South Dakota School of Mines and Technology
Retention and Success Initiatives

Recent changes to address retention and success initiatives:
- Raised admissions standards in 2005.
- Reporting of student by “home institution” implemented several years ago. This helps to more accurately track degree seeking students. For example, SDSU and USD nursing students previously enrolled as degree seeking students for two years with no intention of completing at the School of Mines because the major is not offered; now the nursing students take the first two years at Mines, but are recorded as degree seeking students with the institution in which they plan to complete their degree.
- Created an Associate Provost for Enrollment Management, 2009.
- Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education is an institutional strategic research initiative.

Student Retention and Success Initiatives
- New student orientation/transition information and programs
  1. New first time freshmen have access to an on-line personalized check-list to keep them informed of
  2. Registrar and Academic Services registers first time freshmen so that class sizes are closely monitored.
  3. **FIRST**
     1. First Connections are summer orientations – preference is that students attend with their future roommates and stay in their actual rooms;
     2. First Adventure Weekend—immediately prior to school starting, new students have an opportunity to connect with peers through camping, service projects, and other activities.
  4. Welcome Week activities.
  5. Convocation with the University President.
  6. Targeted orientations for international, multicultural, veterans, and non-traditional students.
- Sophomore convocation (and plan to implement a junior and a senior convocation)
- Early Alert Outreach. At the four week juncture of the semester, all faculty are sent an email from the Director of Retention and Testing inviting them to submit the names of students who are currently manifesting behaviors that suggest they may be “at risk” for succeeding in the class. These behaviors include, but are not limited to, attendance problems, poor homework, quiz or test performance, distraction or apathetic behaviors, acting out behaviors, or other behaviors of concern. These students are contacted and asked how things are going in the class, if there are any challenges they might wish to discuss, or if any support services would help the student be successful.
- 4th Attempt/Suspension Appeal Avoidance Program. All students enrolled in a course for the third time or currently on probation are contacted early in the semester, requested to meet with the Director of Retention and Testing to discuss an Academic Plan strategy to avoid the need to appeal to attempt the course for the fourth time or appeal a suspension. In conjunction with this requirement the student is required to attend a University Symposium that addresses topics relevant to successfully completing the semester. The
student is required to write out the Academic Plan, discuss it with his/her academic advisor and have them sign the Plan. The Plan is then taken to the Director of Retention and Testing where an Advisor hold is removed from WebAdvisor after discussing the plan.

- University Symposium. Students making the transition from high school to Mines are invited to attend an free, no-credit symposium where topics are covered that will assist them to be successful their first semester. Study skills, learning styles, faculty expectations and other topics are covered.

- All first year faculty are visited and shown academic retention initiatives, such as the placement and proficiency testing, academic support services, such as tutoring and Supplemental Instruction, and how to utilize Peer Advisors to support them in assisting first-year students with transition and advising issues.

- An Early Alert Team, consisting of representatives from the faculty, Student Affairs and Academic Affairs meet weekly to discuss students of concern to determine if an intervention will assist the student achieve personal and academic goals.

- The Mines Peer Advising Program assists assigned first year students with the transition to Mines and offers assistance related to peer advising, effectively using WebAdvisor to register for courses, and provide another friendly outreach students transitioning to a new and more challenging academic environment.

- Students are assigned a faculty academic advisor in the declared major.

- Supplemental Instruction (SI) in selected courses are offered.

- Tutoring is available in the Tech Learning Center (TLC); tutoring and other support services are also offered through the Office of Multicultural Affairs, Ivanhoe International Center, the residence halls and the Veterans Resource Center.

- Tiospaye in Engineering and Science supports Native American students through financial and academic support.

- Students Emerging as Professionals (STEPS), the Center for Manufacturing and Production (CAMP), and programs through Career Services are examples of concentrated efforts designed to engage students in and out of the classroom to develop their full potential.