*High-risk students have a major impact on both institutions of higher education and society in general. Specifically, attrition affects patterns of funding, planning for facilities, and the long-term academic curricula of institutions of higher education.*

Admissions offices are already stretched to the breaking point, budgets are tight across the board, and developing and instituting a feasible student retention program can feel like an insurmountable challenge. Developing and maintaining an effective student retention program is within the reach of all universities. And with the ever-increasing competition for students, retaining those who enroll at your institution is of the utmost importance. Not only does turnover of enrolled students cost an institution financially, low retention rates degrade the quality of the educational experience on campus. By committing to three key steps, any university can improve its student retention statistics and the experience of all its students. Assessment As with most multifaceted problems, the first step is to understand what an institution is facing. From one university to the next, the reasons students do not return to class the next semester vary. Elsewhere, students may not be receiving the personal attention they need to cope with the work load. Each institution must create its own distinct plan of action. A thorough assessment of the reasons students are leaving an institution will yield valuable insight to help form an effective student retention plan. Next, assessing student personalities helps institutions identify traits that lead to student success and conversely, behaviors and characteristics that signal a student at risk. Using results of the student assessment, along with student academic and demographic data, an institution can create a model to predict the likelihood of student success. This predictive model will serve as the roadmap for building the student retention program by outlining particular risk factors and allowing a university to address each appropriately. The predictive model also helps institutions identify at-risk students before it is too late. It is often advisable to work with an outside agency to perform an assessment. An impartial party has the benefit of having seen an array of problems and their accompanying solutions in a variety of environments. It is also better able to address politically charged situations that may be overlooked by a group entrenched internally. Such an unbiased viewpoint is essential when a school is truly ready to positively impact student retention. Careful evaluation of student success factors and retention efforts will result in a clear and executable plan for improving student retention. At the heart of this step is effective, meaningful communication with students who have been identified as being at high risk for attrition. Information uncovered during the assessment process will shape communication plans to address the needs of specific student groups. Whether it be registration deadline dates or details about study group meeting times, just providing information to students can make all the difference in helping them stay enrolled and eventually graduate. Communication systems can improve efficiency and free up staff for personal interaction with students who need it. When a student meets a certain condition, these systems can deliver pertinent information to help reverse the trend. Scheduled e-mail, mail and phone communication alerts students to the resources they need and helps them find the path to stay in school. Because these systems can deliver messages about specific topics to the students who need them, these systems let a small staff accomplish more and make the retention office more efficient and effective. On-Going Coaching Some students will get the help they need to get back on track through the communication systems. These reminders with helpful information will provide the nudge they need to complete tasks on time and stay on top of their educational responsibilities. Other students who are at higher risk may require more personal attention to succeed. The retention office will assign an achievement coach to each of these high-risk students using information obtained during the other two steps to make an appropriate match with a professional. Thanks to an automated communication system, the retention staff now will be free to provide one-on-one counseling to help these students achieve their education goals. Personal coaches should be assigned only to those students who are most at-risk and need a more high-touch approach. These students will meet with their coaches weekly or more often, if necessary for guidance uncovering their strengths and weaknesses and setting short-term and long-term goals. This frequent contact with an achievement expert will likely provide the support these

students need to reach their educational goals. In time, these students will be back on track and learn to manage their responsibilities independently. By addressing the needs of these students in a personal way, the university will enjoy greatly improved retention rates. Not only do improved retention rates contribute to the overall reputation of a university, effective communication with at-risk students improves the experience these students have in college, turning them into ambassadors for the school. And improved retention takes the burden of replacing lost students, a time-consuming and costly exercise, off the admissions department. With average retention rates hovering around 68 percent at four-year colleges and universities, the time to act is now. Remember that there is expert assistance available during all steps of the retention program process. With renewed commitment to retaining students and guidance from retention professionals, universities can understand their unique retention challenges and overcome them. More information is available at www.

*Understanding attrition and risk is critical to achieving success among the high-risk group by the 21st cdntury. Most students begin school with positive attitudes; however, differences in race, gender, and social class often begin to emerge in early childhood education and increase through high school and college.*

Attrition is a major problem for American colleges and universities, and efforts to retain students are stymied and made complex because an increasing number of enrollees fit the socioeconomic and demographic profile of "high-risk" students. This issue is critical for the nation as a whole, because the increasing enrollment of high-risk students--minorities, females, low-income, and disabled individuals--is expected to continue into the 21st century. High-risk students have a major impact on both institutions of higher education and society in general. Specifically, attrition affects patterns of funding, planning for facilities, and the long-term academic curricula of institutions of higher education. Attrition affects the future labor market, because students are unprepared for the required roles and responsibilities. What causes attrition and risk? The answer to this seemingly simple question is rather complex. Indeed, a number of academic, nonacademic, and related factors are associated with attrition and risk. Academically, it appears that all students do not receive equal preparation in elementary and secondary schools. Moreover, the instructional approaches used by teachers of high-risk students tend to be inefficient. On the other hand, nonacademic factors associated with attrition and risk are generated by both teachers and students. Thus, many high-risk students develop low self-esteem and begin to cooperate with systemic forces resulting in pregnancy, dropping out, and delinquency. To achieve success among high-risk students by the 21st century, a variety of strategies must be implemented. Special retention needs of high-risk students must be identified, and simultaneously institutions must be committed to providing both financial and academic support. In addition, social support through advising and counseling from faculty, the family, and peers is a necessary part of this equation. Although the characteristics of high-risk students are sometimes correlated with those of nontraditional students, the two concepts have different denotations. The term "high risk" is a theoretical concept based on an implicit assessment of the degree of negative risk associated with the educational experience. Thus, nontraditional students typically include older adults, minorities, and individuals of low socioeconomic status. Some nontraditional students are not high-risk students, and, conversely, some high-risk students are traditional students. By the same token, some high-risk students are also nontraditional; for example, an older or mature student might also be academically underprepared. Declining enrollments, for instance, leave unused building capacity. Large numbers of part-time or academically underprepared students increase the average cost per student. Furthermore, high rates of noncompletion among others in the general student body magnify the problem. Some institutions have expanded their curricula to include special courses for their high-risk students. For example, the majors that students choose and the changes they make in majors affect the development of curricula. Similarly, academically underprepared students who choose majors they perceive as less academically challenging affect the development of curricula, because as the university enrolls fewer students choosing "difficult" majors and more students choosing "easy" majors, its curriculum becomes thus shaped over time. To understand high-risk students in institutions of higher education, one must review the different experiences of students in elementary and high schools. The school curriculum seems to benefit white males and students of high socioeconomic status more than minorities, females, and students of low socioeconomic status Reyes and Stanic  For the most part, minorities, females, and students of low socioeconomic status begin their school experience with positive attitudes. But differences in race, gender, and social class often begin to emerge during elementary school and increase by high school and college. Discrimination based on class, race, and gender influences the quality and quantity of material taught in schools. Schools are an umbrella system or organization from which discrimination and differential treatment are often meted out. As a result of the social stratification in society, teachers and administrators may inherit a reality that creates an aversion to high-risk, low-income, and minority students. This internalization is then reflected in their attitudes and behavior toward those students. Many scholars have confirmed the operation of a race-based

ontology in the classroom. These negative attitudes may result in prejudgment or avoidance of, for example, culturally different students to the point where students receive little or no academic or personal assistance. Such negative behaviors can lead to low aspirations and low self-esteem. And low self-esteem can in time cause students to "cooperate" with systemic forces and participate in various forms of antisocial behavior. Students in institutions of higher education encounter risks in several forms. It might also involve a relatively greater probability of choosing a field that is incongruent with the skills and competencies needed by the present labor market--particularly by the labor market of the 21st century. The potential for risk and attrition exists for all college enrollees, but for some subgroups, the probability of risk and attrition is extraordinarily high. A number of causal variables interact to increase attrition and risk among particular demographic and socioeconomic populations. These variables can include academic factors low grade point average, academic underpreparedness, for example but could extend far beyond the scope of the academic. Indeed, each high-risk student represents the outcome of his or her individual characteristics, combined with the shaping and contouring that occurs as a consequence of a socially stratified society. Regardless of the reason, however, attrition and risk are costly to the individual and to society, both directly and indirectly. Thus, strategies for intervention must be developed and implemented on a number of levels. Among students, high-risk students must be challenged to develop academic and nonacademic skills and competencies associated with success in college. At the institutional level, administrators, teachers, and counselors must engage in behaviors that facilitate persistence and completion of the program. In addition, institutions of higher education must make a financial commitment to high-risk students in the form of guaranteed financial assistance for the duration of their degree program. At the community level, businesses and community-based organizations have formed partnerships with educational institutions to reduce risk. In addition to these strategies for achieving success among high-risk students, academic support services must be offered that include developing and building skills. Further, the provision of social support is vital. This framework brings together the student, the teacher, the institution, parents, peers, and the community in a dynamic synthesis. Preventing Students from Dropping Out. College Entrance Examination Board. The Educational Status of Black Americans. Authors Jones, Dionne J. National Urban League Press. A Review of Literature on Blacks and Mathematics. A Theoretical Syntheses of Recent Research. Please note that this site is privately owned and is in no way related to any Federal agency or ERIC unit. Further, this site is using a privately owned and located server. This is NOT a government sponsored or government sanctioned site.

## Chapter 3 : Half of High-risk Students Coming Up Empty - Higher Education

*This report reviews the literature on high-risk students at the higher education level in terms of the following questions: are high-risk students and nontraditional students the same? what is the impact of high-risk students on institutions of higher education? are high-risk students treated.*

## Chapter 4 : High Risk Students and Higher Education: Future Trends. ERIC Digest.

*At-risk students may be those who have made poor choices or decisions that impacted negatively on their academics, or they may be an adult student who returns to higher education after an extended absence, or students with academic or physical limitations not identified before enrolling in higher education.*

## Chapter 5 : Library Resource Finder: Location & Availability for: High-risk students and higher education

*Higher education is free or extremely low-cost, but access to academic degree programs at top universities is heavily rationed. Students who are not academically qualified have the opportunity to.*

## Chapter 6 : Peer Reviewed Research in Student Affairs | NASPA Journals

*Note: Citations are based on reference standards. However, formatting rules can vary widely between applications and fields of interest or study. The specific requirements or preferences of your reviewing publisher, classroom teacher, institution or organization should be applied.*

## Chapter 7 : At-risk students - Wikipedia

*Roughly half of high-risk students are starting college but have nothing to show for it in terms of earnings because they leave without a credential that could command a higher salary. Such is one of the key findings of "The New Forgotten Half and Research Directions to Support Them," a new.*