

University of Kentucky

UKnowledge

---

Undergraduate Education Faculty Presentations

Undergraduate Education

---

8-20-2012

## Retention Improvement: Reflecting on Current and Future Actions to Improve Retention - a brief written by Jason Pieratt on behalf of the Division of Undergraduate Education

Randolph Hollingsworth  
*University of Kentucky*, [dolph@uky.edu](mailto:dolph@uky.edu)

Follow this and additional works at: [https://uknowledge.uky.edu/uge\\_present](https://uknowledge.uky.edu/uge_present)



Part of the [Higher Education Administration Commons](#)

[Right click to open a feedback form in a new tab to let us know how this document benefits you.](#)

---

### Repository Citation

Hollingsworth, Randolph, "Retention Improvement: Reflecting on Current and Future Actions to Improve Retention - a brief written by Jason Pieratt on behalf of the Division of Undergraduate Education" (2012). *Undergraduate Education Faculty Presentations*. 4.  
[https://uknowledge.uky.edu/uge\\_present/4](https://uknowledge.uky.edu/uge_present/4)

This Presentation is brought to you for free and open access by the Undergraduate Education at UKnowledge. It has been accepted for inclusion in Undergraduate Education Faculty Presentations by an authorized administrator of UKnowledge. For more information, please contact [UKnowledge@lsv.uky.edu](mailto:UKnowledge@lsv.uky.edu).

## Retention Improvement: Reflecting on Current and Future Actions to Improve Retention

August 20, 2012

Between 8/5/2012 and 8/17/2012, the individuals below participated in Retention Improvement discussions facilitated by Jason Pieratt (on overload with Undergraduate Education doing retention improvement work). The purpose of the discussions is best summarized by a comment received from one participant afterwards: ***"It was good for me to reflect on what we're actually doing and think of more ways we can make an impact!"*** This reflection and brainstorming about retention is important but ongoing action must follow to achieve greater levels of student success at UK.

### Participants

#### College of Arts & Sciences

- Anna Bosch, Associate Dean for **Undergraduate Programs**
- Christine Blank, Assistant Director in the **A&S Advising Office**
- Derek Eggers, Director of **Online Education**
- Roxanne Mountford, Department Chair, **Writing, Rhetoric, and Digital Media**

#### College of Business and Economics

- Scott Kelley, Associate Dean for **Undergraduate Affairs** and Professor of Marketing
- Gail Hoyt, **Director of Undergraduate Studies**, Economics Department
- Marianne Young, **Enrichment Director for Retention**

#### Enrollment Management

- Sean Cooper, Director of **Student Records** in the Registrar's Office
- Tyler Gayheart, Director, **Interactive Communications**
- Lynda George, Director, Office of **Financial Aid**
- Linda Smitha, Director, **Student Account Services**
- Mary Marcum, **Financial Ombud**, Student Account Services

#### Food Services Staff

- Tamela Terry, cleaning **Ovid's dining** area and greets students

#### Human Resources

- Kim Wilson, Associate Vice President of **Human Resources**
- Sarah Bowes, **Employment Director**
- Crystal Gabbard, Assistant **Employment** Director
- Chuck Embs, Program Coordinator for **Student Employment**
- John Buzzard, **HR Communications**

#### Student Affairs

- Becky Jordan, Associate Dean for **Student Development**
- Lauren Goodpaster, Director, **New Student** and Parent Programs
- Nancy Stephens, Asst. Director, New Student and **Parent Programs**
- Christie Baughman, **KCrew** coordinator

#### Undergraduate Education

- Matthew Deffendall, Director of **First Generation** Initiatives
- Susan Herrick, Asst. Director of **Undergraduate Studies**
- Francene Gilmer, Assistant Provost for **Career Education**, Director of the **Career Center**

#### Undergraduate Student and Student Worker in the Mezzo

- Ashley Johnson, **diversity student who is graduating** in December after 4.5 years at UK

### Different Perspectives but Common Principles

The participants in the retention discussions have different perspectives from their role at UK and prior experiences. Putting these together for this report is like the link which shows directions to UK <http://www.uky.edu/UKHome/subpages/directions.html>. It might seem straightforward but there are actually many different directions to UK listed at this link depending on where you're coming from and where exactly you want to go. It is similar for UK student success. Some people focus on the lower level classroom and instructors, some on the pre-college preparation, others on the characteristics of UK that will be attractive to high quality students, some on student support services in the transitional period, others on admission policies and scholarships, etc. – different views of student success depending on “where you're coming from and where exactly you want to go”.

Perhaps some approaches benefit UK retention more than others (which has funding implications) – but ***instead of having paralyzing debates about which exact retention levers to pull and who owns retention, the most important thing to do is empower and involve as many people as possible in improving retention.*** Retention improvement is not just a “faculty thing”, “advisor thing”, “Provost/President/Taskforce thing” but we have to empower and involve students, parents, high schools, peers, instructors, residence life, advisors, faculty, staff, alumni, donors, Deans, recruiters, IT, and others to improve student success.

**Common Principles to Student Success.** Even with the different perspectives about student success, there are three common principles that should underlie retention improvement.

1. One Student at a Time Mentality

- Retention rates are derived from summing up each student who starts at UK and comparing that to the sum of students who stay at UK. Often the focus is about the cohort retention rate, rate for Greeks, rate for diversity students...rate for groupX. The focus has to be about the individual student – one at a time getting each student who starts at UK to persist until the degree is finished in a timely manner.

2. Ongoing Smaller-Scale Improvements

- There are a few major (and fairly expensive) changes that UK could implement that would lead to a 2-5% increase in retention. For example, three big changes are strategically increasing the amount of institutional aid, mandating UK101 for low-end incoming students, and mandatory degree planning/roadmaps as the foundation of registration and advising. Besides the few big solutions, there are many more small and ongoing improvements and policy changes that will lead to the bulk of retention improvement at UK. This includes small programs to give students more personal contact from peers and faculty and richer learning experiences to apply the knowledge from the classroom.

3. It Takes a Village to Retain a Student

- This has been mentioned already – many different people, units, and roles have to be empowered and involved to improve student success. It takes communication across all the parts of UK and a focus on and awareness of student success. On the main campus of UK, everyone should understand “student success is my main job”.

**Making Sense of Student Success with the UK Student Success Model**

Which factors are most important to student success? How can we make the biggest impact? Where can I (or my department) make an impact on student success? If I wanted to develop a program to improve student success, what might that cover? Many retention studies at UK over the past several years provide the general framework to answer these questions and more. This research-driven framework is the UK Student Success Model shown below.

**UK STUDENT SUCCESS MODEL**

<b>A Student is Ready to Succeed at UK or Not Ready to Succeed at UK Based On...</b>		
<b>Academics</b>	<b>Satisfaction</b>	<b>Finances</b>
Taking care of business in the classroom is a key factor to success at UK. Research shows how incoming grades, incoming curriculum (especially Math), ongoing trajectory of grades, and rigor are important from pre-UK through the entire time at UK.	Students should say, "I want to be at UK. UK has the programs I want and at UK I get treated fair and with respect." UK has to offer a great experience, high touch, special programs that enrich the learning, and show excellence in everything.	Some students have achieved academic greatness, have many choices, and must be offered competitive financial incentives by UK. Others struggle to pay for UK at all and have financial need. All other things aside, success at UK is dependent on finances.

Readiness factors of academics, satisfaction, and finances apply to all the success stages below...

<b>A Student Must Succeed Over Several Stages at UK to Achieve Post-UK Success...</b>		
<b>Early Success Stage (Recruiting, Transition, Year1)</b>	<b>Intermediate Success Stage (Semester2, Year2, Year3)</b>	<b>Final Success Stage (Year4, Post-UK Success)</b>
The more proactive UK is about retention, the better. In this stage, we get students to have a good fit with UK and ready for UK (academics, satisfaction, and finances). This includes preview nights, recruiting fairs, advising conferences, KWeek, UK101, and more. It also includes the first-year initiatives. Most of the final retention outcome is determined from the outcomes in this early stage.	Choosing UK in Year1 does not mean the student will finish UK. At <u>each</u> stage, the student asks, "is UK right for me as far as academics, satisfaction, and finances?" The student needs to be in a good-fit major going into Year2, there is an added level of independence with living off campus, and the end still seems far off. Relationships with faculty and applied learning are more important.	Year4 is all that is listed here because UK must keep a focus on graduating students in a timely manner. This stage is about making sure the students are ready for post-UK success in graduate school or a career. Academics, satisfaction, and finances continue to play an important role both for the student and for the chance that the student will ever contribute back to UK as a graduate.

How can we empower and involve students, parents, high schools, peers, instructors, residence life, advisors, faculty, staff, alumni, donors, recruiters, technology, and others to improve UK student success?

### **Summary of Retention Improvement Discussions**

The context for the discussions was based on the status of retention at UK as of August 2012:

- UK retention has statistically dropped since 2009. The 2010 and 2011 cohorts entered UK with higher academic quality and more credit for prior learning. Yet the retention rates for the 2010 and 2011 cohorts failed to achieve expected levels based on these incoming characteristics.
- The 2012 new freshmen cohort will have 500+ more students than the 2011 cohort, all of the new growth is from out-of-state students, the students are here, and by using past retention data roughly 360+ could leave in the first 16 weeks and another 560+ in the spring term for a total of 920+ new students quickly leaving UK in the first 8 months.
- 2006 graduation rates will be released next spring – this will bring attention to UK’s retention efforts. There must be a solid across-campus retention improvement plan outlined centrally and in each unit before these 2006 graduation rates are released.
- Even with Mike Mullen gone, no more Director of Retention and Student Success, and War on Attrition not as prevalent, retention improvement is still a major issue that will be pushed over the next few weeks and ongoing by the Provost and President.
- All ideas and best practices are welcomed. However, solutions that are proactive and/or that could be implemented quickly should be given higher priority.

Below is a summary of ideas coming from the discussions with the individuals listed on page1. These are arranged either in a “global” section or by the sections of the UK Student Success Model on the previous page.

#### **GLOBAL RETENTION IDEAS**

##### **“Student Success is My Main Job” Mindset for All Employees (particularly Main Campus)**

- All employees (no matter the job at UK) should make students feel welcome, reach out to them, and be approachable. New students are transitioning to UK, looking for friendly people to trust, and this can be extremely helpful for retention.

##### **Weave Post-UK Success into Everything from Recruiting to Graduation**

- Post-UK Success is about being prepared as a citizen and for economic independence after UK. Much of this is related to career success and continuing education in graduate school. This is a key to motivation and focus – when a student is really focused on post-UK success, then getting through UK (i.e. retention) is much easier to achieve.
- From the start, the Career Center could assess incoming students, help advisors and students pick good-fit majors by the end of Year1, lead student/parent workshops, and help advisors, peer leaders, and faculty to provide students with post-UK success focus.

##### **Capitalize on “Small” Settings that Already Exist at UK**

- UK101, WRD/CIS classes, and recitations are all small settings that lend to team-building and retention interventions. All faculty, TAs, and others involved in these small settings should have retention training and focus.

### **Student Services Building One-Stop Shop**

- UK does well on “intake” facilities (e.g. Admissions, Visitor Center) but not so good otherwise. This one-stop shop would house primary student services: advising, financial aid, tutoring, counseling, student records, and more. This place would have ease of access for on-campus and off-campus students. It could make things highly organized to efficiently get students the service they need without being passed around campus.

### **Retention-Focused Office under the Provost**

- UK no longer has a point office or point person for retention improvement. Advisors, faculty, ResLife, and others spend a lot of time gathering and submitting information about student attrition. There is not much feedback about the results of this work which will eventually lead to burnout in helping with alerts, registration efforts, etc.
- This office would lead the research to know the reasons why students stay at or leave UK, submit proactive and prediction-based alerts for at-risk students, coordinate collaborative retention-focused projects across campus, and develop retention policies.

### **Academic and Social Gathering Places throughout Campus**

- These places should be comfortable, set up for doing homework, for having academic discussions, good for a cup of coffee with a professor or advisor, and ideal for relaxing and hanging out. Make it attractive for students, faculty, and staff to congregate and enjoy the academic heart of campus – not just slabs of concrete walls and benches. There are pockets like this – 1G Resource Center, Wired/Keeneland, and others. It is also a great setting for mentors, advisors, and instructors to pop in, see how the students are doing, and develop relationships with the students.

### **Faculty Involvement in Retention Improvement**

- All have to be involved in retention but the reason for isolating faculty is because of perceptions of faculty that must be overcome as part of faculty involvement in retention. First, a lot of faculty don't see themselves as part of UK. Some faculty seem to have a disconnected contract with UK just passing through. Faculty might need to be brought into the culture of UK more so that they truly feel part of the retention solution. Second, faculty are often the “gatekeeper” for UK (i.e. to kick out students that Admissions should have “never” let in from the start). There is a “need” for this gatekeeper role but only if the faculty filling that role helps the student find the proper resources to turn things around at UK and/or adjust academic plans.
- It would help for faculty to be more accessible to students – answering emails, keeping regular office hours, taking better care of the students in their care – approachable and courteous as any job would require.
- Each student could be assigned a faculty mentor so that students make this important connection to the academic aspects of UK and faculty get to make these important connections with incoming students.

### **Flexible Bachelor's Degree and Four Year Degree Plans**

- It could help with retention if UK had a program or two that was more flexible with the requirements (yes these get a bad rap as “completer degrees” or “general degrees”). This could be an option though – a program that has academic soundness but flexible degree requirements. This includes being flexible with the residency requirement so that our Project Graduate students (or any student that nears completion but quits UK) can wrap up the UK degree with some credits from their current place of residence.
- This includes guaranteeing that each program at UK can be completed in four years (except for five-year programs). Several UK programs are near impossible to finish in the four-year window given the number of requirements or timing of course offerings.

### **Reasonable Academic Progress for All Students (not just those with certain types of aid)**

- This system would track term-by-term, stage-by-stage progress of students with grades, earned hours, withdrawn hours, student loan debt, major-changing, degree requirements remaining, academic standing, suspension status, and other factors. As one participant said “the responsibility and goal as a University should be to ensure students finish their degree in a timely manner”. It is unacceptable to have a student at UK with 186 hours, \$57,000 in student loans, working at McDonalds, still enrolled, and nowhere close to getting a UK degree. Furthermore, some of the retention “improvements” in the past at UK have been due to relaxing suspension policies where students were allowed to give it another try at UK when little to no real progress was made during the first year.

### **Human Resources is a Significant (but underutilized) Resource for Retention Improvement**

- HR has many contacts with students related to student employment – on and off campus. HR is also responsible for supervisor training (including the many supervisors around campus who supervise student workers). Both of these are very important for student retention. HR Student Employment staff should be brought in as another key link with academic alerts and the advising network (they already present about student employment at the advising conferences). Regarding alerts, a student worker “not showing up for work” is an important indicator to bring into the student success alert system and research.
- Given the research on how a moderate number of on-campus employment hours is better than off-campus employment, the current budget situation at UK might be a strategic time to increase the number of positions on campus for student employees (since they are less expensive to hire). With enrollment growth goals, UK should be aware of on-campus employment opportunities for students.

### **Communication Platform for Retention is Needed**

- UK's QEP is "Multimodal Communication Across the Curriculum". Retention improvement is a place where better communication is needed across campus.
  - Successful students need a platform to present their stories to at-risk students. For example, successful students might do a better job at convincing incoming at-risk students about having a plan from day1, getting a right mindset for UK, balancing social life, getting supervisors who stress student success, UK is an elite school, college is not easy, making step by step improvements, not getting in financial trouble, and working hard to graduate from UK even when it is tough.
  - Serious matters like financial aid issues, housing issues, and Students of Concern should be communicated across all student service units. This is a place where IT could really facilitate a system that allows for this across campus communication. The recent housing cancellations for returning sophomores is an example of where better communication from student service staff could have prevented bad PR to UK.
  - Aligning expectations is an important communication issue. The student decision-maker needs to understand the differences between UK and high school. "What is a E grade?" Some students have never seen this grade and shouldn't see one before they know that it is a failing grade at UK.
  - Cloud Email – this is not working well. Students are missing something in setting up their accounts and are not getting messages from Student Account Services, Financial Aid, Hobsons Retain, and other official contacts from UK as they did prior to the Cloud email change. There should be a campaign and verification process that this new email is properly set up and being used by students.

### **ACADEMICS**

#### **Put Caps on Withdrawing from Classes and Finalize the UK Withdraw Process**

- UK has changed policies over the last few years making it easier for students to withdraw from classes to protect the UK GPA. This policy is currently left unchecked and needs a counter-policy which places caps on the number of W grades and also incentives for pushing through to finish a course instead of withdrawing. Some advisors have misconceptions about attempted hours, full-time status, and how these failed attempts impact financial aid. Withdrawing from any class does impact financial aid.
- Related to withdrawing from classes is the process of withdrawing from UK altogether. Over the past year, progress was made towards a retention-focused withdraw policy. However, this project has lost steam and needs to be picked back up. In general, UK currently makes it too easy to leave. At a minimum, a student should have to come in and talk to someone about the decision and make sure all loose ends are tied up with a plan for readmission in a later term.

### **Revise Admission Standards to Provide Alternate Admission Paths to Unprepared Students**

- Extremely unprepared students (e.g. 3-deficiency APP) should get “deferred admission” where these students complete core classes at BCTC before transferring over to UK. This policy change is important for both the student (i.e. can’t keep letting in so many with a very slim chance of finishing) and UK (they will not be part of GRS cohort rates). It is unclear whether this policy would change tuition net revenue (it is an exchange that might result in less students for Year1 and more students in Year2-Year4). Recruiting and Admissions can adapt to this policy which would serve many positive academic and political purposes for UK.

### **Extra Support When Instructors or TAs Have Foreign Accent**

- It is a frequent complaint of students not being able to understand the accents of some of the foreign faculty or TAs (often in some of the more difficult classes at UK). In these cases, UK should provide copies of notes and/or course assistants with easy-to-understand accents. This issues adds an unnecessary level of stress to new students in tough classes and it contributes to course management issues from student withdraws.

### **North Campus and Across Campus Tutoring**

- Students on South Campus do better academically at UK than North and Off Campus students. A big factor is The Study on South Campus which has convenient tutoring. North Campus students must go 2.5 miles (42 minutes) to travel to The Study. This is not reasonable and additional tutoring services across campus are needed soon.

### **Math Readiness, Remediation, and Requirements**

- Struggling with Math is by far one of the key issues with academic success at UK. Last year a report was provided showing how Math success is related to retention through pre-UK grades, procrastination with math, attempt/withdraw/sit\_out/attempt\_again pattern of many students, and possible interventions. This is a big issue that can be addressed with expanded tutoring, requiring Math in the first year, and providing fall-back Math courses for those who withdraw to succeed in a subsequent term.

### **Grade Forgiveness Policy Changes**

- There are some policies at UK where a student is *better off* transferring out of UK in some cases because of the policy. One such policy is the current grade makeup policy. For example, when a pre-Engineering student flunks MA113, to fix the GPA, this student must re-take MA113. However, if that student desired to switch to the International Studies major, this major only requires MA111. This student’s GPA will remain messed up at UK because of the bad grade in MA113 even though the student will never need that course again. There should be some type of policy based on UKCore categories or even a full first-year GPA forgiveness policy for a few hours as a way to let students start over *at UK* instead of transferring out of UK.

### **60/75 Rule Decreased to Declare Major by End of Year1**

- This rule refers to the number of credits that a student can accumulate and still be undeclared. The current limits were set when USP was the general education program and required 42 credits. With UKCore only requiring 30 credits, this 60/75 rule should be greatly reduced to closer to 40/50 rule. Research at UK and nationally shows that students need to be in a good-fit major by the end of the first year (or roughly 30 hours).

## **SATISFACTION**

### **First Six Weeks of the First Fall Semester**

- Both Business and Economics and First Generation Initiatives indicated a need to capitalize on the first six weeks of the fall term while the new students are transitioning to UK. Students should not be going back home much in this initial period at UK – not even on weekends. This time should be used for starting relationships at UK, learning about UK's resources, becoming part of the UK family, having weekend retreats, and solidifying the decision to be a UK student (and future graduate).

### **Introverts and Students with Overwhelming Transition Issues**

- Many transition events are geared around big crowds, big activities, and popular activities. Some students (e.g. those from small towns, first generation, out-of-state, etc.) may have major transition issues coming to Lexington and UK. These types of events may not meet their transition needs. Perhaps some students have not had to make new friends in years. More transition activities and outreach should be geared around this. In fact, some transition events may be so big that they even add to the overwhelming feeling of getting started at UK. Having a “freshmen buddy” or “junior peer mentor” relieves a lot of stress – these connections should be made soon after advising conferences.

## **FINANCES**

### **Expand Student Account Services to Help Students Pay and Save for Entire Time at UK**

- The Student Account Services office in Enrollment Management has been a strategic partner with many across campus for retention improvement (changing from Student Billing to Student Account Services and also adding Financial Ombud counseling). Many students do not have healthy financial options or habits. Student Account Services could be expanded to let students distribute one-year scholarships across four years, allow students to save money and pay on the future terms, and get personal account services to manage the full price of UK (not just single year/term of tuition). These personal services could also include expansion of the training, sessions, and appointments to help students work through the massive amount of financial information disclosed by UK. This would take a significant commitment to human resources – as is the case across campus, there is already an overload of work for employees of UK to commit more to retention.

### **Increase Institutional Need-Based Aid (or Institutional Mixed Need/Merit-Based Aid)**

- It is important to be strategic about recruiting the merit students who have worked hard to achieve academic success. However, the current funding of need vs. merit aid at UK is out of balance. With a total net revenue perspective, it can still pay off for UK to infuse need-based aid to help students get through financial difficulties. This issue is of growing importance with the future enrollment growth coming mainly from out-of-state students (i.e. more students enrolling with huge unmet need, no KEES money, few have PELL eligibility, no CAPP funds, and often credit issues).

### **Scholarship Renewal Policies Need to Have a Retention-Focus**

- Often “renewable” scholarships are given to students who really have little chance of meeting UK’s renewal criteria. For example, a significant number of students who get the automatic Provost Scholarship only have a 1/3 chance of getting that award renewed in Year2. The main solution here is that UK implement graduated levels of renewal instead of a one-size-fits-all renewal criteria. Not only should this be a key part of retention improvement, it should also be built into the current RFP that UK has put out for external consultants to evaluate UK’s scholarship effectiveness. UK’s scholarship policy can’t just focus on intake and getting the student to initially choose UK, but must be retention-focused looking at the entire four-year picture.

## **EARLY SUCCESS STAGE**

### **Put All Students into a Learning Community and Provide an Itinerary of Transition Activities**

- The Living Learning Communities, Greek organizations, Learning Communities (e.g. A&S CURRENTS which doesn’t have the “living” component) all provide a small environment at UK. Each student coming into UK deserves this small experience with richer learning and more opportunities to make connections at UK.
- The second part of this comes from the itinerary of training, events, and team-building that First Generation Initiatives uses for peer mentors, student service students, first generation LLP students, First Scholars, and ResLife. This includes move-in events, training, team-building, movies, meals, tours, parent programs, and information sessions (Math, Financial Aid, Bb, and more).

### **Be More Proactive in All Retention Efforts**

- With retention efforts, there is a tendency at UK to observe attrition issues instead of acting on early information or trying to prevent attrition before it happens. The bulk of efforts at UK should focus on prediction-based alerts and interventions, early stage interventions (recruiting, transition, year1), and addressing sophomore retention issues in semester2 instead of year2.

### **Peer Connections, Peer Mentors, and Ongoing Use of UK101 Connections After the Class**

- TAs, Peer Mentors, Peer Advisors, Peer Tutors, KCrew Leaders, Student Services Students, First Generation mentors, and other similar peer leaders are extremely important while students transition to UK. This is how UK makes the new students feel like family and welcome at UK. Peer-aged students help by answering questions, pointing new students to resources, and looking out for attrition issues when “authorities” are not trusted enough yet. Retention training and focus is needed with any TA or peer leader program.
- UK101 Peer Mentors and Instructors could also be utilized after the course is over for registration interventions. It is often the advisor that is the main point of contact for these types of interventions, but wherever FERPA allows, it could benefit to use the established peer contacts through UK101, KCrew, or SSS.

### **Parent Involvement**

- The New Student and Parent Programs does a great job however, they only cover about 1/3 of the parents of incoming students. Like peer mentors, parents are a huge resource for students in the early stages at UK. This is needed as a retention solution for far-from-home students, making sure students get involved and know about resources, and for academic success. At a minimum, UK should mail the midterm grades of freshmen to the permanent address of students.

### **Greek Recruitment Moved to After the Fall Semester Census Day to Promote Fit at UK for All**

- The Greek organizations have a statistically proven retention benefit. The brotherhood/sisterhood and high expectations help students keep a good focus on student success. Changing the recruitment dates until after the fall semester census day will not change that aspect of Greek organizations. They will continue to have a retention impact. However, by waiting until after the census day of the fall term before Greek recruitment, it removes the Greek distraction for the incoming class, promotes a stronger sense of fit and belonging for all incoming students, and gives time for UK to prepare students for possible rejection in the Greek recruitment process.

### **UK101 Required for All At-Risk Students**

- UK has known for years the tremendous retention benefit for at-risk students in UK101. However, these students are left to voluntarily sign up for the orientation course. The most at-risk should be required to take this course to get a boost for academic and personal life at UK.

## **INTERMEDIATE SUCCESS STAGE**

### **UK102 Spring Semester Course as Transition to Year2-Year3**

- This course could build on the UK101 course offered in the fall. However, this course would be geared more around Year2 success at UK covering budgeting, independent living, living off-campus, selecting a good-fit major by the end of the spring term, etc.

### **Sophomore Retention Programs**

- UK started last year to focus on sophomore retention initiatives in the second year. A great set of resources is provided on the Academic Success webpage, B&E provides an Academic Survival Kit, and sophomores will get their own set of events in September this fall. As with freshmen though, many issues with sophomore success originate pre-sophomore year. Therefore, much of the emphasis on sophomore issues could possibly be more effective during the second half of Year1.

### **Off-Campus Student Services**

- Some departments want to make convenient services to upper-level students who live off-campus. To accomplish this requires a better understanding of where students live around Lexington and then looking into ways to tie in services through new offices, Ag extension offices, or UK Federal Credit Union offices.

### **Degree Planning Required for All Students**

- Both internally and at other schools that have improved retention, mandatory degree planning is suggested as an effective retention tool. This makes the student understand the timeline and exit plan for their major. This should be the foundation for advising and registration at UK.

## **FINAL SUCCESS STAGE**

### **Resume and Portfolio Requirements for Degree Checkout**

- In senior classes, capstone classes, and with graduation checkout, require that the students be ready to enter life outside of UK. This might also include requiring a course like A&S 350 “Personal Strengths and Your Career Development” and requiring students to work with Career Center counselors to finalize resumes and plan job searches.