

Task 1.1.1 Executive Summary

Effectively delivered by staff and popular among participants, the Career Workshops do appear to have demonstrated a positive, albeit slight impact on retention after one year. Moreover, these activities could significantly impact retention if deployed on a larger scale, and if delivered through improved strategies as outlined by the program staff. Our central findings can be summarized as follows.

Strengths of the Activity

- At-risk workshop participants demonstrated first year retention parity when compared to our more stringent benchmark comparison group
- At-risk workshop participants demonstrated a first year retention rate that was 15.4% higher than a matched at-risk peer group, and 16.4% higher than the general population of undecided majors
- The workshop activities appear to have an added benefit in that they were particularly effective for the male participants. Since males also attrite disproportionately more than females, it is noteworthy that these activities seem to be particularly effective within a group that exhibits two salient risk factors for attrition.

Opportunities to Improve the Activity

- Expand coverage to a larger proportion of the undeclared major risk group using enrollment targets based on impact projections calculated from the pilot data
- Increase efficiency by offering fewer workshops and significantly increasing the enrollment in each of these offerings
- Capitalizing on this new, more efficient delivery model to also better coordinate the workshops with other activities to avoid scheduling conflicts that result in lower and less predictable participation rates

Action Plan to Improve the Activity

- Recruit a minimum pool of 100 *student* participants solely from those individuals who have demonstrated some form of commitment to attend UW-Stout
- Develop a deployment plan for two workshops with the capacity to deliver them to a minimum of 50 students as well as whatever number of parents that accompany them
- Coordinate scheduling of the two sessions to avoid conflict with any other campus, or foreseeable external activities that might also draw these stakeholders