

# **Non-Returning Student Survey Fall 2007**



**Southeastern Louisiana University  
Office of Institutional Research and Assessment**

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## **Introduction**

In Fall 2007, Southeastern's enrollment was below expectations. In particular, continuing students showed a 4.4% decrease at the undergraduate level and a 5.2% decrease at the graduate level. The retention rate of the Fall 2006 cohort was the lowest it had been since admissions standards were implemented. A better understanding about why students had not returned was needed. The Office of Institutional Research & Assessment contracted with the Southeastern Social Science Research Center to conduct the Non-Returning Student Survey, a phone survey of students who had been enrolled in Fall 2006 but were not enrolled in Fall 2007.

Students who had graduated in Fall 2006, Spring 2007, or Summer 2007 were not included in the sample. Also excluded were students who had been suspended and those who had not met their developmental requirements in two semesters and were asked to leave the university. This report details the results of the Non-Returning Student Survey.

## Method

### Participants

The participants in this survey were 473 students, who were enrolled in Fall 2006 and were not enrolled in the Fall of 2007. None of the participants had graduated, nor were they suspended. In addition, those new students who did not meet their development requirements in two semesters and were asked to leave the university were excluded.

**Table 1**  
**Characteristics of the Sample vs. the Population**

	<b>Sample</b>	<b>Population</b>
<b>Size</b>	473	3,310
<b>Class</b>		
Freshmen	38.3%	42.8%
Sophomore	18.6%	16.8%
Junior	12.7%	12.0%
Senior	14.4%	12.8%
Graduate	16.1%	15.6%
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	63.8%	63.1%
Male	36.2%	36.9%
<b>Race</b>		
Asian/Pacific Islander	0.8%	1.0%
Black, Non-Hispanic	15.4%	16.7%
Hispanic	2.3%	2.2%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	1.3%	0.7%
Unknown	2.3%	2.8%
White, Non-Hispanic	77.8%	76.7%
<b>Full or Part Time Fall 2006</b>		
Full-time	66.4%	67.4%
Part-time	33.6%	32.6%

<b>Table 1 cont. Characteristics of the Sample vs. Population</b>		
<b>Type of Student Fall 2006</b>		
First-time Freshman	21.8%	23.9%
New Graduate Student	5.5%	6.2%
New Transfer Student	6.6%	6.0%
Continuing Student	55.6%	53.8%
Readmitted Student	8.9%	8.4%
Exchange Student (Superior Junior, Cross-enrolled, etc.)	1.1%	1.4%
Other (SPA)	0.6%	0.3%

Table 1 provides demographic information of the sample vs. the population. The characteristics are very similar between the sample and the population. The only major difference is that freshmen are under-represented in the sample as compared to the population.

**Procedure**

The Office of Institutional Research & Assessment contracted with the Southeastern Social Science Research Center to conducted the Non-Returning Student Survey. The survey was administered by phone, using trained and experienced student interviewers.

**Instrument**

The survey first asked a series of questions to determine if students planned on returning to Southeastern in the future, and if they had intended to obtain a degree when they began at Southeastern. Respondents who indicated they did not plan on returning to Southeastern were given a list of forty-three possible reasons why a student might leave college, and were asked to rate whether it was a major reason, a minor reason, or not a reason at all in their decision to leave Southeastern. Students who indicated that they did plan to continue their education at Southeastern were first asked when they planned to return to Southeastern. They were then given a list of nine possible reasons why a student might stop attending Southeastern for a while, and were asked to rate whether each item was a major reason, a minor reason, or not a reason at all in their decision to “stop-out.” The final section asked for demographic information that is not collected as a part of the application or registration process, such as the number of children a student has and how far they have to travel to campus. The entire survey can be found in Appendix A.

## Results

The first set of questions was to determine whether students were: 1) Drop-Outs, those students who no longer plan to continue their education at Southeastern, including those who plan on or have transferred elsewhere; 2) Stop-outs, those students who plan to return to Southeastern at some point. Based on these definitions, 54% (n=254) of the respondents are Drop-Outs, and 45% (n=213) are Stop-outs.

### Stop Outs

Most of the Stop-outs (54%) planned on returning to Southeastern in Spring 2008, with over half (63%) of those in fact enrolled at Southeastern in Spring 2008. Twenty-seven percent (27%) of stop-outs plan on returning to Southeastern within the next year, 9% plan on returning within the next two years, 1% plan on returning within the next five years, and 8% are not sure when they will return to Southeastern.

Next, Stop-outs were asked to indicate whether each of nine possible reasons was a Major Reason, a Minor Reason, or Not a Reason for their decision to stop attending Southeastern for a while. “Had family responsibilities to take care of” was the item with the largest endorsement, with 57.0% of respondents indicating it was a reason they stopped attending Southeastern. This was followed by “Need to earn more money” which 49.2% of respondents indicated was a reason they stopped attending.

Table 1 provides the percentage of endorsement for Major Reason, Minor Reason, and Not a Reason for each item.

**Table 1**  
**Stop-Out Reasons**

	<b>Major Reason</b>	<b>Minor Reason</b>	<b>Not a Reason</b>
Had family responsibilities to take care of	38.6%	18.4%	42.1%
Need to earn more money	28.1%	21.1%	49.1%
Needed a break from school	16.7%	27.2%	55.3%
Work interfered with school	20.2%	14.0%	64.9%
Academic problems	12.3%	15.8%	71.1%
Could not schedule the classes you needed	13.2%	11.4%	74.6%
Health reasons	18.4%	7.9%	72.8%
Military obligation	5.3%	7.0%	86.8%
Religious obligation	0.9%	7.9%	90.4%

In addition to the overall response, four groups of students were analyzed separately, cohort students, all other undergraduates, degree-seeking graduate students, and non-degree seeking graduate students. Table 2 provides information on when each group plans on returning to Southeastern.

**Table 2**

	<b>Cohort</b>	<b>Other Undergraduates</b>	<b>Degree-Seeking Graduates</b>	<b>Non Degree-Seeking Graduates</b>
Next semester	59.3% (16)	55.7% (88)	47.4% (9)	11.1% (1)
Within the next year	18.5% (5)	23.4% (37)	42.1% (8)	77.8% (7)
Within the next two years	7.4% (2)	9.5% (15)	5.3% (1)	0%
Withing the next five years	0%	0.6% (1)	0%	0%
Not sure at this time	11.1% (3)	7.6% (12)	5.3% (1)	11.1% (1)
Total in Group	27	158	19	9

Tables 3-6 provide information on reasons to stop attending Southeastern by the various groups. There were some differences between the groups. For both Cohort students and degree-seeking graduate students, “Needed a break from School” was the top reason, whereas for Other Undergraduates, family responsibilities was the top reason for stopping out.

**Table 3**  
**Stop-out Reasons - Cohort**

	<b>Major Reason</b>	<b>Minor Reason</b>	<b>Not a Reason</b>
Needed a break from school	14.8%	29.6%	51.9%
Need to earn more money	11.1%	29.6%	55.6%
Had family responsibilities to take care of	25.9%	11.1%	55.6%
Academic Problems	11.1%	25.9%	59.3%
Work interfered with school	14.8%	14.8%	66.7%
Could not schedule the classes you needed	7.4%	11.1%	77.8%
Military obligation	7.4%	7.4%	81.5%
Religious obligation	0.0%	11.1%	85.2%
Health reasons	7.4%	0.0%	88.9%

**Table 4**

**Stop-out Reasons - Other Undergraduates**

	<b>Major Reason</b>	<b>Minor Reason</b>	<b>Not a Reason</b>
Had family responsibilities to take care of	44.3%	17.1%	35.4%
Need to earn more money	36.7%	17.1%	41.8%
Needed a break from school	17.7%	25.9%	53.2%
Work interfered with school	26.6%	15.8%	54.4%
Academic Problems	12.7%	16.5%	67.1%
Health reasons	14.6%	7.6%	74.7%
Could not schedule the classes you needed	13.3%	13.9%	69.6%
Military obligation	4.4%	4.4%	88.0%
Religious obligation	1.9%	3.8%	91.1%

**Table 5  
Stop-out Reasons - Degree-Seeking Graduate Students**

	<b>Major Reason</b>	<b>Minor Reason</b>	<b>Not a Reason</b>
Needed a break from school	15.8%	36.8%	47.4%
Need to earn more money	31.6%	10.5%	57.9%
Had family responsibilities to take care of	36.8%	5.3%	57.9%
Health reasons	26.3%	10.5%	63.2%
Work interfered with school	21.1%	10.5%	68.4%
Academic Problems	10.5%	10.5%	78.9%
Could not schedule the classes you needed	15.8%	5.3%	78.9%
Military obligation	5.3%	5.3%	89.5%
Religious obligation	0.0%	5.3%	94.7%



**Table 6**  
**Stop-out Reasons - Non-Degree-Seeking Graduate Students**

	<b>Major Reason</b>	<b>Minor Reason</b>	<b>Not a Reason</b>
Need to earn more money	44.4%	11.1%	44.4%
Had family responsibilities to take care of	55.6%	0.0%	44.4%
Needed a break from school	33.3%	11.1%	55.6%
Work interfered with school	22.2%	11.1%	66.7%
Health reasons	0.0%	11.1%	88.9%
Could not schedule the classes you needed	0.0%	11.1%	88.9%
Military obligation	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Religious obligation	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Academic Problems	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%

**Drop Outs**

Most of the Drop-outs (77%) intend to finish their education elsewhere, although only 50% of the Drop-outs had already enrolled in another school. When asked what school they have or will enroll in, the most commonly cited school was Louisiana State University. Table 7 provides the schools students identified as having enrolled in or planning to enroll in.

**Table 7**  
**Schools Where Respondents Have or Plan to Enroll**

<b>School</b>	<b>Number of Respondents</b>	<b>Percent of Respondents</b>
Arizona State	1	0.5%
Atlantic University West Palm	1	0.5%
Baton Rouge Community College	13	6.5%
Charity	1	0.5%
CIU Online	1	0.5%
Columbia College	1	0.5%
Consumnes River College	1	0.5%
CTT	1	0.5%

**Table 7**

<b>Schools Where Respondents Have or Plan to Enroll cont.</b>		
Delgado	28	14.0%
Delta College	1	0.5%
Eastern Illinois University	1	0.5%
Ezcollzor College	1	0.5%
Front Reimes Community College	1	0.5%
Georgia State University	1	0.5%
Holly Cross University	1	0.5%
ITI Technical College	2	1.0%
Louisiana College	3	1.5%
Louisiana Tech	3	1.5%
Loyola	2	1.0%
Louisiana State University	30	15.0%
LSU Alexandria	1	0.5%
Louisiana Technical College	8	4.0%
New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary	1	0.5%
New York University	1	0.5%
Nicholls	4	2.0%
Northern Kentucky University	1	0.5%
North Oaks Hospital	1	0.5%
Nuclear Power	1	0.5%
Our Lady of Holy Cross	1	0.5%
Our Lady of the Lake	10	5.0%
Paramacate Training of EBR	1	0.5%
Paul Mitchell Cosmetology	1	0.5%
Pearl River	1	0.5%
Remmington College	1	0.5%
Rice	1	0.5%
River Parishes Community College	2	1.0%
Santa Rosa Jr. College	1	0.5%
<b>Table 7</b>		

<b>Schools Where Respondents Have or Plan to Enroll cont.</b>		
Southwest Mississippi	1	0.5%
Southern	5	2.5%
St. Leo University	1	0.5%
SUNO	1	0.5%
Texas Community College	1	0.5%
Tulane	1	0.5%
University of Louisiana - Lafayette	6	3.0%
University of Louisiana - Monroe	2	1.0%
UNL	1	0.5%
University of Central Florida	1	0.5%
University of Little Rock	1	0.5%
University of New Orleans	9	4.5%
University of Memphis	1	0.5%
University of Phoenix	1	0.5%
University of Southern Mississippi	1	0.5%
University of Wyoming	1	0.5%
Vermont College	1	0.5%
Undecided	29	14.5%
William Carey	2	1.0%
Xavier	3	1.5%

Respondents were then asked what was the main reason they decided to attend another school. Twenty percent (20%) of the respondents said they decided to attend another school because the major or program they were interested in was not available at Southeastern. Eighteen percent (18%) indicated they wanted to attend a school closer to home/work, or they were tired of commuting to Southeastern. An additional 10% indicated they had moved, and 7% transferred because attending would be cheaper for them. Finally, 7% indicated they transferred because they could not get into Southeastern's Nursing program.

Next, Drop-outs were asked to indicate whether each of thirty-eight possible reasons was a Major Reason, a Minor Reason, or Not a Reason for their decision to leave Southeastern. "Decided to attend a different college" was the item with the largest endorsement, with 56.9% of respondents indicating it was a reason they left Southeastern. This was followed by "Moved to a new location" (38.5%) and "Tired of commuting to Southeastern" (29.3%).

Table 8 provides the percentage of endorsement for Major Reason, Minor Reason, and Not a Reason for each item.

**Table 8**  
**Percentage of Endorsement for Major Reason, Minor Reason, and Not a Reason**

	<b>Major Reason</b>	<b>Minor Reason</b>	<b>Not a Reason</b>
Decided to attend a different college	48.8%	8.1%	40.4%
Moved to a new location	27.7%	10.8%	56.5%
Tired of commuting to Southeastern	16.2%	13.1%	66.5%
Too much stress	11.2%	15.0%	71.2%
The major you wanted was not available at Southeastern	16.5%	8.1%	72.7%
Family or personal health-related problem	11.9%	7.7%	73.8%
Wanted a break from your college studies	5.4%	16.5%	75.4%
Too much conflict between the responsibilities of work and school	10.8%	10.8%	75.4%
The cost of gas was too high to commute	10.8%	10.8%	75.4%
Dissatisfied with your grades	10.0%	11.2%	75.8%
Family responsibilities were too great	8.1%	12.3%	76.5%
Did not intend to get a degree when you started at Southeastern	10.4%	7.3%	79.6%
Could not get into the program you wanted	10.4%	7.3%	79.6%
Wanted to get work experience	6.9%	10.8%	79.6%
Too much conflict between the responsibilities of family and school	8.5%	10.4%	78.5%
Did not receive enough financial aid	9.6%	6.9%	80.0%
Dissatisfied with your major	6.5%	10.4%	80.4%
Had problems scheduling classes	4.2%	11.5%	80.8%
Accepted a full-time job	11.2%	5.0%	80.8%
You were disappointed with the quality of instruction at Southeastern	3.8%	11.5%	81.5%
Academic advising was inadequate	6.2%	8.1%	82.3%
Encountered unexpected expenses	7.3%	7.3%	82.7%
<b>Table 8</b> <b>Percentage of Endorsement for Major Reason, Minor Reason, and Not a Reason cont.</b>			
	<b>Major</b>	<b>Minor</b>	<b>Not a</b>

	<b>Reason</b>	<b>Reason</b>	<b>Reason</b>
There were too many required courses	5.4%	8.5%	83.1%
Dealing with hurricane related problems	4.2%	9.2%	83.5%
Southeastern did not promote an atmosphere that was conducive to learning	3.8%	8.5%	84.6%
Dissatisfied with the social life at Southeastern	4.2%	7.3%	85.8%
Courses were too difficult	2.7%	8.5%	86.2%
Courses were not challenging	1.9%	8.5%	86.5%
Did not have the study skills required to succeed in college	2.3%	7.7%	87.3%
Impersonal attitudes of college faculty and/or staff	1.9%	7.7%	87.3%
Lost your TOPS Scholarship	4.6%	4.6%	87.7%
Could not find affordable housing you liked	3.1%	5.8%	88.5%
Did not feel like you fit in	1.5%	6.5%	89.2%
Suspended or placed on probation	4.2%	3.5%	89.6%
Could not find and/or afford child care	3.5%	3.5%	90.0%
Southeastern was too small for you	1.2%	6.2%	90.0%
Unhappy with Southeastern's rules and regulations	3.1%	4.2%	90.0%
Could not find part-time work	1.9%	5.4%	90.0%
Southeastern was too large for you	1.2%	5.4%	90.8%
Experienced racism, prejudice or sexism	1.2%	4.6%	91.2%
Your parents and/or other relatives influenced you to quit	1.5%	3.5%	92.3%
Inadequate facilities for physically handicapped students	0.8%	3.5%	93.1%
Credit card debt was too much	1.2%	2.3%	93.8%

Tables 9-12 provide information on reasons to drop out by the various groups. There were 69 students in the Cohort group, 139 in the Other Undergraduate group, 16 in the Degree-Seeking Graduates group, and 32 in the Non-Degree Seeking Graduate group. The results for both the undergraduate groups was very similar, with “Decided to attend a different college” and “Moved to a new location” the two top reasons for dropping out. The major reason for non-degree graduate students was that they did not intend to earn a degree when they started.

<b>Table 9</b>			
<b>Percentage of Endorsement for Major Reason, Minor Reason, and Not a Reason</b>			
<b>Cohort Group</b>			
	<b>Major Reason</b>	<b>Minor Reason</b>	<b>Not a Reason</b>
Decided to attend a different college	59.4%	8.7%	30.4%
Moved to a new location	29.0%	17.4%	49.3%
Too much stress	11.6%	27.5%	59.4%
Tired of commuting to Southeastern	23.2%	13.0%	62.3%
The major you wanted was not available at Southeastern	21.7%	14.5%	62.3%
Dissatisfied with your grades	14.5%	20.3%	63.8%
Wanted a break from your college studies	7.2%	26.1%	65.2%
Too much conflict between the responsibilities of work and school	14.5%	15.9%	66.7%
Wanted to get work experience	11.6%	18.8%	68.1%
Family or personal health-related problem	8.7%	11.6%	72.5%
Did not receive enough financial aid	13.0%	11.6%	72.5%
The cost of gas was too high to commute	14.5%	8.7%	75.4%
Dissatisfied with your major	7.2%	14.5%	76.8%
Southeastern did not promote an atmosphere that was conducive to learning	2.9%	17.4%	78.3%
There were too many required courses	5.8%	14.5%	78.3%
Did not have the study skills required to succeed in college	2.9%	17.4%	78.3%
Accepted a full-time job	13.0%	7.2%	78.3%
You were disappointed with the quality of instruction at Southeastern	2.9%	15.9%	79.7%
Had problems scheduling classes	2.9%	14.5%	79.7%
Family responsibilities were too great	0.0%	17.4%	81.2%
Lost your TOPS Scholarship	8.7%	8.7%	81.2%
Dissatisfied with the social life at Southeastern	5.8%	11.6%	81.2%
Encountered unexpected expenses	10.1%	7.2%	81.2%
Too much conflict between the responsibilities of family and school	4.3%	13.0%	81.2%
Could not get into the program you wanted	2.9%	13.0%	82.6%
Dealing with hurricane related problems	2.9%	10.1%	84.1%

<b>Table 9</b>			
<b>Percentage of Endorsement for Major Reason, Minor Reason, and Not a Reason cont.</b>			
<b>Cohort Group</b>			
	<b>Major Reason</b>	<b>Minor Reason</b>	<b>Not a Reason</b>
Did not intend to get a degree when you started at Southeastern	8.7%	4.3%	85.5%
Did not feel like you fit in	5.8%	7.2%	85.5%
Courses were too difficult	1.4%	11.6%	85.5%
Courses were not challenging	1.4%	11.6%	85.5%
Academic advising was inadequate	2.9%	8.7%	85.5%
Impersonal attitudes of college faculty and/or staff	2.9%	8.7%	85.5%
Southeastern was too small for you	1.4%	10.1%	87.0%
Could not find affordable housing you liked	1.4%	10.1%	87.0%
Unhappy with Southeastern's rules and regulations	4.3%	7.2%	87.0%
Could not find part-time work	2.9%	8.7%	87.0%
Experienced racism, prejudice or sexism	2.9%	5.8%	88.4%
Southeastern was too large for you	1.4%	5.8%	91.3%
Your parents and/or other relatives influenced you to quit	2.9%	4.3%	91.3%
Suspended or placed on probation	4.3%	1.4%	92.8%
Inadequate facilities for physically handicapped students	0.0%	5.8%	92.8%
Credit card debt was too much	1.4%	4.3%	92.8%
Could not find and/or afford child care	0.0%	4.3%	94.2%

<b>Table 10</b>			
<b>Percentage of Endorsement for Major Reason, Minor Reason, and Not a Reason</b>			
<b>Other Undergraduate Group</b>			
	<b>Major Reason</b>	<b>Minor Reason</b>	<b>Not a Reason</b>
Decided to attend a different college	54.0%	7.2%	34.5%
Moved to a new location	33.1%	8.6%	51.8%
Tired of commuting to Southeastern	15.1%	13.7%	64.7%
Family or personal health-related problem	15.1%	8.6%	68.3%
Family responsibilities were too great	12.9%	10.1%	71.9%
Too much stress	12.2%	10.8%	72.7%

**Table 10**  
**Percentage of Endorsement for Major Reason, Minor Reason, and Not a Reason cont.**  
**Other Undergraduate Group**

	<b>Major Reason</b>	<b>Minor Reason</b>	<b>Not a Reason</b>
Too much conflict between the responsibilities of family and school	11.5%	10.8%	73.4%
The cost of gas was too high to commute	12.9%	8.6%	74.1%
Could not get into the program you wanted	15.8%	3.6%	76.3%
Dissatisfied with your major	7.9%	10.1%	77.7%
Too much conflict between the responsibilities of work and school	9.4%	8.6%	77.7%
Wanted a break from your college studies	5.0%	12.2%	78.4%
Dissatisfied with your grades	9.4%	7.9%	78.4%
The major you wanted was not available at Southeastern	12.9%	4.3%	78.4%
Had problems scheduling classes	4.3%	12.9%	78.4%
Dealing with hurricane related problems	6.5%	10.1%	79.1%
Academic advising was inadequate	9.4%	6.5%	79.9%
Did not receive enough financial aid	10.1%	5.0%	79.9%
Encountered unexpected expenses	7.2%	7.9%	80.6%
Did not intend to get a degree when you started at Southeastern	6.5%	7.2%	82.0%
There were too many required courses	5.8%	7.2%	82.0%
Wanted to get work experience	5.8%	7.9%	82.0%
Accepted a full-time job	10.8%	2.2%	82.0%
You were disappointed with the quality of instruction at Southeastern	2.9%	9.4%	82.7%
Suspended or placed on probation	5.8%	5.0%	84.9%
Dissatisfied with the social life at Southeastern	4.3%	6.5%	84.9%
Courses were too difficult	3.6%	6.5%	85.6%
Southeastern did not promote an atmosphere that was conducive to learning	2.9%	5.8%	86.3%
Could not find affordable housing you liked	5.0%	3.6%	87.1%
Impersonal attitudes of college faculty and/or staff	1.4%	7.2%	87.1%
Lost your TOPS Scholarship	3.6%	3.6%	87.8%
Did not have the study skills required to succeed in college	2.9%	4.3%	88.5%



<b>Table 10</b>			
<b>Percentage of Endorsement for Major Reason, Minor Reason, and Not a Reason cont.</b>			
<b>Other Undergraduate Group</b>			
	<b>Major Reason</b>	<b>Minor Reason</b>	<b>Not a Reason</b>
Courses were not challenging	0.7%	6.5%	88.5%
Could not find and/or afford child care	3.6%	2.9%	88.5%
Southeastern was too large for you	1.4%	5.8%	88.5%
Did not feel like you fit in	0.0%	6.5%	89.2%
Southeastern was too small for you	0.7%	4.3%	90.6%
Your parents and/or other relatives influenced you to quit	1.4%	3.6%	90.6%
Unhappy with Southeastern's rules and regulations	2.2%	2.9%	90.6%
Experienced racism, prejudice or sexism	0.7%	4.3%	90.6%
Could not find part-time work	1.4%	3.6%	90.6%
Inadequate facilities for physically handicapped students	0.0%	2.9%	92.8%
Credit card debt was too much	1.4%	0.7%	93.5%

<b>Table 11</b>			
<b>Percentage of Endorsement for Major Reason, Minor Reason, and Not a Reason</b>			
<b>Degree-Seeking Graduate Students</b>			
	<b>Major Reason</b>	<b>Minor Reason</b>	<b>Not a Reason</b>
Decided to attend a different college	37.5%	6.3%	56.3%
Did not intend to get a degree when you started at Southeastern	18.8%	12.5%	68.8%
Too much stress	18.8%	12.5%	68.8%
Wanted a break from your college studies	6.3%	18.8%	75.0%
Moved to a new location	18.8%	6.3%	75.0%
Tired of commuting to Southeastern	6.3%	12.5%	75.0%
Courses were not challenging	6.3%	12.5%	75.0%
You were disappointed with the quality of instruction at Southeastern	6.3%	18.8%	75.0%
The major you wanted was not available at Southeastern	18.8%	6.3%	75.0%
Academic advising was inadequate	0.0%	25.0%	75.0%
Family responsibilities were too great	6.3%	12.5%	81.3%
<b>Table 11</b>			

<b>Percentage of Endorsement for Major Reason, Minor Reason, and Not a Reason Degree-Seeking Graduate Students</b>			
	<b>Major Reason</b>	<b>Minor Reason</b>	<b>Not a Reason</b>
Southeastern did not promote an atmosphere that was conducive to learning	12.5%	6.3%	81.3%
Could not get into the program you wanted	12.5%	6.3%	81.3%
Accepted a full-time job	12.5%	6.3%	81.3%
Too much conflict between the responsibilities of work and school	12.5%	6.3%	81.3%
The cost of gas was too high to commute	0.0%	18.8%	81.3%
Southeastern was too small for you	0.0%	12.5%	87.5%
Could not find and/or afford child care	6.3%	6.3%	87.5%
Courses were too difficult	6.3%	6.3%	87.5%
Had problems scheduling classes	6.3%	0.0%	87.5%
Did not receive enough financial aid	12.5%	0.0%	87.5%
Wanted to get work experience	6.3%	6.3%	87.5%
Too much conflict between the responsibilities of family and school	6.3%	6.3%	87.5%
Family or personal health-related problem	6.3%	0.0%	93.8%
Southeastern was too large for you	0.0%	6.3%	93.8%
Did not feel like you fit in	0.0%	6.3%	93.8%
Dissatisfied with your grades	6.3%	0.0%	93.8%
There were too many required courses	6.3%	0.0%	93.8%
Dissatisfied with your major	6.3%	0.0%	93.8%
Could not find affordable housing you liked	0.0%	6.3%	93.8%
Unhappy with Southeastern's rules and regulations	0.0%	6.3%	93.8%
Impersonal attitudes of college faculty and/or staff	0.0%	6.3%	93.8%
Dissatisfied with the social life at Southeastern	6.3%	0.0%	93.8%
Experienced racism, prejudice or sexism	0.0%	6.3%	93.8%
Inadequate facilities for physically handicapped students	6.3%	0.0%	93.8%
Encountered unexpected expenses	6.3%	0.0%	93.8%
Could not find part-time work	0.0%	6.3%	93.8%
Dealing with hurricane related problems	0.0%	6.3%	93.8%

**Table 11**

<b>Percentage of Endorsement for Major Reason, Minor Reason, and Not a Reason Degree-Seeking Graduate Students</b>			
	<b>Major Reason</b>	<b>Minor Reason</b>	<b>Not a Reason</b>
Credit card debt was too much	0.0%	6.3%	93.8%
Your parents and/or other relatives influenced you to quit	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Suspended or placed on probation	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Lost your TOPS Scholarship	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Did not have the study skills required to succeed in college	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%

<b>Table 12 Percentage of Endorsement for Major Reason, Minor Reason, and Not a Reason Non-Degree Graduate Students</b>			
	<b>Major Reason</b>	<b>Minor Reason</b>	<b>Not a Reason</b>
Did not intend to get a degree when you started at Southeastern	25.0%	6.3%	68.8%
The major you wanted was not available at Southeastern	15.6%	12.5%	71.9%
Tired of commuting to Southeastern	12.5%	9.4%	78.1%
Dissatisfied with your grades	6.3%	12.5%	78.1%
Accepted a full-time job	9.4%	12.5%	78.1%
The cost of gas was too high to commute	0.0%	18.8%	78.1%
Wanted a break from your college studies	3.1%	15.6%	81.3%
Decided to attend a different college	9.4%	9.4%	81.3%
You were disappointed with the quality of instruction at Southeastern	9.4%	9.4%	81.3%
Too much conflict between the responsibilities of work and school	9.4%	9.4%	81.3%
Family responsibilities were too great	6.3%	9.4%	84.4%
Moved to a new location	9.4%	3.1%	84.4%
Courses were too difficult	0.0%	12.5%	87.5%
Courses were not challenging	6.3%	6.3%	87.5%
Could not get into the program you wanted	3.1%	9.4%	87.5%
Had problems scheduling classes	6.3%	6.3%	87.5%

<b>Table 12 Percentage of Endorsement for Major Reason, Minor Reason, and Not a Reason</b>			
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<b>Non-Degree Graduate Students</b>			
	<b>Major Reason</b>	<b>Minor Reason</b>	<b>Not a Reason</b>
Impersonal attitudes of college faculty and/or staff	3.1%	9.4%	87.5%
Wanted to get work experience	3.1%	9.4%	87.5%
Too much stress	3.1%	9.4%	87.5%
Could not find and/or afford child care	6.3%	3.1%	90.6%
Southeastern did not promote an atmosphere that was conducive to learning	6.3%	3.1%	90.6%
There were too many required courses	3.1%	6.3%	90.6%
Academic advising was inadequate	3.1%	3.1%	90.6%
Encountered unexpected expenses	3.1%	6.3%	90.6%
Too much conflict between the responsibilities of family and school	6.3%	3.1%	90.6%
Family or personal health-related problem	6.3%	0.0%	93.8%
Southeastern was too small for you	3.1%	3.1%	93.8%
Dissatisfied with your major	0.0%	6.3%	93.8%
Unhappy with Southeastern's rules and regulations	3.1%	3.1%	93.8%
Did not receive enough financial aid	0.0%	6.3%	93.8%
Dealing with hurricane related problems	0.0%	6.3%	93.8%
Did not feel like you fit in	0.0%	6.3%	93.8%
Could not find part-time work	3.1%	3.1%	93.8%
Suspended or placed on probation	0.0%	3.1%	96.9%
Southeastern was too large for you	0.0%	3.1%	96.9%
Your parents and/or other relatives influenced you to quit	0.0%	3.1%	96.9%
Lost your TOPS Scholarship	0.0%	3.1%	96.9%
Did not have the study skills required to succeed in college	0.0%	3.1%	96.9%
Could not find affordable housing you liked	0.0%	3.1%	96.9%
Credit card debt was too much	0.0%	3.1%	96.9%
Dissatisfied with the social life at Southeastern	0.0%	3.1%	96.9%
Experienced racism, prejudice or sexism	0.0%	3.1%	96.9%
Inadequate facilities for physically handicapped students	0.0%	3.1%	96.9%

**Demographics of Drop-Outs and Stop-Outs**

The last portion of the survey asked participants for demographic information that is not readily available as part of the student record system. Answers to these questions help give a better understanding as to what type of student will leave Southeastern either temporarily or permanently. Almost half (41%) of the respondents traveled more than 30 miles (one way) to Southeastern's main campus, while only 13% lived on campus. Approximately 69% of the respondents worked off campus. An additional 5% worked both on and off campus, and 6% worked on campus. Fifty percent (50%) of those who worked, spent more than 30 hours a week working, with an additional 20% spending 21-30 hours a week working. Thirty percent (30%) of the respondents are first-generation college students, which according to Terenzini et al (1996) is a student who has no parent with any college or university experience.

## References

Terenzini, P.T., Springer, L. Yaeger, P.M., Pascarella, E.T., & Nora, A. (1996). First-generation college students: Characteristics, experiences, and cognitive development. Research in Higher Education, 37(1), 1-22.

Appendix A  
Non-Returning Student Survey

Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am calling from the Southeastern Louisiana University. May I please speak with \_\_\_\_\_. To better serve our students, we are conducting a confidential and voluntary survey of former Southeastern students who are not enrolled here this semester. The survey will take only a few minutes. Will you participate?

### **Intro questions**

1. Do you plan to continue your education?  
**If no, go to Non-Returning**  
**If yes continue to intro 2**  
**If Don't Know, go to Non-Returning**
  
2.
  - a. Do you plan to continue your education at Southeastern or somewhere else?  
**If Southeastern, go to Stop Out questions**
  - b. Have you enrolled in another school yet?  
1=No 2=Yes
  - c. What school have/will you enroll(ed) in?
  - d. What is the main reason you decided to attend \_\_\_\_\_ ?  
**Go to Non-Returning Questions**

### **Non-Returning:**

I am now going to read some reasons why a student might leave college. For each reason, please tell me whether it was a major reason, a minor reason, or not a reason that you decided to leave Southeastern.

1. Family or personal health-related problem
2. Wanted a break from your college studies
3. Moved to a new location
4. Did not intend to get a degree when you started at Southeastern
5. Tired of commuting to Southeastern
6. Could not find and/or afford child care
7. Family responsibilities were too great
8. Southeastern was too small for you
9. Southeastern was too large for you
10. Did not feel like you fit in
11. Your parents and/or other relatives influenced you to quit
12. Dissatisfied with your grades
13. Suspended or placed on probation
14. Courses were too difficult
15. Courses were not challenging
16. Southeastern did not promote an atmosphere that was conducive to learning
17. There were too many required courses
18. You were disappointed with the quality of instruction at Southeastern



19. The major you wanted was not available at Southeastern
20. Could not get into the program you wanted
21. Dissatisfied with your major
22. Academic advising was inadequate
23. Had problems scheduling classes
24. Lost your TOPS Scholarship
25. Did not have the study skills required to succeed in college
26. Could not find affordable housing you liked
27. Unhappy with Southeastern's rules and regulations
28. Impersonal attitudes of college faculty and/or staff
29. Dissatisfied with the social life at Southeastern
30. Experienced racism, prejudice or sexism
31. Inadequate facilities for physically handicapped students
32. Encountered unexpected expenses
33. Did not receive enough financial aid
34. Decided to attend a different college
35. Could not find part-time work
36. Wanted to get work experience
37. Accepted a full-time job
38. Too much conflict between the responsibilities of work and school
39. Too much conflict between the responsibilities of family and school
40. Too much stress
41. Dealing with hurricane related problems
42. The cost of gas was too high to commute
43. Credit card debt was too much

### **Stop-Out questions**

1. When do you plan to return to Southeastern
  - Next semester
  - Within the next year
  - Within the next two years
  - Within the next five years
  - Not sure at this time

For the following reasons I read, please tell me if they were a minor reason, a major reason, or no reason at all for why you decided to stop attending Southeastern for a while.

1. Needed more to earn more money
2. Had family responsibilities to take care of
3. Needed a break from school
4. Military obligation
5. Religious obligation
6. Work interfered with school

7. Academic problems
8. Health reasons
9. Could not schedule the classes you needed

### **Demographics:**

Southeastern is looking for ways to help students remain in school. The following information may help us better meet the needs of students like yourself.

1. The last time you attended Southeastern, how many miles did you have to travel (one way) to reach Southeastern's main campus, or did you live on campus?
  - 1-Lived on campus
  - 2-Less than 5 miles
  - 3-Between 5 and 10 miles
  - 4-Between 11 and 20 miles
  - 5-Between 21 and 30 miles
  - 6-More than 30 miles
  
2. Did you work on or off campus?
  - 1-Did not work **(Skip to Question 6)**
  - 2-Worked on campus
  - 3-Worked off campus
  - 4-Worked both on and off campus
  
3. How many hours did you work a week?
  - 1-No more than ten hours
  - 2-Eleven to twenty hours
  - 3-Twenty-one to thirty hours
  - 4-More than thirty hours
  
4. What was your Mother's highest level of education?
  - 1-No high school diploma
  - 2-High School diploma/GED
  - 3-Some college
  - 4-Associate Degree
  - 5-Bachelor's Degree
  - 6-Graduate or Professional Degree
  - 7-Unknown or refused
  
5. What was your Father's highest level of education?
  - 1-No high school diploma
  - 2-High School diploma/GED
  - 3-Some college
  - 4-Associate Degree

- 5-Bachelor's Degree
- 6-Graduate or Professional Degree
- 7-Unknown or refused

Thank you for your time. If you have any questions regarding this survey, please contact:

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