

# **Non-Returning Student Survey 2013 Cohort**



**Southeastern Louisiana University  
Office of Institutional Research**

**March 2016**

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## **Introduction**

The first Strategic Priority for Southeastern is “To engage a diverse population of learners with powerful experiences.” In order to better understand the reasons why students leave Southeastern before graduating, Institutional Research conducted the Non-Returning Student Survey, a phone survey of Fall 2013 cohort students who were not enrolled in Fall 2014. Students who had been suspended were excluded from the sample. This report details the results of the Non-Returning Student Survey.

## **Method**

### **Participants**

The population for this study were the 604 students of the Fall 2013 cohort who were not enrolled in Fall 2014 and were not currently suspended. The survey yielded a response rate of 51.3%.




## **Procedure**

The Office of Institutional Research worked with Enrollment Services to identify students to conduct the phone survey. These students were trained and supervised by Institutional Research staff. The survey was conducted from 6 pm - 9 pm Monday through Thursday.

## **Instrument**

The survey first asked a series of questions to determine if students planned on returning to Southeastern in the future, and if they had intended to obtain a degree when they began at Southeastern. Respondents who indicated they did not plan on returning to Southeastern were given a list of possible reasons why a student might leave college, and were asked to rate whether it was a major reason, a minor reason, or not a reason at all in their decision to leave Southeastern. Students who indicated that they did plan to continue their education at Southeastern were first asked when they planned to return to Southeastern. They were then given a list of possible reasons why a student might stop attending Southeastern for a while, and were asked to rate whether each item was a major reason, a minor reason, or not a reason at all in their decision to “stop-out.” The final section asked for demographic information that is not collected as a part of the application or registration process, such as the number of children a student has and how far they have to travel to campus. The entire survey can be found in Appendix A.

## Results

The first set of questions was to determine whether students were: 1) Drop-Outs, those students who no longer plan to continue their education at Southeastern, including those who plan on or have transferred elsewhere; 2) Stop-outs, those students who plan to return to Southeastern at some point. Based on these definitions, 68% (n=131) of the respondents were Drop-Outs and 32% (n=61) were Stop-outs.

### Stop Outs

The majority of the Stop-outs (33%, n=20) plan on returning to Southeastern in Spring 2015, while 38% (n=23) planned on returning to Southeastern within the next year. Ten percent (n=6) plan on returning within the next two years and 20% (n=12) are not sure when they will return.

Next, Stop-outs were asked to indicate whether each of thirteen possible reasons was a Major Reason, a Minor Reason, or Not a Reason for their decision to stop attending Southeastern for a while. “Needed to earn more money” was the item with the largest endorsement, with 41% of respondents indicating it was a major reason and 18% indicating it was a minor reason they stopped attending Southeastern. This was followed by “Had family responsibilities to take care of” which resulted in 33% citing the statement as a major reason and 16% citing a minor reason.

Table 2 provides the percentage of endorsement for Major Reason, Minor Reason, and Not a Reason for each item.

**Table 2**  
**Stop-Out Reasons**

	<b>Major Reason</b>	<b>Minor Reason</b>	<b>Not a Reason</b>
Needed to earn more money	41.0%	18.0%	41.0%
Had family responsibilities to take care of	32.8%	16.4%	50.8%
Academic problems	14.8%	31.1%	54.1%
Needed a break from school	8.2%	32.8%	59.0%
Work interfered with school	23.0%	16.4%	59.0%
Did not receive enough financial aid	19.7%	16.4%	63.9%
Tuition & fees too high	19.7%	13.1%	67.2%
Encountered unexpected educational expenses	13.1%	13.1%	73.8%
Health reasons	8.2%	14.8%	75.4%
Could not schedule the classes you needed	1.6%	18.0%	80.3%
The cost of gas was too high to commute	8.2%	9.8%	82.0%
Religious obligation	3.3%	6.6%	90.2%
Military obligation	8.2%	90.2%	98.4%

**Financial Analysis- Stop Outs**

The following table shows financial aid amounts for students who indicated that financial reasons were a reasons they stopped out.

<b>Pell Grant</b>		<b>Average</b>	<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Maximum</b>	<b>Mode</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>% of Pell Grant recipients</b>
Needed to earn more money	<i>Major Reason</i>	\$3,346	\$706	\$5,645	\$5,645	16	26.2%
	<i>Minor Reason</i>	\$3,528	\$2,823	\$5,645	\$2,823	4	6.6%
Encountered unexpected							



Honors Scholarships		Average	Minimum	Maximum	Mode	Count	% of Honors Scholarship recipients
Needed to earn more money	<i>Major Reason</i>	\$966	\$900	\$1,000	\$1,000	3	4.9%
	<i>Minor Reason</i>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Encountered unexpected educational expenses	<i>Major Reason</i>	\$900	\$900	\$900	N/A	1	1.6%
	<i>Minor Reason</i>	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	N/A	1	1.6%

TOPS		Average	Minimum	Maximum	Mode	Count	% of TOPS recipients
Needed to earn more money	<i>Major Reason</i>	\$2,393	\$400	\$4,362	\$2,181	12	19.7%
	<i>Minor Reason</i>	\$2,452	\$400	\$4,362	\$2,181	9	14.8%
Encountered unexpected educational expenses	<i>Major Reason</i>	\$1,290	\$400	\$2,181	N/A	1	1.6%
	<i>Minor Reason</i>	\$2,776	\$400	\$4,362	\$2,181	7	11.5%
Tuition & fees too high	<i>Major Reason</i>	\$2,261	\$400	\$4,362	\$2,181	4	6.6%
	<i>Minor Reason</i>	\$2,295	\$400	\$4,362	\$2,181	5	8.2%
Did not receive enough financial aid	<i>Major Reason</i>	\$2,247	\$400	\$4,362	\$2,181	5	8.2%
	<i>Minor Reason</i>	\$2,512	\$400	\$4,362	\$2,181	7	11.5%



School	Number of Respondents	Percent of Respondents
Northshore Tech	1	1%
Northwest Vista College	1	1%
Our Lady of Holy Cross	1	1%
Paul Mitchell	1	1%
South Louisiana Community College	1	1%
Southern University @ NO	1	1%
The Highlands in Birmingham	1	1%
the university of wiscousin	1	1%
US Naval academy	1	1%
Xaiver University	1	1%
Yuva College	1	1%

An analysis of National Student Clearinghouse shows 13 community colleges and 15 universities that students enrolled in after attending Southeastern. It represents 79% of drop-outs. The top two- year schools chosen were Delgado Community College (36%) and Baton Rouge Community College (31%). The top four-year schools chosen were Louisiana State University-AG (25%) and University of New Orleans (19%).

Respondents were then asked what was the main reason they decided to attend another school. A combined 29% (n=24) of the respondents indicated Southeastern did not have the major in which they were interested and moving closer to home were reasons they left Southeastern(6%). All the responses can be found in Appendix B.

Next, Drop-outs were asked to indicate whether each of forty-five possible reasons was a Major Reason, a Minor Reason, or Not a Reason for their decision to leave Southeastern. “Decided to attend a different college” was the item with the largest endorsement, with 59% of respondents indicating it was a major reason they left Southeastern. This was followed by “tired of commuting to Southeastern” (21%) and “too much stress” (12%).

Table 4 provides the percentage of endorsement for Major Reason, Minor Reason, and Not a Reason for each item.



	<b>Major Reason</b>	<b>Minor Reason</b>	<b>Not a Reason</b>
Could not find part-time work	4.6%	10.7%	80.9%
Southeastern was too small for you	2.3%	11.5%	80.9%
Had problems scheduling classes	3.8%	10.7%	80.9%
Did not intend to get a degree when yo started at Southeastern	4.6%	6.9%	81.7%
Unhappy with Southeastern’s rules and regulations	2.3%	8.4%	81.7%
Suspended or placed on probation	4.6%	7.6%	81.7%
Your parents and/or other relatives influenced you to quit	3.1%	9.9%	81.7%
Southeastern was too large for you	3.1%	8.4%	82.4%
You were disappointed with the quality of instruction at Southeastern	3.1%	8.4%	83.2%
Academic advising was inadequate	5.3%	6.1%	83.2%
Problems with residence hall	5.3%	5.3%	83.2%
Credit card debt was too much	3.1%	4.6%	85.5%
Impersonal attitudes of college faculty and/or staff	1.5%	6.1%	85.5%
Experienced racism, prejudice or sexism	3.1%	4.6%	86.3%
Southeastern did not promote an atmosphere conducive to learning	0.8%	6.1%	87.8%
Dealing with hurricane related problems	2.3%	0.8%	90.8%
Could not find and/or afford child care	0.8%	2.3%	91.6%
Inadequate facilities for physically handicapped students	3.1%	90.1%	93.1%



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TOPS		Average	Minimum	Maximum	Mode	Count	% of TOPS recipients
Tuition & fees too high	<i>Major Reason</i>	\$2,331	\$400	\$4,362	\$4,362	5	3.8%
	<i>Minor Reason</i>	\$2,959	\$200	\$4,362	\$4,362	10	7.6%
Did not receive enough financial aid	<i>Major Reason</i>	\$2,321	\$200	\$4,362	\$4,362	6	4.6%
	<i>Minor Reason</i>	\$3,172	\$400	\$4,362	\$4,362	6	4.6%

### **Difficult Course(s)**

Students were asked if they had problems with any particular course. Sixty-seven respondents (31%) identified a particular course or courses with which they had problems. Math was the most commonly cited course, with 40 respondents (60%) indicating a particular math course or just math in general.



## References

Terenzini, P.T., Springer, L. Yaeger, P.M., Pascarella, E.T., & Nora, A. (1996). First-generation college students: Characteristics, experiences, and cognitive development. Research in Higher Education, 37(1), 1-22.

## **Appendix A**

Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am calling from the Southeastern Louisiana University.

To better serve our students, we are conducting a confidential and voluntary survey of former Southeastern students who are not enrolled here this semester. The survey will take only a few minutes. Keep in mind that all answers are strictly confidential. Your participation is voluntary.

You may stop at any time without penalty, and if you wish not to answer a particular question, please say so. For quality control, your call may be monitored. All questions pertaining to this survey should be addressed to Dr. Michelle Hall. My supervisor may call once our interview is completed to insure that I am conducting it properly.

### **Intro questions**

1. Do you plan to continue your education? (*1=No, 2=Yes*)  
If no, go to Non-Returning  
If yes continue to intro 2
  
2. a. Do you plan to continue your education at Southeastern or somewhere else?  
If Southeastern, go to Stop Out questions  
(*1=Southeastern, 2= somewhere else*)

12. Dissatisfied with your grades
13. Suspended or placed on probation
14. Courses were too difficult
15. Courses were not challenging
16. Southeastern did not promote an atmosphere conducive to learning
17. There were too many required courses
18. You were disappointed with the quality of instruction at Southeastern
19. The major you wanted was not available at Southeastern
20. Could not get into the program you wanted
21. Dissatisfied with your major
22. Academic advising was inadequate
23. Had problems scheduling classes
24. Lost your TOPS Scholarship
25. Did not have the study skills required to succeed in college
26. Could not find affordable housing you liked
27. Unhappy with Southeastern's rules and regulations
28. Impersonal attitudes of college faculty and/or staff
29. Dissatisfied with the social life at Southeastern
30. Experienced racism, prejudice or sexism
31. Inadequate facilities for physically handicapped students
32. Encountered unexpected expenses
33. Did not receive enough financial aid
34. Decided to attend a different college
35. Could not find part-time work
36. Wanted to get work experience
37. Accepted a full-time job
38. Too much conflict between the responsibilities of work and school
39. Too much conflict between the responsibilities of family and school
40. Too much stress
41. Dealing with hurricane related problems
42. The cost of gas was too high to commute
43. Credit card debt was too much
44. Tuition & Fees too high

### **Stop-Out questions**

1. When do you plan to return to Southeastern
  - 1 - Next semester
  - 2 - Within the next year
  - 3 - Within the next two years
  - 4 - Within the next five years
  - 5 - Not sure at this time

For the following reasons I read, please tell me if they were a minor reason, a major reason, or no reason at all for why you decided to stop attending Southeastern for a while.

*(1=Major Reason, 2=Minor Reason, 3=Not a Reason)*

2. Needed to earn more money
3. Had family responsibilities to take care of
4. Needed a break from school
5. Military obligation
6. Religious obligation
7. Work interfered with school
8. Academic problems
9. Health reasons
10. Could not schedule the classes you needed

**Demographics:**

Southeastern is looking for ways to help students remain in school. The following information may help us better meet the needs of students like yourself.

1. Did you have problems with any particular course?  
If yes, which course(s)?
2. What is your marital status?  
1-Never Married  
2-Married  
3-Divorced  
4-Separated  
5-Widowed  
6-Refused
3. Do you have any children under the age of 18 living with you?  
1-None  
2-One  
3-Two  
4-Three  
5-Four or more





**Appendix B**  
**What is the main reason you decided to attend \_\_\_\_\_?**

- ! not a major we offer
- ! Affordable Location
- ! convenient -closer to home
- ! more focused on major
- ! Another focus in a major
- ! Aviation Program
- ! Better opportunities at home and career goals that were met at brcc and not at southeastern
- ! career, wanted to get experience relating to cosmetics
- ! Change major and attend a new school to meet new people.
- ! Change of major and they had the best program in state for major.
- ! changed major and brcc only offers it.
- ! Cheaper
- ! Close to home and had a job opportunity
- ! closer to home
- ! Closer to home
- ! Closer to home and cheaper
- ! Commute and finances . loved SLU but needed to save up funds
- ! commuting issues
- ! Cost, fin aid
- ! Dental Assist
- ! did not like Hammond family lives there
- ! Did not like Hammond area rathers BR
- ! Didn't like Hammond
- ! didn't want to participate in 4 year program
- ! didnt have her major
- ! Didnt Have major
- ! easier and shorter
- ! Engineering
- ! engineering major
- ! Engineering program
- ! Finanical issues, decided to move back to home
- ! FOOTBALL SCHOLARSHIP ISSUES
- ! from baton
- ! Good business school
- ! Homesick
- ! I wanted to move back home
- ! I was forced to move back home
- ! it has engineering and SELU does not
- ! It is closer to home
- ! It is closer to home and they have a better business program.
- ! It is closer to home.
- ! It is more at her speed of learning
- ! It was closer to home
- ! It was more convenient It was not working out at Southeastern.

! It's closer to home  
! Its closer to home.  
! Like going to school where you grew up  
! Live in New Orleans and wanted to be home  
! Lived in St. Tammy Parish  
! Location  
! Location people  
! Lost stops  
! Lost TOPS  
! Mainly for pre-reqs, SLU is more expensive than Delgado, may return or UL  
! Major  
! Major change to paramedic  
! Major wasn't at Southeastern  
! move hoe  
! moved to be closer to her friend  
! Much more opportunities, and friends  
! OFF SHORE PROGRAM AND A DEGREE THAT SOUTHEASTERN DIDN'T HAVE  
! Petroleum Engineering  
! Plans to go to Pharamcy school there  
! preffered biology program  
! ptec program  
! She lives in Baton Rouge it is more convenient for her to attend LSU then commute to SELU.  
! small populations, and easier scheduling  
! SOUTHEASTERN DIDN'T HAVE THE MAJOR HE WANTED  
! SOUTHEASTERN DIDN'T HAVE THE PROGRAM SHE WANTED  
! Technical college  
! The degree program  
! They have courses for his major  
! this was not the original plan, Southern was her first choice, did not like Southeastern. It was  
! too late to transfer to Southern  
! to be in the military  
! TO GET GPA UP AND CHEAPER  
! To go ahead and get a career  
! undecided with what to do with life  
! Wanted to be closer to home  
! Wanted to get a degree in electrical engineering which is not available at SLU  
! wanted to go for chemical engineering  
! Wanted to go to a different school  
! was for her

**Appendix C**  
**Did you have problems with any particular course?**

- ! Advising was not helpful, did not listen to me
- ! All classes in general did not give enough homework, but math and english did.
- ! ART, 3 hrs long course
- ! Biology
- ! Biology 151
- ! Calculas
- ! chem 107
- ! Chemistry
- ! Chemistry 121
- ! COMM 211
- ! English 101
- ! English 101, Southeastern 101
- ! English- I do not like writing long long papers, that was annoying Math- did not like how the test was online, it is ridiculous that i failed because of a comma
- ! English- the classes required many hours to succeed, was in shock and was not aware of what it all expected. Overloaded with too many major courses. Work load was too overwhelming. Adviser was very pushy.
- ! English102
- ! HISTORY (Western Civilization) MATH 161
- ! History 201
- ! History 211
- ! math
- ! MATH (College ALGEBRA)
- ! Math 155
- ! Math 155- did not like doing everything online
- ! Math 155, Math 92
- ! Math 161
- ! MATH 161
- ! Math 161 practice final was different from actual test.
- ! Math 161- had a Russian teacher who was hard to understand and she did not explain well.
- ! Math 161-because it was mostly online, had to teach herself
- ! Math 161, too difficult for freshmens
- ! MATH 161: practice test was randomized, so what was supposed to be on the real test was hard to predict.
- ! Math 165
- ! Math 92
- ! MATH 92
- ! Math 92 the tests on computer
- ! Math 92- all online did not make it helpful, had to withdraw from the class
- ! Math 92- could not pass, because it is all online, i must be taught in person on paper. especially coming from high school
- ! Math 92- the class itself, the pace it is set at

- ! Math 92A Science -BIO 101
- ! Math 94
- ! Math course, the one with 5 credit hours, hard and inconvenient
- ! Math155
- ! Math162
- ! ONLINE COURSES
- ! online math
- ! Psychology
- ! Psychology 101
- ! Scheduled an English class which is his strong point, professor was really demanding and he was not disciplined to keep up with everything. Dr. Christopher Gene.
- ! SE 101- the teacher made it impossible, was never mention of assignments, did not teach, talked about unrelated things Math 155- was told that he could not use the computers because he did not have ID, did not enough chance to succeed, does better on paper instead of on the computer
- ! Se101
- ! SE101- a stupid, pointless class pre-reqs for criminal justice were not relatable to degree
- ! Spanish 101
- ! To get more involved with classes and have great study skills
- ! World History