



Fall 2007 Cohort Non-returning Students: What do we know?

Executive Summary

The following report provides an analysis of 476 first-time full-time freshmen in the University of South Alabama (USA) Fall 2007 cohort who did not return to USA in Fall 2008. Of these non-returning students, 148 transferred to another institution prior to Fall 2008 and 328 did not enroll at another college or university. Results showed a large majority of students who transferred went to a public (137) two year institution (101) located in Alabama (97).

Also, as a follow up to a previous study that found a drop of 22% in retention of African-American students in the Fall 2007 cohort compared to the Fall 2006 cohort, ethnicity was used as a covariate to compare mean differences of non-returning students who transferred compared to non-returning students who did not transfer (ANCOVA). The ANCOVA results showed non-returning students who were 1) from Mobile or Baldwin County, 2) had lower high school GPAs, 3) attended later orientation sessions, 4) did not receive a freshman scholarship or financial aid, 5) did not live on campus, earned/completed fewer hours, and 6) attained lower USA GPAs were significantly less likely to transfer to another institution than non-returning students who transferred.

Findings indicate an opportunity for the institution to 1) contact non-returning students from the local area and students who had a high school GPA of 3.5 to understand reasons for their decision to transfer and/or to discuss readmission to USA, 2) apply intrusive advising techniques to scholarship recipients to ensure their persistence at USA, 3) use attendance during last two orientation sessions, low high school GPA, and ACT scores of 17 or below as early alert signals for students to be closely monitored and advised to help them persist and return to USA.

Overview

The following report provides an analysis of 476 first-time full-time freshmen in the University of South Alabama (USA) Fall 2007 cohort (freshmen who enrolled in Summer 2007 or Fall 2007) who did not return to USA in Fall 2008.¹ The National Student Clearinghouse (NSC) was used to identify whether non-returning students transferred to another institution or did not enroll at all in another higher education institution in Fall 2008. With the NSC receiving data from over 3,200 (91%) of all colleges and universities in the United States, students who were not identified as transfer students by the NSC are unlikely to be enrolled at another college or university. Comparisons are made between 148 non-returning students who transferred to another institution prior to Fall 2008 and 328 non-returning students who did not enroll at another college or university.

Profile of Non-returning Student Who Did Not Transfer

- No third party scholarship² (88%)
- From Mobile or Baldwin County (81%)
- No freshman scholarship³ (81%)
- USA GPA 2.0 or below (78%)
- No financial aid (78%)
- Lived off-campus (74%)
- 18 years old or younger (66%)
- White (66%)
- Earned zero-six USA credit hours (54%)
- Female (54%)
- High school GPA between 2.51-3.0 (37%)
- Composite ACT score between 18-20 (36%)
- Attended fifth session of new student orientation (31%)

¹ International (32) non-returning students are not included in this analysis.

² Military/ROTC, vocational rehab, employment funded, prepaid AL, MS, or FL tuition, etc.

³ Bay Area, Honors, Mitchell, Presidential, or Starnes merit based scholarships

Profile of Non-returning Student Who Transferred

- No third party scholarship (89%)
- 18 years old or younger (82%)
- No financial aid (68%)
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Key Characteristics of Fall 2007 Cohort Non Returners (cont')

Top w/in Group Characteristics	Did Not Transfer	% Did Not Transfer	Transferred	% Transferred	% Difference Btwn Did Not & Transferred
<i>Composite ACT Score (Note: n=270 Did Not Transfer; 131 Transferred)</i>					
18-20	98	36%	36	28%	-8%
21-23	71	26%	40	31%	+5%
<i>College</i>					
Arts & Sciences	140	43%	52	35%	-8%
<i>Freshman Scholarship</i>					
No	264	81%	95	75%	-6%
<i>Other Scholarship</i>					
No	289	88%	131	89%	+1%
<i>Ethnicity</i>					
White	215	66%	96	65%	-1%
African-American	87	27%	39	26%	-1%
<i>Gender</i>					
Female	177	54%	80	54%	0%
Note: Cells are shaded in yellow where % transferred compared to did not transfer was positive and greater than 10% while cells are shaded in red where % transferred compared to did not transfer was negative and greater than 10%.					

Region where the student originated from had the second greatest percentage differential between non-returning students who did not transfer and non-returning students who transferred. Students from Mobile or Baldwin County were far more likely not to transfer while students from the rest of Alabama or the Mississippi service area were more likely to transfer than students from the same region.

- 81% of non-returning students who did not transfer and were from Mobile or Baldwin County (265) compared to 57% of non-returning students who transferred (85).
- 7% of non-returning students who did not transfer and were from the Mississippi service area (23) compared to 17% of non-returning students who transferred (25).

Four other comparison groups had percentage differentials greater than 10% between students who did not transfer and students who transferred: housing, high school GPA, age, and financial aid.

- 74% of non-returning students who did not transfer and were living off-campus (243) compared to 52% of non-returning students who transferred (77).
- 15% of non-returning students who did not transfer and had a high school GPA of 3.51 or higher (36) compared to 32% of non-returning students who transferred (43).
- 31% of non-returning students who did not transfer and attended the fifth new student orientation session (92) compared to 18% of non-returning students who transferred (26).
- 78% of non-returning students who did not transfer and did not receive financial aid (255) compared to 68% of non-returning students who transferred (100).

Mean Differences Based on Transfer Status w/ Ethnicity as Covariate

In a previous retention based report completed by Institutional Research, Planning, and Assessment related to the entire Fall 2007 freshman cohort, results showed a drop of 22% in retention of African-American students in the Fall 2007 cohort compared to the Fall 2006 cohort. Therefore, the decision was made to use ethnicity as a covariate to compare mean differences for each characteristic included in this analysis. Mean differences for each characteristic of students who did not transfer were compared to students who transferred with ethnicity serving as a covariate (ANCOVA). Students who did not transfer were coded as “0” and students who did transfer were coded as “1”. Significant mean differences were found for students based on region, high school GPA, orientation session attended, whether the student received a freshman scholarship (Y/N), whether the student received financial aid (Y/N), whether the student lived on campus (Y/N), number of hours earned/completed at USA through Summer 2008, and USA GPA through Summer 2008. The ANCOVA results including the confidence intervals (CI) showed that non-returning students who were from Mobile or Baldwin County, had lower high school GPAs, attended later orientation sessions, did not receive a freshman scholarship or financial aid, did not live on campus, earned/completed fewer hours, and attained lower USA GPAs were significantly less likely to transfer to another institution than non-returning students who transferred (see Primary Significant Mean Differences of Pairwise Comparisons w/Ethnicity as Covariate table or Appendix).

APPENDIX

Crosstabs of Fall 2007 Freshman Cohort Non-returning Students

Region of Residency * Transferred Crosstabulation

	0	1
	Total	

Age * Transferred Crosstabulation

			Transferred		
			0	1	Total
Age	17	Count	18	6	24
		% within Transferred	5.5%	4.1%	5.0%
	18	Count	198	115	313
		% within Transferred	60.4%	77.7%	65.8%
	19	Count	52	20	72
		% within Transferred	15.9%	13.5%	15.1%
	20	Count	17	1	18
		% within Transferred	5.2%	.7%	3.8%
	21	Count	9	0	9
		% within Transferred	2.7%	.0%	1.9%
	>=22	Count	34	6	40
		% within Transferred	10.4%	4.1%	8.4%
	Total	Count	328	148	476
		% within Transferred	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

HSGPA Collapsed * Transferred Crosstabulation

			Transferred		
			0	1	Total
HSGPA Collapsed	2.5 or below	Count	44	18	62
		% within Transferred	18.3%	13.2%	16.4%
	2.51-3.0	Count	89	38	127
		% within Transferred	36.9%	27.9%	33.7%
	3.01-3.5	Count	72	37	109
		% within Transferred	29.9%	27.2%	28.9%
	3.51-4.0	Count	36	43	79
		% within Transferred	14.9%	31.6%	21.0%
	Total	Count	241	136	377
		% within Transferred	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

1083% 4160%

ACT * Transferred Crosstabulation

			Transferred		
			0	1	Total
ACT	24-26	Count			
		% within Transferred			
	27-29	Count		7	19
		% within Transferred	4.4%	5.3%	4.7%
	30 or above	Count	3	5	8
		% within Transferred	1.1%	3.8%	2.0%
	Total	Count	270	131	401
		% within Transferred	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Orientation Attended * Transferred Crosstabulation

1	Total
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College * Transferred Crosstabulation

			Transferred		
			0	1	Total
College	EG	Count	36	12	48
		% within Transferred	11.0%	8.1%	10.1%
	ED	Count	23	19	42
		% within Transferred	7.0%	12.8%	8.8%
	CS	Count	12	5	17
		% within Transferred	3.7%	3.4%	3.6%
	CE	Count	5	1	6
		% within Transferred	1.5%	.7%	1.3%
	Total	Count	328	148	476
		% within Transferred	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

USA GPA * Transferred Crosstabulation

		Transferred		
		0	1	Total
3.01-3.5	Count			
	% within Transferred			
3.51-4.0	Count			
	% within Transferred			
	Count			
	% within Transferred			

Variables w/Significant Mean Differences w/Ethnicity as a Covariate

Pairwise Comparisons						
Dependent Variable: Transferred						
(I) Region of Residency	(J) Region of Residency	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.a	95% Confidence Interval for Difference a	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Mobile/ Baldwin	*Rest of AL	-0.257	0.069	0.002	-0.452	-0.063
	*FL Serv. Area	-0.456	0.069	0.017	-0.861	-0.050
	*MS Serv. Area	-0.282	0.070	0.001	-0.479	-0.086
	Rest of U.S.	-0.111	0.104	0.966	-0.402	0.181
Rest of AL	*Mobile/ Baldwin	0.257	0.069	0.002	0.063	0.452
	FL Serv. Area	-0.199	0.156	0.899	-0.638	0.241
	MS Serv. Area	-0.025	0.092	1.000	-0.284	0.234
	Rest of U.S.	0.147	0.120	0.917	-0.190	0.484
FL Serv. Area	*Mobile/ Baldwin	0.456	0.144	0.017	0.050	0.861
	Rest of AL	0.199	0.156	0.899	-0.241	0.638
	MS Serv. Area	0.173	0.157	0.956	-0.267	0.614
	Rest of U.S.	0.345	0.174	0.389	-0.145	0.836
MS Serv. Area	*Mobile/ Baldwin	0.282	0.070	0.001	0.086	0.479
	Rest of AL	0.025	0.092	1.000	-0.234	0.284
	FL Serv. Area	-0.173	0.157	0.956	-0.614	0.267
	Rest of U.S.	0.172	0.120	0.806	-0.165	0.508
Rest of U.S.	Mobile/ Baldwin	0.111	0.104	0.966	-0.181	0.402
	Rest of AL	-0.147	0.120	0.917	-0.484	0.190
	FL Serv. Area	-0.345	0.174	0.389	-0.836	0.145
	MS Serv. Area	-0.172	0.120	0.806	-0.508	0.165

Based on estimated marginal means

*. The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

a. Adjustment for multiple comparisons: Sidak.

Pairwise Comparisons						
Dependent Variable: Transferred						
(I) High School GPA	(J) High School GPA	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.a	95% Confidence Interval for Difference a	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
2.5 or below	2.51-3.0	-0.017	0.075	1.000	-0.215	0.180
	3.01-3.5	-0.056		0.976	-0.257	0.146
	*3.51-4.0	-0.265	0.082	0.008	-0.482	-0.047

2.51-3.0	2.5 or below	0.017	0.075	1.000	-0.180	0.215
	3.01-3.5	-0.038	0.062	0.990	-0.202	0.125
	*3.51-4.0	-0.247	0.068	0.002	-0.427	-0.068
3.01-3.5	2.5 or below	0.056	0.076	0.976	-0.146	0.257
	2.51-3.0	0.038	0.062	0.990	-0.125	0.202
	*3.51-4.0	-0.209	0.070	0.019	-0.395	-0.023
3.51-4.0	*2.5 or below	0.265	0.082	0.008	0.047	0.482
	*2.51-3.0	0.247	0.068	0.002	0.068	0.427
	*3.01-3.5	0.209	0.070	0.019	0.023	0.395

Based on estimated marginal means

a. Adjustment for multiple comparisons: Sidak.

*. The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Pairwise Comparisons

Dependent Variable: Transferred

(I) Freshman Scholarship	(J) Freshman Scholarship	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.a	95% Confidence Interval for Difference a	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
No	*Yes	-0.200	0.050	0.000	-0.298	-0.298	-0.101
Yes	*No	0.200		0.000	0.101	0.101	0.298

Based on estimated marginal means

*. The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

a. Adjustment for multiple comparisons: Sidak.

Pairwise Comparisons

Dependent Variable: Transferred

(I) Orientation Attended	(J) Orientation Attended	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.a	95% Confidence Interval for Difference a	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
August	May	-0.109	0.118	1.000	-0.469	-0.469	0.251
	*Summer 1	-0.411		0.000	-0.688	-0.688	-0.133
	Summer 2	-0.106	0.081	0.989	-0.354	-0.354	0.141
	Summer 3	-0.120	0.076	0.919	-0.351	-0.351	0.111
	Summer 4	-0.195	0.073	0.144	-0.417	-0.417	0.026
	Summer 5	0.022	0.060	1.000	-0.160	-0.160	0.203
May	August	0.109	0.118	1.000	-0.251	-0.251	0.469
	Summer 1	-0.302	0.137	0.446	-0.718	-0.718	0.115
	Summer 2	0.003	0.130	1.000	-0.394	-0.394	0.400
	Summer 3	-0.011	0.127	1.000	-0.398	-0.398	0.375

Summer 4

-0.087

0.125

1.000

-0.468

0.295

