

Recruiting to Retain

Why Student Success Begins with Your Recruitment and Enrollment Practices

Presenters

Anika Olsen

Executive Director, Admissions and Orientation
Northern Arizona University

Raymond Brown

Dean of Admission
Texas Christian University

Kevin Campbell

Chief Enrollment Officer
Abilene Christian University



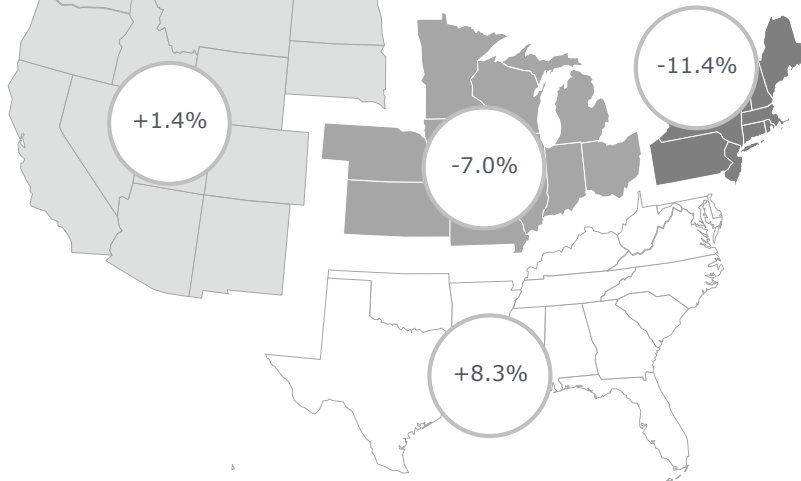
- 1 Introduction
 - 2 Northern Arizona University
 - 3 Texas Christian University
 - 4 Abilene Christian University
-

Demographic Headwinds

Many Parts of the Country Facing a Shrinking Pool of Students

Regional Growth in High School Graduates

Projected, 2011-2022

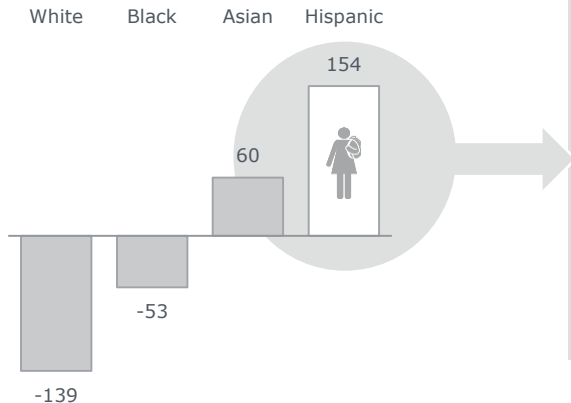


Challenging Growth

High-Quality Support Will Be Crucial for Future Students

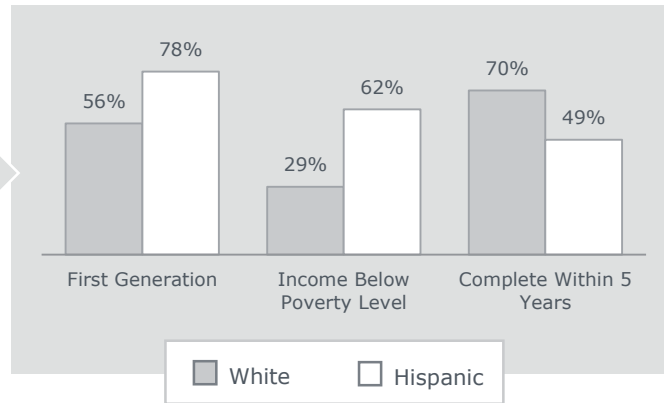
A Shifting Student Demographic

Projected Growth in High School Graduates 2011-2022 (Thousands)



A Growing Student Success Challenge

Demographic and Student Success Characteristics, White Versus Hispanic Students

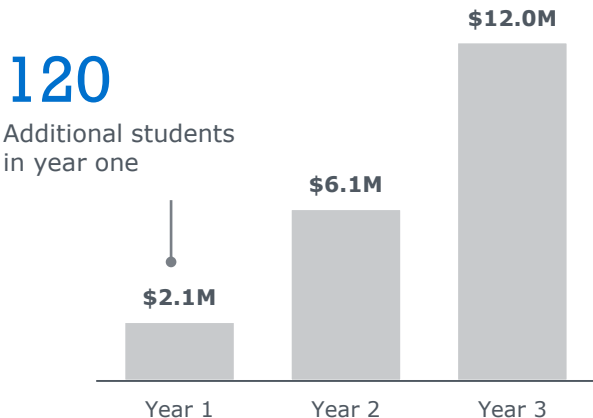


Doing Well by Doing Good

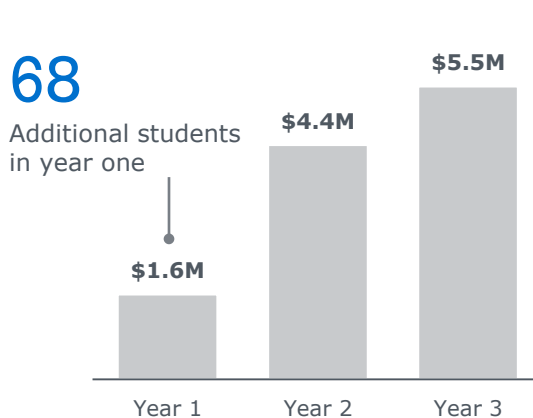
Even Moderate Increases in Retention Mean Huge Revenue Gains

Revenue Gains from 1% Annual Improvement in Institution-Wide Retention Over Three Years

Mid-Sized Public University
15,000 Undergraduates



Small Private University
8,000 Undergraduates



Reporting for Duty

EMs Called Upon to Advance Success, Searching for a Practical Role

For Some, a Prominent Seat at the Table...



"I spend as much time with the CBO as the provost, and increasingly work with advancement... **EM is moving towards ownership of the entire student lifecycle.**"

Chief Enrollment Officer

Public Research University (Midwest)

...For Others, More Responsibility Than Resources



"I don't control either the registrar or financial aid, **but I'm still formally tasked with improving retention.**"

Chief Enrollment Officer

Public Master's University (Midwest)



"I'm directly responsible for retention **because it has a number attached to it.**"

Chief Enrollment Officer

Private Master's University (East)

1

Introduction

2

Northern Arizona University

3

Texas Christian University

4

Abilene Christian University

Northern Arizona University

**By the
Numbers**

23,845

Undergraduates

151

Total programs

69

Online degree programs



About NAU

- A large, four-year, primarily residential public university
- College of Business ranked #4 in the nation for veterans¹
- School of Forestry ranked #10 in the nation²
- Physical therapy program ranked #40 nationally³

About Flagstaff

- #4 best small college town in the U.S.⁴
- 288 days of sunshine a year
- 100 inches of snow annually

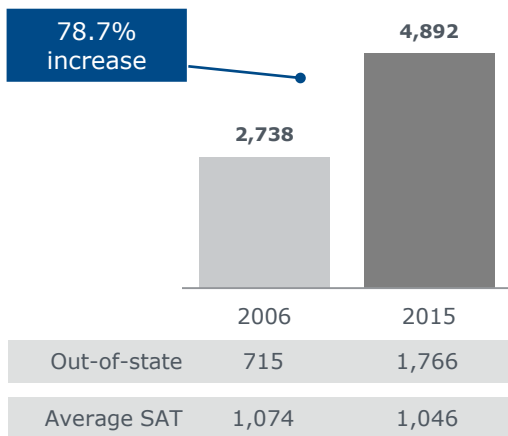
1. Military Times
2. Based on indexed scholarly output
3. *US News and World Report*
4. USA Today

A Decade of Exceptional Growth

Close Attention to Recruitment Creating Stability in an Uncertain Market

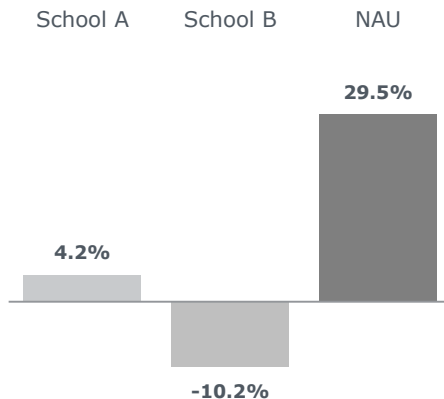
FTFT Enrollment

NAU, 2006 Versus 2015



Enrollment Growth

NAU Versus Similar Schools in Its Region, 2009 Versus 2014



A Rapid-Response Enrollment Team

Pursuing a “First in the Mailbox” Ambition

Efficient Processes Enable Rapid Application Response

Key Features of NAU’s Application Processes

Self-reported application

Initial admission offers made based on students’ self-reported grades and test scores

Automated application processing

CRM set up to send out automated acceptance offer notices to students crossing pre-set qualification thresholds. Offers can go out to qualified students as soon as the day after receipt of application.

Agile CRM systems

Salesforce recently adopted as primary CRM, but CRM functions previously handled via a flexible, improvised combination of other systems.

Long-Term, Intensive Engagement

An “Evidence-Based” Approach to Search, Application, and Yield

Data-Driven Efforts Across the Recruitment Funnel



Year-Round Junior and Sophomore Search

Building robust relationships with high school students, well in advance of their senior year



Senior Search and Custom Application Marketing

Inviting seniors to apply through a customized application that is “activated” as a marketing and customer service platform



Affordability Marketing

Engaging seniors via dedicated communication streams and content aimed at boosting rates of FAFSA filing



Yield Management

Includes surveying efforts that help predict student likelihood to yield, and a continuously updated online enrollment progress reporting portal for enrollment staff

An “All-Points” Approach

Taking Pains to Ensure That Students Are Actively Engaged

Animating Principles of NAU’s Recruitment Outreach

Giving Students Every Possible Opportunity to Connect

Early engagement

Outreach to students and families begins in students’ sophomore year of high school

Multichannel approach

Students engaged via email, websites, physical mail, phone calls, postcard series

Context-aware outreach

Outreach is tweaked based on student status at any given point in time

Live individual attention

Students contacted directly by NAU personnel at key engagement points

Evidence-based outreach

Communications used to engage students based on tested and proven methods

Finely calibrated progress tracking

Students engaged directly at a broad range of potential sticking points

Deep dives on critical topics

Financial aid and other high-stakes communications given special attention

Full-spectrum content

Communications touch on all key drivers of student persistence



A Case in Point

Admitted Students Personally Welcomed by Flagstaff's Mayor



Jerry Nabours,
Mayor of Flagstaff



Creating Transparency on Fit

Because Well-Informed Applicants Are Better Equipped to Succeed

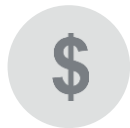
Helping Students Assess NAU Across Three Parameters

Key Themes Addressed in NAU's Student-Facing Recruitment Communications



Social fit

Will I like living in Flagstaff?



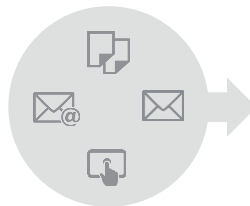
Financial fit

Can I afford to study at NAU?



Academic fit

Does NAU's teaching approach match my needs?



Recruitment communications



An Integrated Org

Coordinating Commonly Separate Functions Promotes Student Engagement

A Student-Centered Enrollment Org

How Key Student Onboarding Processes Are Organized at NAU



Sample Benefits of a Coordinated Approach



Boosting peer mentoring

75% of out-of-state students enroll in NAU's peer mentoring program during orientation



Supporting supplementary study

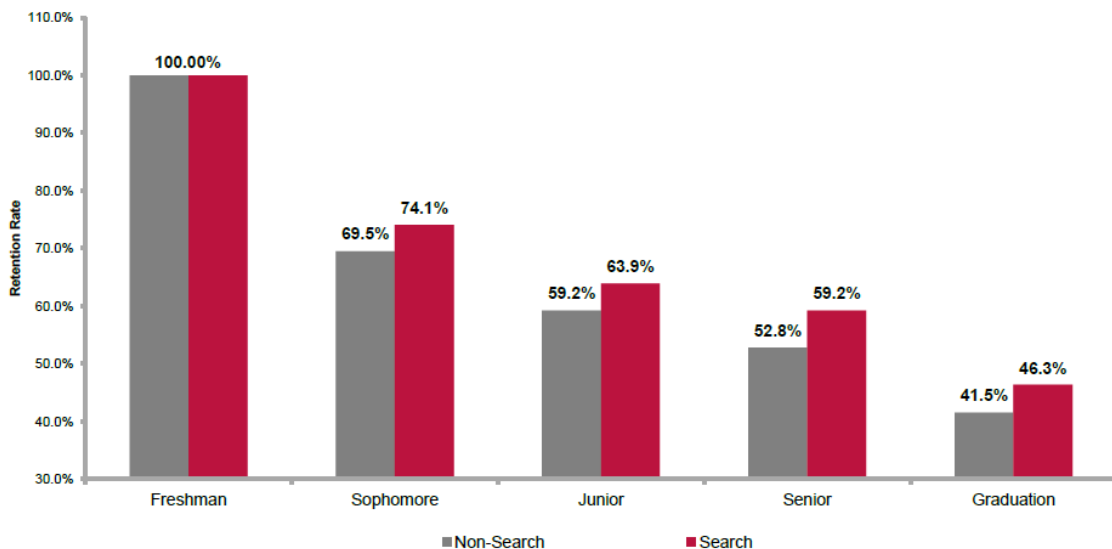
Transfer team ensures seamless integration of credits earned by students outside NAU after enrollment

Evidence of Retention Benefit

Intensively Recruited Students Persist at Higher Rates

Student Retention, by Recruitment Mode

NAU, Intensive Search and Recruitment Versus Default Approach



- 1 Introduction
 - 2 Northern Arizona University
 - 3 Texas Christian University**
 - 4 Abilene Christian University
-

Texas Christian University

By the Numbers

8,650
Undergrads

1,300
Grad Students

91%
Freshman Retention

13:1
Student-Faculty Ratio



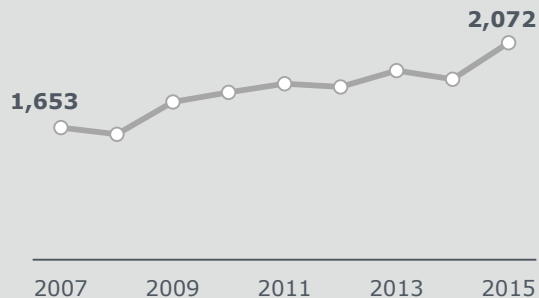
Background

- TCU enrolls: 40% male and 60% female
- Classification: Private Doctoral
- One of "America's Best Colleges" according to *U.S. News & World Report* (#82, National Universities), *Forbes* "Rising Stars: 10 Top Colleges to Watch"
- Member of NCAA Division I Big XII Conference; 200+ campus orgs
- Graduate programs include Business, Nursing, Education, Science, Social Sciences & Humanities, Health, and Fine Arts

A Growth Story

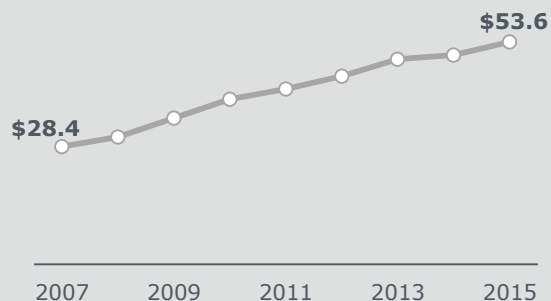
Steady Enrollment a Defining Feature of Our Recent Past

Enrollment



25%
increase

Net Tuition Revenue (Millions)



89%
increase

Notes on Our Enrollment Practice

An Evidence-Based Approach That Seeks to Better Understand Students



Intensive, Data-Driven Recruitment

Extensive data collection, testing, and measurement used during recruitment process to identify messages and communication channels that resonate most with students.



Thoughtful Evaluation

Basis on which applicants are evaluated constantly tested and reviewed—e.g., research findings caused us to weight high school curriculum, class rank, and GPA heavily relative to standardized college admission test scores.



Some Notable Wins

Significant Boost in Academic Profile Mirrored by Improved Retention

130-pt↑

increase in TCU's
freshman-class SAT
profile in 11 years

13↑

percentage point increase
in freshman-to-sophomore
persistence in 11 years



Not Stopping There

An Opportunity for Stronger Engagement

While we've made great gains on retention, 200 students still don't return after freshman year. And we've found the main reason is that they haven't found their niche.

Helping Students Find Their Niche

Prioritizing Student Engagement in Freshman Year and Beyond

“Frog Camp” Orientation

Frog Camp, which significantly increases retention, is a summer orientation that gives freshmen a chance to get to know classmates and the environment. Seventy-eight percent of incoming students attend.

A Hundred Little Things

From the nonstop activities scheduled during the week before classes (which is programmed morning to night to help incoming students develop relationships early in the year) to student activity fairs with more than 200 activities with which to get involved to going door-to-door in October to ask students how things are going after their first round of grades.

Building Community Connections via Curriculum

From one-credit courses for fall freshmen, where guest speakers introduce opportunities on campus and within the community, to a multi-year leadership program, curriculum has the power to build connections.

Internship Opportunities

Strong internship programming through Career Services actively engages students from freshman year and on. TCU-sponsored scholarships for unpaid internships with nonprofits make it more likely students are able to pursue some experiences.

Next on the Agenda

Bringing Our Data and Analytics Capabilities to Student Success Efforts



*Advisors and
Specialists*



*Deans and
Departments*



*Provost and
Leadership*

Customized Analytics and Predictive Modeling

- GPA and credit trends
- Critical courses and grades
- Student risk scoring
- Opportunity assessments

Improving Data Actionability

- Real-time risk assessments
- Student behavioral trends
- Case status tracking
- Outcomes analyses

- 1 Introduction
 - 2 Northern Arizona University
 - 3 Texas Christian University
 - 4 **Abilene Christian University**
-

Abilene Christian University

By the Numbers

3,600
Undergrads

800
Grad Students

23%
Enrollment growth,
2011-2015

14:1
Student-faculty ratio



Background

- A private master's university
- One of "America's Best Colleges" according to *U.S. News & World Report* (#17, Regional Universities, West)
- Recognized by *U.S. News* "Most Innovative School," an Apple Distinguished School and a Military Friendly School
- Member of NCAA Division I Southland Conference; 5th most NCAA Championships (57)
- ACU enrolls 43% male and 57% female

Notes on Our Approach

Committed to Evidence-Based Practice, from Recruitment to Persistence



Dynamic, In-House Wildcat Recruiting Team

Led by Dean of Admissions, Tamara Long, 25 admissions and enrollment professionals make up our team.



Robust Data and Analytics Capabilities

ACU makes extensive use of data and analytics to inform decisions and improve processes. This includes working with third-party experts on data-driven student search, application generation, and yield management.



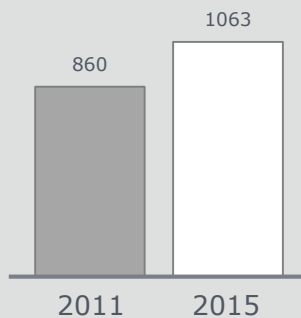
A Student Success Collaborative

ACU is joining a cohort of higher education institutions focusing on student success. The collaborative uses data, analytics, and findings from best-practice research to improve the impact of advising efforts.

Pursuing Principled Growth

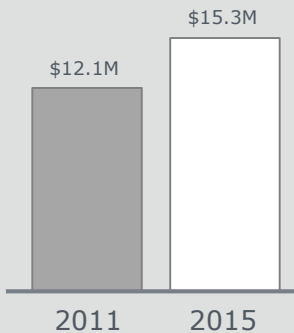
Growing Head Count and Revenue While Maintaining Academic Standards

Enrollment



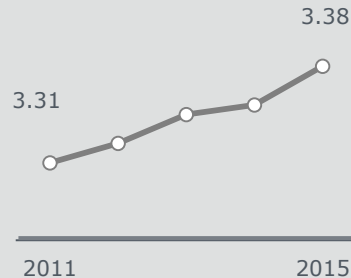
23%
increase

Net Tuition Revenue



26.5%
increase

Core GPA



Quality continues to rise

How Enrollment Serves Student Success

“Retention-Active” Initiatives Pursued by Enrollment Leadership



Annual Block Tuition

Unique plan creates credit velocity by providing flat-rate tuition *for the year*. The annual fee covers 36 hours over fall, spring, and summer, including short courses, study abroad, etc. Student debt is decreasing, and student behavior is changing. [Eighty-five percent of graduates participating in the annual block tuition program graduate in 4 years](#) (previously only 60% of graduates finished in 4 years).



Reformed Admission Philosophy

Deemphasized ACT/SAT scores to implement an admission model based on alternate criteria such as grit. New [model looks at successful upper classmen](#) to determine important metrics for admission criteria. In some cases, students with lower test scores have persisted better.



Recruiting Strategy Alignment

In addition to admitting students who fit ACU's successful student profile, we are now using this profile upstream in our recruitment profile. [We are actively working to search for prospective students who fit the student success profile.](#)



Bridge Scholars Program

Looking to support high-risk students not quite ready for a full course load, ACU [created the Bridge program to provide a soft start](#). Seventy-one students entering program in the fall.

Toward an Integrated Org

A Student-Centered Department Comprising Admissions and Advising



Dean of Admissions to Oversee Student Selection, Onboarding, and Success

Starting this fall, the Dean of Admissions will officially oversee the full loop for student success, including the selection of students, the onboarding of students, and the success of students.

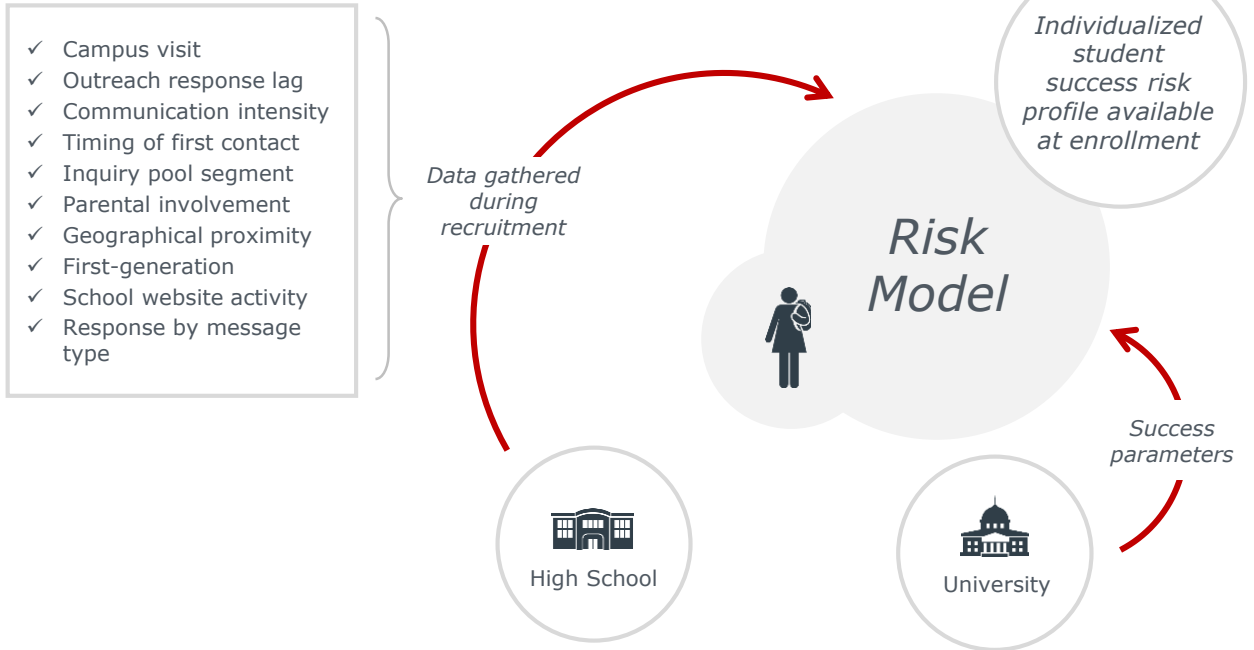


Centralized Advising Center to Be Powered by a Data-Enabled Student Success Infrastructure

Student advisement will be centralized under Admissions, creating a dedicated owner for university-wide student success. This new organizational structure is supported by analytics and a technology platform that powers data-enabled, coordinated care between stakeholders across campus.

Day-One Support

Understanding a Student's Needs from the Moment She Enrolls

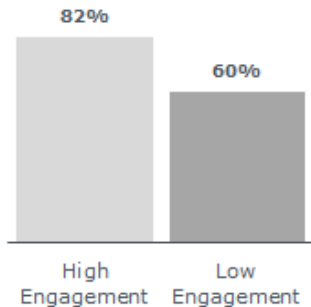


Recruitment Data Predict Success

A Range of Measures Gathered During Recruitment Provides Insight

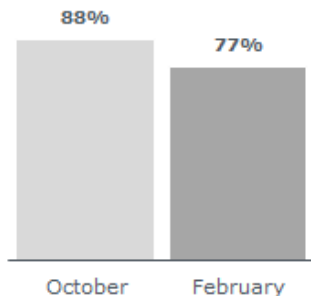
First-Year Persistence

*By Parental Engagement
(First-Generation Students)*



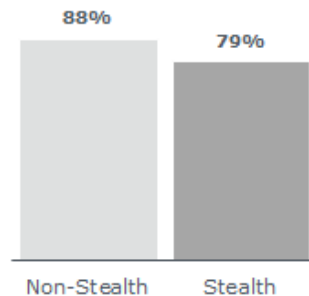
A private university in the Northeast

By Month of Application



A small private college in the Midwest

Non-Stealth Versus Stealth Applicants



A private university in the Northeast

Questions?

Anika Olsen

Executive Director, Admissions and Orientation
Northern Arizona University

Raymond Brown

Dean of Admission
Texas Christian University

Kevin Campbell

Chief Enrollment Officer
Abilene Christian University