



# Finance and Curriculum:

Sustaining Students through Graduation

*Presented by: Dr. Ouida McAfee*

# **The “*BIG PICTURE*”: Key Causes of Student Attrition & Key Components of a Comprehensive Student Retention Plan**

*Joe Cuseo*  
Marymount College

## **I. ROOT CAUSES OF STUDENT *ATTRITION* AND SYSTEMIC *STRATEGIES* FOR PROMOTING STUDENT *PERSISTENCE***

- #1. *ACADEMIC* Roots**—student withdrawal related to:
  - (a) inadequate *preparation* to meet the academic demands of college coursework
  - (b) *disinterest in/boredom with* the content of courses or their method of delivery.
  
- #2. *MOTIVATIONAL* Roots**—student attrition related to:
  - (a) low level of *commitment* to college in general or the specific college attended
  - (b) *perceived irrelevance* of the college experience.
  
- #3. *PSYCHOSOCIAL* Roots**—student departure related to:
  - (a) *social* factors
  - (b) *emotional* issues.
  
- #4. *FINANCIAL* ROOTS**—student attrition related to:
  - (a) *inability (or perceived inability) to afford* the total cost of college
  - (b) *perception* that the *cost* of college *outweighs* its *benefits*.





## Campus Life

Discover what life on a college campus has to offer

97

 Like

### Beware the Top 5 Reasons for Dropping Out of College

 Share

According to a [2011 study out of Harvard University](#), nearly half of America's college students drop out before receiving a degree. Get to know the top risk factors to avoid becoming a statistic.

#### 1. Money concerns.

Some students underestimate college costs and realize too late that they lack the funds to cover it all. Others decide they'd rather be making money working full time than pursuing a costly degree. Still others become discouraged at the prospect of incurring loan debt. Avoid so-called sticker shock and other financial pitfalls by sitting down with your parents or a counselor before enrolling, to examine all possible [avenues for funding](#) as well as the pros and cons of enrolling straight out of high school versus [taking a gap year](#).



# How Much?

Many students do not finish  
college because they need  
"\$500"

According to Noel-Levitz & Georgia State University [Video](#)



# Who?

## First generation

Income too  
high for  
Pell grant

Junior in  
College—  
ran out of  
funds

## Non-Traditional student

# Why are you telling me?

1. Retention (sustainability) is everybody's business
2. 60x30 TX
3. State of Texas Hiring Freeze
4. \$10,000 <sub>tui/fees</sub> x 6 <sub>yrs</sub> = \$60,000



# Now What?

A Scholarship Assignment shares the best practice of engaging the student community in sustaining their educational opportunity through fiscal awareness and fiscal participation.

The Scholarship Self-Initiative Assignment is a best practice to be shared and aligns with Abraham Maslow's Self-actualization theory of providing motivation for students to realize their own maximum potential and possibilities for sustainability of educational opportunities.

According to Maslow's research, these kinds of self-initiatives promote growth and sustainability for individuals to become more creative in searching for ways to fulfill their highest needs.

# Yes, there is a model!

Albany State University—Academic Advising and Retention partnered with Honor's College on a Scholarship Assignment in ASU 1201

—Resulting in increased awareness and Out of 500 students, 280 applied for \$389,000--was able to track \$13,000 Awarded



# Result: Win-win!

Graded Assignment-must apply for one scholarship

Provided sample scholarship booklet

Provided directives on writing an essay

Contact Dr. Melvin Shelton , Director of Honor's  
College, Albany State University  
([melvin.shelton@asurams.edu](mailto:melvin.shelton@asurams.edu))

# The Pitch

## (to Administration—see handout)

1. Relating the assignment to the University Mission
  - historical context?
  - impacting culture?
  - leveraging existing curricular offerings?
2. Answering student demand
  - what market niche will it fill?
  - Who else is doing this?
  - why do it?
  - what is the evidence for a need
3. Addressing programmatic structure
  - How does it connect to the outcomes?
  - where will it fit in the academic structure?
  - Are there external accreditation/licensure requirements?



# Other Resources

o <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=42-w-tMyl3Y>

o <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mG-ZoMPV8mY>

o <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wfLI40TsIC4>

# Contact Me!

To continue this discussion  
at your organization:

[Ouida.mcafee@tamuc.edu](mailto:Ouida.mcafee@tamuc.edu)





Let's Work!