

COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENT RETENTION:  
AN EXAMINATION OF STUDENT PRE-ENTRY ATTRIBUTES,  
ACADEMIC EXPERIENCES, AND SOCIAL EXPERIENCES AND THE  
RELATIONSHIP TO FIRST-YEAR PERSISTENCE

Cynthia Adamson

Dr. Cynthia MacGregor, Dissertation Supervisor

ABSTRACT

This study investigated the extent that the attributes of incoming students and their subsequent academic and social interactions at an institution are related to community college student retention. Student data from a cohort of first-time students ( $N = 1089$ ) attending a community college in southwest Missouri was analyzed to examine variables related to fall-to-fall student retention. Predictors of first-year retention included receiving federal Pell grants, high school GPA, receiving a C or higher in college orientation, first semester college GPA, and receiving a C or higher in general psychology, general biology, and U.S. History. The findings highlight the importance of college readiness and value of federal financial aid programs for community college student persistence.

*Keywords: student retention, persistence, community college, college success, college readiness*