

Memorandum

To: Members of the Saint Mary's College Community
From: Mark Figueroa, Director of Institutional Research
Date: March 28, 2007
Subject: Undergraduate First-Year Student Attrition Report, Fall 2006

As a means of monitoring first-year student enrollment trends, the following report on new first-year (non-transfer) students is offered here. As noted last year, attrition data is usually reviewed and reported on a year-to-year basis (from fall term to fall term). However, we again elected to study characteristics of first-year, non-transfer students who enrolled for the fall term and did not re-enroll for the spring term. Of 611 new first-year students (NFYS) who enrolled for the fall 2006 semester, 55 did not re-enroll for the spring. Of those, 13 left campus prior to completing the fall term; the other 42 completed the fall semester. In using the entire entering class (611) to calculate the fall-to-spring attrition rate, we find a rate of 9%, an increase of 5.3% from last year's rate (3.7%). If we include only those students who completed the semester and not those who left before completing the term, the rate of attrition is 7.7%, and increase of 5.6% compared to last year (2.1%).

OVERALL CHARACTERISTICS

The chart below contrasts background characteristics of non-returning students to those who returned for the Spring semester.

	Non-returning NFYS Characteristics (N=55)	Overall NFYS Class Characteristics (N=611)
% Residing on campus	84%	95%
% Female	67%	64%
% Male	33%	36%
Average High School GPA	3.09	3.33
Average Combined SAT Score	1064	1080
% from Public High Schools	64%	56%
% from out-of-state	11%	15%
% of "first-generation" college students	36%	39%

In addition to the above characteristics, the following is descriptive of those 55 non-returning students:

- 1 was admitted with Honors at entrance, 3 were admitted through the HP program, and 5 were "FastApp" applicants
- 13 left campus without completing the Fall 2006 term
- 12 were found in violation of the disciplinary code. The violations are listed below.
(Note that some students had multiple violations.)
 - 6 alcohol, 4 drugs
 - 3 disorderly conduct
 - 2 excessive noise, 2 property damage
 - 1 dishonesty, 1 disruptive behavior, 1 trespass

- 18 were on academic probation at the end of the Fall 2006 term
- 7 were found in violation of the disciplinary code and on were on academic probation
- 3 received XF grades for being found in violation of the academic honor violation

RESIDENCY

Of the 55 students who did not return, 46 of them lived on-campus. Below is a breakdown of residence hall occupancy for the Fall semester:

	Ground/ 1st Floor	2nd Floor	3rd Floor	4th Floor
Aquinas	3	2	2	
Assumption	1	1		
Augustine	3	5	8	1
DeLaSalle		3	4	3
Justin	6	3		
Mitty	1			

Of those, 2 sets of students were roommates. Additionally, 13 students were in rooms adjacent to one another.

ETHNICITY

The table below shows a greater proportion of African-American and Asian American/Pacific Islander students (compared to their class as a whole) chose not to return for the Spring 07 term.

Student Ethnicity	% of Non-returning NFYS	% of overall NFYS Class
African American	12.7 %	7.5 %
Asian/Pacific Islander	16.4%	14.3 %
Latino	20 %	21.0 %
Native American	0 %	1.3 %
White	50.9%	50.3 %

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Breakdown of course completion (1-unit courses only) and grade point averages for the 42 who completed the Fall 06 term:

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| <p><i>Course Completion</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 27 completed 4 courses • 11 completed 3 courses • 4 completed 2 courses | <p><i>Fall GPA</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 had GPA 0-1.0 • 10 had GPA 1.01 - 2.00 • 19 had GPA 2.01 - 3.00 • 5 had GPA 3.01- 4.00 |
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Of the 12 students found in violation of the disciplinary code, 10 completed the Fall 06 term with the following GPAs:

- 6 had GPAs under a 2.0
- 3 had GPAs between 2.01 and 3.0
- 1 had a GPA above 3.01

The following is a grade distribution of the 42 students who completed the Fall 06 term but did not re-enroll for the Spring 07 term.

Grade Distribution of the 42 who completed the Fall 2006 Term								
		# of Grades Earned (include + and -)						
Course #	Course Title	As	Bs	Cs	Ds	Fs	Is	Total
ACCTG-001	Financial Accounting		1			1		1
AH-001	Survey World Art		1					1
AH-025	Survey of Asian Art					1		1
AN/SO-001	Social & Cultural Anthropology		1			1		2
AN/SO-004	Social Problems	1	1		1			3
BIOL-010	Introduction to Biology				2	1		3
BIOL-050	General Biology					1		1
BUSAD-040	Business Statistics		1			1		2
CHEM-007	Introductory Chemistry				1	2		3
CHEM-008	General Chemistry I			2	1	1		4
COMM-002	Comm & Social Understanding		3	2				5
COMM-003	Communication Inquiry			1	1			2
COMM-010	Argument & Advocacy		1			1		1
COMM-163	Television Production		1					1
ECON-003	Principles of Micro-Economics	1		2	1			4
ECON-004	Principles of Macro-Economics		1					1
ENGL-003	Practice in Writing		2	1		2		5
ENGL-004	Composition	3	17	7	2	4		30
FREN-003	Intermediate French					1		1
FREN-010	Conversation/Composition	1						1
HIST-017	US History to 1877	1	1	1				3
INTEG-011	Freshman Seminar		1	1				2
INTEG-031	Freshman Mathematics		1				1	2
INTEG-051	Freshman Language	1		1				2
INTEG-071	Freshman Laboratory	1		1				2
KINES-010	Introduction to Kinesiology	1						1
KINES-012	Health Education					2		2
LATIN-001	Introductory Latin			1				1
MATH-004	Intro Probability & Statistics			1				1
MATH-013	Calculus with Elem Functions	1				1		2
PERFA-010	Intro to Music: Rock to Bach		1					1
POL-001	Intro to Comparative Politics		1	1				2
POL-002	Intro to American Politics			1				1
PSYCH-001	Intro to Personal-Social Psych		2	3	2			7
PSYCH-002	Intro Physio-Experim Psych			1				1
PSYCH-010	Introduction to Psychology			1	2			3
RELST-001	Intro to Biblical Literature			1				1
SEM-020	Greek Thought	2	14	9	2	4	4	35
SPAN-002	Continuing Elementary Spanish			1				1
SPAN-003	Intermediate Spanish	1		1				2
SPAN-009	Comp for Spanish Speakers		1					1
SPAN-010	Conversation-Composition	1						1

Further analysis of student attrition and retention for the incoming Fall 06 class will be conducted after the completion of the Spring 07 term.

Questions for Discussion:

- What rate of attrition is acceptable for first-year students at SMC?
- How, as an institution, should we respond to this increased rate of attrition?
- What other information would be needed in order to make an informed decision about how we should respond?

Please feel free to contact me with any question or comments regarding the data – x4754 or mfiguero@stmarys-ca.edu