Student Retention Initiatives at Trinity College

Penelope Paschal ‘05
Research Question

- What initiatives have been taken place to increase student retention at Trinity College, and what initiatives have been most effective and successful?
Significance

- Student Retention is important!
  - Benefits school and students
- Important for students to be happy and to feel comfortable
- Schools want to show that they can keep students
- Trinity in particular
Literature

- Studies show that if minority students participate in orientation activities, student orgs. - more likely to stay
  - Trinity: MOCA, PRIDE

- For freshmen, support from others (peers, faculty) essential – If students uncomfortable, haven’t found niche they will leave during or after freshman year
  - Trinity: Early Intervention TEAM
Thesis

- There is no single initiative that increases student retention at Trinity College because there are so many that affect students and the institution, whether it be in an academic, culture, or social way.
- However, there are initiatives that are more successful and effective than others.
Research Process

○ **Qualitative**
  - Interviewed members of administration

○ **Quantitative**
  - Analyzed statistics, charts/graphs, and packets that were given to me by administration
Reasons why students leave

- Students unhappy with social life at Trinity
- Lowest levels of satisfaction have been under the categories:
  - “Quality of social life”
  - “Overall impression of Trinity students”
  - “Intellectual life outside the classroom”
- Other reasons
6 year graduation rates and projections at Trinity and among other 415 Colleges and Universities

- **Trinity** Projections
  - cohorts
  - 1998 – 87.8%
  - 1999 – 85.0%
  - 2000 – 88.7%
  - 2001 – 89.3%
The importance of Learning Communities: Percentage of Students withdrawing (cohorts 1996-2002)

- Enrolled in Gateway Programs (ISP, interarts…)
- Not enrolled in Gateway Programs
- Enrolled in Gateway or Tutorial College
- Not enrolled in either of them
SI Sessions (part of Gateway Course Project) – developed 2001-2002

- Many students (1/5) receive D’s, F’s, W’s in intro science courses
- Peer led sessions
- Results: Grades
Results: Fall 2001 and Spring 2002

- Spring 2002
  - SI Group:
    - 83.4% A’s and B’s
    - 16.7% C’s
  - Non SI Group:
    - 55.5% A’s and B’s
    - 44.4% C’s and D’s
Early Intervention TEAM

- Faculty/Administration involved
  - Help students who are showing signs of academic or personal troubles
  - Offer options or other opportunities if thinking about leaving/transferring