



One Student at a Time: Carroll University
Benefits from Technology That Helps
Increase Retention and Graduation Rates

JENZABAR®

Carroll University Benefits from Jenzabar's Retention Management Technology

As Wisconsin's oldest four-year institution of higher education, Carroll University "combines the best of a rich heritage with state-of-the-art technology and a vibrant academic experience," says Carroll President Douglas N. Hastad. "Our goal is to provide students with an excellent academic experience and to help them succeed by supporting them as they pursue their degrees."

While the ultimate responsibility for successful completion of degree requirements rests with students, institutions of higher education need to be attentive to the ongoing successes of each student. Campuses need to help keep students on track and be ready to step in when students demonstrate behaviors that suggest they might be thinking of leaving. Carroll is committed to providing a superior educational opportunity for every student and dedicated to improving the success of students by helping them reach graduation.

Every institution faces the challenge of retaining students, but few have systems in place to proactively target students at risk of leaving the institution, for whatever reasons. For many, retention is an afterthought, with institutions hoping that faculty, staff and administrators are sufficiently focused on, and prepared to deal with, students who are at risk of leaving before completing their degrees. Carroll University recognized the importance of retention, especially during these turbulent economic times, and made a strategic commitment to discover the tools and techniques needed to effectively deal with at-risk students before they made the decision to leave.

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Jim Wiseman

Vice President of Enrollment at Carroll University

Carroll's goals were twofold. First, administrators wanted to identify the factors that help predict student attrition and utilize technology to identify those students who are most at risk of leaving the institution. Second, once those factors were identified, the campus wanted to create a process to effectively deal with students believed to be at risk of leaving the institution. Carroll found the first part of the solution through Jenzabar.

New Retention Initiatives in an Uncertain Economy

Not surprisingly, the economic environment is causing a negative impact on higher education, and the students and families institutions serve. The impact of an economic recession makes it even more difficult to maintain student enrollment and, as important, to retain students. Carroll University recognized this and made a decision to develop a systematic and proactive approach to retaining and graduating students. Especially in this fragile economy, Carroll's goal was to help students graduate and to preserve sufficient enrollment to sustain the institution during challenging times. Carroll



leaders recognized that retaining students is not only as important as enrolling new students, but is more cost-effective than the initial recruitment process.

The Technology

Jenzabar and Carroll have been longtime partners. Jenzabar provides Carroll with the university's enterprise resource planning system, Jenzabar CX; and an Internet portal, Jenzabar's Internet Campus Solution (JICS). The flexibility of the products, coupled with Jenzabar's deep understanding of the value of retention and the company's sincere interest in working with institutions like Carroll University, made them a likely partner for this initiative.

Carroll University began its retention initiative with Jenzabar in early 2008. The partners began to jointly develop what is now known as Jenzabar's Retention Management Solution (Jenzabar RMS). This sophisticated customizable technology is a combination of powerful software and professional services that allows institutions of higher education to target at-risk students.

Jenzabar's Retention Management Solution utilizes a mathematical model derived from historical retention data and applies it to current freshman data to predict the persistence of an individual student. The system compares the model to the data in each student's record daily.

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The Jenzabar RMS dashboard uses a strategic formula to categorize students according to their probability of leaving and then sends alerts for every at-risk student, enabling the institution to proactively intervene. The dashboard allows Carroll's Director of Student Success to identify the factors that are triggering an at-risk status, track changes in student attrition, gather reports from

a Web-based campus-wide alert system, customize strategies for each student at risk, and use this information to develop a personalized retention plan for each student.

“To have a successful retention management initiative, there must be a commitment from everyone within the institution, starting with top management and extending to faculty and staff,” said Jim Wiseman, Vice President of Enrollment at Carroll University. “A campus must use all of its resources to help students be successful, one student at a time. For Carroll, this means using information from Jenzabar RMS to develop the right intervention strategy at the right time for each at-risk student.”



Intervention Strategies and Outcomes

With Jenzabar RMS, Carroll University has incorporated a process to better profile at-risk students and implemented a strategic retention structure to improve the success of students. Jenzabar's Retention Management Solution has enabled Carroll University to leverage data from its student information system, Jenzabar CX, to pinpoint at-risk students across campus and personalize intervention strategies for each student.

Clearly, the technology and intervention strategies helped the University reach its retention goals. In doing so, the campus was able to increase the affected students' chances of earning an undergraduate degree. In addition, the campus was able to retain the revenue that would have otherwise been lost when at-risk students dropped out.

“The Jenzabar Retention Management Solution system benefited the University greatly, because the ultimate goal is to get students to graduation,” said Wiseman. “At the end of the school year, the freshman-to-sophomore retention has exceeded our expectations.”

For example, after the first retention period (fall 2008 to fall 2009), the result was a two-percent increase in the number of first-time freshmen retained in a single school year. This increase, particularly during a worldwide economic recession, sends a powerful message about Carroll University and its genuine interest in helping students earn their degrees.



Cultural Changes on Campus

Carroll University's campus-wide retention initiative, along with Jenzabar RMS, has allowed the institution

to determine and alter policies that impede retention. Some institutional policies and procedures that contribute to attrition at Carroll University have been, and will continue to be, altered for improved retention. These include residency requirements, registration holds, advisor clearances for students to register, and even meal hours on weekends. In all likelihood, these changes would not have occurred had it not been for the retention initiative.



“High retention rates are critical for the success of an institution. At Carroll, our challenge is about intervention at the right time, with the right student,” said President Hastad. “Jenzabar's Retention Management Solution is a crucial component to the campus-wide retention initiative and has empowered us to help retain students, one student at a time.”

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