Summary of Results for First Year Retention Analysis—2012 Cohort

(Prepared by Skip Dine Young; 10/10/13)

*Factors Predicting (Relatively) Higher First Year* ***Attrition*** *(2012)*

--Lower Total SAT (including adjusted ACT scores) [weak relationship]

--Lower high school percentile rank [weak relationship]

--Lower percentage of need met by Hanover

--Lower percentage of need met by all sources

--Lower Hanover total gift (scholarships and grants)

--Lower Hanover scholarship

--Lower total aid (all sources)

--Home state outside of IN/OH/KY region [weak relationship]

--Less educated mother [weak relationship]

--Interested in health career [weak relationship]

For comparison’s sake, here are the predictors from last year:

*Factors Predicting (Relatively) Higher First Year* ***Attrition*** *(2011)*

--Lower SAT Writing

--Lower parent resources

--Lower percentage of need met by Hanover

--Lower percentage of need met by all sources

--Lower Hanover total gift (scholarships and grants)

--Lower Hanover scholarship

--Lower total aid (all sources)

--First Generation Students

--Unmarried parents [weak relationship]

--Less educated parents

Additional Findings:

--First year students who rushed a Greek House, who joined BSP, or who had a music scholarship were retained a significantly higher level than other students.

--Students who left Hanover with a low college GPA tended to have a lower high school GPA, rank, and percentile rank. These same students did not have lower standardized test scores.

--While effective family income (a measure of family financial resources) was not a predictor of attrition overall, those students who left the college before the completions of their first semester and those students who left with a low college GPA were from families with significantly less resources. Interestingly students who had *low GPAs but stayed* at the college (often on probation) tended to be from families who had greater family resources.

Important Notes:

--None of these predictors are extremely strong. That is, there are plenty of students succeeding in all of the “disadvantaged” classes above. It is just that their attrition rates are comparatively higher than other groups (at a statistically significant level).

--Many of these factors are overlapping. For example, first generation students are less likely to have parents with higher educations, and this situation impacts parent resources as well.

Reasons for Leaving—Observations on Categorical Analysis (2012 cohort)

[See attached Excel sheet “Why Did First Year Students Leave Hanover in 2012-2013?” for full results of this categorical analysis.]

Observations:

1. Financial issues, both as primary and secondary reasons for leaving, are extremely common. This observation (combined with the findings that financial aid variables are among the best predictors of attrition) highlights the importance of finances on family decision making in the current economic climate.
2. It is notable that financial issues interact significantly with family issues. It is not just a matter of absolute cost, but instead, it is a matter of how a Hanover education fits into family values. I think the issue for many families is not “Can we *afford* Hanover?” but “Is Hanover *worth it* for us.”
3. There are fewer students in good standing *saying* they are leaving because they don’t like their grades. It appears that first semester freshman grades have gone up somewhat (2009- 2.7; 2012-2.86)).
4. On the other hand, students are commonly reporting that they are leaving because Hanover does not offer the kind of academic program/major they are seeking. Students claimed they were leaving Hanover, at least in part, because they believed that they could not get the following areas of study: nursing (x4); sports medicine (x2); sports management; business; ecology; forensic studies; journalism; wildlife management; Japanese; computer science; occupational therapy; engineering; music education; dietary studies; and unspecified (x3).
5. Social issues are rarely the primary cause of students leaving, but they are a common secondary cause.
6. Health and mental health issues seem to play a greater role in students leaving Hanover than might be generally assumed given such a young population.