

Rising Up from an Enrollment Crisis

Improving Student Success at Eastern University

Eastern University

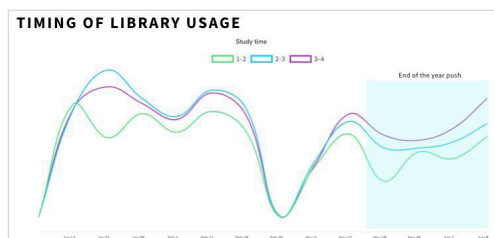
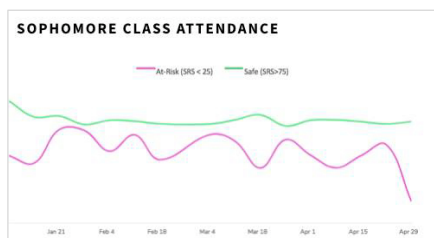
Eastern University, a Christian university in Saint Davids, PA, was experiencing an enrollment crisis that began in 2015. Over a period of just three years, the institution's total full-time undergraduate enrollment had dropped by 15%. As a private institution that relies solely on tuition for operational expenditures, the university needed to find a solution. One area of opportunity was the university's retention rate: they were retaining only 74% of freshmen (down from 78% in 2014).

Solution

To support retention and protect enrollment, the university decided to invest heavily in proactive advising services, beginning with centralized advising functionality supported by Degree Analytics. To implement this process, Degree Analytics took a two-step approach: First, identifying the top behavioral drivers of student retention and second, instituting proactive advising alerts. Both exercises were driven primarily by data gathered through the university's wireless network and blended with SIS data.

Methodology

Based on the network data Eastern University was already storing, Degree Analytics was able to immediately measure class attendance and robust engagement metrics for 97% of the student population. During the fall term, we prioritized advising interventions with students who were not attending class, and in the spring term we used a more robust picture of the student experience to institute additional behavioral alerts and nudges for on-campus time, library time, and changes in behavior.



Impact

Through data, nudges, direct interventions, and program measurement, Degree Analytics supported Eastern advisors and student life professionals in prioritizing and executing student services that ultimately had profound impacts on student retention. These efforts, along with other programs instituted by a university completely bought into the concept of student success showed extremely profound results:

\$560k

Impact on tuition revenue

4%

Improvement in first year retention

12%

Improvement in attendance after intervention



2.6B

Rows of wireless data analyzed

97%



Students identified

4.1

Devices per student

76

Average Weekly Hours on Campus

3,760

Classes measured for attendance

93%

Attendance accuracy