



INDIANA UNIVERSITY

OFFICE OF THE VICE PROVOST  
FOR UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION

Bloomington

# LATE-STAGE RETENTION AND GRADUATION RATES

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# SUMMARY

*Having taken into consideration the many factors affecting graduation rates and retention in upperclassmen, we have found that the large degree of variability of circumstance surrounding failure to obtain a degree make one core solution impossible. There does not exist a structural factor – akin to the Kelley Drop-Out phenomenon – influencing upperclassman retention. In terms of graduation delays, we identify course failure to be the primary cause.*

*On the issue of upperclassman retention, we recommend reinstating upperclassman drop-out surveys to gather more information.*

*On the issue of delayed on-time graduation, we recommend increased knowledge-sharing between Kelley and the College on at-risk student identification methods and surveying student opinions on perceived curricular bottle-necks to identify major-specific hurdles.*



# OUTLINE

Research Question: What causes failure to graduate

Status Quo: What is currently being implemented?

Solutions: Further Research, Knowledge Sharing, and Identifying Bottlenecks

# WHY DO STUDENTS FAIL TO GRADUATE?

## First Two Years

- Well-defined causes.
- Failure to matriculate.
- Inability to cope with academic rigor.
- Loss of scholarship.

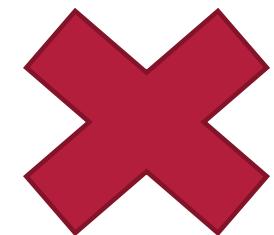
## Third and Fourth Years

- Failure to pass a bottleneck class.
- Change in career plans.
- Loss of funding.
- Personal difficulties (health/family/etc.)

# INTERNAL VS EXTERNAL FACTORS

## External Factors

- Extreme diversity: no overarching solution.
- Not within the purview of the University to fix.



## Internal Factors

- Institutional issues such as classes and financing.
- Some solutions may be possible.



## CURRENT STRATEGIES FOR ADDRESSING UPPERCLASSMAN RETENTION ADVISORS

- Students who are academically at risk can be mandated to meet with an advisor or dean.
- Advisors do have the ability to reach out to students based on GPA and credit reports.
- Academic success courses for struggling students (COLL-R200)

## CURRENT STRATEGIES FOR ADDRESSING UPPERCLASSMAN RETENTION SCHOLARSHIPS AND FINANCES

### Problem

- One of the major issues for students is the loss of scholarship money due to poor academic performance or taking a year off.

### Potential Solution

- Offering ways to maintain scholarships despite taking a semester off could incentivize students to finish their degree.
- Offering returning student scholarships/incentives.

### Current Barrier

- Scholarship policy is rigid

## CURRENT STRATEGIES FOR ADDRESSING UPPERCLASSMAN RETENTION OFF-RAMPS

### Target Demographic

- For in-state students who need to be closer to home or who want to escape the large university feeling of Bloomington.

### Limitations

- May not be the best option for students whose struggles are academic, as this could create the sense that regional campuses are “easy”.
- Less likely to be a helpful alternative for non-resident students.
- Empirically shown to be an ineffective on-ramp to IUB

# FINDINGS

## Upperclassman Drop-Out Rate

**From a student perspective**, there do not appear to be structural curricular factors – akin to the Kelley drop-out phenomenon – at the upperclassman level.

- This finding is backed up by the data, which indicates a very small portion of students dropping out at the upperclassman level.

## Delayed Graduation

**From an advisor perspective**, course failure remains the culprit for delayed graduation.

# AVENUES FOR FUTURE ACTION AND RESEARCH

## Upperclassman Drop-Out

**Action Item 1:** Reinstate Drop-Out survey to gather more information

## Delayed Graduation

“How can we connect and collaborate with faculty to identify and address bottleneck classes without diluting the curriculum for the sake of achieving a higher graduation rate?”

**Action Item 2:** Knowledge-sharing between Kelley and the College to implement an algorithm for identifying students not on track to graduate. Kelley’s advanced student tracking algorithm should be employed by departments across the university.

**Action Item 3:** Survey student opinion on perceived curricular bottle-necks to identify major-specific hurdles. Ultimately, the goal is to address inefficiencies in the process, not change the rigor of the curriculum.