



Student Retention Services from Ruffalo Noel Levitz

**Increase college completion rates and strengthen
the quality of student life and learning**

RUFFALOSM
NOEL LEVITZ

Increase student retention and college completion rates with consulting and assessment from Ruffalo Noel Levitz

In today's environment, there is increasing pressure to improve student retention and college completion rates. You can be ready to meet these demands with consulting, assessment tools, and research from Ruffalo Noel Levitz.

RETENTION CONSULTING

How can you continue to increase student retention and college completion rates on your campus? Ruffalo Noel Levitz consultants rely on collaborative, data-informed strategies that engage the entire campus community in overcoming obstacles to college completion. You receive recommendations for action from someone who has experience working with campuses like yours. [Read more on page 3](#) and [see six brief case studies, starting on page 10.](#)

RETENTION ASSESSMENTS AND ANALYTICS

The best way to promote student retention is to eliminate problems before they start. Our retention assessment tools help you assess your students and intervene early:

Satisfaction-Priorities Assessments

Take the pulse of your campus by measuring the satisfaction and priorities of students, campus personnel, and parents. Conduct surveys of traditional-age students, adult learners, online learners, and other groups. [Read more on page 4.](#)

Retention Management System *Plus*™

Increase college completion rates through earlier, more focused interventions. Assess student motivation and receptivity with the College Student Inventory™, Mid-Year Student Assessment™, and the Second-Year Student Assessment™, and pinpoint additional risk indicators with the Student Retention Predictor™. [Read more on page 5.](#)

BEGIN WITH A FREE PHONE CONSULTATION

One of the hardest questions for those working on student retention is “How can we continue to improve our completion rates?”

Find out by talking with one of our experienced student retention strategists. Contact us at **800.876.1117** or email ContactUs@RuffaloNL.com and indicate the specific issues you'd like to discuss and when you're available, and we'll set up a free phone consultation.

RETENTION CONSULTING

Find a partner to help rally your campus around student success

What are the most productive next steps to continue increasing college completion rates on your campus? How can you engage everyone on campus—including current students, staff, faculty, and administration—to help more students achieve their educational goals?

Ruffalo Noel Levitz has helped colleges and universities throughout North America to increase college completion rates. To achieve your desired level, our consultants partner with you to assess your current retention level, generate buy-in with key campus personnel, and to develop collaborative, data-informed strategies.

Tap into decades of experience

When you work with our retention consultants, you gain an experienced partner. We work with you side-by-side to gather and analyze data that you can act on immediately to set retention priorities and create initiatives that have the greatest impact on persistence. Draw on our experience and expertise to:

- Assess your institutional retention strategy for any gaps and opportunities
- Identify factors that put students at risk of dropping out
- Uncover meaningful data about your students that point to specific actions that are needed
- Benchmark your outcomes and retention programs with those of similar institutions
- Get faculty more involved in student retention
- Energize the work of retention committees
- Create data-informed strategic action plans for improving college completion/graduation rates
- Integrate your retention action plans with recruitment and marketing activities and campuswide strategic enrollment planning
- Strengthen accreditation efforts
- Apply for and utilize Title III and Title V grants

For state universities and community colleges, we also have experience with meeting requirements for performance-based funding.

ASK FOR AN ON-CAMPUS RETENTION ANALYSIS

Ready to get started? Invite one of our experienced consultants to your campus to conduct a customized evaluation of your retention efforts, including a collaborative planning session to outline specific next steps your institution can take to increase completion rates based on the findings. To schedule a consultation, call 800.876.1117 or email ContactUs@RuffaloNL.com.

SATISFACTION-PRIORITIES ASSESSMENTS

Strengthen the quality of student life and learning on your campus by using Ruffalo Noel Levitz Satisfaction-Priorities Surveys

Successful campuses continuously strive to improve the quality of the student experience. In order to do that, you need to know where to focus your efforts.

The Ruffalo Noel Levitz Satisfaction-Priorities Surveys help you pinpoint those challenges and priorities. They allow you to look at your institution inside and outside of the classroom, so you can analyze a wide spectrum of issues that affect the student experience. You'll see a clear picture of what you need to do now to improve student life, learning, and success.

Precise, comprehensive, and customizable

Our satisfaction-priorities surveys have been taken by more than 4,900,000 students at 2,600 institutions, giving you access to exceptionally valid and varied national benchmarks. Each of these surveys includes the option of adding customized, campus-specific items:

Student Satisfaction Inventory™

The national standard in satisfaction assessment, the Student Satisfaction Inventory is ideal for traditional-aged undergraduate students.

Institutional Priorities Survey™

The companion survey to the Student Satisfaction Inventory, this instrument assesses the satisfaction and priorities of students as seen by administrators, faculty, and staff, offering a valuable comparison to your student data.

Adult Learner Inventory™

The Adult Learner Inventory is designed for students 25 years and older enrolled in undergraduate programs at adult-learning-focused institutions. The survey is based on the Principles of Effectiveness for Serving Adult Learners from CAEL (Council for Adult and Experiential Learning) and is part of the ALFI Toolkit.

Adult Student Priorities Survey™

Also for students 25 and older, the Adult Student Priorities Survey is ideal for graduate and undergraduate students as well as adult students in weekend, evening, and continuing education courses.

Priorities Survey for Online Learners™

The Priorities Survey for Online Learners is the only satisfaction-priorities assessment tool designed specifically for students in online distance learning programs.

Parent Satisfaction Inventory™

This survey reveals the satisfaction and priorities of the parents of currently enrolled students at four-year colleges and universities. Find out how to better meet parent expectations by addressing their top priorities and issues.

SEE SURVEY SAMPLES AND ORDER ONLINE

Find more information online at www.noellevitz.com/StudentSatisfaction.

Ruffalo Noel Levitz provides consulting to assist with data interpretation.

RETENTION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM *PLUS*

Use these early-alert student surveys and motivational assessments to increase college completion rates and student success

The early-alert Retention Management System *Plus* (RMS *Plus*) is a comprehensive suite of student success surveys and analytics that help you identify which individual undergraduates are most at risk, gauge students' receptivity to assistance in key areas, and connect at-risk students to relevant campus services.

The resulting reports from these assessments give you actionable summary data for the entire class, for specific subpopulations, and for each individual student to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of your student interventions.

Find out how to strengthen student persistence and completion at the most critical times in the student experience

The following are all part of the RMS *Plus*. By using all four of these early-alert research tools, you'll stay in touch with your students' needs, interests, motivations, and challenges while encouraging their continued progress toward college completion:

College Student Inventory™

Prioritizes student interventions more efficiently by assessing the strengths and challenges of each incoming cohort and each individual incoming student. Administered before or early in a student's first term.

Mid-Year Student Assessment™

Equips you to strengthen student persistence by identifying changes in students' needs at the midpoint of their first year. This is a follow-up post-test for the College Student Inventory.

Second-Year Student Assessment™

Prioritizes the concerns of the second-year cohort as a group as well as the specific needs of individual, at-risk students. You can administer this assessment prior to, during, or immediately following the first term of the second year of college or at the end of the freshman year.

Student Retention Predictor™

Identifies the statistical likelihood that each incoming student will persist based on institution-specific predictive modeling and in-depth analytics.

Save time and effort identifying and prioritizing students' needs

- Take advantage of efficient and convenient online survey administration and reporting
- Use predictive modeling to identify campus- and student-specific risk factors
- Receive individualized action plans for each student, itemizing specific ways to help each student be successful
- Receive detailed reports of each cohort's strengths and challenges for campuswide retention planning

SEE SURVEY SAMPLES AND ORDER ONLINE

Find more information at www.noellevitz.com/RetentionManagementSystem.
Ruffalo Noel Levitz provides consulting to assist with data interpretation.

STUDENT RETENTION PREDICTOR™

Gauge the precise likelihood of each student persisting and the factors that may be putting them at risk using in-depth analytics

The Student Retention Predictor combines your institutional enrollment data and data from our early-alert and motivational surveys (see previous page) into a powerful statistical model that delivers the most comprehensive student retention analysis and advising program available to higher education.

This highly advanced predictive model shows you the probability of persistence for each incoming student and the factors that may be putting them at risk. You receive a full range of student data that you can use for everything from campuswide retention planning to individual student interventions.

Give everyone on campus a powerful tool for increasing student success

The Student Retention Predictor is truly a campuswide student retention tool, strengthening campus retention planning, student retention reporting, and individual interventions. Use it to:

- Identify at-risk students, using a numeric retention score (specific to your campus)
- Guide student retention planning using a wealth of precise data, normed for your institution
- Prioritize your student retention initiatives and interventions
- Gather data needed to satisfy accreditation and other accountability requirements
- Provide advisors and counselors with valuable data for student interventions
- Provide valuable data to members of student affairs, academic affairs, housing, athletics, and other key areas so they can better serve students

Manage your analytics data from the online Retention Data Center

Our secure, online Retention Data Center makes it easy for you to manage the data from the Student Retention Predictor as well as your other Retention Management System *Plus* components. Customize your data so you can:

- Prioritize your incoming students based on their retention scores, and find out how many students are expected to persist in each segment
- Run key strategic reports summarizing the risk data on your new class
- Customize the scope of student records included in your reports
- Tailor your reports so they include the exact information you want
- Provide advisors with highlighted information for one student or an entire subpopulation, broken down by demographic, academic, risk factors, student recommendations, or other categories

FREE DEMONSTRATION

Send an email to ContactUs@RuffaloNL.com to request an online demonstration of the Student Retention Predictor or call 800.876.1117.

MORE RETENTION RESOURCES

Find additional, customizable surveys for campus research in The Research Toolkit™

The Research Toolkit gives you an efficient, affordable, and helpful resource for conducting campus research. This series of research tools covers a wide range of common research topics, including student retention. Each instrument thoroughly covers its topic and data is provided to campus in an organized tabulation report that you can put to use immediately.

Available research instruments that help with retention include:

- Withdrawing Student Survey, for students who leave your campus before graduation
- Residence Hall Survey, which assesses residence hall conditions and residence life programming
- Senior Survey, which assesses student life and learning in the student's final year
- Customized Cohort Surveys, which assess student life and learning for any cohort you choose

In addition, Ruffalo Noel Levitz offers custom research projects to study any area related to student retention and enrollment.

To learn more, visit www.noellevitz.com/ResearchToolkit and www.noellevitz.com/CustomResearch

National Conference on Student Recruitment, Marketing, and Retention

The Ruffalo Noel Levitz National Conference on Student Recruitment, Marketing, and Retention is the most comprehensive conference on enrollment management. Each summer, presenters share successful strategies, new technologies, and campus programs that you can adapt to your own institution.

Topics include:

- Student success
- Strategic enrollment planning
- Admissions
- Student communications
- Campus marketing and positioning
- Financial aid
- Web and social media strategies
- Developing your staff
- Technologies to improve enrollment efficiency

Ruffalo Noel Levitz also offers student retention workshops, webinars, and presentations throughout each academic year, including sessions at many higher education meetings. Each year, we present to more than 4,000 educators from institutions throughout North America and beyond.

To learn more, visit www.noellevitz.com/events

MORE RETENTION RESOURCES

Retention Excellence Awards

The Lee Noel and Randi Levitz Retention Excellence Awards program was established in 1989 to honor the retention achievements of postsecondary institutions throughout the United States and Canada.

Each year, Ruffalo Noel Levitz offers an award to campuses which have displayed exceptional achievement and/or improvement in the realm of student retention. Not only is this award a testament to their dedication to meeting and exceeding institutional enrollment goals, but increased student retention speaks to their devotion to student success. The awards are given out at the National Conference on Student Recruitment, Marketing, and Retention.

To learn more, visit www.noellelvitz.com/RetentionAwards

Financial aid research to analyze student retention on your campus

What factors are really affecting student persistence at your campus? Ruffalo Noel Levitz can analyze your historical institutional data to uncover the extent to which financial aid may be triggering student attrition.

To learn more, visit www.noellelvitz.com/FinancialAidServices

Student retention papers and research

Keep an eye on changing student perspectives and changing campus practices with Ruffalo Noel Levitz papers and research. Examples include:

- National Freshman Attitudes Reports
- National Student Satisfaction and Priorities Reports
- National Second-Year Student Attitudes Reports
- Student Retention Indicators Reports
- Student Retention Practices Reports
- White Paper: *Linking Student Satisfaction and Retention*
- White Paper: *A New Way to Measure Student Success*

To find these reports and others, visit www.noellelvitz.com/StudentRetentionPapers

MORE RETENTION RESOURCES

Retention Revenue Estimator

Quickly estimate the revenue you can gain by increasing retention with our simple, auto-calculating worksheets. All you do is fill in a few key numbers—the worksheet does the rest.

In addition, you can compute your return on investment (ROI) from new retention initiatives by downloading an ROI worksheet.

To download the worksheets (PDFs), visit www.noellevitz.com/RetentionRevenueEstimator

Graduate course: Effective Retention in Higher Education

Through a partnership with Bay Path University, Ruffalo Noel Levitz offers online graduate programs in enrollment management, including a course in effective retention management. Whether you are new or experienced in student retention, you will gain the knowledge and information you need to advance to the next level.

To learn more, visit www.noellevitz.com/GraduateStudy

Strategies newsletter and the Ruffalo Noel Levitz blog

Ruffalo Noel Levitz regularly sends out newsletters, reports, and other information to keep campus professionals informed of current trends and best practices. This includes postings from the Ruffalo Noel Levitz blog.

To sign up for the newsletter, visit www.noellevitz.com/SubscribeToNewsletter

CASE STUDY

Indiana University East

Indiana University East sought to raise retention rates to offset a decline in enrollment that followed the university's transition from a community-based two- and four-year institution to a traditional baccalaureate and master's degree university.

To accomplish this goal, the university partnered with Ruffalo Noel Levitz to develop a strategic retention plan with seven main areas of focus. The university hired a retention coordinator to collect and manage data, changed its advising model to align with the needs of more traditional four-year students, and developed a mandatory new student orientation and a mandatory first-year seminar class.

Results

Attitudes changed and the campus became retention-minded with student success and graduation as the focal point. First-to-second-year retention rates rose for full-time, part-time, and transfer students: full-time increased from 59.7 percent to 61.7 percent, part-time from 30.8 percent to 35 percent, and transfer students from 64.7 percent to 65 percent. All of these improvements were realized in the first year of implementing the plan. The overall fall-to-spring retention rate in the following year also increased. Going forward, the university anticipates continued success as its long-term retention plan calls for improving its graduation rate by at least ten percentage points.

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“We were able to get the entire campus and faculty to participate in these positive changes.

“If a campus needs to take retention seriously, the best way to get an initiative started is by working with [Ruffalo Noel Levitz].

“When working with a major initiative like this, it is always useful to have someone onboard from the outside.””

Larry Richards, PhD
Executive Vice Chancellor
Indiana University East

CASE STUDY

Newman University (Kansas)

Newman University wanted to increase retention rates, especially among first-year students, student-athletes, and international students.

To accomplish these objectives, the university brought in Ruffalo Noel Levitz for retention consulting. Newman analyzed all of its touchpoints with students—including financial aid, student accounts, and residential life—and mobilized its entire campus to build persistence using task forces. Relationships between students, faculty, and staff flourished with everyone focused on the university's mission and retention goals.

Results

Overall retention rates increased seven times over Newman's original goal. Student services, such as retention-based Project Care, grew significantly while students, faculty, and staff continue to seek out ways for improvement. The campus continues to be very relationship-driven; according to a recent survey, 100 percent of students reported having fulfilling relationships with faculty and professors.



"If you really buy into retention consulting, it is not just a one-year thing—you'll keep building on your results year after year. It has a cultural effect on a campus.

"Our consultant came in to make things better, not to change us. The campus became a beehive of activity during the implementation of our retention initiatives—it was really the perfect fit."

Rosemary Niedens
Associate Vice President, Academic Services and Student Development
Newman University

CASE STUDY

Trenholm State Technical College (Alabama)

Trenholm State Technical College sought to develop a campuswide retention program to increase the retention rate by three percent a year until it reached the national average. The college also sought to ensure that 90 percent of its faculty, administrators and staff participated in an activity designed to increase awareness of retention strategies and initiatives.

The college enlisted the help of Ruffalo Noel Levitz consultants and products to assist with developing and providing retention strategies for the entire campus that addressed academic advising, student satisfaction, professional development and customer service, and orientation.

Results

The college's retention rate increased from 37.9 percent to 43 percent in the first year, to 45.7 percent in the second year, and is estimated to reach 48 percent this year. In addition, the college has trained 98 percent of faculty and staff in the importance and application of retention strategies.



“We are a two-year technical college with 34 programs that lead to associate degrees and certificates. We had to work hard to change the culture of the college to understand the importance of retention and its effects on our students and the institution. Our consultants were able to bring their expertise as leading retention specialists to our college and work with us to help the entire campus—faculty, students, and staff—understand the importance of retention to the institution.

“Before [Ruffalo Noel Levitz], we were mainly focused on bringing students in. Now, because of our retention success, we have other institutions in our system and state calling us to see how we did it. We have earned a great deal of respect from our colleagues because of our retention efforts.”

Samuel Munnerlyn
President
Trenholm State Technical College

CASE STUDY

Oral Roberts University (Oklahoma)

Oral Roberts University (ORU) wanted to improve the quality of the first year of college for its freshman students. The university hoped to facilitate better outreach based on students' needs as well as improve student satisfaction and raise retention rates.

To help accomplish these objectives, ORU has administered the Student Satisfaction Inventory (SSI) from Ruffalo Noel Levitz since 2001 to understand the satisfaction level of its students and to understand what issues are important to them. To complement this data, the university administered additional inventories to identify first-year students' strengths and challenges as well as their receptivity to interventions during the first term. Additionally, ORU worked with Ruffalo Noel Levitz on a highly advanced statistical tool to reveal the probability of each of its incoming students persisting as well as individual risk-factors for each of them.

Results

Using the survey and inventory tools has reinforced the value of one-on-one conversations with students by giving ORU staff data to guide meaningful dialogues with students. The report results are easy for students and staff to understand, simplifying the process of connecting students to the campus resources they need to succeed. The data and results have opened the faculty's eyes to the concerns of all students, even those considered academically prepared who would otherwise not receive additional attention and guidance. Collectively, the retention tools have helped ORU's retention rate improve. Most recently, fall-to-fall retention grew from 76.8 percent to 81.6 percent.



"[Ruffalo Noel Levitz] consultants don't come in with pre-conceived ideas and solutions—they listen for what's going on in the moment on your campus and base recommendations off of your goals and your data. Working with them on student surveys and assessments has been key to our success.

"[Ruffalo Noel Levitz] provides recommendations that are research-based, yet broad in approach to campus visions. They take into account people in departments all across campus, discovering goals and developing ways to meet them."



Sheree King
Director of Student Success and Retention
Oral Roberts University

CASE STUDY

Delgado Community College (Louisiana)

Delgado Community College sought to foster student success through strategic initiatives, thereby helping more students to persist from the first semester to the second semester.

Incoming students complete a motivational assessment to assist them in their transition from high school to the demands of college. Using this information, campus leaders are able to proactively reach out to students to address their strengths and challenges academically, personally, and financially. These initiatives take the form of an innovative College Coach program and a series of focused workshops.

Results

Delgado's student success initiatives have demonstrated effectiveness in that more freshmen are continuing to the second semester than in previous years. Students who have been involved in the College Coach initiatives and who have completed the Ruffalo Noel Levitz College Student Inventory (CSI) are engaged by their coaches and are persisting at the college. Most importantly, students are learning new skills and gaining confidence through participation in the college's success programs.

“The [Ruffalo Noel Levitz] retention tools, specifically the College Student Inventory (CSI), fit perfectly with the student services we already had in place and provided a bridge over the gap to students, helping us start conversations.”

Arnel Cosey, PhD
Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs/Executive Dean, City Park Campus
Delgado Community College

CASE STUDY

Catawba Valley Community College (North Carolina)

As part of a five-year strategic plan, Catawba Valley Community College wanted to raise its overall enrollment, increase retention, and increase its enrollment of minority populations to create a welcoming, multicultural environment on campus.

Catawba Valley partnered with Ruffalo Noel Levitz to plan and track its enrollment activities. For the first time, the college identified specific enrollment goals and defined a track to follow for their achievement. Targeting underrepresented populations and establishing a more welcoming campus environment were just two among many initiatives in the plan.

Results

The college now follows a structured, systematic enrollment process that allows it to target the students it wants and needs, and to track its progress. Since starting the project, overall enrollment has risen 13 percent over two years. Within the same timeframe, minority enrollment has risen 11.5 percent. Catawba Valley has seen a persistence increase as well from fall to spring of 5.6 percent, from 75.5 percent to 81.1 percent. Strategic targeting has also allowed Catawba Valley to save money in its marketing by making its marketing and recruitment efforts more efficient and effective.



“Any institution that is going through changes would benefit from a partnership with [Ruffalo Noel Levitz]—it is the best way to create a catalyst for change, to get assistance for change, and to see change occur in a short amount of time.

“Our partnership with [Ruffalo Noel Levitz] allowed me as president to make cultural changes on campus that I would not have been able to do so quickly alone.

“Without partnering with [Ruffalo Noel Levitz], we would not be anywhere close to the progress we’ve made.

“Their consultants are amazing—they’ve helped us organize, implement, and follow strategies that have led to success.”

Garrett Hinshaw, PhD
President
Catawba Valley Community College

ASK FOR A FREE PHONE CONSULTATION

Learn how Ruffalo Noel Levitz consultants can help you address student retention challenges. Ask for a free phone consultation. Send an email to ContactUs@RuffaloNL.com or call 800.876.1117 to schedule your consultation or to ask a question about our services.

About Ruffalo Noel Levitz

Ruffalo Noel Levitz is a nationally recognized consulting firm that focuses on strategic planning for enrollment and student success in higher education. Each year, higher education executives from throughout the United States meet regularly with Ruffalo Noel Levitz to accomplish their goals for student recruitment, marketing, student retention, and strategic enrollment management. Since 1973, the firm has partnered with more than 3,000 colleges and universities throughout North America. The firm offers consulting, custom research, benchmark data, innovative tools and technologies, side-by-side plan development and execution, and resources for professional development.

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