, co-ops, practicums, assistantships, student teaching, field experiences, clinicals and education abroad experiences.

Often described as high-impact learning, service-learning experiences can help increase retention, completion and career placement. The University of Akron completed a Carnegie Classification survey in fall 2013 and found that students completed over 7,700 service-learning experiences in 2011-2012.

The job/graduate school placement rate (six months after graduation) is currently 72%. As part of our Vision 2020 major goals, we are committed to improving this percentage to 80% by 2020. The University maintains high placement rates for graduates in the College of Engineering (92%) and Honors College (80%). In 2012, UA School of Nursing graduates continue to exceed the state average pass rate of 90% for the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses (NCLEX) with a pass rate of 94%. And notably, 2012 Akron Law graduates had a nine-month post-graduation employment rate of 91%, exceeding the national average of 85%.

Targets:
- Increase student participation in career-relevant learning experiences by 1-2% per year over the next 6 years to reach 75%
- Improve job/graduate school placement rate in a degree-relevant position six months following graduation by 1-2% per year over next 6 years

Emerging Strategies: Closing Achievement Gaps

Close Achievement Gaps
Retention and completion achievement gaps need to be identified and addressed for all student cohorts with a particular focus on minority and low-income students. Data indicate that achievement gaps exist in college preparedness, retention and completion rates for various student cohorts. The Division of Student Success will work closely with the University’s Diversity Council to ensure the success of underrepresented students. The University of Akron is committed to the success of all students and will invest the time and resources needed to close identified gaps in student success.

Targets:
• Create a scholarship program dedicated to minority and low-income students with appropriate criteria for eligibility and with strong program coordination
• Improve existing learning communities and other programs dedicated to minority students
• Create additional first-year programs, based on data analysis, for strong support of minority students and other underrepresented groups
• Create a completion scholarship program for underrepresented students
• Improve existing support programs dedicated to minority students
• Improve percentage of students who participate in career-relevant learning experiences by 1-2% per year over next 6 years

Workforce Development Priorities

In response to the call for campus retention and completion plans to align with the state’s workforce development priorities, a document is included in the Appendix that shows a matrix of the program offerings at The University of Akron, compared to the nine key industries in JobsOhio (shown below). The information also includes the number of degrees produced over the last three-years.

- Advanced Manufacturing
- Aerospace and Aviation
- Agribusiness and Food Processing
- Automotive
- Biohealth
- Energy
- Financial Services
- Information Services and Software
- Polymers and Chemicals

The University of Akron has over 30 programs that align with the 9 JobsOhio industries. An important ingredient to the success of the programs includes the opportunity for students to engage in internships and co-op experiences. About half of the 30 programs have a required internship or co-op component. We will focus on increasing these opportunities for students, as our data indicate the positive impact on career placement. One example includes the successful hiring rate of co-op students; 50% of our students are hired by their co-op employer. As previously mentioned, 67% of University of Akron students report participating in a career-relevant learning experience prior to graduation, including internships, co-ops, practicums, assistantships, student teaching, field experiences, clinicals and education abroad experiences.

The University of Akron is also supporting regional and state workforce and development priorities by the execution of Vision 2020 through a long-term, groundbreaking program targeting investments in regional solutions, health care and medicine, the human condition and
innovative technologies. Called Achieving Distinction, this strategy aligns investments to enhance and advance vital partnerships where greater gains can be achieved via the mutual leveraging of resources.

Core principals of this strategy include: new faculty and staff must have a combination of training and experience that will allow them to contribute to programs across disciplines and/or colleges through research-collaboratives and curriculum design; diversity of people, thoughts and perspectives must be enhanced; linkages to rigorous use of library resources and/or collaborations must be present; purchased instrumentation and equipment should be available to other researchers across the institution; teaching and research priorities must span multiple colleges and/or units; demonstrated impact on student success must be shown; and alignment with the University’s strategic plan is a requirement.

A vital part of Vision 2020 is continued investment in distinctive programs that encourage collaboration across disciplines and departments and are aligned with the University’s commitment to providing innovative solutions to regional and global problems. The Achieving Distinction strategic investment program’s competitive process allows for the greatest potential for impact and influence as quickly as possible. Twenty-seven proposals were received in 2012, demonstrating impressive faculty engagement and commitment to a shared vision. Provost Mike Sherman and Vice President George Newkome announced the Achieving Distinction funding following a comprehensive review of the proposals. A brief description follows of the three proposals selected.
**Biomimicry Research and Innovation Center**
The unparalleled diversity of processes, materials, and resources, in the natural, world offer design solutions for societal challenges ranging from medicine to traffic to economy to sustainable urban growth. But successful translation of designs from nature requires a new way of thinking about the relationship between university research, education and community partners such as government and industry. We plan to leverage university expertise in biomimetic research to collaborate with regional partners who have developed a business model using biomimicry as the foundation for the Great Lakes region to become the world’s leader in sustainable innovation, both economically and educationally, powered by technologies inspired from the natural world around us.

The primary goal of the Biomimicry project is to create an internationally recognized center for biomimicry research, design, teaching and training that is first to market, innovative and without peer in scope and capacity. Major objectives include: enhance / expand capacity for biomimicry research and teaching; strengthen regional partnerships through collaboration in research, education and business; create a K-PhD biomimicry education and research “ecosystem;” and use the Biomimicry Center to extend the [Akron Model](#).

**Proof-of-Concept Framework**
With the guidance of The Deshpande Foundation, the proposed Framework will accelerate the pace of commercialization of UA based technologies in the Akron community by providing an enhanced focus on innovation, technology incubation, entrepreneurship and job creation. The goal will be to achieve an order-of-magnitude increase in economic impact over the next five years, by leveraging the best practices of the Akron Model, and by closely engaging UA faculty, students and entrepreneurial leaders from the Akron community. This proposal builds upon the collaboration model of the Austen BioInnovation Institute and the i6 Innovation Award that recognized the strong productive partnership between Austen BioInnovation Institute in Akron (ABIA) and The University of Akron Research Foundation (UARF) in strengthening innovation and technology commercialization. The Framework is a logical next step in building upon the success of the Akron Model to reach and exceed the goals of Vision 2020.

**Intellectual Property and Entrepreneurialism**
The proposal recognizes that an effective innovation ecosystem requires efficient interaction among many different actors. The entrepreneur brings the concept. The financer provides the funds. The management expert helps build the organizational structure. Lawyers guide the founders and management team to reduce the overall risk to the organization, document and define legal relationships among the various actors, and protect the enterprise’s intellectual property, without which innovation cannot thrive. All of these activities are governed by a
The legal and regulatory environment that can either promote or hinder growth and innovation.

We envision a multi-disciplinary Center for Intellectual Property and Entrepreneurialism with the expertise to conduct cutting-edge research, while also serving the needs of the innovation ecosystem. The Center would train students across all of the areas described above. Through in-house clinics and external placements, it would serve start-ups and other entrepreneurial efforts. The Center would be a one-stop-shop for entrepreneurial economic development, providing business, financial, marketing and legal expertise. With a broad perspective, it would also serve as a nonpartisan, unbiased policy forum, researching and debating the relevant issues, and where necessary, it would propose legislative change and provide expert counsel at the local, state and national level. Together, these efforts will directly contribute to President Proenza’s goal of making Northeast Ohio a center of innovation and economic dynamism.

**Achieving Distinction February 2014 Update: External Funding Leveraged**
(Reported by the Office of the Vice President for Research and Dean of the Graduate School)

The Innovation Practice/Proof of Concept Center has attracted significant external funding totaling more than $600,000, including:

- NSF I-Corps (UA): $200,000 to date
- LCCC (pre-seed fund: UARF): $125,000
- Jumpstart (venture fund: UARF): $250,000
- National Collegiate Inventors and Innovators (UA): $31,000

The Biomimicry Research Initiative has attracted significant external funding totaling more than $3,000,000, including:

- Multiple assistantships (UARF): $700,000
- National Science Foundation (UA): $492,400
- Human Frontier Science (UA): $1,200,000
- Air Force (UA): $608,000

Another Achieving Distinction investment includes a pending proposal for external funding from the Ohio Department of Development LOI (venture fund: UARF) for $10M-$30M.

**Universal Accountability for Student Success Implementation Structure**

With leadership provided by the Executive Vice President for Student Success, a Student Success Steering Team has formed with the charge of implementation, measurement and
reporting completion progress to meet annual goals for each initiative. A retention and completion website has been developed and deans have named “retention champions” within their colleges. A strategic communication plan will be developed for colleges, advising units and students.

The University has committed resources to continuing and enhancing retention and completion efforts. To increase the engagement of faculty and academic support units, the University has committed funding of retention and completion pilot projects. An internal RFP process was launched in March 2014. The University is committed to supporting faculty for excellence in teaching and learning. Part of this will include an evaluation of the Retention Promotion and Tenure process. Also important to retention and completion is the support of Institutional Research (IR) and Information Technology (IT). For example, the University’s data warehouse system will need to be programmed to support academic and academic support unit metric needs. IT and IR must be close partners, as college/unit data reporting will need to align with metrics of retention and completion, Vision 2020 and Complete College Ohio.

A basic list of offices and staff members accountable for each section of the University’s retention and completion plan may be found at the end of the appendix.
References


Appendix

Retention and Completion Metrics

Metrics have been developed and separated into two general categories: general retention and completion metrics that will be reported for various bachelor’s degree seeking student cohort groups, and initiative specific metrics. The student cohort groups will include remedial, at risk pre-majors (ACT 17 or below and high school GPA of 2.5 or below), bottleneck Nursing and Engineering pre-majors, college ready pre-majors (ACT 21 and a 3.0 high school GPA), first generation, Pell eligible, African American, Hispanic, adults 25+ years, learning communities and international. A list of metrics within each general category follows.

General Retention and Completion Metrics

- 1st semester retention
- 1st year retention
- Percentage of full time students completing 15+ credit hours per semester
- Percentage of full time students completing 30+ credit hours in the first year
- Percentage of pre-majors matriculated into majors at 30 and 48 credit hours
- Job/graduate school placement six months after graduation

Initiative Specific Retention and Completion Metrics

- Pathways for Student Academic Success: high school average GPA and ACT composite score
- Orientation: percentage of students who attended Orientation enrolled for fall
- ZipStart: percentage of incoming freshman class who enrolled for ZipStart courses
- Early Alert: percentage of faculty participation for early-term progress reports in 100-200 level courses
- Alternative Forms of Credit: number of student credit hours for fall and spring semesters
- Peer Mentoring: number of students served
- Learning Assistants: number of students served; percentage of students earning DFW scores
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Retention and Completion Plan - Draft Document
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* Indicates associate's degree; all other degrees are bachelor level
The University of Akron

Student Resources for Academic and Personal Support

The University of Akron is dedicated to laying the foundation for all of our students’ success and personal growth;

- in the learning environment
- in the campus community, and
- in the larger, diverse world, through
- quality instruction by dedicated faculty
- opportunities for campus and community engagement, and
- a supportive environment

Need ANY kind of HELP for students: HELP A ZIP Referral System → [http://www.uakron.edu/referral/](http://www.uakron.edu/referral/)

Know a student who is having difficulties? Let us know about it here, and we'll alert campus professionals who will intervene and offer support.

Examples of issues that can be reported include:

- missed assignments,
- poor grades on exams, assignments and projects,
- poor attendance,
- personal problems and
- financial issues.

Academic Advising

- Center for Academic Advising and Student Success
  - Simmons Hall 205, 330-972-7430, [http://www.uakron.edu/advising/index2.dot](http://www.uakron.edu/advising/index2.dot)
  - Simmons Hall 301, 330-972-5723, [http://www.uakron.edu/css/](http://www.uakron.edu/css/)
- Buchtel College of Arts and Sciences, CAS 118, 330-972-7880, [http://www.uakron.edu/bcas/academic-advising/](http://www.uakron.edu/bcas/academic-advising/)
  - Myers School of Art, Folk Hall 103, 330-972-5959
- College of Business Administration, Advising, CBA 260, 330-972-7042, [http://www.uakron.edu/cba/undergraduate/current---students/contacting---advisers.dot](http://www.uakron.edu/cba/undergraduate/current---students/contacting---advisers.dot)
- College of Engineering, Dean's Office, ASEC 201, 330-972-7816, Burrowbridge -- 5368
  - Biomedical, ASEC 275, 330-972-6650, [http://www.uakron.edu/engineering/BME/index.dot](http://www.uakron.edu/engineering/BME/index.dot)
  - Chemical/Bimolecular, Whitby Hall 211, 330-972-7250, [http://www.uakron.edu/engineering/BME/index.dot](http://www.uakron.edu/engineering/BME/index.dot)
  - Corrosion, 135 S. Broadway Street, 330-972-2800, [http://www.uakron.edu/corrosion/](http://www.uakron.edu/corrosion/)
  - Mechanical, ASEC 101, 330-972-7672
- College of Health Professions - Mary Gladwin Hall 101, 330-972-7551, [http://www.uakron.edu/health/](http://www.uakron.edu/health/)
  - School of Nursing, Student Affairs, MGH 313, 972-5103, [http://www.uakron.edu/nursing/](http://www.uakron.edu/nursing/)
  - School of Nutrition & Dietetics, Schrank Hall South, 210, 330-972-7163, [http://www.uakron.edu/nutritiondietetics/](http://www.uakron.edu/nutritiondietetics/)

Retention and Completion Plan - Draft Document

Appendix - d
Career Bookstores
Adult Commuter Co
Child Career
- Planning
- Planning

www.uakron.bncollege.com
http://wayne.uakron.edu/student
www.uakron.edu/mcuc
students/advising/

http://www.uakron.edu/honors/staff/advising.dot

www.uakron.edu/summitcollege/current---students/advising/

www.uakron.edu/career/

www.uakron.edu/counseling

Career Planning

Two credit course, #1100:117 emphasizes self---understanding, decision making, and career exploration and planning

Child Care

Center for Child Development (Child care for 18 months---5 years olds), 108 Fir Hill, 330---972---8210
www.uakron.edu/education/community---engagement/ccd

Co---Curricular Activities

Undergraduate Student Government, Student Union 307A, 330---972---7002,
http://www.uakron.edu/usg/

Graduate Student Government, Student Union 307A, 330---972---7002, www.uakron.edu/sp/gsg

Fraternities and Sororities, Fraternity and Sorority Life, Student Union 140, 330---972---7909,
http://www.uakron.edu/fsl/

Intramurals/Recreations Activities, Office of Intramural Sports, Student Recreation & Wellness Center, 330---972---6965, http://www.uakron.edu/srws/intramural---sports/

Department of Student Life, Student Union, 330---972---7866, www.uakron.edu/studentlife

SOuRCe (Student Organization Resource Center) information on registered student organizations
Student Union 137, 330---972---2483, www.uakron.edu/studentlife/source

Zips Athletics, (schedules, events, ticket office) 330---972---6920, www.goazips.com

Commuter Students

Office of Off---Campus Student Services, Student Union 152, 330---972---5500,
www.uakron.edu/offcampus
Computers

- **Computer Based Assessment** (interactive computer programs and computer based testing) Schrank Hall North 153, 330—972—6511, [www.uakron.edu/it/instructional_services/cbae](http://www.uakron.edu/it/instructional_services/cbae)
- **Zip Support Center** (troubleshooting for login, e-mail, and basic computing problems) 330—972—6888 [http://support.uakron.edu/wiki/index.php/main_page](http://support.uakron.edu/wiki/index.php/main_page)
- **Laptop Checkout** (valid and 2nd photo ID for verification required for checkout) Bierce Library 361 and Student Union Information Center, 2nd floor
- **Student Computer Support Services** – software installation, diagnostic, and repair services, Computer Center, 185 Carroll Street, 330—972—7626,
- **Student Learning Tutorials through Atomic Learning Library** – From MyAkron, log--on using your UANet ID and password. Click on the Student tab at the top of the screen and under “Computer Software Help!” you will see Atomic Learning. Click on Atomic Learning and explore more than 100 software learning tutorials available at your fingertips.

Counseling Services

- **Counseling Center** – Personal and confidential counseling and support services – Simmons Hall 306, 330—972—7082, [www.uakron.edu/counseling/counseling](http://www.uakron.edu/counseling/counseling)
  - **College Survival Kit** – Academic Performance workshops presented by the Counseling Center [http://www.uakron.edu/dotAsset/7020288d92eb-4c09-82a7-b65f518c28a5.pdf](http://www.uakron.edu/dotAsset/7020288d92eb-4c09-82a7-b65f518c28a5.pdf)
- **Department of Psychology Counseling Clinic** (personal and career counseling conducted by graduate students) College of Arts & Science Building, Room 342, 330—972—6714, [http://www.uakron.edu/psychology/academics/cpcp/psych---clinic.dot](http://www.uakron.edu/psychology/academics/cpcp/psych---clinic.dot)

Disability Services

- **Office of Accessibility**, Support services for students with disabilities: Learning, physical, and psychological disabilities. Simmons Hall 105, 330—972—7928, TTY/TDD. 330—972—5764, [www.uakron.edu/access](http://www.uakron.edu/access)

Education Abroad

- **Office of Internationals Programs** (Education Abroad Program – Study, Work, and Travel Abroad), Polsky 483, 330—972—6349, [http://www.uakron.edu/oip/studyabroad](http://www.uakron.edu/oip/studyabroad)

Financial

- **Office of Student Financial Aid** (grants, loans, scholarships, and work---study) Simmons Hall 202, 330—972—7032, [www.uakron.edu/finaid](http://www.uakron.edu/finaid)
- **Office of Student Accounts** (accounts receivable, cashier’s office and collections) Simmons Hall 106, 330—972—5100, [http://www.uakron.edu/student---accounts/](http://www.uakron.edu/student---accounts/)
- **Installment Payment Plan** (allows fees to be paid on payment basis) Simmons Hall 110, 330—972—5100, [www.uakron.edu/student---accounts/payments_and_billing/payment---options.dot](http://www.uakron.edu/student---accounts/payments_and_billing/payment---options.dot)

Financial Aid, Registration and Cashier's Services

- **Student Services Center** (In-person assistance with financial aid, registration, and cashiers) Simmons Hall Lobby, 330—972—7272 (information desk) [www.uakron.edu/ssc](http://www.uakron.edu/ssc)

Health & Wellness

- **Counseling Center** (personal and confidential counseling and support services) Simmons Hall 306, 330—972—7082, [www.uakron.edu/counseling/counseling](http://www.uakron.edu/counseling/counseling)
Department of Psychology Counseling Clinic (personal and career counseling conducted by graduate students) College of Arts & Science Building, Room 342, 330---972---6714, http://www.uakron.edu/psychology/academics/cpcp/psych---clinic.dot

Health Services [medical care for uncomplicated illnesses and injuries provided by registered nurses, nurse practitioners and doctors; Wellness programming] Student Recreation and Wellness Center 260, 330---972---7808, http://www.uakron.edu/healthservices/

International Student Services

Office of International Programs, Polsky 483, 330---972---6349, www.uakron.edu/oip

Libraries

Main Library, Bierce Library, 330---972---8161 (reference department), www.uakron.edu/libraries

Law Library, School of Law, 330---972---7330, http://www.uakron.edu/law/library

Science and Technology Library, ASEC 104, 3309722---7195, http://www.uakron.edu/libraries

Wayne College Library, Wayne College F---wing, 330---684---8789, http://www.wayne.uakron.edu/library

Military Services Center

Military Services Center, Comprehensive enrollment and referral services to veterans and family members, Simmons Hall 120, 330---972---7838, www.uakron.edu/veterans

Transfer and Adult Student Enrollment Center, Simmons Hall 211 (evaluation of military credit), 330---972---7009, www.uakron.edu/transferstudents

MyAkron

Online Student Information Center for registration, grades, schedules, payment, campus events, latest news, weather, etc. www.myakron.uakron.edu

Parking & Shuttle Service


Roo Express Shuttle, a University owned and operated shuttle system, 330---972---7213 www.uakron.edu/parking/roo---express/index.dot

Peer Mentoring

Office of Multicultural Development — (mentoring service for first year students) — Simmons Hall Room 124, 330---972---6769, http://www.uakron.edu/omd/peer---mentors.dot

Personal Safety

University Police (UAPD) 146 Hill St. (non---emergencies) 330---972---2911. Dial x9911 from a campus phone for emergencies. www.uakron.edu/safety/police

Campus Patrol (student members of the University police for who can escort students around campus), 972---330---7263, www.uakron.edu/safety/police/services

Emergency Telephones “Blue Lights” (direct line to UAPD, more than 200 locations across campus)

Student Recreation & Wellness Center

Rock---climbing wall, pool, workout facilities, group exercise, intramurals, outdoor trips, weight--loss and fitness programming, massage services — 330---972---BFIT (330--- 972---2348), www.uakron.edu/srws/
Residence Life & Housing

 Department of Residence Life and Housing, Ritchie Residence Hall 119, 330---972---7800, www.uakron.edu/reslife

Student Conduct

 Student Judicial Affairs (addresses issues related to academic integrity and student rights & responsibilities) Simmons Hall 302, 330---972---6380, http://www.uakron.edu/sja/
 Office of Student Life: Student Union 140, 330---972---7866; http://www.uakron.edu/studentlife/

Student Employment

 Office of Student Financial Aid (functions as the personnel office for all on---campus student employees) Simmons Hall 202, 330---972---7405 http://www.uakron.edu/student---employment/
 Career Center (internships, cooperative education, first---job) Student Union 211, 330---972---7747; www.uakron.edu/career/

Student Health Services

 Medical care for uncomplicated illnesses and injuries provided by registered nurses, bursar practitioners and doctors; Wellness programming -- Student Recreation and Wellness Center 260, 330---972---7808, http://www.uakron.edu/healthservices/

Student Success Seminar

 Two---credit course designed to identify campus resources and builds learning skills, Course #1100:101

Testing Services

 Counseling Center, Testing services include ADHD and learning disorder assessments and many national exams such as CLEP, PRAXIS, and ACT. Simmons Hall #304, 330---972---7084, www.uakron.edu/counseling

Tutorial Services

 Math Lab, Bierce Library, Room 69, 330---872---5214, http://www.uakron.edu/tutoring/bmc/index.dot
 Math Lab, Polsky, Room 333, 330---972---6552, http://www.uakron.edu/summitcollege/future---students/tutoring---study---tips/math---lab.dot
 College Reading and Study Skills (course: practice in reading comprehension skills and study techniques) Course #2010:062
 Study Skills Center (professional diagnosis and assistance) Polsky 332, 330---972---6551, (330---972---7046 for tutoring appointment) http://www.uakron.edu/summitcollege/developmental_programs/study---skills---centers/
 Writing Lab (professional feedback and assistance) Bierce Library 69, 330---972---6548, http://www.uakron.edu/tutoring/bwc/index.dot
 Writing Lab, Polsky, Room 303, 330---972---6984, http://www.uakron.edu/summitcollege/future---students/tutoring---study---tips/writing---lab.dot

Wayne College

 Wayne College Student Services -- Offers variety of services for students on Wayne Campus --- 330---684---8900, www.wayne.uakron.edu/student---services/
Zip Card Office & Meal Plans

Dining Plans, http://www.uakron.edu/zipcard/meal-plans.dot
# The University of Akron Retention and Completion Plan

**Accountability Summary Table (DRAFT – individuals to be added at later time)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domains</th>
<th>Goals</th>
<th>Responsible Units</th>
<th>Point Persons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Retention and Completion Strategies:</strong> Addressing academic preparation, giving students the best start and the right support</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Pathways to Student Academic Success</td>
<td>3.5 average high school GPA 24 average ACT composite score</td>
<td>Division of Student Success Colleges</td>
<td>Coordination: EVP Student Success AVP Enrollment Management (Thorpe)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restructured Advising Offices</td>
<td>100% of full time pre-major students with 48 credit hours or more and in good academic standing to be matriculated into a degree granting college</td>
<td>Division of Student Success Office of Academic Affairs (policy)</td>
<td>Coordination: EVP Student Success AVP Student Success (Moore)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-Design New Student Orientation</td>
<td>98% of students participating in Orientation enroll the following fall semester</td>
<td>Division of Student Success</td>
<td>Coordination: EVP Student Success AVP Student Success (Moore); AVP Student Success (Nicholson); for Admissions, AVP Enrollment Management (Thorpe)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer Bridge for Bachelor’s Degree Seeking Students at Risk</td>
<td>Establish summer bridge program by summer 2014</td>
<td>Division of Student Success</td>
<td>Coordination: EVP Student Success AVP Moore AVP Adam Smith</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZipStart</td>
<td>Increase the number of ZipStart student headcount 20% per year to result in</td>
<td>Division of Student Success Office of Academic Affairs</td>
<td>Coordination: EVP Student Success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domains</td>
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<td>serving at minimum, 1/3 of the entering freshman class</td>
<td>(Registrar)</td>
<td>AVPs Moore and Thorpe</td>
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<td>Colleges</td>
<td>Registrar</td>
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<td>Deans or dean designees (need to be specific)</td>
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<tr>
<td>First Year Student Success</td>
<td>By fall 2014, implement a <strong>required</strong> student success course for new</td>
<td>Division of Student Success</td>
<td>Coordination: EVP Student Success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seminar</td>
<td>bachelor’s degree seeking freshman not directly admitted into a college</td>
<td></td>
<td>AVP Moore</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expand Learning Communities</td>
<td>By fall 2014, improve learning community programs to reach more students, especially at risk populations</td>
<td>Division of Student Success</td>
<td>Coordination: EVP Student Success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Success indicators will include 1st semester retention, 1st year retention and completion rates</td>
<td>Division of Student Affairs</td>
<td>AVP Nicholson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Increase the percentage of learning community student credit hours taught by full time faculty</td>
<td>Colleges</td>
<td>AVP Messina</td>
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<td><strong>College representatives</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Alert Initiatives</td>
<td>By fall 2014, 80% faculty participation for early-term progress reports in 100-200 level courses</td>
<td>Office of Academic Affairs</td>
<td>Coordination: Office of Academic Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Develop a process for attendance reporting for 100-200 level courses to begin fall 2014</td>
<td>Division of Student Success</td>
<td>AVP Burdick</td>
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<td>AVP Moore</td>
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<td>Registrar</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alternative Forms of Credit</td>
<td>Increase alternative credit hours awarded by 10% annually</td>
<td>Office of Academic Affairs Colleges</td>
<td>Coordination: Office of Academic Affairs AVP Burdick AVP Moore Deans representatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Mentoring</td>
<td>Increase participation in peer mentoring programs to serve 1,000 students by fall 2015</td>
<td>Division of Student Success</td>
<td>Coordination: EVP Student Success AVP Moore AVP Nicholson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Assistants</td>
<td>Increase the number of learning assistants to reach at minimum, 75% of students in the selected gateway courses by fall 2015 and 100% of students by fall 2016 Decrease DFW rate in the selected gateway courses by 5% per academic year</td>
<td>Division of Student Success Colleges</td>
<td>Coordination: EVP Student Success AVP Nicholson Executive Director, Greg Dieringer BCAS College representative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bottleneck Majors</td>
<td>By fall 2014, add pre-engineering learning communities By fall 2015, add pre-nursing learning communities</td>
<td>Division of Student Success Colleges</td>
<td>Coordination: EVP Student Success AVP Nicholson College representatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domains</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Retention and Completion Strategies:</strong> <em>Changing the University's culture to focus on completion and placement</em></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zips Retention Grants</td>
<td>Close retention and completion rate gaps for Pell eligible students</td>
<td>Division of Student Success</td>
<td>Coordination: EVP Student Success</td>
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<td>AVP Moore</td>
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<td>Executive Director Financial Aid, Michelle Ellis</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Deans representatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three Year Accelerated Degrees</td>
<td>60% of bachelor’s degrees available in an accelerated format by June 2014 (Legislatively mandated)</td>
<td>Office of Academic Affairs Colleges</td>
<td>Coordination: Office of Academic Affairs</td>
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<td>AVP Burdick</td>
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<td>Deans representatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finish in Time</td>
<td>Increase 5 percentage points per year for full time undergraduate students enrolling in 30+ credit hours per year</td>
<td>Division of Student Success Colleges</td>
<td>Coordination: EVP Student Success; University Marketing and Communications</td>
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<td>AVP Moore</td>
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<td>AVP Hill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retention Analytics</td>
<td>Implement the retention analytics system for identified pilot programs (pre-major students) by fall 2014</td>
<td>Division of Student Success Office of Academic Affairs</td>
<td>Coordination: EVP Student Success; Office of Academic Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100% of enrolled pre-major students with 48 credit hours or more and in good academic standing to be matriculated into a degree granting college</td>
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<td>AVP Burdick</td>
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<td>AVP Moore</td>
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<td>AVP Roadruck</td>
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<td>AVP Smith</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reduce # credit hours</td>
<td>120 credit hour compliance for all</td>
<td>Office of Academic Affairs</td>
<td>Coordination: Office of Academic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Retention and Completion Plan - Draft Document
Appendix - m
<table>
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</table>
| to degree                     | programs except for those with specific program accreditation requirements by July 2014  
60 credit hour compliance for associate degree programs by July 2014  
Implementation of new General Education program by fall 2015                                                                 | Colleges                  | Affairs  
AVP Burdick  
College representatives                                                                 |
| Career Placement of Graduates | Increase student participation in career-relevant learning experiences by 1-2% per year over the next 6 years to reach 75%  
Improve job/graduate school placement rate in a degree-relevant position six months following graduation by 1-2% per year over next 6 years | Division of Student Success Colleges | Coordination: EVP Student Success  
AVP Moore  
Director, Christina Ross  
College representatives (relevant learning) |

**Emerging Strategies: Closing Achievement Gaps**

| Close Achievement Gaps       | Create a scholarship program dedicated to minority and low-income students with appropriate criteria for eligibility and with strong program coordination | Division of Student Success | Coordination: EVP Student Success  
AVP Moore  
AVP Nicholson  
ED Ellis |

Retention and Completion Plan - Draft Document  
Appendix - n
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<tr>
<td>Improve existing learning communities and other programs dedicated to</td>
<td>Improve existing learning communities and other programs dedicated to minority students</td>
<td>Division of Student Success</td>
<td>Coordination: EVP Student Success AVP Nicholson College representatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>minority students</td>
<td></td>
<td>Colleges</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create additional first-year programs, based on data analysis, for</td>
<td>Create additional first-year programs, based on data analysis, for strong support of minority students and other underrepresented groups</td>
<td>Division of Student Success</td>
<td>Coordination: EVP Student Success; VP Student Affairs AVP Moore AVP Messina AVP Nicholson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>strong support of minority students and other underrepresented groups</td>
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<td>Colleges</td>
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<tr>
<td>Create a completion scholarship program for underrepresented students</td>
<td>Create a completion scholarship program for underrepresented students</td>
<td>Division of Student Success</td>
<td>Coordination: EVP Student Success AVP Moore ED Ellis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve existing support programs dedicated to minority students</td>
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<td>Division of Student Success</td>
<td>Coordination: EVP Student Success; VP Student Affairs AVP Moore AVP Messina AVP Nicholson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve percentage of students who participate in career-relevant</td>
<td>Improve percentage of students who participate in career-relevant learning experiences by 1-2 % per year over next 6 years</td>
<td>Division of Student Success</td>
<td>Coordination: EVP Student Success AVP Moore Director Ross College representatives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>learning experiences by 1-2 % per year over next 6 years</td>
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<td>Colleges</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>