Retention basics
The retention rate measures the percentage of students who remain enrolled at an institution from fall to fall. USC Provost Dr. Michael Amiridis has identified achieving a 90% freshman-sophomore retention rate as a “dashboard” goal in the Academic Affairs Blueprint for Academic Excellence. The current rate is 87.2%

Fall 2011 cohort non-returners
548 first-time, full-time students did not return for their sophomore year
54% male
87% white

Why this matters
First and foremost, the retention rate is a measure of USC’s ability to “deliver on the promise” to the students who make significant investments of time and money to enroll here. It’s also increasingly scrutinized in federal policy decisions and in the national stature and rankings of institutions of higher education. And with small increases in the retention rate, the university can generate significant revenue. As Carolina expects limited increases in state appropriations, this is crucial for financial stability.

Improved sub-cohort retention
Over the past year, freshman-sophomore retention of students in many sub-cohorts has increased.
+0.4% overall
+0.3% in-state
+0.9% African-American
+0.6% out-of-state

Only among males has there been a slight decrease—0.2%—in retention.

freshman-sophomore retention rates* (rounded to the 10th place)
84% Tennessee
87% South Carolina
90% Clemson
90% Georgia Tech
95% North Carolina
95% Virginia

estimated tuition revenue generated over 4 years by increasing retention rate
$5,161,155 +3% (137 students)
$3,440,722 +2% (92 students)
$1,720,383 +1% (46 students)

*Source: http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/datacenter/

Tennessee
South Carolina
Clemson
Georgia Tech
North Carolina
Virginia

Retention basics
The retention rate measures the percentage of students who remain enrolled at an institution from fall to fall. USC Provost Dr. Michael Amiridis has identified achieving a 90% freshman-sophomore retention rate as a “dashboard” goal in the Academic Affairs Blueprint for Academic Excellence. The current rate is 87.2%

Fall 2011 cohort non-returners
548 first-time, full-time students did not return for their sophomore year
54% male
87% white

Why this matters
First and foremost, the retention rate is a measure of USC’s ability to “deliver on the promise” to the students who make significant investments of time and money to enroll here. It’s also increasingly scrutinized in federal policy decisions and in the national stature and rankings of institutions of higher education. And with small increases in the retention rate, the university can generate significant revenue. As Carolina expects limited increases in state appropriations, this is crucial for financial stability.

Improved sub-cohort retention
Over the past year, freshman-sophomore retention of students in many sub-cohorts has increased.
+0.4% overall
+0.3% in-state
+0.9% African-American
+0.6% out-of-state

Only among males has there been a slight decrease—0.2%—in retention.

freshman-sophomore retention rates* (rounded to the 10th place)
84% Tennessee
87% South Carolina
90% Clemson
90% Georgia Tech
95% North Carolina
95% Virginia

estimated tuition revenue generated over 4 years by increasing retention rate
$5,161,155 +3% (137 students)
$3,440,722 +2% (92 students)
$1,720,383 +1% (46 students)

*Source: http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/datacenter/
University resources

To support students’ success and satisfaction—and therefore their persistence—at Carolina, the university offers a vast array of programs and services. Here are just a few.

The Office of the Provost recently relaunched the university’s Retention Workforce to conduct research, design retention strategies and implement initiatives to improve retention. Dr. Nichole Knutson, director of retention strategy, planning and assessment, chairs the cross-campus group of 16 faculty and staff.

First-year students who enroll in University 101 are more likely to persist to sophomore year (88%) than those not enrolled in UNIV101 (84.4%). The benefits are even greater for our lowest-ability students. Among students in the lowest quintile of predicted GPA, the retention rate for UNIV101 participants is 83.1%, compared to 70.8% for non-participants.

The Student Success Center is the one-stop shop for academic support. The center, located in the Thomas Cooper Library, offers general and course-specific assistance, support for students in danger of losing their scholarships and early-intervention initiatives to identify and help students before they’re academically at risk.

According to the National College Health Association, seven of the top 10 impediments to students’ academic success are health-related. Student Health Services offers integrated healthcare, including general medicine, counseling and preventive care, to keep students healthy and on track academically.

What faculty can do

Take attendance.

Provide frequent feedback to the students on their work or their participation in class.

Grade and return an assignment within the first two weeks of class.

Communicate high expectations and be clear about how and with what resources students can succeed.

Submit grades on time. Grades posted after the deadline (72 hours after date of scheduled final exam) can delay students’ financial aid.

Refer students to campus resources.