

Bridge to Excellence (B2E)

Year 12 Report

July 1, 2013

Prepared by: B2E Coordinator Will Cooper

Bridge to Excellence Retention Program Year 12 Administration

For Year 12 (Fall 2012), the Bridge to Excellence (B2E) program was open to all first-time, full-time students enrolling at Arkansas Tech University's main campus. **Will Cooper** served as B2E Program Coordinator.

For Year 12, Retention Services used Form B of Noel-Levitz's online College Student Inventory (CSI), just as it had the previous year. The CSI is a standardized survey designed to gauge a student's self-perceived academic, financial, and social readiness for college.

The CSI was administered on a daily basis from May 15, 2012, through October 1, 2012. After freshmen registered for their fall classes in the Academic Advising Center in Rothwell Hall, they took the CSI in Room 247 of the Doc Bryan Student Services Building from May through the end of August.

Students who had not taken the CSI were emailed a link with which to take the CSI if they chose to do so.

Bridge to Excellence Retention Program Mission

The B2E program's mission -- to empower freshmen to make a successful transition from high school (or work) to college -- remained the same. The program's continuing goals included:

- (1) increasing Arkansas Tech University's freshmen retention rate,
- (2) boosting freshmen participants' GPA's,
- (3) and improving Arkansas Tech University's graduation rates.

Demographics

For Year 12, B2E defined a program participant as a student who was a first-time, full-time freshman who both (1) took the CSI and (2) met at least one time with his or her assigned mentor during the fall semester. A non-participant was a student who did not meet with his or her mentor.

According to these definitions, 731 first-time, full-time freshmen participated in the program for Year 12. Since 1,457 first-time, full-time students entered Tech for the Fall 2012 semester, this meant that 726 new students chose not participate. The gender and ethnicity demographics of Year 12 B2E participants were similar to those of the Fall 2012 main

campus freshman class as a whole:

| FALL 2012 | B2E FIRST-TIME, FULL-TIME PARTICIPANTS | ALL ATU FIRST- TIME, FULL-TIME STUDENTS |
|--|---|--|
| Female | 51.50% | 50.70% |
| Male | 48.50% | 49.29% |
| Didn't Report Gender | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| Black/African American | 8.80% | 10.50% |
| American Indian/Alaskan | 1.00% | 1.59% |
| Asian or Pacific Islander | 1.10% | 1.00% |
| Hispanic/Latino | 5.00% | 5.54% |
| White/Caucasian | 81.6% | 78.80% |
| Multi-Ethnic or Other Ethnic Origin | 1.50% | 1.93% |
| Prefer Not To Respond | 0.0% | 0.0% |

Intervention

For Year 12 of the B2E program, 147 mentors took part – 90 faculty and 57 staff. The definition of a B2E mentor continued to be a faculty or staff volunteer who helps his or her assigned freshmen to successfully make the transition from high school (or work) to college.

The purpose of B2E Mentors remained the same – helping their mentees understand and evaluate their CSI results and also acting as the student's "go to" person when a mentee had a college-related question or concern. B2E mentors offered mentees encouragement, advice, information, and feedback – in essence, the B2E mentor established a relationship with his or her assigned students and made them feel welcome at Tech.

B2E Coordinator Will Cooper assigned each first-time, full-time, main campus freshman to a faculty or staff B2E mentor. For the sixth year in a row, all faculty mentors were assigned mentees whose majors either fell

under the faculty mentor's department or, barring that, under the faculty mentor's academic college. Meanwhile, undeclared students were primarily assigned to Student Services staff and non-Student Services staff.

Each mentor was sent student folders via email that included a CSI Student Report, student contact information, a class schedule, and B2E Mentee Fact Sheet for each of his or her mentees. Based on the student's responses, the CSI Student Report included three sections:

- Student Background Information.
- Motivational Assessment.
- Specific Recommendations.

The mentor could use this information as a springboard for discussion to identify and encourage student strengths. In addition, the CSI could be used to determine what (if any) college-related challenges the student might have or anticipate having. When appropriate, the mentor could then refer the student to any relevant campus support service(s) and schedule a follow-up meeting. (Campus support services include academic tutoring labs, administrative departments, clubs and organizations, etc.)

At mid-term, each mentor was provided with his or her mentees' mid-term grades. Mentors were encouraged to use this information to follow-up with their mentees, cheering on those mentees who were doing well academically and offering assistance/advice to those mentees who were struggling academically. After the close of the semester, mentors were also supplied with each mentee's final grades.

General Conclusions

For Fall 2012 to Spring 2013, the retention rate for main campus B2E participants (n=731) was higher than that for main campus non-participants (n=726).

According to Arkansas Tech Institutional Research data, 90.29% of Fall 2012 B2E partakers returned for the Spring 2012 semester, while only 81.54% of non-partakers came back. This means that the retention rate for B2E participants was 9% higher than that of non-participants.

For Fall 2011 to Fall 2012, the retention rate for these main campus B2E participants (n=731) was also higher than that for main campus non-participants (n=780). According to Arkansas Tech Institutional Research data, 75.65% of Fall 2011 B2E partakers returned for the Fall 2012 semester,

while only 57.69% of non-partakers came back. This means that the retention rate for B2E participants was 18% higher than that for non-participants.

The GPA (Grade Point Average) of both groups was also impacted, with B2E participants having a higher average GPA than non-participants. At the end of the Fall 2012 semester, the cumulative GPA for B2E partakers was 2.904, as compared to the 2.451 GPA of non-participants. This means B2E participants had a fall GPA that was 0.453 higher than the fall GPA of non-participants.

Appendices

- Appendix A contains the retention rate data for Years 1-12 of the B2E program.
- Appendix B contains the fall semester GPA data for Years 1-12.
- Appendix D gives the cohort B2E percentage participation.

BRIDGE TO EXCELLENCE YEAR 12 REPORT

Appendix A

ATU Freshman Cohort Retention Rates by B2E Program Year *

| Semester/ Year | Number of B2E Program Participants | B2E Participants' Retention Rate | Non- Participants' Retention Rate | Percentage Difference In favor of B2E |
|-----------------------|---|---|--|--|
| FALL TO SPRING | | | | |
| Year 1 (2001) | 105 | 89.52% | 81.91% | 7.61% |
| Year 2 (2002) | 310 | 86.77% | 79.53% | 7.24% |
| Year 3 (2003) | 751 | 90.01% | 74.83% | 15.18% |
| Year 4 (2004) | 811 | 87.92% | 70.10% | 17.82% |
| Year 5 (2005) | 855 | 88.07% | 72.47% | 15.60% |
| Year 6 (2006) | 764 | 88.99% | 72.07% | 16.92% |
| Year 7 (2007) | 885 | 89.15% | 76.40% | 12.75% |
| Year 8 (2008) | 890 | 87.64% | 78.65% | 8.99% |
| Year 9 (2009) | 1029 | 90.48% | 77.20% | 13.28% |
| Year 10 (2010) | 857 | 90.20% | 78.23% | 11.97% |
| Year 11(2011) | 731 | 90.97% | 78.97% | 12.00% |
| Year 12 (2012) | 731 | 90.29% | 81.54% | 8.75% |
| | AVERAGE: | 89.16% | 76.82% | 12.34% |
| FALL TO FALL | | | | |
| Year 1 (2001) | 105 | 82.86% | 66.00% | 16.86% |
| Year 2 (2002) | 310 | 72.26% | 63.60% | 8.66% |
| Year 3 (2003) | 751 | 76.83% | 59.01% | 17.83% |
| Year 4 (2004) | 811 | 73.98% | 53.20% | 20.78% |
| Year 5 (2005) | 855 | 74.04% | 58.71% | 15.33% |
| Year 6 (2006) | 764 | 73.95% | 54.85% | 19.10% |
| Year 7 (2007) | 885 | 73.11% | 58.49% | 14.72% |
| Year 8 (2008) | 890 | 75.17% | 60.81% | 14.36% |
| Year 9 (2009) | 1029 | 78.23% | 62.53% | 15.70% |
| Year 10 (2010) | 857 | 75.61% | 54.87% | 20.13% |
| Year 11 (2011) | 731 | 75.65% | 57.69% | 17.96% |
| | AVERAGE: | 75.60% | 59.06% | 16.49% |

* Data from Arkansas Tech University Institutional Research.

BRIDGE TO EXCELLENCE YEAR 12 REPORT

Appendix B

ATU Freshman Cohort Grade Point Average
(GPA) Comparison by B2E Program Year *

* Data from Arkansas Tech University Institutional Research.

| Semester/Year | B2E Participants | Non-Participants | Difference |
|----------------------------|------------------|------------------|--------------|
| End of Fall (1st Semester) | | | |
| Year 1 (2001) | NA | NA | NA |
| Year 2 (2002) | 2.886 | 2.379 | 0.507 |
| Year 3 (2003) | 2.872 | 2.321 | 0.551 |
| Year 4 (2004) | 2.780 | 2.323 | 0.457 |
| Year 5 (2005) | 2.810 | 2.388 | 0.422 |
| Year 6 (2006) | 2.875 | 2.240 | 0.635 |
| Year 7 (2007) | 2.746 | 2.181 | 0.565 |
| Year 8 (2008) | 2.878 | 2.293 | 0.585 |
| Year 9 (2009) | 2.919 | 2.269 | 0.650 |
| Year 10 (2010) | 2.815 | 2.131 | 0.684 |
| Year 11 (2011) | 2.943 | 2.407 | 0.536 |
| Year 12 (2012) | 2.904 | 2.451 | 0.453 |
| AVERAGE: | | | 0.503 |

BRIDGE TO EXCELLENCE YEAR 12 REPORT

Appendix C

ATU Freshmen Cohort
Percentage Participation
in B2E 2001-2012
(Main Campus, First-Time, Full-Time,
Degree-Seeking)

| Cohort Group (Total Number) | Total Number of Freshman Cohort | Total Number of B2E Participants | Percentage of Freshman Cohort B2E Participants |
|--|--|---|---|
| 2001 | 1205 | 105 | 8.7% |
| 2002 | 1170 | 310 | 26.5% |
| 2003 | 1339 | 751 | 56.1% |
| 2004 | 1296 | 811 | 62.5% |
| 2005 | 1320 | 855 | 64.7% |
| 2006 | 1300 | 764 | 58.8% |
| 2007 | 1368 | 885 | 64.7% |
| 2008 | 1260 | 890 | 70.6% |
| 2009 | 1470 | 1029 | 70.1% |
| 2010 | 1422 | 857 | 60.3% |
| 2011 | 1511 | 731 | 48.3% |
| 2012 | 1457 | 731 | 50.2% |