



COOPERATIVE INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH PROGRAM
at the HIGHER EDUCATION RESEARCH INSTITUTE AT UCLA

Tracking Students for Retention

Many campuses are interested in understanding why students might not persist through their first year.

The online version of the YFCY is designed to be administered to all first-year students who matriculated at your institution this past fall, regardless of current enrollment status. Those who left school are presented with questions that tell you what they are doing now, why they left, and what they plan to be doing the subsequent fall.

The first question on the online version of the YFCY asks students:

“For Spring 2013, were you still a student at [your institution name here]?”

If the student answers “Yes” he or she proceeds to the YFCY as normal. If he or she answers “No,” the student is directed to the retention questions. The specific items are included at the end of this handout.

In order to make use of these retention questions, simply include the names and emails of ALL students who matriculated in the fall in your email file when preparing your YFCY sample. The retention questions are not available to institutions participating in a paper administration of the YFCY.

When you receive your YFCY reporting, your Institutional Profile will contain a separate report with results for students who indicated they were no longer at your institution, detailing their responses to the items below.

YFCY Retention Questions:

1. *For Spring 2013, were you still enrolled at [insert institution name here]?*

Yes
No

(skip logic—if yes, then go to traditional YFCY #1; If No, then go to YFCY addition #2 below)

2. *In Spring 2013, did you take classes at a different college/university?*

Yes

No

(skip logic, if yes, then go to #3 below; if No, then go to #4)

3. *Which of the following best describes your situation in Spring 2013?*

(Mark one)

Enrolled full-time in a four-year college/university

Enrolled part-time in a four-year college/university

Enrolled full-time in a two-year college/university

Enrolled part-time in a two-year college/university

4. *Did you do any of the following in the Spring of 2013?*

(Mark all that apply)

Worked for pay full-time

Worked for pay part-time

Volunteered full-time

Volunteered part-time

Looked for work but did not find a job

Sought medical attention

Travelled

Stayed at home to be with or start a family

None of the above

5. *Indicate the importance you personally of each of the following reasons for leaving:*

(Mark one for each row)

[Response choices *Very Important, Somewhat Important, Not at all important*]

Academic probation/suspension/expulsion

Dissatisfied with grades

Not challenged academically

Courses were too difficult

Preferred major was not offered

Too many required course

I did not feel a sense of belonging to the campus

There is a lot of tension on campus (e.g., racial/ethnic, sexual orientation, gender)

Location of the college not right for me

Size of the college not right for me

Dissatisfied with social/cultural opportunities

***Indicate the importance you personally of each of the following reasons for leaving
(Continued)***

I was not ready for college
Experienced health problems
Did not feel welcome due to my race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, etc.
Family crisis
Always intended to transfer
Felt lonely or homesick

Wanted to be closer to home
My awarded financial aid was inadequate
Could not afford to continue to attend
Encountered unexpected expenses
Needed to make more money
Could not find a job to help pay for college

Too difficult to balance having a job and going to college
Wanted work experience
Wanted to start or focus on my own business
Did not need a degree for my current or intended job

6. Do you plan to return to [insert institution name here]?

Yes
No

7. What do you plan to be doing in Fall of 2013?

(Mark all that apply)

Attending a four-year college/university full-time
Attending a four-year college/university part-time
Attending a two-year college/university full time
Attending a two-year college/university part time
Working for pay full-time
Working for pay part-time
Volunteering
Looking for work
Receiving medical treatments
Travelling
Staying at home to be with or start a family
I have no plans for Fall 2013
None of the above