

*Access to Success  
Two-year Report  
January, 2008  
(January 11 Update)*

Two freshman classes have now experienced the multiple retention components UWM offers in our Access to Success initiative. And there is a great deal of positive news to report! The Fall, 2006 class participated in these retention activities at an overall higher rate (64%) than did the Fall, 2005 class (62%) and their satisfactory performance and one-year retention increased.

**Status of Meeting Access to Success Goals:**

Progress has been made in advancing the goals of Access to Success (A2S) as follows:

**Goal 1: Increase overall freshman retention.**

**Status: Overall freshman retention increased for all freshmen and even more for freshmen who participated in any of the A2S retention activities.**

- A 2.3 percentage point (PP) increase, from 68.7% for the Fall, 2005 freshman class to 71.0% for the Fall, 2006 freshman class.
- Fall, 2006 freshman participants in any A2S activity were retained at 74.9% compared with 73.5% for Fall, 2005 participants – a 1.4 PP increase.

**Goal 2: Decrease the gap in one-year retention between targeted freshmen of color and non-targeted freshmen.**

**Status: The increase in retention of targeted freshmen of color exceeded the increase in retention of non-targeted freshmen, thereby decreasing the gap.**

- Retention for targeted freshmen increased 3.9 PP (from 55.8% to 59.7%) and exceeded the 1.9 PP (from 70.9% to 72.8%) increase in non-targeted freshmen retention– narrowing the gap from 15.1 PP in 2005 to 13.1 PP in 2006.
- Retention for targeted freshman *A2S participants* increased 2.6 PP (from 61.6% to 64.2%) and exceeded the 1.1 PP (from 75.7% to 76.8%) increase in retention of non-targeted freshman *A2S participants* - narrowing the gap from 14.1 PP in 2005 to 12.6 PP in 2006.

**Goal 3: Decrease the gap in one-year retention between freshmen entering with developmental English/mathematics needs and those entering with college-level placement in English/math.**

**Status: The increase in retention of freshmen requiring developmental math exceeded the increase in retention of freshmen placing at college level, thereby decreasing the gap.**

- Retention for freshmen entering with UWM's lowest math level placement increase 6.0 PP (from 57.1% to 63.1%) and exceeded the 1.2 PP increase in retention of freshmen with college level math placement – narrowing the gap from 15.7 PP in 2005 to 10.9 PP in 2006.
- Retention for freshman *A2S participants* entering with UWM's lowest math placement increased 3.9 PP (from 64.4% to 68.3%) and exceeded the 0.6 PP increase in retention of freshman *A2S participants* with college level math placement – narrowing the gap from 12/7 PP in 2005 to 9.4 PP in 2006.

## **Patterns of UWM's most successful freshmen**

Freshmen who have the very highest one-year retention rates are the very few who participate in Honors programs and in the Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program. For those activities that engage substantial numbers of freshmen, the highest one-year retention rates and best first year performance were achieved by freshmen who participated in:

### ***Supplemental Instruction***

The retention rate for SI participants was 83%, compared with 74% for freshmen in classes that offered SI but who did not participate, and 65% for freshmen not enrolled in courses offering SI.

### ***Mentoring***

The retention rate for mentoring participants was 77% compared with 70% for nonparticipants.

### ***Tutoring***

The retention rate for tutoring participants was 82% compared with 69% for nonparticipants.

### ***First Year Transition Courses:***

The retention rate for Freshman Seminar participants was 76% compared with 70% for nonparticipants. The retention rate for participants in Introduction to the Professions courses was 76% compared with 69% for nonparticipants.

### ***Math Combined Course Pilot***

The retention rates of students requiring remedial math who participated in the math pilot were modestly higher than those of equivalently placing students who did not (70% vs 66% for any remedial math placement, and 68% vs 63% for students in Math 090). But the small number of freshmen of color participating in the pilot had substantially higher retention than equivalently placing students of color who did not (73% vs 56% for any remedial math placement, and 70% vs 51% for students in Math 090).

## **Challenges and Questions**

Some of the results for the 2006 freshman cohort also raise questions and point to the need to increase and/or adjust retention strategies. Examples include:

### ***Varying Success Rates by Ethnicity***

Retention and satisfactory performance increased for all ethnicities except African American freshmen. The retention rate for Fall 2005 African American freshmen was 53.5% compared with 52.5% for Fall 2006 African American freshmen. African American freshmen who participated in mentoring, tutoring and supplemental instruction in 2006-07 were retained at 68% and higher (80% for SI participants).

### ***Varying Success Rates by Retention Intervention***

The retention rates of freshmen participating in mentoring, tutoring, and the study skills class increased in the 2006 class compared with the 2005 class. But there were some slight decreases in retention rates in 2006 for freshmen participating in the freshman seminars and in the summer bridge programs.

### ***Magnifying the Impact***

There is important and demonstrable progress in meeting the A2S retention goals yet we wish to increase the rate of progress. As intended, students admitted with needs for developmental courses and retention assistance are demonstrating increases in retention rates that are higher than the increases in retention demonstrated by students admitted at and above college entrance levels. Additional focus is needed on retention of high-achieving and well-prepared students. Increasing participation in A2S interventions that will engage and retain students at all levels of preparation continues to be a goal and a challenge.

## **Next Steps**

The Access to Success Retreat on January 16, 2008 will provide an opportunity to review current strategies, new action plans being implemented, and additional ideas for enhancing retention.

The full Access to Success data set for the freshman class of 2006 is posted at:

[http://www4.uwm.edu/acad\\_aff/access/retreat08/](http://www4.uwm.edu/acad_aff/access/retreat08/)