NISTS 2020 | REIMAGINING THE TRANSFER STUDENT EXPERIENCE
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# Exploring the Future of Transfer Student Success: Barriers, Assessment, and Practice Informed Approaches

*Partnerships and Collaboration, Transition Programs and Services*

While current research suggests strategies for increasing retention and graduation (Talbert 2012), many practitioners may be unaware of the value of retaining transfer students. This collaborative session will explore ways to mitigate the barriers that transfer students experience. Participants will discuss a practical approach for improving their support of transfer students and brainstorm ways to address barriers. Attendees will share how they might improve student services, policies, and processes to benefit their transfer students.

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# EXPLORING THE FUTURE OF TRANSFER STUDENT SUCCESS

## *BARRIERS, ASSESSMENT, AND PRACTICE-INFORMED APPROACHES*


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NISTS 2020 ANNUAL CONFERENCE | ATLANTA, GA

# INTRODUCTIONS

- **Thomas Grites, PhD**
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# RATIONALE

- Historically overlooked and neglected
- Not clearly defined
- Too diverse a population
- Too many assumptions
- Too little time
- They are beginning to matter (metrics, performance-based funding)
- It’s the right thing to do

# THEY DIDN'T COUNT

- **Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS)**
- The retention rate measures the percentage of first-year students who had persisted in or completed their educational program a year later {at the same institution}
- These data have been collected since 2003

# WHY NOT?

- This calculation is derived from the federal Student Right To Know and Campus Security Act of 1990, which defined the **graduation rate** as the “percentage of full-time, first-time, degree-seeking enrolled students who graduate after 150 percent of the normal time for completion…” {at the same institution} (Hagedorn, 9)
- Excludes: **TRANSFERS**, part-time students, non-degree students, other than fall term admits

# BUT THINGS ARE CHANGING

- In 2015-16, IPEDS began to report graduation rates in four cohorts, not just one
  - full-time, first-time
  - part-time, first-time
  - full-time, non-first-time
  - part-time, non-first time
- However, the accepted calculation of retention rates has remained the same since c1990

# …AND…

- National Student Clearinghouse
- The **persistence rate** is the percentage of students who return to college at **any institution** for their second year, while the **retention rate** is the percentage of students who return to **the same institution** for their second year; data collected since 2005
- Includes all institutions attended (transfer students are included in the data)
- Other data resources:
  - Student Achievement Measure (SAM)
  - College Scorecard

# STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT MEASURE

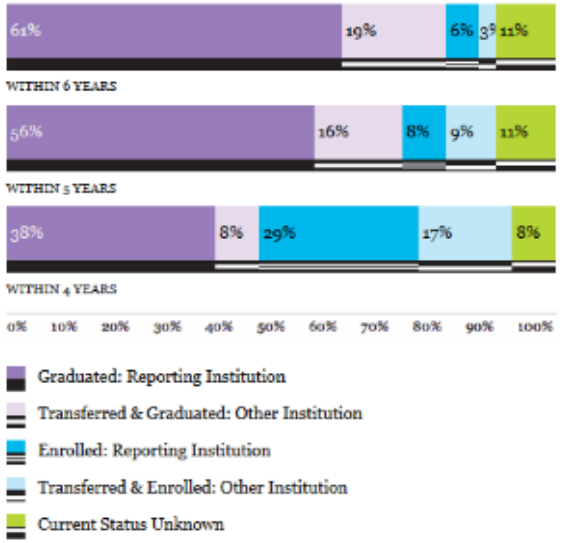
sam student achievement measure

*More outcomes for more students.*
www.studentachievementmeasure.org

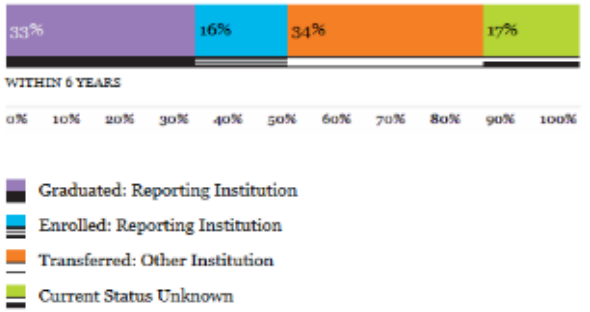
## SAM Chart Examples

Both SAM models report multiple student outcomes using a horizontal, stacked bar chart.

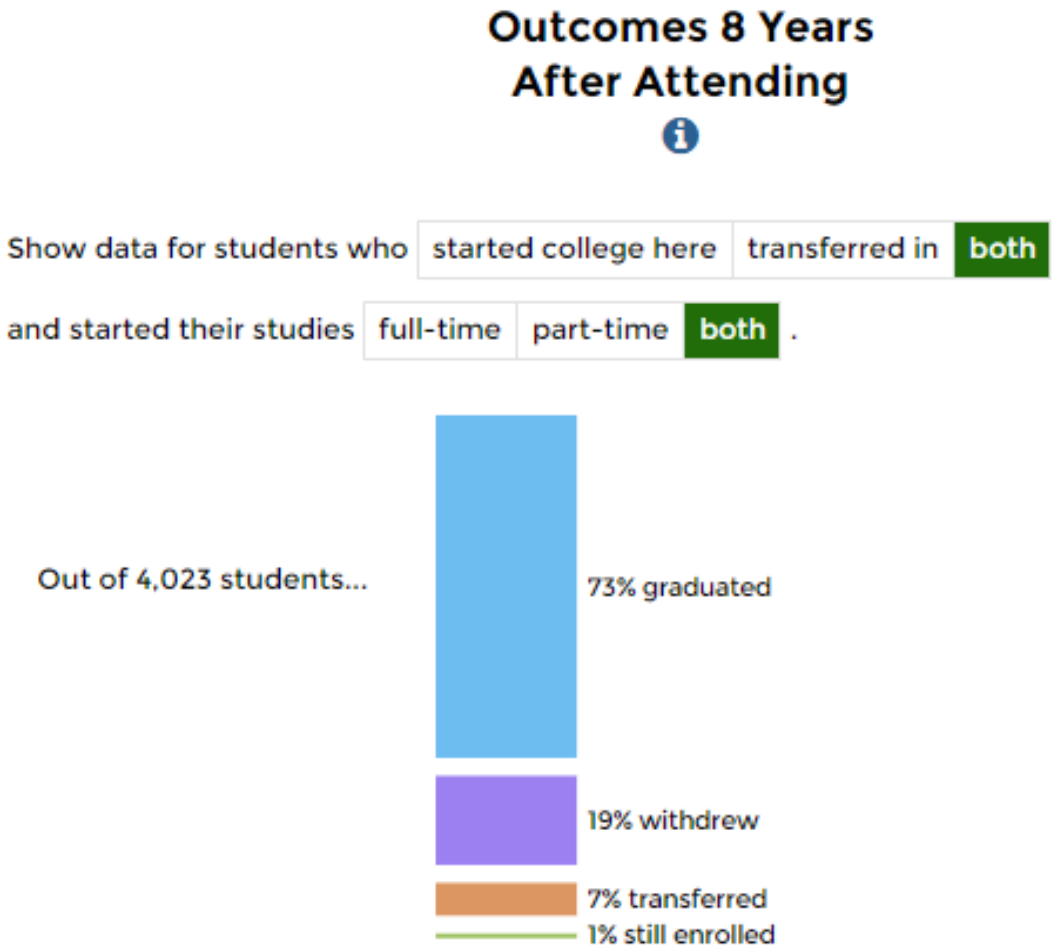
**SAM Institution Example: Students Seeking a Bachelor's Degree**




**SAM Institution Example: Students Seeking an Associate Degree or Certificate**



# COLLEGE SCORECARD (NEW): STOCKTON UNIVERSITY



# BARRIERS

- **Transfer of Credits** (equivalencies, timing of receipt and evaluation of transcripts, credit vs. competency question)
- Definitive **“Pathways”** (articulation, sequencing, pre-requisites, State policies)
- Limited **Programs/Services** as transitional experiences (scholarships, Honors, learning communities, Orientation/Registration, seminar courses)
- Unforeseen **Expectations** (academic workload, social integration, major/course availability, other differences)
- Absence of a **Culture of Transfer** (welcoming atmosphere, designated office for assistance, strength/availability of academic advising personnel and practices, advocacy)

# SO, WHAT CAN WE DO?

- Responding to FTIC PBM, USF created Office of Academic Advocacy to increase FY retention and four-year FTIC graduation rate
  - Nearly 60% of our students are transfers
    - State excess hours did/do count transfers
    - Institutional goals to graduate more students
  - The office's framework was applied to transfer efforts, as a means to get ahead of the almost certain Florida transfer metrics
    - **And because it is the right thing to do for transfer students**

# USF'S APPROACH - ACADEMIC ADVOCACY

- Case Management model
  - Academic Advocacy is a different approach than Advising

- Rubric
  - Risk Stratification
- Outreach Protocol
  - Differentiated Care Pathways

  - (Venit, E., 2015)

# RUBRIC - LOW

- Student exhibits behaviors which **may** create concerns for their academic progression, if not addressed
  - Poor class attendance
  - Low/failing mid-term grades
  - Major reselection with viable alternative
  - Could benefit from better study skills, tutoring
  - Major/career incongruence
  - Random failed classes

# RUBRIC - MEDIUM

- Student experiences barriers that **directly impact** their academic performance, putting the student at risk of excess hours or attrition
  - Moderate/persistent wellness concerns
  - Transportation issues
  - Employment conflicts / financial concerns / food insecurity
  - Excess withdrawal attempt
  - Personal conflicts
  - Major reselection with limited alternative options

# RUBRIC - HIGH

- Student has multiple complex issues that **will lead** to a separation from the university if not addressed
  - Elevated wellness/medical concerns
  - Poor grades while on academic probation
  - Housing insecurity
  - Death of family member
  - International student at risk of losing sponsorship or status
  - Victim of violent crime

# OUTREACH PROTOCOL

| Indicator | Initial Outreach | Next Steps | Continued Outreach | Next Steps | Final Outreach | Last Steps |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Low | Send email<br><br>Create Task in Archivum for continued outreach reminder | If student responds to email, delete Task<br><br>If origin of student concern was based on OAA research/outreach, create a referral to self | If after 5 days no response is received, send follow up email<br><br>Continue Task reminders in Archivum or manage referral outcome | If student responds to email, delete Task and open a Referral/ Case | If after an additional 5 days no response is received, close referral in Archivum | N/A |
| Medium | Send email<br><br>Create Task in Archivum for continued outreach reminder | If student responds to email, delete Task, and open a Case<br><br>-Unless-<br><br>If origin of student concern was based on OAA research/outreach, create a referral to self | If after 5 days no response is received, send follow up email<br><br>Continue Task reminders in Archivum or manage referral outcome | If student responds to email, delete Task, and open a Referral/ Case<br><br>Consult with Leslie to ensure thorough assessment<br><br>Look for campus partner connections in continued outreach | If after an additional 5 days, no response is received, make final phone call student | If student finally responds, open a Case<br><br>Make appropriate referral to SOCAT or campus partner based on lack of response and close referral in Archivum |
| High | Send email<br><br>Create Task in Archivum for continued outreach reminder | If student responds to email, delete Task, and open a Case<br><br>-Unless-<br><br>If origin of student concern was based on OAA research/outreach, create referral to self | If after 2 days, no response is received, send follow up email<br><br>Continue Task reminders in Archivum or manage referral outcome | If student responds to email, delete Task, and open a Referral/ Case<br><br>Consult with Leslie to ensure thorough assessment<br><br>Look for campus partner connections in continued outreach | If after an additional 3 days no response is received, make final phone call | If student finally responds, open a Case<br><br>Make appropriate referral to SOCAT or campus partner based on lack of response, and close referral in Archivum |

# SOURCES OF INTERACTIONS

- Predictive Factors
- Referrals
  - Campus Partners / Care Team
  - Instructors
  - Students Self-Referring
  - University Community

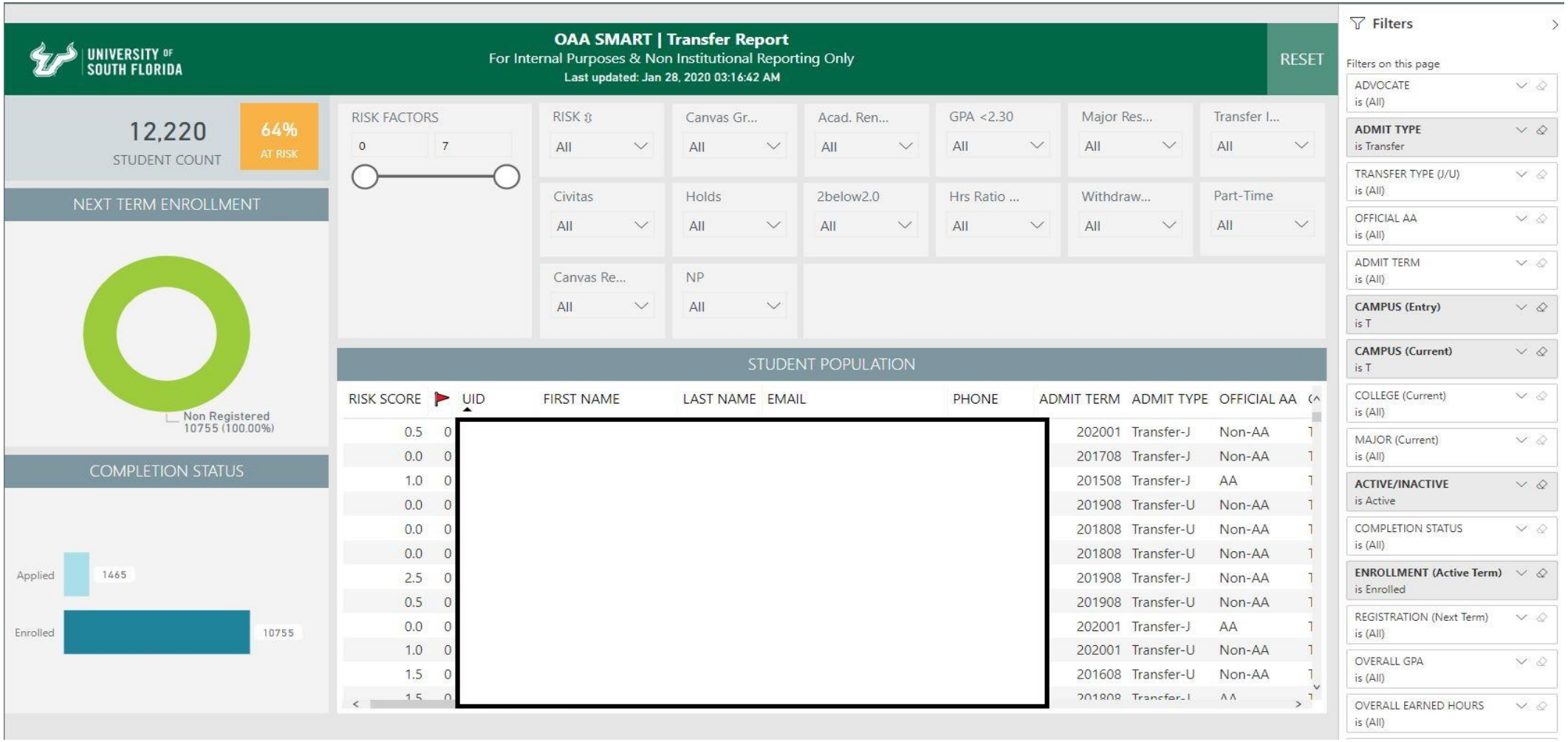
# PREDICTIVE FACTORS

- Canvas Grade Reporting (live)
- Not Registered
- Canceled for Non-payment Reports
- Holds Queries
- Midterm Grades
- Withdrawal Attempts
- Academic Standing
- Academic Probation
- Number of Prior Institutions
- Civitas Predictive Analytics Platform (2014)
- **PowerBI**

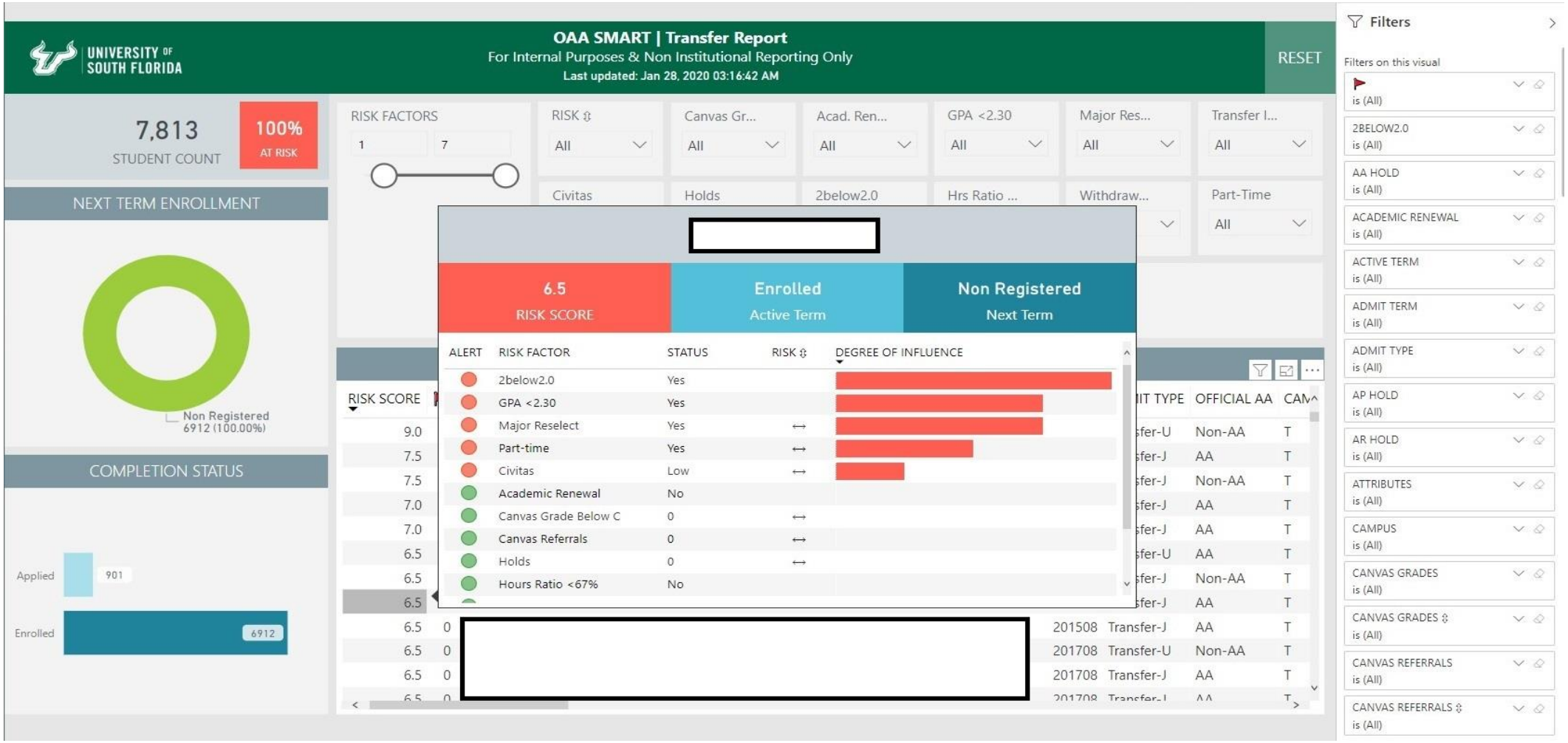
# POWERBI

- Dedicated technology resource (funding)
- Pilot Group
- Data access (sources)
- Streamlines multiple reports/sources of historical and live data
- Analyze multiple risk factors
- See data connections/trends in new ways
- Add “weight” to risk based on time of the semester
  - Dynamic Risk Score
- OAA SMART

# OAA STUDENT MONITORING AND RISK TRACKING



# OAA STUDENT MONITORING AND RISK TRACKING



# DYNAMIC RISK SCORE

- Recognized risk factors may be more critical at certain points in a semester, more weight is added to original risk score
- Weighted risk scores go from .5 to 2
- Split semester into increments, and 2 weeks after the semester ends
- Fall & Spring semesters
  - Registration holds carry a heavier weight at the end of semester, going into a new semester, but not at the beginning of a new semester as registration have already been accomplished
  - Withdrawal attempts increase in weight during the first weeks of the semester, but decrease once the withdrawal period has passed

# DYNAMIC RISK SCORE

| RISK INDICATOR | ADMIT TYPE | SEMESTER | Weeks 1-3 | Weeks 4-8 | Weeks 9-12 | Weeks 13-16 | Week 17 | Week 18 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Civitas Persistence Probability | FTIC & Transfer | Fall & Spring | 0.5 | 0.5 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| CANVAS Grade Below Average | FTIC & Transfer | Fall & Spring | 0.5 | 1 | 1.5 | 2 | 0.5 | 0.5 |
| Withdrawal Limit | FTIC & Transfer | Fall & Spring | 1 | 1 | 1.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 | 0.5 |
| 2below2.0 | FTIC & Transfer | Fall & Spring | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Hours Ratio <67% | FTIC & Transfer | Fall & Spring | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| GPA <2.30 | FTIC & Transfer | Fall & Spring | 1.5 | 1 | 1 | 1.5 | 1 | 1.5 |
| Major Reselect | FTIC & Transfer | Fall & Spring | 1.5 | 1.5 | 0.5 | 2 | 2 | 2 |
| Holds | FTIC & Transfer | Fall & Spring | 0.5 | 0.5 | 1 | 1.5 | 1.5 | 1.5 |
| Part-time | Transfer Only | Fall & Spring | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Academic Renewal | Transfer Only | Fall & Spring | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Transfer Institution Count | Transfer Only | First Year | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |

# WHEN THEY NEED IT MOST

**Week 2**

- Pull fall cohort report and send welcome email to students
- Receive list of students cancelled due to nonpayment (CF)
- Send outreach to CF students

**Week 5**

- Begin reviewing Canvas grades through Power BI. This will continue bi-weekly and conclude in Week 14
- Export an Excel list of students who have grade(s) below 70% and save on the P: Drive; remove duplicate students to ensure they do not receive more than one email communication per month regarding grades

**Week 10**

- Pull midterm grade report
- Send withdrawal deadline email to students who have a C- or worse for midterm grade

**Week 11**

- Start of spring OR summer/fall registration
- Outreach to student cohort regarding registration when all registration windows have opened

**Week 14**

- Contact non-registered students via phone and email to encourage registration; this outreach campaign continues through the end of the first week of the spring semester

**Week 16 (once final grades post)**

- Congratulations email sent to students who have a 2.0 or higher
- Outreach sent to spring and summer admits who are on deferred academic probation (DP) or AP
- Outreach sent to fall students on AP

# CONCLUSION

- “This spring we mark the ten-year anniversary of the final report of the Student Success Task Force in 2010, which launched the student success movement at USF . . . The three main recommendations of the task force have been implemented with great success: institutionalizing the student success effort with the creation and growth of our unit, transforming the culture at USF to put student needs at the center of our efforts, and **developing the data capacity and insight to enable us to identify and help students when they need it most** . . . Our achievement is reflected in record rising retention and graduation rates . . . and our extraordinary success in narrowing and eliminating achievement gaps by race/ethnicity and socioeconomic status.” [Dr. Paul Dosal]

# CONCLUSION

- Transfer performance metrics are likely coming, nationally
- Find a process that helps prioritize and mitigate your workflow
  - Stratify risk
  - Differentiate care
  - Case manage with campus partners those that need it most
- Work towards streamlining technology to tell deeper and more relevant data stories for predictive interventions
- Consider how/what risk is dynamic and when at your institution, and create a calendar of work
- Being a good steward of current resources (demonstrative)

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