

College Persistence-Related Dimensions

In this document we define the eight dimensions included in our Student Persistence Measure (SPM), based on Davidson, Beck, and Milligan's (2009) literature review of the retention and higher education literature. The eight dimensions are: degree commitment, institutional commitment, academic integration, social integration, satisfaction with support services, adjustment and wellbeing, and financial strain.

1. **Degree commitment** refers to the value that the student attaches to earning a college degree, including both their intentions and estimated likelihood or certainty that a degree will be achieved.
2. **Institutional commitment** refers to the degree to which the student is satisfied with their selection of the institution they attend, and are confident and committed to obtaining a degree from such institution.
3. **Social integration** refers to the student's sense of belonging, shared values, and similarity to others in the college environment (Davidson et al., 2009).
4. **Academic integration** reflects the student's perception of how their academic goals are advanced by the institutions curriculum, class discussions, quality of instruction, (Davidson et al., 2009), academic advising, engagement in class discussions, library resources, and interactions with professors and other students.
5. **Satisfaction with social support** services refers to the student's perception of how well their out-of-the-classroom school-related needs are met by the institution's social support agencies.
6. **Adjustment and wellbeing** refers to the students' overall sense of physical and psychological health as well as the mechanisms they use to cope with the various types of stress that arise in and out of the college environment.
7. **Academic orientation** refers to the student's orientation to and like for learning, reading for pleasure, showing intellectual curiosity, and self-confidence in their ability to do well in school.
8. **Financial situation** refers to the student's financial sufficiency to meet their basic needs (e.g., food, rent), tuition, and knowledge about financial aid programs available to them as college students

References

Davidson, W. B., Beck, H. P., & Milligan, M. (2009). The College Persistence Questionnaire: Development and validation of an instrument that predicts student attrition. *Journal of College Student Development*, 50(4): 373-390.

Lindheimer III, J.B (2011). *The College Persistence Questionnaire: Developing Scales to Assess Student Retention and Institutional Effectiveness* (Doctoral dissertation, Appalachian State University).