

**UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA**

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# **Improving Our Graduation Rates**

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**The Report of the Graduation  
and Retention Subcommittee of  
the Council of Undergraduate  
Deans**

**Twin Cities Campus  
August 13, 2001**

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## Overview

The University of Minnesota-Twin Cities has five- and six-year graduation rates that lag substantially behind those of other public research universities that we consider our peers. While graduation rates have improved in recent years, our six-year graduation rate, at 51%, is among the lowest in the Big Ten and (according to *U.S. News and World Report*) the lowest among the 50 top-ranked public universities.

While we have known for many years that our graduation rates are low, and while graduation rates have been a concern to the University, we have not focused on comprehensive and systematic efforts to improve our graduation rates. We have often excused the situation by saying that our graduation rates were low because we were an urban institution, because our students have to work more than other students, or because of a host of other reasons. This report examines all of those reasons and argues that none is sufficient to explain why our graduation rates trail those of comparable institutions.

We argue in this report that the University must make a conscious, focused effort to address this problem, for the sake of both the students and the institution. We make recommendations in four major categories: communicating clear and explicit institutional expectations, making a commitment to help students stay on track, removing institutional barriers and providing incentives for success, and balancing access with success. Each of these areas has specific suggestions that will need further discussion by various University policy groups and other members of the University community.

While we believe that our recommendations are an important starting point, we also want to challenge others to bring forward additional suggestions. Student success, measured in terms of timely graduation, needs to be a shared priority. We need the commitment and ideas of faculty, staff, and students to move us forward on this important agenda.

## Background

In December of 2000, Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education Craig Swan asked Gerald Rinehart, Assistant Dean of Carlson School of Management and Chair of the Twin Cities Council of Undergraduate Deans (CUD)\*, to appoint a subcommittee of CUD to work on retention and graduation issues on the Twin Cities campus. The Subcommittee was co-chaired by Rinehart and Swan, and included members suggested by representatives from CUD. The list of committee members is included as Appendix 1.

The appointment letter to the committee included the following observation and charge:

Through hard work in all colleges we have made significant improvements, especially in graduation rates. At the same time there is still a significant distance to go before we are in the company of colleges and universities where we think we belong. I am concerned that we not rest on our laurels, but rather be sure that we are doing everything we can to help students succeed through graduation. Retention is a prerequisite to graduation.

I am asking the subcommittee to come forward with specific and practical recommendations of action steps that will enhance retention and graduation. In order to improve graduation rates we first have to retain students. Are there things that we should be doing to would help improve retention?

The committee met first on January 25, and continued to meet regularly through spring semester. A preliminary draft outline of this report was presented to CUD in June for discussion and comment.

This report has two functions: to clarify why the members of CUD are concerned about retention and graduation at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities, and to present an array of possible approaches to address this problem. We recommend the immediate implementation of some of these possible solutions, and offer others for further consideration in various other committees and policy-making groups. We hope that this report will spark discussion throughout the campus, and will lead to greater awareness of the issues we are facing and the options available for addressing these issues. We also hope that other ideas for additional action items will be suggested as part of these discussions.

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\* The Council of Undergraduate Deans is a group of associate/assistant deans who have responsibility for undergraduate education in their respective colleges. It meets monthly to discuss issues of common concern across colleges, and quarterly via ITV with counterparts at the other campuses. The Council has no formal statutory authority and works largely by consensus.

## PART ONE: Graduation and Retention Information

### Defining the Issue

Under President Yudof's leadership, the University has made important progress in building programs to support and encourage student retention and graduation. Building on the Undergraduate Initiative of the early 90s, we have worked together to create a variety of freshman year experiences (e.g., New Student Convocation, freshman seminars, living-learning communities) that have improved freshman year retention and satisfaction. Nonetheless, the University's retention and five- or six-year graduation rates lag far behind those of our peers. Table 1 shows comparative graduation and retention rates for other public Big Ten campuses, as well as for selected other public universities. Not only does the University of Minnesota have the lowest five-year graduation rate in the Big Ten, it ranks 50<sup>th</sup>—dead last—in six-year graduation rates among the top 50 national public universities (*U.S. News and World Report*, September 2000).\*

As many studies have shown, graduation rates are affected by many "input" factors, including the quality of the admitted student body. We know that because of its commitment to access, the University of Minnesota admits a larger number of students who are less qualified by traditional measures than is the case in many of our peer institutions. But various statistical models have been developed that look at an institution's **predicted** graduation rate based on the test scores of its incoming students and controlled for institutional spending. *U.S. News and World Report's* data for the top 50 public universities shows Minnesota's actual graduation rates below its predicted rate after controlling for the quality of the incoming class as measured by average high school rank and the proportion of part-time students (*U.S. News and World Report*, September 2000). Only 11 of the top 50 publics underperform their predicted graduation rate, and Minnesota is the only Big 10 institution in that group. For example, Purdue's predicted six-year graduation rate is identical to ours—55%. But their actual six-year rate is 64%, while ours is 51%. See Appendix 2 for more information on these rankings.

The *U.S. News and World Report* data also show that even our freshman retention rates, which have improved dramatically, are still near the bottom of the Big Ten, with only Iowa and Ohio State lagging behind. And our current freshman retention rates (84%), do not

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\* In August, 2001, the University of Minnesota issued updated graduation and retention statistics based on a standard methodology used nationwide in IPEDS reporting. We are now using a standard cohort ("first time/full time") that is more comparable with other institutions. This new methodology shows a small increase in graduation rates over the figures used by the committee in the creation of this report (for example, six year graduation rates are 53% under this methodology), but the revised figures do not change the basic trends and comparisons included in this report. See Appendix 6 for information on the methodology change and on updated graduation and retention statistics.

TABLE 1 Graduation and Retention Rates for Big Ten and Selected Other Public Institutions

<i>All Undergraduates (* indicates value is for degree-seeking students)</i>	<i>* Age 25 or Older</i>	<i>Part-time</i>	<i>* Live Off- Campus</i>	<i>* 1st Year Retention</i>	<i>* 4-Year Graduation Rate</i>	<i>* 5-Year Graduation Rate</i>	<i>6-Year Graduation Rate</i>
Univ Minnesota-Twin Cities	14%	16%	81%	83%	24%	42%	51%
Big 10 Publics							
Indiana Univ	5%	9%	55%	86%	41%	62%	66%
Michigan State Univ	6%	13%	56%	86%	24%	57%	66%
Ohio State Univ	14%	15%	78%	79%	19%	49%	56%
Penn State Univ-Main Campus	5%	6%	64%	93%	60%	78%	80%
Purdue Univ-Main Campus	6%	7%	57%	87%	28%	59%	67%
Univ of Illinois-Urbana	2%	3%	67%	92%	49%	72%	78%
Univ of Iowa	11%	13%	71%	83%	33%	59%	64%
Univ of Michigan-Ann Arbor	4%	6%	63%	94%	62%	81%	84%
Univ Wisconsin-Madison	7%	11%	76%	91%	35%	67%	73%
Other Top 30: Public							
Cornell Univ	2%	na	45%	95%	81%	89%	90%
SUNY at Stony Brook	15%	10%	49%	83%	32%	50%	54%
Univ of Calif-Berkeley	8%	7%	62%	95%	48%	77%	81%
Univ of Calif-Los Angeles	9%	5%	70%	95%	38%	73%	79%
Univ of Calif-San Diego	6%	2%	67%	93%	45%	74%	78%
Univ of Calif-Santa Barbara	6%	4%	76%	87%	41%	65%	70%
Univ of NC-Chapel Hill	5%	6%	60%	94%	62%	78%	83%
Univ of Texas at Austin	9%	13%	85%	88%	30%	59%	65%
Univ of Washington	17%	16%	83%	90%	37%	63%	69%
Top 30 Privates (average)	1%	5%	27%	95%	78%	87%	

presage a dramatic long-term increase in our four-, five-, and six-year graduation rates. Timely graduation depends upon retention, average credit loads and how those courses meet degree requirements. Over the course of 4-5 years, small differences in retention make a large difference in overall graduation rate:

80 percent retention and full load = 41.0% 4 year grad rate

83 percent retention and full load = 47.5% 4 year grad rate

90 percent retention and full load = 65.6% 4 year grad rate

While all institutions, Minnesota included, have the highest rates of attrition from the freshman to sophomore year, The University of Minnesota-Twin Cities has a higher-than-average attrition in the junior and senior years, a time when most other institutions are at a more steady state. Graph 1 shows the University's retention rates graphed against those of other AAUDE institutions (institutions participating in the Association of American Universities Data Exchange).<sup>\*</sup> While we start slightly lower, the differences continue to increase, becoming dramatic in the fifth and sixth years when other institutions level off or even (in the sixth year) increase their rates.

It is not within the scope of this report to look at factors related specifically to retention and graduation of students of color, but we do want to note that, as is the case in most institutions, our graduation rates for African-American, Chicano-Latino, and American Indian students lag behind the average for all students, and behind the rates for Asian-Americans and white students. This is one of many topics that merits continuing attention and effort. However, we believe that the issues raised in this report affect all students, including students of color, and that the recommendations included in this report will help all students. See Appendix 3 for more information on graduation and retention rates by ethnic group and by college.

## Why Do We See Low Graduation and Retention Rates as a Problem?

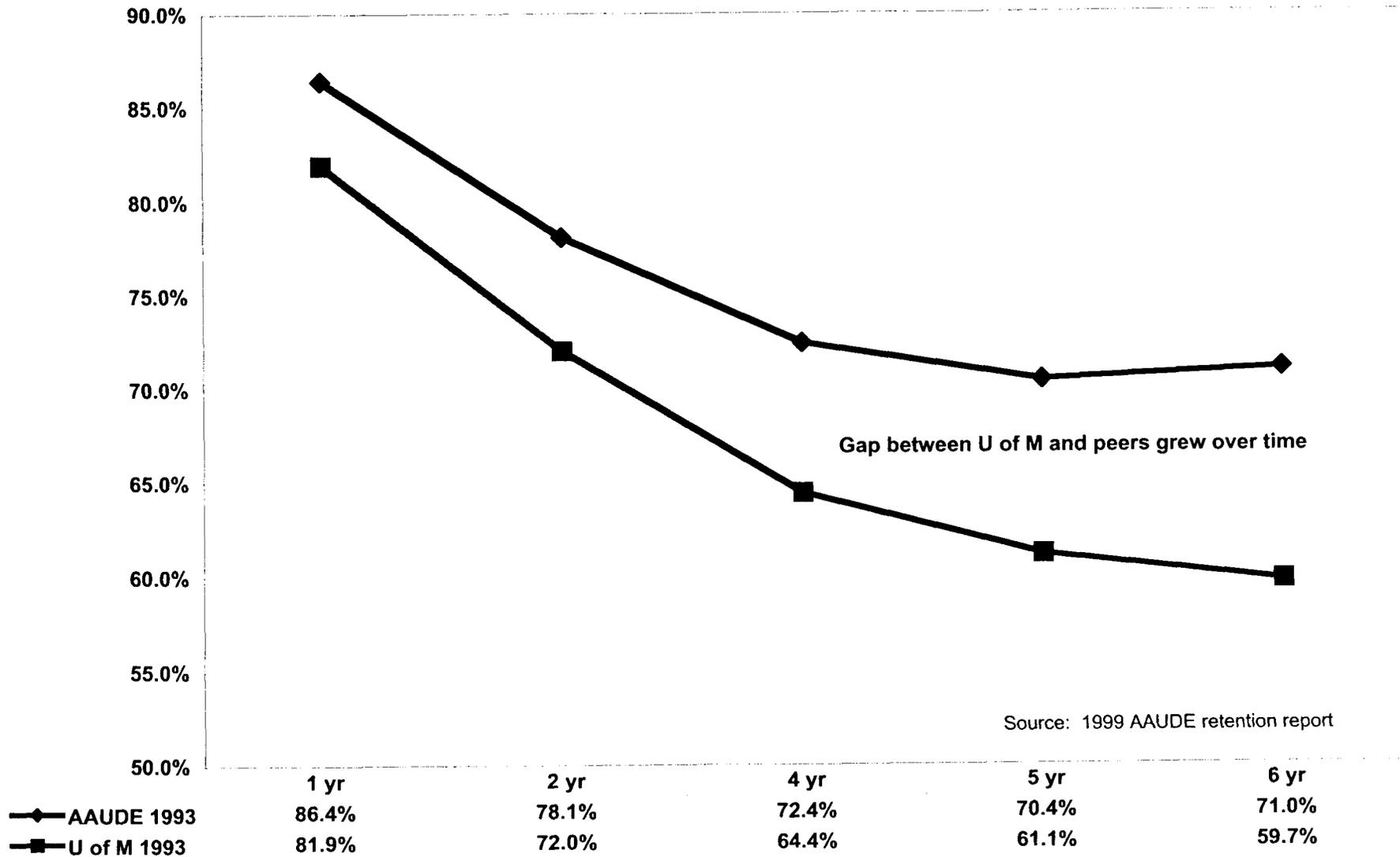
As the committee pursued its charge, members of the committee were encouraged to discuss retention and graduation with faculty, staff and students in their colleges or offices. To the surprise of most members of the committee (who felt that it was self-evident why our retention and graduation rates need attention), reports came back to the committee of people in the university community who did not define our low graduation rates as a problem. "Why shouldn't students take as long as they want?" they asked. "As long as they get an education, isn't that what matters?"

The committee felt that it was important that we address this question directly, rather than assuming the "self-evident" response. We reviewed a variety of studies and data, and we offer four important categories of reasons to support our assertion that the current low

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<sup>\*</sup> The AAU is a group of 62 research universities. Participants in the AAUDE tend to be the public university members.

**Success Rates (Continuing + Graduated) of 1993 New Freshman Cohorts  
U of M vs. AAUDE average**



retention and graduation rates are an important issue that requires serious and concerted attention.

### Academic/social reasons for students

Students come here not just to take courses and to accumulate credits, but to complete a degree. When Admissions officials talk with prospective students and their parents, discussions often focus on majors, graduation, and post-graduate opportunities. Not only do students expect to complete a degree, but when they arrive both they and their parents (in the case of traditional-age students) also articulate expectations that they will be done in four years. A nationwide longitudinal study (CIRP), in which the University participates every other year, asks incoming freshmen how long they expect to take to get their degrees. In the latest CIRP study (1999), 77.6% of our entering freshmen said that they expected to complete their U of M degree in 4 years or less (Higher Education Research Institute, 1999).

There is also ample evidence, at the University and at many other institutions, to suggest that students who complete their studies in a more timely way (4-5 years) have more intensity in their academic experience, more involvement with the institution, and greater satisfaction with their educational experiences. Study after study has shown that retention (and ultimately graduation) is positively correlated with both student-student and student-faculty interaction. Alexander Astin, in *What Matters in College?*, notes: "practically all the involvement variables showing positive associations with retention suggest high involvement with faculty, with fellow students, or with academic work" (Astin, 1993). A recent study by the Campus Involvement Center showed that the activities "most influential in creating a feeling of community were attending class, interacting with faculty and other students in the classroom, interacting with classmates outside of the class on projects/assignments, and socializing with classmates outside of class" (Gormley, 2001). This clearly supports the notion that more intense involvement with academics leads to a greater sense of involvement in the university, and hence a greater likelihood of satisfaction and degree completion. Similarly, there are negative correlations for working too many hours (more on this later), working off-campus, and commuting.

Another issue is that we are losing students after we, and they, have invested substantial time and money in their education. When we looked at the population of students who were registered in spring 2000 but not again in the next year, there were more than 1500 students with a GPA of 2.0 or better who had stopped out or dropped out. Of these, 200 had completed 120 credits, which is the number of credits required for most degree programs. And many of the "missing" students had been very successful academically: Fully one third (560) had completed at least 30 credits with a GPA of 3.0 or better. It appears that we are losing successful students, some of them late in their college careers.

The most critical finding in the literature is that students who take longer—and especially students who stop out for one term or more—are much less likely to complete a degree. Research completed by Stephen DesJardins at the University of Minnesota, as well as national research (Adelman, 1999) shows that stopping out for even a term raises the risk of non-completion. In fact, Adelman notes that continuous enrollment is the single most important

behavioral predictor of ultimate attainment of a baccalaureate degree. And DesJardins showed that the longer you take to complete the degree, the less likely you are to complete it (DesJardins, 2001).

### Financial costs to students

Because we charge tuition by the credit, there is a tendency for students to think of the cost of college as "the same" whether they take 10 credits or 16 a term. The former is simply spread over a longer period of time. But there are many costs that are not taken into consideration in this kind of equation. First, there are the direct, out-of-pocket costs above and beyond tuition. Student fees now run more than \$250 per semester, and must be paid by anyone enrolled for 6 credits or more. A student who takes 12 semesters to graduate rather than 8 pays an additional \$1000 in student services fees alone. Technology fees are charged each semester to students with more than six credits. In addition, there are expenses such as driving and parking, and other small costs of being a student. And all these charges, along with tuition and fees, inevitably increase over time. The longer a student takes to graduate, the more each term will cost.

Second, beginning in 1999, the University's tuition structure was changed to provide a substantial price break (half-price) for each credit more than 12 that a student enrolls in each semester. A student who takes 15-16 credits a term and graduates in four years saves 10% in tuition compared with a student who takes 12 credits a term and graduates in five years. At current tuition rates this savings amounts to \$2160.

Third, there are important opportunity costs to taking longer to graduate. Students who take longer sacrifice lifetime earning potential by entering the job market later and thus being a year or two behind in their lifetime career path. More importantly, students who do not graduate at all do not benefit from the degree effect on lifetime earnings. Each year in college increases incomes on average over high school grads. Graduating adds an addition 10% to 20% premium. Economists estimate that baccalaureate degree holders earn a lifetime average of around \$900,000 more than high school graduates. So if the completion of the degree, as opposed to years of education, adds 10% to 20%, then the effect on lifetime earnings of the baccalaureate degree (as opposed to simply accumulating the same number of credits and not graduating) is about \$90,000 to \$180,000 (Park, 1999).

### Financial costs to the institution

Many people reason that because students still need to take the same classes, whether for four years or seven, the cost to the institution is the same. But in fact, a student who is taking 12 credits a semester often uses as many university resources, *other than classes*, as a student who is taking 16 credits. That student still meets with an advisor, talks to a librarian, needs study space, participates in intramural sports, talks to a financial aid counselor, goes to the writing lab, uses e-mail, and registers for classes. Although the cost of each transaction may be small, the aggregate costs to the institution of providing good service are significant. It is

important that we, as a public institution, act as responsibly as possible in trying to minimize those costs.

## The University's reputation and ranking

While we might deplore the attention given to national rankings, they are a fact of life in higher education. Parents and students are consulting the rankings in ever greater numbers when making college choices. Most national rankings put significant weight on graduation rates, and ours always pull us down. For example, 20% of *U.S. News and World Report's* rankings are based on six-year graduation rates and freshman retention rates. Because people pay attention to such rankings, they affect college choice, especially among the best students, who have more college options. If they don't think an institution is competitive, they will vote with their feet and go elsewhere.

The loss of good students is obviously a concern for the institution, but it ought to be of concern to the students as well. Students who are admitted to the University of Minnesota want their degree to come from an institution with the best possible national ranking. Institutional ranking and reputation have an effect on graduate school admission and on hiring decisions. Also, the quality of the student body contributes to the quality of the education the institution can provide. When students are well-prepared and intellectually engaged, classes are more interesting for both students and faculty. It is in the best interests of both the institution and the students if our graduation rates, and hence our rankings, are improved.

## Why Are Our Graduation Rates So Low?

For years, we have known that our graduation rates were low but have accepted the status quo because we assumed that the factors leading to this low graduation rate were beyond our control. People spoke about the fact that we were in an urban setting, that our students have to work more, that our students commute, that our students are simply busy doing interesting things, or even that the Midwest is "different." The committee examined each of these assumptions and found substantial cause to question each of them as a defining and insurmountable factor in our low graduation rates.

## Assumptions

**Assumption 1: The "urban factor."** Urban institutions offer a challenge because there are more distractions for students (including easy accessibility to a wide range of jobs), more complexities of attending college, and more people living at home and/or commuting. But when we look at the urban location *per se*, it becomes clear that other urban research universities face the same issues, but nevertheless maintain a much better graduation rate. The committee reviewed statistical work that tried to explain variation in graduation rates across institutions and explicitly included an "urban factor." The urban variable was never statistically significant. Two examples will help to make this clearer. UCLA has an 80% graduation rate (although their students admittedly have a considerably higher admissions

profile). But the urban institution with which we have the most in common, both demographically and culturally, is the University of Washington. Their students are fairly similar to ours in admissions profile, they have a similar percent of part-time students (16%), a similar percent of students living off-campus (around 80%)—but 6-year graduation rates at the University of Washington are 72%. Ours are 51%. (See also Appendix 3.)

**Assumption 2: The “Midwest factor.”** It is sometimes alleged that students from the Midwest are more independent, more likely to combine work and school, less likely to be supported by their parents, and that this accounts for our students taking longer. But all the other major midwestern research universities—including Iowa, Wisconsin, Iowa State, Indiana, Purdue, and Illinois—outperform us in terms of graduation rates.

**Assumption 3: “Commuter campus.”** It is true that many of our students live off-campus: we have the highest percentage of students living off-campus of any school in the Big Ten (81%), though Ohio State (also in an urban area) comes close with 78%, and Wisconsin has 76%. But the University of Texas at Austin and the University of Washington in Seattle both have proportionally more students living off-campus, yet they also have much higher five-year graduation rates (59% and 63% respectively, compared with our 42%). And we are less a “commuter campus” than the phrase “off campus” suggests: 77% of our freshmen now live in residence halls, and many other students, although technically living off-campus, live within walking distance of campus. In recent survey, about 60% of students reported that they lived within 3 miles of campus, and nearly the same percent indicated they did not consider themselves commuter students (Harrold, 2001). In the last 20 years, there has been a dramatic decline in the percentage of students who consider themselves commuter students—from 58% in 1981 to 42% in 2001.

**Assumption 4: “Doing interesting things.”** The theory is that if students participate in wonderful opportunities like study abroad, research opportunities, or internships, they will necessarily take longer to graduate. First of all, this isn’t necessarily the case—students in other public and private colleges and universities do all these things and still graduate in four years. And secondly, even if it were true, that would mean that we would see a higher graduation rate at five, six, or even seven years. But our graduation/retention rates do not catch up with other institutions at these points.

**Assumption 5: Work.** Work is an extraordinarily complex issue, and one that the committee has not had the opportunity to study thoroughly. (The issue of work as a risk factor in completing degrees is discussed in more depth below.) There is conflicting evidence about whether our students work more than students at other public four-year institutions. The CIRP survey cited above asks students about both their work hours in high school, and their work plans while in college. More Minnesota students said they worked 11-20 hours a week in high school (40%) than the national average for public institutions (31%). And more Minnesota students say that they will get a job to help pay for college (57%) than students in other public universities (39%). In addition, U of M students are more concerned than others about financing their education (only 27% of UM students reported that they had “no concerns,” compared with 35.5% in public institutions nationally). But in the same study, our students report levels of parental income similar to the national norms, so if our students

do work more, it is not yet clear why. Do they actually get less financial support from parents than other students, or do they make lifestyle choices that require more work?

It should also be noted that students everywhere are working more. In a study published in 1998 using national data from students who began college in 1989, 67% of students attending public four-year colleges worked, for an average of 26 hours per week among those who did work (Cuccaro-Alamin, Choy, and Carroll, 1998). In the Student Interest Survey just completed, 25% of University of Minnesota students said they did not work, around 50% said they worked off campus, about 21% worked on campus, and 4% worked both on and off campus. The average hours worked for students who did work was 19.6, which is actually less than the national average reported above. Students who worked off-campus averaged almost 23 hours per week, while students who worked on campus averaged 13 hours per week (Harrold, 2001). So we do not have conclusive evidence that our students actually work more than they do at other schools. It would be very helpful to supplement this information with a more detailed study on the extent to which our students are different from other research institutions with regard to amount of time actually worked, and reasons for work.

### Factors Identified by the Committee

The five assumptions described above each reflect the university environment, but we believe that even in the aggregate they cannot fully account for the substantial difference in graduation rates between the University of Minnesota and its peer institutions. What other factors can we identify that might help us make decisions about how to improve our graduation rates?

Committee members repeatedly observed that “something happens” after students begin school here to change their attitudes about making progress toward a degree. Of the Minnesota students in the CIRP survey, 83% say they expect to register for 15 credits or more each term. Yet only about 40% do. Similarly, more than 40% of students sign up for the Four-Year Graduation Guarantee, but only 25% have been graduating in four years. Clearly, students’ stated expectations cannot be a guide to actual behavior. It is natural for people to overstate their expectations, but why do we fall so short? Defining this amorphous but very real “something” became a major task for the committee. Our analysis suggests that this phenomenon has four components.

**Lack of clear and explicit institutional expectations.** For many years, we as an institution did not articulate an explicit expectation that students should or could graduate in four (or five) years. We assumed (and many people still assume) that the length of time students take is their private business, that since they are paying, they should be able to do what they want, and that there is no institutional interest in creating different expectations. As explained above, however, this overlooks many costs to both the student and the institution, including the very large cost to students of not finishing at all. Our lack of clear institutional expectations led to a set of institutional policies that were rather *laissez-faire* in requiring students to meet certain expectations. One example of this is that until 1999, we did not require students to declare a major by a certain point in their degree program, and

consequently we found some students with 150 quarter credits and no major. Now we ask students to declare a major by the semester in which they complete 60 semester credits.

Another small example of a failure to communicate expectations is that we did not consistently offer clear road-maps to help students understand what they had to do to finish in four years. Nor we did not make any effort to create a sense of class identification (e.g., "class of 2002"). Now we begin with New Student Convocation and give students a sense of expectations about their graduation date, as well as providing advisers and students with better information about what students need to do to graduate in four years. As part of the Four Year Graduation Guarantee and in conjunction with the change from quarters to semesters, all majors have developed four year plans showing students a sequence of courses that will lead to graduation in four years. At the same time, it is less clear that this information is well known to students or a regular part of advising sessions.

At Minnesota, we have consistently created policies that allowed maximum flexibility and maximum choice for students. But maximum flexibility when combined with minimum expectations can be a recipe for lackluster performance. While we want to maintain flexibility and allow for individual student needs, we have learned that it is not effective to create policies that will allow for every possible permutation of student circumstances. We need to state our expectations, support those expectations with policies, and create a reasonable system of appeals to handle the exceptions.

Our inability or unwillingness to create expectations for students has led to a culture in which students do not meet the same kinds of standards that students in other institutions meet. For example, our students simply take fewer credits than students in many similar institutions take. At the University of Wisconsin-Madison, the average is 13.9 credits per semester, and U of M it's 13.04. This seems like a minimal difference, but it means that 20% of our students would have to take one more 4 credit course per semester to come up to Wisconsin's rate. This would be a dramatic shift in student behavior, and it is not something that will happen without clear communication and a change of institutional culture.

The lack of the machinery and the commitment to help students stay on track. As we discussed ways to deal with the "non-graduation culture" on campus, it became clear that we lack mechanisms to sense when a student is off track toward graduation and to intervene in a timely way. We do not have in place enough early warning mechanisms to identify students in academic trouble, or to identify students who have missed out on crucial "checkpoint" courses, or students who have simply drifted away from a credit load and attendance pattern that will keep them progressing toward a degree. Our peer institutions with higher graduation rates all have more of these mechanisms. Furthermore, we sense that the lack of such mechanisms reflects a lack of institutional commitment to seeing students through to the successful completion of their studies. We believe that some advisers and faculty do not see their jobs as entailing any responsibility for student graduation.

Institutional barriers and institutional incentives. Because we are a highly complex and highly decentralized institution, it is difficult to look over students' shoulders and understand all the policies and requirements that students need to meet. Students have not only course requirements and deadlines, but also college policies, financial aid policies,

institutional policies, and a host of other complexities to address. Each one may be highly reasonable in itself, but the overall effect may be conflicting messages to students and real barriers to progress. We need to be highly vigilant about an array of barriers that the institution may inadvertently put in students' ways. With the active cooperation of CUD and the guidance of SCEP, we made a giant step forward in 1999 in developing a set of common policies that cut across colleges and that eliminate some of the complexity of different standards and policies in different colleges (for example, differences in how probation is defined). We must continue to identify and eliminate those barriers that have minimal educational value but frustrate and defeat students.

We also need to take a further look at how our policy actions and institutional incentives align with our expectations. The "half-price-over 12 credits" policy is a good example of how policy can be realigned to provide incentives that support expectations.

**Access as a historical value.** The University of Minnesota has traditionally been a critical point of access to higher education for students who could not otherwise get a college education. There was a time—70 years ago—when the U was the major public educational option for most students in Minnesota. However, with the development of the MnSCU system over the last 30 years, access to higher education is now much more widely available. But the citizens of the state of Minnesota, and the legislature, continue to see access to the University as an important value, if not an entitlement. This creates a dichotomous identity for the University. On the one hand, we want to be among the very best public institutions, so that we can effectively serve the best students and assure that they don't have to leave the state to get a great education. At the same time, we want to provide a path that will allow students to come to the U and prove themselves, even if they have not done well in their prior education. That path into the University is provided by General College, which is the major point of access to the U for underprepared or at-risk students. It is part of the Minnesota story to provide a second chance and to allow people to try, and the President has affirmed the importance of General College in meeting this goal. But as General College has grown, we cannot ignore the fact that one-sixth of our entering freshmen now come in through GC, which means that one student in six who begins at the University did not meet the admission requirements expected by the other colleges. And for whatever reason, the fact is that these high-risk students have historically had six-year graduation rates under 25%. It is difficult to raise the institutional graduation rate with when a large cadre of students admitted as freshmen are graduating at such a low rate.

## Why Do Students Leave?

The committee determined at its first meeting that we needed more information to understand why students do not complete degrees at the University. Ron Matross and Ron Huesman, University staff members and members of the committee, undertook a study that used both a record analysis and a phone survey to look at characteristics and attitudes of students who had been registered in spring 2000 but did not register again in either fall 2000 or spring 2001. A full copy of the report, describing methodology and detailed results, is included as Appendix 4.

Around 300 students were eventually contacted in the phone survey (26.2% of the original sample of 1153). Based on one question about whether students intended to return to the university at some time, Matross and Huesman divided respondents into two groups: dropouts and stopouts. The latter were students who expressed some intention of coming back to the University. The stopouts comprised 58% of the sample and the dropouts (those with no intention of returning) 42%. Not surprisingly, dropouts tended to be predominantly freshmen and sophomores, while stopouts were predominantly juniors and seniors. The majority of dropouts (56%) were now enrolled in another institution, while the majority of stopouts (71%) were employed.

Respondents were asked their reasons for leaving, both in a free answer format and as a response to a list of possible reasons. Matross and Huesman provide a detailed analysis of these responses, but they also present the following cogent summary and discussion, which we quote almost in its entirety:

In particular, we learned that Minnesota dropouts and stopouts score high on many of the known dropout risk factors: They tend to work heavily, live off campus, not be involved in campus activities, and receive little financial support. Within this general pattern, we can discern three broad subgroups each of whom requires a package of interventions:

**The underperformers.** Some students are unable to cope with their college work and find themselves candidates for academic dismissal or leave of their own accord. They tend to encounter trouble early and often, in numbers beyond what would be expected from their academic records. With the exception of some high risk students in General College, the University generally admits students whose previous academic records should allow them to succeed academically.

The survey excluded those in academic trouble, but it is likely that the reasons for individual academic failure are diverse, ranging from inadequate high school preparation to poor study habits to personal problems. While we should try to identify at risk students before they enter, it may be most fruitful for the University to develop early warning systems for identifying students in trouble and intervening with them. Mid-term grades and alerts, and study skills classes are two such interventions

**The disenchanted.** Another group of students leave because they are dissatisfied with something about the University's programs and environment. The survey found that the dropout group was heavily populated with such students. When they go, they are gone for good, and search for a different college. These students cite as their primary reasons for leaving problems with course availability, inadequate advising, and an unfriendly environment. They tend to be younger and more traditional in their approach to college. Compared to stopouts they are more likely to live on campus, receive parental support, and work less, and be involved in campus activities. (Compared to students in general, however, they are less likely to live on campus and be involved in campus activities.)

It is with this group that the University has probably made the most headway in improving retention. Initiatives like the Freshman Experience program, freshman seminars, improved course access, and living-learning communities have appeared to have increased the satisfaction of students and improved freshman-to-sophomore retention. There is more to be done, though, to further reduce the number of disenchanting dropouts. Noteworthy in this regard is the finding that 40% of the dropouts were sophomores. The transition to an upper-division major may be a particular source of problems, deserving of special scrutiny and intervention.

**The drop-ins.** Perhaps the most difficult group for whom to shape interventions is the large stopout group. These students don't cleanly dropout the way the disenchanting students do. It is more like they "drop in" to college, while they center their lives in the workplace. They are not unhappy with the University; they just don't make it a primary focus of their lives. These students work long hours, commute to campus, take lighter credit loads, pay their own college expenses and have little involvement in college activities. They leave, intending to come back, primarily because of the demands of their jobs and their perceived need to earn money.

By most accounts, Minnesota has a larger drop-in student population than nearly all other major research universities. It can be argued that their style of attendance should not be a concern. Students who center their lives in the workplace may be learning valuable career skills, as well as holding down their levels of loan debt. As long as they earn their degrees, they may be better off in the long run than students who earn their degree in four years but incur a large amount of loan debt. The problem is that too many of the drop-ins don't earn their degrees.

The discussion of "drop-ins" continues with some very important observations about institutional choices in how we attempt to work with these students. Basically, the choice Matross envisions relates to the character of the institution—we describe the University as an "urban research institution," but the question is whether we want to put more emphasis on the "urban" piece or the "research" piece. Both require substantial time, effort, and funds, and take us in different directions. It is hard to imagine having enough time or money to do both extremely well. One moves us toward serving more part-time, older than average students, with more attention to fitting education around the demands of work. This scenario includes more evening and weekend classes, less emphasis on campus involvement, more investment in distance education and work-related learning. The other requires serving more traditional-aged students with a focus on creating a more intensive undergraduate education that draws on the best that a research university has to offer. While we can and will always do some of both, the question is where we want to put our energy and our heart.

## PART TWO: How Can We Improve? Issues and Recommendations

The committee considered a range of possible suggestions for change, from the most radical and sweeping to the most minute and mundane. Some of each will be described below, but ultimately the course advocated by most committee members—though not by any means unanimously—is a more incremental approach. There may be many other possible ideas that the committee has not considered, and we invite continued discussion of other options.

Our recommendations attempt to address each of the four issues we identified in the first section of this report: communicating clear and explicit institutional expectations, developing an institutional commitment to help students stay on track (and developing the strategies and “machinery” to help support that commitment), reducing institutional barriers and developing incentives, and balancing access with success.

### Communicating Clear and Explicit Institutional Expectations

We have made progress in communicating expectations to students, and in devising educational programs to support those expectations. Beginning with the creation of Residential College in 1995, and continuing with the Four-Year Graduation Guarantee and an integrated approach to students’ first-year experience (New Student Convocation, Freshman Seminars, and Living-Learning Communities), we have focused on helping students make the adjustment to the University and connect to faculty and other students. Preliminary data on freshman seminars, while not conclusive, show that students who took them are retained at a higher rate than students who did not take them. We are making progress, especially with first-year students. But there is much more to be done.

### Academic progress

We need to be sure that students and parents have a clear understanding of the difference between “academic progress” and “good standing.” Students can take courses and remain in good standing at the University without making significant academic progress toward their degree. Academic progress means that students are taking classes that meet requirements and help them to attain a degree. It requires that students have timely access to good advising and that they have quick and easy access to their APAS reports. There is progress on making the APAS reports available on the Web, and we support and encourage this effort. It would also be helpful if all students were aware of the availability of the “checkpoint plans” for each major that were developed as part of the Four-Year Graduation Plan. These checkpoint graphs provide a very quick and easy reference to help students understand how to plan their programs to stay on track for timely graduation. We must assure that all of these plans are updated and accurate, and that every student and adviser knows where to find them on the web ( <http://www.opa.pres.umn.edu/fouryear/alphachk.htm>).

## Reaching Out to Students Who Live at Home

We need to communicate with parents and students about risk factors when students live at home. We have often talked about commuter students or students who don't live on campus, but the real risk factors are more closely associated with students who live at home (about 15% of our freshmen, compared with 9% nationally in four-year publics) (CIRP, 1999). Several research studies suggest that students who live at home do not make as strong a commitment or connection to college as students who live on or near the campus in a collegiate environment (Astin, 1993). While we recognize that living at home may be viewed as a financial necessity for some students, both students and parents need to know that there are real risks involved in this choice. Students who live at home need to make a special effort to become as fully integrated as possible into the life of the University. Some institutions require freshmen to live on campus because of the importance that early integration into campus life has for long-term success. While we do not advocate such a requirement, nor do we have the residence hall space to support it, we want to assure that the University has good programs to support the students who live at home and help to integrate them with the campus, and that students and parents take steps to minimize the risks of living at home.

Also, because the University is located in the state's major population center, we have a much higher percentage of students who can maintain a strong connection with their former environment—51.7 % of UM students are 50 miles or less from home, compared with 27.3% at other public universities across the country. This closeness to home allows students to maintain what one member of the committee called a “commuter psychology”: students who do not feel as if they have “gone away to college” may be tempted to view their time on campus as a continuation of high school. Even students who live on or near campus may maintain strong ties to home, to high school friends, and to activities away from the University. Such ties may weaken their connection to the University and hence their commitment to completing a degree.

## Financing a college education

Most importantly, we need to do more to help students, and the parents of prospective and admitted students, understand not only the costs of college and ways to pay these costs, but also the trade-offs involved in various choices. Again, this is a complex issue and there is no one formula that is right for all students or families. But there is important, basic information that we can share that will help people make choices.

Prospective students and their parents seem to need more information about college costs and the options for paying them. The Minnesota Higher Education Services Office (HESO) distributes two very useful publications that help explain how to finance college. One (*Get Ready!*) goes to all Minnesota elementary schools for distribution to fifth graders; a second (*Focus on Financial Aid*) goes to high schools for distribution to all seniors at the beginning of their senior year. Both are available on HESO's website at <http://www.mheso.state.mn.us>

Despite these excellent efforts, the level of misinformation and anxiety about college costs remains high. A recent study sponsored by the American Council on Education summarized extensive research about "what the public thinks and knows about paying for college." Most people, even parents of prospective college students, overestimated the cost of attendance, underestimated the amount of aid available, and in general did not understand options available to them, or, in the study's words: "The gap between the importance that the public places on getting a higher education and the knowledge that it has about how to afford it is staggering" (Ikenberry and Hartle, 1998). The report of the National Commission on the Cost of Higher Education, also issued in 1998, urges colleges to do more to communicate with families about the costs of college and what can be done to offset them. The HESO website contains excellent resources on financing education, and we need to assure that we are providing such information through both the Admissions and Financial Aid offices, and in a way that connects to families' concerns.

One of the pieces of information that we should consider developing to help students and parents make decisions is a brochure or handout that provides information about work, and about work versus loans, and about the costs of not graduating in four or five years. We should also include information about the financial returns on the investment of completing a college degree.

What do we know about work? Most students work, and in general, work is not harmful to the completion of a college degree (or even to completion in four years), provided it does not exceed about 20 hours a week: "The consensus seems to be that a modest amount of work while enrolled enhances retention, that work on campus certainly intensifies involvement and contributes to completion, but that an excess of work (particularly off-campus) is negatively related to persistence" (Adelman, 1999). For students who work more than 20 hours a week, especially in off-campus jobs, there is good evidence that progress is slowed, grades are lower, they are less engaged in learning, and they are at greater risk of dropping out or stopping out. While we recognize that work is important in cultivating many excellent skills, we need to encourage students to limit work hours to 20 or fewer per week and to seek on-campus jobs.

Similarly, while we don't want to encourage high levels of loan indebtedness, we want to show students that there may be financial advantages to assuming some loan debt in return for a quicker graduation and earlier full-time employment. The Institute of Technology has developed a simple chart that balances the cost to their students of staying longer in school (with no loans and more hours of paid work), versus taking on some loans, working less, and being employed earlier. For some students, the latter is a more economical proposition. A study on "Postsecondary Financing Strategies: How Undergraduates Combine Work, Borrowing, and Attendance," noted that borrowers were generally more likely than non-borrowers to attend full-time, and also that borrowers persisted (i.e., stayed in school) at a higher rate than non-borrowers (Cuccaro-Alamin, Choy, and Carroll, 1998). We also know that on a statewide basis (i.e., not just at the University), loans make up a smaller portion of the total of grants and loans for Minnesota undergraduates than they do nationally, although the increase in borrowing by Minnesota undergraduates between 1997 and 1999 was greater

than the increase in student borrowing nationally (MHESO, Highlights of Financial Aid Survey, 1999 ).

There is a great deal more we need to know about our students and how much they work, why they work, where they work, how much they earn, and what their expenses are (including the growing costs of credit card debt). The last extensive study of this sort at the University of Minnesota was done in 1989, and student habits have changed considerably since that time. Nevertheless, even in the absence of this detailed information, we know that there is much we could say to students and parents about work, loans, and the financial advantages of finishing a degree in the most timely manner possible.

## Making The Commitment to Help Students Stay on Track

Faculty, advisers, and other staff members interact with students on a daily basis and help them to make an array of decisions about their lives and their education. We need to be sure we provide faculty and staff members with information that will help them understand the consequences—to the student and to the institution—of too many students taking too long to graduate. Of course, there will always be some students who need to take six or more years for very good reasons, and we want to be able to respond to these legitimate needs. But for many of our students, there are strategies that would help them move through their degree programs in a more timely way.

The people who work directly with students are their best advocates, and they want to help students make choices that are good for them. For many years, that has often meant providing students with maximum flexibility while setting minimum expectations. But our graduation rates indicate that that this approach has not, in fact, proven to be an effective way of helping students complete degrees. If the people with direct student contact are convinced of the need to change—for the benefit of students—it will be easier to achieve an improved graduation or retention rate. If in fact we come to believe that this is important, there is much that all of us can do to assist students to make choices that will lead to this goal.

As part of these discussions, each college needs to look closely at the resources it assigns to advising, and must assure that all students have timely access to effective advising. Most of the strategies discussed below depend for their success on the active involvement and intervention of advisers in the colleges and departments. But many of these advisers are already working at capacity, and most college offices cannot take on an array of additional work without seeing a deterioration in quality and timeliness of service. If these strategies are to be effective, colleges need to assure that they have adequate advising support to implement them, and adequate technological support to free up adviser time for working with students.

The committee explored a number of strategies that might be implemented quickly and that have promise of helping students make good academic decisions. These can be clustered into four major areas: full-year registration for freshmen, e-mail reminders to students, mid-term grades, and drops and withdrawals.

## Full-year registration for freshmen

The committee supports the development of a program of full-year registration for new students when they attend New Student Orientation in the summer. In other words, we think freshmen should leave orientation not only with a fall schedule of courses but also with a spring schedule. We believe that this will reduce student and parent anxiety, especially for those students whose fall schedule does not include all the courses (such as composition) that many students expect to take in the first semester. We also think that it will simplify scheduling and encourage students to focus first on their academic commitments, with work as a secondary focus. The Provost's office is already beginning exploratory discussions with colleges on this subject.

## E-mail reminders

Over the past year, we have been experimenting with various types of e-mail reminders to students in specific situations. Copies of various sample e-mails are included as Appendix 5. Based on these pilot tests, we advocate that the registrar's office and undergraduate colleges cooperate to send the following reminders to students:

- before registration, remind all students about the half-price tuition for all credits over 12.
- after the registration queue is complete, remind continuing students who haven't registered to register immediately or to contact their adviser if they have questions.
- for students approaching 60 credits without a major declaration, remind them of the 60 credit policy, offer assistance, and encourage them to see an adviser if they need help.
- for students not successful in gaining admission to their desired major or college, stay in communication with them to offer continuing assistance in selecting another option.
- for students who have 110 credits and haven't registered or haven't filed for graduation, develop a strategy (beginning with an e-mail) that gets students in to see an adviser about their academic progress.

## Mid-term grade reports

Many institutions on the semester system use some sort of formal mid-term warning or grade report for students who are not doing well in their classes (such reports are uncommon on the quarter system because of the tight time frame). For example, five of the Big Ten schools have some form of mid-term grade reporting, and these take various forms. They are intended to be a "wake-up call" for students in trouble, and for that reason most institutions report mid-term grades only for students who are on a path to earn less than a C- grade. In some institutions, these are sent only to freshmen, and in others to all undergraduates. In one case, mid-term grades are reported only for a set of courses (12) that are taken predominantly

by freshmen and that are seen as key “gatekeeping” courses for academic progress. The intent in all of these cases is to give students a serious warning of possible failure while there is still time for the student to take the appropriate steps to rectify the situation.

The committee recommends that SCEP adopt a policy of requiring faculty to submit mid-term warnings for freshmen (or, alternatively, for all students) likely to earn a D or F in any 1xxx course. This can be set up as a web-based system for ease of data entry, and this will allow the registrar to notify students and advisers as appropriate. Grades should be collected around the sixth week so that students can be notified in a timely way and encouraged to seek help. Instructors would need to be sure that these courses are structured in a way that allows appropriate evaluation by the sixth week. Advisers should be copied on the e-mails, which will give them an aggregate picture of student performance across all courses. This policy should be required for freshmen and recommended for all students. The warning need not differentiate between the D or F grade, but needs to be unambiguous, and also to direct the student to helpful resources. (Note: General College currently uses mid-semester grades and has had a positive experience with them.)

To assist students who get warnings, we also recommend (and have initiated discussion with the College of Education and Human Development) that in addition to current semester-long study skills courses, half-semester study skills courses ought to be offered in the second half of the semester through the LASK program.

### Drops, withdrawals, and incompletes

Members of the committee were concerned that the use of mid-term grades might create a flurry of withdrawals at the eighth week, rather than creating the desired effect of students seeking academic assistance. The committee reviewed other institutions’ practices with regard to “late drops” or withdrawals, and queried whether the introduction of mid-term grades had increased the number of drops. Most said that mid-term grades had not dramatically increased the number of drops.

In general, the drop/withdrawal policies at other Big Ten schools are fairly similar to ours, with one or two exceptions where they are more stringent. At the University of Minnesota, students may drop courses with no transcript record for the first two weeks of a semester, but from weeks 2 to 8, a drop is recorded on the transcript as a W grade. After week 8, a student may generally not drop a course except under unusual circumstances, and with the approval of the college’s scholastic committee.\*

Common sense and logic clearly tell us that a student who has too many W grades is not on track for a timely graduation. Adelman’s extensive study takes this observation a big step further, noting that too many drops lead not only to delayed graduation but actually to dropping out:

We found that a high DWI (Drops-Withdrawals-Incompletes) index worked significantly against degree completion. The situation could be ameliorated by institutional policies

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\* with the exception of the one-time late drop, which a student may use once at any time in his/her academic career at Minnesota.

that both restrict the extent of withdrawals, incompletes, and no-credit repeats *and* pay closer attention, in advisement, to student credit loads and time commitments (Adelman, 1999).

In response to concerns such as this, we looked at the 1994 entering cohort of University of Minnesota students, comparing number of W grades on the record with students' 4, 5, and 6 year graduation rates. The data showed that one or two W grades had no apparent effect on graduation (and in fact students in GC or CLA with one W grade graduated at a higher rate than those with none, though this was not true for IT students). However, for all students there was a clear correlation between high numbers of W grades (3 or more) and lower rates of graduation. For example, we found that non-GC students with one drop had a 61.8% six-year graduation rate, while those with three or more drops had a 36.7% six-year graduation rate. For students who entered through GC, the effect was similar: 33.3% of those with one W graduated in 6 years, but only 16.3% of those with three or more Ws did so.

These data, combined with national studies, indicate that we need to give serious consideration to W grades as an indicator of risk for students. For that reason, we recommend consideration of several strategies related to student withdrawals:

- Approval by faculty before students can drop a course between week 2 and 8. At the present time, students can withdraw from a course without having a conversation with anyone—faculty or adviser. No permission is required. The faculty members of the committee argued that faculty are likely to be in the best position to help a student develop strategies for success in their course. If students withdraw without a discussion with faculty, there is no opportunity to consider such strategies. If such a requirement is to be effective, it cannot devolve into a stamp or departmental signature—it must require real faculty involvement and commitment to making this process work. We encourage SCEP to take up this issue as soon as possible.
- E-mail notification to the adviser when a student's credit load drops after week 2. Right now, there is nothing that rings alarm bells for advisers when students drop courses—and especially when they drop below 12 credits. We can develop an automatic system that will e-mail a student's adviser of record as soon as that student's credit load drops below 12 after the second week of the semester. The adviser can then assure that the student is aware of possible consequences (including loss of financial aid or scholarships), and that the student is getting support in making the best decision.
- Identification of courses where W grades are frequent and plans to help students succeed in these courses. When we looked at University of Minnesota data, we found that W grades comprised 6% of all grades in 1xxx classes and around 5% in 3-5xxx courses. For last year, those designators with the highest percentage of W grades (more than 7%) at the 1xxx level included Japanese, Math, Computer Science, OMS (business statistics), Philosophy, Humanities, Statistics, Music, and French. Some of these are extraordinarily difficult courses with small numbers of students (Japanese, for example), but there may be intervention

strategies for each of these that will help students persist in larger numbers. Colleges need to take responsibility to examine these grade patterns and suggest how we might help students stay in courses and succeed.

- Limitation on total number of W grades a student can earn in his/her college career. This is a more radical strategy and would put a policy in place that would reinforce the concern about students taking too many W grades. Penn State limits W grades to four in a student's undergraduate career. While most students don't even use 3, this policy nonetheless causes students to take the withdrawal process very seriously, and to carefully decide whether they can finish a course or use one of their limited W grades. In addition, when students take a W grade at Penn State, instructors must designate that W grade as WP (withdrawn-passing), WF (withdrawn-failing) or WN (withdrawn—no grade), and these grades are recorded on the transcript. SCEP should consider whether either of these options would be of assistance in reducing the casual use of W grades. However, such a policy should only be considered in combination with advising interventions such as those mentioned above.

Finally we encourage SCEP to review the use of I grades and assure that faculty are giving these grades appropriately. Under Senate policy, I grades are to be given only when the student is unable to complete a course because of illness or emergency. An I grade requires a contract for completion between the student and the faculty member. I grades should not be given when a student simply misses required work or skips the final. SCEP should assure that faculty are aware of these policies and in general compliance with them.

## Removing Institutional Barriers and Providing Incentives for Success

With the implementation of common policies, the development of web registration, the use of e-mail to communicate with students (for example, sending study lists by e-mail), and a variety of other policy changes and new procedures, we have already made significant steps toward creating a policy and administrative environment that supports timely graduation. At the request of SCEP, the administration has also asked colleges to examine the time to degree for each major, and to consider whether there are barriers in our requirements that could be reduced or eliminated while maintaining rigorous degree programs. But more could be done. This section discusses a variety of possible policy changes or administrative actions that might be taken to help achieve the goal of improving our graduation rate.

- Develop incentives for colleges to focus on graduation/retention, or sanctions if they fail to improve. Financial consequences (either in the form of incentives or in the form of fines) have the potential to provide an impetus for colleges to examine their graduation rates and develop college-specific strategies that will address each college's own particular culture and students. This also gives colleges a different way to look at enrollment management issues, since better retention has implications for the number of students admitted to the college.

For this recommendation to work, the colleges will need regular cohort progress reports by college, distributed each semester (these are under development and will soon be available)

- Develop additional incentives for students to complete their degrees in a timely fashion, or (alternatively) additional "costs" for students who drop/stop-out, or reduce their credit load. An example of such a policy at the University is the reduced per-credit cost for more than 12 credits. Some institutions have policies to require timely completion. They may require that students formally declare themselves to be either full-time or part-time, and that full-time students adhere to certain academic progress requirements. For example, UC-Berkeley has a stringent academic progress policy that essentially requires students to complete an average of 30 credits per year, although the actual implementation is slightly more lenient ("take the number of semesters you have been enrolled on the Berkeley campus, subtract one, and multiply by 15.") Students who are in college more than eight semesters may not continue beyond the semester in which they complete more than 130 credits. Students who wish to register for fewer than 13.5 credits in any semester must have permission from the dean.\* While we doubt whether a policy as rigorous as Berkeley's is appropriate for Minnesota, SCEP should consider whether there might be an academic progress policy that would be suitable for the U of M.
- Find better ways to identify students who may be at risk of stopping out or dropping out. We know about many risk factors—academic underpreparedness, living at home, working too much—but there are other pieces of information that would help us identify these students so that advisers could work with them in a different way. For example, we do not now use the full range of information we have on students from the questionnaire that accompanies the ACT test. Some of the questions on the questionnaire are good surrogates for identifying students at risk of dropping out. We should develop a strategy to use the available information to identify these students and intervene.
- Pay more attention to retention in the junior and senior years. Given the problems that we have with students who leave late in their academic programs, we should consider encouraging colleges to develop strategies addressing issues or programs such as entry into the major, junior seminars, special scholarships or other aid programs for juniors, and various other forms of assistance to students who have completed at least two years of college. This might also include a special review to assure that all checkpoints have been met and that the student is on target for graduation.
- Continue to work to increase grant-based student aid such as scholarships, to help students reduce their dependence on work.

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\* <http://ls-advise.berkeley.edu/rr/units.html#minmax>

## Balancing Access with Success

The committee encourages the administration to continue to work closely with General College to assure that the students admitted to GC are those who have the best chance of graduating from a research university. This may mean reducing the size of the class admitted to General College, or focussing more explicitly on the research about factors in high-risk populations that will lead to success. We want to assure that student success, here and throughout the University, is defined in terms of graduation, not just persistence from term to term. General College is an important portal to the University, but despite many resounding successes, most of the students who come through that portal still do not graduate in six years. As General College has honed its mission over the past ten years, it has learned a great deal about how to help at-risk students. It has even won a national award for its retention programs. GC is doing the job that the University has asked it to do. But as an institution, we need to come to grips with our identity and decide what proportion of our student body should be admitted through General College, and we also need to understand and accept the implications of those decisions and their effect on admissions practices, graduation rates and student success.

## Conclusion

This report attempts to provide a basic compendium of information about graduation and retention rates at the University of Minnesota, to argue that these rates are too low, and to present some possible approaches to addressing this problem. The success of any of these interventions will depend in part on the institution's willingness to take this issue seriously and continue to explore both the nuances of the problem (for example, more studies on specific issues such as students' work behaviors) and the larger questions of institutional identity and focus. We need comments and discussion from students, faculty, and staff as we address these issues. We have presented more questions than conclusions, and we hope that CUD, SCEP, MSA, and other policy-making and administrative groups will seriously consider what further steps should be taken.

We present this report as the opening of a dialogue that we hope will ensue. We welcome discussion, disagreement, revision, or any response at all—except apathy. President Yudof, in presenting his budget to the Regents this summer, has said that we are at a crossroads in terms of our institutional stature and identity. We hope that the issues raised here will be taken seriously by the University community, and that we can move ahead together to address them. And as President Yudof has noted, with our tuition rising there will be an expectation that we will deliver even better service. Improved graduation rates must be part of that expectation. If there is consensus that the University's graduation and retention rates are a problem, then we must move at all levels—administration, faculty, staff, and students—to pursue solutions. If the members of the academic community do not perceive these numbers as problematic, then we must be able to explain to the public, to the legislature, to parents, and to students, why it is acceptable that the University graduates only slightly more than half of the students who begin here as freshmen. We as a committee do not find this acceptable, and we hope others agree and are prepared to act.

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## Appendix 1 Members of the Subcommittee

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## Appendix 2: Data from *U.S. News and World Report*

The following two tables summarize data from the *U.S. News and World Report* college rankings, September 2000.

<b>Overall Rank</b>	<b>Top 50 National Publics (U.S. News and World Report , Sept. 2000)</b>	<b>Actual 6-yr Grad Rate</b>	<b>Freshman Retention Rate</b>
1	University of Virginia	91	97
6	College of William and Mary (VA)	88	96
1	University of California–Berkeley	82	95
3	University of Michigan–Ann Arbor	82	95
33	SUNY–Binghamton	81	91
2	Univ. of California–Los Angeles	80	96
3	U. of North Carolina–Chapel Hill	80	95
13	Pennsylvania State U.–University Park	80	93
7	Univ. of California–San Diego	79	94
26	Miami University–Oxford (OH)	79	90
10	University of California–Davis	76	91
8	Univ. of Wisconsin–Madison	75	91
10	U. of Illinois–Urbana-Champaign	75	92
10	University of California–Irvine	74	92
24	Rutgers–New Brunswick (NJ)	73	89
14	University of Washington	72	84
38	Clemson University (SC)	72	83
17	Texas A&M Univ.–College Station	71	88
26	Virginia Tech	71	89
26	University of Delaware	70	86
44	Ohio University	70	84
47	University of New Hampshire	70	83
8	Georgia Institute of Technology	69	86
26	Indiana University–Bloomington	68	87
26	Univ. of California–Santa Cruz	68	85
38	University of Connecticut	68	87
14	Univ. of California–Santa Barbara	67	88
18	University of Florida	67	91
47	University of Vermont	67	82
16	University of Texas–Austin	66	88
33	Univ. of California–Riverside	66	86
42	Auburn University (AL)	66	81
33	North Carolina State U.–Raleigh	65	88
20	Purdue Univ.–West Lafayette (IN)	64	87
24	Univ. of Maryland–College Park	64	88
26	Colorado School of Mines	64	84
26	University of Colorado–Boulder	64	83
33	Michigan State University	64	87
20	University of Georgia	63	88
38	University of Pittsburgh	63	84
47	Florida State University	63	84
20	University of Iowa	62	83
33	Univ. of Missouri–Columbia	60	84
38	Iowa State University	60	83
47	Univ. of Massachusetts–Amherst	60	79
47	Washington State University	59	84
44	Univ. of Tennessee–Knoxville	57	78
20	Ohio State University–Columbus	56	81
42	University of Kansas	53	78
44	University of Arizona	52	77
18	Univ. of Minnesota–Twin Cities	51	84

**Top 50 National Public Listed by  
Graduation Performance (Predicted -  
Actual) (US News, Sept 2000)**

	<b>Actual Grad Rate</b>	<b>Predicted Grad Rate</b>	<b>Grad Performance</b>
44. Ohio University	70	55	15
13. Pennsylvania State U.-University Park	80	66	14
10. University of California-Irvine	74	61	13
26. Miami University-Oxford (OH)	79	66	13
47. Washington State University	59	46	13
47. University of New Hampshire	70	57	13
33. Univ. of California-Riverside	66	54	12
1. University of Virginia	91	80	11
14. Univ. of California-Santa Barbara	67	56	11
33. Michigan State University	64	53	11
10. University of California-Davis	76	66	10
26. University of Delaware	70	60	10
33. SUNY-Binghamton	81	71	10
38. Clemson University (SC)	72	62	10
42. Auburn University (AL)	66	56	10
20. Purdue Univ.-West Lafayette (IN)	64	55	9
3. U. of North Carolina-Chapel Hill	80	72	8
6. College of William and Mary (VA)	88	80	8
14. University of Washington	72	64	8
24. Rutgers-New Brunswick (NJ)	73	65	8
17. Texas A&M Univ.-College Station	71	64	7
38. University of Connecticut	68	61	7
3. Univ. of California-Los Angeles	80	74	6
8. Univ. of Wisconsin-Madison	75	69	6
26. Virginia Tech	71	65	6
47. Univ. of Massachusetts-Amherst	60	54	6
3. University of Michigan-Ann Arbor	82	77	5
7. Univ. of California-San Diego	79	74	5
26. Univ. of California-Santa Cruz	68	63	5
47. University of Vermont	67	62	5
38. University of Pittsburgh	63	59	4
44. Univ. of Tennessee-Knoxville	57	53	4
20. Ohio State University-Columbus	56	53	3
10. U. of Illinois-Urbana-Champaign	75	73	2
26. Indiana University-Bloomington	68	66	2
1. University of California-Berkeley	82	81	1
20. University of Iowa	62	62	0
26. University of Colorado-Boulder	64	64	0
33. North Carolina State U.-Raleigh	65	65	0
42. University of Kansas	53	53	0
16. University of Texas-Austin	66	67	-1
38. Iowa State University	60	61	-1
47. Florida State University	63	64	-1
18. University of Florida	67	69	-2
24. Univ. of Maryland-College Park	64	66	-2
44. University of Arizona	52	55	-3
<b>18. Univ. of Minnesota-Twin Cities</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>-4</b>
20. University of Georgia	63	67	-4
33. Univ. of Missouri-Columbia	60	64	-4
26. Colorado School of Mines	64	77	-13
8. Georgia Institute of Technology	69	83	-14

### **Appendix 3: Other U of M Retention/Graduation Data and Comparative Big Ten/Public Data**

The following pages include one set of tables that report UMTC graduation and retention rates by college and by ethnic group, and another set of comparative data related to retention and graduation in the Big Ten and selected other public institutions.

**Twin Cities Campus NHS Retention and Graduation Rates by College, Fall 1991-Fall 1998 Cohorts**  
 Source: Fall 1999 U of M Retention Reports

**All Students**

Year	N	Retention Rate After:				Cumulative Graduation Rate After:				
		1 yr	2 yrs	3 yrs	4 yrs	4 yrs	5 yrs	6 yrs	7 yrs	8 yrs
1991	3,205	81.2%	71.8%	64.5%	43.6%	15.3%	38.1%	47.6%	51.5%	53.3%
1992	3,220	78.1%	66.4%	60.5%	40.6%	14.9%	36.1%	44.5%	48.2%	
1993	3,448	79.7%	69.8%	63.9%	41.2%	18.0%	40.4%	48.3%		
1994	3,570	79.7%	69.4%	63.4%	41.0%	18.6%	42.3%			
1995	4,293	81.2%	70.5%	64.9%	33.3%	23.5%				
1996	4,185	81.6%	73.1%	64.0%						
1997	4,458	84.1%	73.1%							
1998	5,086	83.1%								

**CSOM**

Year	N	Retention Rate After:				Cumulative Graduation Rate After:				
		1 yr	2 yrs	3 yrs	4 yrs	4 yrs	5 yrs	6 yrs	7 yrs	8 yrs
1991										
1992										
1993										
1994										
1995										
1996	222	90.1%	87.8%	81.5%						
1997	214	94.4%	91.1%							
1998	265	94.0%								

**IT**

Year	N	Retention Rate After:				Cumulative Graduation Rate After:				
		1 yr	2 yrs	3 yrs	4 yrs	4 yrs	5 yrs	6 yrs	7 yrs	8 yrs
1991	563	88.6%	83.7%	79.4%	53.8%	21.7%	55.4%	67.3%	69.4%	71.6%
1992	561	86.3%	79.1%	73.6%	49.6%	19.8%	48.7%	59.7%	62.6%	
1993	636	87.9%	82.2%	76.6%	51.7%	22.2%	52.8%	64.0%		
1994	653	88.2%	82.4%	75.8%	51.5%	23.4%	55.0%			
1995	690	89.4%	82.2%	78.4%	43.9%	27.2%				
1996	684	89.2%	83.3%	77.2%						
1997	711	91.0%	82.6%							
1998	819	86.6%								

**CLA**

Year	N	Retention Rate After:				Cumulative Graduation Rate After:				
		1 yr	2 yrs	3 yrs	4 yrs	4 yrs	5 yrs	6 yrs	7 yrs	8 yrs
1991	1,687	84.7%	75.9%	68.2%	44.2%	18.6%	42.8%	53.5%	57.3%	59.2%
1992	1,792	79.4%	68.3%	63.5%	40.4%	18.5%	41.2%	49.2%	52.6%	
1993	1,942	81.4%	72.5%	66.8%	40.2%	22.1%	46.0%	53.3%		
1994	2,043	79.0%	69.5%	63.7%	38.5%	21.2%	45.4%			
1995	2,552	81.2%	71.2%	65.6%	29.7%	27.7%				
1996	2,274	82.3%	73.0%	62.6%						
1997	2,290	83.6%	73.2%							
1998	2,560	83.6%								

**GC**

<u>Year</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Retention Rate After:</u>			
		<u>1 yr</u>	<u>2 yrs</u>	<u>3 yrs</u>	<u>4 yrs</u>
1991	793	67.6%	53.2%	44.9%	34.8%
1992	739	67.7%	50.6%	41.9%	34.5%
1993	716	67.7%	50.6%	44.4%	36.2%
1994	664	72.4%	55.3%	49.2%	40.1%
1995	779	73.8%	57.1%	49.8%	36.5%
1996	808	71.2%	60.6%	51.1%	
1997	931	77.6%	60.5%		
1998	947	74.0%			

<u>Cumulative Graduation Rate After:</u>				
<u>4 yrs</u>	<u>5 yrs</u>	<u>6 yrs</u>	<u>7 yrs</u>	<u>8 yrs</u>
3.3%	14.6%	20.6%	24.7%	26.4%
2.2%	12.0%	19.8%	24.5%	
2.7%	13.5%	20.7%		
4.2%	18.7%			
5.9%				

**COAFES**

<u>Year</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Retention Rate After:</u>			
		<u>1 yr</u>	<u>2 yrs</u>	<u>3 yrs</u>	<u>4 yrs</u>
1991	95	90.5%	83.2%	74.7%	40.0%
1992	74	83.8%	78.4%	68.9%	36.5%
1993	88	80.7%	71.6%	62.5%	30.7%
1994	116	86.2%	75.0%	69.0%	32.8%
1995	162	85.2%	78.4%	71.0%	34.0%
1996	106	85.8%	78.3%	72.6%	
1997	113	91.2%	83.2%		
1998	172	82.6%			

<u>Cumulative Graduation Rate After:</u>				
<u>4 yrs</u>	<u>5 yrs</u>	<u>6 yrs</u>	<u>7 yrs</u>	<u>8 yrs</u>
21.1%	47.4%	60.0%	64.2%	64.2%
20.3%	50.0%	56.8%	60.8%	
20.5%	38.6%	45.5%		
27.6%	52.6%			
24.7%				

**CNR**

<u>Year</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Retention Rate After:</u>			
		<u>1 yr</u>	<u>2 yrs</u>	<u>3 yrs</u>	<u>4 yrs</u>
1991	39	79.5%	71.8%	64.1%	56.4%
1992	35	77.1%	65.7%	57.1%	40.0%
1993	41	73.2%	70.7%	65.9%	41.5%
1994	38	78.9%	73.7%	65.8%	39.5%
1995	49	75.5%	63.3%	65.3%	34.7%
1996	29	62.1%	65.5%	58.6%	
1997	34	76.5%	64.7%		
1998	42	78.6%			

<u>Cumulative Graduation Rate After:</u>				
<u>4 yrs</u>	<u>5 yrs</u>	<u>6 yrs</u>	<u>7 yrs</u>	<u>8 yrs</u>
10.3%	41.0%	51.3%	53.8%	56.4%
8.6%	37.1%	42.9%	48.6%	
17.1%	48.8%	56.1%		
18.4%	36.8%			
18.4%				

**CHE**

<u>Year</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Retention Rate After:</u>			
		<u>1 yr</u>	<u>2 yrs</u>	<u>3 yrs</u>	<u>4 yrs</u>
1991	28	82.1%	75.0%	60.7%	46.4%
1992	19	94.7%	84.2%	78.9%	52.6%
1993	25	88.0%	84.0%	76.0%	40.0%
1994	56	82.1%	69.6%	64.3%	39.3%
1995	60	76.7%	65.0%	60.0%	25.0%
1996	61	82.0%	70.5%	63.9%	
1997	53	79.2%	67.9%		
1998	82	86.6%			

<u>Cumulative Graduation Rate After:</u>				
<u>4 yrs</u>	<u>5 yrs</u>	<u>6 yrs</u>	<u>7 yrs</u>	<u>8 yrs</u>
14.3%	32.1%	42.9%	50.0%	50.0%
21.1%	68.4%	68.4%	78.9%	
20.0%	48.0%	56.0%		
19.6%	44.6%			
33.3%				

**CBS**

<u>Year</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Retention Rate After:</u>			
		<u>1 yr</u>	<u>2 yrs</u>	<u>3 yrs</u>	<u>4 yrs</u>
1991					
1992					
1993					
1994					
1995					
1996					
1997	112	84.8%	75.9%		
1998	199	92.0%			

<u>Cumulative Graduation Rate After:</u>				
<u>4 yrs</u>	<u>5 yrs</u>	<u>6 yrs</u>	<u>7 yrs</u>	<u>8 yrs</u>

**Twin Cities Campus NHS Retention and Graduation Rates by Ethnicity, Fall 1991-Fall 1998 Cohorts**  
 Source: Fall 1999 U of M Retention Reports

**All Students**

Year	N	Retention Rate After:				Cumulative Graduation Rate After:				
		1 yr	2 yrs	3 yrs	4 yrs	4 yrs	5 yrs	6 yrs	7 yrs	8 yrs
1991	3,205	81.2%	71.8%	64.5%	43.6%	15.3%	38.1%	47.6%	51.5%	53.3%
1992	3,220	78.1%	66.4%	60.5%	40.6%	14.9%	36.1%	44.5%	48.2%	
1993	3,448	79.7%	69.8%	63.9%	41.2%	18.0%	40.4%	48.3%		
1994	3,570	79.7%	69.4%	63.4%	41.0%	18.6%	42.3%			
1995	4,293	81.2%	70.5%	64.9%	33.3%	23.5%				
1996	4,185	81.6%	73.1%	64.0%						
1997	4,458	84.1%	73.1%							
1998	5,086	83.1%								

**African American**

Year	N	Retention Rate After:				Cumulative Graduation Rate After:				
		1 yr	2 yrs	3 yrs	4 yrs	4 yrs	5 yrs	6 yrs	7 yrs	8 yrs
1991	145	60.7%	51.7%	44.8%	33.1%	2.1%	15.9%	23.4%	29.7%	31.0%
1992	157	64.3%	47.8%	45.2%	35.7%	1.9%	16.6%	26.1%	28.7%	
1993	149	70.5%	55.7%	49.0%	35.6%	6.0%	20.8%	24.8%		
1994	156	68.6%	55.1%	51.3%	40.4%	3.8%	24.4%			
1995	209	79.4%	63.2%	52.6%	36.8%	10.5%				
1996	156	75.6%	63.5%	58.3%						
1997	227	76.7%	66.5%							
1998	216	83.3%								

**American Indian**

Year	N	Retention Rate After:				Cumulative Graduation Rate After:				
		1 yr	2 yrs	3 yrs	4 yrs	4 yrs	5 yrs	6 yrs	7 yrs	8 yrs
1991	45	55.6%	42.2%	26.7%	17.8%	8.9%	17.8%	20.0%	20.0%	20.0%
1992	29	41.4%	34.5%	27.6%	24.1%	0.0%	3.4%	10.3%	17.2%	
1993	33	54.5%	42.4%	30.3%	18.2%	12.1%	21.2%	27.3%		
1994	31	48.4%	32.3%	29.0%	22.6%	9.7%	16.1%			
1995	49	57.1%	49.0%	49.0%	26.5%	14.3%				
1996	40	67.5%	47.5%	27.5%						
1997	38	63.2%	50.0%							
1998	36	75.0%								

**Asian/Pacific**

Year	N	Retention Rate After:				Cumulative Graduation Rate After:				
		1 yr	2 yrs	3 yrs	4 yrs	4 yrs	5 yrs	6 yrs	7 yrs	8 yrs
1991	323	83.9%	75.2%	70.3%	53.6%	11.8%	34.7%	44.6%	49.5%	52.3%
1992	310	85.2%	70.0%	63.5%	48.7%	8.7%	31.0%	42.3%	46.5%	
1993	361	85.9%	75.6%	69.8%	49.6%	14.4%	33.8%	44.3%		
1994	364	84.3%	75.3%	67.3%	48.9%	17.6%	35.7%			
1995	396	84.1%	73.2%	64.9%	38.6%	18.2%				
1996	394	84.5%	73.6%	65.2%						
1997	381	86.6%	73.8%							
1998	439	82.7%								

**Chicano/Latino**

Year	N	Retention Rate After:				Cumulative Graduation Rate After:				
		1 yr	2 yrs	3 yrs	4 yrs	4 yrs	5 yrs	6 yrs	7 yrs	8 yrs
1991	70	68.6%	55.7%	52.9%	35.7%	4.3%	24.3%	32.9%	34.3%	34.3%
1992	71	66.2%	56.3%	54.9%	36.6%	4.2%	21.1%	28.2%	32.4%	
1993	84	69.0%	53.6%	48.8%	33.3%	10.7%	17.9%	31.0%		
1994	84	67.9%	56.0%	50.0%	33.3%	10.7%	25.0%			
1995	96	76.0%	61.5%	57.3%	30.2%	17.7%				
1996	88	73.9%	63.6%	55.7%						
1997	104	83.7%	70.2%							
1998	128	72.7%								

**International**

<u>Year</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Retention Rate After:</u>				<u>Cumulative Graduation Rate After:</u>				
		<u>1 yr</u>	<u>2 yrs</u>	<u>3 yrs</u>	<u>4 yrs</u>	<u>4 yrs</u>	<u>5 yrs</u>	<u>6 yrs</u>	<u>7 yrs</u>	<u>8 yrs</u>
1991	54	81.5%	77.8%	63.0%	31.5%	44.4%	68.5%	70.4%	75.9%	75.9%
1992	60	88.3%	81.7%	56.7%	31.7%	26.7%	50.0%	58.3%	61.7%	
1993	58	86.2%	84.5%	72.4%	43.1%	32.8%	53.4%	62.1%		
1994	54	88.9%	81.5%	66.7%	22.2%	48.1%	55.6%			
1995	34	91.2%	85.3%	67.6%	29.4%	35.3%				
1996	52	94.2%	82.7%	63.5%						
1997	64	89.1%	79.7%							
1998	57	91.2%								

**White**

<u>Year</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Retention Rate After:</u>				<u>Cumulative Graduation Rate After:</u>				
		<u>1 yr</u>	<u>2 yrs</u>	<u>3 yrs</u>	<u>4 yrs</u>	<u>4 yrs</u>	<u>5 yrs</u>	<u>6 yrs</u>	<u>7 yrs</u>	<u>8 yrs</u>
1991	2,533	83.5%	73.9%	66.4%	44.3%	16.3%	40.2%	50.5%	53.8%	55.7%
1992	2,566	78.9%	67.7%	62.0%	40.6%	16.7%	38.5%	46.5%	50.2%	
1993	2,736	80.0%	70.4%	64.7%	41.0%	19.0%	43.1%	50.8%		
1994	2,849	80.6%	70.2%	64.4%	40.8%	19.4%	44.8%			
1995	3,468	81.6%	71.2%	66.1%	32.7%	25.2%				
1996	3,416	82.0%	74.2%	64.9%						
1997	3,567	84.7%	74.0%							
1998	4,091	83.5%								

# U OF M

## Twin Cities

Entering Freshmen	Number of Entering Freshmen	Overall Acceptance Rate	Top 10% of HS Class	Top 25% of HS Class	Top 50% of HS Class
<b>Univ Minnesota-Twin Cities</b>	<b>5,166</b>	<b>77%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>60%</b>	<b>88%</b>
<b>Big 10 Publics</b>					
Indiana Univ	6,735	84%	21%	53%	91%
Michigan State Univ	6,924	77%	21%	54%	90%
Ohio State Univ	6,219	79%	26%	56%	87%
Penn State Univ-Main Campus	4,101	47%	48%	90%	93%
Purdue Univ-Main Campus	6,584	87%	25%	57%	90%
Univ of Illinois-Urbana	6,462	71%	49%	85%	99%
Univ of Iowa	3,983	84%	20%	50%	89%
Univ of Michigan-Ann Arbor	5,253	59%	63%	90%	99%
Univ Wisconsin-Madison	5,596	73%	46%	93%	99%
<b>Other Top 30: Public</b>					
Cornell Univ	3,013	34%	82%	95%	100%
SUNY at Stony Brook	2,141	54%	24%	63%	98%
Univ of Calif-Berkeley	3,727	28%	95%	100%	100%
Univ of Calif-Los Angeles	4,200	33%	97%	100%	100%
Univ of Calif-San Diego	3,373	48%	96%	100%	100%
Univ of Calif-Santa Barbara	3,584	61%	95%	100%	100%
Univ of NC-Chapel Hill	3,436	35%	69%	93%	99%
Univ of Texas at Austin	6,744	71%	44%	80%	97%
Univ of Washington	4,219	66%	37%	72%	96%
<b>Top 30 Privates</b>	<b>1,482</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>85%</b>	<b>97%</b>	<b>100%</b>

# U OF M

## Twin Cities

Entering Freshmen	ACT Composite 25th Percentile	ACT Composite 75th Percentile	SAT Combined 25th Percentile	SAT Combined 75th Percentile
<b>Univ Minnesota-Twin Cities</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>1040</b>	<b>1290</b>
<b>Big 10 Publics</b>				
Indiana Univ	21	27	1010	1250
Michigan State Univ	21	26	980	1240
Ohio State Univ	21	27	1010	1250
Penn State Univ-Main Campus	na	na	1101	1310
Purdue Univ-Main Campus	22	27	980	1220
Univ of Illinois-Urbana	25	30	1120	1350
Univ of Iowa	22	27	1060	1290
Univ of Michigan-Ann Arbor	25	30	1160	1380
Univ Wisconsin-Madison	23	28	1040	1320
<b>Other Top 30: Public</b>				
Cornell Univ	na	na	1260	1450
SUNY at Stony Brook	na	na	1000	1220
Univ of Calif-Berkeley	na	na	1230	1450
Univ of Calif-Los Angeles	24	29	1170	1380
Univ of Calif-San Diego	24	29	1140	1340
Univ of Calif-Santa Barbara	22	27	1060	1270
Univ of NC-Chapel Hill	na	na	1130	1340
Univ of Texas at Austin	22	27	1090	1310
Univ of Washington	22	28	1030	1280
<b>Top 30 Privates</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>1,320</b>	<b>1,503</b>

# U OF M Twin Cities

All Undergraduates (* indicates value is for degree-seeking students)	Ugrad Enrollment	Part- time	* State Residents	* Women	* SOC	* Average Age Full-time Students	* Average Age All Students
Univ Minnesota-Twin Cities	33,868	32%	74%	52%	17%	22	22
(degree seeking)	25,903	16%					
<b>Big 10 Publics</b>							
Indiana Univ	27,826	9%	75%	54%	9%	20	20
Michigan State Univ	34,089	13%	92%	53%	16%	20	21
Ohio State Univ	36,252	15%	93%	48%	15%	21	22
Penn State Univ-Main Campus	34,951	6%	80%	46%	13%	na	21
Purdue Univ-Main Campus	30,159	7%	74%	43%	15%	20	21
Univ of Illinois-Urbana	27,452	3%	93%	47%	28%	na	na
Univ of Iowa	19,337	13%	72%	55%	8%	20	20
Univ of Michigan-Ann Arbor	24,015	6%	72%	50%	29%	na	20
Univ Wisconsin-Madison	28,984	11%	69%	53%	13%	20	21
<b>Other Top 30: Public</b>							
Cornell Univ	13,442	na	45%	47%	34%	20	20
SUNY at Stony Brook	12,260	10%	97%	51%	40%	21	22
Univ of Calif-Berkeley	22,261	7%	92%	50%	41%	21	21
Univ of Calif-Los Angeles	24,103	5%	97%	54%	62%	21	na
Univ of Calif-San Diego	15,837	2%	97%	51%	47%	21	21
Univ of Calif-Santa Barbara	17,059	4%	96%	55%	33%	21	21
Univ of NC-Chapel Hill	15,291	6%	83%	61%	19%	19	20
Univ of Texas at Austin	37,203	13%	94%	50%	35%	21	21
Univ of Washington	25,273	16%	89%	52%	33%	22	22
<b>Top 30 Privates</b>	<b>6,711</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>20</b>

**Appendix 4: Report from Ron Matross and Ron Huesman on  
"Why Do They Leave?"**

The full text of the report, including appendices.

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

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## **Why Do They Leave?**

**A Study of Student Departure from the  
University Minnesota**

Ronald Matross, Office of the  
Executive Vice President and  
Provost

Ronald Huesman, Office of  
Institutional Research and  
Reporting

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## Executive Summary

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As part of its examination of student graduation and retention, a subcommittee of the University of Minnesota Council of Undergraduate Deans commissioned a study of Twin Cities Campus undergraduates who were enrolled in the spring 2000 and did not re-enroll in the fall or spring 2001. The study consisted of two parts: an examination of the demographic and academic characteristics those who were retained and not retained, and a survey of a sample of students who were not retained. Key findings included:

- Of those enrolled in spring 2000, 14.6% did not enroll in either the subsequent fall or spring. Of those who did not re-enroll, 36% had academic or financial holds that prevented them from registering.
- Compared to stayers, leavers had lower credit loads, lower GPAs, lower coefficients of completion (ratio of credits completed to attempted), lower ACT composite and high school rank scores, and lower amounts of financial aid of all types.
- In the survey, students were divided into dropouts and stopouts based on their response to the question of whether they intended to re-enroll. Of the 257 students surveyed, 149 (58%) were classed as stopouts based on their reply of yes or not sure to the re-enrollment question and 108 (42%) were considered dropouts because they did not re-enroll.
- The majority of dropouts (56%) were enrolled in another college, while the majority of stopouts (71%) were employed.
- Stopouts most often cited work(25%) or finances(30%) as their primary reason for leaving, while dropouts most often cited academics (25%), the campus environment (16%), or the campus location (18%).
- When asked how important various other reasons were in their decision not to re-enroll, stopouts most often rated as extremely important work-school conflicts and the need to earn money for school. Dropouts most often cited being turned down for a program they wanted or changing career plans.
- Both stopouts and dropouts scored high on a number of factors putting them at risk for not completing their degree programs.
  - Only 26% of stopouts and 46% of dropouts lived their first term in a university residence hall.
  - Sixty-six percent of the stopouts and 52% of the dropouts were working more than 20 hours a week in their most recent term.

- Fifty-one percent of the stopouts and 38% of the dropouts said that their parents were paying none of their college expenses.
- Sixty-six percent of the stopouts and 52% of the dropouts said that they were not at all involved in college extra-curricular activities.
- When compared to the responses of Spring 2001 enrollees, stopouts and dropouts gave significantly lower ratings to the quality of advising, and slightly lower ratings to the quality of instruction. In terms of overall satisfaction with the University, stopouts were actually more satisfied than current students, while dropouts were significantly less satisfied.
- In sum, there appear three syndromes of leaving the University:
  - The **underperformers**, who are unable to cope with academic work and find themselves candidates for academic dismissal. They require early identification and help.
  - The **disenchanted**, students who are relatively able academically, but who become dissatisfied with the University's programs and environment. The University's initiatives to improve the undergraduate experience have probably helped reduce their numbers.
  - The **drop-ins**, students who are satisfied with the University, but who drop in to school while they center their lives in the workplace, often never finishing their degrees. Reducing their numbers will require a number of advising, policy, and educational initiatives to get them to spend more of their time and energy on academics and campus life.

## Introduction

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As part of its examination of issues surrounding undergraduate retention, the Graduation and Retention subcommittee of the Council of Undergraduate Deans undertook a study of recent leavers from the Twin Cities campus. Using records analyses and a survey, the study examined the characteristics and attitudes of students who were enrolled in spring 2000, but who did not enroll for either fall or spring, 2001.

The study was designed to fill in some large gaps in the University's knowledge of student dropout and stopout. While the University has had good descriptive information on how many students in a given entering cohort do not enroll in subsequent terms (Institutional Research and Reporting, 2000), it has had little systematic insight into students' reasons for non-enrollment.

The study addressed the following research questions:

- In what ways are dropouts and stopouts different from the students who re-enroll?
- How many students who leave in a given year are stopping out, intending to return?
- What are the reasons why students stopout and dropout?
- How are stopouts and dropouts different?
- What happens to stopouts and dropouts—do they enroll in other colleges, go to work, or both?
- How do departure patterns and reasons differ by college?
- To what extent are risk factors from the retention literature (Tinto, 1993), involved in the departure of U of M students? These previously identified risk factors include:
  - Having lower test scores and high school rank
  - Of African American, Hispanic, or American Indian origin
  - Attending part-time
  - Having stopped out previously
  - Living off campus
  - Working heavily
  - Not involved in campus activities
  - Attending reluctantly (not in 1<sup>st</sup> choice college)
  - Being turned down for a program or major
  - Receiving loans rather than grants

## Method

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### Record Analysis

The study consisted of two parts: a records analysis and a survey. The records analysis compared all the spring 2000 students who did not re-enroll in 2001 with those who did.

Comparisons were made on the following items:

- **Demographics:** Ethnicity, gender, home location, age
- **Academic history:** College, GPA, credits attempted and completed, previous stopout, financial and academic holds
- **Admissions information:** Admissions test scores, high school rank, initial status as freshman or transfer, applications for transfer or upper division
- **Financial aid information.** Most recent loan, grant, and scholarship awards.

### Survey

**Sample.** The survey was conducted by telephone among the 1,119 undergraduate non-enrollees who did not fall into the following categories:

- International students (Because of difficulty of contact and unique issues)
- General college students (Because of unique issues associated with lack of academic preparation)
- Those who were dismissed for academic reasons, on academic probation, or had GPAs less than 2.0.
- Graduates and transfers to other U of M campuses. (Some graduates were included in the survey sample because the sample was drawn early in the spring before some students applied for graduation)
- Those known to be studying abroad.

**Content.** The survey asked about issues not discernible from academic records, including:

- Current work and education situation
- Reasons for leaving. Free answer primary reason and importance of listed academic, personal, and financial reasons.
- Satisfaction with U of M instruction, advising and overall. The questions used the same wording as those in recent student and alumni surveys, so comparisons could be made.
- Potential retention risk factors: Hours worked while at the U of M, U of M residence, loan debt, extent of parental financial support, whether the U of M college was first choice, whether the person was turned down for desired program.

A copy of the questionnaire can be found in Appendix A.

**Procedures.** The survey was conducted by telephone, from March 26 to March 30, 2001 by Applied Media Research, Inc., using computer-assisted telephoning technology. Responses were received from 257 students, for a response rate of 23% from the original sample of 1,119.

Because college dropouts are highly mobile, and are often negative toward their former schools, dropout surveys typically have very low response rates. This survey was no exception, despite extensive efforts to contact and interview students. The techniques used to find the students included:

- Sending a postcard to the student's home address explaining the study and asking the recipient to call a toll-free number with a current phone number for the student. (Appendix B shows the postcard)
- Checking phone numbers against a phone update database to find changes.
- Calling back at least six times to numbers with no answer.
- Calling both the student's last known number and their listed home number (usually a parent)

Despite these efforts, 355 students were impossible to call, including 146 with only disconnected or out of order numbers, 118 bad or untraceable numbers, 91 on a national "do not call" list. If these students are excluded, the response rate (interviews/possible interviews) was 34%

Error in the survey results may come from several sources including sampling error, representativeness of the sample, and the wording of the survey questions. Only the sampling error (error due to taking a sample rather than the whole population) can be estimated quantitatively. In this study, the sampling error is 6.2%. The representativeness of the sample cannot be easily quantified, but can be partially assessed by comparing the characteristics of survey respondents with those of the all those not retained (See appendix B). The survey respondents included comparatively more students from the Colleges of Liberal Arts and Human Ecology and fewer from the Institute of Technology; more women and fewer men; more seniors and fewer freshmen; more white students and fewer Asian/Pacific students.

### **Data Analysis**

The quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS frequencies, cross-tabulations and analyses of variance. The open-ended responses were classified into categories, and the categories were added to the quantitative data. The survey analysis divided respondents into stopouts and dropouts, based on students report of their intentions to return to the University. These groups and other characteristics were contrasted using crosstabs and analyses of variance. The data are unweighted.

## Results

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### Part 1: Records Analysis

#### Voluntary vs. Involuntary Departure

The first issue in understanding dropouts and stopouts is to determine how many of those who left did so voluntarily, as opposed to having a hold on their records to prevent them from registering. Table 1 shows the Spring 2001 status of Spring 2000 enrollees, broken out by U of M college. Overall, 13.6% of those enrolled in Spring 2000 were not enrolled in the subsequent two semesters. Among the 1,855 not enrolled, 660 (36% of non-enrollees) had a registration hold, financial or academic, that prohibited them from enrolling.

The Colleges of Continuing Education (19.7%) and Education and Human Development (14.3%) had the highest percentage of their students who were voluntary dropouts. General College had the highest percentage of involuntary leavers (9%) and almost as many involuntary leavers as voluntary ones. The Institute of Technology was the only college that more involuntary leavers (97) than voluntary ones (93).

**Table 1. Status of Spring 2000 Enrollees at Start of Spring 2001 Term**

College	Retained		Not Enrolled		Total
	N	%	Voluntary	Reg Hold	
Ag/Food/Envir Sci	445	86.6%	44	25	514
Arch/Landscape Arch	34	85.0%	4	2	40
Biological Sciences	425	94.7%	14	10	449
Carlson School	689	96.0%	19	10	718
Dentistry	32	97.0%	1	0	33
Education & Human Dev	137	78.3%	25	13	175
General College	879	81.8%	98	97	1074
Human Ecology	373	88.8%	31	16	420
Liberal Arts	6346	84.5%	804	360	7510
Medical Technology	35	97.2%	1	0	36
Natural Resources	223	85.1%	24	15	262
Nursing	84	100%	0	0	84
Technology	1933	91.1%	93	97	2123
Continuing Education	140	72.5%	38	15	193
Total	11775	86.4%	1195	660	13630

Note: Retained is defined as enrolled either Fall 2000 or Spring 2001, and not graduating.

### Stayers vs. Leavers

The next step in the analysis was to look for factors in the student record that differentiate those who leave from those who stay. Table 2 shows a breakout of the characteristics of Spring 2000 enrollees who were and were not retained. Graduates are excluded, and the voluntary and involuntary leavers are combined.

Among classes, seniors and freshmen had higher departure rates (21%) than did sophomores and juniors (11% and 8%). Departure rates differed little by gender, but there were significant ethnicity differences. As would be expected from the retention literature, Asian and white students had a departure rate of 13%, while American Indian students had a 30% rate and African American and Chicano/Latino students had rates of 20% and 21%.

Students from Wisconsin and North Dakota had lower departure rates (11%) than did students from Minnesota (14%) and other states (15%). Students aged 25-34 and 35+ had higher rates (32% and 27%) than did those 21-24 (14%) and under 21 (9%).

Compared to those retained, those leaving had significantly lower credit loads, GPA's, ACT scores and coefficients of completion. They also had lower levels of financial aid of all types-grants, loans, and work-study. The retrospective look at the demographic and academic characteristics of leavers confirms that they did score higher than retainees on many of the known dropout risk factors.

**Table 2. Comparison of Spring 2000 Enrollees Retained and Not Retained**

	Retained		Not Retained		Total	
	N	%/Mean	N	%/Mean	N	%/Mean
<b>Total</b>	11775	86.4%	1855	13.6%	13630	100%
<b>College</b>						
Agricultural/Food/Envir Sci	445	86.6%	69	13.4%	514	100%
Architecture/Landscape Arch	34	85.0%	6	15.0%	40	100%
Biological Sciences	425	94.7%	24	5.3%	449	100%
Carlson School of Mgmt	689	96.0%	29	4.0%	718	100%
Dentistry	32	97.0%	1	3.0%	33	100%
Education and Human Dev	137	78.3%	38	21.7%	175	100%
General College	879	81.8%	195	18.2%	1074	100%
Human Ecology	373	88.8%	47	11.2%	420	100%
Liberal Arts	6346	84.5%	1164	15.5%	7510	100%
Medical School	35	97.2%	1	2.8%	36	100%
Natural Resources	223	85.1%	39	14.9%	262	100%
Nursing	84	100%	0	0%	84	100%
Technology	1933	91.1%	190	8.9%	2123	100%
Continuing Education	140	72.5%	53	27.5%	193	100%
<b>Class</b>						
Freshman	1380	79.1%	365	20.9%	1745	100%
Sophomore	4111	89.3%	495	10.7%	4606	100%
Junior	3969	91.6%	366	8.4%	4335	100%
Senior	2315	78.6%	629	21.4%	2944	100%
<b>Gender</b>						
Men	5725	85.8%	949	14.2%	6674	100%
Women	6037	87.0%	899	13.0%	6936	100%
Unknown	13	65.0%	7	35.0%	20	100%
<b>Ethnicity</b>						
African American	457	79.8%	116	20.2%	573	100%
American Indian	70	69.3%	31	30.7%	101	100%
Asian /Pacific	985	87.1%	146	12.9%	1131	100%
Chicano/Latino	214	78.7%	58	21.3%	272	100%
White	9695	87.1%	1440	12.9%	11135	100%
Missing	354	84.7%	64	15.3%	418	100%
Student of Color	1726	83.1%	351	16.9%	2077	100%

**Table 2. Continued**

	Retained		Not Retained		Total	
	N	%/Mean	N	%/Mean	N	%/Mean
<b>Home State</b>						
Minnesota	8503	85.9%	1396	14.1%	9899	100%
Wisconsin	2131	89.2%	258	10.8%	2389	100%
North Dakota	200	88.9%	25	11.1%	225	100%
South Dakota	272	85.3%	47	14.7%	319	100%
Other U.S. States	513	85.2%	89	14.8%	602	100%
Non U.S.	30	93.8%	2	6.3%	32	100%
Unknown	126	76.8%	38	23.2%	164	100%
<b>Age</b>						
Under 21	5499	91.5%	508	8.5%	6007	100%
21-24	5051	86.2%	810	13.8%	5861	100%
25-34	869	68.2%	406	31.8%	1275	100%
35+	351	73.1%	129	26.9%	480	100%
Unknown	5	71.4%	2	28.6%	7	100%
Median		22		23		22
<b>Cumulative GPA as of Spring 2000</b>						
Below 2.49	2255	68.1%	1057	31.9%	3312	100%
2.5-2.99	3641	89.7%	416	10.3%	4057	100%
3.0-3.49	3594	93.6%	244	6.4%	3838	100%
3.5+	2276	94.4%	136	5.6%	2412	100%
Missing	9	81.8%	2	18.2%	11	100%
Mean		2.99		2.32		2.90
<b>Credits</b>						
Mean cum credits attempted	11775	51.6	1855	60.9	13630	52.8
Mean cum credits completed		49.7		51.9		50.2
Mean completion coefficient		0.97		0.82		0.95
Spring 2000 mean credit load		13.2		9.6		12.7
<b>Admissions Scores</b>						
Mean ACT Composite	9582	24.5	1207	23.3	10789	24.4
Mean High School Rank	9220	76.4	1184	67.3	10404	75.4
<b>2000 Year Financial Aid</b>						
Loan	5104	\$6,066	706	\$5,987	5810	\$6,056
Grant/Scholarship	4962	\$4,391	569	\$3,970	5531	\$4,348
Work-Study	2138	\$2,532	244	\$2,415	2382	\$2,520

## Part 2: Survey Analysis

### Characteristics of Surveyed Dropouts vs. Stopouts

The phone survey looked at the selected group of voluntary dropouts and divided them into "stopouts" and "dropouts", based on their responses to the question, "Do you plan to return to the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities, to finish your degree?" The distribution of answers to this question was:

Yes	47.5%
No	42.0%
Not sure	10.5%

After looking at the characteristics and survey responses of the three different answer groups, we grouped the "Not sure" and "Yes" respondents as stopouts, and the "No" respondents as dropouts. Table 3 shows the characteristics of stopouts and dropouts.

The total number of stopouts was 149 (58%), and the total number of dropouts was 108 (42%). Over two-thirds of the respondents were from the College of Liberal Arts. Disproportionately large numbers were from the Colleges of Human Ecology, and Agriculture.

The class levels of stopouts and dropouts were significantly different. Seventy percent of the stopouts were juniors and seniors compared to 54% of the dropouts. Stopouts were generally older than dropouts, having a median age of 23, compared to 21 for dropouts.

Of the total group, women comprised 54% and students of color 11%. The majority were from Minnesota, although dropouts were more likely than stopouts to have come from out of state, especially Wisconsin. The average cumulative GPA of stopouts was slightly lower, at 2.71, than that of the dropouts 2.84.

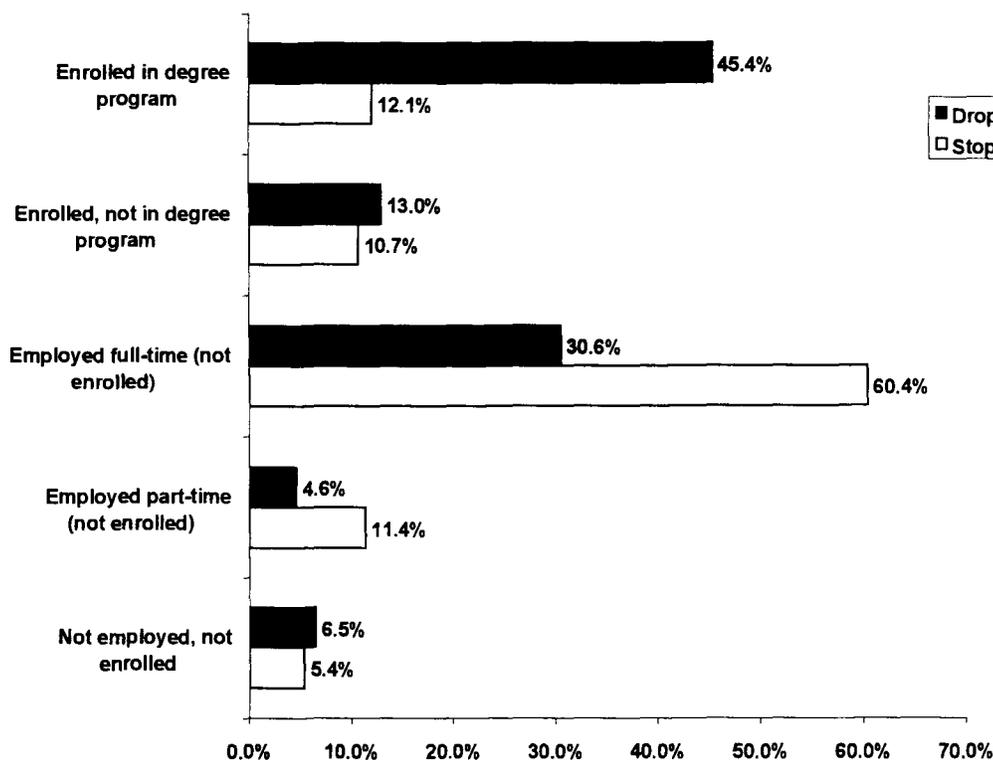
**Table 3. Comparison of Characteristics of Surveyed Stopouts vs. Dropouts** (Stopout = Plan to return to U or not sure; Dropout = No plan to return.)

	Stopouts		Dropouts		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
<b>Total</b>	149	58.0%	108	42.0%	257	100
<b>College</b>						
Agricultural/Food/Envir Sci	7	4.7%	5	4.6%	12	4.7%
Architecture/Landscape Arch	1	0.7%		0.0%	1	0.4%
Biological Sciences	2	1.3%	1	0.9%	3	1.2%
Carlson School of Mgmt	3	2.0%	1	0.9%	4	1.6%
Dental Hygiene	1	0.7%		0.0%	1	0.4%
Education and Human Dev	2	1.3%	5	4.6%	7	2.7%
Human Ecology	7	4.7%	7	6.5%	14	5.4%
Liberal Arts	113	75.8%	82	75.9%	195	75.9%
Natural Resources	1	0.7%		0.0%	1	0.4%
Technology	9	6.0%	4	3.7%	13	5.1%
Continuing Education	3	2.0%	3	2.8%	6	2.3%
<b>Class*</b>						
Freshman	17	11.4%	16	14.8%	33	12.8%
Sophomore	24	16.1%	34	31.5%	58	22.6%
Junior	25	16.8%	24	22.2%	49	19.1%
Senior	83	55.7%	34	31.5%	117	45.5%
<b>Gender</b>						
Men	70	47.0%	46	42.6%	116	45.1%
Women	79	53.0%	62	57.4%	141	54.9%
<b>Ethnicity</b>						
African American	8	5.4%	8	7.4%	16	6.2%
American Indian		0.0%	2	1.9%	2	0.8%
Asian /Pacific	5	3.4%	2	1.9%	7	2.7%
Chicano/Latino	4	2.7%	3	2.8%	7	2.7%
White	126	84.6%	92	85.2%	218	84.8%
Missing	6	4.0%	1	0.9%	7	2.7%
Student of Color	17	11.4%	15	13.9%	32	12.5%
<b>Home State*</b>						
Minnesota	89	59.7%	57	52.8%	146	56.8%
Wisconsin	11	7.4%	22	20.4%	33	12.8%
North Dakota	2	1.3%	4	3.7%	6	2.3%
South Dakota	4	2.7%	5	4.6%	9	3.5%
Other U.S. States	3	2.0%	4	3.7%	7	2.7%
Unknown	40	26.8%	16	14.8%	56	21.8%
<b>Age**</b>						
Under 19	1	0.7%	7	6.5%	8	3.1%
19-20	35	23.5%	43	39.8%	78	30.4%
21-24	46	30.9%	30	27.8%	76	29.6%
25-34	46	30.9%	19	17.6%	65	25.3%
35+	19	12.8%	7	6.5%	26	10.1%
Unknown	2	1.3%	2	1.9%	4	1.6%
Median	23		21		22	
<b>Spring 2000 Cum GPA*</b>						
Below 2.49	59	39.9%	26	24.5%	85	33.5%
2.5-2.99	49	33.1%	39	36.8%	88	34.6%
3.0-3.49	28	18.9%	32	30.2%	60	23.6%
3.5+	12	8.1%	9	8.5%	21	8.3%
Mean	2.71		2.84		2.76	

## Activities after Leaving the U of M

Respondents were asked about employment and schooling since leaving the University. Chart 1 shows that the majority of dropouts (56%) were enrolled in another college, most in a degree program college, while the majority of stopouts (71%) were employed.

**Chart 1. Employment and Further Education Status \*\***



\*\*p<.01

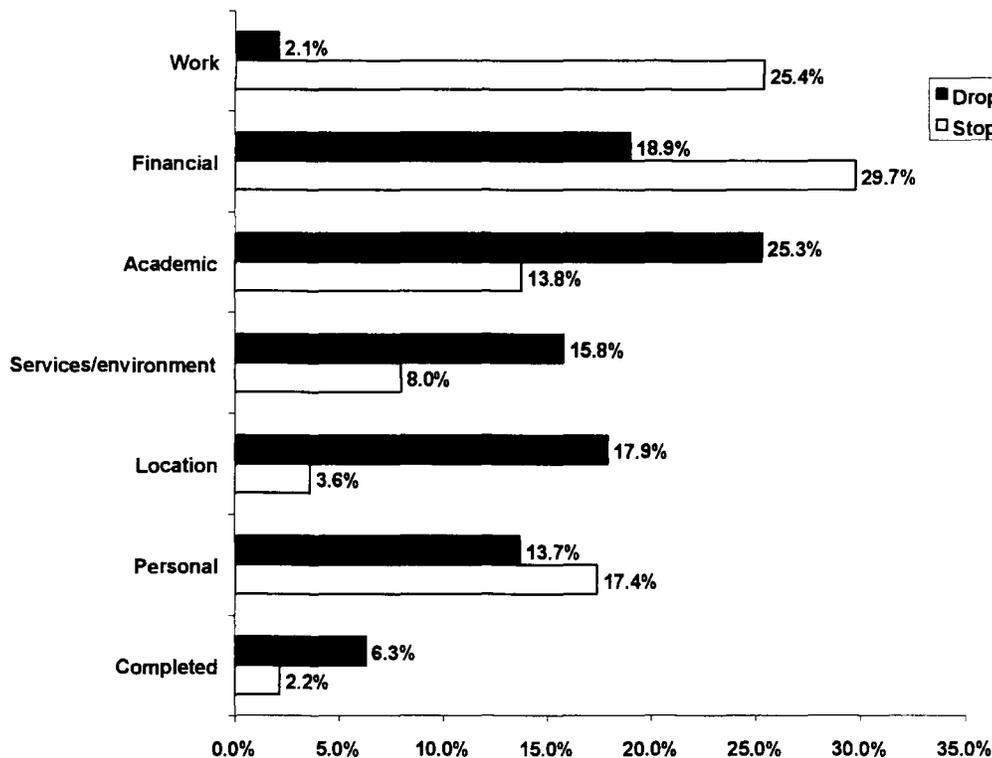
## Reasons for Leaving the U of M

The survey asked students about their reasons for leaving in two different ways. First it asked respondents to state their primary reason for leaving in a free-answer question. Then it asked them how important each of a list of reasons was to their decision.

The free answer questions were coded into broad categories, shown in Table 5

Stopouts and dropouts differed in the reasons they gave for leaving. The majority (55%) of stopouts cited one of the two closely related factors of work (e.g., had to work more hours) and finances (e.g., needed more money). In contrast, dropouts most frequently (41%) cited academic reasons (e.g., didn't have desired major, or couldn't get into a program) or aspects of University services or environment (e.g., too impersonal or bad advising). Dropouts were also more likely than stopouts (18% vs. 4%) to cite the location of the campus (e.g., too far from home) as a reason for leaving.

Chart 2. Free-Answer Primary Reason for Not Enrolling\*\*



\*\*p&lt;.01

Table 4 shows respondents mean ratings of the importance of different reasons, and the percentage who rated the item as extremely important. The patterns of responses were consistent with those of the free answer questions. Stopouts rated the need to earn more money for school and conflicts between work and school as most important, followed by needing a break from school and family or personal problems.

Dropouts rated as most important changing career plans, being turned down for a program they wanted, and not being able to get into the courses they wanted.

**Table 4. Importance of Listed Reasons for Not Enrolling**

(Rated on 1-4 scale, where 1= not important, 2=somewhat important, 3= very important, 4=extremely important)

	Stopouts		Dropouts		Total	
	% Ext Imp	Mean	% Ext Imp	Mean	% Ext Imp	Mean
Needed to work more to earn money for school**	35.0%	2.66	12.1%	1.84	25.6%	2.32
Had conflicts between work and school **	22.5%	2.35	9.1%	1.58	17.0%	2.03
Couldn't get into the courses you wanted	12.5%	1.89	13.1%	2.02	12.8%	1.94
Changed career plans	10.1%	1.94	18.8%	1.92	13.7%	1.93
Had family or personal problems**	25.2%	2.11	9.2%	1.58	18.7%	1.90
Needed a break from school	16.8%	2.12	4.0%	1.57	11.6%	1.89
The campus was too impersonal*	4.9%	1.62	11.1%	1.96	7.4%	1.76
Classes were too big*	8.3%	1.55	9.1%	1.79	7.8%	1.65
Wanted a program that the U doesn't have	10.5%	1.55	9.1%	1.70	9.9%	1.61
Courses weren't relevant*	2.8%	1.56	9.1%	1.65	5.4%	1.60
The U wasn't what you expected	4.2%	1.51	8.1%	1.72	5.8%	1.60
Were turned down for a program you wanted	6.3%	1.41	14.1%	1.65	9.5%	1.50
Had problems with transfer credits	4.2%	1.45	7.1%	1.51	5.4%	1.47
Didn't have many friends at the U	2.1%	1.27	3.0%	1.29	2.5%	1.28
Wanted to be with my friends at another school	2.8%	1.16	5.1%	1.36	3.7%	1.24

\*\*p<.01 \*p<.05

### Dropout Risk Factors

Numerous retention studies (Tinto, 1993) have found that students are at risk for dropping out of college when they are less involved and connected with their college. The survey asked about a number of risk factors associated with lower connection. Interestingly, the dropouts in the survey tended to score somewhat lower on these risk factors than did the stopouts, but both groups showed patterns that clearly put them at risk. Table 5 summarizes our findings on dropout risk factors.

Most directly, when students were asked about how involved they were in extracurricular activities, 66% of the stopouts and 52% of the dropouts said they were not involved at all. These figures contrast with 40% of 1999 enrollees and 36% of 1996 graduates saying they were not at all involved (IRR, 1999).

Living in a residence hall, especially in one's first term increases connections. Only 26% of the stopouts and 46% of dropouts spent their first term in a residence hall, and in their last term, 9% of stopouts and 25% of dropouts were in the halls. Although many of the survey respondents did not enter as freshmen, the percentage living off campus contrasts with the 75% of recent freshmen who initially live in the residence halls.

While some employment, especially on campus, is often beneficial for helping a student graduate, working more than half-time (20 hours a week) frequently interferes with studying and college life. The survey found that the majority of respondents, 66% of the stopouts and 53% of the dropouts, were working over half time in their last term. For many the pattern of working heavily was established early; 41% of the stopouts and 32% of the dropouts reported working more than 20 hours a week in their first term at the University.

An understanding of why students are working to that degree can be gained from their reports of the percentage of their expenses being paid by their parents and their total loan debt. The majority of stopouts (51%) and a plurality of dropouts (38%) said that their parents were not contributing anything to their college expenses. And another 17% of stopouts and 11% of dropouts said that their parents were paying a quarter or less of their expenses.

At the same time, students were holding down their loan debt. Forty-one percent of stopouts and 42% of dropouts said they had no loan debt, and about two-thirds of both groups had less than \$10,000 in debt. It appears that many of these students are working heavily because their parents are offering little support, and they want to hold down their loan debt.

The survey also examined the extent to which the respondents were "reluctant recruits", attending a school that was not their first choice. Twelve percent of stopouts and 17% of dropouts fell into this category, figures not appreciably different from the 16% of 1999 entering freshmen who said the University was not their first choice (CIRP Survey, 1999). Only 6% of stopouts and 9% of dropouts said they were denied admission to a U of M program.

**Table 5. Reports of Items Related to Dropout Risk Factors**

	Stopouts	Dropouts	Total
<b>First-Term Residence**</b>			
U residence hall	25.5%	45.6%	33.9%
Apartment	26.2%	22.3%	24.6%
At home	37.2%	25.2%	32.3%
Fraternity/sorority	2.1%	2.9%	2.4%
Other	9.0%	3.9%	6.9%
<b>Spring 2000 Residence**</b>			
U residence hall	9.0%	25.2%	15.7%
Apartment	44.8%	36.9%	41.5%
At home	37.9%	28.2%	33.9%
Fraternity/sorority	1.4%	4.9%	2.8%
Other	6.9%	4.9%	6.0%
<b>Hours Working--1st Term</b>			
None	22.1%	35.0%	27.4%
1 to 10	9.7%	8.7%	9.3%
11 to 20	27.6%	24.3%	26.2%
21 to 30	18.6%	14.6%	16.9%
More than 30	22.1%	17.5%	20.2%
<b>Hours Working--Spring 2000*</b>			
None	9.9%	12.7%	11.1%
1 to 10	3.5%	5.9%	4.5%
11 to 20	21.1%	28.4%	24.2%
21 to 30	18.3%	28.4%	22.5%
More than 30	47.2%	24.5%	37.7%
<b>Extra-Curricular Involvement</b>			
Not at all involved	65.5%	51.5%	59.7%
Slightly involved	20.0%	22.3%	21.0%
Involved	6.9%	13.6%	9.7%
Very involved	5.5%	9.7%	7.3%
Extremely involved	2.1%	2.9%	2.4%
<b>% of Expenses by Parents**</b>			
None	51.0%	37.9%	45.6%
Less than 25%	18.6%	11.7%	15.7%
25-49%	7.6%	10.7%	8.9%
0-74%	9.7%	7.8%	8.9%
75% or more	13.1%	32.0%	21.0%
<b>Current Educational Loan Debt</b>			
None	39.7%	42.4%	40.8%
Under \$1000	0.7%	2.0%	1.3%
\$1000-\$9999	23.4%	24.2%	23.8%
\$10,000-\$19,999	20.6%	20.2%	20.4%
\$20,000-\$29,999	9.2%	8.1%	8.8%
\$30,000 or more	6.4%	3.0%	5.0%
<b>U of M was 1st Choice College</b>			
Yes	79.3%	83.5%	81.0%
No	20.7%	16.5%	19.0%
<b>College was 1st choice at U</b>			
Yes	88.0%	84.9%	86.7%
No	12.0%	15.1%	13.3%
<b>Not admitted to U of M program</b>			
Yes	5.5%	8.7%	6.9%
No	94.5%	91.3%	93.1%

\*\*p&lt;.01 \*p&lt;.05

### Satisfaction with their University Experiences

When asked to offer some overall assessment of their experiences, survey respondents were somewhat more negative than graduates or currently enrolled students, but not as much as one might expect. As shown in Table 6, the average ratings of the quality of

instruction by all groups were "good" or better. Dropouts were the most negative, with 10% rating the quality of instruction as poor or very poor.

Both stopouts and dropouts were more negative toward the quality of their advising than were graduates and current students. While roughly 15% of 2001 enrollees and 18% of 1996 graduates rated their advising as poor or very poor, 30% of the stopouts and dropouts did so.

The overall satisfaction ratings of stopouts and dropouts combined were very similar to those of current students, although appreciably lower than that of graduates. Dropouts did offer the lowest ratings, with some 31% saying they were dissatisfied.

**Table 6. General Assessments of the University Compared to 2001 Enrollees and 1996 Graduates**

	Stopouts	Dropouts	Total Leavers	Sp 2001 Enrollees	1996 Grads
<b>Quality of Instruction**</b>					
Very poor (1)	0.0%	1.9%	0.8%	1.5%	0.3%
Poor (2)	2.1%	8.7%	4.9%	3.0%	1.1%
Fair (3)	22.2%	18.4%	20.6%	16.5%	9.5%
Good (4)	40.3%	37.9%	39.3%	42.5%	37.6%
Very good (5)	33.3%	25.2%	30.0%	30.8%	41.5%
Excellent (6)	2.1%	7.8%	4.5%	5.8%	10.0%
Mean	4.11	3.99	4.06	4.16	4.49
<b>Quality of Advising**</b>					
Very poor (1)	8.3%	10.8%	9.3%	8.2%	6.9%
Poor (2)	23.4%	17.6%	21.1%	6.3%	12.1%
Fair (3)	26.2%	33.3%	29.1%	23.5%	27.2%
Good (4)	24.1%	20.6%	22.7%	27.5%	28.5%
Very good (5)	17.9%	17.6%	17.8%	23.0%	15.9%
Excellent (6)	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	11.4%	9.3%
Mean	3.20	3.17	3.19	3.85	3.62
<b>Satisfaction with U **</b>					
Very dissatisfied (1)	2.8%	5.8%	4.0%	3.2%	1.9%
Moderately dissatisfied (2)	2.8%	7.8%	4.8%	6.5%	3.3%
Slightly dissatisfied (3)	6.9%	17.5%	11.3%	11.5%	3.5%
Slightly satisfied (4)	29.0%	12.6%	22.2%	17.2%	9.5%
Moderately satisfied (5)	38.6%	36.9%	37.9%	44.1%	47.3%
Very satisfied (6)	20.0%	19.4%	19.8%	17.5%	34.4%
Mean	4.58	4.25	4.44	4.45	5.00

### Subgroup Differences

In addition to the comparison between dropouts and stopouts, we also looked at differences in the survey responses among subgroups defined by gender, ethnicity, class, and college.

#### Gender and ethnic differences

Differences between the genders and ethnic groups were remarkably few. Men and women differed on two items:

- Men who were in college were more likely than women to be enrolled in a degree program (82% vs. 62%).
- More women than men cited personal or family problems as a very or extremely important reason for their not returning (39% vs. 23%).

Students of color differed significantly from other students on three items:

- Students of color were twice as likely as other students to cite personal or family issues as extremely important in their decision to leave (33% vs. 17%).
- Nearly three times as many students of color as other students reported educational debt levels of \$20,000 or more (31% vs. 11%).
- Students of color were less likely to be employed than were other respondents (69% vs. 88%).

#### **Class differences**

Remembering that freshman and sophomores were more likely to be dropouts, and juniors and seniors were more likely to be stopouts, class differences tended to fit the pattern of stopouts vs. dropouts.

Freshmen and sophomores were significantly more likely than juniors and seniors to:

- Be in school
- Cite academics and the school environment as their primary reason for leaving
- Cite as important family or personal problems, and having friends at another school.
- Have their parents pay more of their college expenses.

Juniors and seniors were significantly more likely than freshmen and sophomores to:

- Be working full-time
- Cite work and finances as their primary reason for leaving
- Cite as important work-school conflicts, needing to work to earn more money, needing a break from school, and courses not relevant
- Have higher levels of loan debt
- To have worked over 20 hours a week in their last term.

#### **College differences**

Because of small numbers, some grouping of colleges had to be done in order to run significance tests. Students from the three St. Paul colleges, COAFES, CHE, and CNR were combined into a group of 26 and the Carlson School, CCE, CALA, and Dental Hygiene were grouped into a rather disparate "other category" of 13.

The significant differences among colleges were as follows:

- IT students were the most likely to say work was their primary reason for leaving;
- St. Paul were the most likely to cite personal/family issues as their primary reason for leaving.
- St. Paul and EHD students were the most likely to report transfer credit problems.

## Discussion

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Our study paints its picture of leavers with a broad brush, and is necessarily limited in its conclusions. It is a snapshot of a cross-section of leavers at one point in time, and needs to be followed by targeted studies of individual student cohorts. Nevertheless, it does add to our knowledge of departure from the University of Minnesota.

In particular, we learned that Minnesota dropouts and stopouts score high on many of the known dropout risk factors: They tend to work heavily, live off campus, not be involved in campus activities, and receive little financial support from their parents. Within this general pattern, we can discern three broad subgroups each of whom requires a package of interventions:

- **The underperformers.** Some students are unable to cope with their college work and find themselves candidates for academic dismissal or leave of their own accord. They tend to encounter trouble early and often, in numbers beyond what would be expected from their academic records. With the exception of some high risk students in General College, the University generally admits students whose previous academic records should allow them to succeed academically.

The survey excluded those in academic trouble, but it is likely that the reasons for individual academic failure are diverse, ranging from inadequate high school preparation to poor study habits to personal problems. While we should try to identify at risk students before they enter, it may be most fruitful for the University to develop early warning systems for identifying students in trouble and intervening with them. Mid-term grades and alerts, and study skills classes are two such interventions

- **The disenchanteds.** Another group of students leave because they are dissatisfied with something about the University's programs and environment. The survey found that the dropout group was heavily populated with such students. When they go, they are gone for good, and search for a different college. These students cite as their primary reasons for leaving problems with course availability, inadequate advising, and an unfriendly environment. They tend to be younger and more traditional in their

approach to college. Compared to stopouts they are more likely to live on campus, receive parental support, and work less, and be involved in campus activities. (Compared to students in general, however, they are less likely to be live on campus and be involved in campus activities.)

It is with this group that the University has probably made the most headway in improving retention. Initiatives like the Freshman Experience program, freshman seminars, improved course access, and living-learning communities appear to have increased the satisfaction of students and improved freshman-to-sophomore retention. There is more to be done, though, to further reduce the number of disenchanting dropouts. Noteworthy in this regard is the finding that nearly a third of the dropouts were sophomores. The transition to an upper-division major may be a particular source of problems, deserving of special scrutiny and intervention.

- **The drop-ins.** Perhaps the most difficult group for whom to shape interventions is the large stopout group. These students don't cleanly dropout the way the disenchanting students do. It is more like they "drop in" to college, while they center their lives in the workplace. They are not unhappy with the University; they just don't make it a primary focus of their lives. These students work long hours, commute to campus, take lighter credit loads, pay their own college expenses and have little involvement in college activities. They leave, intending to come back, primarily because of the demands of their jobs and their perceived need to earn money.

By most accounts, Minnesota has a larger drop-in student population than nearly all other major research universities. It can be argued that their style of attendance should not be a concern. Students who center their lives in the workplace may be learning valuable career skills, as well as holding down their levels of loan debt. As long as they earn their degrees, they may be better off in the long run than students who earn their degree in four years but incur a large amount of loan debt.

The problem is that too many of the drop-ins don't earn their degrees. DesJardins, Ahlburg, and McCall (1999) found that having a previous stopout episode sharply increases the risk of future stopouts and eventual dropout. Stopping out sets off a pattern that often leads to eventual dropout and non-completion. There appears to be a minimum level of "academic intensity" (Adelman, 1999) that is needed to maintain momentum toward a degree. Students who take lighter credit loads and stop in may not be able to study intensely enough to finish their degrees.

Developing interventions to improve the graduation rates of drop-in students is problematic. There are two basic approaches which might be taken, and each has drawbacks. One approach is to accept the drop-in pattern and to find ways to be helpful and supportive to this group of students. Interventions in this approach would

include increasing on-campus employment opportunities, offering more classes, advising, and other services in the evening and on the weekends, and offering more classes in the workplace and in communities off campus. In essence, this approach is to more heartily embrace the University's role as an urban campus to become really good at doing the things that urban campuses do to accommodate working, adult students. The drawback to this approach is that it ignores the University's distinctive and traditional role as the state's flagship research university, as well as all the benefits that a student gains from attending such an institution.

The alternative approach is to try to persuade more students to approach their study in the traditional and intensive way, taking full-credit loads, enrolling continuously, living on campus, and being involved in campus activities. The University has taken some steps in this direction, such as its four-year graduation guarantee and new residence halls. But more needs to be done, if this approach is to be pursued.

To persuade the "drop in" to be more traditional, campus culture, student culture, and parent culture will all need to be changed. In a variety of ways, symbolic and concrete, the University needs to communicate its expectation that students will earn their degrees in a timely way. Students will need to have both consistent encouragement and incentives to enroll full-time and continuously. If the campus begins to expect more from students, students will, in turn expect more from the University in areas like course access, prompt service, and careful advising. And parents will need to understand the consequences of embracing the ethos that their children should pay for their college themselves.

The University of Minnesota has had low graduation rates for decades. In recent years, the institution has had some success in raising first year retention rates and five-year graduation rates. Still, the University lags well behind its peers. To make further progress, the University will need to launch further, more detailed research on student success and failure. It then needs to use that research to develop interventions to decrease student academic failure, to reduce student dissatisfaction with academic programs and services, and to instill a culture of commitment to student graduation.

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## Appendix A: Survey Questionnaire

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### University of Minnesota Stopout/Dropout Survey

Hello, I am (name) calling for the University of Minnesota. We're doing a short survey of recent U of M students who weren't enrolled this past year.

**Q-1. First, we'd like to know about your current activities. Are you currently going to school?**

Yes → Ask 1a & 1b Below

No → Skip to Q-2

**1a. At what school?** \_\_\_\_\_

**1b. Have you been admitted to a degree or certificate program there?**

Yes → What Program? \_\_\_\_\_

No

**Q-2. Are you currently working for pay?**

Yes → Ask 2a & 2b Below

No → Skip to Q-3

**2a. Do you work full-time, that is 35 hours or more a week?**

Yes

No

**2b. Do you plan to pursue a career in the same field in which you are currently employed?**

Yes

No

Not sure

**Q-3. Do you plan to return to the University of Minnesota Twin Cities to finish your degree?**

Yes → Ask 3a below

No → Skip to Q-4

Not sure → Skip to Q-4

**3a. When do you think you'll come back—next fall, or later?**

Next fall

Later

Not sure

**Q-4. Next we'd like to know your about your reasons for not attending the U of M this past year. What would you say is the one main reason why you didn't attend the U this past year? (Write in)**

**Q-5. Now I would like you to read you a list of possible factors in your decision. Please tell me whether each was not important, somewhat important, very important, or extremely important in your decision not to attend the U last year?**

	Not Important	Somewhat Important	Very Important	Extremely Important
a. Had conflicts between work and school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b. Classes were too big	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c. I couldn't get into the courses I wanted	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d. I couldn't get into a program I wanted	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e. Wanted to be with my friends at another school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
f. The campus was too impersonal	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
g. Had problems with transfer credits	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
h. Had family or personal problems	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
i. Needed to work more to earn money for school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
j. Wanted to travel	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
k. Courses were too hard	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
l. Courses weren't relevant	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
m. Didn't have many friends at the U	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
n. Needed a break from school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
o. The U wasn't what I expected	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
p. Changed career plans	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Next, I'd like to ask you a few questions about your experiences on the Twin Cities Campus.

**Q-6. How would you rate the overall quality of the instruction you have received at the University—very poor, poor, only fair, good, very good, or excellent?**

- Very poor
- Poor
- Fair
- Good
- Very good
- Excellent

**Q-7. How would you rate the overall quality of the advising you have received at the University—very poor, poor, fair, good, very good, or excellent?**

- Very poor
- Poor
- Fair
- Good
- Very good
- Excellent

**Q-8 When you applied to the University, was it your first choice of schools?**

- Yes → Go on to Q-9
- No → *What was your first choice?* \_\_\_\_\_

**Q-9 Did you get into your first choice of colleges within the University of Minnesota?**

- Yes → Go on to Q-10
- No → *What was your first choice?* \_\_\_\_\_

**Q-10 After coming the University, were been turned down for admission to a U of M program or college?**

- Yes → Go on to Q-11
- No → *What program?* \_\_\_\_\_

**Q-11 How much of your college expenses have been paid by your parents or family—None, Less than 25%, 25 to 49%, 50 to 74%, or 75% or more**

- None
- Less than 25%
- 25-49%
- 50-74%
- 75% or more

**Q-13 How much student loan debt do you currently owe—None, Under \$1000, \$1000 to \$9,999, \$10,000-\$19,999, \$20,000-\$29,999, or \$30,000 or more?**

- None
- Under \$1000
- \$1000-\$9999
- \$10,000-\$19,999
- \$20,000-\$29,999
- \$30,000 or more

**Q-14 In your first term at the U, how many hours a week did you work— None, 1 to 10, 11 to 20, 21 to 30 or more than 30?**

- None
- 1-10
- 11-20
- 21-30
- More than 30

**Q-15 In your most recent term at the U, how many hours a week did you work—None, 1 to 10, 11 to 20, 21 to 30 or more than 30?**

- None
- 1-10
- 11-20
- 21-30
- More than 30

**Q-16. Where did you live in your first term at the University—in a residence hall, an apartment, at home with your parents, in a fraternity or sorority, or somewhere else?**

- U residence hall
- Apartment
- At home
- Fraternity/sorority
- Other → *Where?* \_\_\_\_\_

**Q-17. Now, where did you live in your most recent term at the U?**

- U residence hall
- Apartment
- At home
- Fraternity/sorority
- Other → **Where?** \_\_\_\_\_

**Q-18. While at the University, how involved were you in campus extra-curricular activities, such as clubs and intramurals . Were you not at all involved, slightly involved, involved, very involved, or extremely involved?**

- Not at all involved
- Slightly involved
- Involved
- Very involved
- Extremely involved

**Q-19. In general, how satisfied are you now with your experiences at the University of Minnesota?**

- Very dissatisfied
- Moderately dissatisfied
- Slightly dissatisfied
- Slightly satisfied
- Moderately satisfied
- Very satisfied

**Q-20. What things could the University do to provide a better experience for students like yourself? (*Write in*)**

**And one last question . . .**

**Would you like to have a University adviser contact you about coming back to school?**

- Yes
- No

## Appendix B: Characteristics of Survey Respondents vs. All Leavers

	All Leavers		Survey Respondents	
	N	% of total	N	% of total
<b>Total</b>	1855	100%	257	100%
<b>College</b>				
Agricultural/Food/Envir Sci	69	3.7%	12	4.7%
Architecture/Landscape Arch	6	0.3%	1	0.4%
Biological Sciences	24	1.3%	3	1.2%
Carlson School of Mgmt	29	1.6%	4	1.6%
Dental Hygiene	1	0.1%	1	0.4%
Education and Human Dev	38	2.0%	7	2.7%
General College	195	10.5%	0	0.0%
Human Ecology	47	2.5%	14	5.4%
Liberal Arts	1164	62.7%	195	75.9%
Medical Technology	1	0.1%	0	0.0%
Natural Resources	39	2.1%	1	0.4%
Nursing	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Technology	190	10.2%	13	5.1%
Continuing Education	53	2.9%	6	2.3%
<b>Class</b>				
Freshman	365	19.7%	33	12.8%
Sophomore	495	26.7%	58	22.6%
Junior	366	19.7%	49	19.1%
Senior	629	33.9%	117	45.5%
<b>Gender</b>				
Men	949	51.2%	116	45.1%
Women	899	48.5%	141	54.9%
Unknown	7	0.4%	0	0.0%
<b>Ethnicity</b>				
African American	116	6.3%	16	6.2%
American Indian	31	1.7%	2	0.8%
Asian /Pacific	146	7.9%	7	2.7%
Chicano/Latino	58	3.1%	7	2.7%
White	1440	77.6%	218	84.8%
Missing	64	3.5%	7	2.7%
Student of Color	351	18.9%	32	12.5%
<b>Home State</b>				
Minnesota	1396	75.3%	146	56.8%
Wisconsin	258	13.9%	33	12.8%
North Dakota	25	1.3%	6	2.3%
South Dakota	47	2.5%	9	3.5%
Other U.S. States	89	4.8%	7	2.7%
Non U.S.	2	0.1%	0	0.0%
Unknown	38	2.0%	56	21.8%
<b>Age</b>		0.0%		

	All Leavers		Survey Respondents	
	<u>N</u>	<u>% of total</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>% of total</u>
Under 21	508	27.4%	86	33.5%
21-24	810	43.7%	76	29.6%
25-34	406	21.9%	65	25.3%
35+	129	7.0%	26	10.1%
Unknown	2	0.1%	4	1.6%
Median	23		22	

Appendix 5: Text of Sample E-mails Piloted in 2000-01

### Take 15 credits (if registered for 8-12):

Have you taken full advantage of your next registration? The College of Liberal Arts generally advises students to take at least 15 credits per regular semester. Taking at least 15 credits offers several advantages. First, all credits over 12 are offered at half price, and students should take advantage of the bargain.

Second, in order to graduate in a timely manner, you need to take at least 15 credits per semester. A recent cost-benefit analysis found that the additional lifetime income from a college degree is as much as \$1.2 million, and the College believes you should begin realizing the financial gains offered by a university degree as soon as possible.

### Planning for senior year (above; 75+ credits):

"Congratulations on becoming a senior and getting close to graduation. You should plan carefully for next year so that you can graduate a year from now. It is important for seniors to plan courses for the full year and not just the fall semester. Don't forget to check the summer courses--the course that you need may be available. Check in with your departmental adviser and your CLA adviser to make sure that you are on track to graduate next spring if not earlier."

### Students who haven't registered at the end of the queue

We have now reached the end of the registration queue for early registration for next fall semester and we're concerned because our records show that you haven't registered yet. Web registration remains open for those who still want to register. If you need some help or advice, now is a good time to contact your college adviser to consider your choices.

We want to help you stay on track for graduation from the U!

Sent to a small sample of CLA students nearing 60 credits:

I am writing on behalf of a University of Minnesota committee that is considering how we can better help students to graduate in four years, and also how we can encourage students to stay at the University until they graduate. One focus of our discussion has been the process of choosing a major. We are especially interested in students who are near the point of declaring a major but have not yet done so. Our records show that as of spring break, you had not yet declared a major in CLA. (If our records are incorrect and you have already declared a major, don't panic--just let me know and I will correct our files.)

We are interested in knowing more about how you are making this decision and what help you are using in the process. As you know, current University policy requires that you declare a major by the end of the semester in which you complete 60 credits. With your registration this semester, you are nearing the 60 credit level. Would you respond to three questions, by return e-mail?

- Do you feel like you are on track in choosing a major?
- If not, what problems are you encountering?
- Is there anything we can do to assist you in this decision?

We would very much appreciate any insight you can provide into this process. I will also be sure that if you need assistance of some sort, someone from CLA will contact you as soon as possible.

Thanks for any help you can give us. We are trying to make the University a better place for you and for the students to come.

**Appendix 6: New Retention Methodology and Results (August, 2001)**



Office of Institutional Research and Reporting 321 Morrill Hall
Office of the Executive Vice President 100 Church Street SE
and Provost Minneapolis, MN 55455-0115
612-624-4851
Fax: 612-624-6057
http://www.irr.umn.edu

Tuesday, August 07, 2001

MEMORANDUM

To: Rochelle Diers, Linda Ellinger, Tom Gilson, Ole Gram, Jennifer Hatfield, Peter
Hudleston, Laura Coffin Koch, Richard Liu, Ron Matross, Nancy Mooney, Bob
Nelson, Peter Radcliff, Jerry Rinehardt, Richard Skaggs, Craig Swan, Peter Zetterberg

From: John Kellogg [Signature]
612/625-3387
j-kell@umn.edu

Subject: New retention reporting system

Introduction:

When we converted student records to PeopleSoft, our old retention reporting system could no longer be
used. We have now built an entirely new, and we think, better system. Its key features are:

- A basic report that maintains the categories used in the previous retention reports.
(attached - see below for descriptions)
• (Coming soon) A data warehouse table offering the ability to do ad hoc reports using the IDEA
query system. Rather than relying on our doing voluminous crosstabs, you can do your own
queries, breaking out the data by gender, ethnicity, and a wide range of other variables. (A list of
the variables that will be in the table is also attached).
• (Coming soon) A data cube in the Management Information System, which will allow you to
"slice and dice" without using a query language.
• Ability to define freshmen cohorts more accurately for IPEDS reporting.

Technical Background:

The new reports are driven by a single large source file containing data cobbled together from Oracle
versions of historical DB2 tables, the PeopleSoft Oracle data warehouse tables, and a number of archived
snapshot data files. The data were extracted and manipulated using a PC based software package called
DBMS COPY. The formatting was done using SPSS and EXCEL. This mix and match method was
necessary since historical student data has not yet been fully converted to PeopleSoft.

**Basic Reports:**

Enclosed are two sets of the basic report tables showing retention and graduation rates for eight years of new entering freshmen (NHS) cohorts summarized at the campus level. One set is for all NHS and the other for full time NHS. Please review these tables at your earliest convenience and respond directly to me with any comments/questions/suggestions concerning their content and/or format. We have done considerable testing of the data, but still consider the numbers to be in beta mode pending your review. *We are currently preparing similar reports summarized at the college level (I.T., CLA, etc.) and will be distributing them soon.*

NOTE: In all report tables, Crookston cohorts only include those students who indicated they were pursuing a baccalaureate degree in their term of entry. Graduation information for Crookston only includes baccalaureate degrees.

**Additional Data fields:**

The source file includes a number of additional data fields that can be used to break out reports at many different levels of detail. Examples include college of enrollment, ethnicity, gender, high school rank, AAR, and major. Information on new entering transfer (NAS) students is also included. This source file will soon be loaded into an Oracle data warehouse table allowing for ad hoc query and analyses. A list of all available fields in this file is attached for your review.

**IPEDS Reporting:**

Also enclosed is an information sheet comparing the "official" IPEDS 6 year graduation rates for the 1994 entering freshmen cohort (submitted to IPEDS earlier this year) vs. "revised" graduation rates based on a more precise definition of the 1994 freshman cohort. Historically, our IPEDS freshmen cohorts have been artificially small due to the exclusion of large numbers of Post Secondary students. We are now able to include these students which significantly affects the graduation rates (primarily for the Twin Cities Campus).

**Changes in definitions from the old report to the new report:**

There are some changes in definitions from the old report to the new report.

Cohort definitions:

Old report: New entering freshmen (NHS) who were still enrolled at the end of their entry term. *Included* students who initially enrolled after the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> week. *Excluded* students who completely cancelled after the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> week

New report: New entering freshmen (NHS) from the fall term Official Enrollment Report. *Excludes* students who initially enrolled after the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> week. *Includes* students who completely cancelled after the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> week.

Retention:

Old report: fall enrollments as of the end of each term.

New report: fall enrollments as of the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of each term

Length of time to graduation:

Old Report: graduation year defined as fall term through summer term.

New Report: same

**Comments/Questions/Suggestions:**

Please direct any comments/questions/suggestions to:

John Kellogg, Institutional Research and Reporting

Email: [J-KELL@TC.UMN.EDU](mailto:J-KELL@TC.UMN.EDU)

Phone: 612/625-3387

Address: 319 Morrill Hall

100 Church St. SE

Minneapolis, MN 55455

Enclosures (4)

**FALL 1994 IPEDS NEW ENTERING FRESHMAN GRADUATION RATES**

Original submitted numbers vs. new revised numbers

**Original IPEDS Cohort definition:**

Status = 'NHS'  
 and  
 Day School Credits >= 12.0 (Full Time)  
 and  
 Non UM Trnsfr Crs = 0  
 (even if taken in high school)  
 and  
 Total Credits <= 45.0  
 (Freshman Status)

**New IPEDS Cohort definition (a):**

Status = 'NHS'  
 and  
 Day + CEE credits >= 12.0 (Full Time)  
 and  
 (HS Grad Year = 1994  
 (including those with college level credits)  
 OR  
 HS Grad YR < 1994 and no college level credits)

**NOTE: THE IPEDS DEFINITION OF GRADUATION REQUIRES THAT A DEGREE BE AWARDED BY THE SAME INSTITUTION THE STUDENT ENTERED AS A FRESHMAN. EACH UM CAMPUS IS REGARDED AS A SEPARATE INSTITUTION. A STUDENT ENTERING AT DULUTH AND GRADUATING FROM THE TWIN CITIES IS CONSIDERED A DULUTH NON GRADUATE.**

**TWIN CITIES**

**1994 Submitted Numbers**

Total Cohort	2205	cum %
Deg <= 4 yrs	376	17.05%
Deg <= 5 yrs	939	42.59%
Deg <= 6 yrs	1096	49.71%

**1994 Revised Calculation**

Total Cohort	2883	cum %
Deg <= 4 yrs	599	20.78%
Deg <= 5 yrs	1336	46.34%
Deg <= 6 yrs	1528	53.00%

**DULUTH**

**1994 Submitted Numbers**

Total Cohort	1163	cum %
Deg <= 4 yrs	225	19.35%
Deg <= 5 yrs	432	37.15%
Deg <= 6 yrs	488	41.96%

**1994 Revised Calculation**

Total Cohort	1346	cum %
Deg <= 4 yrs	271	20.13%
Deg <= 5 yrs	509	37.82%
Deg <= 6 yrs	567	42.12%

**MORRIS**

**1994 Submitted Numbers**

Total Cohort	475	cum %
Deg <= 4 yrs	190	40.00%
Deg <= 5 yrs	250	52.63%
Deg <= 6 yrs	263	55.37%

**1994 Revised Calculation**

Total Cohort	531	cum %
Deg <= 4 yrs	220	41.43%
Deg <= 5 yrs	283	53.30%
Deg <= 6 yrs	296	55.74%

**CROOKSTON:**

Crookston Campus IPEDS numbers involve counting Associate degrees which require independent calculations

**BETA VERSION - NOT FOR RELEASE**  
**Full-time NHS**  
**University of Minnesota Undergraduate Retention Report**  
**for Students Entering the University Fall 1992-1999**  
**Graduation/Retention/Attrition Rates One Year after Entry**

Campus			1992		1993		1994		1995		1996		1997		1998		1999	
			N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Crookston	Graduated	Degree Entry Unit			0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	0.6%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
		Group Total			0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	0.6%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	Enrolled	Enrolled Entry Unit			58	58.0%	83	64.3%	74	50.0%	108	62.1%	112	65.1%	115	65.3%	141	63.5%
		Enrolled Other Campus			0	0.0%	3	2.3%	4	2.7%	1	0.6%	2	1.2%	0	0.0%	2	0.9%
		Group Total			58	58.0%	86	66.7%	78	52.7%	109	62.6%	114	66.3%	115	65.3%	143	64.4%
	Not Enrolled	Not Enrolled Undergrad			42	42.0%	43	33.3%	70	47.3%	64	36.8%	58	33.7%	61	34.7%	79	35.6%
Group Total				42	42.0%	43	33.3%	70	47.3%	64	36.8%	58	33.7%	61	34.7%	79	35.6%	
	Campus Total			100	100.0%	129	100.0%	148	100.0%	174	100.0%	172	100.0%	176	100.0%	222	100.0%	
Duluth	Enrolled	Enrolled Entry Unit	826	66.2%	912	64.2%	909	65.8%	948	63.9%	1122	63.0%	1091	63.5%	1195	66.4%	1334	65.5%
		Enrolled Other Campus	48	3.8%	73	5.1%	73	5.3%	72	4.9%	86	4.8%	69	4.0%	60	3.3%	45	2.2%
		Enrolled Other Unit	127	10.2%	115	8.1%	115	8.3%	112	7.6%	174	9.8%	218	12.7%	141	7.8%	164	8.0%
		Group Total	1001	80.2%	1100	77.4%	1097	79.4%	1132	76.3%	1382	77.6%	1378	80.2%	1396	77.6%	1543	75.7%
	Not Enrolled	Not Enrolled Undergrad	247	19.8%	321	22.6%	284	20.6%	351	23.7%	398	22.4%	341	19.8%	403	22.4%	495	24.3%
		Group Total	247	19.8%	321	22.6%	284	20.6%	351	23.7%	398	22.4%	341	19.8%	403	22.4%	495	24.3%
		Campus Total	1248	100.0%	1421	100.0%	1381	100.0%	1483	100.0%	1780	100.0%	1719	100.0%	1799	100.0%	2038	100.0%
	Morris	Graduated	Degree Entry Unit	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	0.2%	0
Group Total			0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	0.2%	0	0.0%
Enrolled		Enrolled Entry Unit	456	79.0%	485	81.5%	436	79.4%	400	75.9%	445	83.0%	378	78.4%	414	78.1%	347	76.3%
		Enrolled Other Campus	28	4.9%	29	4.9%	28	5.1%	31	5.9%	22	4.1%	21	4.4%	16	3.0%	19	4.2%
		Enrolled Other Unit	1	0.2%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
		Group Total	485	84.1%	514	86.4%	464	84.5%	431	81.8%	467	87.1%	399	82.8%	430	81.1%	366	80.4%
Not Enrolled		Not Enrolled Undergrad	92	15.9%	81	13.6%	85	15.5%	96	18.2%	69	12.9%	83	17.2%	99	18.7%	89	19.6%
		Group Total	92	15.9%	81	13.6%	85	15.5%	96	18.2%	69	12.9%	83	17.2%	99	18.7%	89	19.6%
	Campus Total	577	100.0%	595	100.0%	549	100.0%	527	100.0%	536	100.0%	482	100.0%	530	100.0%	455	100.0%	
Twin Cities	Enrolled	Enrolled Entry Unit	1808	76.2%	2104	75.9%	2265	75.1%	2853	75.6%	2767	74.1%	2929	75.2%	3423	75.4%	3573	79.5%
		Enrolled Other Campus	9	0.4%	10	0.4%	7	0.2%	24	0.6%	13	0.3%	20	0.5%	12	0.3%	23	0.5%
		Enrolled Other Unit	107	4.5%	153	5.5%	186	6.2%	257	6.8%	334	8.9%	372	9.6%	356	7.8%	187	4.2%
		Enrolled Other Level	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	0.0%	1	0.0%
		Group Total	1924	81.1%	2267	81.8%	2458	81.5%	3134	83.1%	3114	83.4%	3321	85.3%	3792	83.5%	3784	84.2%
	Not Enrolled	Not Enrolled Undergrad	449	18.9%	506	18.2%	559	18.5%	639	16.9%	619	16.6%	574	14.7%	748	16.5%	710	15.8%
		Group Total	449	18.9%	506	18.2%	559	18.5%	639	16.9%	619	16.6%	574	14.7%	748	16.5%	710	15.8%
		Campus Total	2373	100.0%	2773	100.0%	3017	100.0%	3773	100.0%	3733	100.0%	3895	100.0%	4540	100.0%	4494	100.0%

BETA VERSION - NOT FOR RELEASE  
 Full-time NHS  
 University of Minnesota Undergraduate Retention Report  
 for Students Entering the University Fall 1992-1998  
 Graduation/Retention/Attrition Rates Two Years after Entry

Campus	1992		1993		1994		1995		1996		1997		1998				
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%			
Crookston	Graduated	Degree Entry Unit		0	0.0%	1	0.8%	1	0.7%	2	1.1%	3	1.7%	1	0.6%		
		Group Total		0	0.0%	1	0.8%	1	0.7%	2	1.1%	3	1.7%	1	0.6%		
	Enrolled	Enrolled Entry Unit		45	45.0%	62	48.1%	57	38.5%	84	48.3%	88	51.2%	84	47.7%		
		Enrolled Other Campus		1	1.0%	5	3.9%	4	2.7%	2	1.1%	2	1.2%	2	1.1%		
		Group Total		46	46.0%	67	51.9%	61	41.2%	86	49.4%	90	52.3%	86	48.9%		
	Not Enrolled	Not Enrolled Undergrad		54	54.0%	61	47.3%	86	58.1%	86	49.4%	79	45.9%	89	50.6%		
		Group Total		54	54.0%	61	47.3%	86	58.1%	86	49.4%	79	45.9%	89	50.6%		
	Campus Total		100	100.0%	129	100.0%	148	100.0%	174	100.0%	172	100.0%	176	100.0%			
Duluth	Graduated	Degree Entry Unit	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	0.1%	1	0.1%	1	0.1%	2	0.1%	1	0.1%	
		Degree Other Unit	0	0.0%	1	0.1%	0	0.0%	1	0.1%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	
		Group Total	0	0.0%	1	0.1%	2	0.1%	2	0.1%	1	0.1%	2	0.1%	1	0.1%	
	Enrolled	Enrolled Entry Unit	503	40.3%	546	38.4%	571	41.3%	580	39.1%	724	40.7%	713	41.5%	814	45.2%	
		Enrolled Other Campus	127	10.2%	163	11.5%	143	10.4%	122	8.2%	170	9.6%	120	7.0%	98	5.4%	
		Enrolled Other Unit	217	17.4%	225	15.8%	215	15.6%	242	16.3%	297	16.7%	330	19.2%	242	13.5%	
		Enrolled Other Level	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	0.1%	0	0.0%	1	0.1%	
		Group Total	847	67.9%	934	65.7%	929	67.3%	944	63.7%	1193	67.0%	1163	67.7%	1155	64.2%	
	Not Enrolled	Not Enrolled Undergrad	401	32.1%	486	34.2%	450	32.6%	537	36.2%	586	32.9%	554	32.2%	643	35.7%	
		Group Total	401	32.1%	486	34.2%	450	32.6%	537	36.2%	586	32.9%	554	32.2%	643	35.7%	
		Campus Total	1248	100.0%	1421	100.0%	1381	100.0%	1483	100.0%	1780	100.0%	1719	100.0%	1799	100.0%	
	Morris	Graduated	Degree Entry Unit	4	0.7%	2	0.3%	0	0.0%	1	0.2%	0	0.0%	1	0.2%	4	0.8%
			Group Total	4	0.7%	2	0.3%	0	0.0%	1	0.2%	0	0.0%	1	0.2%	4	0.8%
Enrolled		Enrolled Entry Unit	328	58.8%	360	60.5%	347	63.2%	315	59.8%	357	66.6%	294	61.0%	315	59.4%	
		Enrolled Other Campus	86	14.9%	77	12.9%	61	11.1%	70	13.3%	49	9.1%	46	9.5%	32	6.0%	
		Enrolled Other Level	0	0.0%	1	0.2%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	0.2%	2	0.4%	
		Group Total	414	71.8%	438	73.6%	408	74.3%	385	73.1%	406	75.7%	341	70.7%	349	65.8%	
Not Enrolled		Not Enrolled Undergrad	159	27.6%	155	26.1%	141	25.7%	141	26.8%	130	24.3%	140	29.0%	177	33.4%	
		Group Total	159	27.6%	155	26.1%	141	25.7%	141	26.8%	130	24.3%	140	29.0%	177	33.4%	
	Campus Total	577	100.0%	595	100.0%	549	100.0%	527	100.0%	536	100.0%	482	100.0%	530	100.0%		
Twin Cities	Graduated	Degree Entry Unit	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	0.1%	2	0.1%	4	0.1%	16	0.4%	
		Degree Other Unit	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	0.1%	1	0.0%	
		Group Total	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	0.0%	2	0.1%	2	0.1%	6	0.2%	17	0.4%	
	Enrolled	Enrolled Entry Unit	1321	55.7%	1556	56.1%	1649	54.7%	2004	53.1%	2086	55.9%	2216	56.9%	2584	56.9%	
		Enrolled Other Campus	9	0.4%	7	0.3%	8	0.3%	28	0.7%	17	0.5%	27	0.7%	15	0.3%	
		Enrolled Other Unit	361	15.2%	469	16.9%	524	17.4%	735	19.5%	697	18.7%	661	17.0%	699	15.4%	
		Enrolled Other Level	0	0.0%	8	0.3%	4	0.1%	3	0.1%	6	0.2%	4	0.1%	4	0.1%	
		Group Total	1691	71.3%	2040	73.6%	2185	72.4%	2770	73.4%	2806	75.2%	2908	74.7%	3302	72.7%	
	Not Enrolled	Not Enrolled Undergrad	682	28.7%	733	26.4%	831	27.5%	1001	26.5%	925	24.8%	981	25.2%	1221	26.9%	
		Group Total	682	28.7%	733	26.4%	831	27.5%	1001	26.5%	925	24.8%	981	25.2%	1221	26.9%	
		Campus Total	2373	100.0%	2773	100.0%	3017	100.0%	3773	100.0%	3733	100.0%	3895	100.0%	4540	100.0%	

**BETA VERSION - NOT FOR RELEASE**  
**Full-time NHS**  
**University of Minnesota Undergraduate Retention Report**  
**for Students Entering the University Fall 1992-1997**  
**Graduation/Retention/Attrition Rates Three Years after Entry**

Campus	1992		1993		1994		1995		1996		1997			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%		
Crookston	Graduated	Degree Entry Unit		4	4.0%	4	3.1%	6	4.1%	11	6.3%	5	2.9%	
		Degree Other Campus		0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	0.7%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	
		Group Total		4	4.0%	4	3.1%	7	4.7%	11	6.3%	5	2.9%	
	Enrolled	Enrolled Entry Unit		31	31.0%	52	40.3%	45	30.4%	65	37.4%	77	44.8%	
		Enrolled Other Campus		1	1.0%	4	3.1%	3	2.0%	5	2.9%	2	1.2%	
		Enrolled Other Level		0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	0.6%	0	0.0%	
	Not Enrolled	Not Enrolled Undergrad		64	64.0%	69	53.5%	93	62.8%	92	52.9%	88	51.2%	
		Group Total		64	64.0%	69	53.5%	93	62.8%	92	52.9%	88	51.2%	
		Campus Total		100	100.0%	129	100.0%	148	100.0%	174	100.0%	172	100.0%	
	Duluth	Graduated	Degree Entry Unit	6	0.5%	2	0.1%	13	0.9%	12	0.8%	15	0.8%	13
Degree Other Campus			3	0.2%	2	0.1%	3	0.2%	0	0.0%	3	0.2%	0	0.0%
Degree Other Unit			1	0.1%	2	0.1%	4	0.3%	6	0.4%	8	0.4%	3	0.2%
Group Total			10	0.8%	6	0.4%	20	1.4%	18	1.2%	26	1.5%	16	0.9%
Enrolled		Enrolled Entry Unit	404	32.4%	446	31.4%	436	31.6%	471	31.8%	599	33.7%	588	34.2%
		Enrolled Other Campus	149	11.9%	179	12.6%	144	10.4%	142	9.6%	160	9.0%	118	6.9%
		Enrolled Other Level	3	0.2%	4	0.3%	3	0.2%	6	0.4%	6	0.3%	5	0.3%
		Enrolled Other Unit	234	18.8%	254	17.9%	244	17.7%	280	18.9%	306	17.2%	347	20.2%
Not Enrolled		Group Total	790	63.3%	883	62.1%	827	59.9%	899	60.6%	1071	60.2%	1058	61.5%
		Not Enrolled Undergrad	448	35.9%	532	37.4%	534	38.7%	566	38.2%	683	38.4%	645	37.5%
	Group Total	448	35.9%	532	37.4%	534	38.7%	566	38.2%	683	38.4%	645	37.5%	
Campus Total	1248	100.0%	1421	100.0%	1381	100.0%	1483	100.0%	1780	100.0%	1719	100.0%		
Morris	Graduated	Degree Entry Unit	22	3.8%	14	2.4%	17	3.1%	20	3.8%	13	2.4%	17	3.5%
		Degree Other Campus	1	0.2%	0	0.0%	1	0.2%	2	0.4%	0	0.0%	2	0.4%
		Group Total	23	4.0%	14	2.4%	18	3.3%	22	4.2%	13	2.4%	19	3.9%
	Enrolled	Enrolled Entry Unit	289	50.1%	311	52.3%	307	55.9%	267	50.7%	317	59.1%	256	53.1%
		Enrolled Other Campus	86	14.9%	85	14.3%	73	13.3%	72	13.7%	53	9.9%	46	9.5%
		Enrolled Other Level	2	0.3%	7	1.2%	1	0.2%	4	0.8%	7	1.3%	1	0.2%
		Enrolled Other Unit	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	0.2%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
	Not Enrolled	Group Total	377	65.3%	403	67.7%	381	69.4%	344	65.3%	377	70.3%	303	62.9%
		Not Enrolled Undergrad	177	30.7%	178	29.9%	150	27.3%	161	30.6%	146	27.2%	160	33.2%
		Group Total	177	30.7%	178	29.9%	150	27.3%	161	30.6%	146	27.2%	160	33.2%
Campus Total	577	100.0%	595	100.0%	549	100.0%	527	100.0%	536	100.0%	482	100.0%		
Twin Cities	Graduated	Degree Entry Unit	8	0.3%	19	0.7%	29	1.0%	28	0.7%	92	2.5%	72	1.8%
		Degree Other Campus	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	0.0%	2	0.1%
		Degree Other Unit	4	0.2%	5	0.2%	10	0.3%	15	0.4%	33	0.9%	24	0.6%
		Group Total	12	0.5%	24	0.9%	39	1.3%	43	1.1%	126	3.4%	98	2.5%
	Enrolled	Enrolled Entry Unit	1007	42.4%	1174	42.3%	1257	41.7%	1555	41.2%	1602	42.9%	1756	45.1%
		Enrolled Other Campus	11	0.5%	13	0.5%	11	0.4%	29	0.8%	18	0.5%	26	0.7%
		Enrolled Other Level	14	0.6%	14	0.5%	16	0.5%	19	0.5%	18	0.5%	18	0.5%
		Enrolled Other Unit	541	22.8%	695	25.1%	738	24.5%	960	25.4%	817	21.9%	838	21.5%
	Not Enrolled	Group Total	1573	66.3%	1896	68.4%	2022	67.0%	2563	67.9%	2455	65.8%	2638	67.7%
		Not Enrolled Undergrad	788	33.2%	853	30.8%	956	31.7%	1167	30.9%	1152	30.9%	1159	29.8%
Group Total		788	33.2%	853	30.8%	956	31.7%	1167	30.9%	1152	30.9%	1159	29.8%	
Campus Total	2373	100.0%	2773	100.0%	3017	100.0%	3773	100.0%	3733	100.0%	3895	100.0%		

**BETA VERSION - NOT FOR RELEASE**  
**Full-time NHS**  
**University of Minnesota Undergraduate Retention Report**  
**for Students Entering the University Fall 1992-1996**  
**Graduation/Retention/Attrition Rates Four Years after Entry**

Campus			1992		1993		1994		1995		1996		
			N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Crookston	Graduated	Degree Entry Unit			17	17.0%	37	28.7%	34	23.0%	38	21.8%	
		Degree Other Campus			0	0.0%	0	0.0%	3	2.0%	0	0.0%	
		Group Total			17	17.0%	37	28.7%	37	25.0%	38	21.8%	
	Enrolled	Enrolled Entry Unit			11	11.0%	16	12.4%	14	9.5%	27	15.5%	
		Enrolled Other Campus			0	0.0%	4	3.1%	1	0.7%	4	2.3%	
		Group Total			11	11.0%	20	15.5%	15	10.1%	31	17.8%	
	Not Enrolled	Not Enrolled Undergrad			72	72.0%	72	55.8%	96	64.9%	105	60.3%	
		Group Total			72	72.0%	72	55.8%	96	64.9%	105	60.3%	
		Campus Total			100	100.0%	129	100.0%	148	100.0%	174	100.0%	
	Duluth	Graduated	Degree Entry Unit	171	13.7%	180	12.7%	195	14.1%	256	17.3%	299	16.8%
Degree Other Campus			33	2.6%	47	3.3%	37	2.7%	33	2.2%	37	2.1%	
Degree Other Unit			82	6.6%	79	5.6%	87	6.3%	107	7.2%	123	6.9%	
Group Total			286	22.9%	306	21.5%	319	23.1%	396	26.7%	459	25.8%	
Enrolled		Enrolled Entry Unit	193	15.5%	204	14.4%	209	15.1%	170	11.5%	247	13.9%	
		Enrolled Other Campus	108	8.7%	127	8.9%	105	7.6%	92	6.2%	130	7.3%	
		Enrolled Other Unit	151	12.1%	163	11.5%	135	9.8%	156	10.5%	179	10.1%	
		Enrolled Other Level	11	0.9%	7	0.5%	4	0.3%	10	0.7%	9	0.5%	
Group Total			463	37.1%	501	35.3%	453	32.8%	428	28.9%	565	31.7%	
Not Enrolled		Not Enrolled Undergrad	499	40.0%	614	43.2%	609	44.1%	659	44.4%	756	42.5%	
		Group Total	499	40.0%	614	43.2%	609	44.1%	659	44.4%	756	42.5%	
		Campus Total	1248	100.0%	1421	100.0%	1381	100.0%	1483	100.0%	1780	100.0%	
Morris		Graduated	Degree Entry Unit	226	39.2%	239	40.2%	227	41.3%	213	40.4%	226	42.2%
			Degree Other Campus	28	4.9%	20	3.4%	22	4.0%	26	4.9%	14	2.6%
	Degree Other Unit		0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	0.2%	
	Group Total		254	44.0%	259	43.5%	249	45.4%	239	45.4%	241	45.0%	
	Enrolled	Enrolled Entry Unit	70	12.1%	72	12.1%	83	15.1%	51	9.7%	76	14.2%	
		Enrolled Other Campus	58	10.1%	60	10.1%	53	9.7%	45	8.5%	34	6.3%	
		Enrolled Other Level	3	0.5%	7	1.2%	2	0.4%	4	0.8%	8	1.5%	
		Group Total	131	22.7%	139	23.4%	138	25.1%	100	19.0%	118	22.0%	
	Not Enrolled	Not Enrolled Undergrad	192	33.3%	197	33.1%	162	29.5%	188	35.7%	177	33.0%	
		Group Total	192	33.3%	197	33.1%	162	29.5%	188	35.7%	177	33.0%	
	Campus Total	577	100.0%	595	100.0%	549	100.0%	527	100.0%	536	100.0%		
Twin Cities	Graduated	Degree Entry Unit	293	12.3%	349	12.6%	396	13.1%	632	16.8%	740	19.8%	
		Degree Other Campus	4	0.2%	0	0.0%	2	0.1%	12	0.3%	7	0.2%	
		Degree Other Unit	149	6.3%	244	8.8%	239	7.9%	366	9.7%	322	8.6%	
		Group Total	446	18.8%	593	21.4%	637	21.1%	1010	26.8%	1069	28.6%	
	Enrolled	Enrolled Entry Unit	583	24.6%	649	23.4%	690	22.9%	705	18.7%	735	19.7%	
		Enrolled Other Campus	6	0.3%	12	0.4%	9	0.3%	13	0.3%	13	0.3%	
		Enrolled Other Unit	417	17.6%	499	18.0%	544	18.0%	525	13.9%	541	14.5%	
		Enrolled Other Level	31	1.3%	24	0.9%	23	0.8%	30	0.8%	26	0.7%	
	Group Total		1037	43.7%	1184	42.7%	1266	42.0%	1273	33.7%	1315	35.2%	
	Not Enrolled	Not Enrolled Undergrad	890	37.5%	996	35.9%	1114	36.9%	1490	39.5%	1349	36.1%	
		Group Total	890	37.5%	996	35.9%	1114	36.9%	1490	39.5%	1349	36.1%	
		Campus Total	2373	100.0%	2773	100.0%	3017	100.0%	3773	100.0%	3733	100.0%	

BETA VERSION - NOT FOR RELEASE  
 Full-time NHS  
 University of Minnesota Undergraduate Retention Report  
 for Students Entering the University Fall 1992-1995  
 Graduation/Retention/Attrition Rates Five Years after Entry

Campus			1992		1993		1994		1995		
			N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
Crookston	Graduated	Degree Entry Unit			28	28.0%	49	38.0%	47	31.8%	
		Degree Other Campus			0	0.0%	2	1.6%	3	2.0%	
		Group Total			28	28.0%	51	39.5%	50	33.8%	
	Enrolled	Enrolled Entry Unit			4	4.0%	4	3.1%	2	1.4%	
		Enrolled Other Campus			0	0.0%	2	1.6%	0	0.0%	
		Group Total			4	4.0%	6	4.7%	2	1.4%	
	Not Enrolled	Not Enrolled Undergrad			68	68.0%	72	55.8%	96	64.9%	
		Group Total			68	68.0%	72	55.8%	96	64.9%	
		Campus Total			100	100.0%	129	100.0%	148	100.0%	
	Duluth	Graduated	Degree Entry Unit	303	24.3%	327	23.0%	342	24.8%	362	24.4%
Degree Other Campus			88	7.1%	117	8.2%	92	6.7%	85	5.7%	
Degree Other Unit			174	13.9%	186	13.1%	180	13.0%	206	13.9%	
Group Total			565	45.3%	630	44.3%	614	44.5%	653	44.0%	
Enrolled		Enrolled Entry Unit	46	3.7%	34	2.4%	44	3.2%	35	2.4%	
		Enrolled Other Campus	43	3.4%	47	3.3%	39	2.8%	43	2.9%	
		Enrolled Other Unit	45	3.6%	49	3.4%	31	2.2%	44	3.0%	
		Enrolled Other Level	10	0.8%	8	0.6%	4	0.3%	6	0.4%	
		Group Total	144	11.5%	138	9.7%	118	8.5%	128	8.6%	
Not Enrolled		Not Enrolled Undergrad	539	43.2%	653	46.0%	649	47.0%	702	47.3%	
		Group Total	539	43.2%	653	46.0%	649	47.0%	702	47.3%	
		Campus Total	1248	100.0%	1421	100.0%	1381	100.0%	1483	100.0%	
Morris		Graduated	Degree Entry Unit	273	47.3%	305	51.3%	290	52.8%	257	48.8%
			Degree Other Campus	53	9.2%	57	9.6%	48	8.7%	53	10.1%
			Group Total	326	56.5%	362	60.8%	338	61.6%	310	58.8%
	Enrolled	Enrolled Entry Unit	11	1.9%	7	1.2%	12	2.2%	12	2.3%	
		Enrolled Other Campus	25	4.3%	17	2.9%	19	3.5%	20	3.8%	
		Enrolled Other Level	5	0.9%	5	0.8%	1	0.2%	4	0.8%	
		Group Total	41	7.1%	29	4.9%	32	5.8%	36	6.8%	
	Not Enrolled	Not Enrolled Undergrad	210	36.4%	204	34.3%	179	32.6%	181	34.3%	
		Group Total	210	36.4%	204	34.3%	179	32.6%	181	34.3%	
		Campus Total	577	100.0%	595	100.0%	549	100.0%	527	100.0%	
Twin Cities	Graduated	Degree Entry Unit	633	26.7%	729	26.3%	831	27.5%	1058	28.0%	
		Degree Other Campus	9	0.4%	3	0.1%	7	0.2%	22	0.6%	
		Degree Other Unit	371	15.6%	533	19.2%	560	18.6%	737	19.5%	
		Group Total	1013	42.7%	1265	45.6%	1398	46.3%	1817	48.2%	
	Enrolled	Enrolled Entry Unit	157	6.6%	197	7.1%	200	6.6%	231	6.1%	
		Enrolled Other Campus	1	0.0%	7	0.3%	3	0.1%	3	0.1%	
		Enrolled Other Unit	182	7.7%	199	7.2%	138	4.6%	164	4.3%	
		Enrolled Other Level	19	0.8%	18	0.6%	19	0.6%	23	0.6%	
		Group Total	359	15.1%	421	15.2%	360	11.9%	421	11.2%	
	Not Enrolled	Not Enrolled Undergrad	1001	42.2%	1087	39.2%	1259	41.7%	1535	40.7%	
		Group Total	1001	42.2%	1087	39.2%	1259	41.7%	1535	40.7%	
		Campus Total	2373	100.0%	2773	100.0%	3017	100.0%	3773	100.0%	

**BETA VERSION - NOT FOR RELEASE**  
**Full-time NHS**  
**University of Minnesota Undergraduate Retention Report**  
**for Students Entering the University Fall 1992-1994**  
**Graduation/Retention/Attrition Rates Six Years after Entry**

Campus			1992		1993		1994	
			N	%	N	%	N	%
Crookston	Graduated	Degree Entry Unit			31	31.0%	54	41.9%
		Degree Other Campus			0	0.0%	4	3.1%
		Group Total			31	31.0%	58	45.0%
	Not Enrolled	Not Enrolled Undergrad			69	69.0%	71	55.0%
		Group Total			69	69.0%	71	55.0%
		Campus Total			100	100.0%	129	100.0%
Duluth	Graduated	Degree Entry Unit	330	26.4%	363	25.5%	377	27.3%
		Degree Other Campus	110	8.8%	143	10.1%	117	8.5%
		Degree Other Unit	203	16.3%	213	15.0%	204	14.8%
		Group Total	643	51.5%	719	50.6%	698	50.5%
	Not Enrolled	Not Enrolled Undergrad	549	44.0%	657	46.2%	638	46.2%
		Group Total	549	44.0%	657	46.2%	638	46.2%
	Enrolled	Enrolled Entry Unit	15	1.2%	13	0.9%	7	0.5%
		Enrolled Other Unit	12	1.0%	6	0.4%	18	1.3%
		Enrolled Other Campus	18	1.4%	17	1.2%	15	1.1%
		Enrolled Other Level	11	0.9%	9	0.6%	5	0.4%
		Group Total	56	4.5%	45	3.2%	45	3.3%
		Campus Total	1248	100.0%	1421	100.0%	1381	100.0%
	Morris	Graduated	Degree Entry Unit	288	49.9%	310	52.1%	304
Degree Other Campus			72	12.5%	71	11.9%	63	11.5%
Group Total			360	62.4%	381	64.0%	367	66.8%
Not Enrolled		Not Enrolled Undergrad	194	33.6%	200	33.6%	172	31.3%
		Group Total	194	33.6%	200	33.6%	172	31.3%
Enrolled		Enrolled Entry Unit	3	0.5%	4	0.7%	2	0.4%
		Enrolled Other Campus	14	2.4%	5	0.8%	6	1.1%
		Enrolled Other Level	6	1.0%	5	0.8%	2	0.4%
		Group Total	23	4.0%	14	2.4%	10	1.8%
Campus Total	577	100.0%	595	100.0%	549	100.0%		
Twin Cities	Graduated	Degree Entry Unit	745	31.4%	839	30.3%	937	31.1%
		Degree Other Campus	9	0.4%	9	0.3%	8	0.3%
		Degree Other Unit	463	19.5%	640	23.1%	655	21.7%
		Group Total	1217	51.3%	1488	53.7%	1600	53.0%
	Not Enrolled	Not Enrolled Undergrad	987	41.6%	1127	40.6%	1235	40.9%
		Group Total	987	41.6%	1127	40.6%	1235	40.9%
	Enrolled	Enrolled Entry Unit	61	2.6%	87	3.1%	100	3.3%
		Enrolled Other Unit	94	4.0%	54	1.9%	62	2.1%
		Enrolled Other Campus	0	0.0%	3	0.1%	3	0.1%
		Enrolled Other Level	14	0.6%	14	0.5%	17	0.6%
		Group Total	169	7.1%	158	5.7%	182	6.0%
		Campus Total	2373	100.0%	2773	100.0%	3017	100.0%

**BETA VERSION - NOT FOR RELEASE**  
**Full-time NHS**  
**University of Minnesota Undergraduate Retention Report**  
**for Students Entering the University Fall 1992-1993**  
**Graduation/Retention/Attrition Rates Seven Years after Entry**

Campus			1992		1993		
			N	%	N	%	
Crookston	Graduated	Degree Entry Unit			33	33.0%	
		Group Total			33	33.0%	
	Enrolled	Enrolled Entry Unit			1	1.0%	
		Group Total			1	1.0%	
	Not Enrolled	Not Enrolled Undergrad			66	66.0%	
		Group Total			66	66.0%	
		Campus Total		100	100.0%		
Duluth	Graduated	Degree Entry Unit	337	27.0%	367	25.8%	
		Degree Other Unit	217	17.4%	221	15.6%	
		Degree Other Campus	120	9.6%	154	10.8%	
		Group Total	674	54.0%	742	52.2%	
	Enrolled	Enrolled Entry Unit	3	0.2%	7	0.5%	
		Enrolled Other Unit	5	0.4%	5	0.4%	
		Enrolled Other Campus	12	1.0%	3	0.2%	
		Enrolled Other Level	3	0.2%	7	0.5%	
		Group Total	23	1.8%	22	1.5%	
	Not Enrolled	Not Enrolled Undergrad	551	44.2%	657	46.2%	
		Group Total	551	44.2%	657	46.2%	
			Campus Total	1248	100.0%	1421	100.0%
	Morris	Graduated	Degree Entry Unit	295	51.1%	315	52.9%
			Degree Other Campus	76	13.2%	72	12.1%
			Group Total	371	64.3%	387	65.0%
Enrolled		Enrolled Entry Unit	0	0.0%	3	0.5%	
		Enrolled Other Campus	10	1.7%	4	0.7%	
		Enrolled Other Level	2	0.3%	3	0.5%	
		Group Total	12	2.1%	10	1.7%	
Not Enrolled		Not Enrolled Undergrad	194	33.6%	198	33.3%	
		Group Total	194	33.6%	198	33.3%	
			Campus Total	577	100.0%	595	100.0%
Twin Cities		Graduated	Degree Entry Unit	788	33.2%	883	31.8%
			Degree Other Unit	501	21.1%	680	24.5%
	Degree Other Campus		11	0.5%	10	0.4%	
	Group Total		1300	54.8%	1573	56.7%	
	Enrolled	Enrolled Entry Unit	43	1.8%	46	1.7%	
		Enrolled Other Unit	34	1.4%	33	1.2%	
		Enrolled Other Campus	1	0.0%	2	0.1%	
		Enrolled Other Level	7	0.3%	13	0.5%	
		Group Total	85	3.6%	94	3.4%	
	Not Enrolled	Not Enrolled Undergrad	988	41.6%	1106	39.9%	
		Group Total	988	41.6%	1106	39.9%	
			Campus Total	2373	100.0%	2773	100.0%

**BETA VERSION - NOT FOR RELEASE**  
**Full-time NHS**  
**University of Minnesota Undergraduate Retention Report**  
**for Students Entering the University Fall 1992**  
**Graduation/Retention/Attrition Rates Eight Years after Entry**

Campus			1992		
			N	%	
Duluth	Graduated	Degree Entry Unit	342	27.4%	
		Degree Other Unit	221	17.7%	
		Degree Other Campus	123	9.9%	
		Group Total	686	55.0%	
	Enrolled	Enrolled Entry Unit	5	0.4%	
		Enrolled Other Unit	4	0.3%	
		Enrolled Other Campus	8	0.6%	
		Enrolled Other Level	2	0.2%	
		Group Total	19	1.5%	
	Not Enrolled	Not Enrolled Undergrad	543	43.5%	
		Group Total	543	43.5%	
			<b>Campus Total</b>	<b>1248</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
	Morris	Graduated	Degree Entry Unit	298	51.6%
Degree Other Campus			79	13.7%	
Group Total			377	65.3%	
Enrolled		Enrolled Other Campus	6	1.0%	
		Enrolled Other Level	1	0.2%	
		Group Total	7	1.2%	
Not Enrolled		Not Enrolled Undergrad	193	33.4%	
		Group Total	193	33.4%	
		<b>Campus Total</b>	<b>577</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	
Twin Cities	Graduated	Degree Entry Unit	814	34.3%	
		Degree Other Unit	513	21.6%	
		Degree Other Campus	11	0.5%	
		Group Total	1338	56.4%	
	Enrolled	Enrolled Entry Unit	23	1.0%	
		Enrolled Other Unit	23	1.0%	
		Enrolled Other Campus	2	0.1%	
		Enrolled Other Level	5	0.2%	
		Group Total	53	2.2%	
	Not Enrolled	Not Enrolled Undergrad	982	41.4%	
		Group Total	982	41.4%	
			<b>Campus Total</b>	<b>2373</b>	<b>100.0%</b>