

Exploring Undergraduate International Student Retention at University of Dayton

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this qualitative, case study is to explore the challenges, responses and best practices of the academic units in the retention of undergraduate, international students moving from their first to second year at the University of Dayton. Over the last ten years, international student enrollment has continued to rise at the university, but retention rates have declined and are consistently lower than the overall first year population. A triangulated approach was used by gathering data from a survey of the undergraduate Deans' offices ($n=4$) institutional data and public websites. The surveyed sample consisted of the College of Arts and Science, and the Schools of Engineering, Education and Health Science and Business.

FINDINGS

SURVEY RESPONSES

None of the units reported having retention initiatives for this population

CHALLENGE THEMES

Faculty intercultural competence

- "faculty comfort and skill in inclusive practices"
- "faculty do not have training in working with international students, and there isn't a structure in place to reward/recognize the importance of that work (it's not part of merit, promotion, or tenure)"

Student preparedness

- "lack of math readiness"
- "lack of understanding of program requirements, unsuccessful writing skills, lack of engagement with domestic students"
- "[failure to] listen to advisor guidance for course selection and registration"

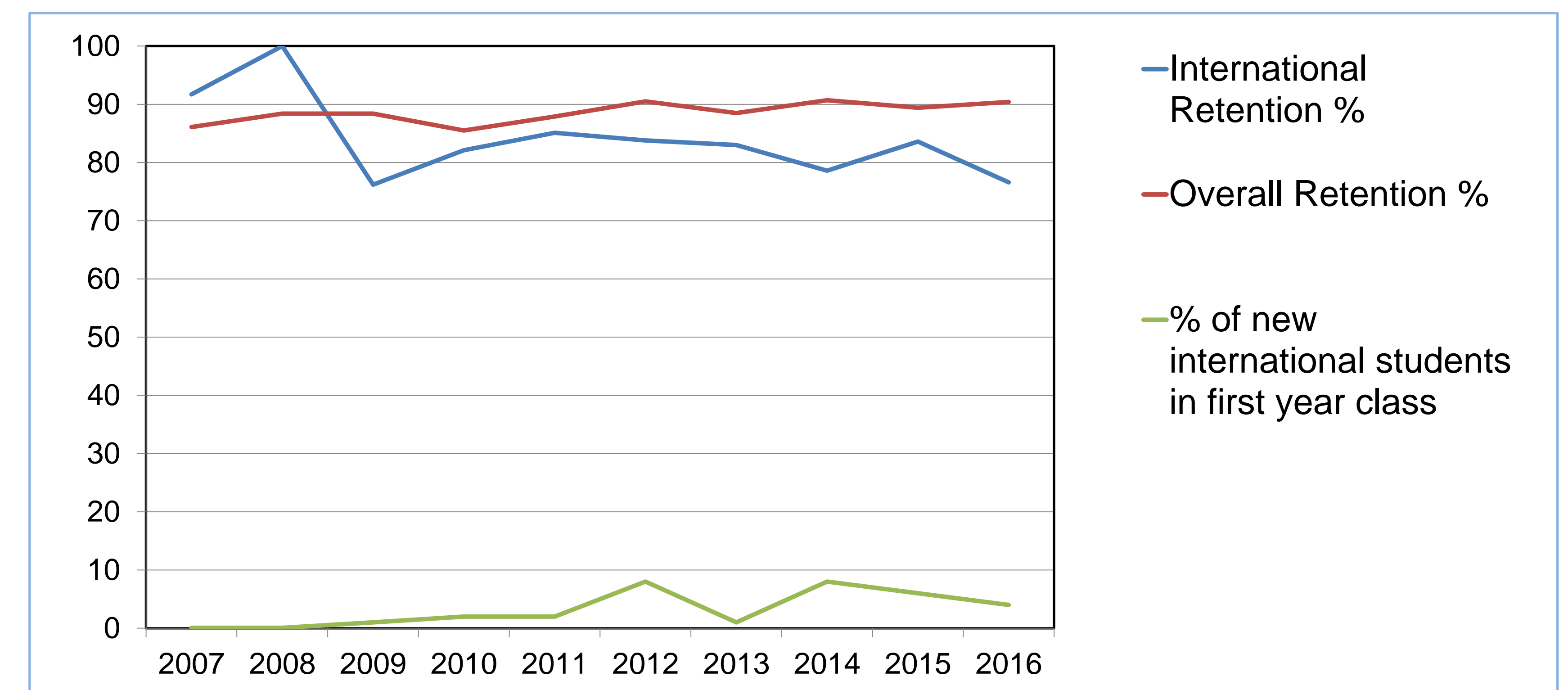
Resources for students and units

- "develop housing that has a theme that would attract domestic and international students"
- "we refer students to tutoring... to UDI 149...the counseling center"
- "coaching course...called Academic Renewal"

WEBSITE RESOURCES

- International Student and Scholar Services
- Global Learning Support
- Student Success and Persistence and the Student Success Network

INSTITUTIONAL RETENTION DATA



RECOMMENDATIONS

- Specific, proactive retention plan within each unit
- Manage the expectations of new students
- Front-load support services in the first year
- Create a more inclusive academic environment by increasing intercultural competence training for faculty, staff, and students.

SELECT REFERENCES

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