Public Abstract

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Graduation Term:SP 2015

Department:Educational Leadership & Policy Analysis

Degree:EdD

Title:Impact of Freshman-Year Alcohol Violations on Retention at a Regional, Midwestern, 4-Year, Public Higher Education Institution

Retention is a critical topic on campuses across the nation. Numerous studies have examined how alcohol consumption affects retention but little to no research exists regarding the impact of alcohol violations on retention.

This quantitative study examined over 7,000 freshmen at a regional, Midwestern, 4-year, public higher education institution. The participants were separated as either having a freshman-year alcohol violation or not having a freshman-year alcohol violation and then analyzed. The results of the study found that there was not a significant difference in retention for those with a freshman-year alcohol violation compared to those without a freshman-year violation. However, when looking only at those participants with a freshman-year alcohol violation, a logistic regression analysis showed that high school GPA, minority racial status, amount of financial aid disbursed, not receiving loans, and not being Pell-eligible were all significant factors indicating a participant was more likely to return to school. However, this model only accounted for 18% of the variance in retention and future studies will need to include more variables to account for more variance in retention.

The results of this study are valuable to all administrators at higher education institutions, especially student conduct administrators. The researcher proposes higher education institutions review policy and programming as it relates to alcohol education and alcohol violation sanctions to increase retention rates among alcohol violators.