Online Retention Specialist Report:
Data Analysis & Evolution
Online Retention Specialist Role

Wichita State University has provided a solution for students who cannot make it to campus to complete their degrees in higher education. The Barton School of Business, the College of Applied studies, the College of Health Professions, and the Fairmount College of Liberal Arts & Sciences all offer online programs to be inclusive to non-traditional students. Online students are often already working full time, raising and supporting their own families, and/or not living close enough to reasonably travel to campus for traditional classes. The online retention specialist’s role at Wichita State was created to support these students enrolled in online programs.

Through the use of Blackboard Analytics, the online retention specialist tracks each student’s online activity every week. If a student is displaying low online activity (they are significantly lower than the class mean) they are contacted and offered support. The type of support offered depends on the student’s needs. It can be general questions regarding drops dates, financial aid/GI bill, and/or contact information for faculty or staff on campus. Students are encouraged to stay in contact with the retention specialist in case they have questions or concerns throughout the semester.

Students indicated in the charts are those who displayed low online activity, course accesses, minutes spent while logged in, interactions between items, and/or submissions. Outreach was provided to these students connecting them to resources across campus.
The total number of students displaying low online activity in one or more of their online courses dropped towards the end of the semester. This is usually the case at the end of a semester as students are engaging in their classes to complete all course work before final grades are submitted by their instructors.
The total number of students displaying low online activity in one or more of their online courses dropped towards the end of the semester within Health Professions and LAS. It's normal to see students logging in towards the end of the semester to ensure they've met all their requirements and followed up on any extensions given by their instructors. Students are also logging in to predict their final grades before the end of the semester. Business ended the semester higher than normal indicating lower online activity which triggered more outreach to support students. I found Business students didn't necessarily need additional support, they simply felt confident in completing their online course due to their instructor's timeliness of grading feedback and answering emails.
Summer Outreach 2017

Weeks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summer 2017</th>
<th>Health Professions</th>
<th>Business</th>
<th>LAS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>July 24-28</td>
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<td>July 17-21</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 10-14</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 3-7</td>
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The Teacher Apprentice Program (T.A.P.) was monitored here in addition to our other online programs. The total number of students displaying low online activity in one or more of their online courses dropped towards the end of each semester. The drop within each of the colleges indicates student's online activity was healthy (students are interacting in their online courses and likely to be more engaged) and required less outreach.
Note: During spring, Blackboard Analytics went down for most of the semester which is why there are 7 weeks of data. It appears to spike during the last recorded week of March 12-16th however this is the time period we experienced an Analytics outage. Although students enrolled in online programs were not tracked, outreach and support continued throughout the semester. Students enrolled in online programs were contacted through email, phone, or meeting up on campus to connect them with online resources such as free tutoring, library assistance, writing center, semester schedule planning, student success planning to remove holds, financial aid support, testing services, career development, support with online orientation, etc.
The Teacher Apprentice Program (T.A.P.) experienced 2 spikes this semester. T.A.P. courses are often 8 weeks instead of the traditional 16-week format which might explain for the double spike. The total number of students displaying low online activity in one or more of their online courses dropped towards the end of the first and second 8-week course timeframe within the semester. This is usually the case at the end of a course as students are engaging to complete all course work before final grades are submitted by their instructors. T.A.P. also experienced higher enrollment around this time period which is why they are now the highest outreach in this chart.
Spring Outreach 2019

T.A.P. and Health Profession students declined towards the end of the semester then experienced a small spike during the last week of classes. There are many variables that could influence spikes but because I worked with the students this semester, I know they didn't experience any specific dilemmas. They most likely finished courses and felt confident they no longer needed to log in. I didn't have many last-minute inquiries from students about final grades or disconnect with instructors. The total number of students displaying low online activity in one or more of their online courses dropped towards the end of each semester for Business and LAS.
### Summer Outreach 2019

#### Graph

- **Health Professions**
- **Business**
- **LAS**
- **TAP**

#### Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summer 2019</th>
<th>Health Professions</th>
<th>Business</th>
<th>LAS</th>
<th>TAP</th>
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Retention Outreach Evolution

In order to manage financial support for an additional advisor in the OneStop, the search for the vacant Online Retention Specialist position was canceled on February 21, 2020. The funding used to support 1FTE will be transferred to OneStop. The following plan for distributing the responsibilities of the discontinued position, will ensure that we meet current requirements of tracking, outreach, and support to students enrolled in online programs with existing resources in the offices of Student Success and Online Learning. The work will transition from one Online Retention Specialist position to multiple advocates across the university. Online Learning will continue to pull Analytics for Learn Reports multiple times every semester to track students enrolled in online programs and train the designated success coaches on how to interpret the reports. These reports will be distributed to success coaches and other online employees so they may provide outreach with SSC, emails, and phone calls.

Barton School of Business
The Success Coach in Barton School of Business will provide outreach:

- General Business
- Management
- Human Resource Management

College of Applied Studies
Because of the high number of students and the specialized support that this program requires, Online Learning will provide outreach with existing staff working part of their duties on this population:

- ECU/EE-Apprentice (TAP)

College of Health Professions
Success Coach that oversees Fairmount College of Arts and Sciences & College of Health Professions will provide outreach:

- Dental Hygiene Completion
- RN to BSN

Fairmount College of Liberal Arts and Sciences
Student Success is hiring a new Success Coach who starts early March and will cover LAS outreach:

- Criminal Justice
- Homeland Security
- LAS-Undecided
- Associate in Arts
- General Studies and Field Major online programs