

# Academic Department Student Success Plan Update 2015-2018

**Department:** Marketing & Operations

**Department Chair:** Paul Schikora

**Department Mission:** The Indiana State University Scott College of Business is dedicated to providing an internationally-accredited professional education to qualified students at both the undergraduate and master's levels. Our primary focus is to provide an experiential learning environment that prepares students to take leadership roles in both public and private organizations. In tandem with this commitment, the College supports, encourages, and produces applied and educational research, development of relationships with the business community, and service to the region and the professions. The Marketing & Operations Department prepares students for management roles in the marketing, operations, and supply chain functions of modern businesses in a global market.

## Department Freshmen (1<sup>st</sup> year) Retention<sup>1</sup> Goal(s):

The SCOB one year Retention Rate was 71.2%. The MO rate was above the college rate at 82.2%. The department rate has increased significantly in the past two years, from 71.0% in 2013 to 75.0% in 2014 and 82.2% in 2015. Just how much of that improvement is due to efforts in the college and department versus random variations in cohort data at this disaggregated level is not clear.

Setting specific goals and action steps to positively impact first-year retention in this department is difficult as we typically do not "touch" students in the freshman year. We have developed a 100-level foundational studies approved course (MKTG 150) that we will be piloting in the spring 2016 semester, but other than that we do not teach freshman-level courses. As a result, we rely on efforts at the college level but also look for ways to interact with freshmen at the department level in a way that positively impacts retention rates.

Projected improvements may seem to not be aggressive enough. However, given the current high retention rate in the department, there is a realistic limit to how high we can get this metric. Note that our last year's success plan aimed for a **long term** retention rate of 80%.

## Action Steps (with dates & person(s) responsible):

- a. Use student organizations to connect with freshmen: Each major in the department has a student organization: a student chapter of the *American Marketing Association* (marketing) and a student chapter of *APICS* (Operations and Supply Chain Management (OSCM)). Both organizations have open membership and meetings. Members are typically marketing or OSCM majors and can serve as mentors and student connections to the department. These organizations will be tasked with contacting freshman business majors to more directly encourage membership or at least connection with the organizations. It is hoped that increasing the students' connections to the college and department we can have a positive impact on retention. *Target date for completion:* Spring 2016 and continuing. *Persons Responsible:* Faculty advisors of organizations (currently K. Bhattacharyya, S. Bhowmick and V. Sweetin).
- b. Use of Meis Center programs: The Meis Center is a cornerstone of student success initiatives in the SCoB. While these are not department initiatives per se, they are listed here to the extent that they impact 1<sup>st</sup> year retention.

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<sup>1</sup> Departments w/o undergraduates can adapt the retention and persistence to completion sections to serve their graduate student success purposes, or alternatively, integrate into the Other Goal(s), Action Steps, and Benchmarks of focal interest to department section at the end of the template.

- 1) A bootcamp was developed for BUS 100 to incorporate several sessions offered by the Meis Center into BUS 100. The sessions incorporated into BUS in Fall 2015 are:
  - i. Welcome to SCOB and the Meis Center!
  - ii. Professional Communication
  - iii. Note Taking
  - iv. How to Dress like a Professional
  - v. Classroom Etiquette
  - vi. Career Fair Prep
  - vii. Appropriate Use of Social Media

*Timeframe: Created and implemented Fall 2015 Persons Responsible: Kelly Wilkinson*

- 2) Freshmen have to attend other Meis Center sessions focus on more freshmen sessions in the spring semester particularly students in BUS 180. (All faculty teaching freshmen)

*Timeframe: In place Fall 2015 Persons Responsible: Meis Center Student Development Team*

- 3) Creation of the Four Year Professional Plan. This collaborative project with Career Services “marries” the career readiness program of the university with the specific professional development needs of the SCOB student. Freshmen will be encouraged to enroll in the career readiness program.

*Timeframe: Fall 2015 Persons Responsible: Meis Center Student Development Team and Career Services*

<i>Retention Benchmarks</i> <sup>2*</sup> (by latest department)	<b>Fall 2012 Cohort:</b> 71.4%	<b>Fall 2013 Cohort:</b> 76.3%	<b>Fall 2014 Cohort:</b> 83.0%
	<b>Fall 2015 target:</b> 84%	<b>Fall 2016 target:</b> 85%	<b>Fall 2017 target:</b> 86%

*Other Freshmen Retention related benchmarks of focal interest to department*<sup>3</sup>

The number of freshmen that declare a major within the department (as opposed to business, non-designated). The earlier they declare, the sooner we can track and interact with them.

**Department Persistence to Completion Goal(s):**

The SCOB 4-year graduation Rate was 27.5%. The MO rate was above the college rate at 39.5%. The department rate is up from 35.7% last year, but still down from the rate of 46.3% in 2013. Being a rate that tracks cohorts over 4 years, there appears to be significant random variations from cohort to cohort at this disaggregated level. As such it may be unreasonable to expect continuous year-to-year improvements at the department level. Instead, the longer term trend should be assessed. Further exacerbating the problem of interpreting the data is the fact that actions at the department and college level have as much as a 4-year lag to show results in the benchmark data.

Efforts to improve 4-year graduation rates in the department focus on eliminating barriers to completion in the two majors and engaging with students more consistently through their time in school. The OSCM major is relatively new and was designed with student success in mind. The marketing major has not been revised in some time now. We are in the process of completing a full review of the marketing major, with the mindset of improving student success.

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<sup>2</sup> Department level current and historical retention and completion benchmark data to be integrated into the plan can be found through Blue Reports: <http://irt2.indstate.edu/cms/ir/blue-reports/>.

<sup>3</sup> A retention and completion rate is an essential benchmark, but it is not necessarily the only benchmark of interest to a department. Others of interest to the department can be integrated as well.

### **Action Steps (with dates & person(s) responsible):**

- a. Complete a program curriculum review in the Marketing major: Departments have a large effect on completion rates through course scheduling, sequencing and prerequisite decisions. While we offer a large number of marketing courses, there are often students needing to take certain courses that are oversubscribed in order to graduate. We also see a lot of requests for prerequisite waivers for students in their last semester who need to take the capstone course but have not completed one of the prerequisite courses. A program review is underway that is intended to identify unnecessary hurdles to timely completion in the major and eliminate them. Several decisions have been made, including the reduction in prerequisites for the Marketing Internship course, the Professional Selling course, and MKTG 301 for business minors; also, the creation of a new digital marketing course and the elimination of the Product and Pricing Strategy course. The OSCM program recently underwent a program revision and is well enough sequenced to avoid these problems. *Target date for completion:* Spring 2016. *Persons Responsible:* Marketing faculty, department chair.
- b. Initiate more intrusive advising procedures: Many issues with students not completing on time are due to lack of timely and/or correct action on the part of students. Regular advising by faculty can intercept these bad choices and head off future problems through better current scheduling decisions. Implementation of MySAM will be a big part of this. *Target date for completion:* Spring 2016. *Persons Responsible:* Department faculty advisors.

<i>Completion Benchmarks</i> (by latest department)	<b>Fall 2009 Cohort:</b> 46.3%	<b>Fall 2010 Cohort:</b> 35.7%	<b>Fall 2011 Cohort:</b> 39.5%
	<b>Fall 2012 target:</b> 41.0%	<b>Fall 2013 target:</b> 42.5%	<b>Fall 2014 target:</b> 44.0%

*Other Persistence to Completion related benchmarks of focal interest to department*

### **Other Goal(s), Action Steps, and Benchmarks of focal interest to department<sup>4</sup>:**

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<sup>4</sup> Departments may have student success related goals, action steps, and benchmarks that do not fit neatly into the other categories. If so, feel free to place them here.