

# Student Success at Southern Oregon University

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**Academic Department Chair Institute  
Southern Oregon University  
Summer 2007**

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*Student success is everybody's  
business.*

--George Kuh

Director of the Center for Postsecondary Research at Indiana University  
Bloomington and founder of NSSE

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# Fall 2004 Cohort Data

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- ❑ Non-resident students persist at higher rate (6%) than in-state students
  - ❑ Women persist at higher rate (5%) than men
  - ❑ Athletes persist at significantly higher rate (26%) than general population
  - ❑ Students in campus housing persist at higher rate (14%) than those who live off-campus
  - ❑ For low-achieving students (overall GPA below 2.0), Core 101 grade correlates with persistence
  - ❑ FR to SO persistence of cohort: 64.9%
  - ❑ Persistence for low-achievers: 35.3%
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# The Data

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- NSSE 2005 drivers of satisfaction among students who have persisted at SOU:
  - “Talked about career plans with a faculty member or advisor.”
  - “Quality of relationships with faculty members.”
  - “Worked with faculty members on activities other than coursework (committees, research, student life activities, etc.)”
  - “Worked harder than you thought you could to meet an instructor’s standards or expectations.”

*Mean on 1-4 and 1-7 scales significantly higher statistically than those who have left SOU, coupled with significantly higher statistical rating of overall experience, advising assistance, and choice of institution*

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# A Framework for Enrollment Efforts

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As outlined in Project DEEP (Documenting Effective Educational Practice), there are key characteristics and choices that are demonstrated by high-achieving institutions to have positive impact on student enrollment, engagement, and persistence. Those identified for focus based on SOU's NSSE and demographic data are:

Put someone in charge

Develop a shared understanding of institutional mission and philosophy

Cultivate an ethic of continuous improvement

Strategically invest in student learning

Front load resources to enhance student learning

Tighten the philosophical and operational linkages between academic and student affairs

Teach students through the recruitment and admission process how to take control of their own learning

Teach new students what it takes to succeed

Implement and maintain a comprehensive set of safety nets and early warning systems

Create and maintain partnerships for learning

Alter structures to encourage cross-functional activities focused on student success

Use technology to tie elements together

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# How to Help Students Achieve

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- ❑ Teach first-year students as early as possible how to use college resources effectively
- ❑ Make the classroom the locus of community
- ❑ Develop networks and early-warning systems to support students when they need help
- ❑ Connect every student in a meaningful way with some activity or positive role model
- ❑ If a program or practice works, make it widely available
- ❑ Remove obstacles to student engagement and success

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**Teach first-year students  
as early as possible how  
to use college resources  
effectively**

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# Pre-Enrollment Efforts

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- Preview Weekends
    - Contact with faculty
    - Focus on intellectual engagement
  - Raider Registration
    - Individualized advising
    - Define liberal arts
    - Students learn & practice processes/procedures
  - New Student Orientation
    - Academic content
    - Civic engagement
    - Model reflecting on activities
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# Structure of Support/Advocacy

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Dean of Students

Student support/advocacy coordination

Resource Centers

Disability Services for Students

Health/Counseling Services

Advising/tutoring

Success at Southern (TRIO)

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# Additional Resources

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Residence Life Staff

Athletics Staff

Civic Engagement/Service Learning  
Staff

Career Development Services Staff

Campus Public Safety Staff

Faculty and Staff members across  
campus

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# How to use resources?

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- Student Planner/Handbook
    - Listing of offices/resources
    - Academic planning tool
    - Policies/procedures
    - Calendar
  - Faculty
    - Advising
    - Referrals
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# Students with Disabilities

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A person with a disability is defined as any person who:

- (1) has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities,
- (2) has a record of such impairment, or
- (3) is regarded as having such impairment. Major life activities include, but are not limited to, seeing, hearing, speaking, moving, working, performing manual tasks or learning. These limitations may be visible or invisible.

Nationally, 10% of the population have disabilities. At SOU, 6.3% (300+) students are registered with DSS.

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# Supporting Students with Disabilities

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If the student is already on file with DSS (Disability Services for Students), a letter will be supplied to faculty with the a listing of the appropriate accommodations.

If the student is new to DSS, the process of documentation review and meeting with the student may take some time.

If a student requests an accommodation without providing notification from DSS of eligibility, faculty are to refer the student to DSS.

If a faculty member has questions or concerns about accommodations or the accommodation process, they should contact the DSS Office.

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# Two Notes on Confidentiality

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- Information concerning a student's disability should be disclosed only to those with a legitimate "need to know". Sharing of information with other faculty and staff needs to be balanced with the student's interest while maintaining their privacy.
  - **Faculty must not discuss or refer to a student's disability or need for accommodations in front of other students or staff. A student is not required to disclose the nature of her/his disability to faculty or staff.**
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# Success at Southern

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## Services

- **College Success Classes**
    - Freshman University Orientation
    - Transfer University Orientation
    - Academic Development
    - Career Exploration
    - School to Work Transition
  
  - **Tutoring**
  - **Academic Advising**
  - **Personal, Career, and Financial Counseling**
  - **Study Groups**
  - **Cultural Activities**
  - **Workshops** (scholarships, financial planning)
  - Additional **financial aid** is available to eligible freshmen and sophomores
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**Make the classroom the  
locus of community**

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# Classroom as Locus of Community

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- What communities exist on campus?
    - Residence Halls/Apartments
    - Athletics
    - ASSOU/Student Organizations
  
  - The Classroom
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# What does Classroom as Community Mean?

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- Reinforces academic focus of the SOU experience
  - Affinity and persistence
  - Tackling community issues with appropriate guidance
    - Diversity
    - Politics
    - Group Dynamics
    - Interdependence
    - Civility in Discourse
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# What does Classroom as Community Mean?

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- The student who “clocks in & out”
  - The classroom in relation to the external community
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**Develop networks and early-warning systems to support students when they need help**

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# Student Issues

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- What issues do faculty see?
  - What can faculty do to address these issues?
  - Assistance for faculty
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# Student Support Network

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The Student Support Network is a collaborative effort across the institution to provide early identification of—and appropriate intervention with—students who appear to be experiencing difficulty that is interfering with their academic success.

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# Student Support Network Purpose

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- ❑ To intervene as early as possible with students experiencing difficulty
  - ❑ To ensure that students at risk or who are experiencing difficulty are aware of—and utilizing—the resources available to them to help resolve their specific issues or concerns
  - ❑ To encourage students to take greater responsibility for their education by helping them recognize both their independence and their interdependence in the SOU campus community
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# Student Support Network Members

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- Dean of Students (convenes)
  - Advisors (ACCESS Staff)
  - Health/Counseling Staff
  - University Seminar Staff
  - Residence Life Staff
  - Enrollment Services Staff
  - Campus Public Safety Staff
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# Web-Based Early Intervention Tool

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The Student Early Warning Report

<https://www.sou.edu/stureport/>

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# When Faculty Should Refer

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- Student effort exceeds returns
  - Poor reading/listening comprehension/  
written expression
  - Extreme distractibility/frustration
  - Severe test or generalized anxiety
  - Good class participation, but poor test  
performance
  - Absences or excessive neglect of course  
assignments
  - Concerning behavior of any kind
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**Connect every student in a  
meaningful way with some  
activity or positive role model**

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# What Constitutes “Meaningful”?

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- ❑ Responsible for tasks that require daily decisions over an extended period of time
  - ❑ Participation in a student group that provides support and momentum
  - ❑ Personal satisfaction derived from being part of something larger than self
  - ❑ Connection to individuals who provide encouragement
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# Meaningful Involvement

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- Civic Engagement and Service
  - Leadership Development
  - Student Employment
  - Internships and Networking
  - Career Development Planning
  - Course work in context
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# The Involvement Center

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- Innovative collaboration including:
    - Student Activities & Leadership
    - Community Based Learning
    - Career Development Services
  - The Center intentionally challenges and supports students as active learners to explore opportunities and become engaged citizens.
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# The Involvement Center

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- ❑ Helps students connect their on- and off-campus involvement, their academic curriculum, and their career aspirations
  - ❑ Provides meaning through contextual knowledge, challenge and support
  - ❑ Engages students to identify problems, find creative solutions, and act as change agents
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# Positive Role Models

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How Can Faculty Support Meaningful Connections?

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**If a program or practice  
works, make it widely  
available**

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# Defining What Works

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- What are faculty/departments currently doing that “works”
  
  - Enrollment Analysis
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**Remove obstacles to student  
engagement and success**

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# The Enrollment Services Center

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One Stop for Student  
Academic Support Services

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# Mission

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To provide outstanding enrollment services to prospective and current students of Southern Oregon University.

We will enhance our services and increase their accessibility through the most effective and efficient use of our human and technological resources.

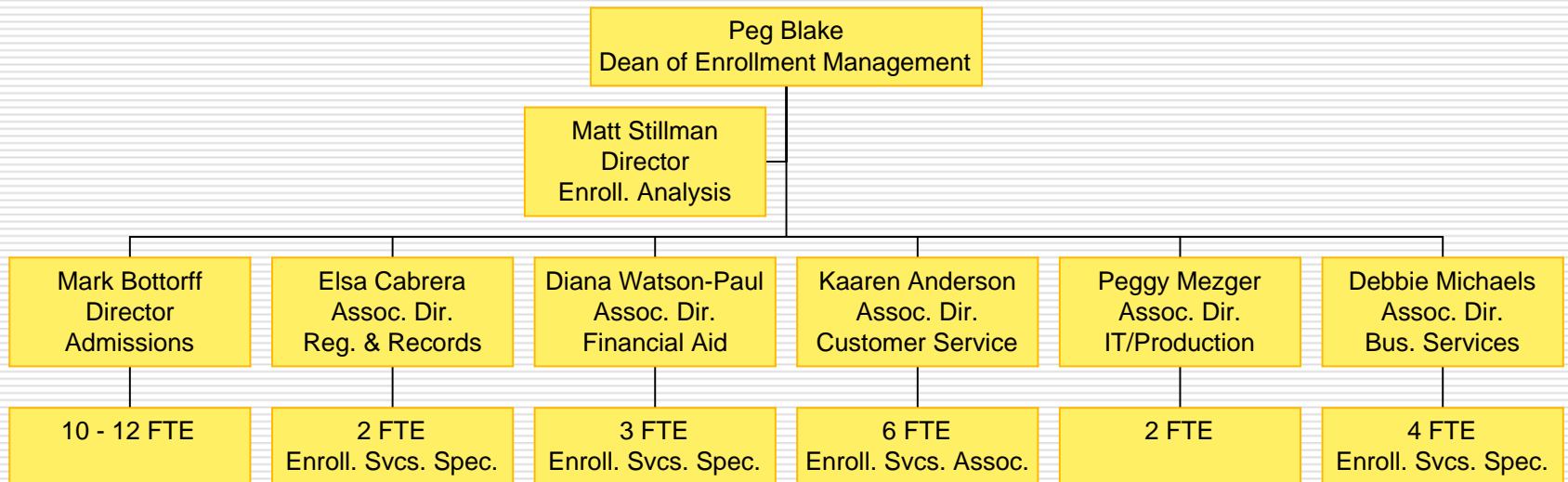
We will adopt best practices and implement them for the benefit of SOU students.

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# Organizational Chart

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## Southern Oregon University Enrollment Services 7/1/07



# Issues...The List Goes On...and On...

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- Class/room scheduling
  - Certification for graduation
  - Academic standards alignment (Fin. Aid and academic standing)
  - Banner/SISWeb
  - Pre-req. checking/overrides
  - Etc.
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# Web Portal

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- ❑ Single sign-on for all SOU business and information (1 user ID and 1 password)
  - ❑ Stronger communication systems
  - ❑ Community development/connections
  - ❑ “One-stop shop” for all enrollment services (and other needs)
  - ❑ <http://mytest.sou.edu>
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# What Faculty Can Do

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- Embrace undergraduates & their learning
  - Set and maintain high expectations for student performance
  - Clarify what students need to do to succeed
  - Provide meaningful feedback to students
  - Weave diversity into the curriculum, including out-of-class assignments
  - Make time for students
  - Hold students accountable for their share of the responsibility for their learning
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# What Faculty Can Do

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- ❑ Adopt a talent development approach to advising
- ❑ Think of advising as if it were a tag team activity
- ❑ Help students map out a path to success
- ❑ Focus on meaningful interactions with students
- ❑ Connect students to co-curricular learning opportunities, as what happens outside the classroom influences learning inside the classroom
- ❑ Encourage students to seek out and learn from experiences with different forms of diversity

*From NSSE Occasional Papers 6 & 11, Jillian Kinzie & D. Jason De Sousa, authors*

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# Questions & Comments

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