

Stay on TRACK User Survey

October 2012: Survey Analysis

This survey assessed attitudes to Stay On TRACK, captured opinions about why students

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Introduction

Stay on TRACK (TRACK) is a multi-faceted initiative of the University of Alaska (UA), focused on assisting University of Alaska system students to

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The student survey had 15 questions, divided into three types:

- x six demographic/descriptive questions about credit loads, place of study, etc.;
- x five questions assessing opinions/awareness of elements of TRACK and
- x four open-ended questions expanding upon the opinion

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reported the greatest planned years to completion (4.2). By the same token, satellite students planned on taking the fewest years (3.5) to complete their degrees, despite the lowest credit loads and them be

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A significant majority (84 percent) of respondents had a neutral or more positive impression of Stay on TRACK. Interestingly, students at satellite campuses had a more positive view (95 percent neutral or better) than did those at main campuses (83 percent neutral or better). This was comparable to associate students, 92 percent of whom had a neutral or better impression, in contrast to 83 percent of BA/BS students.

A similarly significant majority (81 percent) was extremely to moderately aware of DegreeWorks. DegreeWorks is the University's academic planning tool. Students were most aware at UAA (83 percent) and least at satellite campuses' (77 percent). A total of 82 percent of BA/BS students were extremely to moderately aware of DegreeWorks, but only 57 percent of associate students had that level of awareness.

15 Credit Issues

Respondents generally know it takes at least 15 credits per semester to graduate "on time". Systemwide, 83 percent of respondents reported knowing the requirement, with UAF having the highest awareness at 90 percent. UAA respondents (79 percent) and satellite campus respondents (81 percent) were less likely to know of the 15-credit rule than were students at main campuses (83 percent). However, only 69 percent of AA/AAS students reported being aware of the 15 credit requirements, versus 83 percent of BA/BS students.

Most commonly, respondents cited family and/or financial issues for not maintaining at least a 15 - credit load (63 percent). Respondents at satellite campuses were most likely to give such an explanation (80 percent) and students at UAA were least likely to cite such (62 percent). Interestingly, only 55 percent of AA/AS students reported being limited by financial/family issues, versus 64 percent of BA/BS candidates. On the other hand, AA/AAS and UAA students were the most likely to indicate that scheduling or UA regulations prevented them from taking 15 credits or more (25 percent and 10 percent, respectively), compared to 9 percent systemwide and just six percent at UAF. At 29 percent, UAF students were the most likely to cite personal reasons (such as simply not wishing to take a high load or finding it to be too challenging academically), whereas only 13 percent of satellite students gave their main reason as personal.

As mentioned, a limited number of faculty and staff participated in a similar TRACK survey. Therein, they took similar views of why students did not take a 15-credit load: 62 percent felt that financial and/or family matters were the major determinants in why students did not do so.

Personal choice is why students take 15 credits a semester. For students taking a 15-credit load or more, all types of students were most likely to identify personal choice as the guiding factor (50 percent), as was the case with BA/BS students (49 percent). Slightly more UAA than UAF students indicated personal choice as a factor-51 percent versus 48 percent. Overall, 38 percent of students said that financial and family support were the main cause of them being able to take 15 or more credits; again, UAA students were the most likely to cite such (40 percent) among the Ps11(n)-7(g-25.261)3(st)11(l)-24 ()-57,

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Students want scheduling and administrative assistance. In order to complete the degree faster (without reference to a 15 credit load), students overwhelmingly requested scheduling and administrative assistance from UA (47 percent), with very little inter-MAU and/or main/satellite campus variation

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advising and more financial/family resources (37 percent and 42 percent respectively), whereas BA/BS students had a fairly strong interest in better advising (42 percent) with the remaining preferences more

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Sources Cited

National Center for Education Statistics (2010). Postsecondary education: characteristics of postsecondary students. Retrieved on 10 July, 2012 from

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Appendix One

Student Survey

Please complete the following survey of your enrollment and degree completion activity and views. This information is being collected by the university to assess student interest in degree completion, and survey responses will inform future *Stay on TRACK* planning. *Stay on TRACK* encourages students to take 30 credits a year, choose a major, meet with their advisor, consider summer enrollment and use DegreeWorks at UAOnline.

Survey responses will remain confidential. Data will be reported in unattributed aggregate.

WIN STUFF! All students who complete the five -minute survey by Wednesday, May 16 will be

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Please respond here.

6) What student support or academic assistance would be helpful to you with a 15+ credit load?

Please respond here.

7) Are you the first in your family to attend college? Select one:

Yes

No

8) Are you currently employed?

I work full time

I work part time

I am not currently employed

9) If the University of Alaska were to offer you a financial incentive to complete your degree on schedule, which incentive is more appealing to you?

Free credits for each year you complete at least 30 credits

\$500 cash payout upon graduation with associates degree in two years; \$1000 cash payout upon graduation with bachelors degree in four years

Freezing tuition at the freshman level for four years if you complete 30 credits toward your degree each year

10) Are you aware of the university's Stay on TRACK campaign? The Stay on TRACK campaign encourages students to:

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Your email address:

Your first and last name:

